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JD(U) always believed in divisive politics: Chirag

Chirag Paswan on Wednesdav accused his uncle, Pashupati Nath Paras, of betraying him, and the Janata Dal (United) of aiding the LJP rebels in crafting the split in the party.

'Centre denied nod to probe oxygen deaths'

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia claimed that the Centre has denied approval to a panel constituted by the Delhi government to probe the deaths of COVID patients due to oxygen shortage. **CITY** ▶ PAGE 3



Delhi police move SC against bail to 3 students in riots case

They were booked under the UAPA after protests against the CAA turned violent

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-four hours after getting bail, student activists Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal and Asif Iqbal Tanha are yet to taste freedom as the Delhi Police quickly moved the Supreme Court on Wednesday against their

The virtual court of sessions judge Ravinder Bedi heard the students' lawyers press for their immediate release, saying they could not be made to spend another night in jail after getting bail.

But the police objected, saying they should not be released until the outstation addresses of the three students and their sureties were verified. In short, the police sought more time to file its verification report.

Sessions judge Ravinder Bedi recorded that he had

Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal and Asif Igbal Tanha should not be made to spend another night in jail after getting bail LAWYERS OF STUDENT ACTIVISTS

The High Court has lost sight of the evidence in the case. It was not a simple protest by students... there was evidence of terrorist activity **DELHI POLICE IN APPEAL BEFORE SC**

heard both sides at "considerable length" and put up the case for orders at 4.45 p.m. However, at 6 p.m., the judge said his court had to go through a rather "heavy board" of bail applications and thus could not pass orders in the case. The judge went on to post the case for orders on Thursday at 11 a.m.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta is likely to mention the appeal against the bail order in the Supreme Court

on Thursday. The police, in their appeal in the Supreme Court, claimed the High Court had lost sight of the evidence in the case. It was "not a simple protest by students". There was "evidence of terrorist activity". Seeking an immediate stay of the HC order, the police said it would otherwise affect all other cases registered by the National In-

the UAPA. In fact, the High Court had made particularly sharp observations in its June 15 order, accusing the govern-

vestigation Agency under

ment of blurring the line between rightful dissent and terrorism.

The police arrested Jawaharlal Nehru University students and Pinira Tod members Ms. Narwal and Ms. Kalita last year. Mr. Tanha, a Jamia Millia Islamia University student, was taken into custody in May 2020.

They were booked under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UA-PA) in connection with the Delhi riots that broke out last year after protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) turned violent.

"It appears that in its anxiety to suppress dissent and in the morbid fear that matters may get out of hand, the State has blurred the line between the constitutionally guaranteed 'right to protest' and 'terrorist activity'," the High Court said on June 15.

Excess deaths in T.N. over 4 times official COVID-19 tally

60,773 more fatalities during second wave

SRINIVASAN RAMANI RAMYA KANNAN

The number of "excess deaths" registered by the Civil Registration System (CRS) in Tamil Nadu ever since the COVID-19 pandemic hit (from April 2020 to May 2021) is 6.2 times the official reported figure of 24,232 deaths. But in data accessed by The Hindu, the CRS recorded the number of deaths due to COVID-19 as 35,807 (14,652 in 2020 and 21,155 till May 2021), possibly adjusted over the months, an increase of nearly 47% in the deaths reported in the State health bulletin.

After omitting deaths due to causal factors unrelated to COVID-19, it is estimated that there were 1,61,581 excess deaths amounting to an undercount factor of 4.5 for the **Missing numbers:** The number of "excess deaths" in Tamil Nadu is over 6.5 times the official COVID-19 toll in 2021. Following an increase in the tally registered in the CRS and after omitting deaths due to causal factors unrelated to COVID-19, the undercount factor reduced to 3.7

How to maximise your score

Period	Excess deaths	Official COVID -19 toll	CRS COVID -19 tally	Under -count factor*	Adjusted undercount factor**
2021	78,531	12,110	21,155	6.5	3.74
Apr '20 - May '21	1,51,408	24,232	35,807	6.2	4.5
Apr '21 - May '21	61,413	11,513	20,512	5.3	3.01

* Based on official COVID-19 toll | ** Based on CRS death toll and adjusted for deaths unrelated to COVID-19

pandemic period – April 2020 to May 2021. In the second wave (April and May 2021) alone, the CRS registered 20,158 COVID-19 deaths, but it was found that this was undercounted by a factor of 3, as the estimated excess deaths for this period were 60,773. The undercount factor for 2021 was 3.7.

Excess deaths in Tamil Nadu were calculated based on the month-wise number of deaths registered by the CRS from January 2018 to May 2021, besides utilising year-wise data from 2015.

Data accessed by The Hindu included cause-wise deaths registered in the CRS and medically certified deaths data (close to 45% of deaths were medically certified in the State as of latest data from 2019).

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Cabinet panel approves additional fertilizer subsidy

One-time measure to provide relief

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal to hike subsidy rates for phosphorus and potassium-based fertilizers by 140% in a bid to provide relief to farmers as the kharif sowing season begins.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The estimated additional subsidy burden is around ₹14,775 crore, with the Centre emphasising that this is a one-time measure as part of COVID-19 relief.

Unlike urea, where the Centre sets a fixed maximum retail price, non-urea fertilizer prices are decontrolled, with the Centre fixing nutrient-based subsidy rates. So

far, a 50 kg bag of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), the fertilizer most popular with Indian farmers after urea, was sold at ₹1,200, including a subsidy of about ₹500.

However, the bull run in the global commodity markets has seen a surge in prices of the imported raw materials as well as the finished fertilizer. In early April, a number of Indian fertilizer companies hiked their DAP prices to ₹1,900 per bag.

Farmers' groups protested against the ₹700/bag hike, pointing out that their input costs for the kharif season would spiral out of control.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Soon, drones might ferry vaccines

ICMR invites expression of interest

JAGRITI CHANDRA

Drones could soon be used for delivering COVID-19 vaccines in remote and hard to reach geographies in the country. The Indian Council of

Medical Research (ICMR) has

invited expression of interest

from drone operators to "develop a delivery model". ICMR's Head of Epide-

miology and Communicable Diseases Dr. Samiran Panda said the aim was to develop a model through a pilot project that could be emulated and adopted by the State governments. The ICMR had conducted a feasibility study



Difficult terrain: Health workers on a vaccination drive in Tral village of south Kashmir. • NISSAR AHMAD

in collaboration with the IIT-Kanpur.

"We need smart vaccination instead of mass vaccination to stem an epidemic. For this, we need to focus not only on areas where the infection is intense but also on places where there are indications that the test positivity rate is still low and that if you saturate the priority groups there through innovative vaccine delivery mechanism, you can stop a surge. This is known as ringfencing," Dr. Panda told The

Technical specifications

The tender document lays down the technical specifications required, which include the ability of drones to fly "beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS)", carry a payload of up to 4 kg and cover a distance of up to 35 km.

While government rules now permit only those drone operations that are within visual range, the ICMR project comes at a time the Ministry of Civil Aviation has allowed 20 entities to conduct trials for long-range or "beyond visual line of sight" drone flights.

GOVT. TO FRAME NORMS ▶ PAGE 9

U.P. police book Twitter, news portal, journalists

Row over assault on elderly man

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of spreading "poison in society" over his tweet after the State police ruled out a communal angle in the assault and humiliation of an elderly Muslim man in Ghaziabad recently.

The police lodged a FIR against social media site Twitter, news portal The *Wire*, journalists Saba Nagvi and Rana Ayyub, fact-checker Mohammad Zubair of Altnews and three others associated with the Congress for allegedly sharing on Twitter a video of the incident and

giving it a "communal colour" without verifying the details. The FIR was lodged against them under Sections 153, 153-A, 295-A, 505, 120-B and 34 of the IPC.

The police said Abdul Samad Saifi was allegedly beaten up by the accused, who included both Hindus and Muslims, as they were unhappy with the effects of a 'taweez' (amulet) provided by him. It was an interpersonal dispute, claimed the Ghaziabad police, dismissing the allegations made in a video of the incident, in which the victim alleged he was made to chant 'Jai Shri Ram'.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Mithun questioned on poll speeches

Petitioner flags 'inflammatory' content

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Kolkata police on Wednesday questioned veteran actor and BJP leader Mithun Chakraborty virtually for about 45 minutes in connection with a complaint that said he made inflammatory comments during the recent Assembly election. The complaint, filed at a

police station by an individual, alleged that Mr. Chakraborty had made inflammatory remarks, which could lead to breach of peace and provoke enmity between different groups. Mr. Chakraborty, who

was one of the star campaigners of the BJP, was often heard repeating dialogues from his films, such as Ek Chobole Chobi [death in one strike]". He joined the BJP on

March 7 during a rally at Brigade Parade Ground in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

'Recreational purpose' Mr. Chakraborty said his re-

marks were only for recreational purposes and had nothing to do with inciting violence. The 71-year-old ac-



Mithun Chakraborty at a campaign meeting held in Kolkata in March.

tor had approached the Calcutta High Court for quashing the legal proceedings against him.

On June 11, the court directed that the actor be interrogated via video conference for the time being.

"In the meantime, the petitioner or his advocate-onrecord would communicate the e-mail address of the petitioner to the State so that for the purposes of interrogation or answering any query of the investigating officer, the petitioner can make himself available by way of video-conference," the order by Justice Tirthankar Ghosh read. The matter will come up for hearing again in court on June 18.



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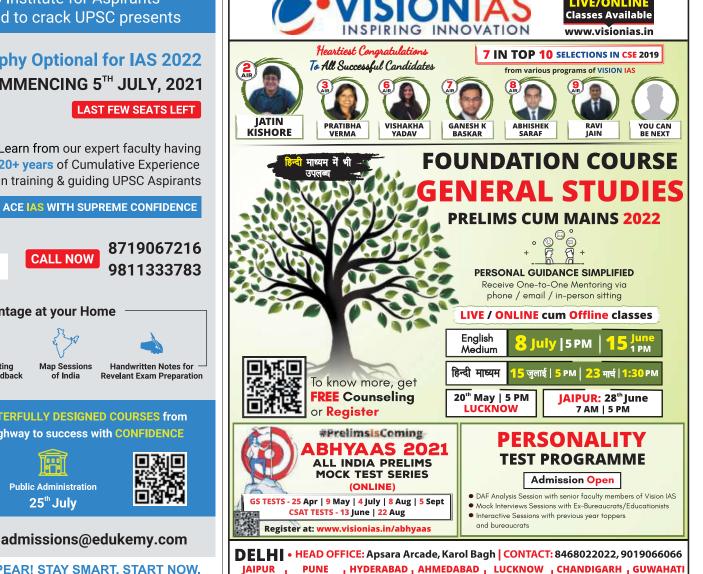
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Judo coach arrested in wrestler murder case

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Crime Branch on Wednesday arrested a judo coach in connection with a brawl at Chhatrasal Stadium involving Olympic medallist Sushil Kumar in which a wrestler died, an officer said.

The judo coach, Subhash, was apprehended from his residence in Kirari here. He was arrested after interrogation. He works as a physical training instructor in a government school in Rohini. He had come to the stadium around 11.30 p.m. along with Kala, said

the police. Mr. Subhash along with Sushil Kumar and other accomplices had allegedly assaulted wrestler Sagar Dhankar and two of his friends on the intervening night of May 4 and 5 over a

property dispute. Dhankar, 23, succumbed to injuries later.

Sushil Kumar was arrested, along with co-accused Ajay Kumar, on May 23 from Outer Delhi's Mundka area. The police said 11 people, including Mr. Kumar, have been arrested so far in connection with the

Case lodged for promoting 'religious disharmony'

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Special Cell on Tuesday registered a case following a complaint against an Instagram account allegedly making objectionable statements against three religions.

The police lodged a case on charges of promoting enmity among religions.

The complainant, a south Delhi resident, stated he came across "objectionable" content on the 'gurus' of three religions through WhatsApp on June 7 and the text was originally posted on Instagram.

A case under Section 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion... and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered.

Fed up with long queues, metro commuters take to social media

DMRC reiterates need to control passenger flow to ensure adherence to COVID rules

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

With the Delhi Metro services continuing to operate in a restricted manner, several stations are witnessing long queues outside the gates over the past few days.

On Wednesday, the DMRC took to Twitter to reiterate its message to passengers on the need to control the flow of commuters inside the stations. The public transporter said that certain stations were intermittently being closed temporarily to ensure compliance of relevant CO-VID-19 guidelines.

As part of crowd-control measures, while only select gates are functional at each station, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has also been temporarily closing gates to ensure social distancing inside the stations.

Increased waiting time

"The waiting time at the entry of some of the stations is also high since only a limited

A 23-year-old Mewat-based

man was arrested for alleg-

edly running a 'sextortion'

racket and victimising 200

Joint Commissioner of

Police (Crime Branch) B.K.

Singh said that the accused

has been identified as Barkat

The police said that they

Ali, from Haryana's Palwal.

were investigating com-

plaints by people who stated

that their morphed obscene

videos were being sent to

them and that they were be-

ing threatening that the vi-

deos will be uploaded on the

A 34-vear-old man was ar-

rested for allegedly supply-

ing illegal firearms to mem-

bers of a gang, the police

three members of the "San-

tro gang" were apprehended

for their alleged involve-

ment in a series of crimes.

including robbery-cum-mur-

der, committed within a

span of a few hours at night

The arrest follows after

STAFF REPORTER

said on Wednesday.

NEW DELHI

people, the police said.

STAFF REPORTER



Commuters wait outside a metro station after it was closed temporarily due to overcrowding. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

number of passengers are being allowed inside through a specified number of gates. We are aware that this is causing inconvenience and delay in journey to some passengers, especially during the peak hours and we apologise for the same," read the statement.

Since the resumption of metro services from June 7, after nearly a month of being suspended due to a lockdown in the national capital, the Delhi Metro is operating at a 50% capacity only.

Youth held for running sextortion racket

social media. "Criminals

from their targets as the vic-

tims could pay up and not

file any complaint because

of the small amount," Mr.

team acted on a secret infor-

mation on his arrival in

Ali was arrested after a

During interrogation, it

was revealed that the ac-

cused used to prepare fake

ID with profile name and

photographs of women on

social media application af-

ter which they would send

friend requests to wealthy

people. The accused would

One held for supplying arms to gang

in the national capital.

The accused arms sup-

plier, Sonu Panwar alias Ba-

ba Khan, was arrested from

Baghpat district of Uttar Pra-

desh on Tuesday, the police

said, adding that he has also

been found previously in-

volved in a 2009 case of at-

tempt to murder registered

at Kotwali police station in

Last week, the Delhi pol-

ice had arrested three men,

identified as Rizwan (28),

the State.

Singh said.

Gurugram.

demand ₹15,000

Due to the reduced capacity inside coaches, only 25 passengers are currently permitted to be inside coaches at any given point.

For safer travel

The DMRC further added, "However, it may be appreciated that these measures are being taken to regulate and control the flow of passengers for their safe travel. We expect the situation to improve once more relaxations are allowed by the authorities in the days to

then share WhatsApp num-

bers and indulge in intimate

chats. "Eventually, they

would very tactfully lure the

victim into stripping on cam-

era which would be record-

ed by them," said a senior

The accused would then

reveal their identity as You-

Tubers and threaten the vic-

tims that they would upload

the videos on social media

which would tarnish their

image in front of family and

friends. "The victims pre-

ferred to pay the extortion

money instead of filing com-

plaint in order to save his

reputation," the officer said.

Shamshad (29) and Nasir

(20), all residents of Loni in

Ghaziabad, from Garhmuk-

teshwar in Uttar Pradesh for

allegedly committing a spate

of robberies in a single night

in the national capital.

Among the four cases regis-

tered against them, one was

a robbery-cum-murder case.

they arrested Panwar based

on the disclosure made by

Rizwan during interroga-

According to the police,

police officer.

creased waiting period before being able to enter the metro stations. On June 13, social media user, Harshit Agrawal, in a tweet had asked how pas-

sengers could know if the coach is already full. "Have you arranged guards in each coach so that they can inform passengers about [whether the] coach is filled or still have seats?" read Mr. Agrawal's tweet.

With the growing queues

outside some of the stations,

several commuters have also

taken to social media to

complain about the in-

In response to the tweet, the DMRC said, "In order to ensure social distancing and compliance to 50% seating in trains, entry of passengers is allowed in limited and controlled manner. Drives are also being carried out to counsel or sensitise passengers. ments are being made in trains in this regard."

tries to give

STAFF REPORTER

A 25-year-old jobless man stabbing his wife to death as she objected to his extramarital affair. The couple also had differences over child, the police said on

The accused tried to make it look like a theft attempt gone wrong. DCP (Outer) Parvinder Singh said that the accused has

The police said that on that a thief had entered the

Vikas's version was not found convincing. The spot was carefully examined which revealed that there was no disturbance to the main gate or other doors of the house from outside,"

Man kills wife, it theft angle

was arrested for allegedly taking care of their infant Wednesday.

been identified as Vikas.

Tuesday, they received a call about a murder-cumtheft at a house in Ranhola. When they reached the spot, the victim's body with stab injuries was found lying on the bed. When asked, the husband stated house and escaped.

Mr. Singh said.

Road safety to be focus of new centre at IIT-D

It will also study road planning, design

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on

Wednesday asked the Delhi

government to respond to a

plea challenging its non-PDS

(public distribution system)

guidelines putting a cap of

20 lakh beneficiaries for pro-

Chawla and Justice Asha Me-

non gave the direction on an application by NGO Delhi

Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan

which said foodgrains be gi-

Under the scheme, each

beneficiary are to be provid-

ed with 5 kg foodgrains (4 kg

of wheat and 1 kg of rice) free

The NGO has also sought di-

rection to the city govern-

ment to modify the May 27

guidelines to the extent that

it should not be a mere one-

Modify guidelines

of cost.

ven to all needy persons.

A Bench of Justice Navin

viding them dry ration.

IIT-Delhi on Wednesday announced that it will establish a 'Transportation Re-Prevention Centre (TRIP-C)' with a focus to produce state-of-the-art knowledge to address road transport and traffic safety in India and regions with similar socio-economic conditions.

The 'Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP) that has been running at the institute since 2002 as an interdisciplinary programme and founded by late Prof. Dinesh Mohan, a world-renowned expert on traffic safety and human tolerance to injury will be converted to a centre.

Sustainable transport The areas of research and

study will include road planning and design interventions associated with traffic safety, road-user behaviour associated with traffic safety and sustainable transport systems and safety aspects of new vehicle technology in mixed traffic.

The institute said that TRIP-C would offer academ-

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Community growth



Plea challenges capping non-PDS

beneficiaries, HC seeks govt. reply

the beneficiaries may re-

ceive dry ration (foodgrains)

for every calendar month

lines [May 27] have put an ar-

bitrary limit of 20 lakh be-

scheme. This limit of 20 lakh

appears to have no rational

basis whatsoever. The provi-

sioning and the estimate of

the number of persons who

are in need of the benefits

"The impugned guide-

under

until further orders.

NGO demands foodgrains be given to all needy persons

Heavy traffic on the ITO Yamuna bridge in the Capital. • FILE PHOTO

ic programmes in the field of transportation and road safety to train professionals who are equipped with the skills for developing and maintaining safe transport infrastructure, including the vulnerable road users. TRIPP coordinator K. Ra-

machandra Rao said, "The forthcoming centre has a unique template on how to run an interdisciplinary programme successfully and would would endeavour to develop standards for safe transport and urban mobility options".

The new centre will offer a 'Master of Science (MS) Research' programme, which would train the students/ professionals in the field of the transportation safety.

Delhi govt. to start 'Lighthouse

project' for marginalised youth

It will help them acquire skills for better employability

under the scheme ought to be based on the number of people who in fact had benefited under a similar scheme last year," the plea said.

"In 2020, when the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, pursuant the orders of this court..., nearly 69.6 lakh persons, who did not possess ration cards, registered under the e-coupon scheme and were provided dry rations. Therefore, rations must be provided to all those who are in need, as also ordered last year," the plea said.

The NGO also asked the authorities to provide for a helpline number for people to register complaints over registering or availing benefits under the scheme and a mandate for nodal officers to place on the official website the action taken by them within 24 hours of receiving

Delhi govt. to start diploma course in yoga

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Delhi government on Wednesday said that it was going to launch a diploma course in 'Meditation and Yoga Sciences' at the Delhi Pharmaceutical Sciences Research University as part of the announcement made in the Delhi budget 2021 that seeks to make yoga a crucial part of everyone's daily life.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, announcing the course, said that yoga is a vital part of our rich and diverse Indian history and that it was the vision of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to make yoga a mass movement that reaches every household and impacts people positively.

Any student which has taken any stream in Class 12 can opt for this course after passing out from school. "The main centre for this diploma course will be housed at the DPSRU however, several satellite centres across city schools which will host evening sessions, thrice a week, for two hours," the government said.

Over 400 trainees will be trained online in the first batch, Mr. Sisodia said.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PMGSY (JKRRDA) JAMMU.

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

e-NIT No:-CEJ/PMGSY/654of 2020-21 Dated: 09/06/2021

lef Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Jammu on behalf of The Government of Jammu & Kashmir, invites e-tenders on % ove/Excess (+) OR % age Below/ Less (-) basis (i.e. on Percentage-Rate Basis) from approved and eligible Contractistered with J&K State Govt, CPWD, Railways or equivalent and other State Govts up to 5.00 PM on 21-06-2021 for each of the Contraction of th

S. No.	Name of Work/ Package No	Name of the PIU	Constt. Part (Rs. In Lacs)	Maintt.Part (Rs. In Lacs	Total (Rs. In lacs)	Cost of documents (Rs in Lacs	Earnest Money (Rs. In Lacs	Time Allowed for completion	Call of tender	Time and date of opening of tenders	Class of contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Balance work for Construction of road from Dadar Morh to Kalah, Package No. JK14-429, Stage Ist, Phase X, Block Pouni, District Reasi. Length - 4.45 KmsAdvertised Cost excluding Maintenance but inclusive of GST = Rs. 63.02 Lacs	Reasi	63.02	-	63.02	0.06	_	09 Months	1 st	10.00 AM	Any registered contractor with State PWD/CPWD Railways or equivalent qualifying
2	Balance work for Construction of Road from "1053 Bhaga to Lalesa Marel" Stage-I, under Package No:- JK14-531 Regular PMGSY Batch-I, 2017- 18, Block Reasi, District Reasi, Length -3.900 kms Advertised Cost excluding Maintenance but inclusive of GST=Rs. 225.05 Lacs	Re	225.05	-	225.05	0.06	_	09 Months	2 st	23-06-2021	edialiying criteria as provided in the Standard Bidding Documents can tender for the works
3	Balance Work for Construction and Maintenance of road from Sulgar to Rua Bagh, Package No: JK14-314, Phase-VIII Stage-II, Block Ghordi & District Udhampur Length:10.300 Kms Advertised Cost excluding Maintenance but inclusive of GST=Rs. 95.60 Lacs	amp	95.60	18.45	114.05	0.06	-	09 Months	1 st	121 10.00 AM	Any registered contractor with State PWD/CPWI Railways or equivalent qualifying
3	Balance work for Construction of Road from LO22 Bamota to Doulka, Under Package No: JKO7-93, Phase-X, Stage-I, Block Duggan(Bani) and District Kathua. Length :10.459 Kms	Billawar	305.60	-	305.60	0.06	_	09 Months	1 st	23-06-2021	eligibility criteria as provided in the Standard Bidding Document can tende

GST = Rs. 209.60 Lacs

Maintenance but inclusive of

DIP/J-2519/21

On 11-06-2021 to 21-06-2021 (5.00 PM

on14-06-2021 to 05.00 PM on 21-06-2021 (c) A Pre bid meeting will be held on12-06-2021 at 12.00 Noon in the Office of The Chief Engineer PMG

(JKRRDA) Jammu to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stag as stated in Clause 9 of instruction to bidders of the Bidding documents

Chief Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Jammu Government of Jammu & Kashmi Jammu and Kashmir

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways Government of India NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways through Public Works Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh has been assigned the work of Project Management Consultancy services for Widening to 4-lane of NH-503 Extn from Km. 0/0 to 28/900 (Amb to Una) in the State of Himachal Pradesh and Widening to 4-Jane of NH-70 (New-03) Jallandhar-Hoshiarpur-Gagret-Amb-Nadaun-Hamirpur-TauniDevi-Sarkaghat-Mandi road from Km. 58/400 to 114/00 (PB/HP border to Nadaun) in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

Proposals are hereby invited from eligible Project Management Consultancy (PMC) firms for preparation of Detailed Project Report, Pre construction activity and Project supervision during construction as well as maintenance period for the work of Project Management Consultancy services for Widening to 4-lane of NH-503 Extn. from Km. 0/0 to 28/900 (Amb to Una) in the State of Himachal Pradesh and Widening to 4-lane of NH-70 (New-03) Jallandhar Hoshiarpur-Gagret-Amb-Nadaun-Hamirpur-TauniDevi-Sarkaghat-Mandi road from Km. 58/400 to 114/00 (PB/HP border to Nadaun) in the State of Himachal Pradesh. The Letter of Invitation (LOI) and Terms of Reference (ToR) including Request for Proposal (RFP) is available online on e-tender portal of https://eprocure.gov.in. The document can also be downloaded from www.infracon.nic.in. Cost of the Document must be furnished in the form of a non-refundable fee of INR 5,000 (Rupees Five Thousand only) by way of online payment only (payment through other modes shall not be accepted), through Bharat Kosh Portal (https://bharatkosh.gov.in) [Select (i)Purpose: Sale of Tende Documents (ii)Pay and Account officer: _Regional pay & Account officer MoRTH(Chandigarh)and (iii) Drawing & Disbursing officer(DDO): Regional Officer , MoRTH , Shimla-171002. The online payment receipt shall be submitted while submitting the proposal. The application form without proof of payment of application fee will be rejected withou any intimation. Brief particulars of the work are as follows:

State	Name of the National Highway	Tentative length in km	Estimated PMC cost (in Rs. Cr.)	Assignment period
Himachal Pradesh	NH-503 Extn. & NH-70 (New-03)	85.00 Km.	20.00	102 months [10 months for DPR+ 8 months for preconstruction activity + 24months for the construction + 5 years for Maintenance]

he PMC firms shall mandatorily register and enlist themselves (the firm and all key personnel), on the MoRTH portal "INFRACON" and furnish registration details along with its RFP. A copy of Infracon Operation Procedure is als

on or before 15.07.2021 at 17:00 hrs. The following schedule is to be followed for this assignment:

Deadline for downloading of bids 15.07.2021 at 15:00 hrs Last date for submission of queries

Pre bid meeting Deadline for Submission of bids Opening of Technical bids

25.06.2021 at 15:00 hrs. 25.06.2021 at 15:00 hrs. :17.07.2021 at 11.00 hrs

Phone: 0177-2629416 Email: ce-nh-hp@nic.in

HP / 1564/21-22

No. . PW-CE-NH-CTR-Tender Notice/Consultancy/2021-8721-29 Dated: 15-06-2021

State	Name of the National Highway	Tentative length in km	Estimated PMC cost (in Rs. Cr.)	Assignment period
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The RFP has also been uploaded on "INFRACON" (www.infracon.nic.in). As such before submitting the proposal enclosed for bidder's reference

All the bidders registered on Infracon shall form a Team on Infracon and which would be assigned unique Infracon Team ID. Bidders while submitting the proposal shall quote the Infracon Team ID. Bid must be submitted online at e-tendering portal of The Ministry Road Transport and Highway (https://eprocure.gov.in

:15.07.2021 at 17:00 hrs.

Yours Sincerely Chief Engineer, National Highways HPPWD. Shimla-2

youth in low-income or slum communities in the city to help them make more informed life choices and acquire necesties," Ms. Vohra said. Kalkaji MLA Atishi said that the initiasary skills for improved employability.

fit Lighthouse Communities Foundation, the Delhi government will set up "Lighthouses" in Kalkaji, Malkaganj, Matia Mahal and Patparganj.

By partnering with Pune-based non-pro-

The Delhi government on Wednesday

said that the Delhi Skill and Entrepre-

neurship University (DSEU) will identify

DSEU Vice-Chancellor Neharika Vohra speaking about the initiative said that the university seeks to make education a means for community growth and change.

"The vision of the DSEU is to intertwine the transformation of the individual and the community. Through the 'Lighthouse project' we feel we can take the university closer to the communi-

tive would ensure that children and youth coming from marginalised backgrounds are not left behind.

This Lighthouse project will be a joint collaboration between the Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University and Lighthouse Communities Foundation supported by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, the government

Man buys bike with stolen money, arrested for theft of over ₹2 lakh

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A man was arrested for allegedly stealing over ₹2 lakh from a lab in South Delhi where he worked as an accountant, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused has been identified as Ranjan, 24, a resident of Tughlakabad, said DCP (South) Atul Thakur.

On Wednesday, the police received a complaint at Hauz Khas police station regarding theft of over ₹2 lakh. The manager suspected involvement of a staffer because there were no traces of a break-in. "After a case was registered, traditional policing methods of interrogation were used with the lab's staffers. Their gestures were noticed while interrogating as there was no clue from CCTV footage," Mr. Thakur said.

The police said that activity of the accountant was found suspicious and it was revealed that he had recently bought a motorbike. When he was asked the source of money with which he bought the bike, he couldn't give a satisfactory response and started making excuses, the police said.

During interrogation, the accused confessed to the crime. He allegedly said that his wife was pregnant and he was in urgent need of money.

A ND-NDE

RISE 05:24 SET 19:22 RISE 12:28 SET 00:32 SATURDAY, JUN. 19 RISE 05:24 SET 19:22

RISE 13:30 SET 01:06

Delhi Weather Delhi City

Delhi Palam Today 37°C The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be very warm and humid. Night will be

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 38°C A dry weather to continue.Day will be slight hot with uneasy afternoon. Night will be slight warm.

Man held under anti-conversion law, rape charge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Greater Noida police on Wednesday arrested a 30-year-old woman's livein partner over allegations of rape and coercing her into changing her religion for marriage, officials said.

The accused, who has been arrested by officials of the Bisrakh police station, has been booked under the Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion Ordinance, 2020, among other charges, they said.

"Accused Murtaza alias Mritunjay, 33, is from Moradabad district in western U.P. and had been living in a rented accommodation in Bisrakh. The accused and the complainant were in a live-in relationship," a police spokesperson said.

Insisted on marriage "When the woman insisted

on marriage, the man forced her for religious conversion. proached us with allegations of rape and forced conversion attempt," the spokesperson said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Women and Child Safety) Vrinda Shukla said the FIR was lodged on June 14 and the man was arrested the very next day.

The FIR also invokes Indian Penal Code Sections 323 (causing hurt), 504 (intentional insult to provoke breach of peace), 506 (criminal intimidation), 376 (rape), 406 breach of trust).

Further legal proceedings have been initiated and will be completed soon, DCP Shukla added.

The woman claimed she worked in a pharmaceutical company where in 2019 she met the accused who was referred to as "Mrityunjay" by colleagues.

After they started living together, the woman happened to see the accused's Aadhaar card, which allegedly mentioned his name as 'Murtaza'. When confronted, the man allegedly threatened and black-

Kejriwal announces plan to train 5,000 youths as health assistants

They will help doctors and nurses in case a third wave hits the city, says Delhi CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

To prepare for a possible third wave, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that the Delhi government would train 5,000 youngsters as health assistants in the coming weeks. These Community Nursing Assistants will be trained in basic nursing, paramedic, lifesaving, first aid, home care, sample collection, oxygen concentrators and cylinders operations among other procedures.

"In case a third wave emerges, we might also witness a shortage of medical and paramedical staff as we had seen during the second and the first waves. Keeping this in mind, the government has devised a big plan for training 5,000 health assistants," the Chief Minister

said during a digital briefing. "In technical terms, they are called Community Nurs-



Healthcare workers at a COVID Care Centre in Delhi.

ing Assistants. So 5,000 youngsters will be trained for two weeks by the IP University and by the 9 medical institutes of Delhi," he said.

These 5,000 health assistants or Community Nursing Assistants will work as assistants to doctors and nurses and pressed into service as and when the need arises.

"We will train these 5,000 people and they will be They will be trained for two weeks... they will be given a salary according to the number of days they

ARVIND KEJRIWAL

called when there is a need. They will be given a salary according to the number of days they work," he stated.

Apply from June 17

"So, online applications can be filled starting June 17. Training period will start from June 28 in batches of 500, that is the first batch of 500 will be trained for two weeks and after that, another batch of 500 will be trained," he also stated.

Mr. Kejriwal said all those who have passed their Class 12 exams are eligible. Applicants should be 18 years or more and applications will be accepted on a first come first serve basis.

"I again hope that a third wave does not come about, but as per the information from the U.K., a third wave has emerged there. So we should also be fully prepared, keeping in mind the developments all over the world," he added.

The Delhi BJP, meanwhile, accused Mr. Kejriwal of attempting to take credit for the Centre-sponsored customised crash course programme for front-line workers.

"How long will you keep trying to take credit for the works of the Centre in your name? PM Narendra Modi is launching this programme on June 18. You are deliberately trying to show that you are doing it," Delhi BJP spokesperson Harish Khurana

70-year-old resident of Khori Basti ends life

Property dealer booked for duping him

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A 70-year-old man ended his life at Khori Basti here on Wednesday after he learnt that his house would be demolished in adherence to the Supreme Court order. The police have registered a case against a property dealer who duped the elderly to sell government land to

The elderly had bought a 1,000 sq feet plot from a property dealer 15 years ago. The property dealer had assured him that he would get the ownership rights for the land. He later spent around ₹3 lakh to construct a house on the plot. But when he learnt that his house was illegal and would be demolished as per the Supreme Court order, he killed himself. His son, aged 36 years, works as a security

The police have registered a case against the property dealer. However, a

guard.

mob pelted stones at the police personnel when they reached the deceased's house. The police have registered a case against 100 people for stone pelting.

The Supreme Court had on June 7 ordered demolition of the structures on 170acre Khori Basti on the forest land within six weeks. The social activists and political leaders of various parties have been demanding that Khori Basti residents be rehabilitated before carrying out the demolition drive

and compensated. Spread across 170 acres, the colony has 5,158 houses, 80 shops, five educational institutes, 36 social, public utility and religious structures and two industrial units. Most of the residents are migrants who bought plots in early 1990s.

Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday (10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)

Domestic workers seek compensation

STAFF REPORTER

On International Domestic Workers Day, the National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) wrote to the Union Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar demanding workers compensation for the number of days of work lost as per the Disaster Management Act.

The NDWM, an NGO which works for domestic workers, have also made other demands including, extending 100 days of work under the MGNREGA to urban areas and vaccination on a priority basis for domestic workers.

"On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the ILO (International Labour Organisation) Convention 189, Decent Work for Domestic Workers, we again appeal to you to pay heed to the protection of vulnerable domestic workers," an email sent to the Minister on Wednesday read.

Fresh stock of vaccine arrives for 18+ group in the nick of time

City sees 212 new infections; there are now 2,749 active cases

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Wednesday.

The Capital has received fresh supply of vaccines -62,160 doses of Covaxin and 1,73,340 doses of Covishield for 18-44 age group on Tuesday, AAP leader Atishi said while presenting a daily vaccination bulletin on

On Tuesday, she had said that all government-run vaccination centres for the age group will be shut from Wednesday due to shortage of vaccines. Fortunately, the government received the fresh stock later in the day, as per

"The reason for slowing



down of the pace of vaccination is because of the dearth of vaccines for the youth. Yesterday [Tuesday], more than half the vaccination centres in Delhi were closed for vouth," Ms. Atishi said. A Delhi government spo-

kesperson said as much. Meanwhile, the downward trend in COVID-19 cases continued in the national capital with 212 new cases being reported in the last 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,31,710, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday.

Also, 25 deaths were reported and the total number of deaths stood at 24,876. A total of 77,891 tests were done in a day, the bulletin said. Of the total cases, 14,31,710 people have recovered and there are 2,749 active cases. The test positivity rate was 0.27%, which means that less than one person out of 300 people taking tests are positive.

'Centre denied nod to probe oxygen deaths'

Sisodia hits out at 'unnecessary interference' by Centre; BJP refutes allegations

STAFF REPORTER

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday claimed the Centre has denied approval to a committee constituted by the Delhi government to investigate deaths of COVID-19 patients due to oxygen shortage and provide compensation.

"As all of you know, there was an oxygen crunch during the last wave of COVID in Delhi. Oxygen supply was diverted to other places. There were also some deaths due to lack of oxygen supply," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

'The Delhi government announced a compensation of ₹5 lakh for the families of those who lost their lives in the incident. Following the directive of the court, the



Manish Sisodia •

Delhi government constituted a committee of health experts to look into the incident and ascertain what led to these deaths. It is extremely saddening that the Central government has dismissed this committee. I don't understand why the Centre has an issue with it." he added.

"The AAP government wants to offer compensation to the families of those who died and also probe and confirm what led to these deaths. The Centre is not letting this happen. Why does it like to obstruct any good step or work being done by the State governments?" Mr. Sisodia asked. "There have been many

incidents of unnecessary interference by the Centre. This decision to dismiss the committee is unreasonable and without any logic. I would like to request the Centre to stop such interference," he said.

Responding to Mr. Sisodia's claims, Delhi BIP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said it is sad to watch Mr. Sisodia playing "dirty politics" over such a sensitive matter.

'Panel already formed'

"The Supreme Court had already formed a committee with regard to oxygen deaths compensation on May 6 comprising Dr. Randeep Gulieria, Dr. A. Budhiraja and Joint Secretaries from both Centre and State governments. This panel had been working for 10 days when suddenly the Delhi government jumped in to form a separate committee on May 27. In the light of the fact that already a high powered fourmember committee with Delhi government representation is working on it, the Delhi government has been + asked to dismantle its committee," Mr. Kapoor said.

L-G reviews water supply situation, requirements

'Use technology to detect leakages'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Wednesday reviewed the existing water supply situation, projected requirements, steps being taken to augment Delhi's domestic water availability and requirements of other

According to administrative sources, Mr. Baijal presided over a presentation made by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) related figures projects being undertaken with regards to the setting up of STPs and WTPs and the rejuvenation of waterbodies.

Groundwater recharge. use of recycled water and rainwater harvesting were also reviewed during the presentation made by the

"Reiterating that management of water in terms of wastage, leakage and distribution is an important area that could largely address supply constraints, the L-G advised the Delhi Jal Board to incentivise water saving and deincentivise wastage by adopting differential pricing," sources said.

"He suggested that technology be used for detecting leakages in pipelines and the same be speedily plugged. Immediately addressing the wastage of water by tankers was also stressed upon," sources also

Parts of city receive rain, mercury dips

Very light rain or thundershowers likely today: IMD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Some parts of the city received rain while overcast skies brought down the temperature and provided relief from the rising mercury. While the official weather station of the city, Safdarjung, did not receive any rain, the weather station at Pitampura recorded 24.5 mm of rainfall.

The maximum temperature settled at 34.2 degrees Celsius, which was five degrees below normal for the season. The minimum settled at 26.2 degrees Celsius, two degrees cooler for the season. The overcast sky managed to bring the temperature down from a maximum of 38.7 degrees Celsius recorded on the previous day.

The forecast for June 17



Motorists take shelter under a foot overbridge during rain at Rajouri Garden on Wednesday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

shows that the city will have a partly cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain or thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be between 37 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

The monsoon was expected early in the city on June 15 ahead of its usual arrival date of June 27 but conditions were unfavourable for it to reach the city, the IMD said. "Largescale atmospheric conditions are not favourable for advance of monsoon into Rajasthan, remaining parts of Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi,"

BJP asks L-G to oversee cleaning of large drains

'Delhi will be flooded if work not done'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Wednesday urged Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal to oversee cleaning of large drains in the Capital, failing which Delhi could face a flood-like

situation. Mr. Bidhuri said the arrival of monsoon was imminent and a welcome development but due to the alleged failure of the Delhi government to ensure that large drains under its jurisdiction were desilted on time, many parts of Delhi would face flooding.

"The PWD has not undertaken the cleaning of such drains and this is likely to

complicate matters," Mr. Bidhuri alleged. The LoP said 1,400 kilo-

metres of drains on arterial roads in Delhi were cleaned by PWD while 400 kilometres of small drains were cleaned by the three municipal corporations. The PWD had not undertaken any cleaning of large drains this year whereas the municipal corporations have already cleaned the small drains under them, he alleged.

"Due to the blockage of big drains, the small ones also get flooded which results in a flood-like situation in low lying areas. Such a situation could lead to an outbreak of malaria and dengue in the Capital," he added.

'Most corrupt' councillors appointed as Mayors: AAP

STAFF REPORTER

The AAP on Wednesday said that the BJP has appointed the "most corrupt" councillors as Mayors and Standing Committee Chairpersons in all three munici-

pal corporations. AAP leader and Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) Vikas Goel said citizens of Delhi will give a befitting response to the "corrupt" methods of the BJP by throwing them out of power in the upcoming elec-

"BJP-ruled South body has brought a new Mayor who has been accused of corruption and the judiciary had expressed strong reservations against him earlier. There are only 8-9 months left of the BJP tenure and the AAP will not allow any corruption to take place in the BJP-ruled civic bodies," said Prem Chauhan, LoP in South Delhi Municipal Corporation.

LoP of East Delhi Municipal Corporation, Manoj Tyagi, alleged that every year the BJP brings new people for the post of Mayor and the Standing Committee Chairman. "This is a practice just to give opportunities for corruption to new people. For several vears, we are witnessing the same and I am very sure that this year will not be any different," he added.

Chandni Chowk stretch now a no-vehicle zone

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Transport Department has notified the site of the Chandni Chowk redevelopment project from the Red Fort to the Fatehpuri Mosque a non-motorised zone.

According to the notification issued on June 14, no motor vehicle shall be allowed to ply on the main Chandni Chowk Road from Red Fort to Fatehpuri Mosque from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on all days.

In addition to these, restrictions will also not apply to the Shanti Desai Marg towards main Chandni Chowk Road upto T-Point Shanti Desai

BJP raises questions over procurement of buses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BJP Rohini MLA Vijender Gupta on Wednesday questioned the Delhi government's decision to keep in abeyance the procurement of 1,000 buses by the DTC after he approached the Lieutenant Governor with a complaint of graft in the process.

In an order issued on June 11, the Transport Department stated that proceedings related to the procurement of 1,000 DTC buses and their annual maintenance contract "be kept in abeyance till further orders."

"Delhi government has

now put the order of the bus-

es in abeyance in a hush-

hush manner. The timing of

withdrawing the purchase

order is highly suspect," Mr. Gupta alleged.

According to him, the order for 1,000 buses worth ₹890 crore was given to two private companies on a three-year warranty. However, despite the warranty, the government gave the order for maintenance from the very first day of the purchase

worth ₹350 crore annually. Responding to the allegation, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said: "The BJP had filed a complaint with the L-G. The L-G had constituted an inquiry. We have stopped the process of procurement till the report on this inquiry comes through. We are even ready for an inquiry by the BJP if it wants to

institute one.'

THEMAHINDU

the IMD said in its bulletin.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Hon'ble Supreme Court of India vide orders dated 10.08.2020 and Commission For Air Quality Management (CAQM) have directed for cashless collection of ECC and Toll Tax from specified commercial vehicles entering Delhi. It has also been directed that commercial vehicles without valid RFID Tags & sufficient recharge be not permitted to enter into Delhi w.e.f. 01.07.2021.

Therefore, Owners/Drivers/Transporters of all specified commercial vehicles entering Delhi which enters into Delhi from any of 124 entry point are required to be equipped with RFID Tags with sufficient recharge to facilitate the Cashless Transaction of Toll Tax & ECC

For purchase of RFID Tags a number of points of Sale are running at various Toll

Plazas. But still it has been observed that a number of specified commercial vehicles entering Delhi Borders are not equipped with RFID Tags with sufficient balance thereby violating the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India & CAQM. Transport Unions/Vehicle owners/Drivers are hereby informed that they may ge their vehicle equipped with RFID Tags and get the Tag recharged at Points of Sale

(POS) located at various Toll Plazas or online by the following process: 1. Download "MCD-Toll" mobile app from playstore; enter mobile no; you will receive OTP; enter OTP; your page will open; recharge using credit/debit card or

2. Go to www.ecctagsdmc.com and then follow the same procedure Ro No. 19/DPI/S/2021-22

Addl. Dv. Commissioner (Toll Tax)

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Parleys for patch-up in strife-hit Tripura BJP unit

Dissidents for replacement of State chief

SYED SAJJAD ALI

BJP's national organisation general secretary B.L. Santhosh, who arrived here on Wednesday, held hectic discussions with a cross section of leaders reportedly to work out a reconciliation between official and rebel groups

He held a closed door one-to-one meeting at the party headquarters with several leaders to understand the differences and repair the cracks, highly placed sources in the party

Santhosh's meetings

Senior leaders like Ajay Jamwal and Phanindra Nath Sharma, who also arrived to oversee organisation matters, did not join the meetings Mr. Santhosh had with MPs Pratima Bhowmik and Rebati Tripura, Deputy Chief Minister Jishnu Debbarman and dissident MLAs. Tripura BJP incharge Vinod Kumar Sonkar, who was also to arrive here, had to cancel his trip

owing to a family matter. After several months, dis-

V.SUBBIAH (88), FCA Chartered Accountant, KSG Subramanyam & Co, Colmbatore, attained Valkunta Praapthi on 16th June 2021. Mobile Contact S.Venkatesh: +91 99449

SAD DEMISE

Passed away on 16.06.2021.

Mobile: 9791014062

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

sident MLAs like Sudip Roy Barman, Ram Prasad Paul, Ashish Das, Sushanta Choudhury and Ashish Kumar Saha went to the party office to meet Mr. Santhosh. Sources said he met the Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, Deputy Chief Minister, two MPs, four Ministers and the MLAs who were called in six separate

Cabinet expansion

Dissidents reportedly made some important demands including replacement of incumbent president Dr. Manik Saha, expansion of Cabinet and certain changes in the organisation.

He also met State office bearers, morcha presidents and district committee presidents.

Later in the evening, he met MLAs from the BJP's ally Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT) at the residence of Mr. Deb.

Party sources said the deliberations of Mr. Santhosh will continue on Thursday. He will also meet State functionaries of the RSS before his return to New Delhi.

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Conditions not favourable for monsoon to cover North: IMD

'Cyclonic circulation lies over U.P. and there is also a western disturbance'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Atmospheric conditions are still not favourable for further advance of monsoon into Rajasthan, remaining parts of Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Wednesday.

It said a cyclonic circulation lies over east Uttar Pradesh and neighbourhood and there is also a western disturbance. These conditions are not

favourable for the advance of monsoon, IMD Director General M. Mohapatra said.

"Large-scale atmospheric conditions are not favoura-

ble for further advance of monsoon into Rajasthan, remaining parts of Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi,"

However, there could be a slow progress of monsoon into some more parts of Uttar Pradesh during the next five days in association with the existing cyclonic circulation IMD added.

Late onset over Kerala

Monsoon has reached Saharanpur in western Uttar Pradesh. The Northern Limit of Monsoon (NLM) continues to pass through Diu, Surat, Nandurbar, Bhopal, Nowgong, Hamirpur, Barabanki, Bareilly, Saharanpur, Ambala and Amritsar, it added. After making a late onset over Kerala on June 3, two days after its normal onset date, the Southwest Monsoon made a rapid progress covering large parts of area than its normal arrival date there.

Assam not to hold school board examinations

Cabinet recommends cancellation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The Assam Cabinet on Wednesday recommended the cancellation of the Class 10 and Class 12 board examinations.

A final decision would be taken on June 18 at a meeting between the Education Department and various stakeholders.

recommendation came less than a week after a group of students approached the Supreme Court seeking directions on the examinations scheduled tentatively in the first week of August.

Water Resources Minister and government spokesperson Pijush Hazarika said the Cabinet had also decided

not to allow home isolation to any COVID-19 patient who does not have separate accommodation facility at

The other Cabinet decisions included empowering the Social Welfare Department to procure rice direct ly from the FCI for the supplementary nutrition programme under the Integrated Child Development Services to reduce costs.

The statutes of Madhab dev University at Narayanpur, Bhattadev University at Bajali, Birangana Sati Sadhani State University at Golaghat and Rabindranath Tagore University at Hojai were also approved for facilitating smooth functioning,

Don't stop treatment even in case of e-card anomalies: Punjab govt.

Private hospitals told to continue services to beneficiaries

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Punjab Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu on Wednesday directed all empanelled private hospitals that the treatment or e-card of the entitled beneficiary of 'Sarbat Sehat Bima Yojna' (the State Health Insurance Scheme) should not be stalled while the beneficiary was admitted to the hospi-

Mr. Sidhu said that in case of any anomalies in the ecard of the beneficiary, the same should be corrected only after the completion of treatment of the beneficiary patient, because the e-cards had been approved at the

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end of the insurance company only. The State government had also provided free treatment for COVID-19 to the entitled beneficiaries under the scheme in all empanelled private hospitals. He said training would be provided to private hospitals to expedite the process of filing the claim under the COVID-19 packages.

Vaccination drive

Mr. Sidhu said the vaccination drive was running in full swing across rural and urban areas. "Punjab has received a quota of 5,98,060 Covaxin doses from the Government of India whereas the State purchased a Covaxin quota of 1,50,850. The utilisation of Covaxin received from the Centre is around 4,90,041 while 66.032 doses have been administered to public from the State purchase quota. On the same pattern, 48,16,580 doses of Covishield have been provided by the Centre and 46,43,786 of which have been utilised," he said.

He said the Punjab government had procured 5,86,000 doses of Covishield of which 5,30,603 doses had been successfully administered till June 13. He said a total

58,15,339 people had received vaccine till now.

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11:00 AM through https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in (AP Portal). For furthe details please visit the university website: www.rgukt.in. Sd/-

Hooda blames Haryana govt. for rising crime and unemployment

'Criminals have lost the fear of law as the govt. is sleeping'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Leader of Opposition in Haryana Assembly Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Wednesday said unheeding attitude of ruling BJP-JJP government towards the State's problems was to be blamed for the rise in crime and unemploy-

Mr. Hooda said the crime graph was rising in the State, which was worrying for everyone. "While criminals have lost all fear of the law, the government is in a state of deep slumber. Theft, robbery, dacoity, ransom and murder have become a part of routine in the State and the news of someone being



Cong. leader B.S. Hooda

shot or killed in public has become common," he said.

Mr. Hooda said maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the State government but those in power are only concerned about their safety. "The government does not pay any attention to the safety of the life and property of the general

public. Seeing the way crime is increasing, it seems as if there is no such thing as government in the State," he

'Figures tell the story'

"The figures of the government itself testify to the increasing crime in the State. According to the recent report of NITI Aayog, Haryana has the highest number of murder cases per 1 lakh people, after Jharkhand. Besides, the NCRB data shows that there are 3 to 4 murders, 5 to 6 rapes, more than 100 robbery, theft, dacoity and ransom incidents take place in the State every day," Mr.

Odisha govt. announces partial lockdown till July 1 +

Hooda said.

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Wednesday announced partial lockdown till 5 a.m. on July 1 following marginal improvement in the COVID-19 situation in the State. The present lockdown comes to end on June 17.

However, night curfew and weekend shutdown will continue.

"Odisha government has announced four lockdowns, including the present one, to bring the pandemic situation

under control. The rate of infection has come down significantly during the third lockdown. A fortnight ago, the test positivity rate (TPR), which was 14 to 15%, came down to 6%," said Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mo hapatra here.

Odisha had already crossed the peak period of the second wave and the infection rate was falling fast, Mr. Mohapatra said, adding that hundreds of positive cases, however, continued to emerge in some districts.

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TENDERS

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www.mstcecommerce.com, www.chennaiport.gov.in **Chief Mechanical Engineer** PUBLIC NOTICE

Know all men by these presents that Sh. Upendra Narain Tankha, S/O Late Gaiendra Narain Tankha, R/O B-3, 426, Ekta Gardens, 9 I. P. Extension, Delhi-110092, revokes/cancels the Power of Attorney dated 4.2, 2021 the disposal of Plants and attested by Notary Public on 5.2.2021 given by Upendra Narain Tankha in favour of his cousin Sh. Harsh Tankha, S/O Late Kailas Narain Tankha, R/O 113 Golf Links, New Delhi -110003. The said Power of Attorney was drafted for court purposes only and the same was meant for 1/8th share of land in Dakhpatti, Rajpur Road, , Dehradun, Uttarakhand. My client has revoked/ cancelled the said power of attorney. Whosoever deals pertaining to the said

ower of Attorney shall do so at his risk

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE e name of "BHARATIYA PRAJA AIKYATA the name of "BHARATIYA PRAJA AIKYATA PARTY". The office of the party is located at NO.01, KOTE STREET, NEAR VENKATESHWARA TEMPLE, KODIGEHALLI L, SAHAKARANAGAR POST, BANGALORE-560092, KARNATAKA. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951- Name / Address of the office bearers of the party are as follows:

astollows:-President: G. Veerareddy S/o GB Nagareddy R/o House No.365/6, Yetugadda Palli, Bagepalli, Chikkaballapur District, Karnataka-515201

Karnataka-515201
General Secretary: Ajit Shrikanth Nadig S/o Shrikanth Nadig R/o 203, Kerekoppa Kerejaddi, Sirsi-581318
Treasurer: Madhukeshwari Honnannavar D/o Shivappa R/o Shivappa Soumitri Siddarameshwara Colony Ranichannamma they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party), Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

within 30 days of the publication of this

GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH NAHARLAGUN Dated Naharlagun, the June 13, 2021

No DHS-15/5/2021 RETENDER NOTICE FOR 32 SLICE CT SCAN MACHINE

 Competitive bids are invited for the procurement, installation and commissioning of three number of 32 Slice CT Scan unit for Bomdila, Ziro and Aalo General hospitals on turnkey pasis under NESIDS in the Directorate of Health Services, Naharlagun. The tender fee receipt with Checklist, should be collected from Directorate of Health Services, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, PO/PS-Naharlagun, Papum Pare District, Pin 791110 Room No. 112. EMD in the form of Demand Draft/Banker's Cheque drawn on any nationalized Bank in favou of Director of Health Services payable at Naharlagun.

Date of uploading in website/	Website:https://arunachaltenders.gov.in
publishing of tender paper	16/06/2021at 0900hrs
Start date & time for downloading tender documents	16/06/2021at 1000hrs onwards
Start date & time for submission of online bids	16/06/2021at 1000hrs onwards
Last date & time for submission of online bids	30/06/2021at 0900hrs
Date & time for opening of technical bids	30/06/2021 at 1100hrs onwards
Tender opening venue	Conference Hall, DHS Complex Naharlagun
Date & time of opening of price bids	Will be intimated on Website
Address for communication:	Planning and Development Branch, Directorate of Health Services, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, PO/PS-Naharlagun, Papum Pare District, Pin 791110 PH.N0.0360-2350302/2244113 email:

3. Tender fee is Rs. 5000.00 (Non-refundable).

4. The interested bidder must be registered with the e-procurement system of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh in the Website: https://arunachaltenders.gov.in using a valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and valid email address to be able to participate in the bidding process. On registration with the portal they will be provided with a user ID and password by the system through which they can submit their bids online.

5. The interested bidders can download tender documents from the e-tendering Website https://arunachaltenders.gov.in 6. Bidders must complete bid submission through online tendering system. Otherwise, thei

bids would not be available during online tender opening. 7. All the key dates and deadlines will be followed as per the time schedule in NI

unless explicitly amended through a corrigendum in the e-tendering Website: https:/

(Dr. Sharat Chauhan) IAS Principal Secretary (Health & Family Welfare Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagai

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, NATIONAL HIGHWAYS DIVISION, DHANBAD. (Combined Office Building Campus)
Telephone No.0326-2313339E e-mail: eenhdhanbad-jhr@nic.in

Notice Inviting Bid Cancellation

Notice Inviting Bid for the work Construction of ROB at Km.- 11 of NH-419 at Chittranjan (LC No. 5SPL/E) in the state of Jharkhand on EPC Mode as published vide Bid/Package No. NH/Dhanbad/03/2021-22 dated 24.05.2021 and PR No. 246882 Road (21-22) D is hereby cancelled due to unavoidable reason. **Executive Engineer,**

PR 248054 (Road) 21-22 (D)

National Highways Division,

Dhanbad

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE, TENDER NO. C-481/4/3

VOL.-II/02/2021, DATE: 11.06.2021

For & on behalf of President of India Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager WCR. Kota invites open E-Tender fo below mentioned work. For this will not be accepted, only e-tenders will be considered. (1) Tender No. C-481/4/3/Vol.-II/02/2021, Dated 11.06.2021 **Name of Work:** Running of Car parking contract for one year at Kota Station (Circulating area of PF-1 Side Area, 4081.67 sq. metre) Assessed Value of Tender: Assessed value of lender: ₹ 50,51,158/- (Fifty lakh Fifty One Thousand One Hundred and Fifty Eight ₹ Only)+18% GST Extra applicable.) EMD: ₹ 2,52,600/- (₹ Two Lakh Fifty Two Thousand Six Hundred Only) Time & Date for Closure for submission of Expander closure for submission of E-tender document: 13.07.2021 upto 15:00 hrs. through online website www.ireps.gov.in only. Tenderer must have Class III DIGITAL SIGNATURE & registration on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderers will be able to bid and al the important mandatory documents need to be uploaded at the time of etendering. Complete details and information for this tender is available on www.ireps.gov.in.

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager West Central Railway, Kota TO ENJOY LIFE, ENSURE LIFE'S SAFETY! GET VACCINATED TODAY.

North Eastern Railway **E-Tendering Notice**

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager, N.E Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf o President of India, invites Tender through E-Procument system "Oper Tender" for the supply of the following item. Complete description of the item and other terms and conditions ar and other terms and conditions are available on website www.ireps.gov.in/sr.No.: 01, E-Tender No.: 50185151B, Due Date: 13.07.21, Description: Gang/Works site remote central backers are RPSC No. control hooter as per RDSO No ΓM/SM/318 Dt. 21.05.2008, **Quantit** : 141 No., Earnest Money 183020.00. Note: The Firms, who desire to participate in e-tender are advised to electronically registe themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a Class-III Digital signature Certificate Authority Licensed by CCA of India Manual of Gregorgia and Authority and Company and Co Manual offers against e-tenders will no be considered.

Sr. Divisional Materials Manage CPRO/S-08 About any Passenger Amenity complai SMS on Mob. No. 09794845955

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER:: PWD BUILDING::ASSAM:: **GUWAHATI-3** NO.GMC 31/2021/5

PRESS NOTICE(EOI)

The Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Building), Assam, invites Bids from Architects/Architectural consultants empanelled under Assam P.W.D. (Building) and other reputed. Architects/Archetectural consultancts registered with Indian Institute of Architects/Council of Architecture and having extensive experience in the relevant field of work for the

SL. NO.	Name of Work	Value of the project.
1	PMC service for Construction of proposed new Medical College at Charaideu District, Assam.	Rs. 55700.00 Lakh
2	PMC service for Contruction of proposed new Medical College at Biswanath District Assam.	Rs. 56442.94340 Lakh
3	PMC service for Construction of new medical college centering MMCH and Kalapahar campus along with 800 bedded General Hospital at MMCH Campus in Guwahati	RS. 99830.31 Lakh

The details may be seen in e-procurement portal website i.e. wwv assamtenders.gov.in.

The validity period of the Bid shall be 180 days from the date submission The Bidders must be registered with the E-tendeirng system(ETS) of the Govt. of Assam. (website:http//assamtenders.gov.in) The Chief Engineer P.W.D. (Building), Assam reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without showing any reasons what

Janasanyog/C/1089/21

Chief Engineer, PWD(Bldg.), Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT **INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

The Executive Engineer, HPPWD B&R Division Kumarsain H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of

con	tractors registered with HPPV	VD for the wor	rks as detailed in	the table.	
Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Starting Date for down-loading Bid	Earnest Money	Deadline for submission of Bid
	Annual surfacing on Oddi Kingal Km. 0/000 to 21/405 (SH:-Renewal coat 30 mm thick Bituminous Concrete in Km.7/000 to 11/000) (PMGSY).	46,79,260/-	24.06.2021 w.e.f 1730 Hrs	Rs. 78,500/-	30.06.2021 up to 1800 Hrs.

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in **Executive Engineer** B&R Division, HP.PWD, Kumarsain, Distt. Shimla H.P. HP / 1578/21-22

IN BRIEF



as Kerala PCC president

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM K. Sudhakaran, MP, was elevated as the Kerala **Pradesh Congress Committee** (KPCC) president on Wednesday. Former leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala said Congress workers should unite behind the KPCC president and the party should act collectively.

After 41 days, Kerala to resume liquor sale

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala will resume the sale of liquor after a hiatus of 41 days on Thursday. Consumers can buy them as takeaways from bars and outlets directly. The government has done away with the Bev-Q mobile phone application, which buyers used to reserve their slots in advance at the point of sale

In-principle nod to discard Class 12 marks

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Kerala Higher Education Minister R. Bindu said the government had given inprinciple approval to the proposal to discard 50% weightage for Class 12 marks for this year's entrance examinations for admission to engineering and pharmacy

Noise pollution: HC castigates Bengaluru DCP

BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday castigated Deputy Commissioner of Police (Intelligence) of Bengaluru city, K. Santosh Babu, for saying that the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules enacted in 2000 needed change, instead of acting as per the rules against 12 places of worship on the complaints of illegality in use of loudspeakers.

Kerala CEO seeks report in Surendran case

State BJP chief accused of corrupt practices during Assembly election

The allegations of corrupt practices raised against BJP Kerala State president K. Surendran have taken a new turn with Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Teeka Ram Meena seeking a police report on the accusations.

Mr. Meena called for a detailed report from the State Police Chief (SPC) on a complaint filed by Saleem Madavoor, president of the Loktantrik Yuva Janata Dal.

Mr. Madavoor wanted a probe into the alleged instances of people carrying huge bags from a helicopter used by Mr. Surendran for electioneering to his car.

The bags contained black money, which he transported to various destinations, giving the police and the Election Commission the slip, he said.

The complaints that Mr.

Surendran had paid ₹10 lakh to Adivasi leader C.K. Janu to contest from Sulthan Bathery and BIP workers bribing Mr. Surendran's namesake and BSP leader K. Sundara not to contest from Manjeswaram were brought to the notice of the CEO.

'Black money'

The complainant stated that the ₹3.5 crore, which was robbed from Dharmarajan, an active Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh worker at Kodakara, was meant to be distributed in a constituency, overriding the Election Commission's directions on spending money for elec-

Mr. Dharmarajan had also visited the election committee office of Suresh Gopi, MP, the BJP candidate in Thrissur, he said.

He alleged that the BJP State leadership distributed



Surendran was accused of paying ₹10 lakh to Adivasi leader C.K. Janu to contest from Sulthan Bathery. • THULASI KAKKAT

around ₹400 crore in black money in Kerala during the recent Assembly election. A copy of the complaint had been forwarded to the SPC.

Legal action

Mr. Meena told The Hindu that the report of the DGP would be forwarded to the Election Commission of India (ECI) for further action. If the police found merit in the

allegations, legal action would be initiated in accordance with the law and in consultation with the ECI. The provisions of the Indian Penal Code and Representation of the People Act could be invoked to deal with election-related corrupt practic-

Future course of action would be dependent on the

Court directs police to probe charge

STAFF REPORTER

The Judicial First Class Magistrate Court here on Wednesday directed the police to investigate the allegation that BJP leader K. Surendran paid ₹50 lakh (₹10 lakh and ₹40 lakh in two instalments) to tribal leader and chairperson of the Janadhipathya Rashtriya Party (JRP) C.K. Janu in cash to ensure her allegiance to the National Democratic Alliance.

The court order came on a complaint filed by Muslim Students Federation State president P.K. Navas.

The court issued a directive to the Station House Officer (SHO), Sulthan Bathery police station, to

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Bihar, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, east Madhya Pradesh, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Thunderstorm with lightning/ gusty winds likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Punjab, Delhi, Telangana and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Agartala 0.532.026.1	Kozhikode1429.023.
Ahmedabad39.528.9	Kurnool – 33.2 26.
Aizawl 4 –22.0	Lucknow
Allahabad	Madurai 38.2 25.
Bengaluru 0.428.020.8	Mangaluru 24.628.323.
Bhopal 0.135.724.8	Mumbai 629.525.
Bhubaneswar 0.132.625.4	Mysuru 927.120.
Chandigarh 230.223.4	New Delhi
Chennai 37.2 29.2	Patna 329.823.
Coimbatore 0.431.723.6	Port Blair1131.027.
Dehradun 32.0 23.7	Puducherry 37.4 26.
Gangtok 3221.717.3	Pune
Goa 47.528.423.7	Raipur – 33.4 25.
Guwahati 0.236.027.0	Ranchi 125.122.
Hubballi24.021.0	Shillong 825.5 18.
Hyderabad 2232.023.3	Shimla
Imphal 227.922.6	Srinagar26.713.
Jaipur 37.6 26.0	Thiruvananthapuram 132.325.
Kochi 930.824.2	Tiruchi
Kohima 28.6 18.2	Vijayawada – 36.2 27.
Kolkata 4427.625.4	Visakhapatnam
(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in C	elsius)

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reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and prematur death in people with heart or lung disease

Chennai zoo loses another lion to virus

B. ARAVIND KUMAR

A 12-year-old male lion, named Pathbanathan, housed in the Lion Safari area of the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, died due to COVID-19 on Wednesday.

Pathbanathan is the second big cat to have died at Vandalur zoo this month. On June 3, Neela, a 9-yearold lioness, died of the dis-

A release from the zoo said the lion tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, as per the report of the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal, on June 3. It had been undergoing intensive treatment since then. "It had not eaten for the past five days," a source said.

The zoo administration is in a state of shock after the death of the second lion. Of the 13 lions at the zoo, two were responding slowly to treatment, sources said.

A forest official said the death of two lions and the critical condition of two more showed the health management of the zoo in

"We are the only zoo in India that has lost two lions," the official said. Though eight lions at a Hyderabad zoo tested positive for the infection, all of them

Two die after consuming surgical spirit

STAFF REPORTER

Two persons died and as many others were hospitalised after they allegedly consumed surgical spirit at Pathanapuram in Kollam.

The deceased have been identified as Prasad and Murukanand. Two others, Rajeev and Gopi, who had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital, were shifted to the Government Medical College Hospital on Wednesday.

All four had consumed isopropyl alcohol procured fro m a private hospital as liquor was unavailable due to the lockdown.

Six Maoists killed in exchange of fire in A.P.

Security forces seize weapons

SUMIT BHATTACHARJEE

Six members of the CPI (Maoist) were killed in an exchange of fire with the security forces near Theegalametta village in Koyyuru mandal in interior part of Visakhapatnam Agency on Wednesday.

Among the deceased were two Divisional Committee Members (DCM) and one Area Committee Member (ACM) rank cadre. Three women were among those dead.

The slain Maoists were identified as Ranadev alias Arjun (DCM), Sande Gan-

giah alias Ashok (DCM), Santu Nachika (ACM), Lalitha and Paike.

The security forces seized a huge cache of weapons, including one AK-47 rifle, two carbines, two modified 303 Lee Enfield rifles, one country-made pistol, some ammunition, explosive materials, extremist literature and kit bags.

According to Superintendent of Police B. Krishna Rao, the exchange of fire took place when a team from elite anti-Naxal force, Greyhounds, was on a combing operation in Thee-

Chandrashekhar dies at 98



Chandrashekhar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Veteran actor Chandrashekhar, best known for featuring in films like 'Cha Cha Cha', and 'Surang', and playing the role of Arya Sumant on the popular TV serial 'Ramayan', passed away on Wednesday due to age-related ailments. He was 98. Chandrashekhar breathed his last around 7 a.m. at his residence here, his son and producer Ashok Shekhar said. "He passed away in his sleep in the presence of family Mr. Shekhar said.

Ramayan actor Chandrashekhar Maharashtra adds 10,107 new cases Stars on the ground

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The number of recoveries barely exceeded the case surge on Wednesday with just 10,567 patients being discharged across Maharashtra as against 10,107 new COVID-19 cases. With a rise in daily cases as opposed to the last few days, the State's active case tally reached 1,36,661.

More than 1,200 deaths were added to the State's progressive death toll of which 1,070 were part of the Health Department's ongoing 'reconciliation' process. As many as 144 fatalities occurred in the last 48 hours and a further 93 were from the past week.

The State's total death toll has climbed rapidly to 1,15,390 with the State's case fatality rate going up to



Warding off virus: A health worker inoculates a construction worker with a dose of COVID-19 vaccine at Chandivali in Mumbai on Wednesday. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

The State's total cases have touched 59,34,880 while its cumulative recoveries have risen to 56,79,746 with the recovery rate stand-

"Of a total 3,86,41,639 laboratory samples tested thus far, 59,34,880 (with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 15.36%) have returned positive with over 2.23 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said.

Pune reported nearly 1,200 new cases taking its total case tally to 10,38,966. As per the State Health Department figures, 16 deaths were recorded as the fatality toll went up to 15,744. According to district authorities, the active cases have declined below 11,000 while the death count reached 17,500. Mumbai recorded 821

new cases to take its total tally to 7,17,172 while the active count touched 17,782. Eleven fatalities took the city's toll to 15,227. In western Maharashtra,

Kolhapur added more than 1,100 new cases taking its total cases to 1,36,588 of whom 12,487 are active. Sixteen deaths saw the toll climb to 4,260.

Neighbouring Satara registered 915 new cases and 16 fatalities, taking its total case tally to 1,82,376 of whom 7,488 are active. Its death toll has risen to 4,276. Sangli logged more than

900 new cases.



on Wednesday as COVID-19 cases come down. • VIJAY SONEJI

The Hindu In School's mega camp a hit

The Hindu In School, in association with Parisar Asha, organised 'Creative Kids', a 10-day-long mega online camp, from May 31 to June 10, which saw participation of more than 165 children across India.

The camp that was curated for two age groups - juniors (7 to 10 years) and seniors (11 to 15 years) - aimed at helping children get over the monotony of the lockdown and teach them essential life skills. Children also learnt various art and craft activities. There were also engaging sessions on landevelopment, theatre, mind mapping, body movement, and mental health well-being.

Chief guest of the grand



online graduation ceremony on the last day of the camp was actor Rajeshwari Sachdev. N. Vaidyanathan, general manager West, The Hindu Group of Publications, and Aarati Savur, CEO, Parisar Asha, were also present along with the participants and their parents.

Ms. Sachdeva applauded the efforts of Parisar Asha and The Hindu in School and urged the children to keep up the good work. Ms.



Savur also appreciated the efforts of the children and the importance of their parents' encouragement in keeping them motivated.

Mr. Vaidyanathan said such efforts were of utmost importance which contributed positively to a child's growth. He also announced one free subscription to the Young World Club for all the participants.

The event was sponsored by Life Insurance Corporation of India and the energy partner was Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limit-

State govt. invites Maratha leaders for talks on quota

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

Even as Maratha quota agitators began a silent protest in Kolhapur district on Wednesday, the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government invited BJP Rajya Sabha member and royal Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati to hold a dialogue with the government to find a solution to the reservation demand.

The government was positive about resolving the Maratha community's demands, Congress leader and Minister Satej Patil said. The MVA supported the stance adopted by the Maratha community leaders,

Apart from Ministers Ha-

san Mushrif and Mr. Patil, all MLAs and MPs of Kolhapur, cutting across party lines, were present in the sit-in called by Mr. Sambhajiraje that saw thousands gathering in pouring rain.

Mr. Sambhajiraje said, "The State government has extended an invitation for a discussion, which is welcome. But I will not go to Mumbai alone. The coordinators of Maratha outfits will decide who will go for

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar had called him on June 4, proposing that they meet in Mumbai to discuss the issue. However, he turned down the suggestion, he said.



Illumination: A Muslilm man lighting an earthen lamp at Ahmed Shah's tomb in Ahmedabad

Experts root for 'healthcare marketing'

It will boost confidence among patients during pandemic

tute of Health Management

Research (IIHMR) has un-

dertaken the study on the

public health aspect of

MOHAMMED IQBAL

"healthcare marketing" will instil confidence among the patients during the CO-VID-19 pandemic and improve access to public health facilities, besides strengthening the health in-

frastructure, a study on the

challenges before public

healthcare system amid the

virus infection in the rural

The strategies to promote

areas in Rajasthan has said. Experts and researchers laid emphasis on the role of primary and community health centres in containing the spread of the virus infection in the villages by generating awareness among the rural populace at a virtual event here on Wednesday. The marketing fun-

damentals were the need of

Jaipur-based Indian Insti-

the hour, said the experts.

"healthcare marketing" to evolve new strategies to promote safety of patients through communication and inculcate confidence among them in the efficacy of treatment. The study also aimed at accelerating the know-how of quality and

improvising access to public

New challenges

health services.

IIHMR president P.R. Sodani said marketing as a component of public services had not yet taken a lead in the public health environment despite its potential to connect with the patients who were in need of immediate care. "COVID-19 has thrown challenges on the availability of public health

help by adopting a role transcending the commercial activities," he said. While Piyush Sinha of Ah-

services. It is here that the

healthcare marketing can

medabad-based CRI Advisory and Research said a holistic healthcare marketing model would enable the corporates to make contribution to raising the country's health status, Sheenu Jain of IIHMR's Centre for Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship laid emphasis on utilising digital platforms for connecting the patients with physicians and healthcare service providers.

As a research institution, the IIHMR has launched a programme in health entrepreneurship under the University Grants Commis-National Skills sion's Qualification Framework.

Terrorising dissent

HC bail orders are an indictment of attempt to portray Delhi protests as terrorist acts

aught between a statutory bar on grant of regular bail and a judicial embargo on any close examination of available evidence at the bail stage, those arrested under the country's main anti-terror law have been languishing in jails without trial for extended periods. The Delhi High Court orders granting bail to three student activists jailed for over a year for their alleged role in the February 2020 riots in Delhi represent a clear-headed effort to get around such impediments. Sound in legal reasoning and interpretation, the judgments of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani have made a salient distinction between those accused of offences against the country's integrity and security on the one hand, and protesters or dissenters roped in unjustifiably under the rubric of 'terrorism' on the other. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act has been invoked by the Delhi Police against activists and others who were among those organising the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, on the claim that they had also fomented the riots. Under Section 43D(5), there is a legal bar on granting bail if the court is of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accusation against those held is prima facie true. Adding to this onerous burden on the accused to demonstrate to the court that the accusation is untrue is a 2019 Supreme Court judgment that bars a detailed analysis of the evidence at the bail stage and rules that bail can be denied on "the broad probabilities" of the case.

The High Court has ruled that the bail court can look at the available evidence to satisfy itself about the prima facie truth of the case. In other words, there is no statutory invincibility to the prosecution case merely because the UAPA has been invoked. It has found that none of the three – Asif Iqbal Tanha, Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita – was specifically or particularly accused of any 'terrorist act', 'funding of a terrorist act' or an act amounting to a conspiracy to commit a terrorist act or something preparatory to it. Once the UAPA charges were not seen to be true, it was open to the court to admit them to regular bail until conclusion of the trial. Further, with 740 witnesses cited, there is no scope for early conclusion of the trial. Riots are matters concerning public order, and not the security of the state. The court's observation that the state, in its anxiety to suppress dissent, has blurred the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and "terrorist activity", is a stern indictment of the establishment. The Delhi Police has gone to the Supreme Court on appeal against the verdict, possibly in the fear that the ruling may foil its design to paint protesters as 'terrorists'. If the High Court's approach to grant of bail is upheld, it would help secure the liberty of other dissenters held under the UAPA elsewhere without sufficient basis.

Closure, compensation

Legal steps must go hand-in-hand with diplomacy to avoid Enrica Lexie repeat

Tine years after two Italian marines shot dead two fishermen off the Kerala coast under the belief that they were pirates, the criminal proceedings against them are set to be formally closed. The Supreme Court of India has ordered that the criminal trial against them be stopped, after Italy deposited compensation of ₹10 crore. The Permanent Court of Arbitration, a tribunal under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, had last year ruled that even though India and Italy had concurrent jurisdiction to try the case, the marines – Salvatore Girone and Massimiliano Latorre – enjoyed immunity from Indian jurisdiction as they were acting on behalf of a state. The UN tribunal had also ruled that the Indian fishing boat, St. Antony, and the victims were entitled to compensation, as Enrica Lexie, the Italian vessel, had violated the boat's right of navigation under the Law of the Sea. The two marines are likely to face trial in Italy, but as far as India is concerned, the monetary compensation may have to be treated as the only available form of closure for the moment. Given the legal tangles over jurisdiction, the lawfulness of their arrest and the location of their trial, as well as the provisions of law under which they should be tried, legal accountability through a criminal trial had been rendered extremely difficult. The legal heirs of the two victims are likely to get ₹4 crore each, and the owner of the fishing vessel, ₹2 crore.

In hindsight, the diplomatic turbulence the incident set off in the early days, the nationalist passions the killings raised and much of the delay in resolving the issue could all have been avoided. A possible way out was to have agreed to Italy's offer of compensation and a trial in its own jurisdiction – the very thing that came out of the UN tribunal's ruling. At that time, many in India believed it was an act of wanton killing, while those in Italy believed the fears of piracy were genuine. India's efforts to assert criminal jurisdiction succeeded in national courts, with the Supreme Court ruling in 2013 that prosecuting the marines, who had been brought into Indian waters from the Contiguous Zone, where the incident took place, was solely in the Union government's jurisdiction. However, when the NIA invoked a stringent anti-piracy law – the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Maritime Navigation and Fixed Platforms on Continental Shelf Act, 2002 – it was received with consternation in Italy. European nations objected to the trial taking place under a law that provided for the death penalty. The provisions of the Act were dropped, but this led to significant delay in prosecuting the matter. A lesson is that such incidents should be dealt with a combination of legally sustainable steps and diplomatic efforts to find early resolution.

'Record' FDI inflows, yes, cause for celebration, no

The inflows during 2020-21 have not been in sync with the Government's priorities for economic recovery



BISWAJIT DHAR & K.S. CHALAPATI RAO

n an otherwise gloomy economic scenario, one area of Lcheer for the Government has been the numbers on inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI). In a recent press release, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that "India has attracted highest ever total FDI inflow of U.S.\$81.72 billion during the financial year 2020-21 and it is 10 percent higher as compared to the financial year 2019-20" (https://bit.ly/3wBcEd6). The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that the equity component of inflows was over U.S.\$61.4 billion, a 19% increase over the U.S.\$51.7 billion received in 2019-20. The credit for this record level of inflows was given to FDI policy reforms, investment facilitation and ease of doing business.

Taken on their face value, these numbers are indeed creditable, especially given that global FDI inflows in 2020 had declined by 42% over the level in 2019, and inflows to developing countries had fallen by 12%. However, if we consider the disaggregated data on inflows into India, the reality of foreign investors' participation in the Indian economy seems a sharp contrast to what the Ministry has presented (https://bit.ly/35yBiyN).

RBI data as a pointer

The RBI provides a useful disaggregation of total inflows of foreign capital into India. This shows that net of repatriation/disinvestment, FDI inflows had declined by 2.4% in 2020-21, as compared to the previous year. This was due to a

47.2% increase in repatriation/disinvestment, which had reached a record level of U.S.\$27.0 billion. The RBI reports yet another disquieting aspect of foreign capital & inflow in 2020-21, a high increase in portfolio investment, fuelled entirely by a 69-fold increase in the participation by foreign institutional investors (FIIs), totalling U.S.\$38 billion. This was the second highest level of FIIs' involvement in India, after they invested U.S.\$42 billion in 2014-15. Surely. sustained sizeable repatriation of the long-term FDI, together with a large increase in speculative capital does not bode well for an economy looking to recover from an economic slump.

Who the recipients are

Analysis of FDI inflows remains largely incomplete without referring to the largest recipients of FDI, which is possible using the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade database. Currently, data for the first three quarters of 2020-21 are available, during which 86% of the equity inflows for the financial year were received. This data shows that three Reliance Group companies, namely Jio Platforms, Reliance Retail Ventures and Reliance BP Mobility, together received U.S.\$27.8 billion or, 54.1% of the total equity inflows during the three quarters. Other large recipients, though with far lower shares, were Schneider Electric India, Byju's, ArcelorMittal India, GMR Airports and Amazon Seller Services.

More than U.S.\$20 billion of promoter's shares in Jio Platforms, currently having the largest wireless subscriber base in India, were sold to 14 foreign investors, including Facebook, Google, KKR & Co., Qualcomm and a number of financial investors and sovereign wealth funds. A major part of the funds

dustries to withdraw its investments already made in the form of Optionally Convertible Preference Shares. This, therefore, amounted to indirect acquisition of shares held by Reliance Industries. While the entire investment in Reliance Retail was by financial investors, viewed in the context of Reliance Group's expansion through acquisitions (e.g. Future Group and Urban Platter) the end use of the inflows becomes obvious. Again, bulk of the investment into Reliance BP Mobility was through the

acquisition route. Facebook's entry in Jio Platform offered two significant benefits to the foreign partner; one, to substantially expand its social media reach by piggy-backing on Jio Platforms and, two giving Facebook a share in India's rapidly expanding e-commerce business through Jio Mart. Following the Facebook deal, Reliance announced its partnership with Google for building an Android operating system, by selling 7.7% in Jio Platforms. Facebook's shareholding was pegged at 9.9% possibly because the International Monetary Fund (and also the RBI) stipulates that if a foreign investor holds 10% or more of voting shares in a company, the investor "exercises a significant degree of influence on its management". Interestingly, Jio Platforms remains "Indian controlled", even though two major American companies now own nearly 18% of its

Acquisitions lie behind other

major inflows as well: Schneider Electric's acquisition of L&T's Electrical & Automation business, ArcelorMittal's acquisition of Essar Steel, and Byju's acquiring a number of companies including Akash Educational Services. GMR's deal with Groupe ADP of France paved the way for a foreign governmentcontrolled company to have a say in India's aviation infrastructure. It may be pointed out that the RBI's data on acquisition-related inflows grossly underestimate the extent to which foreign investors have taken over existing businesses.

Skewed distribution

Perhaps alluding to these large cases of inflows, the RBI commented in its Annual Report thus: "Even though FDI inflows were stronger in 2020-21, their distribution was highly skewed. The coefficient of variation of FDI flows (based on transaction size) was larger during the pandemic period, implying concentration in distribution. The lower incidence of transactions points to the underlying weakness in FDI inflows during the year. Without the top five FDI deals, FDI inflows during 2020-21 would have declined by about a third of their level a year ago". The RBI is entirely correct in its observation that without the large inflows mentioned above, there is a serious question mark over FDI inflows. In the absence of large inflows, FDI equity inflows suffered a precipitous fall in Q4 of 2020-21, the second lowest inflows in Q4 since 2014-15 barring 2016-17.

Although the RBI has expressed its optimism that "[G]oing forward, the pipeline of FDI for 2021-22 could be supported by the thrust given to PLI and domestic growth prospects", the nature of the bulk of the "investments" which involved a mere transfer of shares without creating productive assets in the country perhaps belies the expectation that FDI can

contribute to the revival of the economy. This view is reinforced by the fact that contrary to the Government's expectations of a larger magnitude of inflows into the manufacturing sector, this sector received just 17.4% of the total inflows during 2020-21.

To the services sector

The services sector attracted nearly 80% of the total inflows with information technology enabled services (ITeS) being the largest component, accounting for over 47% of the inflows thanks to the RBI's classification of Jio Platforms as "Other information technology and computer service activities". Wholesale and retail trade were the other prominent ones. According to the RBI, non-acquisition-related inflows into the manufacturing sector were the lowest in 2020-21 even in absolute terms, over the past five years. They were U.S.\$6.7 billion in 2020-21, as compared to U.S.\$12 billion in 2016-17, and were lower than even the previous year's amount of U.S.\$8.2 billion by 1.3%. Quick calculations based on the RBI data (which are gross underestimates) show that 34.9% of the reported inflows into the manufacturing sector were acquisition-related.

Clearly, FDI inflows have not been in sync with the government's priorities for the post-CO-VID-19 economic recovery: the AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan, anchored on the revival of the manufacturing sector through the Performance Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. When this is the situation, 'record' levels of FDI inflows during 2020-21 cannot be a cause for celebration.

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Energy inefficiency can short circuit cooling India

As Indian homes will be a key site where future cooling demand will play out, awareness of energy efficiency is crucial



ANNA AGARWAL

ore frequent and intense heat waves are expected with a rise in global tem-In the last three decades, there have been 660 heat waves across India causing 12,273 deaths (https://bit.ly/3pXxtNj). with currently low penetration levels of air conditioners (ACs), will likely require substantial cooling services to keep citizens healthy and productive. The India Cooling Plan (https:// bit.ly/3pZNm5B) projects the number of room air conditioners to become about four times in the next 10 years, and about 10 times in the next 20 years, making India the world's largest energy user for cooling.

Scant data Here lies a conundrum. Cooling will likely be at the forefront of India's adaptation to climate change, but if cooling needs are met with inefficient ACs, it could be the bane of India's mitigation efforts. Indian homes will be an important

site where this conundrum between cooling needs and potential emissions will play out. Despite its clear importance, the implications of an increase in residential cooling demand have not been carefully examined. Estimates of AC ownership and usage, the two factors which will determine the extent of future cooling demand, have little empirical backing. We know little about what cooling appliances peonle seek, and how and why peo ple make their purchase decisions. The pursuit of energy efficiency, too – for instance, who buys efficient technologies and why - remains underexplored.

Delhi survey results

In a recently published paper (https://bit.ly/3vBtTtu) in the Environmental Research Letters, my colleagues and I look at household cooling patterns, and unpack household characteristics that are leading to increased use of air conditioners and adoption of energy efficient choices. The findings are based on a door-to-door household survey in areas of Delhi, with above average levels of AC penetration.

We find that the desired levels of cooling vary greatly even among relatively homogenous communities. In Delhi's wealthy neighbourhoods, 43% of the households own an AC, 39% own coolers and 18%

only have a fan. Further, the way households use ACs also differs

quite a bit. While most households use an AC for three to four hours a day during peak summer months, about 15% use ACs for over eight hours a day. It is interesting to note that the India Cooling Action Plan in its estimation of residential cooling demand, assumes that an average household uses an AC for eight hours a day, which as per our study seems to be an upper bound. People prefer different AC set-point temperatures, again indicative of varying perceptions of thermal comfort. Half of the households set their ACs between 24°C-26°C, and 27% prefer their AC temperature to be between 21°C-23°C. This wide range of preferred AC temperatures have important implications on energy demand requirements, as every 1°C

increase in AC set-point tempera-

ture can lead to additional 6%

savings (https:// energy bit.ly/2TDcd3j).

Unfortunately, energy efficiency does not feature as a priority in the purchase of cooling appliances. Only 7% of the households have an energy efficient (star-rated) fan, and 88% of the coolers are locally assembled. Most people prefer to buy a three-star AC, and less than 20% of AC-owning households bought the highest rated

An obstacle

Large-scale adoption of efficient cooling appliances will be essential to providing the required thermal comfort in a low carbon manner. We find that low levels of energy efficiency awareness are a major bottleneck that hinders the purchase of more efficient appliances. A third of the households did not know of the Star Labelling programme, which is a government programme mandatory for refrigerators and air conditioners. Of the households that had heard of the programme, only half of them understood what it meant. We find that it is this set of informed households that are more likely to own a higher efficiency AC, and also likely to use the appliance efficiently. Higher upfront cost and low market availability of more efficient air conditioners (four-star and five-star) are other

reasons for buying a less efficient AC. We find that many households also use alternative cooling strategies to keep cool, with the use of a fan being the favourite non-AC cooling option, and use of nonenergy cooling methods such as natural ventilation being a common practice. Households using such non-AC cooling methods were found to use their AC for fewer hours.

Other solutions

The impending cooling demand transition in India offers a potential advantage. Because a majority of investments in cooling technologies, infrastructure, and behaviours are yet to be made, there is a unique opportunity to lock-in energy efficient consumption patterns. Awareness campaigns on the benefits of energy efficiency along with subsidies and financial incentives that help with the higher upfront costs can help drive up the adoption of more efficient technologies. Encouraging the use of passive cooling alternatives including energy efficient building designs can help provide the desired thermal comfort with reduced dependence on energy intensive cooling technologies

Anna Agarwal is a fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Court's bail orders

The Delhi High Court's orders granting bail to activists and students charged under the stringent UAPA, is the higher iudiciary's firm reiteration of the constitutional right of people to dissent and protest (Page 1, "Delhi riots: 3 student activists get bail", June 16). The judicial observations are as strong a judicial indictment of the cavalier attitude of the Delhi police in mechanically invoking such stringent laws as they could be. The judgment also exposes a total lack of professionalism on the part of the Delhi police. One does hope that the Supreme Court of India will lay down certain mandatory criteria for invoking the UAPA by investigating agencies. S.K. CHOUDHURY,

■ This is an era defined by a strong executive that does not hesitate to wield vaguely worded provisions of draconian laws to shrink spaces for dissent and criminalise the protester. The High Court has spoken directly and wisely to fundamental concerns of the times, making it a good day for democracy. S.S. PAUL, Chakdaha, Nadia, West Bengal

Waiting for justice

The Italian marines obeyed the Supreme Court of India's orders for their trial and right til the end, the integrity and dignity of the Indian judicial process have been upheld (Inside pages, "SC closes trial against Italian marines", June 16). Yet, many of us do not understand why the law that was applied to prosecute the Italian marines is silent when it comes to the FIRs raised

against Sri Lankan Navy personnel for killing Indian fishermen off the coast of Rameswaram since 1983. Trespassing the waters of Sri Lanka should not result in killings; instead, judicial custody and diplomatic steps alone should be the remedy. The fact is that since 1983. the families of victims have been waiting for justice. EDMOND RAYEN, Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu

Kerala and education

A letter ('Letters to the Editor', June 16) in connection with the article, "Higher education in Kerala needs a new chapter" (Editorial page, June 14) justifies the setting up of more colleges to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of the State of Kerala. Merely increasing GER will not improve the quality of higher education. Mediocre institutions will only add

numbers but not academic quality. Getting very high ranks in the NAAC accreditation per se is not the right barometer of merit. It is an open secret that these accreditation processes are biased in many ways. MARY OOMMEN, Kuttapuzha, Tiruvalla, Kerala

■ The state of education in Kerala leaves much to be desired. An egalitarian social setup, where women and marginalised sections enjoy greater freedom, social mobility and economic security, has never been the aim of (higher) education in Kerala. The rampant commercialisation of education, with selffinancing colleges and unaided schools mushrooming everywhere, makes it something that has nothing to do with critical thinking and social change

and justice. A fundamental

overhaul of the system is needed to make society in the State a real democratic one. SUKUMARAN C.V.,

Palakkad, Kerala

On the fringes

Primarily, as with any investment, the value of cryptocurrencies can fluctuate. Within their nascent stage of development (OpEd page, "Embracing cryptocurrency", June 16) there have been ups and downs in value and also sensitivity to publicity due to and amateur investors. Second, to use cryptocurrencies, a digital infrastructure including computers, smartphones, Internet networks and connectivity must be in place. India has achieved a network penetration that is still low. The absence of such a robust digital background also highlights the role of the Government in regulating

cryptocurrencies, let alone

granting them the status of

legal tender.

BOBIN SAJI GEORGE,

the high number of informal CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The reference in the penultimate paragraph of "The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong" (Between the Wickets column, June 16, 2021, Sports page) to India's win of the 1983

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail:readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No persona visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

World Cup (50-over) should be corrected to (60-over).





THE HINDU DELHI THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2021

A seesaw of science and pseudoscience

India is drifting rapidly towards a state of ignorance even as it aims for development



Prime Minister Narendra Modi seems thoroughly modern. But he also appears to be steeped hopelessly in superstition. He promotes the exploration of the moon, orders the most sophisticated fighter jets, launches the first bullet train project, boasts about India being a vaccine 'powerhouse' that supplies vaccines to the world - all products of modern science. But he also simultaneously plumps for pseudoscience. He invokes cosmic energy to drive out the SARS-CoV-2 by exhorting the public to beat gongs and blow conches at auspicious hours based on ancient numerology; he does not pull up his Cabinet colleagues when they launch a yoga guru's concocted COVID-19 medicine, drugs that have no clinical evidence of trials and have been condemned by the Indian Medical Association. Mr. Modi speaks glowingly of India's scientific accomplishments in its mythic past and cites, for example, the elephant head transposed on Lord Ganesha as great strides in plastic surgery, long before the West in-

vented it. Nobel-winner physicist Richard Feynman coined the term 'cargo cult science' to describe all kinds of pseudoscience that passed off for science over the ages – ancient superstitions, black magic, voodoo, witch doctors, astrology, mind reading, ESP (extrasensory perception), expanded consciousness, aphrodisiacs made from rhino horns, and other debatable ideas. He spoke of a 'Cargo Cult' of people, the South Sea islanders in the Pacific, who, during the world war, had seen planes landing and delivering cargos. After the war, they wanted to receive similar gifts from the skies. So they prepared landing strips to resemble runways, set up flares on either side, made wood pieces that looked like headphones, stuck bamboo stakes to resemble antennas, and waited for planes to land to deliver the goodies, the cargo. They waited and waited and repeated their exercise by adjusting the sticks and flares but the planes did



People in Gujarat applying cow dung on their bodies believing it will boost their immunity against COVID-19. • REUTERS

not land. They were missing something. They did everything right. But there were no planes. They were changing the form but not the substance. "We really ought to look into theories that don't work, and science that isn't science," said Feynman. "Cargo cult science" was his phrase for research that mimicked science. Despite never seeming to yield verifiable results, it garnered public acceptance because it seemed to possess the semblance of rigorous methodology.

A slew of offerings

India has a surfeit of charlatans godmen and 'sadhus' of various hues, dieticians of native foods who have morphed into self-anointed doctors, and quacks who have turned apothecaries and practise various alternative medicines. Traditional practitioners have set up labs on a limited scale for analysing blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and equipment like X-ray machines and ECGs on the lines of western medicine to acquire the veneer of science that gives them credibility. They peddle everything from esoteric diets to cow dung and cow urine, as 'curealls' for all ailments, including the COVID-19 infection, which has ravaged the country. They offer various things to the rising middle class, from Vedic medicines, which promise immunity and boost potency to increase libido, to 'instant nirvana'.

It can't be denied that home remedies are often beneficial. If one has a bad cold, a concoction of crushed black pepper and turmeric boiled in milk will do wonders. A terrible bloated stomach can be eased by buttermilk garnished with garlic and ginger. Corns in the feet can be managed without surgery by applying fresh lime and wrapping the affected parts in a ripe banana peel.

From home remedies to Ayurveda, there are many cures that work for illnesses. Alternative medicines from other parts of the world, including treatments from medicines used by tribal communities, have been useful and passed down from generations. But their limitations have to be recognised and acknowledged. Modern medicine, an offshoot of science that questioned existing beliefs and practices, discovered the method of experimentation to find out whether medicines worked, and if they did not, it encouraged exploring new ideas. This was the beginning of the scientific age.

Scientific progress has been possible only because the great men of science acknowledged their ignorance and were not afraid to question; each generation added to the fount of knowledge because they left the door to the unknown ajar. However, pseudoscientists are a danger to society because they are cocksure of their belief systems. They are not comfortable with doubts and uncertainties. It is alright to be not sure because certainty shuts all doors to corrections and blocks progress, which can be fatal for a civilisation.

Returning to the subject, one is compelled to wonder whether Mr. Modi is a man of science or pseudoscience. Why is he pushing both at different times and on different occasions? If it is a political strategy with an eye on the electorate to appease the public, both the modern and the rational, the traditional and the superstitious, it has not, going by the recent State elections, yielded the expected results. His mixed messaging,

mystic symbolism and mythic metaphors are incongruous with the image of a leader in a hurry to propel India to a technologically advanced nation alongside the modern developed economies of the world. While Mr. Modi's loyalists – both within the saffron fold and on the fringes – are wreaking havoc and showing India in a bad light as a country of obscurantists lost in ignorance and superstition and going back to the Middle Ages, his administrators and scientists at the helm of policymaking are paralysed by the predominance of regressive orthodox forces and are unable to give impetus to scientific advancements and infrastructural progress to lead India into the comity of developed economies. India, hitherto a rising power, suddenly seems a foundering ship adrift on the seas of pseudoscience amid a huge calamity.

Core values

The Indian civilisation, from its known beginnings, has served as a quest for knowledge for people to explore the deep meaning of life and existence. It is a great adventure of ideas in the history of the human spirit stretching back three thousand years. "Nothing is more sacred to man than his own history ... For us Indians, a study of Upanishads is essential, if we are to preserve our national being and character," said Indian philosopher and former President S. Radhakrishnan. He added, "There is much in our past that is degrading and deficient but there is also much that is life-giving and elevating. If the past is to serve as an inspiration for the future, we have to study it with discrimination and sympathy ... While the fundamental motives, the governing ideas which constitute the essential spirit of our culture are a part of our very being, they should receive changing expression according to the needs and conditions of our time."

Mr. Modi must heed the above words. Modern science is not antithetical to Indian thought. The spirit of enquiry, embracing new ideas and evolution through acquiring new knowledge is at the core of our being from the Upanishadic times. Without losing time, Mr. Modi must steer the nation back on to the path of science.

Capt. Gopinath is a soldier, farmer and

Acquitted but not forgotten

The right to be forgotten must be studied along with the concepts of fair criticism and accountability



& SUYASH SARVANKAR

In an important development for the 'right to be forgotten', the Delhi High Court recently ordered the removal of one of its own judgments from easy access. The petitioner was acquitted of certain crimes by the court and the judgment was freely accessible on the Internet. Unhappy with this, the petitioner sought removal of the judgment from a leading database platform and search engines. The court, as a temporary relief, asked search engines to remove this order from search results, and ordered the database platform to block the judgment from being accessed by search engines. The High Court recognised that the petitioner may have a right to be forgotten, which must be balanced with the right of the public to access courts of record.

The right to be forgotten is, generally, the right to have information about a person removed from public access. The proponents argue that individuals should be able to determine the development of their life in an autonomous way. Persons cannot be perpetually stigmatised for past conduct.

In 2017, the Supreme Court recognised the right to be forgotten as being under the ambit of the right to privacy (specifically, informational privacy) under the Constitution. It observed that if someone desired to remove personal data from the virtual space, it ought to be respected. The top court observed that a lot of personal information may serve no "legitimate interest", was "incorrect", or was not "necessary" or "relevant". However, the right to be forgotten was subject to reasonable restrictions based on countervailing rights such as free speech. But despite the Supreme Court's judgment, the right remains underdeveloped in India.

For now, individuals may request data hosts to take down some content, and it may be taken down based on the policies of the respective hosts. For example, some embarrassing selfies that a person posted as a minor may violate the terms of service. These photos may be taken down if so requested because they not only violate terms of service but are also unnecessary and irrelevant. However, if these photos have since become part of, say, a scientific study on Internet usage patterns by teens, or if the person now holds a prominent government office, they

now serve a public purpose.

There is a general consensus that people should be allowed to modify or delete information uploaded by themselves. However, whether this extends to information uploaded by third parties is uncertain. Take for instance a news article reporting an accusation of sexual harassment against a public figure. If the person was never convicted, should they continue to bear the infamy? Is abhorrent conduct reportable only if there is a legal proceeding to support it?

The U.S. example

Perhaps there is a lesson in the American civil rights movement. Back then, some governments filed defamation claims against newspapers to disincentivise them from reporting violence against protesters. In one of these cases, The New York Times was held liable to pay \$500,000 (a king's ransom in 1962) by an Alabama court for some errors in their content. In appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court intervened in New York Times Co. v. Sullivan (1964), and ruled that public interest reporting may continue without fear as long as it did not intentionally or recklessly make outright false statements. Thus, the court disallowed suppression of criticism and accountability, especially against powerful figures. The case has been cited by the Supreme Court of India several times. Nonetheless, many courts in the country have ordered take-down of unflattering news articles pertaining to legal proceedings, redaction of names of litigants, and removal of references from search results. However, this is perhaps the first instance of a court ordering the removal of access to its complete final judgment from certain spaces.

While there may be significant merit to the right to be forgotten, whether it extends to the removal of judgments of courts of record is uncharted territory. Judgments are published for good reasons. Trials held under public scrutiny act as a check against judicial caprices and help in enhancing the confidence of the public in the fairness and objectivity of the administration of justice.

The wrong that the Delhi High Court sought to correct could have been achieved by narrow tailoring. The court could have ordered that the name and personal details of the petitioner be redacted while maintaining public access to the judgment itself. Unaware of the Streisand effect, the court names the petitioner repeatedly in its interim order, while removing the acquitting judgment from easy access. The issue has been listed for a final hearing and the outcome is keenly awaited.

The authors are with Advaya Legal

The Man Frindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 17, 1971

'Pakistan may seek a solution'

[Washington, June 17] The United States be-

lieves that there is an "increasing awareness on the part of Pakistan" that it must seek a

political settlement with representative ele-

ments in East Bengal. Though General Yahya

Khan has said nothing to indicate such a

change of attitude, and has insisted all along

that the Awami League is dead as far as he is

concerned, the United States is proceeding

on the assumption that he will eventually seek a solution within the framework of pro-

posals made by the Awami League prior to

have detected an inclination on General Ya-

hya Khan's part to abandon his initial at-

tempts to set up a "puppet Government" in

The United States itself is unwilling to de-

fine what it means by its calls for a "political

accommodation". But it is less reluctant to

concede that the Awami League's 'six-point'

plan constitutes the "floor" for any

The United States still believes that the

leaders of East Bengal will settle for such a

solution even after all the carnage perpetrat-

The scientific study of agriculture has gener-

ally been recognised as opening up a career

with great possibilities and the demand for it

appears to be steadily growing in India. Agricultural education is said to be engaging the

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 17, 1921

settlement.

ed by the Pakistani army.

Agricultural studies

United States official sources say they

Higher education and COVID-19

Institutes should be given financial assistance to create safe campuses for students and staff

The state of campuses of higher education institutes in India is at its nadir currently. The second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic brought the entire country to its knees and people struggled to access basic healthcare facilities. But there is still a lack of serious consideration for the safety of campuses, which may be among the most vulnerable sites for the spread of infection at the community level. Apart from routine advisories in the form of notifications for standard operating procedures, protocols or guidelines issued from time to time at the apex level by the University Grants Commission (UGC), and at the State level by the respective Education Departments, nothing concrete has been done on the ground.

Campuses that house hostels, li-

braries, common rooms-cum-washrooms, canteens, auditoriums, gymnasiums, playgrounds, administrative offices, staff rooms, guest houses and staff quarters, besides classrooms and laboratories, require resources to change and modify their current settings for CO-VID-19-appropriate behaviour. Taking the 'business-as-usual' approach could lead to risking the lives of both students and employees on a very large scale. On May 10 this year, the UGC suggested a slew of measures that higher education institutes should adopt to fight the COVID-19 crisis. It recommended, inter alia, constituting a task force and setting up helplines, roping in counsellors and mentors for providing mental health support and enabling the wellbeing of all stakeholders, and creating a team of well-informed volunteers trained in life skills, including the NCC and the NSS. However, it did not mention the means and mechanisms for training the workforce for these specialised tasks. In the absence of that, such measures remain

Numerous orders

empty efforts.

The abysmal financial state of higher education institutes, especially Staterun universities, combined with a lack of will on the part of State governments already overwhelmed by the vaccination drive, has exacerbat-

ed the situation. Reports of deaths of several teachers in prominent universities highlight the loss of the national intellectual capital and scholarship.

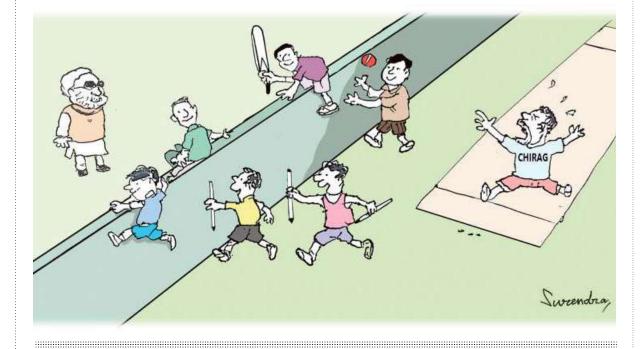
The UGC in its order dated November 5 last year listed guidelines for colleges to reopen post the lockdown. It recommended that State governments estimate and prepare for the required procurement of essentials, such as disinfectants and face masks, in each of their districts and zones in consultation with higher education institutes; it also asked them to draw out a plan for distribution. Universities and colleges were instructed to ensure a sufficient supply of these items to students, faculty and staff. The UGC also suggested that higher education institutes set up on-campus facilities for the isolation of symptomatic persons and for quarantining of those who were in contact with infected persons. Alternatively, they could tie up with Staterun hospitals or other approved premises, as suggested by local authorities, for providing essentials to quarantined or isolated persons.

The need for quick action

But these measures are far from reality. Explicit budgetary allocations for higher education institutes for CO-VID-19 management were found to be missing in the States' annual budgets. This apathy on the part of institutes and policymakers (both at the Central and State levels) could endanger lives and may lead to a complete shutdown of academic activities in the time to come.

It is incumbent upon the UGC to direct State governments to generously provide financial assistance to higher education institutes for managing the COVID-19 crisis. The resources could come from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for the year 2021-22, which was released by the Department of Expenditure at the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs much before the normal schedule, in view of the extraordinary public health crisis.

Milind Kumar Sharma teaches at the Department of Production & Industrial Engineering, M.B.M. Engineering College, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur. Views expressed are personal



DATA POINT

poor right from primary

They were also poor in

Meghalaya and Nagaland

level of education.

for the same level

rural girl students

secondary school. Similarly,

among rural boys in 9 States

poor levels were observed

attended higher

Out of school According to the NFHS-5, in 2019-20, only 29% of girl students attended higher secondary school in rural Gujarat, compared to a figure of 93.6% for rural Kerala. Similarly, only 45% of male students attended higher secondary school in rural Gujarat, compared to 90.8% in rural Kerala. In all States analysed, school attendance dropped as the education level increased. Specifically, the fall was more pronounced when students reached the higher secondary level. While the drop in attendance was much lower in rural Kerala, it was the highest in

rural Gujara	t. By Jas ı	min Nih	alani, Vig	gnesh Ra	dhakrishnan and Sumant Se	en			,		
	RURA	L MALE	(AGE GR	OUP)	NOTE: AGE 6-10 (PRIMARY						
State	6-10	11-13	14-15	16-17	SCHOOL), 11-13 (UPPER PRIMARY), 14-15 (SECONDARY),	6-10	11-13	14-15	16-17		
Kerala	99.5	99.8	98.2	90.8	16-17 (HIGHER SECONDARY)	Kerala	99.4	99.9	98.9	93.6	
Goa	99.1	95.8	100	90.1		Sikkim	98.5	97.6	94.1	84.2	
Sikkim	98.2	97.4	89.5	87.2		Goa	100	96.3	100	81.3	
J&K	96.9	97.7	91.8	85.4	(9/2/2/2/2	Himachal	99.4	98.3	94.4	81.1	
Himachal	99.4	98.6	95	79.4		Manipur	97.3	95.2	91.4	81	
Telangana	98.6	96.4	92	76.6	5 JUNE 1997	J&K	96.4	97.1	91.9	79.5	
Manipur	98.2	97.9	92.3	76.4		Nagaland	94.3	93.9	89.8	77.3	
Maharashtra	97.6	97.1	90.2	74.7	A TOWN	Meghalaya	95.2	95.9	87.8	76.1	
Andhra	99.1	95.6	85.8	70.2		Telangana	98.3	96.3	89.4	70	
Mizoram	96.3	96.7	89.1	69.5		Maharashtra	97.9	95.6	87.7	66.9	
Bihar	90.5	89.5	80.9	69.2		West Bengal	98.5	97.2	92.3	65.2	
Meghalaya	92.4	92.1	80	68.9		Mizoram	96.6	94.1	86.3	63.3	
Karnataka	97.6	96.8	87.8	68.6	25005374	Karnataka	97.8	97.1	87.3	62.7	
Nagaland	94.4	94.3	80.4	64.2	· 信息 医- 48	Assam	96.7	94.7	84.5	60.6	
Tripura	97.7	97.1	83	62.2		Bihar	89.9	88.7	76.3	60.4	
WB	98	93.3	79.1	58.6		Andhra	99.3	96.5	83.5	58.6	
Assam	96.2	92.7	80.2	58	A BEST	Tripura	97.3	95.3	90.4	57 <u>.</u> 6	
Gujarat	96.4	91.4	69.7	45		Gujarat	97.3	85.9	53.7	29.2	
In Bihar, at levels wer		ely 🖊	In 10 Sta than 709	% of		Rural Gujarat ecorded the	4	did not d	ndance le rop much	n in	

highest fall in

from lower to

higher education

attendance levels as

students progressed

rural Kerala with increase in

Data are for 18 States/UTs for

which detailed tables were released recently by the NFHS-5.
All the figures pertain to 2019-20

education levels

earnest attention of the Bombay Government and the leaflet issued by the Director of Information describes briefly what Bombay is doing in that direction. The Bombay Government has provided, it is stated, excellent facilities for agricultural education both at the Government College of Agriculture,

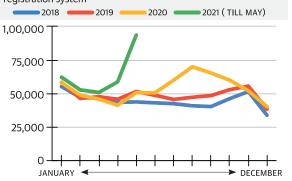
dominions.

Poona, and in six schools of agriculture in other parts of the Presidency, where the education is imparted in the appropriate vernaculars. These schools are under the Department of Agriculture. There is noticeably a large increase in the number of students at the Poona College, where there are now 203 pupils as against 170 in 1919 and 115 in 1916. The number of students from outside the Presidency is 67, of whom 23 came from South India and Ceylon, 19 from Bur-

ma, 7 from Bengal and 7 from the Nizam's

Excess deaths in T.N. over four times COVID-19 tally

Registered deaths: The graph depicts the month-wise number of deaths recorded in Tamil Nadu's civil



Causes such as heart disease and heart attacks, diabetes mellitus, unclassified, liver disease, bronchitis, pneumonia, cerebro-vascular issues constituted more than 80% of all deaths registered in 2020 and 2021, increasing from 72% and 73% in 2018 and 2019, suggesting that there was a fall in other causes overall compared to COVID-related or similar causality. Deaths due to cancer for example fell from 3% in 2018 and 2019 to 2.6% and 1.9% in 2020 and 2021 so far. The inability to access standard care for chronic conditions over a period of two years, it is suspected, could have led to higher mortality over this period among patients who had comorbidities.

The proportion of men and women among the dead remained the same (60%-40%) before (2018 and 2019) and during the pandemic years (2020 and 2021).

Both the undercount figures, adjusted for unrelated causal factors and registered death count (3.7, 3) and unadjusted (6.5, 5.3) numbers, for 2021 and the second wave (April 2021-May 2021) respectively are, however, much less than the corresponding figures from CRS data estimated for Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh (42 and 43, 34 and 31.4) recently. The unadjusted figure for Tamil Nadu was also similar to that of Karnataka - an estimated five times the actual death count

Raw data from the Greater Chennai Corporation on deaths show that the undercount factors (based on offijusted figures) were 5.6, 4.1, 5.6 compared to 6.5, 6.2 and 5.3 for the State for the periods April 2020-May 2021, January to May 2021 and April-May 2021 respectively. This suggests that undercounting was lower in the city limits overall, but improvements in registration similar numbers during the second wave The inclusion of causal

in the rest of the State led to

data along with the CRS registrations in Tamil Nadu helped in estimating the excess deaths in a granular manner. Releasing CRS data on death registrations along with causal factors nationwide from all States will go a long way in estimating the actual number of deaths.

Differences of opinion "We need to understand

that there are two different things at play - death certification, and medical certification of death. As far as registration of deaths, there is no major issue in the State. As far as medical certification goes, it is indeed an evolving process - driven by ICMR guidelines. But in many cases there have been differences of opinion about the underlying cause of death. For instance, doctors are conflicted whether a person had died due to complications from Parkinsonism, and has also tested positive for COVID-19. So medical certification is an evolving process, at best guidelines are also shifting," explains Health Secretary J. Radhakrishnan.

However, he adds that Tamil Nadu has an established mechanism of facilitating death audit, and a State-level reconciliation committee constituted for the express purpose of reconciling death data (COVID-related). "The government has been clear about revealing the proper figures - whether it is related to deaths or positive cases. Reconciliation we even indicate such deaths in the daily bulletin we put out. In the field, health staff have also been overwhelmed, which might result in a lag in counting/ certifying deaths," Dr. Radhakrishnan said.

(With inputs from Vignesh Radhakrishnan)

Nod for additional fertilizer subsidy

After a high-level meeting on May 19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the subsidy would be increased to ₹1,200 per bag, ensuring that farmers would not face any price rise. That decision was approved by the Cabinet on Wednesday, applicable for the kharif sea-

"This has been done as one-time measure as CO-VID-19 package to reduce the hardships of farmers. As anticipated that international prices may come down in few months, GoI may review the situation accordingly and decide regarding subsidy rates at that point of time," said an official statement.

The Centre has also directed all fertilizer companies to sell all their old stocks of DAP at the old pric-

Uttar Pradesh police book Twitter, journalists

Twitter was named as accused for not taking any steps to remove the tweets in question, said the FIR.

Three persons have been arrested so far, including Parvesh Gurjar in whose house the victim was assaulted, said a senior officer. Police identified the other accused as Kallu, Poli, Adil, Aarif and Mushahid.

The FIR accused the journalists and political activists of deliberately trying to spread discord between Hindus and Muslims and

disrupting public peace. Tweeting a news link of the incident, in which it was reported that the man was beaten up allegedly for not chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' and had his beard chopped, Mr. Gandhi said he did not believe that the true followers of Lord Ram could do such a thing. "Such cruelty is far from humanity and is shameful for both society and religion," he said on

Mr. Adityanath responded saying that Mr. Gandhi should feel ashamed for trying to "spread poison in the society" despite the facts of the case being revealed.

Ms. Naqvi later issued a clarification and said her comment was based on a newspaper report. "I will wait for the investigation to be completed," she tweeted.

India to launch deep ocean mission

With Cabinet nod, it is poised to be among the few countries that can launch underwater missions

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet has approved the long-pending deep ocean mission, which among other things involves developing a submersible vehicle that will allow a crew to plunge 6,000 metres into the ocean and hunt the floor for precious metals. If this works, India will be among a handful of countries able to launch an underwater mission at such depths.

In the works since 2018, the mission is expected to cost ₹4,077 crore over the next five years. The estimated cost for the first phase of three years (2021-24) would be ₹2,823.4 crore. The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional mission.

There are six components to the programme. A manned submersible will be developed to carry three pe-

Look-out

notice for



Deep dive: One component of the mission is tapping deep-sea flora and fauna, including microbes. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

ople to a depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools. An integrated mining system will be also developed for mining polymetallic nodules at those depths in the central Indian Ocean. "The exploration studies of minerals will pave way for

the commercial exploitation in the near future, as and when commercial exploitation code is evolved by the International Seabed Authority, an United Nations organisation," says an accompanying press note.

The second component involves developing Ocean

Climate Change Advisory Services, which entails developing a suite of observations and models to understand and provide future projections of important climate variables on seasonal to decadal time scales.

Microbes, minerals

The next component is searching for deep sea flora and fauna, including microbes, and studying ways to sustainably utilise them. The fourth component is to explore and identify potential sources of hydrothermal minerals that are sources of precious metals formed from the earth's crust along the Indian Ocean mid-oceanic ridges. The fifth component involves studying and preparing detailed engineering design for offshore Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) powered desalination plants.

The final component is

aimed at grooming experts in the field of ocean biology and engineering. This component aims to translate research into industrial applications and product development through onsite business incubator facilities.

The Deep Ocean Mission was in 2019 envisaged as a ₹8,000 crore mission, as *The* Hindu has earlier reported. India has been allotted a site of 75,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN). These are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and co-

Being able to lay hands on a fraction of that reserve can meet the energy requirement of India for the next 100 years, say officials at the Earth Sciences Ministry.

Body brought up from mine in Meghalaya

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The body of one of at least five miners trapped in a rat-hole coal mine in Meghalaya since May 30 has been retrieved, officials

East Jaintia Hills district's Deputy Commissioner Ethelbert Kharmalki said the body detected by a submersible robotic device was retrieved on June 16 afternoon and sent for an autopsy to ascertain the iden-

"The operation to detect and retrieve the other bodies will resume on Thursday," he told *The Hindu*.

District officials said the chances of survival of the other miners were very slim as the electronic devices could detect only two objects deep inside the water-filled pit, one of them turning out to be the body retrieved on Wednesday.

scam accused

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Central Bureau of Investigation has issued lookout circulars against some key accused persons in the scam involving large-scale import of fertilizers and their raw materials by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative Limited (IFF-CO) at highly inflated rates, to prevent their escape

IFFCO Managing Director U.S. Awasthi and Indian Potash Ltd. Managing Director Pravinder Singh Gahlaut are the main accused. The Enforcement Directorate is also conducting a money laundering probe against them, given the allegation that at least ₹685 crore was paid in commissions for supply of fertilizers and raw materials from 2007 to 2014.

Class 12: SC to hold hearing on assessment CBSE set to submit its criteria for assigning marks today, Education Ministry official says Justice Maheshwari had KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

The Supreme Court on Thursday is scheduled to hold a hearing in which the CBSE and the ICSE are expected to place on record the objective criteria by which they intend to assess the performance of Class 12 students whose Board exams have been cancelled due to the pandemic.

On June 3, Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal had informed a Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari that the process for fixing the criteria may The hearing was based on

a petition filed by advocate Mamta Sharma for cancellation of the exams.

Justice Khanwilkar had scheduled the case for June 17, for the Board to place the criteria/objective standards

Pandemic impact: Widespread protests by students led to the cancellation of the Class 12 exams. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR of assessment on record and for the petitioners to address

the court on the issue. The court had, on June 3, said it would prefer to keep the petition pending till the objective criteria were scrutinised.

The court had urged the CBSE and the ICSE authorities to interact on a day-today basis and come up with their respective objective criteria for assessment.

Student concerns "The students have appre-

hensions... Many students want to go outside for further education. This requires an urgent decision. Let the persons concerned interact on a day-to-day basis," Jus-

even asked why the government needed two weeks as objective criteria had been notified last year when the Board exams were similarly cancelled. The ICSE, represented by

advocate J.K. Das, had urged the court to give more time, at least three weeks to prepare the criteria.

"If you want to do it, you can do it overnight... Everything can now be done on video conferencing... Don't bargain for time like this... Do not force us to pass directions. Do it on your own," Khanwilkar addressed Mr. Das.

Ms. Sharma had, in her petition, earlier argued against the deferment of both exams to an unspecified date. She had said students cannot be made to midst of an unprecedented public health crisis.

The CBSE is set to submit its criteria for assigning Class XII marks in the Supreme Court on Thursday, a senior Education Ministry official said. A 12-member panel of stakeholder representatives was set up on June 4, soon after the decision was taken to cancel Class XII Board examinations due to the pandem-

The panel was tasked with creating a formula to assign marks in lieu of the Board examinations.

Two members of the panel earlier told The Hindu that the stakeholder feedback had largely been in favour of using a combination of final examination scores from Class X and XI, and internal marks from Class XII.

(With inputs from Priscilla Jebaraj)

Karnataka legislature tops with 31 sitting days

Study says it passed 61 Bills in 2020

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

The COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown, which affected the functioning of the legislatures of several States last year, had an apparently marginal impact on the working of the Karnataka legislature, if the number of

sitting days is an indication. Compared with its average number of sitting days of 32 from 2016 to 2019, the legislature, which is bicameral, met on 31 days last year, the highest for any State in 2020, according to a study that co-

vered 19 States. The southern State was followed by Rajasthan (29 days) and Himachal Pradesh (25 days). For comparison, Parliament met for 33 days last year.

In 2020, the average number of sitting days for the 19 States was 18, which was 11 less than the fourvear (2016-19) average of 29.

Kerala, which had the distinction of remaining at the top in the four years with an average of 53 days, had only 20 days of sittings of the legislature last year, stated the study report, "Annual Review of State Laws 2020," which was prepared by the PRS Legislative Research ("PRS"), a New Delhi-based think tank.

As regards other southern States, Tamil Nadu had met on 23 days against its four-year average of 35, Andhra Pradesh had met on 12 days (four-year average of 26) and Telangana had met on 17 days (four-year average of 25 days).

After the lockdown, Karnataka's figure of sitting days of the legislature was 10; Telengana 9; Andhra



The Karnataka legislature met for an average number of 32 days from the years 2016 to 2019. ■PTI

Pradesh 7; Tamil Nadu 3 and Kerala 2. However, the highest for any State, post-lockdown, was 11 in Chhattisgarh followed by 10 in Himachal Pradesh. Rajasthan, which was the number two State in terms of the overall number of sitting days, had met only on five days after the lockdown.

As for the number of Bills passed last year, Karnataka again topped the list with 61 Bills, followed by Tamil Nadu (42) and Uttar Pradesh (37). For this purpose, Appropriation Bills were ex-

Among poor performers under this category, Delhi passed only one Bill; West Bengal passed two Bills, and Kerala three Bills. On the duration of time

taken to pass Bills, the previous year saw 59% of the Bills being passed by the legislature of the States on the day of introduction. A further 14% was adopted within a day of being introduced. Only 9% of the Bills was passed more than five days after introduction, some of which were referred to committees for further examina-

In respect of ordinances, data from the 19 States showed that, on average, 14 ordinances were promulgated last year.

In six months, trans ID portal has issued 1,500 certificates

Official says it will be available in 5 regional languages soon

DAMINI NATH NEW DELHI

Just over six months after it was launched, the Centre's national portal for issuing certificates of identity to transgender persons has issued 1,557 certificates as of Wednesday, according to Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry data.

A total of 2,805 applications had been received since the launch of the portal on November 25 last year. Of them, 1,125 came from Andhra Pradesh, 696 from Odisha, 246 from Madhya Pradesh, 225 from Gujarat and 101 from Puducherry, data accessed by The Hindu showed.

Many States, however, had applications in single digit. Assam and Goa saw one application each; Rajasthan and Jammu & Kashmir had two each; and Punjab and Chhattisgarh had three applications each.

Out of the total, 2,327 ap-

The portal is available for those who understand English or Hindi, leaving out a large part of the country

GRACE BANU

plications were found to be valid, out of which 1,557 applicants had been issued certificates and 770 were pending, the data showed.

Among the issues related to the portal raised by trans activists was the language barrier. Grace Banu, a Dalit and

trans rights activist based in Tamil Nadu, said the portal was available for those who understand English or Hindi, leaving out a large part of the country.

Speaking during a webinar organised by Bahujan Economists, a platform for students and researchers in economics from marginalised communities, on Tueswere finding it difficult to access welfare schemes for lack of IDs and the portal wMoreas not accessible to many.

day, she said trans persons

More accessibility

When asked to comment, a senior official of the Ministry said the portal, which was available in English at transgender.dosje.gov.in, would be made available in five regional languages also by July to make it accessible to trans persons from across the country.

The official added that the format of the application could be translated soon.

However, integrating the information into the central database would take longer.

The official said the portal would be made available in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, and one North Eastern language would be included by the end of June or early in July.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Militant killed

on Srinagar

A militant was killed in an

overnight encounter on the outskirts of Srinagar Nowgam Wednesday. A police spokesman said

the encounter with hiding militants at Wagoora in Nowgam area of Srinagar began on Tuesday night. "Two terrorists are believed to be trapped at the encounter site. The security forces cordoned off the area throughout the night," an official said.

As the operation, which was being carried out by the personnel of the police and the CRPF, resumed on Wednesday morning, one militant was found dead in the area.

He was identified as Uzair Ashraf Dar, son of Mohd Ashraf Dar, a resident of Wandina Melhoora in Wachi area of Zainapora belt in south Kashmir's Shopian district. Dar joined militant ranks on January 2, officials said.

'Take calculated risks with professionalism'

Experts speak on digital transformation of law and how students can adapt to it

ARCHANA SUBRAMANIAN

CHENNAI As part of its Career Counselling 2021 series, held along with The Hindu, the Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science (HITS) hosted a webinar on "Digital transformation of law and how students can adapt to

Vincent Comraj, Dean, School of Law, HITS, spoke about the evolution of legal education and how it paved the way for dynamic modern



classes may have now become virtual but it is the continuous assessment and prerecorded materials that are making them emerge as capable students," he said. Yusuf Abdul-Kareem,

Vice-President, Emerging Markets and Business Intelli-

education but allowed us to connect meaningfully. "Universities are able to collaborate not only in integrating courses but also on the research front. Schools are changing the way they are training their teachers and networking. This transformation is giving way for interdisciplinary courses." Despite breakthrough

gence, LSAC, said globalisa-

tion had a major impact on

technologies, the legal sector is taking only baby steps, said Ramanuj Mukherjee, CEO and Co-Founder, Law-Sikho and iPleaders. His advice to students was: "Taking risks is necessary but it should be calculated and done with professionalism. You will be able to see more problems and a lot more solutions with your young minds. Your time is now!" The session ended with

panellists fielding questions from the audience. The session can be viewed at https:// bit.ly/3xq9JE2

'Outreach campaign on COVID-19'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Congress on Wednesday announced its plans for a nationwide outreach campaign to help those affected by COVID-19 and gather data on the infected patients and the deceased.

The outreach was announced on a day when former party chief Rahul Gandhi and Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan exchanged barbs on twitter over vaccination.

Party general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said its president Sonia Gandhi and Pradesh Congress Committee chiefs would also be writing condolence letters to the next of kin of those who passed away due to COVID-19. outreach programme aims to cover three crore households in 30 days," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi had tweeted, "India needs quick and complete vaccination – not BJP's usual brand of lies.

In reply, Dr. Vardhan said, "Signor @RahulGandhi continues to remain lost in a mythical land furthering mythical claims without checking any facts!"

Adhir Ranjan shouted down at PAC meeting

Cong. leader attempted to criticise govt.'s vaccination policy

SOBHANA K. NAIR NEW DELHI

Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairperson and senior Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury was shouted down by BJP and Janata Dal(U) leaders at a meeting held on Wednesday when he attempted to make a political comment criticising the Union government's COVID-19 vaccination policy.

The meeting was called to shortlist the subjects that the committee would work on for 2021-22.

Political comment

When Mr. Chowdhury rose to make the concluding remarks, it was learnt that he read out a statement, a political comment, criticising the Union government's current vaccination policy and overall alleged mismanagement during the pandemic. He wanted the "vaccine production and distribution" to be investigated by the com-

As per the panel's rules, no subject can be deliberated upon till there is a con-

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury

Even before he could read out the second paragraph of the statement, the BJP and the JD(U) started shouting at

The BJP's Bhupendra Yadav, Satyapal Singh and Rajeev Chandrasekhar; the JD (U)'s Rajiv Ranjan Singh; Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader T.R. Baalu; the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)'s Thambi Durai; Rahul Shewale from the Shiv Sena; Bhartruhari Mahtab of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD); and Shakti Singh Gohil from the Congress were the other members.

The BJP and JD(U) members criticised Mr. Chowdhunot the platform to make a political comment, sources said. They also reminded him that the meeting was not being telecast to an audience, so it was an useless attempt to score a political point here.

Mr. Chowdhury said he was only quoting facts that were already in the public domain.

Proceedings 'very ugly' The shouting match went on in front of the senior officials of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). One of the members who attended the meeting described the proceedings as

"very ugly" and completely

"avoidable" Earlier, during the meeting, Mr. Baalu said since public money had been spent on pandemic management and vaccines, it needed to be investigated. There was no objection from anyone.

Because a consensus could not be built, the subject of vaccine production and distribution was not accepted as one of the agendas

'SP spreading the illusion that MLAs are leaving BSP'

They are experts in narrow-minded politics, says Mayawati

OMAR RASHID

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Wednesday accused the Samajwadi Party (SP) of spreading an "illusion" that some of her party MLAs were breaking away to join it. She noted that they had been suspended by her.

The SP was an expert in "narrow-minded politics" of casteism, manipulation and malice, she said.

Ms. Mayawati's comments come a day after around half a dozen suspended BSP MLAs met SP president Akhilesh Yadav amid talks of them joining the party ahead of the 2022 Assembly

MLAs meet Yadav



Mayawati

election. One of them, Aslam Raini, however, said they also had the option of forming their own party if they could muster 12 MLAs.

So far, 11 MLAs from the

BSP have been suspended in the recent past.

Ms. Mayawati said the MLAs had been suspended over allegations of colluding with the SP and an industrialist in order to defeat a Dalit candidate fielded by the BSP in the Rajya Sabha elections. If the SP was honest to these MLAs, it would not keep them hanging, she said. The SP knew that if it took them in, it would face a rebellion, Ms. Mayawati added. MLAs from the SP were restless to join the BSP, she said and alleged that the SP's moves, character and face had always "anti-Dalit".

The BSP had won 19 seats in 2017. However, while on paper it has 16 MLAs, its actual strength is down to just seven due to rebellions and the recent expulsion of senior legislators Lalji Verma and Ram Achal Rajbhar.

'Probe land purchase in Ayodhya'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Congress general secretary Privanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday reiterated the demand for a Supreme Court monitored investigation into allegations of corruption in a land purchase at Ayodhya by the Ram Temple Trust.

The Congress general secretary, who is the party in-charge of Uttar Pradesh, in a Facebook post, said, "Any attempt to find an opportunity in faith is an assault on the faith of crores of Indians" and a "big sin".

Her remarks come just days after Ram Temple Trust general secretary Champat Rai denied all allegations of corruption.

"The Supreme Court should get the entire scam investigated under its supervision," Ms. Vadra said.

sensus among all members. ry, stating that the PAC was of the PAC for this year. 'HC cannot tell probe agency to arrest accused'

It is for the agency to take a call as to when a petitioner is to be arrested: SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

High Courts cannot decide when investigative agencies should arrest an accused, the Supreme Court said in an order, adding that it is entirely the call of the probe officers.

A Bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and V. Ramasubramanian said it was beyond the jurisdiction of a High Court to direct the police to take someone into custody.

"It is for the investigative agency to whom the investi-

the case The High Court trans-

months. gation has been entrusted to take a call as to when the petitioner is to be arrested," the

Supreme Court noted. The court was hearing a petition filed by a man accused in a rape case.

The Karnataka High Court had quashed a trial court order of May 24, granting the accused anticipatory bail in

ferred the case to the Corps of Detectives and ordered the outfit to submit a final report in the case within four

However, the High Court also went on to direct the probe officer to take the accused into custody and produce him before the local

magistrate.

"We find that such direction to take the accused into custody is beyond the jurisdiction of the High Court. Whether an accused is liable to be arrested is based upon the decision of the investigating officer depending upon the material collected during the investigation, which may be conducted in a particular crime," the apex

The Bench left it entirely to the investigator's discretion whether or not to arrest the accused.

Shiv Sena-BJP workers clash in Mumbai

STAFF REPORTER

Workers from the Shiv Sena and the BJP clashed on Wednesday after the BJP held a protest outside the former's headquarters in Mumbai to condemn the Sena's statement on the allegations of a scam in the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya.

The BJP had given a call for a protest march at the Sena Bhavan after the Sena had called for an inquiry into the allegations of a scam in the construction of the Ram temple. An editorial in the Sena mouthpiece, Saamna, had asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene and ensure that there was no "blot of scam" as the construction "was a matter of national pride". The BJP termed the Sena's position

Govt. to frame norms for drones to carry vaccines

Focus is on air safety during BVLOS drone operations

JAGRITI CHANDRA

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has invited expression of interest from drone operators to "develop a delivery model" for using drones to deliver CO-VID-19 vaccines in remote and hard to reach areas in the country.

The tender document lays down the technical specifications required, which include the ability of drones to fly "beyond visual line of sight [BVLOS]".

While government rules now permit only those drone operations that are within the visual range, the ICMR project comes at a time when the Ministry of Civil Aviation has allowed 20 entities to conduct trials for long-range or "beyond vi-

SOUTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

and on behalf of the President

ndia, the Deputy Chief Engineer, Gauge

onversion-II, Southern Railway Tiruchchirappalli invite E-Tender for the following works as per notice inviting tender (NIT) e – Tender Portal

www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderers intending to apply for the tende need to get enrolled in the porta

www.ireps.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted. e-Tender Forn shall be issued free of cost to al

enderers. Both the tenders involves Big

ecurity (Earnest Money Deposit) and a

Security Declaration in lieu of Bi-

the tenderers are requested to submit the

same as prescribed, while submitting th

Tender No. DYCE-GC-II-TPJ-01

1.Gauge Conversion work betwee Tiruturaipundi and Agastiyampal

Section: Supply of welding portion for 60 Kg (90UTS) and 52 Kg(90UTS) rail Joints, welding of rails by Alumino thermit welding technique with single

shot crucible SKV process and supply of combination welding portion (52kg/60kg)- RDSO approved firms

Advertised Value (in Rupees)

Period of Completion (in Months) SIX(6) MONTHS

Tender No. DYCE-GC-II-TPJ-01

2. Gauge Conversion between Tiruvaru and Pattukkottai – Proposed

miscellaneous works as per Tiruvaru

Stage II work and other amenity works for completion of TVR yard.

Advertised Value (in Rupees)

Period of Completion (in Months)

Closing /Opening date @ 15.00 hrs on For further details refer to website porta

vww.ireps.gov.in or contact office of the Deputy Chief Engineer, Gauge

onversion - II, Southern Railway, SE

should only apply.

sual line of sight" drone flights. These experimental

flights start from June 18 and are likely to conclude by October. Based on learnings from these test flights, the government will frame the guidelines for BVLOS operations and they could be finalised by March 31 next year.

"Once the trials are over, different entities will submit their flight data and proof of concept, based on which the draft guidelines will be framed. Our task is to ensure air safety during BVLOS drone operations. These include ensuring that the drones stick to the assigned flight path, maintain robust communication and control link and are able to withstand the vagaries of nature," said Amber Dubey,

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and head of the drones division.

Drone companies said the guidelines would pave the way for drone deliveries in rural, remote and peri-urban settings to begin with, and similar operations in urban areas would take much

Ice boxes

"Vaccines are carried in ice boxes containing dry ice in order to maintain required temperature levels. These boxes contain data loggers, which have 4G network connectivity to relay live recording of temperature through a mobile app to an operator on the ground," said Wing Commander S. Vijay (retired), Chief Operating Officer, Skye Air Mobility.

Executive Director, TIDCO

Cong. leader comes out in support of Pilot

Issue is about honouring party workers who played a key role in the 2018 poll win, says Shekhawat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Amid renewed factionalism in the Rajasthan Congress between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, former Speaker of the Rajasthan Assembly, Depender Singh Shekhawat, has openly come out in support of Mr. Pilot.

Mr. Shekhawat, who has been a five-term MLA, issued a statement saying that the issue in Rajasthan was not about the Cabinet expansion, but about honouring the Congress workers who played a key role in the 2018 Assembly election victory.

His statement comes two days after the Chief Minister's Office issued a statement that Mr. Gehlot would



Turf wars: Raiasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot with former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot last year. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

for the next one or two months as a precaution in view of his condition following his recovery from CO-VID-19. This statement was interpreted as the Chief Minister conveying to the All India Congress Committee

not meet anyone in person (AICC) that he was in no hurry to carry out a Cabinet expansion.

Committee formation

After Mr. Pilot and his supporters rebelled against the Chief Minister last July, the AICC set up a three-member committee to resolve the differences and accommodate Mr. Pilot's supporters in the Cabinet. It was seen as one of the steps to arrive at a compromise. Mr. Shekhawat said,

"These reports of a bargain going on for the number of positions in the Cabinet, boards and corporations are absolutely false. Mr. Pilot and all of us have been striving to seek honour and selfrespect for the grassroots Congress workers".

"Those who valiantly took on the wrath of the BJP governments of Vasundhara Raje and Prime Minister Narendra Modi from 2014 onwards gave their sweat and blood to revive the Congress after it suffered its worst-ever defeat in 2013 – getting

only 21 out of the 200 seats. They need to get adequate recognition and respect now that we are the party in power," he stated.

Mr. Shekhawat said political appointments should be given to "those who have carried the burden of making the Congress win at the polling booths and not to cherry-picked retired bureaucrats and officers whose lovalties are temporary".

He added, "We have full faith in the commitment made by the high command to address all such issues that we have raised".

Mr. Shekhawat's statement is seen as an assertion by the Pilot camp after reports that some of his loyalists may have joined the Gehlot camp.

Paras reaches Patna with Bhan Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A large number of supporters of both the leaders were present at the Patna airport to welcome them. Both leaders headed towards the party office, a few yards away from the airport, without speaking to presspersons.

office amidst heavy police

Visit www.etenders.kerala.gov.in and www.kseb.in Ref: PR/MC1/E289/E-Tender/2021 Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (TIDCO)

KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender ID_2021_KSEB_403245_1, Chinnar Small Hydro Electric Project (24MW/76.45mu) - Phase II - Construction of Power House,

Valve House, Tail Race, Switch Yard and Hydro Mechanical & Electro

(A Government of lamit Nadu Enterprise) 19-A. Rukmani Lakshmipathi Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008. Tender Notice No: TIDCO/Logistics Plan/2021-22 To formulate State Integrated Logistics Plan for Tamil Nadu and also to deploy on-site Project Management Team at State Logistics Cell in TIDCO ender Documents available and www.tntenders.gov.in and ue date for obtaining tende www.tidco.com .06.2021 to 19.07.2021 www.tntenders.gov.in 20.07.2021 at 3:30 PM in the above address As per the Tender Document the Tender inviting authority

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS TIRUPATI, CHITTOOR DIST, A.P. OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, TTD, TIRUPATI AMENDMENT to e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE The due date for bid download end date and last date for bid submission for the beli oned work is postponed as follows Name of the work CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL WORKS 17.06.2021 01.07.202 CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL WORKS (RESIDENTIAL BLOCK NO.1, RESIDENTIAL BLOCK NO.II, SUITE BLOCK, KALYANAMANDAPAM & IMPROVEMENTS TO THE OLD KPS BLOCK) IN TO TOP 2021-22 KARNATAKA HINDU RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS DEPARTMENT FOR THE KARNATAKA STATE CHARDITES AT TRIJINAK STATE CHARITIES AT TIRUMALA Note: The remaining conditions of the tender document holds good. Note: For full details log on to the website https://tender.apeprocure

Road, Trichy - 620 001 ement.gov.in / or Deputy Chief Engineer, Gauge http://www.apeprocurement.gov.in Conversion / II. Tiruchchirappall oc.No.PR4/13931/Adv.No.44/PRO/2021, Dated-16.6.2021 कार्यालय श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल मण्डफिया, जिला-वित्तौडगढ (राज.) क्रमांक/लेखा/श्रीसांमंमं/2021-22/287

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-2021-22/01 निविदाओं के कार्य श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल मण्डफिया के अन्तर्गत भवन, सड़क निर्माण/नवीनीकरण व विद्युत कार्वों हेतु कार्य (कुल कार्य १६) निविदाओं की कुल लागत रू. १६०९.०६ लाख निविदा वेबसाईट पर उपलब्ध होने व दिनांक 16.06.2021 प्रातः 09.00 बजे से उपलब्ध होकर दिनांक 08.07.2021 जमा कराने की दिनांक व समय को सार्थ 06.00 बजे तक जमा करवाई जा सकेगी। प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क निविदा शुल्क एवं धरोहर राशि Tender Fees & Processing Fee - NEFT/RTGS/UPI.(SBI, जमा कराने की प्रक्रिया तथा जमा MANDFIYA A/C. NO. 51079791309 IFSC CODE-कराने की दिनांक SBIN0031432) धरोहर राशि- रूपए 50/- के स्टाम्प पत्र पर घोषणा पत्र निविदा खोलने की दिनांक समय एवं स्थान दिनांक 09.072021 को दोपहर 2.30 बजे, जिला कलेक्ट्रेट परिसर कमरा नं. 04 में खोली जावेगी NIB NO:- SMM2122A0001 SMM2122WSOB00001 SMM2122WSOB00005 SMM2122WSOB00006 SMM2122WSOB00007 SMM2122WSOB00008 SMM2122WSOB00009 SMM2122WSOB00010 SMM2122WSOB00011 SMM2122WSOB00012 मख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी श्री सांवलियाजी मंदिर मण्डल, मण्डफिया, जिला-वित्ताँड्गढ़

'JD(U) always believed in divisive politics'

Efforts were on to break the LJP even when my father was alive, says Chirag

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Chirag Paswan on Wednesday accused his uncle, Pashupati Nath Paras, of betraying him, and the Janata Dal(U) of aiding the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) rebels in crafting the split in the party.

Addressing his first press conference since the coup in the party, he sidestepped questions on the BJP's role, but did obliquely express disappointment that the party did not come to his rescue.

Mr. Paswan said efforts were on to break the LJP even when his father was alive. Asked if he blamed the JD(U), he said, "This is an internal matter of my party. How can I blame anyone if my own party members betray me? But, yes, I cannot



deny the role JD(U) played. They have always believed in divisive politics and engineering defections."

Discontent in the party had been brewing since November 2019, when its founder and Mr. Paswan's father, Ram Vilas Paswan, decided to anoint the son to the post of national president. The internal differences peaked soon after his appointment. Mr. Paswan replaced Mr. Paras, who, for long, held the post of the Bihar State unit chief with his younger cousin, Prince Raj.

The decision to campaign against the JD(U) and contest the polls alone while remaining in the National Democratic Alliance during the 2020 elections was the last straw.

Throughout the poll campaign, Mr. Paswan asserted that he remained in the NDA and loyal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He went on to compare his devotion to Mr. Modi as that of "Hanuman to Lord Ram".

When asked at the Wednesday press conference why he did not seek help from his "Ram" (Mr. Modi), he said, "If Hanuman has to seek help from Ram, then what is the point of Hanuman or Ram.' "I am the son of Ram Vilas

Paswan. If I was not scared to contest alone back then, then I have no reason to be afraid today, too," he added. Mr. Paswan said he and

his mother, Reena Paswan, made all efforts to keep the party and parivaar (family) together. "When I lost my father, at least I had my uncle. But today that he has also deserted me, I truly became an orphan." He accused Mr. Paras of

betraying him when he was suffering from a long bout of typhoid and was debilitated. "They tried to break the party when my father was in the ICU. And, finally, they decided to stab me in the back when I was bedridden," Mr. Paswan added.

Minutes after Lok Janshakti

Party (LJP) president Chirag Paswan held a press meet in Delhi on Wednesday, rebel party leader and his uncle, Pashupati Kumar Paras, reached Patna along with senior party leader Suraj Bhan Singh.

They went into the LJP

deployment. "Tomorrow, there is election for party president," Mr. Paras said.



Probe role of trusts that supplied Remdesivir: HC

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday directed the Maharashra government to examine the roles of MLA Zeeshan Siddique and actor Sonu Sood in supplying Remdesivir through private trusts each had set up. "Was it possible for the public to ascertain the quality or source of these drugs?" the

No bias in Amphotericin **B** allocation, says Centre

court asked.

The Central government told the Bombay High Court on Wednesday that there has been no discrimination in the distribution of Amphotericin to treat Mucormycosis, or black fungus disease, among the States. The hearing will continue on June 18.

Use of drones mandatory for NHAI projects

NEW DELH The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has made use of drones mandatory for video recording of the national highway projects during different stages of development, construction, operation and maintenance. These videos will be saved on NHAI's portal "Data Lake" to assess the progress made.

Daily average of jabs continues to improve

22.8% of adults in the country have got at least one shot

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

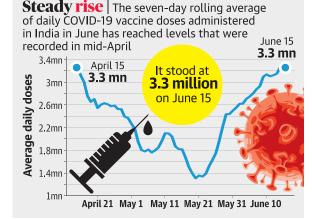
India recorded 64,964 new COVID-19 cases and 2,261 new deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,96,97,263 cases 3,81,863 deaths.

Kerala reported 13,270 new infections, followed by Tamil Nadu (10,448) and Maharashtra (10,107). Maharashtra recorded 1,236 new fatalities, followed by Tamil Nadu (270) and Kerala (147). Maharashtra's fatalities include backlog deaths which were missed in the previous reports.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Lakshadweep, and Ladakh. The data are sourced from the respective States' health bulletins.

Around 19.3 lakh samples were tested in the country on Tuesday (the results for which were made available on Wednesday).

About 28 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Wednesday, which is 11.26 lakh doses fewer than what was recorded in the previous 24



hours. It is also 24,362 doses more than what was recorded during the corresponding period a week ago. The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in the country continues to increase. It stood at 31.14 lakh on June 15, which is more than the 26.96 lakh recorded a week before (June 8).

India is also administering the highest number of average doses in the world, followed by the United States (1.14 million), Japan (1 million), and Brazil (0.92

About 22.8% of adults in India, 43% of those aged above 45, and 46.6% of people aged above 60, have been administered at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, until 8 p.m. on Wednesday. While 15.7% of the country's population has received at least one dose, only 3.5% are fully vaccinated. The figures are based on the estimated population in

the highest number of 7-day average daily deaths in the world with 3,721 deaths recorded on June 15. The two other countries with the highest fatality count after India were Brazil (1,986) and Colombia (577). Nearly 34% of the world's new deaths were recorded in India on

India continued to record

'Vaccine interval based on studies'

Insights from tracking platform will be used for any new decisions: N.K. Arora

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The increase in gap between two doses of Covishield is based on scientific evidence, N.K. Arora, Chairman of the COVID-19 Working Group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), has said.

In a release issued by the Union Health Ministry on his interview with DD News, Dr. Arora explained that the decision to increase the gap between two Covishield doses from four-six weeks to 12-16 weeks lay in the fundamental scientific reason regarding the behaviour of adenovector vaccines.

"In the last week of April 2021, data released by Public Health England, the United Kingdom's executive agency of the Department of Health, showed that vaccine efficacy varied between 65% to 88% when the interval is 12 weeks. This was the basis on which they overcame their epidemic outbreak due to the Alpha variant," he noted.

This issue was discussed and with no dissenting notes, the recommendation was that the vaccine interval had to be 12 to 16 weeks. The earlier decision of four weeks was based upon the bridging trial data available then.

Dr. Arora pointed to how emerging evidence and reports regarding the efficacy



Precious drops: At present, the mandated interval between two doses of Covishield is 12 to 16 weeks. • B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

of partial vs full immunisation were being considered by the NTAGI.

"Two or three days after we took the decision to increase the dosage interval, there were reports from the U.K. that a single dose of AstraZeneca vaccine gives only 33% protection and two doses give about 60% protection; discussion has been going on since mid-May whether India should revert to four or eight weeks," he observed.

"When the NTAGI took this decision, we also decided that India will establish a vaccine tracking platform to assess not only the impact of the vaccination programme, but also the type of vaccine and interval between doses, and what happens when someone is fully / partially immunised. This is very important in India, since around 17-18 crore people have received only one dose, while around 4 crore people have received two doses," he stated.

Dr. Arora referred to a studv bv PGI Chandigarh that compared the effectiveness of partial vs full immnunisation. "A PGI Chandigarh study very clearly shows that vaccine effectiveness was 75% for both partially immunised and fully immunised. So at least in the short run, effectiveness was similar whether you are partially or fully vaccinated. This was in relation to the Alpha variant which had swept Punjab, northern India and came to

Results from a study by CMC Vellore were similar, he pointed out. "An important study by CMC Vellore, Tamil Nadu, which covers most of the current wave India experienced in April and May, 2021, shows that if somebody is partially immunised, vaccine effectiveness of Covishield is 61%, and with two doses, the effectiveness is 65% and there is very little difference, especially since there is some degree of uncertainty involved in calculations."

Two other studies were coming up from two different organisations within Delhi, Dr. Arora said.

"And both these studies show that breakthrough infection with one dose is around 4%, and around 5% with two doses, basically hardly any difference. And the other study shows 1.5% -2% breakthrough infections," he said.

When asked about any proposal to reduce the Covishield gap, he said a decision would be taken scientifically. "COVID-19 and the vaccination are very dynamic. Tomorrow, if the vaccine platform tells us that a narrower interval is better for our people, even if the benefit is 5% - 10%, the committee will take the decision on the basis of merit and its wisdom.'

'No calf serum

final product

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Union Health Ministry

on Wednesday refuted

some social media posts on

the composition of Covax-

in, where it has been sug-

gested that it contains new-

born calf serum. It said that

newborn calf serum was

in Covaxin

Cabinet approval for OFB corporatisation

'No change in staff service conditions'

DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI

Addressing a long pending reform, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a plan to corporatise the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), which has 41 factories, into seven fully government owned corporate entities on the lines of Defence Public Undertakings

Once implemented, the OFB, the establishment of which was accepted by the British in 1775, will cease to

'Historic decision'

"This is a historic decision and there should be no concern on the part of the employees. There will be no change in service conditions of the employees which is also mentioned in the Cabinet note," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, assuring the 70,000 employees who had expressed concern over the proposed move.

It is a major decision in terms of national security and also make the country self-sufficient in defence manufacturing as repeatedly emphasised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mr. Singh stated.

Improving efficiency

This move would allow these companies autonomy as well as help improve accountability and efficiency. a defence official said. "This restructuring is aimed at transforming the ordnance factories into productive and profitable assets, deepening specialisation in the product range, enhancing competitiveness, improving quality and achieving cost efficiency," the official said.

Currently, the Kolkata headquartered OFB functions as a department under the Department of Defence Production.

All employees of the OFB (Group A, B and C) belonging to the production units would be transferred to the corporate entities on deemed deputation initially for a period of two years without altering their service conditions as Central government employees, the official explained. The pension liabilities of the retirees and existing employees would continue to be borne by the government.

Inland Vessels Bill receives Cabinet nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday gave the nod to the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, which will replace the Inland Vessels Act, 1917.

"Total 4,000 km inland waterways have been operationalised. The Bill will regulate safety, security and registration of inland vessels," tweeted Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

A key feature of the Bill is a unified law for the entire country, instead of separate rules framed by the States. The certificate of registration granted under the proposed law will be deemed to be valid in all States and Union Territories, and there will be no need to seek separate permissions from the States

The Bill provides for a central data base for recording the details of vessel, vessel registration, crew on an electronic portal. It requires all mechanically propelled vessels to be mandatorily registered. All non-mechanically propelled vessels will also have to be enrolled at district, taluk or panchayat or village level.

Rajnath calls for open Indo-Pacific

India supports freedom of navigation in these international waterways, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

India hoped that the code of conduct for South China Sea (SCS), being negotiated between the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, would lead to outcomes in line with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and did not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of nations that were not party to these discussions, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Wednesday.

"Maritime security challenges are another area of concern to India. The sea lanes of communication are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development



Maritime focus: Rajnath Singh addressing the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus via video conference. •PTI

tracted attention in the region and beyond," he said at the 8th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Plus Meeting. "India supports freedom of naviga-

of the Indo-Pacific region. In tion, over flight, and unimthis regard, developments in peded commerce in these inthe South China Sea have atternational waterways," he pointed out.

China and ASEAN have set a target of end-2021 to finalise the code of conduct but recently officials had said it

then. Mr. Singh reiterated India's call for a free, open and inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific, based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws. "Premised upon the centrality of ASEAN, India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as important platforms for implementation of our shared vision for the Indo-Pacific," Mr. Singh observed.

may not be concluded by

He expressed concern at cyberthreats like ransomware and cryptocurrency thefts and called for a multistakeholder approach, guided by democratic values.

used only for the preparation/growth of vero cells. The final vaccine did not contain newborn calf serum, it asserted. "Different kinds of bovine and other animal serum are standard enrichment ingredient used globally for vero cell growth. This technique has been used for decades in

polio, rabies, and influenza

vaccines," said the release. Vero cells were washed with water and chemicals (also technically known as buffer) many times to make them free from newborn calf serum. Thereafter, they were infected with coronavirus for viral growth. Thereafter, the grown virus was also killed (inactivated). This killed virus was then used to make the final vaccine and in the final vaccine formulation, no calf serum was used, the Ministry noted.

Four more arraigned in Mehul Choksi case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Four more persons, including two officials of the Punjab National Bank, have been arraigned by the CBI along with 18 others in a supplementary chargesheet filed recently in a case against fug-

itive Mehul Choksi and others for allegedly cheating the bank of ₹7,080.86 crore.

The new accused persons are an assistant general manager of the bank Sanjay Prasad and single-window operator Sagar Swant; Dhanesh Sheth, director of Gili India

Limited and Nakshatra eet submitted in May 2018. Brand Limited, and Sunil Verma, international head of Mr. Choksi's Gitanjali Group of companies.

The other 18 individuals/ entities, including Mr. Chokcused in the first chargesh- disappearance of evidence.

In the latest chargesheet, the CBI has invoked the IPC and the Prevention of Corruption Act provisions related to the offences of criminal conspiracy, cheating, criminal si, were also named as ac- breach of trust and causing

THE CROSSWORD + 13276 Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers into our online grids.

14 Shocked a girl, her arm struck, throbbing basically (6)



15 Dynasty of father's lavish indiscriminately, losing dollars (7)

Display keystrokes of genius.

@ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

18 King perhaps providing franc to university (7) 20 Sharp as tack primarily, you reportedly emptied treasure (6)

22 Wolfram, core of it is used by plant life (5) 24 A bridge perhaps at Cuba closed as Ross passed (9) 25 Got alibi? Because at first they can't be omitted (9)

26 Sometimes used while cooking; pan, RO? Perhaps (5) 27 A catch held at the end, Victor dropped in match getting tense (6)

DOWN

2 A pistol Ruby returned clipped off finger tip when held by radical (9)

3 Outrageous isolation, no law left or act to make it illegal (15) 4 A small vessel to wrench primarily, big round and tapered at the top

6 Remarkable race, perhaps, dashes in the middle; boat and fish (5,5,5) 7 A small studio perhaps gets popular director on to 4th & 5th movie (5)

8 Regular myth, rich are spoilt (8) **9** Makes sense for a date to cook spud (4,2)

16 Perhaps Norton is against six; primarily routing everyone (9)

17 A very loud lecture outside on platform (8) 19 A beauty treatment for female? A govt agency launches first (6)

20 Doctor has boil to get rid of (7)

23 Cycle is at gate for a short while (5)

SUDOKU



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FAITH

Govindaraja seen as Rama

In his Perumal Thirumozhi, Kulasekhara Azhvar praises the Govindaraja shrine in Chidambaram as Thillai Thiruchitrakootam, said Akkarakkani Srinidhi in a discourse. He describes Ayodhya as a city surrounded by huge walls. Rama is born in the Surya kula, and He shines brightly in this illustrious family. He describes Rama as a great warrior - 'veeran.' Rama's valour is evident in the Ramayana, and Vedanta Desika who wrote Raghuveera Gadyam, praises Rama with

the words, 'Jaya, jaya Mahaveera.' Kulasekhara Azhvar describes Rama's eyes being redhued, like lotuses. Rama looks like a dark cloud. Clouds can sometimes disappoint us, for when we expect them to give us rain, they move away. But the cloud that is Rama does not let us down. Parasara Bhatta, in his Rangaraja Stava, a work in praise of Lord Rangaraja of Srirangam, says Lord Rangaraja resembles a rain-bearing cloud. So dark in colour is He. The ornaments He is adorned with give out a variety of colours, so that it seems as if one is beholding a rainbow.

Where there are rain-giving clouds, there is lightning. What is the lightning in the case of this cloud known as Rangaraja? It is the Goddess residing in His chest who shines like lightning. The Lord of Thillai Thiruchitrakootam is described as 'Thani mudalvan' - the unparalleled, unequalled, unsurpassed One, the Supreme One, with all auspicious qualities. Kulasekhara Azhvar sings of Rama's killing of Tataka and His protection of Viswamitra's yaga. It is the same Rama who accomplished all this who resides in Thillai Thiruchitrakootam, Rama who bent Siya's bow and married the large eyed Sita resides in Thillai Thiruchitrakootam. The feet of those who have surrendered to Him, serve as Kulasekhara Azhvar's refuge.

(set by Afterdark)

ACROSS

- 1 Give up, at one vacate bed that is being occupied by Tom (8) 5 Fruit, cherry in the core is more foul (6)

- 12 Note in second book, we had on description of exoskeleton (9) 13 Held by inappropriate ethics; they are in the mouth (5)

10 Perhaps an Iranian, is nowhere near by metric system (5) 11 Married? Yes and sad by middle of the week, perhaps (9)

1 Change result by replacing novice finally with adult (6)

28 Loses due to nervousness, hope sucks almost; terrible (6,2)

21 An agreement perhaps is pure counter – play on words, if not unsatisfactory (6)

A window into the world

(Clockwise from right) A work by Karman Verdi; Mads Nissen's photograph of 85-year-old Rosa Luzia Lunarid being embraced by nurse Adriana Silva da Costa; the team behind CAM; a click by Andrea Grimaudo; and an interpretation of Salvador Dali's Persistence of Memory by Hayati Evren • covid ART



miles away

Covid Art Museum, a global digital collective, has been documenting the pandemic through artworks and photographs that embody hope, fear and courage

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

Even as COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc, artists are finding creative ways to express the myriad moods associated with the pandemic and lockdowns.

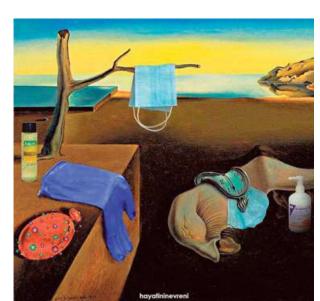
The Covid Art Museum (CAM), perhaps the first of its kind in the world, features art conveying hope, anxiety, courage, fear, boredom, struggle, solidarity, loneliness, and, even the feeling of 'languishing.'

Created by Emma Calvo, José Guerrero and Irene Llorca, three friends, advertising executives and art enthusiasts in Barcelona, Spain, digital museum, launched on March 19, 2020 features art from all over the world. Centred on the pandemic, it includes photographs, animation, installations, illustrations, graphic art and cartoons.

Common elements such as masks, sanitisers, gloves, methods of social distancing and, of course, the Coronavirus itself, can be found in many of the pieces.

Edited excerpts from an email interview with José

Why did you create this



digital museum?

• We created the museum because we were locked up at home like everyone else, in Spain. It was a strange and worrying situation, but people were doing amazing things such as concerts on balconies, yoga classes on rooftops and streaming choreographies.

One of these activities was also art that talked about the pandemic. We thought it would be a good idea to bring all these works together in one museum so they

wouldn't fall into oblivion. That's how we created The CAM on Instagram from the sofa of our homes.

selected?

technique.

blished.

visit.

• The main criteria is that

they should be related to the

current moment: the crisis

of COVID-19. That's why we

don't close ourselves to any

whether they are illustra-

tions, photographs, paint-

ings, poems, drawings, ani-

mations, videos.... From all

the works received or found,

a selection of those that best

reflect the situation, is pu-

Quality and originality are

also important to us. Even if

it is digital right now, we are

still a museum. We want to

keep the standards of a mu-

seum you would physically

We collect all kinds of art

How many works are there now?

• There are more than 840 publications at the time of this interview. Every day we upload new works. They come from all over the world - from Brazil, USA and Spain to India, Indonesia and

How are the artworks



• There are several published works that have come from India and they are very interesting projects. They bring their particular vision of the situation, because despite the similarities, each part of the world has experienced the pandemic in a different way.

How do you think art has helped people cope with social isolation?

• The Internet connects people from all over the world regardless of distance, and that is very useful in the context of crisis, pandemic and quarantine.

Being stuck at home, under such circumstances, one can feel depressed, worried and very lonely.

That's why we thought it was a good idea to create a museum that would show what was happening at the

Then, the public would see that millions of people were living and feeling the same thing. In times of crisis, it is essential to feel accompanied.

With the museum, people felt integrated into a community where they could participate and contribute their own works or simply write their thoughts in the comments section.

Portrait of an artist in quarantine

Art director Bala Govind Kumar's series, Quarantine Days, documents his days of living in isolation





ANASUYA MENON

When Bala Govind Kumar tested positive for COVID-19 on April 26 in Chennai, he spent 14 days in isolation at his rented apartment, feeling lonely and listless. Through these days, he used his iPad to create a visual diary of his emotions through art.

The series of six paintings, Quarantine Days, is an exploration of the concept of self. "All I could see was myself. Why not create self-portraits, I thought," says Bala, whose style is greatly inspired by Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. He recorded a video of himself engaged in various daily chores and made a montage of the stills for his first work titled Rooted. It shows versions of himself staring out the window and at the ceiling, eating, and looking at his phone.

For the 25-year-old self-taught artist and architect hailing from Tirunelveli and working as an art director in Chennai, this was a healing process. "Art is my natural way of selfexpression. And it made my days of isolation easier to bear."

Bala chose to work digitally as it did not require him to go out to procure art supplies. "In another time, 1 would have preferred

acrylic or oil paint. But now I realise digital art gives you a lot of artistic freedom; it is easy to pursue even in extraordinary circumstances such as this."

The works are a meeting place of Bala's emotions and his physical reality. He describes each stage of the disease and his mental state – breathing difficulty, loss of taste and smell and fatigue.

"I could not work every day. On the days I felt better, I would create two works," he says.

After six days indoors, he went up to the terrace, spending time with plants which rejuvenated his mind and he captured that, in one of the works. Bala explains how art was not just restorative but also gave him a glimpse into the philosophical. "We are bound by time. Whatever we may think we are, we cannot run from this."

Bala plans to exhibit his works when the COVID-19 situation improves.

Currently in Tirunelveli, he is working on a series, Misplaced Goat, which is a quest to rediscover his hometown through its rich tradition of folk art.

> High fives and smiles Ashok Kurmi doing his rounds in

Mumbai • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ok revisits every locality after two weeks. He first sanitises the streets, the houses, doors and windows and then calls out to the kids, asking them to wear their masks be-

fore making an appearance. "Now

they eagerly wait for me to visit them," says Ashok, adding that he

is pleased to see them following his

advice. It takes him around six

Bala Govind's works are for sale @kalaa_shala on Instagram.

Talking to myself Bala Govind Kumar says his artworks proved restorative SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A hundred ways to say thank you

The Gratitude Project shows appreciation to frontline workers through a shared online journal

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

"It's one thing to be grateful, it's another to express it in ways that are deeper than just the words 'thank you'," says Maya Patel, one of the founders of Mumbai-based Gratitude Project (GP) that was started in the last week of May. "We wanted the wall to be a space of that expression of how people's lives have been touched in positive

Over the last year, there have been many projects offering thanks to frontline workers in healthcare, agrarian community, last mile delivery, law enforcement, sanitation, security, and media. Some of them write letters, some raise funds and others pitch in to buy them essentials. Maya is also glad the project comes at a

time when many people feel demoralised by the state of the nation while the rest of the world gets back to normal. While social media has certainly become a black hole of rants, they

wanted GP to be a ray of light amid the noise.

Those working on the project are Maansi Vohra, Hriyanka Shah, Mili Shivika Sanwalka, Poonglia, Latisha Shah, Alekha Advani and Maya, all of whom worked with the YouthFeed India campaign over the

pandemic. Through their work, the girls were able to see which communities were not given as much thanks as they deserved, and they conceptualised a gratitude hub.

The website, designed by SH-One with graphics by Ravina Puri, is minimalist so posts have more impact.

Maya adds that the team wanted people to be creative and explore beyond a 'normal thank you'. A skim of the website wall



Good messagingThe TGP team; (below) some of the posts of gratitude on the site SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

reveals different mediums such as photos, poetry and drawings - many in Hindi, Marathi and Punjabi.

"More than the messages we have received, it is the responses," says Maya. "As an initiative, our mission is to get as many posts up as possible, but to also get this in

> front of as many frontline workers as possible. We've been contactdelivery executives and doctors who tell us, 'this made my day, I've had so many days of darkness'. That is our fuel to keep

> > Maya explains GP's core value: "If we couldn't show the frontline workers the gratitude they have received,

wouldn't have proceeded. We want people to know this whole concept is larger than it looks onscreen, in terms of impact."

going."

With the number of posts shooting past 500, including those written by Athiya Shetty and Soha Ali Khan, GP may be growing but Maya and her team want gratitude to grow more. "Our country has shown us there is humanity left and that people are happy to just help!"



The red-nosed superhero

This clown walks the streets of Mumbai, sanitising localities and spreading the word about hygiene and pandemic awareness among kids

PRIYADARSHINI PAITANDY

Spiderman is often at Dharavi. Santa Claus, too, is a frequent visitor. Only, last Christmas he doled out masks instead of candy. All thanks to 37-year-old Ashok Kurmi, a benevolent shape shifter who changes his getup at the behest of children living in the Mumbai slums.

An employee with a pharmaceutical company, Ashok took it upon himself to spread not only joy, but also the message of hygiene, social distancing and the importance of masks, when the pandemic took the country in its grip last March.

"I was working from home. At about 11.30 am I would set out to various parts of Mumbai, sanitising localities and spreading awareness on COVID-19. I want to help people living in the slums, and the homeless who live under flyovers," he

Initially, Ashok wore a PPE kit but that made people, especially kids, nervous. They assumed that he was in their neighbourhood to take away a COVID patient. "I realised that if I wanted to communicate with kids, I should dress in a way that connects with them. So, I started visiting in a Mickey Mouse costume. I got a good response and could teach them about the virus and how to stay safe," he says.

Eventually, the children started suggesting different characters for Ashok to dress up as. Doraemon, Santa and Spiderman followed in quick succession. He changes his look every 25 days.

Now, if you spot a clown armed with a sanitisation device on the streets of Mumbai, be sure to give him a pat on the back. "That is my current avatar," Ashok says over a call from Mumbai.

Being a clown does not come cheap. He bought a sanitisation machine for ₹9,000 with his own savings. "The sodium hypochlorite so-

lution that I use, costs around ₹1,300 for five litres. That quantity is easily used up in one area," he says.

So far, Ashok says he has sanitised around two lakh houses in the city. Right from conveyance and the masks he distributes to his costume and the charts he makes for the kids, all expenses are borne by him. It amounts to roughly ₹15,000 a month. Ash-

hours to complete his work in a locality. Sometimes, language can be a barrier, he says: "In some areas the

kids understand Hindi or Marathi and in some places they understand Tamil. I plan ahead and make charts in those languages, with a little help from the Internet." Ashok also takes the time to

draw boxes at bus stands and taxi stands so people can maintain social distancing. He says the police are happy with his work, and even suggest which area to head to next.

Old habits

"Getting dressed up as a character is not new to me," says Ashok, "Every December, I used to distribute gifts to children in the waiting area of Sion hospital and Tata Memorial Hospital as Santa Claus," he says. This new role is an offshoot of that.

His family comprising his parents, wife and twoand-a-half year old

> daughter were reluctant to let him out initially. "But I explained to them that this needs to be done. People on

don't really have an idea of the risks and how to stay and need

help. Now, my family is supportive," he says, adding that they help him with his one hour make-up routine, as he starts getting into the character of a

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

A year-and-a-half leading up to the England tour of 2018 was hard on Ravindra Jadeja. It had been over eight years since he made his international debut. His potential as an all-rounder was still in question. He wasn't a regular in the side, especially in the limited-overs format. Between January 2017 to June 2018, Jadeja was not a part of four Tests, 25 ODIs and 22 T20s that India played.

"It was one of the hardest phases of my life, I used to be awake till early morning thinking about the game. I was constantly contemplating on how to overcome my hurdles, boost my confidence, and up my game," says Jadeja aka Jaddu from Southampton, where he is preparing for India's World Test Championship (WTC) final against the world's top-ranked side, New Zealand.

Jadeja is now an indispensable member of the team. His unbeaten 86 off 156 balls in the Oval Test replenished 2018 confidence.

Impressive performances followed across formats. Sample: a first Test century against the West Indies in 2018, a 59-ball 77 in the 2019 World Cup semi-final (albeit in a losing cause), and a 28-ball 62 in the Indian Premier League this

The Oval Test knock, according to Jadeja, was a marker of his resurgence. He ceased having sleepless nights after that. But that innings was not a magic pill. "I worked hard on building my health and my mind," he tells us in an interview organised by AS-ICS, the sports brand he is associated with.

Jadeja explains how he takes care of his mental health: "I stick

to my routine that includes waking up early, following my diet, working out, spending time with my family, and most importantly

Whenever I get some break, I visit my farmhouse and spend time with my horses as they have become an imminent part of my life.



with my daughter. She is my stress buster. Whenever I get a break, I visit my farmhouse and spend time with my horses as they have become a part of my life and have been there through all the highs and lows. My workout, especially running, is a vital part of my daily routine. I combine it with strength training and stretching to keep myself flexible."

The last couple of years has been challenging for sportspersons across the world, having to be in bio-bubbles. "You can't even meet your teammates, sometimes," he says. This is why he is grateful for having his family with

"It's a big advantage to have them with you on tours. You can spend time with them when you have nothing to do. When there aren't many restrictions, you can even go for a walk and explore new places with them," he adds.

With the WTC final set to begin on Friday, the focus, however, is back on cricket. Jadeja, due to an injury, missed the historic Gabba Test in Australia earlier this year and the home series against England that followed. So, he is raring to be a part of what promises to be another special match against New Zealand.

Playing it my way Ravindra Jadeja - SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

How to go green

Sustainability consultant Shriya Suriyanarayanan's podcast, Footprint, is a beginner's guide to sustainable living in India



ANASUYA MENON

Shriya Suriyanarayanan came to a point in life when she saw plastic waste all around her. Greatly bothered by this, Chennai-based Shriya, an Engineering graduate from NIT Tiruchi, spent over two years following people and initiatives towards managing plastic waste and sustainability in India.

Today, Shriya is a sustainability consultant. Her podcast, Footprint - A Guide to Sustainable Living, acts as a beginner's guide to sustainability and has built a listenership of over 40,000 since July 2020.

Season One, which contains 10 episodes, talks about sustainable choices in different aspects of life. From growing one's own food and zero-waste living to home care, selfcare and a career in climate, Shriya's panel of experts and practitioners offer multiple sustainable solutions.

Hosted on Aawaz.com, the podcast has featured Anuradha Kedia, co-founder of the Better Home Cleaners which deals with environment-safe home cleaning products; Abhay Rangan, founder of a plant-based dairy company Goodmylk; and Anshuman Bapna, founder and CEO of Terra.do, an online school working to solve climate change, to name a few.

If there is going to be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans by 2050, it is about time we did something about it, she says in one of the episodes. "Legislative changes around climate change and plastic waste are expected to be implemented over the next few years. There is

Right on target Shriya's podcast is aimed at young, urban Indians and families • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

massive progress and innovation being led by startups, NGOs and individual contributors across India. But we still need to talk about this constantly because consumer demand will drive Government and private sector action."

Consumer behaviour is something she is optimistic about: "According to Google Trends, search interest in 'sustainable lifestyles' has increased over six times in the past year. This means there are people who want to lead a sustainable life, but are not sure how. When I was doing my research on sustainable solutions, I found a wealth of information available, but it was scattered." The extra time she had during lockdown in 2020 was when she "decided to channel that into something productive and bring all this information together as one comprehensive guide".

In the right context

The podcast

listenership of

since July 2020

over 40,000

has built a

Shriya adds that her focus is on the Indian consumer and Indian products. "Indians inherently lead more sustainable lives due to our cultural practices and socio-economic conditions. According to a recent report, India's per capita plastic consumption is half the global average. But we need to build on that with solutions that are viable in the Indian context. These podcasts help young, urban Indians and families take the next step towards alternative solu-.....

tions," she states. While Season One is from an individual's point of view – on how to lead a sustainable life, Shriya is considering making Season Two from a business perspective. "It could cover issues such as sustainability within larger brands, how

does one judge sustainability rela-

tively, ethical and fair manufacturing, trade practices and the like," she muses.

Shriya admits that a sustainable lifestyle is not a pocket-friendly decision. She explains, however, "It is more expensive today because demand is less and the raw materials costlier. We hope to reach economies of scale soon, so it becomes affordable. But we need to remember that living more sustainably doesn't mean buying a lot of sustainable products. If you just buy less and use what you have for longer, that's a great start. Minimalism and sustainability are very closely linked."



Conscious shoppers, designers and the creatively inclined, can source pre-used silk and cotton saris, dupattas and more from Гhe Rewrap Companv



Draped in memories Deepa and Mansi are full of ideas for how old fabrics can be reused • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

fabric and maintenance," says Deepa.

Mansi adds, "Some of our customers recycle saris into curtains or cushion covers. Silk is made into handbags or sari covers. People seem to have the time and are showing great interest in home decor now."

At The Rewrap Company, one can also buy yardage of upholstery fabrics, sourced from the manufacturer directly. "Apart from being useful for making table runners, shopping bags and cushion covers, we use these to make covers for the saris we sell," Mansi says.

The Rewrap Company has stocked over 150 products, and prices start from ₹150. Currently, they operate through the Instagram handle @therewrapcompany, but plan to launch a website soon.

"We want to be in the fabric space and stay away from pre-loved stitched garments. We cater to conscious buyers. Going forward we plan to offer consultancy in preserving saris that have antique or sentimental value. We can help preserve them by repurposing them in various ways. For example, a silk sari can be framed and mounted on the wall or even used as a partition. A cotton sari on the other hand, will be ideal for use as a blanket or curtain. Wedding veshtis/dhotis can be made into sari covers," says Deepa."

reimagined

CHITRADEEPA ANANTHARAM

When friends and neighbours Deepa Balaji and Mansi Karra had to end their respective careers last year due to the pandemic, they decided to get together and focus on sourcing and selling preloved, unstitched fabric.

"My mother has been my biggest influence when it comes to the idea of sustainability. I grew up wearing my elder sister's outfits, which were later used by my cousin," says Mansi. "As an event planner, I observed that most brides use their expensive bridal wear such as sari or ghagra, just once. These special outfits could be used multiple times if shared with friends or cousins. I also realised that unstitched garments such

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13417

as sari or dupatta or stole can be recycled and repurposed imaginatively in many ways," she adds. In April, the duo launched The Rew-

rap Company, an online shop to buy and sell pre-loved, gently used fabric. "We carefully choose the products we sell by assessing the garment for any stains or damage, sanitising it, and labelling it. If required we dry clean the sari. A significant number of saris in our collection are unused with the price tag intact," says Deepa, who shut her travel company which she ran for 23 years when the pandemic began.

"The initial week was chaotic with our bedrooms filled with stuff we received from everyone. We segregated the collection based on quality, design,

Across

(anag) (9)

(4,2)

(anag) (8)

Down

8 10 cents (4)

9 Sofa bed (3-3-2)

10 Bring into use (6)

11 Render harmless (6)

13 Exhausted the supply

16 Make sense of — trounces

18 South African currency

3 Joined together — in duet

15 Vulgarised art (6)

19 One aims to score

between them (9)

1 Traduced (8) 2 A little rough (6)

5 Deceitful – hedonists

- (anag) (6) 4 Scandinavian capital (4) 6 Amusement – temporary redirection (9)
- 7 Severe storm (9) 12 Soak (8)
- 14 Overweight (6) **15** Continue (4,2)
- 17 Try ammunition (4)

The solution will appear on June 24, 2021. Solution No. 13416

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Been there, done that



Alien invasion Chris Pratt in a scene from The Tomorrow War • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Chris Pratt on playing a Former Delta Force Operator going to the future in 2051 in *The* Tomorrow War, to fight deadly aliens and save the planet for his daughter

MINI ANTHIKAD CHHIBBER

In The Tomorrow War, an upcoming military science fiction film, Chris Pratt plays Dan Forester, a Former Delta Force Operator going to the future, 2051, to fight deadly aliens and save the planet for his daughter, Muri (Ryan Kiera Armstrong). The film directed by Chris McKay, has some hairraising action sequences.

Talking of the biggest adrenalin rush at a virtual press conference, the Jurassic World actor said, "There was so much to choose from. Off the top of my head, there is a great sequence when we make the jump to 2051. There is this transition where we fall from the sky in Miami to land in a pool. There was some serious water work. We got to jump off of this high dive that we built out of a fork lift into the water. The camera followed us down and there were stunt people jumping down and landing on top of you forcing you under water. That sequence probably took two or three days. You are trying to get smashed into the ground, come up and struggle into a close up underwater. It was a lot of fun."

Unlike the real world, in The Tomorrow War, it is the older people who are sent to fight the aliens. "Everyone who goes forward into the future is over the age of 30 and eve-

ryone who comes back to train us is under 30 because you can't live in both timelines at the same time. They are drafting a crop of people who are going to be dead in 2051. You are dealing with people who are making life decisions based not on the life that they could lead, but rather the world that they are leaving for their children. My character, Dan is doing this to protect his family. It is different to think about people being drafted away from their children rather than children being drafted away from their parents."

The SFX-heavy film called for a great deal of green screen work. Admitting it is liberating not having to work with a prop, Pratt says, "You basically force the animators to make your choices work. If you have a real tentacle, you are limited to how you can move it, but if you have a fake one, you

can move it anyway you like. You can imagine an animator pulling their hair out saying, 'Oh, great. I have to make that work somehow'.'

Drolly elaborating, Pratt "I have says, fair had my

ing that is not there is particularly embarrassing, Pratt says. "You put your trust in the director that they will not allow it to become a viral YouTube sensation." The Tomorrow premieres on July 2, 2021 on Amazon Prime Video.

share of running from and fighting

against creatures that aren't there.

You could have a whole podcast epi-

sode about the way to achieve it. It is a combination of various things you are

going to look at, whether it is a tennis

ball or the guy named Troy who is se-

ven feet tall and very scary. You look

at Troy and think, 'That is certainly a

person who could lift me up and

break me in half.' He becomes signifi-

cantly less scary when he is put in a

Acting opposite or fighting someth-

giant grey leotard."

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Biden, Putin hold 'great power' summit

The leaders agree to return their Ambassadors to their posts in an attempt to lower tensions

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE GENEVA

U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin concluded their summit meeting on Wednesday between what the American leader called "two great powers," wrapping up more quickly than expected.

The pair's second sitdown, with aides present on both sides, lasted about 65

That session was to be divided into two parts with a break in between, but concluded without a second

The two sides had said they expected to meet for four to five hours but spent less than three hours together, including an opening meeting with just the two Presidents and each one's top foreign aide.

In a press conference held after the summit, Mr. Putin said they have agreed to return their Ambassadors to their posts in a bid to lower tensions. Russia's Ambassador to the U.S., Anatoly Antonov, was recalled from Wash-



Face to face: U.S. President Joe Biden, left, with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, at Villa La Grange in Geneva on Wednesday. • AP

ington about three months ago after Biden described Mr. Putin as a killer. U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Sullivan left Moscow almost two months ago after Russia suggested he return to Washington for consultations.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Putin plunged into the face-to-face talks on Wednesday at a lush lakeside Swiss mansion, a

highly anticipated summit at a time when both leaders say relations between their countries are at an all-time

As the two leaders appeared briefly before media at the start of the meeting, Mr. Biden called it a discussion between "two great powers" and said it was "always better to meet face to

face." The meeting in a booklined room had a somewhat awkward beginning – both men appeared to avoid looking directly at each other during a brief and chaotic photo opportunity before a scrum of jostling reporters.

Mr. Biden nodded when a reporter asked if Mr. Putin could be trusted, but the White House quickly sent out a tweet insisting that the President was "very clearly not responding to any one question, but nodding in acknowledgement to the press generally".

Mr. Putin ignored shouted questions from reporters, including whether he feared iailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Shaking hands

The two leaders did shake hands - Mr. Biden extended his hand first and smiled at the stoic Russian leader moments earlier when they posed with Swiss President Guy Parmelin, who welcomed them to Switzerland for the summit.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Putin first held a relatively intimate meeting joined by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Each side had a translator for the session, which lasted about an hour and a half. The meeting, after about a 40-minute break, then expanded to include senior aides on each side.

Israel strikes Hamas sites in Gaza over incendiary balloons

Palestinian shot dead in West Bank after suspected attack

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE GAZA CITY

Israel carried out air strikes on the Gaza Strip early on Wednesday after militants in the Palestinian territory sent incendiary balloons into the south of the country, in the first flare-up between the two sides since a major conflict killed hundreds last month.

The strikes were the first under the new coalition government headed by Naftali Bennett. The uptick in violence came after more than a thousand Jewish ultranationalist demonstrators bearing Israeli flags poured into Jerusalem's flashpoint Old City on Tuesday, with scores of police deployed and international monitors urging calm.

According to Palestinian sources, the Israeli Air Force targeted at least one site east of Khan Yunis in the south of the Gaza Strip. The military said that in response to the "arson balloons", its "fighter



Fire in the sky: Explosions light up the night sky at Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip following shelling by Israel. • AFP

jets struck military compounds belonging to the Ha-

mas terror organisation". It said "facilities and meeting sites for terror operatives" in Khan Yunis were targeted. There was no indication of any casualties.

The military added that it was "prepared for any scenario, including a resumption of hostilities, in the face of continuing terror activities from the Gaza Strip". Firefighters said the balloons caused around 20 fires.

Tension spilled over to

the occupied West Bank, where a Palestinian woman was shot dead after attempting to ram Israeli soldiers with her car and attack them with a knife, the Army and the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

The Ministry said the woman later died of her wounds. The incident took place near Hizma, south of Ramallah, with official Palestinian news website Wafa identifying the woman as Mai Afana, 29, from the town of Abu Dis, near Jerusalem.

India extends \$100 mn loan to Sri Lanka

It will help in solar power coverage

mission.

MEERA SRINIVASAN

India and Sri Lanka on Wednesday signed an agreement for a \$100-million loan from the Export Import Bank of India to support the island nation's efforts to expand solar power coverage.

Issuing a press statement on the bilateral initiative, the Presidential Media Division said one of the "key plans" of the government was to generate solar power, with the contribution of state-owned buildings, places of worship and houses of the low-income families. "Steps will also be taken to

provide facilities to store solar energy in batteries for the low-income families that are unable to access the national power grid," the statement said. Sri Lanka has an installed

capacity of 4,213 MW of ower. While 1,400 MW of that is hydropower, some 900 MW is produced from coal. Over the last five years, Sri Lanka has sought to tap more renewable sources of power, particularly solar power. The country's electricity demand is expected

to grow at an average 5.3% from 2015-2034, according to the Public Utilities Com-

A press release from the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka said the \$100 million line of credit will help finance various projects Sri Lanka's solar energy sector, including those announced at the founding conference of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) held in March 2018, in New Delhi, such as rooftop solar photo-voltaic systems for households and government buildings.

As many as 89 countries, including Sri Lanka, signed the framework agreement of the ISA, jointly launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former French President Francois Hollande in 2015, with the aim of bringing together countries to promote largescale deployment of solar

The line of credit extended by India, according to officials, is for a period of 20 years, with an interest of 1.75 %. Sri Lanka owes about \$960 million in debt repay-

China to send first crew to space station

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The three members of the first crew to be sent to China's space station say they're eager to get to work making their home for the next three months habitable, setting up testing and experiments and preparing for a series of spacewalks.

The three met reporters on Wednesday from inside germ-free glassed-in room, hours before they were to blast off on Thursday morning. "First of all, we need to arrange our home in the core module, then get started on a whole range of diagnostic tests on crucial technology and experiments," said mission commander Nie Haisheng, 56, who is making his third trip to space.

Liu Boming, 54, whose one previous flight in 2008 included China's first spacewalk, said there would be multiple such activities during the mission as the astronauts prepare the Tianhe, or Heavenly Harmony, core module to receive two other modules to be sent up next year.

China offers glimpse of Tibetan life without the Dalai Lama

The Communist Party has been trying to Sinicise Tibetan life

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A brisk wind ruffles yellow prayer flags as dozens of Tibetans, some on crutches, circle a shrine in a time-honoured Buddhist ritual. Across the street, a red banner spells out a new belief system, one being enforced with increasing fervour, of China's ruling Communist

"Xi Jinping's new socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics is the guide for the whole party and all nationalities to fight for the great rejuvenation of China," the sign proclaims in Tibetan and Chinese script, referring to China's leader, who has sought to put his imprint on virtually every aspect of life across the vast county.

Lately, that has increasingly encompassed religion, both in central China and on its fringes, such as Tibet. The party is pressing a programme to Sinicise Tibetan life to separate Tibetans from their language, culture, and especially, their devo-



The Dalai Lama

tion to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's traditional spiritual leader who has lived in exile

In the sun-drenched courtyard of the Jokhang Temple, one of the holiest sites in Tibetan Buddhism, the head monk, Lhakpa, said the Dalai Lama is not its spiritual leader. Asked who is, he said: "Xi Jinping".

The Associated Press joined a rare and strictly controlled media tour to Tibet highlighting what the government describes as the social stability and economic development of the region after 70 years of Communist Party rule. Stops included monasteries. temples. schools, poverty alleviation projects and tourist sites.

That appears to reflect the party's confidence that it is prevailing in the global battle of public opinion over Ti-

As a counterweight, Tibet rights groups continue to report detentions, economic marginalisation, a suffocating security presence and heavy pressure to assimilate with China's Han majority while pledging loyalty to the Communist Party. In the model village of Ba

ii east of Lhasa, the capital. residents dressed in traditional garments told foreign journalists how poverty alleviation campaigns had changed their lives. "Time has changed, so people's demands have changed. People needed religious beliefs as their spiritual sustenance in old times, but now we don't," said Tsering Yudron. 25, an accountant.

"Tibet has eradicated extreme poverty," reads a 2019 government report on Tibet. "People now lead better lives and live in contentment. A brand new socialist Tibet has taken shape."

Field narrows as Iran poll candidates quit

Hard-liner Raisi seen as front-runner

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran's presidential contest headed towards a showdown between the country's hard-line judiciary chief and moderate former central bank chief on Wednesday, as two candidates dropped out on the last day of campaigning to clear the path for the challengers. Mohsen Mehralizadeh,

the only reformist candidate in the vote, as well as hardline contender Alireza Zakani withdrew from the race, state media reported, leaving just five candidates in the field ahead of Friday's vote. Such dropouts are common in Iranian presidential elections in order to boost the chances of similar candidates. The departure of 64-year-

old Mr. Mehralizadeh, who served as Governor in two Iranian provinces, is aimed at consolidating support for top banker Abdolnasser Hemmati, who has positioned himself as a leading moderate and stand-in for President Hassan Rouhani, who is term-limited from running again.

Polling and analysts indicate that Mr. Hemmati lags behind hard-line judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi, the presumed front runner long cultivated by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Also ending his cam-

paign, Mr. Zakani, a 55-yearold hard-line lawmaker twice rejected from running for President, threw his support behind Mr. Raisi.

"I consider him (Raisi) to be the most qualified," Mr. Zakani was quoted as saying by state TV. Other candidates were expected to follow suit later on Wednesday. Over 200 lawmakers in Parliament, which is dominated by hard-liners, released a statement urging the rest of the conservative candidates to withdraw and back Mr. Raisi's presidential bid.

Mr. Mehralizadeh, the pro-reform candidate, had previously served as Vice President in charge of physical education under reformist President Mohammad Khatami and as a deputy in the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, which runs the country's civilian nuclear programme.

ELSEWHERE



British lawyer sworn in as ICC's chief prosecutor

THE HAGUE

British lawyer Karim Khan was sworn in as the new chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. He takes over from Fatou Bensouda of Gambia, whose nine-year term ended on Tuesday. AFF

EU nod for more Belarus sanctions

BRUSSELS

The European Union agreed additional sanctions on Belarus on Wednesday in response to the forced landing of a Ryanair flight in Minsk and the arrest of a dissident journalist on board in May, an EU diplomat said.

The sanctions, approved by EU Ambassadors and to be adopted by the bloc's Foreign Ministers at a meeting on Monday, target seven individuals with links to the

Belarus aviation sector, according to the diplomat.

Ambassadors also signed off on a fourth package of asset freezes and travel bans, to be imposed on more than 70 Belarusian individuals in response to last year's contested presidential election, the diplomat said.

This fourth package of measures was already being prepared when the Ryanair jet was forced to land in Minsk on May 23 and Opposition blogger Roman Protasevich and his girlfriend were arrested by Belarusian authorities. EU governments described the incident as air piracy and, at the start of June, banned Belarusian airlines from flying over European Union territory or having access to its airports.

The latest listing of seven individuals is meant as a stop-gap measure while economic sanctions are discussed to inflict real punishment on President Alexander Lukashenko.

No radiation leak from nuclear plant: Beijing

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Chinese nuclear power plant near Hong Kong had five broken fuel rods in a reactor but no radioactivity leaked, the government said on Wednesday in its first confirmation of the incident that prompted concern over the facility's safety.

No. 1 reactor of the Taishan

Nuclear Power Plant in Guangdong province but was contained by barriers that functioned as planned. the Ministry of Ecology and Environment said.

The French co-owner on Monday reported increased "noble gases" in the reactor. Experts said that suggested

DATE:14.06.2021

fuel rods broke and leaked Radiation rose inside the radioactive gas produced during nuclear fission.

Pakistan court adjourns Jadhav's case till Oct. 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani court has adjourned till October 5 the hearing of a government's plea to appoint a counsel for Indian death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav on request of the country's top law officer, according to a media report.

Mr. Jadhav, the 50-yearold retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017.

On Tuesday, the Islamabad High Court adjourned the hearing of the government's plea to appoint counsel for Mr. Jadhav till October 5 at the request of the



Kulbhushan Jadhav

Attorney General for Pakistan Khalid Javed Khan, The Express Tribune reported.

The High Court also issued notice to the counsel of the Indian High Commission to appear before the court on the next date of hearing.

Kim warns of tense food situation

ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un warned about possible food shortages and urged the country to brace for extended COVID-19 restrictions as he opened a political conference to discuss national efforts to salvage a broken economy, the official Korean Central News Agency said on Wednesday.

The North's economy has deteriorated amid pandemic border closures, which choked off trade with China, while devastating typhoons and floods last summer decimated

ODISHA JOINT ENTRANCE EXAMINATION-2021 (OJEE-2021)

No: OJEE / 206

NOTICE REGARDING EXTENSION OF LAST DATE OF APPLICATION

In view of the COVID -19 pandemic, the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE - 2021), which was tentatively scheduled during 17th to 24th June, 2021, has been postponed. The revised dates of the Examination will be notified, on

Further, the last date for submission of online application forms for all the courses under OJEE 2021 is extended up to 12.07.2021 and last date for fee payment up to 14.07.2021.

assessment of the situation, in the 1st week of July.

CHAIRMAN, OJEE, Odisha

OIPR-14020/11/0004/2122

TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD. Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process) SI.No. Tender Inviting Authority | Specification No. CE/MM For details of works/Procurement/Due date of submission opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit website

www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app, www.tangedco.gov.in,



website http://www.ireps.gov.in from experienced / reputed contractors in the field RWF_S_TPT_FA_0-1000_21-22 Due Date & Time 08.07.2021 - Tender closing at 14:15 Hrs. Scope of Work Carriage of Railway products i.e., Finished Axles of 1100 MT from Rail Wheel Factory (RWF), Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560 064 to various Railway

consignees in India by road, under distance slab of 0-500 Kms. & 500-1000 Kms (For detailed scope of work, please refer uploaded Tender Document).
 Distance Slab
 0-500 Kms.
 500-1000 Kms.
 Quantity
 1100 MT

 Estt.Tender Value
 Rs. 17,01,000/ EMD Amount
 Rs. 34,000/ Estt.Tender Value Rs. 17,01,000/-Contract Period 12 (Twelve) months from the date of commencement of Work PRINCIPAL CHIEF MATERIALS MANAGER



FOR DRAINAGE PROJECT WORKS OF AMC UNDER GUJARAT RESILIENT CITY PROGRAMME (GRCP) UNDER WORLD BANK FUNDING PROGRAMME Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation Re-invites Request for Proposal

for following works. (A) Request for Proposal from technically sound and experienced Consulting engineering firms for preparing Detailed Design, DPR Tender, Estimate & Execution Drawings for Drainage Project works for Augmentation and Up gradation of Existing Sewage Treatment Plants, Construction of New Sewage Treatment Plants, Tertiary

Treatment Plants, Drainage and Storm water works, works with

Micro tunneling, Lake & Canal development, Conservation of Lakes Rehabilitation of Existing Old Drainage lines for the below listed 1) RFP for West Zone, North West Zone, South West Zone. (Western Side)

(2) RFP for Central Zone, North Zone, South Zone, East Zone. (Eastern Side) Online Submission up to : 23/06/2021 Up to 18:00 hours **Physical Submission** : 24/06/2021 Up to 16:00 hours

Date of RFP (Technical Bid) Opening: 24/06/2021 at 17:00 hours Detail and RFP available on : http://www.nprocure.com

"DIAL: 155303 FOR COMPLAINTS R

MARKET WATCH

	16-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,502	-0.51
US Dollar	73.32	-0.01
Gold	47814	-0.08
Brent oil	74.89	1.65

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANG
Adani Ports	706.70.	-55.1
Asian Paints		
Axis Bank		
Bajaj Auto		
Bajaj Finserv	11856.15	57.4
Bajaj Finance	6081.60	-79.5
Bharti Airtel		
BPCL		
Britannia Ind		
Cipla		
Coal India		
Divis Lab		
Dr Reddys Lab		
Eicher Motors		
Grasim Ind		
HCL Tech		
HDFC		
HDFC Bank		
HDFC Life		
Hero MotoCorp		
Hindalco		
Hind Unilever		
ICICI Bank		
IndusInd Bank		
Infosys		
Indian OilCorp		
ITC		
JSW Steel		
Kotak Bank		
L&T		
M&M		
Maruti Suzuki		
Nestle India Ltd		
NTPC		
ONGC	126.70	1.3
PowerGrid Corp	242.15	5.4
Reliance Ind	2211.60	38.4
SBI Life	991.80	4.0
State Bank	425.95.	3.5
Shree Cement	28224.75	261.1
Sun Pharma	668.55	-4.6
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	735.90.	16.4
Tata Motors		
Tata Steel	1142.15	32.1
TCS		
Tech Mahindra		
Titan		
UltraTech Cement		
UPL		

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 16

except jen at 1 pinn on same 10				
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL		
US Dollar	73.12	73.44		
Euro	88.62	89.01		
British Pound	.103.21	103.66		
Japanese Yen (100)	66.50.	66.80		
Chinese Yuan	11.43	11.48		
Swiss Franc	81.32	81.68		
Singapore Dollar	55.14	55.39		
Canadian Dollar	60.02	60.28		
Malaysian Ringitt	17.76	17.85		
Source-Indian Bank				



JLR starts delivery of SUV Range Rover Velar

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India has begun deliveries of the new Range Rover Velar SUV in India starting ₹79.87 lakh, ex-showroom. The vehicle is available in the R-Dynamic S trim on Ingenium 2.0 l petrol and diesel powertrains. The petrol engine delivers a power of 184 kW and 365 Nm of torque and the diesel engine delivers 150 kW and 430 Nm of torque.

L&T Infotech to acquire **Cuelogic Technologies**

Larsen & Toubro Infotech Ltd. (LTI) has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Cuelogio Technologies, a Pune-based digital engineering and outsourced product development firm. The value of the acquisition was not disclosed. Cuelogic's revenue for FY21 stood at \$5.50 million (unaudited), LTI said in a regulatory filing on Wednesday, Cuelogic would be integrated with the digital practice of LTI, it added.

Blue-collar jobs portal Apna raises \$70 million

Apna, a jobs platform for the working class, has raised \$70 million in a Series B round led by Insight Partners and Tiger Global. Existing investors, Sequoia Capital India, Lightspeed India, Greenoaks Capital and Rocketship VC also participated. Apna had earlier raised \$20 million and is now valued at \$570 million, the company said. Apna would use the proceeds to strengthen its presence and expand pan-India over the next six months.

Gearing up for Sputnik V commercial release: DRL

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories on Wednesday said it is gearing up for commercial release of Sputnik V vaccine. A limited pilot, rolled out last month and now in its final leg across cities, has helped test cold storage arrangements. CoWIN integration, trackand-trace and other logistical arrangements. DRL said the public could register for the vaccine on the CoWin portal after the commercial release.

Direct tax receipts jump this FY

Surge reflects healthy exports, dispute resolution scheme's impact: economists

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

India's direct tax receipts in first two-and-a-half months of 2021-22 have doubled to almost ₹1.86 lakh crore from the comparable period last year when the national lockdown hit collections, the Finance Ministry said on Wednesday.

Economists said the tax figures suggest the economy could post double-digit growth in the first quarter.

"The jump in the direct tax collections... reflects healthy exports and a continuation of various industrial and construction activities, given the lower stringency of the staggered regional lockdowns in 2021 versus the nationwide lockdown in 2020," said Aditi Navar, chief economist at rating agency ICRA. "This supports our expectation



Returns spur hope: Tax figures indicate the GDP will grow in double-digits in Q1, says ICRA's Nayar. • GRN SOMASHEKAR

that GDP will record a double-digit expansion in Q1," she added.

Vivad Se Vishwas The substantive rise in inflows could be attributed to dispute resolution scheme Vivad Se Vishwas that concluded recently, said Neeru Ahuja, partner, Deloitte India. "Taxpayers have taken advantage of the scheme and have settled their old disputes and litigation with the income tax department along with depositing their tax dues. This seems to be the main reason" for the jump in receipts, she added.

The collections from April 1 to June 15 include Corporation Tax of ₹74,356 crore and Personal Income Tax inflows, which include the Securities Transaction Tax, of ₹1.11 lakh crore. The collections in the year-earlier period totalled ₹92,762 crore.

"Despite extremely challenging initial months of the new fiscal, the Advance Tax collections for the first quarter of 2021-22 stand at ₹28,780 crore against Advance Tax collections of ₹11,714 crore for the corresponding period of the immediately preceding financial year, showing a growth of approximately 146%," the Finance Ministry said.

The advance tax kitty includes ₹18,358 crore as Corporation tax and Personal income tax of ₹10,422 crore. "This amount is expected to increase as further information is received from banks," the ministry added.

Speed, scale of vaccination to shape recovery: RBI Bulletin

Second wave has hit domestic demand, write bank officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The speed and scale of vaccination against COVID-19 will shape the path of recovery of the economy, which has the resilience and the fundamentals to bounce back from the pandemic and unshackle itself from pre-existing cyclical and structural hindrances, according to an RBI bulletin article.

As per the current assesscle on 'State of the Economy'.

'Ramping up healthcare' Observing that vaccines by and productivity growth." themselves would not end the

have to learn to live with the pandemic has mainly hit dom- cines with ramping up invest- tocols, they said. estic demand, Reserve Bank ment in healthcare, logistics of India Deputy Governor and research. The pandemic and scale of vaccination will M.D. Patra and other central is a real shock with real conse-shape the path of recovery. bank officials wrote in the artiquences. Hence, there is a need to ensure that the recov- lience and the fundamentals

pandemic, they said, "we wrestle with the second wave, ticle's authors wrote.

though cautious optimism was returning, they opined.

The central bank said views expressed in the article were those of the authors and did not necessarily represent those of the RBI.

On the brighter side several aspects of aggregate supply conditions - agriculture and contactless services were holding up, while industrial production and exports had ment, the second wave of the virus, complementing vac- surged amidst pandemic pro-

"Going forward, the speed The economy has the resiery is built on a solid founda- to bounce back from the pantion of business investment demic and unshackle itself from pre-existing cyclical and The economy continued to structural hindrances," the ar-

200 IBC pleas filed since Mar. 24: IBBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

About 200 applications for resolution of stressed assets have been filed under the insolvency law since the suspension of fresh proceedings ended on March 24, as per IBBI.

IBBI Chairperson M. S. Sahoo said, "Since the expiry of suspension on filing, about 200 applications have been filed.

"The higher threshold default of ₹1 crore coupled with support and forbearances limit the flow of applications," Mr. Sahoo said.

"Since the markets and the economy are not in the best of their times, the stakeholders may be waiting for the appropriate time to use the Code," he said.

Deal pricing in line with practice, law: PNB HF

'Price higher than valuers' floor price'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Amid concerns raised in certain quarters about its proposed ₹4,000 crore-deal with Carlyle group, PNB Housing Finance (PNB HF) on Wednesday said the process followed in determining the issue price for its securities was in line with the "market practice" followed by listed firms and in compliance with applicable law.

Responding to clarifications sought by the stock exchanges on Monday regarding the deal, the company – a subsidiary of Punjab National Bank – also emphasised that pricing was not required to be based on a valuation report from a registered valuer and that the If approved, the ₹4,000-crore deal will see Carlyle group take control of PNB subsidiary

final price was higher than the floor price suggested by registered valuers.

The company stressed that the price was arrived at after due consideration and weighing of various relevant factors, and hence the pricing for the preferential issue had been determined in compliance with the applicable law.

If it goes through, the deal - announced in May and subject to approvals would also see Carlyle group taking controlling stake in PNB Housing Finance.

NCLT doubts Videocon plan confidentiality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NCLT has raised doubts over 'confidentiality' of the liquidation valuation of assets of Videocon Industries and 12 group firms during the insolvency process.

The tribunal asked the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India "to examine this issue in depth" to ensure that the confidentiality clause is followed without any compromise.

The liquidation value of Videocon Industries and 12 group firms was ₹2,568.13 crore and fair value of the assets was ₹4,069.95 crore.

The bid submitted by resolution applicant Twin Star Technologies in the resolution plan was for ₹2,962.02 crore.

Adani stocks extend losses for a third session

Group had rejected report on funds

REUTERS BENGALURU

Shares in companies controlled by Indian billionaire Gautam Adani fell again on Wednesday, adding to their losses stemming from a media report that said accounts of three foreign investor funds that own stocks had been frozen.

The companies involved had rejected the report earlier this week, calling it "blatantly erroneous."

Adani Enterprises, Adani Green Energy, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone fell as much as 3.3% to 4.7% on Wednesday, while shares of Adani Total Gas, Adani Transmission and Adani Power hit their lower



From their closing levels on Monday to session lows on Wednesday, they had shed between 0.9% to 9.7%.

In the past year, a broad surge in Adani Group companies have made Mr. Adani the second richest Indian, behind Mukesh Ambani, chairman and managing director of conglomerate Reliance Industries.

Power use grows 9.3% in June first half

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Power consumption in India grew by 9.3% in the first half of June to 55.86 billion units (BU), indicating a slow recovery in commercial and industrial electricity demand, according to Power Ministry data.

Power consumption was recorded at 51.10 BU in the first half of June last year (June 1-15), it showed.

According to experts, the recovery in power consumption and demand was slow during the first half of the month despite the low base of last year.

They are of the view that the recovery in the rest of June is not likely to be robust because of the early onset of monsoon.

Automation to cull 3-mn IT jobs by 2022: report

'Firms set to reap \$100 bn in savings'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

With automation taking place at a much faster pace across industries, domestic software firms that employ over 16 million are set to slash headcount by 3 million by 2022, that will help them save \$100 billion, mostly in salaries annually, Bank of America said in a report.

About 9 million of them are employed in low-skilled services and BPO roles, as per industry association Nasscom. Of these 9 million roles, 30%, or about 3 million, will be lost by 2022, principally driven by the impact of robot process automation or RPA. Roughly 0.7 million roles are expected to be replaced by RPA and the rest due to other technological upgrades and upskill-

Youngest,

oldest lost jobs

in 2nd wave'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

When it comes to losing a

job permanently, the youn-

gest and the oldest seg-

ments in the workforce

have reported an increase

in setbacks in the second

wave of the pandemic, a

survey of by a Fortune 500

The survey, conducted

in April this year, covered 2,000 persons in India.

The survey said 6% of

those above 55 years of age

reported having perma-

nently lost their job, as

the proportion reporting a

permanent job loss has in-

creased to 11% from 10% in

the year-earlier period, the

survey conducted by finan-

cial technology company

FIS said.

In those aged below 24,

against 4% last year.

company has said.



ing, according to the report. "TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCL, Tech Mahindra and Cognizant and others appear to be planning for a 3million reduction in lowskilled roles by 2022 be-

cause of RPA upskilling. "This is \$100-billion in reduced salary and other costs... on the flip side, it offers a likely \$10 billion boon for IT firms that successfully ware niche by 2022."

over May

India's fuel demand re bounded in the first half of June as easing of lockdowns helped sales but the consumption was still low-

While petrol sales rose by 13% during June 1-15 ov-

PRESSS TRUST OF INDIA

Fuel demand revives in June

er compared to last year.

er the same period of last month, diesel consumption was up 12%, according to state fuel retailers. This is the first monthly increase since March. Fuel demand had recovered to near-normal levels in March before the onset of the second wave of CO-VID-19 led to the reimposition of lockdowns in diffe-States, stalling mobility and muting eco-

implement RPA and \$5 bilnomic activity. Consumplion from a vibrant new softtion in May slumped to its lowest since August 2020. India to have 330 mn

4G count to touch 830 mn: Ericsson

5G connections by 2026'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

5G will represent about 26% of mobile subscriptions in India at the end of 2026 with an estimated subscription base of 330 million, according to Ericsson Mobility Report.

Also, 4G subscriptions are expected to rise from 680 million in 2020 to 830 million in 2026, increasing at a CAGR of 3%. The number of smart-

phone subscriptions, that stood at 810 million in 2020, was expected to touch more than 1.2 billion by 2026.

"COVID-19 has accelerated India's digital transformation as consumers increasingly rely on digital services to fulfil their business or personal needs," said Nitin Bansal, head of



network solutions for Southeast Asia, Oceania and India, Ericsson. The average traffic per

smartphone user in India has risen from 13GB a month in 2019 to 14.6GB in 2020. This may to grow to about 40GB in 2026.

Total mobile data traffic in India has grown from 6.9EB/month month in 2020.



IN BRIEF

Sneh and Deepti spin India back into the contest

The two off-spinners strike in the final session as England slips to 269 for six; Beaumont (66), Knight (95) lead the hosts' charge

INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Off-spinners Deepti Sharma and Sneh Rana removed two batters each in the final session as India reduced England to 269 for six on the opening day of the one-off Test here on Wednesday.

After losing Lauren Winfield-Hill (35) in the first session, the hosts lost Tammy Beaumont (66) in the second session but staved in control.

However, the visitors sent back Natalie Sciver (42), Amy Jones (1), England skipper Heather Knight (95) and Georgia Elwiss (5) in the posttea session to make a strong comeback.

Debutant Sneh dismissed Beaumont and also trapped Jones in front. The off-spinner also got rid of Elwiss, who was held by Deepti.

Deepti broke the thirdwicket stand of 90 between Knight and Sciver by having the latter leg-before. She also trapped Knight in front five short of a century. Though the England captain went for a review, it proved unsuccessful. Knight's 95 came off 175 deliveries and contained nine fours.

Sophia Dunkley (12) and Katherine Brunt (7) will resume the England innings on Thursday.

Crucial wicket

In the second session, though India picked up the crucial wicket of Beaumont, England consolidated its position by reaching 162 for two

India toiled hard for most part of the post-lunch period before Sneh picked up her maiden Test wicket. She got rid of the in-form of Beaumont, who was brilliantly caught by Shafali Verma at short leg.

Beaumont faced 144 balls



Big wicket: Deepti Sharma traps England skipper Heather Knight in front. • REUTERS

and her second Test half-century was embellished with six fours.

Knight and Sciver then

batted cautiously as England made 76 runs off 28 overs in the second session.

hosts, after choosing to bat, reached 86 for one. The Indian pace duo of veteran Ihu-In the opening period, the lan Goswami and Shikha

SCOREBOARD

England — 1st innings: Lauren Winfield-Hill c Taniya b Pooja 35 (63b, 4x4, 2x6), Tammy Beaumont c Shafali b Sneh 66 (144b, 6x4), Heather Knight lbw b Deepti 95 (175b, 9x4), Natalie Sciver lbw b Deepti 42 (75b, 6x4), Amy Jones Ibw b Sneh 1 (9b), Sophia Dunkley (batting) 12 (47b, 1x4), Georgia Elwiss c Deepti b Sneh 5 (11b), Katherine Brunt (batting) 7 (30b); Extras (b-2, lb-1, w-1, nb-2): 6; Total

Pandey made a promising start, doing just enough to trouble the English batters on more than one occasion.

In the seventh over, Jhulan induced an edge from Winfield-Hill as she went for an extravagant drive but Smriti Mandhana dropped the chance in the slip cordon despite getting both hands to the ball.

In the next over, Winfield-Hill got lucky again. Debutant Pooja Vastrakar induced (for six wkts. in 92 overs): 269. Fall of wickets: 1-69 (Winfield-Hill, 20.3 overs), 2-140 (Beaumont, 48.1), 3-230 (Sciver, 72.6), 4-236 (Jones, 75.4), 5-244 (Knight, 78.1), 6-251(El-

India bowling: Jhulan 18-2-44-0, Shikha 11-3-36-0, Pooja 12-3-43-1. Sneh 29-4-77-3. Deepti 18-3-50-2, Harmanpreet 4-0-16-0. Toss: England.

a thick edge but the ball flew between second slip and gully to the boundary.

Pooja eventually had the last laugh as she had Winfield-Hill brilliantly caught by wicketkeeper Taniya Bhatia, giving breakthrough.

Five players made their Test debut for India: Shafali, Deepti, Pooja, Sneh and Taniya. For England. Sophia was the lone player to earn a Test cap.

Two India squads simultaneously playing

may continue: Dhumal

India fielding two different squads in different locations due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic can become a norm as it allows more bilateral cricket and some respite to allformat players from biobubble fatigue, said BCCI treasurer Arun Dhumal on Wednesday, PTI

Smith back on top of Test rankings; Kohli fourth

India skipper Virat Kohli (814 points) climbed to fourth while Australia's Steve Smith (891) reclaimed the top position, beating Kane Williamson (886), in the ICC Test rankings released on Wednesday. Rishabh Pant (747) and Rohit Sharma (747) kept their joint sixth spots. PTI

If we can play freely, we will get the desired result: Rahane

WTC FINAL

ASHWIN ACHAL

In an Indian team filled $oldsymbol{1}$ with flamboyant batting superstars, the unassuming Ajinkya Rahane often slips under the radar. Rahane's recent numbers, however, underlines the value he brings to the table.

With 1,095 runs at an average of 43.80, the Mumbai batsman is India's leading run-scorer in this World Test Championship (WTC) cycle. His leadership qualities which came to the fore in the memorable series win in Australia recently - is yet another asset.

Typically modest

Heading into the WTC final against New Zealand at Southampton, Rahane is typically modest when asked about his good form. "I like to be in the present, and adjust to the conditions on the given day. Being India's highest run-scorer in the WTC cycle does not matter. It's in the past. If we can play freely, we will get the desired result," Rahane said in a media interaction on Wednesday.

Rahane is familiar with the WTC final venue, the Rose Bowl, having played two Test matches there on earlier tours. Though both matches (in 2014 and 2018, against England) resulted in



Good tidings: Ajinkya Rahane has done well in the past at Rose Bowl, the venue for the WTC final. • FILE PHOTO

losses, Rahane did fairly well, scoring three fifties in four outings. The Indian vice-captain has also played at Southampton during his stint with Hampshire in the English county circuit.

The 33-year-old stated that spin could play a factor, even though the match could be affected by rain. "We don't want to go out there thinking about the weather forecast. In England, slow bowlers are the key. I've played many matches at Southampton – two Tests and two-three County games. It's about adapting to slow bowlers.

Too early

"It's too early to think about team composition, but we have a bowling attack which

can do well in all types of pitch and weather conditions," Rahane said.

Rahane, and indeed the Indian team, have good memories of the tour to Australia a few months ago. The Mumbai batsman had famously taken over captaincy duties from an unavailable Virat Kohli in the second Test, before leading an injury-ravaged side to a thrilling 2-I win.

He stated that the victories in Australia helped revive interest in Test cricket. and that this trend is set to continue with the WTC final clash. "The Australia series was the biggest win for us. We did so well there. I thought people started to take interest in Test cricket once again," Rahane said.

'Many dangerous players in Indian batting line-up'

Southee says Kiwis need to be sharp

S. DIPAK RAGAV

Tew Zealand pacer Tim Southee feels that the two-Test series against England, which his team won 1-0, has provided the best preparation for the WTC final against India.

"We have had a great start to the tour. I think it's been a great preparation leading into the final. We have got a number of guys who have had good performances in the two Tests," said Southee in an online interaction on Wednesday.

On the Indian batting line-up, the 32-year-old said it has a good mix of youth and experience, and doesn't



Southee. • GETTY IMAGES

rely only on stars like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma.

"There are so many dangerous players in the line-up, so we are going to have to be on top of our game as a bowling unit and we know how dangerous

Relief for BCCI in Deccan Chargers case

SONAM SAIGAL

In a relief to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the Bombay High Court on Wednesday set aside an arbitration award directing the Board to pay over ₹4,800 crores for the termination of Hyderabad Deccan Charges from the Indian Premier League (IPL).

A single bench of justice Gautam Patel set aside the award (order) passed by an

arbitrator who was appointed in 2012 to decide on the Board's termination notice to Deccan Chronicle Hold ings Limited (DCHL).

In July 2020, retired Supreme Court judge C.K. Thakkar, the sole arbitrator, had directed the BCCI to pay DCHL a compensation of ₹4,814.67 crores plus 10% interest from 2012.

This was subsequently challenged before the high

Kiwis have belief and ability

There is a flow to their cricket, both home and away

S. DINAKAR CHENNAI

On an evening of considerable drama, edge-of-the-seat thrills, and fluctuations in fortunes, New Zealand saw a historic triumph snatched away by a bizarre set of rules in a head-spinning 2019 ODI World Cup final at Lords.

For the Kiwis, the memories are fresh, so are the wounds.

Teams can wilt from such heart- and gut-wrenching setbacks. But then, New Zealand, resilient, has only grown in strength.

Sides that do not fear defeats win more. And these New Zealanders have been bravehearts.

And now they stand close to the summit of the Test playing nations ahead of the clash against India at Southampton.

Depth and options

This is a side with serious depth and options. Gone are the days when New Zealand, a nation of just under five million, was referred to as a side whose sum was greater than its parts.

In the present New Zealand side, the parts are significant. On view is considerable ability. Led by the tactically suave

Williamson, New Zealand has a rhythm and a flow to its cricket, both home and

New Zealand's batting with Williamson, formidable



step, thanks to their recent exploits against England. • AFP

with the willow, and Ross Taylor, strokeful with a sense of occasion, in its ranks, has solidity.

The left-handed opening pair of the battling Tom Latham and Devon Conway, who has made a sensational start to his Test career with his footwork and balance, can ambush attacks.

In the middle-order, the left-handed Henry Nicholls, provides strokes and stabili-

Colin de Grandhomme is a natural striker of the ball and an accurate seamer. Both B-J. Watling and Tom Blundell are efficient 'keepers and competent batsmen. The competition for spots is immense, reflecting depth.

The Kiwis have shown faith in left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel ahead of the experienced Mitchell Santner. Pace will be New ZeaKiwi pacemen will be backed by excellent slip catching. The left-right new ball pair

land's cutting edge. And the

of Trent Boult and Tim Southee bowl an attacking length and swing the ball. + They are incisive with varia-

And the never-say-die Neil Wagner lends an unmistakable dash of aggression with his compelling short-pitched

Matt Henry bowls in the channel around the offstump, seams it both ways and is a game-changer. Then, there is the tall Kyle Jamieson, with his pace, higharm action, bounce and twoway seam movement.

Whoever misses out from the pace pack will be unlucky. The depth in the Kiwi ranks is such. This New Zealand team has quality and belief. And it can sting.

Hummels' own goal gifts France victory

Miranchuk nets Russia's winner against Finland; Wales blanks Turkey

EURO 2020

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Mats Hummels' own goal was enough to hand France a 1-0 victory over Germany on Tuesday as the World Champion made a winning start to its Euro 2020 campaign by controlling the game. Hummels turned the ball into his own net in the 20th minute, which ulti-

France also saw Kylian Mbappe and Karim Benzema have second-half goals ruled offside, while Adrien Rabiot hit the post for Les Bleus.

mately decided the contest.

"It was a clash that could have been a semifinal or a final, so to take three points was important," said France coach Didier Deschamps.

The result leaves France second on goal difference in the early Group F table behind Portugal, after the holder's 3-0 win over Hungary.

Pressure on Germany The home defeat piles the pressure on Germany ahead of its next game against Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal on Saturday, also at the Allianz Arena. "It was a brutally in-

tense game," said Germany head coach Joachim Low. Seven years ago, it was



Heartbreak: Germany's Mats Hummels tried to make a lunging clearance but ended up putting

their second game in Group

Hummels' header which knocked France out of the 2014 World Cup in the quarterfinals as Germany went on to triumph.

the ball into his own net. •AP

In the final 10 minutes, Mbappe was furious to be denied a penalty, while Benzema looked to have sealed the win when he tapped in Mbappe's pass in the dying stages, but VAR caught the latter offside.

In Group B, Aleksei Miranchuk's goal earned Russia a 1-0 victory over Finland in

B on Wednesday. The midfielder curled in

the only goal just before the break in Saint Petersburg as Russia bounced back from losing its opening game 3-0

In Group A, Wales beat Turkey 2-0 at Baku. Ramsey and Roberts were the

The results: Group A: Wales 2 (Ramsey 42, Roberts 90+5) bt Turkey O; Group B: Finland O lost to Russia 1 (Miranchuk

45+2); Group F: France 1 (Hummels 20-og) bt Germany 0. **TODAY'S MATCHES**

GROUP C Ukraine vs North Macedonia 6.30 p.m. GROUP

GROUP C The Netherlands vs Austria 12.30 a.m. (Friday) Live on Sony Ten 2, 3 &

Sony Six (SD & HD)

Denmark vs Belgium

9.30 p.m.

Russia's Fernandes cleared of spinal injury

REUTERS ST. PETERSBURG

Russia has confirmed that Mario Fernandes did not suffer a spinal injury after his heavy fall in the match against Finland on

Wednesday. The full-back had a rough fall in the first half after an aerial duel which saw him land on his back and neck. The 30-year-old was taken

off the pitch on a stretcher

and rushed to the hospital

"Fernandes was suspected of having a thoracic spine injury," the Russian team said in a statement. "According to the scan results, Fernandes does not have a spinal injury. He is flying with the team to Moscow and will be under the supervision of the doctors of the Russian national team.'

Unwelcome visitor



12th man: A paraglider lands in the stadium ahead of the match between Germany and France in Munich on Tuesday. Greenpeace later apologised for the protest and injuries caused to many spectators. •AP

Auger-Aliassime stuns his idol Federer

Andy Murray makes a winning return

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Roger Federer suffered a setback in his preparations for Wimbledon after crashing out of the second round of the Halle Open on Wednesday.

Federer, bidding to win a ninth title at Wimbledon which starts on June 28, suffered a shock 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 defeat to 20-year-old Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime.

"It's amazing, for sure I didn't expect this," said Auger-Aliassime after beating one of his heroes at the first attempt on the ATP Tour. "I thought he would be gone by the time I joined the



Felix Auger-Aliassime.. memorable win. • AP

On Tuesday, Andy Murray made a winning return, easing into the second round of Queen's with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over Benoit

■ The 39-year-old Federer's match against 20-year-old Auger-Aliassime was the first time the Swiss was playing an opponent born in the 2000s. The 19-year age difference is biggest in any of his 1,522 career matches

■ Federer and Auger-Aliassime share their birthdays (August

8). When Auger-Aliassime was born in 2000, Federer had a

35-40 career record and had reached one ATP Tour Final First time in 18 appearances at Halle that Federer hasn't made the quarterfinals. The first of these last-eight matches came eight weeks before Auger-Aliassime was born in

2000, with Federer losing to Michael Chang

TV PICKS

England Women vs India Women: Only Test, Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. Euro 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six HD (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m., 9.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m.

Copa America 2021: Sony Ten 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 2.30 a.m. (Friday); Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m. (Friday).

IN BRIEF



Nets back into the lead against Bucks

Kevin Durant had 49 points. 17 rebounds and 10 assists in one of the most spectacular performances in post-season history, sending the Brooklyn Nets back into the lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals with a 114-108 victory over the Milwaukee

Bucks in Game 5 on Tuesday

With James Harden returning but delivering little offence and Kyrie Irving out, Durant played all 48 minutes and shot 16 for 23 from the field He scored 20 points in the fourth quarter, perhaps the biggest shot a 3-pointer with 50 seconds left and the Nets protecting a one-point lead. The two-time NBA Finals MVP became the first player in NBA history to have at least 45 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists in a playoff

The result: Eastern Conference: Brooklyn Nets 114 bt Milwaukee Bucks 108 Brooklyn leads series 3-2.



FIFPRO board member

Former UEFA head Michel Platini confirmed on Tuesday French representative on the board of FIFPRO, the world players' union, "This makes me very happy," Platini said in a statement. He is due take up his post in November, a source close to the triple Ballon d'Or winner said. AFF

It's crowded at the top

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The open section of the National under-14 online rapid chess championship on Wednesday created a record of sorts when 628 players completed three

Only four players, from the top-10 seeds, managed to be part of the 56-player leaders' group.

Ishaan Das caused the biggest upset of the day by beating fifth seed Aayush Bhattacharya in the first round. Eight more rounds remain.

Rahm starts favourite on a tough layout

Local star Mickelson has the chance to become only the sixth to complete the career Grand Slam

US OPEN

REUTERS TORREY PINES (CALIFORNIA)

Jon Rahm, forced to withdraw from his last start with a sizeable lead because of a positive COVID-19 test, is a favourite at this week's U.S. Open at Torrey Pines where hometown boy Phil Mickelson seeks the one Major that has eluded him.

Cleared to play

Rahm was running away with the Memorial Tournament - leading by six shots after 54 holes - before having to withdraw and go into self-isolation but said on Saturday he was cleared to play after two negative tests in a 24-hour span.

The Spanish World No. 3, in search of his first Major, will be in comfortable surroundings on the South Course as he has four top-10 finishes in five events played there, including a win in the 2017 Farmers Insurance Open.

A number of big names

Despite all the professional

arrangements by the Nation-

al Rifle Association of India

(NRAI) and the Sports Auth-

ority of India (SAI), the two

Tokyo-bound skeet shooters

Mairaj Ahmad Khan and An-

gad Vir Singh Bajwa are fac-

ing uncertainty regarding

their vaccination and visa ex-

While Angad had his first

shot of Covishield on April 1,

Olympian Mairaj is still wait-

ing anxiously for the first jab.

ration before the Games,

Mairaj has requested the In-

dian Embassy in Rome for

Pfizer vaccine, so that he can

have the second dose in 21

Quite peeved by the con-

sistent tame communication

from the Embassy about re-

questing the local health

authorities for the vaccine,

without any positive res-

ponse, the Indian camp has

shot off a strong communica-

tion to the Ambassador Dr.

Considering the short du-

tension in Italy.

days.

KAMESH SRINIVASAN



Comfort factor: Spain's Jon Rahm, practising ahead of the US Open, will be in familiar surroundings as he has four top-10 finishes in five events played at Torrey Pines. • AFP

Tournament.

Fingers crossed: Angad and Mairaj are hoping for a solution

so that they can fly to Tokyo from Italy. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

like World No. 2 Justin Thomas and four-times Major winner Rory McIlroy are among those in the 156player field who will try to snap out of a form slump on a notoriously difficult layout with penalising rough.

Defending champion Bryson DeChambeau, who overpowered Winged Foot last

"We are mentally, emo-

tionally and physically dis-

turbed after almost a month

chasing the Indian Embassy

for our vaccination and ex-

tension of our visas," wrote

the Indian camp, seeking a

nistered the vaccination ear-

lier, as he was COVID-19 pos-

itive on April 27, and then

tested negative on May 13,

July 7, there is panic about

extending it by a week so

With the visa ending on

before flying to Europe.

Mairaj could not be admi-

quick resolution.

Visa, vaccination worries for shooters

year to win his first Major by six strokes, comes in having finished in a share of 18th place at the Memorial

Six-times runner-up Mickelson, a three-time winner of the PGA Tour event at Torrey Pines, the course he grew up on, this week offers him an incredible chance to become

their training peacefully and

There is an alternate ar-

rangement of the two shot-

gun marksmen going to Za-

greb, Croatia, to join the rifle

and pistol shooters, but that

would considerably upset

In fact, on the advice of

the coach Ennio Falco, both

the skeet shooters had opted

to skip the World Cup start-

ing in Osijek, Croatia, from

June 24, so as to concentrate

on the best possible prepara-

their training.

fly to Tokyo from Italy.

only the sixth person to complete the career Grand Slam.

Brooks Koepka, who counts two U.S. Open wins among his four Majors, may not be at 100% after surgery in March to repair a dislocated kneecap but has proven he can play through pain as he finished runner-up at the PGA Championship.

No Koepka-DeChambeau pairing

AFP TORREY PINES

Those hoping for for an early pairing of Bryson DeChambeau and Brooks Koepka were disappointed by Tuesday's pairings announcement.

Scenes of Koepka showing his unhappiness with DeChambeau's loud talking at the PGA Championship had sparked a social media spat between the two Major champions.

DeChambeau has been paired with Hideki Matsuyama and Tyler Strafaci, while Koepkawill tee off alongside Justin Thomas and Collin Morikawa.

Bopanna-Divij duo enters quarterfinals INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU

HALLE Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan knocked out second seeds Lukasz Kubot and Edouard Roger-Vasselin 7-6 (11), 6-4 to reach the quarterfinals of the €1,455,925 Halle Open on Wednesday.

Other results: €132,280 Challenger, Nottingham: First round: Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Leonardo Mayer (Arg) 3-6, 6-3, 7-6(1).

\$100,000 ITF women, Nottingham: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Renata Zarazua

Minnen & Alison Van Yutvanck (Bel) 6-3, 4-6, [10-7].

\$25,000 ITF women, Figueira da Foz, Portugal: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Momoko Kobori & Ayano Shimizu (Jpn)

bt Junri Namigata (Jpn) & Riya

Bhatia 6-2, 5-7, [10-4]. \$25,000 ITF women, Madrid: First round: Cristina Dinu (Rou) bt Karman Kaur Thandi 1-6. 7-6 (5), 6-2

\$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Alexander Kotzen (USA) & Siddhant Banthia bt Thomas Fancutt (Aus) & Ajeet Rai (Nzl) 6-3, 6-0.

Murray and Venus get Wimbledon wildcards

ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON

Former Wimbledon champions Venus Williams and Andy Murray will receive wild cards to compete in the grass-court Grand Slam tournament when it starts in less than two weeks.

The men's and women's singles winners will each get \$2.4 million, a nearly 28%



Venus. ■FILE PHOTO

Andy Murray. ■ FILE PHOTO

decrease from 2019, although the overall reduction in prize money is 5.2%, the All England Club also announced on Wednesday.

The club said the factors for the decrease "substantial investment" accommodations and testing programs.

included crowd constraints, a

NOTICE INVITING BID Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL) In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751001 Tel.:(0674) 2380950; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in; Email: logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in

Bid Ref.No.: OSMCL/2021-22/DRUGS-EPM/23 Date: 16/06/2021 Online Bids through e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in) are invited from eligible bidders for supply of Drugs & Medical Consumables as per the particulars mentioned below:

Particulars Date and time 1. Date & time of release of bid 16/06/2021. 5 PM End Date & Time 18/06/2021, 3 PM 28/06/2021, 6.00 PM Fnd Date & Time Date & time for submission of Tender Start Date & Time Documents, Tender Document Fee 29/06/2021, 10 AM 02/07/2021, 11.00 AM of tender document 4. Date & time of Online Technical bid 02/07/2021, 11:30 AM To be informed to the qualified bidders

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmcl.nic.in and https://tendersodisha.gov.in . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning

Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha OIPR-10112/11/0025/2122

NOTICE INVITING BID

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL) In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751001 Tel.:(0674) 2380660; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in; Email: logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in

Bid Ref.No: OSMCL/2021-22/SURGICAL-DHS-RE-TENDER/21 Date:16/06/2021 Online Bids through e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in) are invited from eligible bidders for supply of Surgical, Syringes and Other items as per the particulars mentioned below:

SI. No.	Particulars Particulars	Date and time				
1.	Date & time of release of bid	16/06/2021, 3 PM				
2.	Date & time for submission of queries by E-Mail id - logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in	18/06/2021, up to 5:00 PM				
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time	End Date & Time			
		21/06/2021, 3 PM	08/07/2021, 6 PM			
4.	Date & time for submission of Tender Document cost	09/07/2021	16/07/2021, till 11.00 AM			
5.	Date & time of Online Technical bid Opening	16/07/2021, 11:30 AM				
6.	Date of opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the qualified bidders				

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmcl.nic.in and https://tendersodisha.gov.in . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha OIPR-10112/11/0026/2122

CAD-452

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751001

Tel.:(0674) 2380660; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in ; Email: logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in **NOTICE INVITING BID** Bid Reference No.:OSMCL/2021-22/SHORT-PAEDIATRIC/24

Online Bids through e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in) are invited from eligible bidders for Supply of Paediatric Items as per the particulars men

SI. Particulars Date and time Date & time of release of bid 16/06/2021, 5 PM Start Date & Time End Date & Time Date & time of Online bid submission 17/06/2021, 11 AM 24/06/2021, 11 AM Date & time of Online Technical bid 3. 24/06/2021, 11:30 AM 4. Date of opening of Price Bid To be informed to the qualified bidders

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites www.osmcl.nic.in and https://tendersodisha.gov.in. OSMCL reserves the right to reject or modify any conditions of the tender or cancel the tender or cancel the issued purchase order at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

> Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha OIPR-10112/11/0027/2122

Warner, Cummins and Maxwell to skip West Indies, Bangladesh tours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Seven top Australian cricketers who recently played in the IPL have pulled out of the country's white-ball tour of West Indies and Bangla-

The two tours are part of team's preparations for the T20 World Cup later this year. David Warner, Pat

Cummins, Glenn Maxwell, Jhye Richardson, Kane Richardson, Marcus Stoinis and Daniel Sams have requested not to be considered for the tours for various reasons while Steve Smith has been rested to fully recover from an elbow complaint which flared up during the IPL, Cricket Australia said in a statement.

Ashton Agar, Wes Agar, Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Dan Christian, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Mitchell Marsh, Ben McDermott, Riley Meredith, Josh Philippe, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Swepson, Ashton Turner, Andrew Tye, Matthew Wade and Adam Travelling reserves: Nathan El-

The squad: Aaron Finch (Capt.),

lils and Tanveer Sangha.

City opens at Spurs AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE boyhood club on the opening weekend.

Champion Manchester City will start the defence of its title away to Tottenham after the fixtures for the 2021-22 season were unveiled on Wednesday.

City is among the sides heavily linked with Spurs striker Harry Kane, throwing up the tantalising possibility that the England captain could line up against his

Manchester United opens its campaign against Leeds at Old Trafford. Elsewhere on the wee-

kend of August 14, Brentford begins life back in the top flight for the first time in 75 years with a London derby at home to Arsenal, while Championship winner Norwich meets Liverpool on its

Karun is Motorsport UK's youngest-ever board member

SPORTS REPORTER CHENNAI

India's former Formula One driver Karun Chandhok was appointed to the Board of Directors of Motorsport UK, the governing body and member ship organisation four-wheeler motorsports in the

sport UK's youngest-ever board member, said, "I moved to En-

United Kingdom

Karun, who has

on Wednesday.

become

gland from India nearly 20 years ago because the belief at the time was that if you wanted to get to Formula 1, you had to come and race in the UK as it was the capital of

motor-

"To have the opportunity to work with the rest of the Board and Motorsport UK in shaping the future landmotorsports in the UK is very excit-

scape

world

sports.

Adhiban, Arjun and Gukesh set for Champions Tour debut



CHESS RAKESH RAO NEW DELHI

gins on June 26.

B. Adhiban, Arjun Erigaisi and D. Gukesh are set to make their debut in the \$1.5 million Meltwaters Champions Chess Tour when the seventh leg of the season be-

Gukesh, the second youngest Grandmaster in history, will also become the youngest player on the Tour by replacing R. Praggnanandhaa for the honour. Praggna-



nandhaa was the youngest participant when he played the New in Chess Classic in

For the first time, three Indians will be part of the 16player field that is likely to be headed by Tour leader and World champion Magnus Carlsen.

P. Harikrishna could well be a fourth Indian 'wild card', should he get voted in by the premium members of official broadcaster chess24.com. The members have been asked to pick two



players from a list of 17. The final list of partici-

pants, along with title-sponsor of the \$100,000 event, will be announced in due

Arjun and Adhiban made it by finishing as the winner and the runner-up of the Indian Qualifier. Gukesh joined them by

sensationally winning the Gelfand Challenge – an event on the Challengers Tour that offers the winner a wild card for Champions Tour.

through her ranking **ATHLETICS** Y.B. SARANGI

Dutee eyes Tokyo berth

Sprinter Dutee Chand is confident of earning a women's 100m quota place in the Tokyo Olympics through her world ranking.

record holder with a timing of 11.22, said she would try to make the cut for the Olympics in

Brand ambassador

Dutee, the National

"I have been training at the National camp here for the last three months. There is no guarantee but I will try my best to touch the (Olympic) qualifying mark of 11.15 in the Indian Grand Prix IV (June 21) and National inter-state championships (June 25 to 29)," said Dutee at a virtual

conference,



where she was named

Senco Gold and Dia-Company's mond brand ambassador, on Wednesday.

Dutee, who clocked 11.58 to come second in the Federation Cup in March, said if she did not get the qualifying time, then she would make it to her second Olympics because of her world ranking.

"As per the current ranking, I am placed 42nd. I am very hopeful

of qualifying. The qualification deadline is June 29. After that I will get one month to prepare well for the Olympics. I will try to achieve my personal best and get into the final in the Olympics." "My training has

been going on well, morning six to 10 and evening six to eight. My speed and stamina have increased and I need to make a few technical changes as per my coach's advice."

al events. "We were supposed

The 25-year-old, an Asian Games silver medallist in 100m and 200m, highlighted the obstacles posed by cancellation of internation-

to go to Poland to compete in the World Relay event, but we could not go there. We could not go to events in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan."