



Pegasus spyware used to 'snoop' on journalists; surveillance via phones

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Ahead of U.P. election, Mayawati tries to win over Brahmins

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Taliban leader 'favours political settlement' even as offensive rages

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Dhawan takes India to a commanding win over Sri Lanka in the first ODI

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NEARBY



Delhi police's meet with farmers inconclusive

NEW DELHI
Ahead of the march planned by farmers near Parliament during the monsoon session, the Delhi police's meeting with the farmer unions remained inconclusive on Sunday. A senior police officer said they had requested the farmers to reconsider their protest call citing the DDMA guidelines and the threat of COVID-19 third wave.

CITY • PAGE 3

No COVID-19 death reported in the Capital

NEW DELHI
The Capital on Sunday reported no COVID-related deaths, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government. The last time Delhi saw zero deaths due to COVID-19 was on March 2 this year. A total of 51 new cases were reported over 24 hours. According to the bulletin, the city had less than a day's stock of COVID-19 vaccines left as of Sunday morning.

CITY • PAGE 3

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EDUCATION PLUS • PAGE 5



Rescue mission: NDRF personnel searching for survivors after a landslide hit a locality in Chembur on Sunday. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

31 killed as rain triggers mayhem in Mumbai

City records over 200 mm rainfall overnight; alert sounded

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

At least 31 persons, including eight minors, lost their lives as incessant rain, which began on Saturday night and continued throughout Sunday, pummelled Mumbai, triggering landslides, house collapse and electrocution. The Regional Meteorological Centre predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places in the next 48 hours, with extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places.

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation said more than 200 mm of rainfall was recorded between 11 p.m. on Saturday and 4 a.m. on Sun-

day. A BMC centre at Dahisar recorded the highest rainfall of 226.82 mm, followed by Chembur with 218.45 mm.

Landslips, wall collapse
Nineteen persons were killed and five injured at Vashi Naka in Chembur after a retaining wall collapsed on four or five huts due to the force of water and mud around 1 a.m. A landslide at Panchasheel chawl in Vikroli on six houses around 3 a.m. resulted in the death of 10 persons, while one person was injured. A teenager was killed after a wall of his house in the Bhandup area collapsed, while one person

was electrocuted at a shop in Andheri.

Five battalions of the National Disaster Response Force were deployed in Chembur and Vikroli to speed up rescue efforts. The search was on for two more missing individuals at the time of writing this report.

"I visited the 3 locations of landslips... Relief work is going on and all necessary financial and medical assistance is being provided by the Govt of Maharashtra and BMC," Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray tweeted.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Govt. ready to discuss all issues in a constructive manner: Modi

Congress, Trinamool oppose proposal on PM's meeting on COVID outside House

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day before the monsoon session of Parliament gets under way, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday told an all-party meeting that his government is ready to discuss and debate all issues in a "constructive" manner.

However, differences surfaced at the meeting, convened by the government, when Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi proposed that the Prime Minister would chair a meeting on the COVID-19 situation in the country at Parliament Annex on Tuesday.

Strongly opposing it, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien said the discussion should take place on the floor of the House.

"MPs do not want fancy PowerPoint presentations on #COVID19 from the PM or this Government in some conference room. #Parliament is in session. Come to the FLOOR OF THE HOUSE," Mr. O'Brien later tweeted.

The Opposition parties also differed among themselves on the issues to be taken up first. At a meeting of Opposition leaders, convened by the Leader of the



Exchange of views: Prime Minister Narendra Modi arriving to attend the all-party meet on Sunday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, the Congress was keen to first take up the issue of the hike in the prices of petroleum products and other commodities, but the other Opposition parties expressed their intention to move an adjournment motion to discuss the ongoing farmers' agitation. Sources said disruptions were expected on the issue of price rise as well as the farmers' agitation.

At a separate meeting with all the floor leaders, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla urged them to "respect the sanctity and dignity of the House", and sought their cooperation for the smooth conduct of the proceedings. The government plans to

take up 31 Bills, including two financial Bills, during the session.

"Took part in the All-Party meeting before the start of Parliament's Monsoon Session. We look forward to a productive session where all issues can be debated as well as discussed in a constructive manner," Mr. Modi tweeted. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Minister and Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal were present at the meeting.

"At the all-party meeting, Prime Minister Modi said healthy and fruitful debates should take place in Parliament. He said the government is ready to hold discussions on any subject if raised

Stormy session expected

The monsoon session is expected to witness heated arguments, with the Congress and its allies set to target the government over price rise. Congress chief Sonia Gandhi held a meet with party MPs on Sunday. "There will be disruptions tomorrow as there has been consensus among Opposition parties about price rise," an MP said. • PAGE 9

as per parliamentary rules and procedures," Mr. Joshi told presspersons

PM's brief presence

The meeting, attended by 33 parties, lasted for more than two hours.

Taking a dig at the Prime Minister's brief presence in the meeting, Mr. O'Brien tweeted: "Prime Minister, Sir. True. You did TAKE PART. The #Parliament meeting lasted for 2 hours and 40 minutes. We had the pleasure of your company for 9 minutes. You listened for 3 minutes. Allowed the photographers/video cams in for 2 minutes. And spoke to us for 4 minutes."

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Pre-Bakrid easing draws flak in Kerala

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The decision by the Kerala government to ease COVID-19 curbs on retail sales for three days from Sunday ahead of Bakrid on July 20, has evoked mixed response. A large section of the public welcomed the brief respite after 71 days of tough curbs.

However, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi tweeted: "Deplorable act by Kerala Govt. to provide 3 days relaxations for Bakra Id celebrations especially because it's one of the hotbeds for COVID-19 at present. If Kanwar Yatra is wrong, so is Bakra Id public celebrations."

The Indian Medical Association also objected to the easing of curbs and threatened to move the Supreme Court against the decision.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Navjot Sidhu appointed Punjab Congress chief

Sonia's decision despite pushback

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH/ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing infighting in the Punjab Congress, former Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu was on Sunday appointed president of the Punjab Congress Committee, along with four working presidents.

An official statement from the All India Congress Committee said Mr. Sidhu and the four working presidents had been appointed by Congress president Sonia Gandhi with immediate effect. The four working presidents are S.S. Gilzian, S.S. Danny, Pawan Goel and K.S. Nagra.

Ms. Gandhi is learnt to have individually spoken to MPs from Punjab on the issue of elevating Mr. Sidhu. A senior leader from Punjab confirmed it to *The Hindu*, and said the Congress chief seemed "determined" on Mr. Sidhu's elevation.



Navjot Singh Sidhu

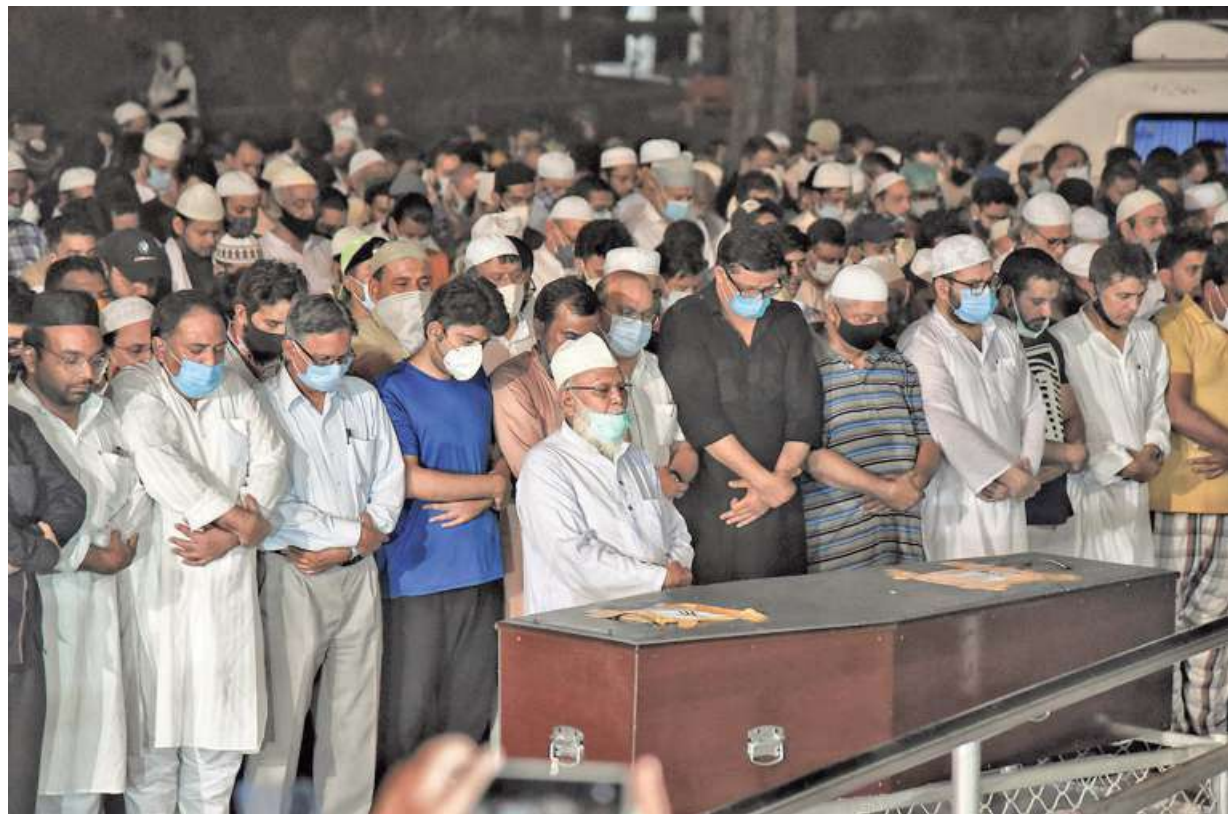
"Ms. Gandhi spoke to the MPs individually and each one of them was opposed to the idea of making Mr. Sidhu the PCC chief," the leader said.

The decision came at the end of a day of hectic political activity in Punjab and Delhi.

While MPs met at Rajya Sabha member Partap Singh Bajwa's house over lunch in Delhi, a group of MLAs from Punjab issued a statement, urging the high command not to let down the Punjab Chief Minister.

RELATED REPORT ON • PAGE 8

Final farewell



In memory: Relatives and friends offering prayers at the funeral of photojournalist Danish Siddiqui, who was killed while covering a clash between Afghan security forces and Taliban fighters near a border crossing with Pakistan, at the Jamia Millia Islamia graveyard in Delhi on Sunday. • ANI (REPORT ON PAGE 8)

After U.P., Delhi calls off Kanwar Yatra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority on Sunday issued an order that no celebrations, processions and gatherings would be allowed during the upcoming Kanwar Yatra in the Capital.

The order said the yatra is scheduled to commence from July 25 despite being banned/suspended by the Uttarakhand government. "In view of the persisting COVID-19 situation, it is decided that the Kanwar Yatra should not be permitted to prevent the spread of the virus in the territory of NCT of Delhi," the order read. The DDMA order came a day after the yatra was cancelled in Uttar Pradesh.

The order said in case of violation of instructions, the violator will be proceeded against as per the provisions of the DDMA Act, 2005, Section 188 of the IPC and other applicable laws.

Midday meals leave a long-lasting impact: study

Lower stunting among children with mothers who had access to school lunches

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Girls who had access to free lunches provided at government schools had children with a higher height-to-age ratio than those who did not, said a new study on the inter-generational benefits of the midday meal scheme, published in *Nature Communications* this week.

Using nationally representative data on cohorts of mothers and their children spanning 23 years, the paper showed that by 2016, the prevalence of stunting was significantly lower in areas where the scheme was implemented in 2005.

More than one in three Indian children are stunted, or too short for their age, which reflects chronic undernutri-



Basic nutrition: A file photo of children having midday meal at a school in Vijayawada. • K.V.S. GIRI

tion. The fight against stunting has often focussed on boosting nutrition for young children, but nutritionists have long argued that maternal health and well-being is the key to reducing stunting in their offspring. Noting that "interventions to improve maternal height and education must be imple-

mented years before those girls and young women become mothers", the study has attempted a first-of-its-kind inter-generational analysis of the impacts of a mass feeding programme.

The paper was authored by a researcher from the University of Washington and economists and nutrition ex-

perts at the International Food Policy Research Institute. It found that the midday meal scheme was associated with 13-32% of the improvement in the height-for-age z-scores in India between 2006 and 2016.

The linkages between midday meals and lower stunting in the next generation were stronger in the lower socio-economic strata and likely work through women's education, fertility, and the use of health services, the paper said.

The scheme was launched in 1995 to provide children in government schools with a free cooked meal with a minimum energy content of 450 kcal.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Transgender persons' bid to break new ground

Several members of the community have applied for the job of sub-inspector in Odisha

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

Not so long ago, Pratima Behera, a 22-year transgender, faced abuses and scurried for cover as baton-wielding policemen chased her at a railway station in Jamshepur, Jharkhand, where she begged for survival. Kalpana Patra (name changed), who used to be a trans-sex worker, also experienced harassment and violence, often at the hands of police.

Both Pratima and Kalpana are set to turn their life around. They have filled out applications to become police officers in Odisha.

From undertaking hour-long running to



Transgender persons preparing for the SI job test in Bhubaneswar. • BISWARANJAN ROUT

practising yoga and from brushing up general knowledge and English language skills to meditating, these two transgender aspirants and their likes are fully occupied all through the day at Sundarpada

locality of Bhubaneswar. They seem to be on a mission to prove themselves.

When the Odisha government came up with an advertisement last month to appoint transgender persons as sub-inspectors of police, the community considered it an opportunity to change the societal perception about them. For a total of 477 SI posts, 1,32,496 candidates have applied. Of them, 97,506 are males and 34,964 females while 26 belong to the transgender community.

"Not many in our community can plan their future on the basis of their qualifications. There are very few employers for us in the job market," said Kalpana.

Pratima said the prospect of joining the police force was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for her, especially after she was forced to flee home and beg for survival just to evade the mocking eyes of her own family members.

"This is a rare occasion when so many transgender candidates have applied for a government job. This is the first permanent, dignified job offered to transgender persons," said Meera Parida, a transgender activist who heads an NGO, Sakhaa, that works on mainstreaming the transgender community. She is mentoring the transgender candidates for cracking the police job.



On June 24, Kiran and Vinay were shot multiple times in Dwarka by the girl's family. The episode left Vinay dead and Kiran recuperating in a women's shelter. *The Hindu* visited their village to meet the families who shared what lies behind the murder

Where honour matters more than life

HEMANI BHANDARI
SONIPAT

The sun was peaking on a summer afternoon in Gopalpur village in Sonipat. A suffocating silence prevailed; most stayed indoors. A 12-year-old boy popped up. Asked about the house of a girl whose husband had recently been killed 'to save the honour', the boy directed promptly: "Everyone in the village knows both the houses, of the girl and the boy, and the whole story," he said with a rather stern face.

Past a bungalow was a double-storey house with cemented exterior. Two wooden cots and chairs were laid out inside the courtyard. Sheela Dahiya had just returned after buying groceries from a nearby shop.

As soon as she heard her daughter Kiran's name, she broke into tears. Her husband Jai Bhagwan - visibly drunk - sat on a chair finding it tough to speak coherently. "I will approach Narendra Modi," he kept repeating.

Ms. Sheela complained that police are not letting her meet her daughter and that the family had visited the police station thrice in the hope that offic-



ers will take them to the hospital because that's the only way they know they'll be able to meet the daughter.

Futile visits

"I received a call from her from a police officer's number right after the incident. She asked me to take her home. We went to the hospital to meet her but we were not allowed. We haven't been able to since then," she said, adding that she, her husband, and two sisters-in-law had

gone to Dwarka Sector 23 police station on July 12 and 13. They waited all day long at the police station but without any luck.

However, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said that Kiran was discharged from the hospital and sent to a women's shelter to ensure her safety. She reportedly told officials that she wouldn't be safe at her maternal house.

Kiran's brother Aman (21) and her cousin Vicky (22) have been arrested along with others for shooting her husband Vinay Dahiya dead at their rented accommodation in Ambrabai village on June 24. They fired bullets at both, but she survived.

Feuding families

Both families were against the relationship and marriage because they were from the same *gotra*. But now Ms. Sheela wants her back. "I can even die to keep my daughter safe here. I've never even laid a hand on her. I just want her back. Whatever happened was in the past," the mother cried with a passing mention of Vinay.

The father butted in: "Us ladke ka naam mat le... vo to marr gaya.. mujhe bas meri beti wapas chahiye [Don't take the boy's name... he is dead now... I just want my daughter back]". The mother promptly told him to shut up.

Long story

The shooting episode was not an on the spur of the moment incident. The antipathy had been brewing since the lovers fled their homes and got married in Chandigarh in August 2020. Their love story dates further back to 2013 when Kiran was in Class VIII.

Ms. Sheela remembered that Kiran used to go to school in the bus and Vinay used to follow her. The word spread in the village and the family members became aware of it. "Those were the last days when she physically attended the school. We made her drop out and sit at home. She took Class IX exams from home and wasn't allowed to study thereafter," the mother recounted.

She said they did everything they could to salvage their honour. "Sab kuch izzat bachaane ke liye kiya tha," she said.

With a tinge of regret, she says: "Police ko complaint dene ka socha tha us waqt bas izzat ke maare chhor diya. Agar us waqt bola hota to shayad aaj ye din na dekhna padta. [We wished to complain against Vinay but stopped because of

honour. If we would have, then maybe we wouldn't have had to see this day]".

Deeper, stronger

The end of studies didn't mean the end of their relationship. Over the next few years, the two families met through mediators and both lovers were instructed not to see each other. But the more they tried to disunite them, the stronger their relationship grew.

Kiran's brother Aman, however, had a streak of violence. "Aman *bhai* was teased among his peers for *didi's* relationship. A few years ago, Vinay had told Aman *bhai* that he was his brother-in-law in front of 25 other boys. It hurt his pride. Vinay had also said that he would kill Aman," recalled Himanshu alias Sunny (15), Kiran's cousin and Vicky's brother.

Aman allegedly killed a friend of Vinay in 2017 when he refused to call Vinay to a place Aman wanted him to come. Aman was then 17 and spent a year in an observation home. But the panchayat intervened, and the issue was apparently resolved.

Two years later, on August 13, three months after Kiran has turned 18, she left the house when everyone was asleep. The same day, they got married in Chandigarh and sought protection from Kiran's family. The court, however, stated that they should seek protection

(Clockwise from top right) Family members and relatives of Kiran at her house in Sonipat; a photo of Vinay Dahiya at his residence; Kiran's mother Sheela Dahiya and father Jai Bhagwan.

• SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

from local police.

A few days later after the marriage, the village panchayat ruled that the couple should stay out of the village following which both families reportedly snapped contact.

But Aman was still seething with anger. On June 24, he, Vicky and a few other youths entered the couple's house and shot multiple rounds at them, leaving Vinay dead.

"If I had any idea that Aman was going to do something like this, I would have beaten him black and blue myself. I have two children and none of them are with me now," cried Ms. Sheela.

A house in mourning

A few meters away from Kiran's house is Vinay's double-storey residence. His photograph, with a garland of yellow *genda*, hangs on the wall. His family is vehemently against bringing Kiran to the house and wants nothing to do with her anymore.

But just before his murder, they had begun talking with their son, and though reluctantly, accepted the marriage. "I had spoken to him the day he was killed. She was pregnant and she and Vinay had gone to a hospital for her abortion because of some complications. He had called me to ask for some home remedies and visit them to help the girl," claimed Vinay's mother, who didn't wish to be named.

Half an hour before the murder, Vinay's brother Deepak said they had spoken to him. Now, all that remains of him is a car - he used to drive while working as a driver at the IGI Airport - parked outside their residence. "Bohot samjhaya tha use. Maara bhi tha. Nahin mana. [We tried a lot to make him understand but he didn't. We beat him too]," said Mr. Deepak.

The villagers too were against the relationship, and they pinned the blame on city culture. All this happens in cities like Delhi; not here, said grocery store owner Rakesh.

"They were brother and sister. No girl and boy in this village can marry each other. It's against the rule of nature. It's a sin," he said, assertively.

Man kills neighbour for not returning borrowed amount of ₹25,000; arrested

His accomplice also nabbed while another is on the run; police find body in canal

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old man allegedly killed his neighbour, beheaded the body, and disposed it in a canal in U.P.'s Muradnagar, the police said on Sunday.

Riyasat, a driver from Old Seemapuri and his 30-year-old accomplice Javed from Garima Garden in Ghaziabad have been arrested, they said.

The case came to the fore when a missing report of a man named Shahjad (52) was registered at Seemapuri police station on Tuesday.

On Friday, the police

found a body in Khekra, U.P. The family members of Shahjad identified the body. Next, a post-mortem was conducted by the U.P. police.

"On the basis of technical surveillance and call details record, the police identified one of the accused persons. A raid was conducted, and the accused were nabbed," said DCP (Shahdara) R. Sathiyasundaram.

During interrogation, Riyasat said the victim had borrowed ₹25,000 from him before the lockdown. When he asked Shahjad to return the money, the latter abused and threatened

him. Riyasat then decided to take revenge and planned his murder for five days, the police said.

On Monday, he asked the victim to come to Khekra for purchasing mangoes and also promised him employment in painting work. He told the police that Shahjad was looking for work.

Offered liquor to victim

Riyasat picked him up from Seemapuri border in his car and took him to Khekra. On the way, Riyasat called Javed.

Later, Riyasat also called his nephew Nadeem, who

is a resident of Khekra, to eliminate Shahjad.

Riyasat offered liquor to the victim and got him drunk. After some time, they reached one of the fields in Khekra, the police said. Riyasat and Nadeem took Shahjad to the field. They attacked him with a chopper, killing him.

After this, they beheaded the body and disposed it of in a canal near Village Surana. A manhunt is on for Nadeem, the police said.

Riyasat was a gramin sewa driver and lost work during the lockdown. Javed is also a driver by profession, the police added.

Driver held for stealing ₹80L of employer

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old driver was arrested from Punjab's Ludhiana for allegedly stealing ₹80 lakh cash from his employer in south Delhi, the police said on Sunday.

The accused - Kinder Pal Singh from Ludhiana - was working with the victim for the last 10-12 years.

Complainant Ajay Gupta from Ludhiana reported on Friday that the incident happened when he went to Sainik Farms in his car along with his driver for making an advance payment of a property, an officer said.

Further probe is under way, the police added.

4 feared trapped as building collapses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

A three-storey residential building inside the premises of a cargo company in Pataudi here collapsed on Sunday. Around four labourers were suspected to be trapped under the debris, and one person was rescued.

The building inside the premises of the company in Khawaspur village came crashing down late in the evening. Around four labourers were feared trapped under the debris, according to the security guard at the company's premises.

Gulshan Kalra, Assistant Divisional Fire Officer, said one person was rescued

One person was rescued and taken to hospital and the team was close to pulling out another person from under the debris

GULSHAN KALRA
Assistant Divisional Fire Officer

and taken to hospital and the team was close to pulling out another person from under the debris.

Yash Garg, Deputy Commissioner, said rescue and relief teams were sent to the spot soon after the incident.

Local MLA Satya Prakash, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Pradeep Kumar, and fire brigade personnel were present at the spot.

HC closes FIR against man in road rage case

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has closed an FIR against a man in a road rage case after the parties amicably settled the issue, noting that the accused has shown remorse for his conduct and undertook not to repeat the same in the future.

Accused to give ₹3 lakh Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri directed him to deposit a cost of ₹3 lakh in the lawyers' pandemic relief fund as the accused volunteered to financially contribute to a social cause.

"In view of the above facts and since no useful purpose will be served in continuance of the present criminal proceedings, it is directed that the aforesaid FIR and the consequent proceedings arising therefrom are hereby quashed," the court said.

The decision would be subject to payment of cost of ₹3 lakh by the man with the Delhi High Court Bar Association Pandemic Relief Fund within a period of two weeks.

The court also recorded the statement of the complainant that he has settled the matter out of his own free will, volition and without any coercion and he has no objection if the FIR and proceedings are quashed.

The FIR was lodged on the complainant's allegation that on October 17, 2020, he and his wife were coming from Safdarjung Enclave at around 2.30 a.m. after having dinner at a restaurant and a road rage incident took place near the AIIMS Trauma Centre.

The complainant alleged that the accused beat him using his belt and he sustained injuries after which the FIR was lodged.

The court was informed that a cross-case was also registered against this complainant in the same incident and it was settled and the FIR was quashed earlier.

Court rejects petition of 93 CRPF jawans seeking deployment in UN Mission

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected the plea of 93 CRPF personnel seeking direction to the force to deploy them in the upcoming United Nations (UN) Mission. It noted that it is not for the court to interfere in administrative tasks such.

A Bench of Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw and Justice Amit Bansal further said the CRPF personnel "merely by being empanelled, therefore, did not acquire any right to be posted at UN Mission, whensoever and wheresoever".

The court said if the 93 CRPF personnel still meet the requirements set out in the new notices for empanelment, they can compete with the fresh applicants and if selected, would again be empanelled.


The direction came on a petition filed by the personnel challenging the decision of the CRPF inviting fresh applications for de-



ployment in the upcoming UN Mission in July, 2021.

The 93 personnel contended that pursuant to similar notices taken out by the CRPF in 2016, they had applied and participated in the selection process comprising written examination, physical standards, physical efficiency and medical tests and were selected.

In June, 2017, they cleared the Pre-Deployment Training and from time to time, till the year 2019, they were subjected to further training for deployment in the UN Mission. However, they were not deployed at any of the UN Missions.


**DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION,
ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Expression of Interest for Selection of Agency for Evaluation of Promotion of Organic Farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in the State of Odisha

Sealed offers/proposals are invited from reputed Govt./Semi-Govt./Institutions, Professional Firms, Pvt. Companies, Cooperative Societies, for empanelment as Agency for Evaluation of Promotion of Organic Farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in the State of Odisha. The Agency should not be involved in the implementation process of the scheme Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in current year or previous years either in the State level or in the GoI level. The proposals should come in sealed envelope super scribed as "Application for Registration of Agency for Evaluation of Promotion of Organic Farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in the State of Odisha" from the Organisations as per the enclosed application format by registered / speed post. No. e-mail will be entertained for submission of proposals in this regard. Interested parties should apply with a non-refundable application fee of Rs.500/- (Rupees five hundred) only in the form of DD / Pay Order in favour of **Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar**. Filled Eoi should reach in the Office of the **State Bio-Chemist, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Dist-Khurda, Odisha** on behalf of the undersigned. Last date for receipt of application is **30th July 2021** upto **2.00PM** and the same shall be opened on the **next working day at 11.00 AM in the office of State Bio-Chemist, Bhubaneswar** in the presence of authorized signatory or representative. The application form and the terms & conditions are available at the website of www.agrisnetodisha.ori.nic.in/ www.odisha.gov.in/

Sd/-
Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha
OIPR-01034/11/0009/2122


**DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION,
ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Expression of Interest (EOI) for Engagement of State Level Agency for Project Management Unit for Integrated Farming System in the State of Odisha

Expression of Interest (EOI) is invited by the Directorate of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar from the experienced and interested Organizations/ Agencies for engagement of State Level Agency for Project Management Unit for Integrated Farming System in the State of Odisha. Interested Organizations/ Agencies are required to submit proposals in sealed envelope super-scribed as "Application for Engagement of State Level Agency for Project Management Unit for Integrated Farming System in the State of Odisha" as per the enclosed application format by registered/ speed post. Proposals in e-mail will not be entertained in this regard. The EOI should be addressed to **Director, Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, 2nd floor, Krushi Bhawan, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khurda, Odisha, Pin-751001**. Last date for receipt of proposal is **9th August 2021 upto 1.00 PM** and the same shall be opened on the **same day at 03:30 PM** in presence of authorized signatory and representatives. The application form and detail terms & conditions are available in the official website of www.odisha.gov.in/ www.agrisnetodisha.ori.nic.in/

The Authority shall not be responsible for any sort of postal delay and proposal received beyond scheduled date and time shall not be entertained & out rightly be rejected. The authority reserves the right to cancel/reject any or all the EOI without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha
OIPR-01034/11/0010/2122

Timings DELHI

MONDAY, JUL. 19
RISE 05:36 SET 19:20
RISE 14:34 SET 00:53

TUESDAY, JUL. 20
RISE 05:37 SET 19:19
RISE 15:43 SET 01:36

WEDNESDAY, JUL. 21
RISE 05:37 SET 19:19
RISE 16:52 SET 02:24

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	36	28
Safdarjang	36	28
Palam	36	27

Delhi Palam Today
32°C Few spells of light to moderate rain and thunder-shower likely at some places with humid condition.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
33°C Light rain & thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky. Warm and humid day.

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THE HINDU
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Police's meet with farmers inconclusive

Protesters requested to reconsider planned march to Parliament; SKM leaders assure peaceful rally

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the march planned by farmers near Parliament during the monsoon session, the Delhi police's meeting with the farmer unions remained inconclusive on Sunday.

A senior police officer said they had requested the farmers to reconsider their protest call citing the DDMA guidelines and the outbreak of COVID-19 third wave.

Samyukt Kisan Morcha leaders have given assurances of "peaceful" protest.

No plans to gherao
"We laid out the plan. We don't plan to do any gherao [or laying siege], and the idea of trying to enter Parliament is ruled out. We have no intent whatsoever to disrupt the functioning of Parliament in any way," said SKM leader Yogendra Yadav, who was part of the farmers' delegation.

The monsoon session be-



Keeping watch: A security officer on duty at the Ghazipur border in Delhi. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

gins on Monday, and the farmers intend to begin their daily protest from July 22.

"We told them [the police] we would not take unlimited crowds. We are only taking 200 select persons. To be doubly sure, we have said these 200 will leave only from the Singhu border. They would leave in pre-decided buses. Each of them will carry an identity card, and the list will be supplied

to the police in advance. So we have taken all precautions possible," said Mr. Yadav.

"We wanted to be extremely careful and ensure that no disruptionist uses this opportunity to do something that will bring a bad name to the movement," he added, noting that the Sikhs for Justice group, which was not part of the SKM, had already given a call for a siege

of Parliament.

The monsoon session of Parliament will start on Monday and is scheduled to conclude on August 13.

Every detail about each protester will be given to the police, including a demonstrator's Aadhaar card and the mobile phone number, said the farmers at the meeting.

Farmers have been protesting against the Central laws since November last year at the Delhi border points of Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur.

The Delhi police said they would consult and get back to the SKM, said Mr. Yadav, who added that the farm unions did not apply for permission to protest, and intend to continue their preparations.

'Equal share'

"All the 40 farm unions involved in the SKM will have an equal share in the protest, with five members from each

union participating each day," said Dharmendra Malik, spokesperson for the Bharatiya Kisan Union-Tikait. "Out of these five members, there will be a team leader who will be fully accountable for his team. The selection of the satyagrahis is being done after thorough scrutiny, with ID cards being issued on the basis of Aadhaar cards," he added.

Barricades set up

The police said multilayer barricades had been installed in the New Delhi area to avoid trespassing during the monsoon session.

"A team also visited the Red Fort, Parliament and other locations to check preparedness. A bomb disposal squad and quick reaction teams have been deployed at key locations. The area around Parliament will remain under round-the-clock security till the monsoon session ends," said the senior police officer.

Farmers' protest: police ask DMRC to be alert

'Shut seven metro stations if required'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police has written to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation to keep extra vigil at seven metro stations and close them if needed in view of the farmers' protest near Parliament during its monsoon session, officials said on Sunday.

The metro stations are Janpath, Lok Kalyan Marg, Patel Chowk, Rajiv Chowk, Central Secretariat, Mandi House and Udyog Bhawan.

Precautionary measure

A senior police officer said it is just a precautionary measure and if required, only then the metro stations will be closed.

Since Delhi metro is the most favoured form of conveyance in the national capital, the protesters may use the metro to reach New Delhi, it said.

Besides, Deputy Com-



Commuters wait outside the Rajiv Chowk metro station in the Capital. ■ FILE PHOTO

missioner of Police (New Delhi) has also requested to keep an extra vigil on the seven metro stations as well as other metro stations which lies in the New Delhi area, it stated.

The farmer unions have planned to protest near Parliament against the three farm laws from July 22.

No COVID-19 death reported in the Capital

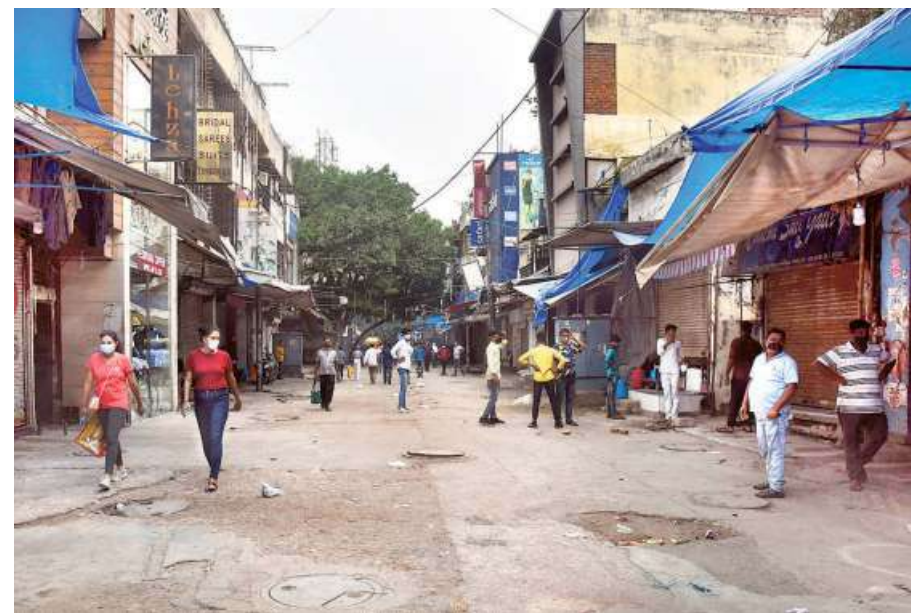
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded zero deaths due to COVID-19 on Sunday, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government.

The last time the Capital had zero deaths was on March 2. The number of new cases added was 51 after 71,546 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 0.07%.

There are currently 592 active cases in the Capital, of which 203 are under home isolation. The total number of cases since the pandemic began has climbed to 14,35,529 and the total fatalities stand at 25,027.

According to the bulletin, the Capital has less than a day's stock of COVID-19 vaccines left as of Sunday morning. There are 72,240 doses of Covishield remaining, of which 60,000 doses were added on July 17, the bulletin said. There are 2,05,630 doses of Covaxin available but due to irregular delivery cycles, only 20% of stocks can be used for first dose.



Export market in Sarojini Nagar was closed until further orders on Sunday for violating COVID-19 norms. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Sarojini Nagar's export market shut for violating COVID norms

No social distancing was being followed, stated SDM order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Sunday closed the export market at Sarojini Nagar till further orders for violating COVID-19 safety protocols.

The market was found to be overcrowded with people

not following COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

Sudden inspection

The shops that fall under the export market will be closed from Sunday, according to an order issued by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Va-

sant Kunj) Ankur Prakash Meshram. Officials surveyed the market at 5.30 p.m. on Saturday and found that it was very crowded with COVID norms being "grossly violated and no social distancing being followed at all", the order added.

Reconstruct demolished church, says Cong.

DPCC president hits out at Kejriwal for putting blame on DDA for razing it

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar on Sunday visited the site where Little Flower Church was demolished in South Delhi last week and assured the church authorities that he would do his best to ensure that the church is re-built at the same site.

Mr. Kumar wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal saying that the church was demolished by the Block Development Officer without

giving proper notice or reasons.

He hit out at Mr. Kejriwal for issuing a statement in Goa saying that the DDA had demolished the church.

False statement

"It is very unfortunate that you made a false statement in Goa that the DDA demolished the church, whereas the land on which the church existed was Gram Sabha land and was under the Delhi government. The matter was also not referred

to the religious committee of the Delhi government dealing in these type of matters," Mr. Kumar wrote in his letter.

Saying that the church was in existence since 2005, and its demolition had hurt religious sentiments of the Christian community and had created a sense of alienation and insecurity among the Christian community, Mr. Kumar demanded that the church be reconstructed immediately so that no attempt is consciously

made to cause deep hurt to the religious sentiments of people.

"Mr. Kejriwal's silence on the issue was proof enough that he was in tacit support of the BJP agenda of subjugating the minority community in a systematic manner," Mr. Kumar said.

He added that the Congress has always upheld religious freedom and allowed people to worship the faith of their choice, and strongly condemned the demolition of the church.

'Efforts on to ensure water supply to all'

Water production reaches 955 MGD, which is above average

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that his government was constantly making efforts towards ensuring regular water supply for the people of Delhi and that the engineers were working 24x7 to achieve the goal.

The Chief Minister said this on a day when the Delhi Jal Board said that water pro-

duction in the city reached 955 MGD whereas the usual average production was 910 MGD of water. The Capital had been facing a severe water crisis as its share of water was not released by Haryana.

DJB Vice-Chairman Raghav Chadha said that this feat was made possible by improved engineering solutions and an adequate water supply in the Yamuna after

16,000 cusec water had reached Delhi from Haryana on Friday.

"The efforts and struggle of all the people of Delhi have now borne fruit. This has exposed the true face of the Haryana government. They had earlier withheld our share of water, which dried up not only the Yamuna but also left the people of Delhi thirsty for water," Mr. Chadha said.

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Mr. N SELVA KUMAR
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selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in
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Prisoners, out on bail, arrested as they return to crime

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

Several inmates, released on emergency parole or interim bail from Delhi prisons to decongest jails amid the COVID-19 outbreak, have been arrested again for being allegedly involved in various criminal cases, said a Delhi police officer on Sunday.

The Supreme Court had on Friday ordered that prisoners, who were released by the high powered committees (HPCs) of States during the second wave of COVID-19 following its May 7 directions, will not be asked to surrender until further orders.

Keeping a watch

The officer said that each police district has a separate jail-bail cell to keep track on criminals on bail. All police stations have been instructed to keep a watch on them. The inmates were lodged in the jails in West, South, Dwarka and Outer Delhi districts.

The North district police on July 5 this year, arrested a man released on bail after being allegedly involved in a murder case. Out on bail, he tried to put pressure on the witnesses using several methods but when he failed to win them over, he decided to take the other alternative by implicating them in a

number of inmates have been released on emergency parole or interim bail from Delhi prisons to decongest jails amid the COVID-19 outbreak

false case of attempt to murder. But his plan was exposed and he was arrested.

In South district, one Amarjeet, a vagabond, was arrested in a theft and house trespass case registered at Kotla Mubarakpur police station. The crime took place on June 24, a senior police officer said.

Amarjeet was earlier sent to jail in a case of violation of the Excise Act, he said.

Dwarka district police also reported arrests of two other inmates out on bail.

According to the police, Naresh Kumar, a resident of Ujwa in Delhi, was arrested in an Arms Act case registered at Jaffarpur Kalan police station.

The other person identified as Deepak Kumar, a resident of Jai Vihar in Baprola, was arrested for his involvement in a criminal case.

In Outer district, a person was arrested in a robbery case. Howev-

In 2020, decongestion process started in March-end

TOTAL INMATES RELEASED

- 5,500 undertrial prisoners released on interim bail
- 1,184 convicts released on emergency parole
- NOT YET SURRENDERED
- Undertrial prisoners: Over 2,400
- Convicts: Over 90

Undue risk



In 2021, decongestion process started in second week of May

- TOTAL RELEASED SO FAR**
- Undertrial prisoners: Over 3,000
 - Convicts: Over 800
- SOURCE: DELHI PRISONS

er, the police said they protested against the bail of an inmate who was involved in several criminal cases, following which his bail plea got rejected.

Four people were arrested in the West district. Among them, two were arrested in theft cases, one in robbery and one for violation of the Excise Act, the police said.

In South East district, three such criminals, out on bail, were arrested for allegedly being involved in robbery and snatching cases.

Different picture

According to the police, at least 90 inmates of North West district and 95 of North East district jails were released. However, no one has been arrested again so far.

In Shahdara district, 104 undertrial prisoners were released from jail, but none of them have been found involved in any other criminal case so far, they said.

A senior Delhi Prisons official said over 3,800 inmates were released from three jails. "This year, the process of releasing inmates started from the second week of May. Around 3,000 undertrial pri-

soners and over 800 convicts were released from the prisons," the official said.

These include inmates who were released last year and then surrendered with no adverse report, and also new prisoners who were eligible for such interim bail or emergency parole in view of the pandemic, under the criteria laid down by a high powered committee in its meetings on May 4 and May 11.

Last year, over 5,500 undertrial prisoners and 1,184 convicts were released on interim bail and emergency parole from the three Delhi jails - Tihar, Rohini and Mandoli - during the COVID-19-induced lockdown. But over 2,400 undertrials and 90 convicts have not reported back to the jail. The district police have been informed about them.

Court direction

The Supreme Court has also directed the State governments and their high powered committees to file the norms or the guidelines being adopted by them in implementing the order on release of prisoners for decongesting jails during the second wave of the contagion.

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If any person(s) having objection with regard to mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 07 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 07 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. Axis Bank Ltd. will proceed with the mortgage process.
Deepjyot Singh, Advocate
A-13, LGF, South Extn-II, New Delhi-49 # 011-26226210, 11, 12

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LEGAL NOTICE

COURT NOTICE
In the Supreme Court of India Extra-Ordinary Appellate Jurisdiction
Special Leave Petition (Civil) No. (S) 23156-23157 of 2019
Heera Lal and others Petitioners(s)/ Appellants(S) Versus The State of Haryana and others Respondent (s)

1. Kamia Widow of Lal Singh, Village Budhena Teh. and Distt. Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62977/2021 for R[4] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
2. Vidya D/o Lal Singh Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62977/2021 for R[5] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
3. Ajudhya D/o Lal Singh Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62977/2021 for R[6] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
4. Shanti D/o Lal Singh Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62977/2021 for R[7] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
5. Devi Charan S/o Mam Raj, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62980/2021 for R[8] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
6. Kanahya Lal S/o Mam Raj, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62981/2021 for R[9] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
7. Kinna D/o Mam Raj, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62982/2021 for R[10] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
8. Kashuri D/o Mam Raj, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62983/2021 for R[11] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
9. Sunil Kumar, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62984/2021 for R[12] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
10. Buland S/o Dal Chand, 2476 Sector-16, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62985/2021 for R[13] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
11. Satish Kumar S/o, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62986/2021 for R[14] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
12. Om Parkash S/o Ramji Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 62987/2021 for R[15] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
13. Vishnu Lal S/o Ramji Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62988/2021 for R[16] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
14. Kishan Lal S/o Ramji Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62989/2021 for R[17] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
15. Raj Kumar S/o Ramji Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62990/2021 for R[18] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
16. Binlia Devi D/o Ramji Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62991/2021 for R[19] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
17. Sat Parkash S/o Pyare Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62992/2021 for R[20] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
18. Suresh Chand S/o Pyare Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62993/2021 for R[21] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
19. Motti Lal, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62994/2021 for R[22] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
20. Jagdish Chand S/o Roshan, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62995/2021 for R[23] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
21. Ajudhya S/o Yadu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62996/2021 for R[24] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
22. Maheshi S/o Yadu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62997/2021 for R[25] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
23. Somoti WD/O Yadu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62998/2021 for R[26] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
24. Radhey Shyam S/o Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 62999/2021 for R[27] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
25. Subhash S/o Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 63000/2021 for R[28] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
26. Munish Chand S/o Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 63001/2021 for R[29] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
27. Neel Kamal S/o Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 63002/2021 for R[30] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
28. Roop Wati D/o Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 63003/2021 for R[31] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)

LEGAL NOTICE

29. Kunti WD/O Babu, Village Budhena Teh. And Distt. Faridabad, Haryana.
PID : 63004/2021 for R[32] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
30. Vijay W/o B.L. Jalandi, Durga Nagar Talab Tillo, District Jammu & Kashmir
PID : 63005/2021 for R[33] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
31. Ashwani Kumar Janardan, 4101 Canal Colony, Sector- 16A, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63006/2021 for R[37] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
32. Pushpa Devi W/o Ashwani Kumar Janardan, 4101 Canal Colony, Sector-16A, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63007/2021 for R[38] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
33. Ramwati Devi Parshari Ram, Faridabad Old District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63008/2021 for R[39] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
34. Shyam Sunder S/o Parsi Ram, Faridabad Old, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63009/2021 for R[40] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
35. Gomati D/o Parsi Ram, Faridabad Old District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63010/2021 for R[41] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
36. Saroj D/o Parsi Ram, Faridabad Old, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63011/2021 for R[42] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
37. Pushpa D/o Parsi Ram, Faridabad Old District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63012/2021 for R[43] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
38. Poonam D/o Parsi Ram, Faridabad Old, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63013/2021 for R[44] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
39. Barwari S/o Paima, Faridabad Old, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63014/2021 for R[45] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)
40. Banshi S/o Paima, Faridabad Old, District Faridabad, Haryana
PID : 63015/2021 for R[46] in SLP (C) No. 23156/2019, SLP (C) No. 23157/2019 (SEC IV-B)

WHEREAS the Petitioner for special leave to appeal with application for CONDONATION OF DELAY IN FILING SLP, EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T. above mentioned (copy enclosed) filed in the Registry by Mr. Shantwan Singh, Advocate on behalf of the Petitioner(s) above named listed for hearing before this court on 20th September 2019, when the court was pleased to pass the following order:-
"Delay condoned."
Issue Notice"
And Whereas, the matter above-mentioned was listed before Hon'ble Court (In Chambers) on 26.02.2021. When the following order was passed:-
"Learned counsel for the petitioners is granted three weeks' time to serve respondents no. 4 to 32, 35 and 37 to 46 through dasti and to file proof thereof. Learned counsel is also permitted to offer substituted Service on the unserved respondents through publication."
NOW, Therefore, Take Notice that the above petition will be posted for hearing before this Court in due course and you may enter appearance before this Court either in person or through an advocate on record of this Court duly appointed by you in that behalf within 30 days from the date of publication of notice. You may thereafter show cause to the Court on the day that may subsequently be specified as to why Special Leave Petition be not granted and the resultant appeal be not allowed.
You may file your affidavit in opposition to the petition as provided under Rule 14 (1) of Order XVI, S.C.R. 2013 within 30 days from the date of receipt of notice or not later than 2 weeks before the date appointed for hearing, whichever be earlier, but shall do so only by setting out the grounds in opposition to the questions of law or grounds set out in the SLPs and may produce such pleadings and documents filed before the Court/Tribunal against whose order the SLP is filed.
TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if you fail to enter appearance as aforesaid, no further notice shall be given to you even after the grant of special leave for hearing of the resultant appeal and the matter above mentioned shall be disposed of in your absence.
Dated: 30th June, 2021
Assistant Registrar

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Tele Tender-03-2021
Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/ Tele/HQ, N. E. Railway, Gorakhpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender for the following works from the contractors having sufficient experience as per eligibility criteria mentioned in tender document.
1. Tender no. & date: N235-62 TeleTender-03-2021. 2. Name of work: Augmentation of Railnet/ Internet Connectivity along with Improvement in LAN/Intercom/ Railway Telephone Wiring in the Offices and residences of officers of NER Headquarters, Gorakhpur. 3. Tender Value: ₹ 1,94,18,403.61/- (Rupees One Crore, ninety four lakh, eighteen thousand, four hundred three and Sixty one paise). 4. Earnest Money: ₹ 2,47,100.00. 5. Validity of Earnest money after opening of tender: 45 days. 6. Validity of offer: 45 days. 7. Place, Date & Time of closing and opening of Tender: Office of the DSTE/Tele, N.E. Rly, Gorakhpur. 17.08.2021 at 15:00 Hrs. 8. Completion Period: 4 months. 9. Website where details of the tender notice & documents are available: www.ireps.gov.in. 10. For any changes of tender: Please check on internet website for Correspondence of the original tender notice. 11. (1) Earnest money is to be paid through only payment modes available on http://www.ireps.gov.in. portal like Net banking, Debit card, Credit card etc. Manual payments like Demand Draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit Receipt, FDR etc. are not allowed. (2) The manual offers are not allowed against the tender and any such manual offers received shall be ignored. 12. The tenders/bidders must have Class III digital signatures and must have to register on IREPS portal. Only, registered tenders/ bidders can participate on e-tendering. 13. All relevant papers must be uploaded at the time of participating in tendering process. 14. Detailed tender notice, Eligibility criteria, terms & conditions are available at website http://www.ireps.gov.in
Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/ CPRO/Signal-22 Tele/Hq, Gorakhpur
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Do not travel with inflammable article in train.

ABRIDGED NIT
On behalf of Herambogalpur Gram Panchayat of Pitharpatima Block under south 24 parganas dist. invites bids through e-tendering process for Est. Cost. of Rs.2720548/- (Excl.GST&CESS). vid NIT No.01/190/XVFC-UN-TIED/NIT/HGP/2021, dt.-19.07.2021. The last date of submission of Bid (online) is 02.08.2021 up to 2.00 p.m.. For details please visit https://wbidders.gov.in and SDO/BDO/GP office. Pradhan, Herambogalpur GP

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Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer, Assam Livestock Development Agency, GS Road, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022. Email: ceoalda@gmail.com

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Chief Executive Officer, Assam Livestock Development Agency, GS Road, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022. Email: ceoalda@gmail.com

Protest at former Minister's residence in Haryana ends

He speaks to women on dharna over misbehaviour allegation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GURUGRAM
Former Minister Manish Grover touched the feet of the women protesters seeking their blessings, causing the five-day-long sit-in outside his residence in Rohtak to end late on Saturday night.
Farmers unions had been staging a sit-in against alleged obscene gestures to women protesters in Hisar on July 10.
The protests concluded following a meeting between protesting farmers and Mr. Grover at the initiative of some distinguished persons with the mediation of the local administration.
The former Minister spoke to the enraged women who supposedly had witnessed a man sitting in a car with him and Hansi MLA Vinod Bhayana and making obscene gestures to them in front of Guru Jambheshwar University, Hisar.
After listening to their version that they did not exactly recognise the person sitting close to Mr. Bhayana, the former Minister touched the feet of women and sought their blessings, said a press statement issued by Samyukt Kisan Morcha.
All the aggrieved women led by Jagmati Sangwan, national vice-president, All-India Democratic Women's Association and the farmers leaders expressed their satisfaction over the deliberations and the outcome.
Inderjit Singh, vice-president, Haryana, All-India Kisan Sabha, announced the lifting of the sit-in and cancellation of the Mahila Nyaya Panchayat scheduled for July 19, which was to be addressed by top brass of the SKM.
Meanwhile, the stalemate

continues in Sirsa where farmers are demanding the release of five protesters who were arrested following an attack on Haryana Assembly Deputy Speaker Ranbir Gangwa's car on July 11.
Over 100 booked
Police had booked over 100 people, mostly unidentified, for sedition, obstructing public servants in discharge of their duty, murderous attempt on an elected representative and damaging public property.
The first round of talks between protesters and the district administration had failed.
The SKM said a senior farmer leader has also gone on a fast-unto-death over the issue. It demanded immediate release of the five farmers and withdrawal of all cases.
(With PTI inputs)

BKU denies report about participation in U.P. election
The Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) on Sunday denied media reports that suggested the organisation could participate in the upcoming Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh. "The report published in a leading Hindi newspaper was misleading and mischievous," said Dharmendra Malik, media in-charge of BKU.
'Oufit is apolitical'
He said BKU president Naresh Tikait has repeatedly said the outfit was apolitical and would continue to be so.
Addressing a panchayat in Sisauli village of Muzaffarnagar on Saturday, Mr. Tikait said, "The Congress was also keen on bringing the farm laws we are protesting against. However, at present, our goal should be to uproot the ruling arrogant government which has not been listening to us for the last eight months."
'No appeal'
Mr. Tikait said the organisation didn't appeal to vote for any particular party but farmers should elect candidates who would resign from their parties and join the movement if farmers' interests are not taken care of.
Mr. Malik said the BKU would send five members every day from July 22 as part of the 200-member contingent of the Samyukt Morcha to protest in front of Parliament.
"They will be selected after due care. Identity cards are being issued to them on the basis of their Aadhaar cards. They will have one leader who would be responsible for the behaviour of the team," he said.



BKU chief Naresh Tikait

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GHAZIABAD

Night curfew relaxed in Haryana, lockdown extended by one week

Now, restaurants and bars can remain open for an additional hour

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GURUGRAM
The Haryana government on Sunday relaxed the night curfew in the State, allowing the restaurants, bars and gymnasiums to remain open for an additional hour but extended the COVID-induced lockdown for another week.
Announcing the extension of lockdown till July 26, the State government, in a detailed order, delayed the imposition of night curfew in the State for an hour, now from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. on all days of the week.
With relaxation in the night curfew, the government allowed the restaurants, bars, and club houses to remain open from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. with the seating capacity of 50% and adherence to requisite social distancing and other COVID-19 appropriate safety norms.
The gyms are also allowed to open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. with 50% capacity.
However, despite a sharp decline in positivity rate and the number of new COVID-19 cases, the government decided "to con-



A woman getting vaccinated in Gurugram. FILE PHOTO

tinue the preventive and precautionary measures" to contain the pandemic and extended the lockdown till 5 a.m. on July 26.
The government had last week allowed the cinema halls, swimming pools and spas to open with certain restrictions in a major relaxation.
The Haryana government had first imposed a week-end lockdown in nine districts - Gurugram, Faridabad, Rohtak, Sonapat, Karnal, Panchkula, Hisar, Sirsa and Fatehabad - from 10 p.m. April 30 to 5 a.m. on May 3. The entire State was then brought under lockdown for a

week on May 3 and the restrictions are being extended on a weekly basis thereafter.
Decline in new cases
The number of fresh COVID cases in the State has declined by almost 71% from 146 on June 22 to 41 on July 17, said a press statement issued by the Haryana Public Relations Department.
The State's recovery rate has also improved by 0.15% from 98.50% on June 22 to 98.65% on July 17.
However, the fatality rate has increased by 0.04% from 1.21% on June 22 to 1.25% on July 17.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH
REMEMBRANCE DAY
AIRUDHAYARAJ (81), Retired Supervisor (Comp Advt), The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 18-07-2021. Address: 29/13, 2nd Trust Main Road, Mandavelpakkam, Chennai - 600028 Mobile No: 9841324571
Mrs. V. WATSALA
beloved wife of Mr. S Venkatarishnan, IRAS (Retd) Left for Heavenly Abode on 18.07.2021
K.R.RANJITH KUMAR
09.01.1975 19.07.2007
You still live in our hearts
Daddy, Mummy, Uncle, Sneha & Tharangini (Daughter)

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BJP gives green signal for expansion of Tripura Cabinet

CM told to give representation to all communities

SYED SAJJAD ALI AGARTALA
The BJP central leadership has reportedly advised the Tripura leadership to reshuffle the Cabinet to give proper representation to all social communities and drop a couple of 'inefficient' Ministers. The reshuffle and expansion are expected to take place in the coming week after the return of Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb from New Delhi.
Mr. Deb and State president Manik Saha left for New Delhi on July 14 soon after attending the swearing-in of new Governor Satyadev Narayan Arya. They met a number of central leaders looking after the organisation and the State.
After meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi a few days back, Mr. Deb met national president J.P. Nadda at his office on Sunday.
Prior to their meeting, Mr. Nadda met Pratima Bhoomik, newly inducted Minister from Tripura in the Union Cabinet.
Sources in the BJP here said the



Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb

Chief Minister and Mr. Saha would return on Monday. Newly appointed organisation in-charge for Tripura Kishore Barman is also expected to arrive next week.
Amid buzz in the BJP circles over possible expansion, sources said two Ministers of the BJP-led coalition government will be dropped.
Tripura can have a maximum 12 Ministers but the Ministry was formed with nine members including the Chief Minister when the BJP-led alliance assumed office in 2018.

Assam cracks down on dacoit gangs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI
The police in western Assam's Dhuri district have cracked down on groups of dacoits that have reportedly been playing mind games with their victims before striking.
A person known to some victims took to social media seeking Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's help in checking a string of dacoities in the district bordering Bangladesh.
He said the dacoits had been forewarning the families they target about striking on a particular date. "They come on the dot, loot every

valuable, beat up the inmates and melt into the darkness," the appeal from social media user Apratim Murkarji read.
The district police negated such a strategy used by miscreants but said more than a dozen dacoits and thieves have been arrested since June 20, when a failed incident of dacoity happened.
"We have arrested 13 dacoits and thieves in several operations and are continuously watching the situation. But it [dacoits forewarning victims] seems to be fear psychosis or rumour," SP Gaurav Abhijit Dilip said.

Shoppers trickle in as Kerala opens for Bakrid

Many shops did business after 71 days, amid fears of next wave; Karnataka to allow higher education classes from July 26

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala dialled down COVID-19 curbs on retail for three days from Sunday for Bakrid on July 20. Police were deployed in strength to enforce the mask and physical distancing mandate. They also warned traders against allowing crowding. The spectre of a third wave loomed with the relaxing of government orders on business, mobility, and social life for 72 hours. The administration was worried about the average test positivity rate (TPR) remaining above 10%. Kerala has requested the Centre for at least 60 lakh vaccine doses in the next 45 days. The relaxing of pandemic regulations prompted shop-

pers to trickle into textile, footwear and fancy stores that opened on Sunday after a hiatus of 71 days. Showrooms of jewellery, home appliances, and electronic goods also opened at 7 a.m. All establishments should close at 8 p.m. before the State-wide night curfew commenced an hour later. The easing of restrictions was applicable only in localities where the average TPR was less than 15%. In areas where it was higher, the relaxations would be applicable only on Monday, Bakrid-eve. Mosques, temples, and churches admitted less than 40 worshippers. Mosques insisted that worshippers bring prayer mats, rinse in running water, observe physical dis-



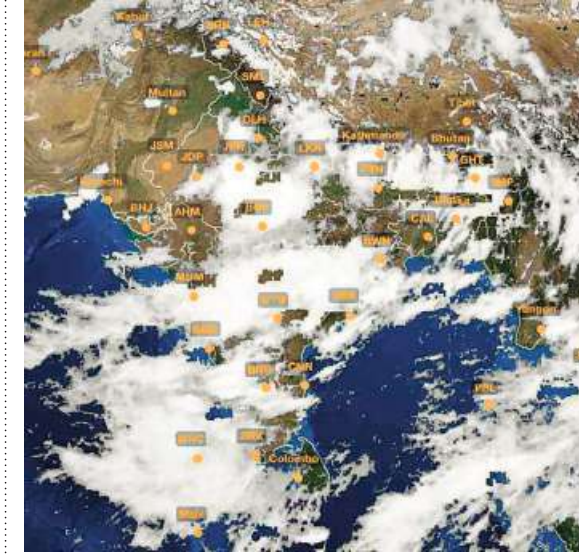
Guarded shopping: The police regulating movement of public at Broadway in Kochi on Sunday. • THULASI KAKKAT

tancing, and wear masks. Beauty parlours and barbershops were allowed to function on alternate weekdays in localities with TPR less than 10%. However, the government allowed them to open between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on all days in the run-up to Bakrid. **Kerala entry norms** Fully vaccinated individuals entering Kerala were not re-

quired to produce RT-PCR negative certification. A COVID-19 vaccination-completed certificate would suffice. The government allowed cinema and television serial shooting in localities where the average TPR was below 15%. Artists and crew should have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose. The government also allowed engineering colleges and polytechnic hostels to admit students preparing for their semester examinations. The Karnataka government on Sunday further pared down COVID-19 restrictions by keeping the curfew hours from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. besides allowing cinema theatres to open with 50% capacity. Higher education courses would commence from July 26, and students who had taken one vaccine dose could attend. The decisions were taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. The teaching and non-teaching staff with at least one dose would be allowed. However, student attendance was optional. Special surveillance measures to screen those coming from Kerala and Maharashtra would continue. Health Minister K. Sudhakar was absent at the meeting. Sources in the Government said that the Health Minister was opposed to opening cinema theatres with 50% capacity. (With inputs from Bengaluru bureau)

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rain is likely at isolated places in Uttarakhand, coastal Karnataka, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala, among others

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	9	33.5	26.1	Kozhikode	...	25.8	23.8
Ahmedabad	2	32.9	28.3	Kurnool	3	29.1	25.3
Aizawl	18	26.0	20.0	Lucknow	0.5	30.1	26.8
Allahabad	...	32.8	27.8	Madurai	...	32.4	25.0
Bengaluru	17.8	28.2	20.0	Mangaluru	114.5	24.4	22.0
Bhopal	...	35.3	26.7	Mumbai	...	19.7	28.4
Bhubaneswar	...	35.6	27.5	Mysuru	6	28.7	19.4
Chandigarh	...	32.5	30.2	New Delhi	...	35.8	26.8
Chennai	77	32.7	25.2	Patna	0.7	33.0	26.9
Coimbatore	4	26.1	21.4	Port Blair	...	29.4	23.6
Dehradun	1.9	25.8	24.3	Puducherry	12.8	30.8	20.4
Gangtok	3	21.5	18.4	Pune	...	28.8	22.0
Goa	35	25.5	23.7	Raipur	00.0	00.0	00.0
Guwahati	1	34.6	26.0	Ranchi	2	30.9	23.9
Hubballi	...	26.0	22.0	Shillong	0.2	35.0	27.6
Hyderabad	16	30.9	23.5	Shimla	0.8	21.6	19.0
Imphal	...	32.0	22.0	Srinagar	...	35.0	23.2
Jaipur	4	32.4	26.6	Thiruvananthapuram	2	30.0	23.7
Kochi	16	29.6	23.2	Tiruchi	...	31.1	26.0
Kohima	10	25.2	17.3	Vijayawada	...	32.0	26.0
Kolkata	...	36.1	28.9	Visakhapatnam	8	34.0	26.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	24	42	20	60	90	...	
Bengaluru	8	12	18	15	18	...	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sonapat in Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 167, indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong in Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 11
Chennai	4	23	66	14	21	...	
Delhi	5	14	42	37	135	...	
Hyderabad	6	14	12	12	21	...	
Kolkata	13	13	11	16	31	...	
Lucknow	3	10	22	24	7	...	
Mumbai	24	11	39	29	35	...	
Pune	60	16	110	88	62	...	
Visakhapatnam	14	29	29	...	39	...	

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by 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 premature death in people with heart or lung disease

IN BRIEF



Mangaluru-Mumbai rail route restored

Train services on the Mangaluru-Mumbai section resumed on Sunday following restoration of a track affected by Friday's landslide near Kulashekara in the city. The Kulashekara-Padil track was certified fit in the morning, the Railways said.

Hackers target AIMIM Twitter handle

The Twitter handle of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) was hacked for a few hours on Sunday. Hackers changed the profile photo of @aimim_national handle to that of Tesla co-founder Elon Musk and tweeted memes on cryptocurrency.

Kerala keeping watch on reservoirs after rain alert

Low pressure area to form in Bay of Bengal by July 23: IMD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With the southwest monsoon turning active over Kerala, the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) has been asked to keep a close watch on dam storage and increase hydel generation to maintain safe water levels.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Sunday that a low pressure area was likely to form in the Bay of Bengal only by July 23, two days later than earlier expected.

Rainfall-related alerts have been suitably modified. Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kanur and Kasaragod can expect heavy to very heavy rainfall and are on orange alert on July 21 and 22.



Recharge season: Water level has been rising in the Malampuzha dam in Palakkad. • K.K. MUSTAFAH

Minister for Electricity K. Krishnankutty said the combined storage in dams managed by the KSEB stood at 52.57% as of 7 a.m. on Sunday. While the storage in the big reservoirs was not an immediate cause for concern, the KSEB had nevertheless

been directed to increase hydropower generation to keep water at safe levels, Mr. Krishnankutty said.

The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority has directed district authorities to make preparations in view of the rain alert.

Nothing to do with audio clip: Karnataka BJP chief

It allegedly talks of leadership change

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

An audio clip, in which Karnataka BJP president Nalin Kumar Kattel allegedly hints at a possible change in leadership, went viral on Sunday. However, Mr. Kattel clarified that he had nothing to do with the clip and that it was not his voice.

In the clip, Mr. Kattel is heard saying in Tulu: "Don't tell anybody. The K.S. Eshwarappa and Jagadish Shettar team will be changed. We are forming a new team. Don't tell anybody..."

Hinting at a leadership change, the BJP chief purportedly says: "There are three names. Anyone can be selected. If any one of them gets selected, they will be in our hands. The choice will be made from Delhi only."

In a release later, Mr. Kattel said: "It is a case of impersonation. Such a fake audio clip is being circulated to defame the party and the government. I have requested the Chief Minister to conduct a probe to verify the authenticity of the audio clip and to identify the culprits behind it." He maintained that there was no discussion on leadership change in the State.

The audio clip has been released at a time when the State is gripped by speculation of a possible leadership change.

The speculation has been gaining momentum ever since Mr. Yediyurappa visited Delhi recently and met party top leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

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RAJ DESAI

Code your moves

Did you know that chess and coding have many similarities? Read on...

Is there a connection between a chess grandmaster and a software developer? Any seasoned coder will tell you that there is and, as a matter of fact, a powerful one. For instance, both require analytical thinking, problem-solving, cognitive skills, and pattern recognition. They also have to think 10 steps ahead.

If playing chess is all about checkmating the opponent in as few moves as possible, then, programming is also about coding lean with proper logic. Attention plays a critical role; a single blunder in chess is as dangerous as leaving vulnerabilities in your programme. There are plenty of other correlations.

Know your tools first: Before you can start playing chess, you have to understand the board's layout. You must know the pieces, their names, and how they move.

Understanding rank and file is also imperative. In coding, you will have to learn about different tools such as code editor, deploy code through GitHub, and run it through a terminal.

Get the basics right: It is not enough to know how to move or some game terms. You need to know how to play. You have to learn the opening principles and different techniques. Gradually, you understand piece

Both require analytical thinking, problem-solving, cognitive skills, and pattern recognition...

development, which openings lead to what kind of vulnerabilities, or opportunities, and so on. It is the same for coding. You need to grasp the basics such as arrays, objects, and functions, and also understand how each

works when you code, when used together, which of them will lead to what kind of output, or what type of functionality they can create.

Learn the syntax: Chess has precise notations to mark and record moves.

Therefore, it is essential to know the difference between QxH6 and QxH6#. This is a unique language specific to chess. Similarly, for coding, learning the syntax for functions, arrays, objects, and so on is critical. It is important to know the difference between =, == and ===. So, be it coding or chess, understand and know the language well to master it.

Understand advanced moves: Once you understand all this, you need to take your game to the next level. You learn more advanced moves such as Forks and Discovered Checks, to keep your opponents on their toes. In programming, you learn advanced concepts such as Object-Oriented Programming (OOP), Nested Functions and Classes, which help you create more nuanced programmes and keep your code clean.

Figure out your style: Once you have mastered the building blocks, start figuring your style. In chess, you could be aggressive like Carlsen, or persistent like Vidit. You do the same while programming. You could be innovative like Steve Wozniak, robust like Linus Strowald, or creative like Mark Zuckerberg. Your style differentiates you from the rest, and takes you from being proficient, to becoming a master.

The writer is CEO and Co-founder, School of Accelerated Learning

VIEWPOINT

Engineering a two-language system

An amalgamation of English and Tamil can produce better-equipped and qualified engineers, and bolster their employability

P.V. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN

Mechanical and Civil engineering programmes in Tamil medium were introduced by Anna University over a decade ago. Currently, the College of Engineering, Guindy (CEG) and the university's constituent colleges offer one or both these programmes. The courses are not popular in other colleges despite 20% reservation in government jobs for the students.

In the 1970s, efforts were made to introduce Engineering courses in Tamil, and many textbooks were prepared in the language. However, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) did not permit Engineering courses in Tamil as it had to evolve a national policy on the subject. In a recent survey, however, the AICTE discovered that 42% of the students surveyed nationally, favoured pursuing Engineering in regional languages. The Madras High Court's Madurai Bench recently reiterated the 20% reservation for Tamil-medium candidates, in every stage of recruitment, in government departments.

Demerits Even for the courses available in Tamil, textbooks are unavailable and capable faculty scarce. Material on advanced topics and research or postgraduate programmes are rarely available. Given that NASSCOM surveys report that 75% of English-medium engineers are not adequately equipped with soft skills, job prospects for Tamil-medium candidates are rarer still.

Rejuvenation Given that these courses have been in existence for 10 years, many textbooks in Tamil should have been prepared. In fact, this can still be done. Capacity building programmes can be implemented for the faculty, who can be trained to design and popularise Tamil equivalents for the technical terms. English

In a recent survey, the AICTE discovered that 42% of the students surveyed nationally, favoured pursuing Engineering in regional languages.

need not be tabooed; it can be used alongside Tamil as it will serve a dual purpose of clarifying the subject and preparing the students to face the world better. Soft skills programmes can also be offered to the Tamil medium students.

PG/Research programmes Relevant PG and research programmes must also be designed and introduced, with proper study and reference material. Universities, the Tamil Nadu government, and educationists can help create/translate quality research material into Tamil. Two decades ago, a Tamil Nadu Science Congress founded by Kunrakkudi Adigalaar, conducted an annual international congress in Science and Technology, where local and foreign researchers participated. Significantly, the proceedings were in Tamil. Revival of such an activity will help enrich research material in Tamil.

The writer is Former Professor and Head, Entrance Exams and Admission, Anna University, Chennai



Leaving the past behind

Afghanistan's neighbours must help it protect the democratic gains of the last two decades

Two events in Central Asia last week, which India attended, saw Afghanistan's neighbours seeking solutions to the conflict there. The first was a meeting in Dushanbe, of the Contact group on Afghanistan of SCO Foreign Ministers, and the second, a Central and South Asia connectivity conference in Tashkent. The meetings also took on a special salience due to their timing. Just days after the U.S. and NATO completed their pullout from the Bagram air base, and most other key locations, it is clear that the Taliban are making advances to return to power, by force if necessary. Of particular concern are the Taliban's attacks on border posts, particularly the border with Central Asian countries, and the Spin Boldak-Chaman border with Pakistan, which are for territorial control and to cut off crucial supply chains to the government in Kabul. At such a time for the SCO Ministers' grouping that includes Russia and China, India and Pakistan, and four Central Asian countries to have issued a joint statement, albeit without naming the Taliban directly, that decried the violence by terrorist groups, was significant. At Tashkent, the host, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, also gave Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani the opportunity to confront Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan for Pakistan's failure to keep its promises on stopping the Taliban from crossing over and ensuring the Taliban conduct peace negotiations in earnest. Despite Mr. Khan's protests, the message is that the region, and global players, will not support the Taliban to enforce its brutal regime in Afghanistan through violent means. For India and the Central Asian States, the worries are about the violence at the frontiers and the resultant refugee influx, extremism, and support to transnational groups such as al Qaeda, LeT, JeM, ETIM and IMU, as it happened earlier under Taliban rule.

As External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said, Afghanistan's past cannot be its future, and in an interview to *The Hindu*, Mr. Ghani made it clear that the Afghan forces will not simply crumble this time. The emergence of the regional consensus to shun any attempt to take power by force will also give the Taliban and its backers in Pakistan reason to pause, and the high-level intra-Afghan talks in Doha over the weekend, and the Taliban's Eid announcement that they will pursue a political solution "seriously" and to assure neighbours they will not allow Afghan territory to be "used against any other country" may be evidence that the message has been received. As the future of Afghanistan is decided in the weeks ahead, it is necessary for the neighbourhood's voice, Central and South Asia included, to emerge more united and determined to protect the gains the nation has made over two decades.

Sensitive and precise

Trafficking needs a wholesome approach that is cognisant of the causative factors

Undoubtedly, trafficking is a pernicious offence, one that societies and governments must have zero tolerance for, and yet, handling the offence of trafficking needs precision, not a sledgehammer. In its current form, the draft Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021 seems to be lacking in nuance, even if well intentioned, to stamp out exploitative trafficking. The Bill, which will shortly be introduced in Parliament, aims at preventing and countering trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, to provide for care, protection and rehabilitation to the victims, while respecting their rights, and creating a supportive legal, economic and social environment for them. This is the Bill's second iteration; the first was passed in the Lok Sabha, in 2018, but then meandered into nothingness as it was never introduced in the Upper House. Notably, the Bill has expanded the area under coverage to include offences taking place, not only within India but also outside it. It envisages the setting up of anti-trafficking committees at the State and national levels to implement the provisions, when passed. In the days the Bill was up in the public domain for comments, civil society activists and legal experts have criticised its various provisions, and submitted that an overzealous approach would blur the nuances and an understanding of the contributing factors, including vicious poverty, debt, lack of opportunity, and development schemes missing their mark.

Vociferous opposition has arisen over the key aspect of handing over investigation in trafficking crimes to the NIA both by those who believe that it would burden the already stretched unit further, and those arguing that this move would be an attack on federalism, by removing local enforcement agencies out of the picture. Another key criticism of the Bill has been its broad definitions of victims, smacking of refusal to consider consensual sexual activity for commerce. This would only land up criminalising sex work and victimisation of the exploited. Bringing pornography into the definition of sexual exploitation would not allow even for any adult consumption of non-exploitative, consensual material. Reporting of offences has been made mandatory with penalties for non-reporting, but those with an understanding of the tortuous processes, point to the fact that victims often do not want a complaint to be recorded. The mention of the death penalty for various forms of aggravated trafficking offences needs to be flagged too. The Government would do well to scan and incorporate the responses to its Bill in order to ensure that the fence does not eat the crop. While sexual exploitation and trafficking can be ghastly crimes invoking public horror, for the state to not employ a wholesome approach, cognisant of the causative factors, one that would be sensitive and precise, would be equally horrific.

A 'tolerant' India can be majoritarian

Mere toleration or empirical plurality of cultures is not the same as a conscious democratic project of multiculturalism



NISSIM MANNATHUKKAREN

B.R. Ambedkar once said, "...fraternity can be a fact only when there is a nation. Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint."

In a recent comprehensive face-to-face survey (of nearly 30,000 people) on religious identity, nationalism and tolerance in Indian society, and conducted in 17 languages between late 2019 and early 2020 by the reputed United States-based Pew Research Center (<https://pewrsr.ch/3xQqIQVQ>), 85% of Hindus affirmed that "respecting all religions is very important to being truly Indian." But, paradoxically, 64% of Hindus think "it is very important to be Hindu to be 'truly' Indian". And 80% among them say, "it is very important to speak Hindi to be truly Indian", giving credence to the slogan of Hindutva.

Rather than celebrating toleration, or seeing the paradoxes as a peculiarity of the Indic mind, it is crucial to recognise that a virulent majoritarianism can coexist with the professions of tolerance. It is misreading to treat the latter as a paradox because mere toleration or an empirical plurality of cultures is not the same as a conscious democratic project of multiculturalism or composite culture.

Thus, in the last two Lok Sabha elections, not a single Muslim has been elected on a Bharatiya Janata Party ticket. This obliteration of political representation of a signif-

icant minority (numbering 200 million) – which arguably has no parallel in any established democracy in the world – has become completely normalised in India, and is not a matter of discussion at all.

Other findings and paradoxes
The Survey abounds in other paradoxes: 80% (across all religions, in almost same proportion) think that respecting other religions is a very important part of their own religious identity, 91% assert that they are free to practise their religion, 77% of Muslims believe in the Hindu notion of karma, but when it comes to inter-religious marriages, friendships and neighbours, there is a marked tendency to keep communities separate. Thus, 67% of Hindus and 80% of Muslims believe it is important to stop women of their communities from marrying outside; 86% of Hindus have their close friends come mainly or entirely from their religion.

Scholar Bhikhu Parekh argues that plural cultures have always existed in the past, but what marks out contemporary multi-cultural societies is the premise of equality of cultures, and not just self-contained co-existence. The key features of multi-culturalism/composite culture are, as Prof. Lord Parekh asserts, cultures beyond compartments, constant dialogue and mutual change, and a strong streak of interrogation of "settled beliefs" across all cultures, especially the dominant culture.

It is a mistake to see the electoral success of religious majoritarianism in recent years as constructed in a vacuum. Instead, it is precisely the decades-long compartmentalisation of different religious communities, and the absence of solid state and civil



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

society arrangements in educational pedagogy, personal relationships, workplace, to facilitate inter-cultural interaction, and based on equality and respect, even under supposedly secular regimes, that has made the soil politically fertile for the demonisation of the minority, especially the Muslim (and occasionally the Sikh, as in the recent farmer protests).

This is despite the Survey breaking the Hindutva appellation of the anti-nationalist Muslim. In fact, 95% of Muslims (and Sikhs) declare that they "are very proud to be Indian".

India's 'skyboxification'

The American philosopher Michael J. Sandel argued that under rising extreme inequalities of capitalism, there is a "skyboxification of American life", in which the affluent classes and people of poor means have no connection at all, and they "live and work and shop and play in different places" and their "children go to different schools". In India, this plays out differently not just in economic terms, but also in religion, and more starkly, caste, the fundamental divide.

Every religion is riven by caste. Like with religion, 64% say that it is "very important" to prevent wo-

men from crossing caste boundaries in marriage, and 70% affirm that "most or all of their close friends share their caste". Again, the Survey brings to the fore the central contradiction of a democratic nation that is divided by compartmentalised hierarchies. Thus, it is vital to note that amidst the gathering clouds of majoritarianism, it is a minority of upper castes that holds the reins of power, across religions, and it is the lower castes among the religious minority that face the brunt of majoritarian attacks. Glossing over this reality, ironically, reinforces religious majoritarianism, and reduces conflicts to merely religion.

This can only be overcome by the union of social groups, especially the oppressed, across, religious and caste boundaries. As B.R. Ambedkar recognised a long time ago, the central barrier to the making of a nation is "separation in social life". It cannot be eliminated simply by elements like, as the Survey shows, a quarter of Muslims and a third of Christians believing in the purifying power of the Ganga, or the same kind of numbers believing in reincarnation, etc.

The antidote to the fear of other social groups, especially minorities, often is increased interaction among them in a variety of public and private settings. This is demonstrated in earlier Pew surveys in India, and those elsewhere. In the United States and West Europe, there is a big difference in positive attitudes towards other social/religious groups when members of those groups are personally known. Despite anti-Muslim sentiments, much higher numbers than India are willing to accept Muslims as neighbours. In the Pew Survey on Emerging Economies including India

(<https://pewrsr.ch/2VvYEBV>), a higher percentage of the majority community in countries such as Lebanon, Venezuela, and South Africa interact with the minorities than India.

Attitudes in South India

But contrary voices to the majoritarian and segregated vision can be seen within the present Survey too. In several aspects such as the superiority of one's own religion, having friends and neighbours from other religions, preventing inter-religious marriages, the importance of being a Hindu and speaking Hindi to be a true Indian, prohibition of beef, the attitudes in South India differ, not by a small, but a substantial margin to the rest of India, especially the North and the Central parts. This enhanced willingness to break differences permeates both Hindus and Muslims in the South, showing the wider reinforcing effects of increased mutual interaction. Since culture affects politics, Hindu nationalism has had much less electoral success in the South, at least so far.

Social reality and complexity cannot be reduced to numbers. After all, one cannot compare attitudes of different social groups blandly without understanding power differences. But quantitative surveys are still necessary tools. Majoritarianism, accompanied by mere tolerant acceptance of minority communities as non-interacting enclaves, is the death knell of democracy. To the extent that the Pew Survey hints at majoritarian attitudes and compartmentalisation, it can only be ignored at our own peril.

Nissim Mannathukkaren is with Dalhousie University, Canada, and tweets @mannathukkaren

A new chapter in Nepal's quest for political stability

The Supreme Court order offers some respite amidst the political uncertainty, with lessons for Indian diplomacy too



SUJEEV SHAKYA

On July 12, 2021, the Supreme Court of Nepal handed over a 168-page verdict on a case filed by 149 lawmakers out of the 275 parliamentarians demanding that Sher Bahadur Deuba be made the Prime Minister. Although the parliamentarians had gone to the Supreme Court as Mr. Deuba had gathered enough support to become the Prime Minister of Nepal under Article 76(5) of the Constitution, President Bidhya Devi Bhandari refused to entertain it. Instead, the President re-appointed K.P. Sharma Oli as the caretaker Prime Minister till the elections that they decided to hold in October and November 2021 were concluded. This ends now.

Impact of court intervention

Amidst such circumstances, the Supreme Court verdict has ended the collusion between Mr. Oli and Ms. Bhandari to continuously take decisions that were against the provisions of the Constitution. In

December, when the President dissolved Parliament at the behest of Mr. Oli, the Supreme Court ruled against this order and reinstated Parliament. The Supreme Court even had a piece of warning for the President to remind her that the office of the President is also defined by the Constitution and hence, cannot be above it.

On Wednesday, July 14, 2021, Mr. Oli left his official residence at Baluwatar which, for the past three and half years, had become his office, party headquarters and the centre of power in Nepal comparable to Narayanhiti Palace during the direct rule of the Kings. He left his residence after addressing the nation in a manner similar to when King Gyanendra left the Narayanhiti Palace on June 11, 2008. His supporters had a procession.

The Oli years

In the past, Mr. Oli's popularity rose when he challenged India during the blockade in September 2015 and whipped up nationalism to emerge as the leader who could lead Nepal. For the 2017 Federal and Provincial elections, the two major communist parties, the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist Leninist-UML), joined hands, and with a landslide



AFP

victory, were to provide a stable government in Nepal in three decades. This coalition between the two parties had laid out some conditions, one of which was that Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Mr. Oli were supposed to rotate the prime ministership. Even amidst these conditions and party coalitions, for the general Nepali public, Mr. Oli came with many expectations. He appointed a technocrat Finance Minister, a former Governor of the central bank, and other team members who, in people's eyes, were perceived to deliver the goods. Prior to taking over, he held various consultations. In one of the long sessions, he gave the impression that he means business. He had a slogan, "Prosperous Nepal-Happy Nepali", that appealed to Nepalis both in the country and abroad, giving a feeling that, perhaps, the great mo-

ment has arrived for Nepal's transformation.

However, the infighting within the ruling party that united in May 2018 began to surface in December 2019. Mr. Oli had, in two years of his rule, ensured that his kitchen cabinet ran the country while his image and international relations were being handled by prominent citizens who kept defending him till the end. He unleashed crony capitalism. Many business groups gained from his rule.

International relations plummeted with Mr. Oli taking on India with an amended map of the country, which only affected bilateral relations. With the United States Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) grant not being ratified (<https://bit.ly/3BhCLSS>), ties have been hit as far as U.S. investors are concerned. With China, while he hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping during a whirlwind transit stop, the agreements never saw the light of the day when it came to implementation. The complaints of Chinese investors in Nepal in terms of governance and bureaucracy have been no different than the complaints of others.

However, his handling of the novel coronavirus pandemic created a public outcry due to a lack of health-care facilities. He was per-

sonally dragged into the Nepal vaccine scam in the purchase of vaccines from the Serum Institute of India. In his swan song, he tried to take credit for the support that Nepal received, which was more due to the goodwill Nepal has and the efforts of many known and unknown activists who ran from pillar to post in different countries to get support and vaccines for Nepal.

Looking ahead

The newly appointed Prime Minister, Mr. Deuba, has served as Prime Minister four times but does not have a great track record. He may have won the confidence vote of July 18 (picture). But in this, there is a great lesson for India to be learnt: on how not to push relationships through intelligence agencies and other tacit ways as it fails each time. This has been seen in earlier decades. India needs to continue to build on people-to-people relationships and engage through official channels of bilateral platforms and diplomacy. Let us not forget that geopolitics is changing as Nepal is now free from being 'India locked'.

Sujeev Shakya is the author of 'Unleashing Nepal' and 'Unleashing The Vajra - Nepal's Journey Between India and China'

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.



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Afghan's stability

Though the Afghanistan President, Ashraf Ghani, sounds optimistic in the face of grave adversity (Page 1, "Taliban won battles, we will win the war: Ghani", July 18), will optimism alone be enough to turn things around in the troubled country?

Dependence on foreign aid to quell terrorism has clearly dented the country's ability to defend itself, and the Taliban, more than anybody else, know this very well.

Whatever the U.S. and its allies have done so far has been undone in one stroke by their sudden withdrawal, leaving the present regime at the mercy of the Taliban. Fundamentalist forces from Pakistan are fomenting trouble, which Islamabad is either unwilling or unable to control. Pakistan also does not seem to have realised what the growth of fundamentalism can do to a country; it has a great example right next door.

India is in a vulnerable position. New Delhi must explore all means to facilitate a lasting solution to ensure the neighbourhood's peace.

YOGANANDH T.,
Salem, Tamil Nadu

Punjab politics

The Punjab Chief Minister eventually blinked (Page 1, "Sidhu may captain Congress in Punjab", July 18). There will now be two power centres, probably working at cross purposes and each turning out to be the nemesis of the other. Captain Amarinder Singh may have bought peace to buy time and recalibrate his strategy. One has to consider his good job in governance and a high possibility of his getting re-elected being pretty high now being damaged. The Gandhi family according precedence to sycophancy over performance will prove inimical to the Congress party.

DEEPAK SINGHAL,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Astrology and India

Though the writer of the article, "No pseudoscience, please" (OpEd page, July 15), has tried to make out a strong case against a degree course in astrology, I believe that people's faith in India is too deeply entrenched for any amount of rationalist thinking to be successful in the real sense. Such beliefs have been in practice for years when even kings relied on sages for a "propitious time" to carry out duties. And our own elected representatives arrange their swearing-in as advised by astrologers. A fear of the unknown, fear of divine wrath, societal or peer pressure are probable reasons why there is blind belief in all kinds of rituals and propitiatory ceremonies. These fears are skilfully fuelled by astrologers, especially in the rural areas, ensuring a steady income stream for themselves. Education, which is the normally touted panacea for most of society's ills, is

also not a cure! One finds even educated families immersed in the subject. India needs a central anti-superstition statute. But given the ideology of the government of the day, such a statute may exist only on paper.

V.V. KOUSHIK,
Chennai

"I don't believe in astrology; I'm Sagittarius and we're skeptical," was what Arthur C. Clarke once said, amply expounding how profoundly we are wrapped in this truism. In every walk of life the influence of astrological predictions, warnings, remedies, etc. are so inextricably entwined that opposing or favouring IGNOU launching a degree course in astrology is of no significance. There is no foreseeable end to the exploitation of the masses seeking solace from these so-called astrology gurus wielding considerable influence on their clients. Any great astrologer, if he is

to bare his conscience, would admit that all the build-up of astrological analysis is to gain the confidence of anxious seekers.

VADUVAMBAL SANKARAN,
Bengaluru

As a teenager who avidly loves science, I am shocked by the number of people who support astrology and affiliated courses. I wonder whether we will soon have a situation where there will be courses on black magic and witchcraft. There are many who believe in these too. If one reads treatises written on astrology by some of the famous astrologers, one finds these books lack a proper and honest scientific approach. The definitions and methods used in these books are vague and lack rigor. I wonder what the IGNOU course will be like.

RISHI SUNIL,
Valiyapadam, Kollam, Kerala

One of the letter writers (Letters to the Editor) is averse to calling 'astrology a

pseudo science'. What is it then? Does he want it to be called a 'science'? Yes, there are lakhs of people in India who consult astrologers. It works at a subconscious level. My deep fear is that if astrology becomes a discipline of study, it may not be far-fetched to say that some government could make it formal for departments to function according to predictions.

M. GANDHI,
Puducherry

Biomedical waste

The acceleration in the statistical rates in the accumulation of biomedical waste is a serious issue. It calls for adequate disposal measures to save the environment. Rather than use landfills, proper disposal mechanisms such as incineration and microwave irradiation should be considered even at the district level.

KUKKU C. JAYAMON,
Kumarakom, Kottayam, Kerala

Calculating the benefits of lockdowns

Lockdowns need to be guided by trade-offs between harsh and mild policies



DIPANKAR DASGUPTA

Data show that as of now 26.2% of the world population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Of them, only 1% live in low-income countries. By contrast, the richer nations, such as the U.S., Canada, Germany and Britain, registered above 50% vaccination by July 17. For India, the percentage of the adult population that has received at least one dose stands at 34.1% as of July 18. How long it will take to eliminate the inequality in the administration of vaccines is shrouded in mystery. Till that happens, long or short lockdowns from time to time will remain the only defence against the virus. Several researchers have studied the effectiveness of the lockdowns in economic terms. It is important, therefore, to take stock of the issues that have materialised in this context.

A trilemma

The *Economist* has come up with a paradox of sorts in an article concerning the trade-off between lives and livelihoods. The article is rooted in the COVID-19 disaster and questions the practicability or even desirability of simultaneously protecting lives and livelihoods with the aid of lockdowns. The discipline of economics, or its dominant school at least, is intimately linked to trade-offs and its fundamental teaching is that one cannot have one's cake and eat it too. During pandemic-driven lockdowns, this boils down not to a dilemma but a trilemma perhaps. Draconian lockdowns help you to keep on living, but they prevent you from earning a living. With incomes drying up, essential expenditures such as those on food, health and education cannot be sustained, implying that life cannot be lived. Extreme lockdown policies imply that you cannot quite have your life and live it too – at least not meaningfully.

The vicious trilemma needs to be torn down if humanity is to be preserved. This calls for a careful assessment of the severity of lockdowns, their costs, and the resulting gains



Migrant workers in search of work in New Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

they hopefully lead to in terms of lives saved. If the expected benefit of a policy falls short of cost, economists will reject it and suggest the adoption of alternative policies, involving an excess of benefits over costs. In other words, one needs to understand the nature of the trade-off. Is the suffering caused by a lockdown sufficiently compensated for in terms of lives saved?

The question is probably less simple than it appears to be at first sight. The New York Governor, Andrew Cuomo, said, "To me, I say the cost of a human life is priceless." In technical economic language, this amounts to asserting that the (monetary) price of a human life is infinitely high. If this be so, saving a life calls for endless sacrifice. If such sacrifice assumes the form of extreme lockdowns, then the line of argument precipitates the trilemma all over again. It is counterproductive to start off with infinity. Clearly, the Governor had failed to come up with a meaningful definition of the value of a human life.

Let us push aside this question for now and estimate instead the cost of a lockdown. Some researchers believe this can be measured by the value of lost GDP. *The Economist* quotes the case of two European countries – France and Italy. Both

imposed heavy lockdowns and suffered 3% shrinkage in GDP. Not that people did not die, but the 3% shrinkage cost of keeping a number of people alive was not insignificant. Similarly, Finland, which experienced a negligible rise in the mortality rate, experienced a 1% fall in per capita GDP. On the other hand, Lithuania performed miserably on its death rate front, but its GDP per person is expected to rise by 2%. *The Economist* points out yet another horrifying estimate of the cost of saving COVID-19-infected lives. Research, it says, has established that for every infected person cured in poorer countries, 1.76 children die on account of a fall in the quality of life, which is not enviably high even in the absence of lockdowns. This is worse than the trilemma scenario outlined earlier.

There are other costs too that should not be overlooked. The horrors faced by migrant labourers in India will continue to jolt our collective memory. One wonders also if life expectancy itself has not been adversely affected in poor as well as emerging economies. Children are held back from school. One cannot rule out the emergence of child labour either. If and when the pandemic takes leave, researchers will surely

address the child labour question in India caught in the iron grip of COVID-19.

The benefits of a lockdown, seen in isolation, do not appear to be all that clear. Lockdowns – severe or mild – prevent the spread of the disease so long as they last. Mortality falls perhaps, only to resurface once the lockdown is lifted. For the U.S., a researcher has come up with the disappointing conclusion that there is no lifesaving impact of lockdowns at all.

How, then, should the benefit of a lockdown be computed? However absurd this may sound, the question takes us back to the value of a human life, which the New York Governor had calculated more emotionally than he should have only to end up in a paradox. Interestingly enough, a good deal of theoretical and empirical research has been done by economists on this issue for the past 50 years at least. The pandemic has merely generated new interest in the subject.

The value of a human life

There are many different ways in which the value of a human life may be calculated. A straightforward method is to study the life insurance premiums people are willing to pay to ensure proper treatment if afflicted by fatal diseases. In rich societies, large amounts will be paid. This could well be used to compute the social benefits of lockdowns, which will probably have higher values in rich societies than in poor societies where few are covered by life insurance. Further, all lives cannot command the same value. It is not criminal to ask if an aged person's life has the same value as that of a younger person. This means that a person's own valuation of his life may well differ from the way policymakers are likely to value it. Consequently, the social benefit of lockdowns continues to be a puzzle.

This is not to suggest that lockdowns ought to be avoided. Quite clearly, they are unavoidable for now, but they need to be carefully designed, guided by trade-offs between harsh and mild policies. Or else, the damaged economies of the world will not revive too soon.

Dipankar Dasgupta is former professor of Economics, Indian Statistical Institute

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Humanity is the fulcrum of journalism

The core requirement for a media house is to foster humanity



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

Last Saturday, we had readers discuss various aspects of news coverage, editorial choices and visual elements at *The Hindu's* virtual Open House. One of the suggestions was to reimagine the newspaper for the next generation of readers. There were intense discussions about how to provide credible information and in-depth analysis for a small device such as a mobile phone.

As a news ombudsman, I have one non-negotiable condition. Reaching out to newer generations is a logical necessity. According to the online reference section of Britannica, India's population is young: "Its birth and death rates are both near the global average. More than half the population is under age 30 and less than one-fourth is age 45 or older." Many newsrooms, *The Hindu* included, keep debating on what should be the right wordage and mix of visuals and words for various devices. In my view, these essential elements seem to be external factors. The core internal and intrinsic requirement for a news organisation is its ability to foster humanity.

Rise in online hate speech

The spread of social media has contributed to a substantial rise in hate speech-related violence. The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) has documented the spike in violence that is directly attributed to online hate speech. It says users' experiences online were originally designed to maximise their engagement. However, with an increase in algorithm-mediated customisation, there is promotion of extreme content. An investigation in *The Wall Street Journal*, "How YouTube Drives People to the Internet's Darkest Corners", was on how the site often recommends divisive or misleading material. A report in CFR recorded that in many ways, the debates in courts, legislatures, and among the public about how to reconcile the competing values of free expression and non-discrimination have been around for a century or longer.

It is this context that we need credible media outlets that can halt the spread of hate, vitriol and misogyny and once again work to-

wards an inclusive public sphere. Though no one has quantified the cost of hate that is generated by social media, we are able to sense its corrosive effect on social harmony. A credible news media has two major functions: bearing witness and making sense. The growth of toxicity on social media has delegitimised the act of bearing witness. The recording of pain, the poignancy of loss, and the space for democratic aspirations are filtered through a narrow partisan lens.

The photojournalist who bore witness

Nothing illustrates this inhuman delegitimation of bearing witness than the racist campaign on social media against photojournalist Danish Siddiqui who was killed while doing his job of documenting the newly emerging politico-military situation in Afghanistan. Siddiqui, a Pulitzer Prize-winning Indian photojournalist, was working for Reuters. According to the news agency, he was embedded with a convoy of Afghan forces that was ambushed by Taliban militants near a key border post with Pakistan. In 2018, he won the Pulitzer Prize in feature photography. He won it alongside colleague Adnan Abidi and five others for their work documenting the violence faced by Myanmar's minority, the Rohingya. Much has been written about the power of his images of the mass funerals held at the peak of India's devastating second wave of COVID-19. Empathy was central to his documentation process. "While I enjoy covering news stories – from business to politics to sports – what I enjoy most is capturing the human face of a breaking story," Siddiqui had told Reuters.

His untimely death also brought out the pitfalls of the amplification of partisan politics on social media. There were hate posts about Siddiqui; some celebrated his death. The Editor's Guild statement explained the significance of a photojournalist bearing witness to an event. After listing out some of the key assignments of Siddiqui – the 2019 Easter blasts in Sri Lanka, the riots in north-east Delhi in 2020, and the devastating human tragedy caused by the pandemic, the Editor's Guild observed: "His work was therefore a living testament to the axiom of photojournalism, 'if your pictures aren't good enough, you aren't close enough.'" Hence, in our quest to reinvent journalism for the new age, we need to ensure that humanity remains the fulcrum of any public discourse.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

Time to build a valuable economy

COVID-19 has brought home to us the absence from the economy of certain crucial services

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

This July marks the 30th anniversary of the economic reforms launched by the Narasimha Rao government in 1991. Evaluations, mainly celebratory, have appeared in the media. A dispassionate assessment would be appropriate as the economic policy changes of 1991 were the first major changes in the policy regime since the 1950s. The hallmarks of the reforms were lessening of government control and opening the economy to international trade and capital flows.

As the timing of the reforms was determined by a balance of payments crisis, it would be natural to assess the reforms in terms of their consequence for this aspect of the economy. In mid-1991, India had foreign exchange reserves that would barely finance three weeks' imports. In mid-2021, the import cover is estimated at well over 12 months. Furthermore, in the three decades since 1991 there has not been a balance of payments crisis. On the other hand, in the preceding three there had been several. This marks a significant reversal.

Financial inflows

A disappointing feature, though, is that the foreign exchange reserves have accumulated as a result of financial inflows rather than export surpluses, as was expected. It is now apparent that competitiveness cannot be established by simply reducing government control over the private sector. The history of globally successful economies shows that publicly provided infrastructure, private R&D and a facilitating government machinery are crucial for a country's export competitiveness. Most of these ingredients have been present in the case of India's software services-exporters but are not equally available for exporters of goods. The occasions since 1991 when there has been a trade surplus have been rare. The balance of payments has been shored up by portfolio capital. Such capital can flow out just as easily, leaving reserves to deplete rapidly. The only guarantee against balance of payments stress is a consistently strong export performance. The reforms are yet to take us there.

The reforms were also meant to raise the rate of growth of the Indian economy, which they did. Though the acceleration took some time coming, the rate of growth of the Indian economy has been higher after 2001. However, it started slowing progressively after the demonetisation of 2016, dropping to less than pre-reform levels even before we were struck by the pandemic. Since then, output has actually contracted, and there is no certainty on how growth will play out in the immediate future. Much depends upon whether there will be a third COVID-19 wave, necessitating the shutting down of economic activity yet again. Returning to the question of long-term growth, it needs to be pointed out that its acceleration after the reforms of 1991 was not the first time it happened. Not only had this occurred before, in the early 1950s and the late 1970s, but also the degree of acceleration had been greater then.

In 1991, we were, in effect, dealing with a cash-flow problem, albeit in foreign exchange. Now COVID-19 has brought home to us something larger, the absence from the economy of certain crucial services and the underlying assets that enable their production. We realised how inadequate our health system is, as we watched helplessly the scramble for oxygen, the overflowing hospital wards and the overburdened crematoria. But our rickety healthcare infrastructure is merely a metaphor for the absent ecosystem for living in India. Sanitation, transportation, urban governance and the producer services, from power supply to waste management, needed to undertake economic activity, are all inadequately available. This deficit cannot be bridged by legislating changes to the policy regime as was done in 1991. The necessary infrastructure would have to be first created and then managed to supply the stream of services expected. We have learned the hard way that the value of an economy depends on the extent to which it serves our needs. The current crisis of lives and livelihood in India is the time to start building a valuable one.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches economics at Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana

DATA POINT

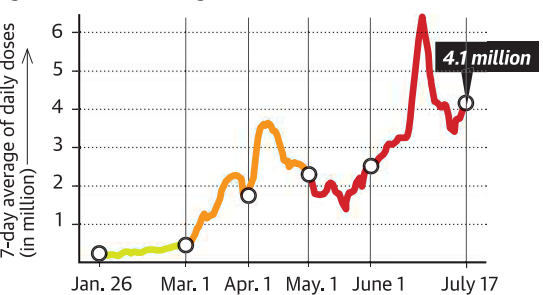
Vaccination progress report

More than 400 million doses have been administered at an average rate of 2.22 million per day since India's vaccination drive started on January 16. The daily rate has improved considerably after the introduction of the new COVID-19 vaccine policy. Between June 18 and July 17, about 4.53 million doses have been administered daily on average, significantly higher than the previous periods. However, to fully vaccinate all adults by the end of this year, 8.84 million doses per day must be administered in the remaining days. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan and Sumant Sen

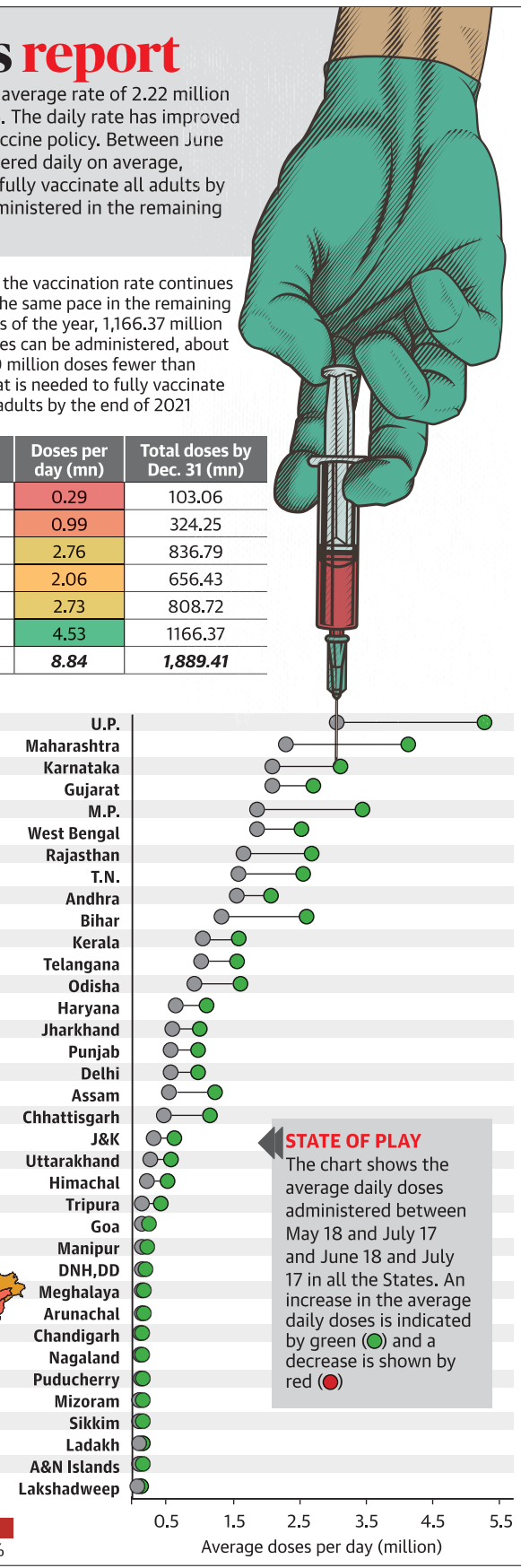
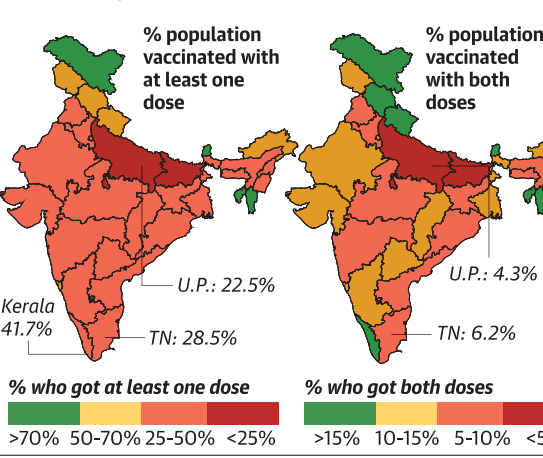
- The seven-day rolling average of daily doses administered fell drastically after peaking at 6.4 million/day on June 26 to 3.4 million on July 12. Since then, it has increased again to 4.1 million on July 17
- Between June 18 and July 17, the daily administration rate increased in almost all the States and UTs compared to the previous month
- If the vaccination rate continues at the same pace in the remaining days of the year, 1,166.37 million doses can be administered, about 720 million doses fewer than what is needed to fully vaccinate all adults by the end of 2021

Phase	Doses per day (mn)	Total doses by Dec. 31 (mn)
Jan. 16 - Feb. 17	0.29	103.06
Feb. 18 - Mar. 17	0.99	324.25
Mar. 18 - Apr. 17	2.76	836.79
Apr. 18 - May. 17	2.06	656.43
May. 18 - June 17	2.73	808.72
June 18 - July 17	4.53	1166.37
Target pace (July 18 - Dec. 31)	8.84	1,889.41

HIGHS AND LOWS | A sharp spike was recorded in average daily doses since June 18. The rate peaked on June 26 at 6.4 million. While it fell in the following few days, it gained momentum again last week



POPULATION COVERAGE | Around 8.8% of the country's adult population was fully vaccinated, while 34.07% had received at least one dose as of July 17. In U.P. and Bihar, less than 5% of adults had received both doses. The second dose coverage was more than 15% in nine States/UTs



STATE OF PLAY
The chart shows the average daily doses administered between May 18 and July 17 and June 18 and July 17 in all the States. An increase in the average daily doses is indicated by green (●) and a decrease is shown by red (●)

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 19, 1971

Bangla mission staff refuse to go Pak

All but one of the 65 staff members of the former Pakistan Deputy High Commission in Calcutta, who had switched over their allegiance to the Bangla Desh Government, stuck to their decision at their "screening" held to-day [Calcutta, July 18] at the instance of Dr. Bonard, Counsellor in the Swiss Embassy in Delhi. The interviews, which lasted about two and a half hours from 10-30 a.m. clears the way for the repatriation of Indian and Pakistani diplomats from Dacca and Calcutta, where the two countries closed their respective Deputy High Commissions in April. Mr. Ashok Roy, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, and Mr. Mehdi Masud, former Pakistani Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta, were witnesses to the interview. Mr. Hossain Ali, head of the Bangla Desh Mission in Calcutta, who was not present at the interview held in a school in a posh locality of South Calcutta, met Dr. Bonard, Mr. Roy and Mr. Masud at a separate house. All the three officials later visited the Park Circus residence of Mr. Maksoud Ali, Assistant Press Attache to the Bangla Desh Mission, who could not attend the interview as he is down with chicken pox.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 19, 1921

The East African Problem

The Joint Parliamentary Committee have not been able as yet to make up their minds about the future status of the Indians in East Africa. The matter has been very fully discussed in all its aspects at successive meetings. The opinions of the India Office and the Colonial Office have been heard "in extns." and the views of several persons who are supposed to have special acquaintance with the subject have been ascertained. Members of the Committee have been circulating memoranda to one another, adumbrating more or less contradictory recommendations, but the features of a satisfactory solution of the problem have not yet emerged. It may be stated, however, that generally speaking the prevailing view of the Committee is more favourable to the claims of the Indian community than to the pretensions of the white minority. This was to be expected of a body which is charged with the Parliamentary oversight of Indian affairs. But the official view is that this question involves Imperial issues which cannot be determined from a sectional standpoint.

FROM PAGE ONE

Govt. ready to discuss all issues, says Modi

Apart from Mr. Kharge, Mr. Chowdhury and Mr. O'Brien, other prominent Opposition leaders who attended the meeting included Anand Sharma (Congress), DMK's T.R. Baalu and Tiruchi Siva, Samajwadi Party (SP) leader Ram Gopal Yadav and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) leader Satish Mishra, among others.

Several Opposition parties separately met in Mr. Kharge's room for floor coordination and the issues to be raised. Besides farmers' agitation and price rise, other important issues the Opposition plans to raise include the pace of vaccination, unemployment, "mis-

use" of Central agencies, "erosion" of the federal structure, restoring Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, border row with China and the new revelation in the Rafale deal.

However, some prominent parties such as the SP and the BSP stayed away and the Trinamool is said to have made a fleeting appearance at Mr. Kharge's meet.

The monsoon session will start from July 19 and is scheduled to conclude on August 13.

On the first day, as per convention, the Prime Minister will introduce the newly inducted ministers to both Houses.

31 killed as rain triggers mayhem in Mumbai

President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray expressed condolences at the loss of lives. "The next of kin of those who lost their lives in the mishap will receive ₹5 lakh each from the State and those injured will be provided free treatment," Mr. Thackeray said.

The Chief Minister directed all agencies to remain on high alert and launch immediate rescue and relief operations in case of any mishaps. "If the water levels in the Mithi river or other major nullahs rise above the danger level, those staying in nearby areas must be relocated to safer locations immediately," he said.

The rain also led to a disruption in water supply to the city as the Bhandup Water Purification Complex was inundated.

Heavy rain also resulted

in waterlogging at 31 locations across Mumbai, and 20 traffic diversions had to be announced. Several suburban local train services were also hit due to waterlogging on the tracks.

The India Meteorological Department predicted heavy to very heavy rain in the next 48 hours. It also expressed the possibility of winds reaching speeds of 45-55 kmph to 65 kmph.

"In view of the likely formation of a low-pressure area over Northwest Bay of Bengal & neighbourhood around July 23 and associated strengthening of westerlies, parts of Konkan Goa and adjoining ghat areas of Madhya Maharashtra is very likely to experience an active rainfall spell during next 5-6 days with heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places and extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places," the release said.

Pre-Bakrid easing draws flak in Kerala

Pointing out that the average test positivity rate remained unyieldingly high at 10.76% and was worryingly above 15% in at least 205 LSGI limits, the IMA urged the government to withdraw the relaxations immediately as the spectre of a third wave loomed.

However, traders have warned that they will protest against any rollback. They have also demanded an incremental easing of curbs on retail activity in the run-up to the Onam-Muharram shopping season.

Meanwhile, the police fanned out in strength across the State to enforce the mask and physical distance mandate.

On Sunday, festival shoppers trickled into textile, footwear, jewellery, electronics, home appliance

and other stores from as early as 7 a.m. Traders foresee business picking up fast.

The current easing of restrictions is applicable only in localities where the average test positivity rate is less than 15%. In areas where the spread is higher than the safety threshold of 15%, the relaxations will kick in only for one day on Bakrid eve on Monday. Mosques, temples and churches admitted worshippers in limited numbers. Managements limited the number of worshippers at a time to less than 40.

Beauty parlours and barbershops also opened on Sunday in localities where the average TPR is less than 10%.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said that ideally, only fully vaccinated persons should undertake shopping.

Midday meals have a long-lasting impact: study

However, only 6% of girls aged 6-10 years had benefited from the scheme in 1999. By 2011, with an expansion in budget, and state implementation following a Supreme Court order, coverage had grown to 46%.

The study tracked nationally representative cohorts of mothers by birth year and socio-economic status to show how exposure to the scheme reduced stunting in their children.

IFPRI researcher Purnima Menon, one of the authors of the study, said the key takeaway is to "expand and improve school meals now for inter-generational pay-offs not too far down in time." Tweeting about the study, she said, "Girls in India finish school, get married and have children all in just a few years - so school-based interventions can really help."

These findings come at a time when the mid-day meal scheme has effectively been put on hold for the last one and a half years, as schools have been closed since March 2020.

Although dry foodgrains or cash transfers have been provided to families instead, food and education advocates have warned that this would not have the same impact as hot cooked meals on the school premises, especially for girl children who face more discrimination at home and are more likely to drop out of school due to the closures.

The findings of the study exacerbate concerns that the interruptions to schooling and to the mid-day meal scheme could have even longer term impacts, hurting the nutritional health of the next generation as well.

Sonia's move comes despite unease among Punjab MLAs

A joint statement had urged high command not to let down CM Amarinder

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

Ahead of the announcement late on Sunday of former Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu being appointed president of the State Congress unit, prominent MPs including Lok Sabha members Manish Tewari, Ravneet Bittu, Jasbir Gill and Perneet Kaur, wife of the Punjab Chief Minister, met for lunch in a pushback to the move.

Officially the meeting was to formulate their position on the call given by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha to raise the farmers' issue and not allow any other business in the House during the Monsoon Session unless the farm laws are repealed.

In Punjab, earlier in the day, at least 10 MLAs came out openly in support of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, urging the high command "not to let him down".

Senior MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira, sharing a statement on behalf of MLAs, urged the high com-



Punjab Speaker Rana K.P. Singh, Rajya Sabha MP Partap Singh Bajwa and Punjab Minister Rana Gurmit Sodhi with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh in Chandigarh on Saturday. •PTI

mand not to let down the Chief Minister because of whose unrelenting efforts the party stands well entrenched in Punjab.

Note of caution

"There was no doubt that the appointment of PCC chief was the prerogative of the party high command but at the same time washing dirty linen in public has only decreased the party graph during the last couple of months," said the MLAs in the joint statement.

The MLAs are Harminder Singh Gill, Fateh Bajwa, Gur-

preet Singh, Kuldeep Singh Vaid, Balwinder Singh Laddi, Santokh Singh Bhalaiapur, Joginderpal, Jagdev Singh Kamalu, Primal Singh and Sukhpal Khaira.

They said that Capt. Singh commanded "immense respect" across different sections of society, particularly the farmers for whom he even endangered his chair as Chief Minister while passing the 2004 Termination of Waters Agreement Act.

They said that the Chief Minister stood as a "tall leader amongst the Sikhs" because of his principled stand

during testing times.

"Since merely six months were left for the elections, pulling the party into the different directions will only harm its prospects in the 2022 polls," they said.

The MLAs also supported Capt. Singh's demand that Mr. Sidhu who had made numerous tweets against him and the government should tender a public apology so that the party and government could function in tandem.

The MLAs offered a word of caution to Mr. Sidhu, who they said was a celebrity and was no doubt an asset to the party but condemning and criticising his own party and government in the public has only created a rift in the cadres and weakened it.

"We hope the party high command would take cognisance of the suggestions and will definitely keep in mind the status, contribution and background of Captain Amarinder Singh in mind while making vital decisions for the party," they said.

Lokpal yet to get director of inquiry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

More than two years after the Lokpal came into being, the Centre is yet to appoint a director of inquiry for conducting preliminary inquiry into graft complaints sent by the anti-corruption ombudsman, according to a Right to Information reply.

The Lokpal, the apex body to inquire and investigate graft complaints against public functionaries, came into being with the appointment of its chairperson and members in March 2019.

According to the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, there shall be a director of inquiry, not below the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India, who shall be appointed by the Central government for conducting preliminary inquiries referred to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) by the Lokpal.

Danish Siddiqui laid to rest in Delhi

Jamia Millia Islamia accepts family's request for burial in its graveyard

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Slain photojournalist Danish Siddiqui, who was killed in Afghanistan, was on Sunday laid to rest at the Jamia Millia Islamia graveyard in Delhi, where a sea of mourners gathered to pay their last respects.

The mortal remains of the photojournalist arrived in the Capital on Sunday evening. Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar accepted the request of the family of Siddiqui to bury his body in the JMI graveyard that is meant exclusively for university employees, their spouses and minor children.

Mr. Siddiqui was a student at the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC) between 2005 and 2007 and graduated with a Master's in Mass Communication and was in 2018 awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award.

His father, Akhtar Siddiqui, retired from the JMI as



End of a journey: A journalist paying homage to Reuters photojournalist Danish Siddiqui outside the Press Club in New Delhi on Saturday. •AFP

Dean, Faculty of Education.

The death certificate issued by the Embassy of India in Kabul says Siddiqui died on July 16 at Spin Boldak, Kandahar, Afghanistan while on assignment with Reuters

as chief reporter and photographer.

The cause of the death has been stated as "multiple gunshot wounds".

Ms. Akhtar said the JMI will organise a condolence

Pegasus spyware used to 'snoop' on journalists

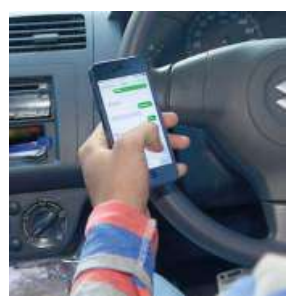
Surveillance via victims' phones

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Telephone numbers of some 40 Indian journalists figure in a "leaked list of potential targets for surveillance", and forensic tests were said to have "confirmed that some of them were successfully snooped upon by an unidentified agency using Pegasus software", *The Wire*, an independent news website, reported on Sunday night.

Indian Ministers, government officials and Opposition leaders also figure in the list of people whose phones may have been compromised by the spyware, *The Wire*, which conducted the investigation along with international partners, claimed.

The leaked telephone numbers included correspondents and writers from the *Hindustan Times*, *The Hindu*, *India Today*, *Indian Express* and *Network18*. Vijaita Singh, who works for *The Hindu's* national bureau, also figures in the list, which includes journalists like Shishir Gupta, Siddharth Vardarajan, M.K. Ve-



The spyware is used to extract messages and other information.

nu, Sushant Singh, Rohini Singh, Muzamil Jaleel, Ritika Chopra and Swati Chaturvedi.

The spyware Pegasus is apparently sold to governments around the world by NSO group, an Israeli company. It can be used to snoop on phones that run on Android and iOS systems.

Seventeen international media groups, including *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post*, led the investigation into how Pegasus was used to allegedly extract messages and information from the phones of journalists, politicians and activists.

FATF review of India put off again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

An evaluation by the global organisation Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to analyse the effectiveness of India's anti-money laundering and countering terrorist financing regime has been postponed for the second time in view of the pandemic and is now slated to be initiated next year, officials said.

The scheduled assessment by the Paris-headquartered watchdog was slated for September-October, 2020.

These dates were postponed to February this year by the FATF secretariat. "The schedule for FATF mutual evaluation has again been postponed from February 2021 and it is tentatively expected to begin in September 2022 now," an officer told PTI. As per this rescheduled calendar, the technical evaluation would begin in September next year.

HAL plans medium lift chopper

All three services are part of the project, Navy has given its requirements

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL), which is planning to indigenously design and develop a medium lift helicopter, the Indian multirole helicopter (IMRH), is hopeful of finalising the detailed project report in the next few months and approach the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) by year-end for project sanction.

"All the three services are on board the project. The Navy has already given their requirements, and we are discussing them right now. It will be a second platform with two different versions. The Army and the Air Force have promised to give the Preliminary Services Quali-



Gaining lift: The Advanced Light Helicopter Mk-III indigenously designed and manufactured by HAL. •PTI

tative Requirements (PSQR) within two months. After that, it will take another two months to make a detailed project report (DPR)," HAL Chairman and Managing Director R. Madhavan said.

Once the DPR is ready, the HAL will approach the CCS for project sanction after which funds will be released.

put across its requirements. The Army and the Air Force were earlier expected to share the PSQRs by June which got delayed due to the second wave of the pandemic and have now sought two more months.

A HAL official said that hoping to secure the CCS sanction for the project in 2022, HAL in the meantime has put in its money for preliminary works. But major funding has to now come in because prototypes have to be made, detailed designs are to be done, which takes lot of money, and needs CCS sanction, the official stated.

The HAL currently has a range of indigenous products in the light helicopter category.

Three Maoist cadres lay down arms in Odisha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHUBANESWAR

Three Left wing extremists, including one commander of the Local Operational Squad (LOS) and another Area Committee Member (ACM) belonging to the banned CPI (Maoist), laid down arms before the Odisha police on Sunday.

After serving two decades in the banned outfit, Sabita Podiam returned to the mainstream when she surrendered before Director

General of Police Abhay at Malkangiri on Sunday. She was commander of the Palachalam LOS of the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) of the Maoist.

Influenced by Ramanna, then secretary of the Kalimela Dalam of DKSZC, she joined the Maoists in 2000.

One month training

According to the Odisha police, she had received one month training under the guidance of Maoist trainer

Loknath (Divisional Committee member).

Subsequently, she was transferred to the Kistaram LOS of the South Bastar Division in Chhattisgarh in 2001. In 2005, she was promoted to the rank of ACM and started carrying a .303 rifle.

In 2010, she was entrusted as Palachalam LOS commander and was given an INSAS rifle.

During long years in the CPI (Maoist), Sabita had participated in several exchange

of fire, ambushes and arsons, mostly in Chhattisgarh. She reportedly disclosed before the police that the COVID-19 pandemic had hit Maoists hard and many cadres were suffering and dying from COVID-19 without getting proper medical treatment.

According to the police, though she was suffering from poor health for a long time, the senior Maoist commanders were opposed to her plea of surrender.

326 sedition cases were filed during 2014-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A total of 326 cases were registered in the country under the controversial colonial-era penal law on sedition between 2014 and 2019 in which just six persons were convicted.

The Supreme Court last week observed that Section 124A of the IPC - offence of sedition - has been enormously misused and asked the Centre why it was not repealing the provision used by the British to "silence" people like Mahatma Gandhi to suppress the freedom movement.

According to the Union Home Ministry data, a total of 326 cases were registered under the sedition law between 2014 and 2019, with the highest 54 cases in Assam.

Out of these cases, chargesheets were filed in 141

cases while just six people were convicted for the offence during the six-year period.

The data of 2020 had not been compiled by the Ministry yet, officials said.

In Assam, out of the 54 sedition cases registered, chargesheets were filed in 26 cases and trials were completed in 25 cases.

However, there has not been a single conviction in the State in any of the cases between 2014 and 2019, the data say.

Jharkhand has registered 40 cases under Section 124A of the IPC during the six years. Chargesheets were filed in 29 cases and trial was completed in 16 cases in which just one person has been convicted.

In Haryana, 31 cases were registered under the sedition law in which chargesheets were filed in 19 cases.

APPEAL

1 year old **Mohamed Hanaf** needs your support in bringing a lasting change and a new life. He suffers from B Cell - Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and requires **₹ 8,00,000/-** towards Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Donations sent by Ch / D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations sent through Ch / D.D. / NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No: 60182010063310, IFSC No: CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT. Please give us your E-mail ID.

All Correspondence is done through **WWS**, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No. 13, N.No. 29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401 / 28235324 / 7338978027. E-Mail ID: womenswelfarefund@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfarefund.org

WWS

Modi meets NDA floor leaders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi presided over a meeting of NDA floor leaders, emphasising coordination among the various constituents of the alliance during the session.

Leaders of the NDA constituent parties present at the meeting included Apna Dal leader Anupriya Patel, Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Pashupati Kumar Paras, Janata Dal (U) leader R.C.P. Singh, AIADMK leader A. Navaneethakrishnan and Republican Party of India (RPI) leader Ramdas Athawale.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president J.P. Nadda were also present at the meeting. Apart from asking for coordinating on floor strategy through the session, Mr. Modi told the NDA leaders to ensure the presence of their MPs in both Houses on a regular basis.

Cong. set to disrupt Lok Sabha proceedings over price rise

Sonia calls for coordination with other Oppn. parties for a common strategy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress and its allies are all set to disrupt proceedings in the Lok Sabha on Monday over price rise and the continuous hike in prices of petrol, diesel and LPG.

The floor strategy of the principal Opposition party emerged after Congress chief Sonia Gandhi virtually met the party's MPs on Sunday evening.

Ms. Gandhi is said to have flagged the issue of effective coordination with other Opposition parties to formulate a common strategy on the floor of the House.

"We have been told there would be disruptions tomorrow [Monday] as there has been consensus among other Opposition parties about price rise," said one MP.

Issues identified

On June 14, the parliamentary strategy group had identified a number of issues to



Gearing up: A worker cutting grass at the lawns of the Parliament House on the eve of the Monsoon Session, in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

corner the Narendra Modi government. They include the devastating second wave, pace of vaccination and preparation for a possible third wave, the economic situation and growing unemployment, restoration of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and border hostilities with China in Eastern Ladakh.

Ahead of the monsoon session, Ms. Gandhi has also recast the parliamentary

team for both the Houses. While Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury continues to be the leader with Gaurav Gogoi as his deputy, Shashi Tharoor and Manish Tewari have been part of the team. The inclusion of Mr. Tharoor and Mr. Tewari is significant as both belong to the group of 23 dissenters (G-23) who had demanded a complete revamp of the party's functioning in a letter to Ms. Gandhi. In the Rajya Sabha, Malli-

karjun Kharge is the leader of the group while Anand Sharma is his deputy. Jairam Ramesh (chief whip), Ambika Soni, P. Chidambaram, Digvijaya Singh and K.C. Venugopal are the other members. "These groups will meet daily during the session and can meet during the inter-session period as well where Parliament issues are concerned," read a July 15 internal memo of Sonia Gandhi.

Assembly poll: Mayawati tries to win over Brahmins

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati is again trying to win the support of the dominant Brahmin community ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election in 2022 despite suffering repeated failures since 2012.

On Sunday, Ms. Mayawati appealed to the community to take 'inspiration' from the Dalits and remain 'firm' in not falling for any lure or gimmicks deployed by other parties especially the ruling BJP. She said she was 'proud' that the Dalit community, to which she belongs, did not fall for any amount of lure they were tempted with by other parties especially the BJP in the last few elections. She claimed that the Dalits voted one-way for her despite attempts to mislead them with money, visits to their homes by BJP leaders and *khichdi* (meal).

To attract the community to her party and build consensus among them that their interests were secure only under a BSP govern-

ment, Ms. Mayawati has deputed Satish Chandra Mishra, Rajya Sabha MP and Brahmin face of the BSP, to start a campaign with special meetings for the community. The campaign will start from Ayodhya.

In the 2017 Assembly polls, the BSP was reduced to 19 seats. It was a huge fall for the party since it came to power with a full majority in the 403-member Assembly in 2007.

Ms. Mayawati admitted that the BSP did not win many seats in 2017 but stressed that her vote percentage did not fall that drastically. "Our vote percentage was even more than the Samajwadi Party's," she said.

While the BSP secured over 22% votes, the SP, which contested less number of seats due to an alliance with the Congress, got around 21.8% though it won more than double the seats won by the BSP.

Ms. Mayawati said the "upper caste" communities especially Brahmins were in distress in U.P. under the BJP rule.

Open-minded on alliance in U.P.: Priyanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday said her party is "open-minded" about forging an alliance with other parties for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls.

Asked whether the Congress will go it alone on all the 403 Assembly seats in the State or align with some political party, Ms. Vadra told reporters, "It is too early to say."

On whether she is ruling out an alliance, she said, "I do not rule it out. We are absolutely not closed-minded. We are keeping an open mind."

"Our aim is to defeat the BJP," Ms. Vadra said, adding that other political parties should also be "open-minded".

She said the organisation is also her area of focus and a lot of work has been done on it in a silent manner. "I have an open mind, but my priority is my party," she said.

Congress allegations misleading: Ravi Shankar Prasad

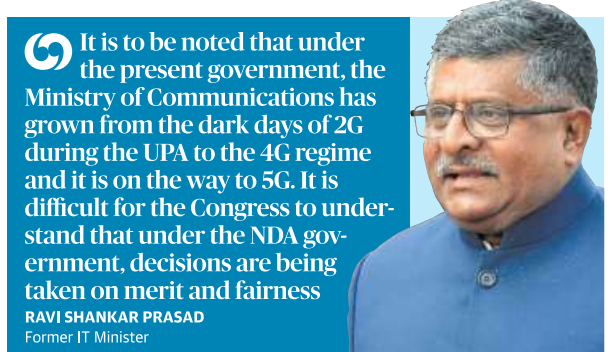
CSC has done the BharatNet operation and maintenance work at a lesser cost than any other organisation: ex-Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after the Congress linked the ouster of Ravi Shankar Prasad with large-scale corruption in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the former Union Minister termed the allegations false and misleading.

Mr. Prasad said the allegations were made in the context of some preliminary observations in the audit report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

In its preliminary finding, the CAG said the Narendra Modi government's BharatNet programme failed to take



It is to be noted that under the present government, the Ministry of Communications has grown from the dark days of 2G during the UPA to the 4G regime and it is on the way to 5G. It is difficult for the Congress to understand that under the NDA government, decisions are being taken on merit and fairness

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
Former IT Minister

off due to financial irregularities, and despite a huge payment to the common service centres (CSCs), the maintenance of cable and other infrastructure was not found efficient in various circles.

"CSC has done the BharatNet operation and maintenance work at a much lesser cost than any other organisation. Due to the efforts made by CSC in improving the BharatNet network, the utilisation of the network in terms of number of FTTH connections and data consumption has increased immensely," Mr. Prasad said.

"It is to be noted that under the present government, the Ministry of Communications has grown from the dark days of 2G during the UPA to the 4G regime and it is on the way to 5G. It is difficult for the Congress to understand that under the NDA government the role of middlemen and lobbyists has been eliminated and decisions are being taken on merit and fairness," Mr. Prasad said.

Government sources said the CAG report was a preliminary one and that a suitable response to the queries raised was being prepared. "The work of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of BharatNet was awarded to CSC at a very competitive cost of ₹800 per km per month for O&M of Optical Fiber and installation of WiFi Access points at ₹80,000 per WiFi access point. Therefore, giving the work of O&M of BharatNet to Common Services Centre (CSC) led to significant savings to the government," said a government source.

Sources said even according to the preliminary report of the CAG, works have been awarded on nomination basis by BBNL to BSNL, Railtel and Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL) for NOFN Phase-1 in May 2013; to C-DOT for Network Management Solutions on 22.04.2013; and to TCIL for Primavera on 25.03.2013. Later work for WiFi Access Points was awarded to CSC on 31.03.2017, 02.02.2018 and to RajCOMP Info Services Private Limited (RISL) on 29.09.2018 on nomination basis. "So not just CSC, but other government organisations have also been awarded BharatNet works," said the source.

16 held in Bihar hooch tragedy as toll rises to 12

Search on for other suspects in case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BIHAR

As the death toll mounted to 12 in the West Champaran hooch tragedy, the district administration swung into action on Saturday and arrested 16 people while suspending and shifting personnel at the Lauriya police station.

Family members of the victims have now given a statement to the police that the deceased had consumed local country-made liquor which led to their deaths eventually.

"Sixteen people have been arrested while a

search operation to nab the others is under way. Station House Officer (SHO) Rajeev Kumar and other personnel attached with the Lauriya police station have been shifted. The officer in-charge K.P. Yadav and one watchman have been suspended," said a press release issued by the district administration.

A number of spurious liquor outlets in several villages of Lauriya and Ram Nagar police stations too were demolished by the police and excise officials after the hooch tragedy on July 13-14.

J&K speeds up work for return of Pandits

State is setting up 6,000 transit flats

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's administration is speeding up work on 6,000 transit accommodations in Kashmir and registering Kashmiri Pandits in a bid to spur the migrant community's return to the Valley from different parts of the country.

Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha, who chaired a meeting of the Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRR&R) Department on Saturday, directed the officials "to take proactive steps to facilitate the return of Kashmiri Pandits community".

"There are many families living in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and other parts of the country and abroad who are willing to return home or register themselves. An extensive exercise must be rolled out to reach out to them through proper means of communication," he said.



Kashmiri Pandits protest their non-inclusion at an all-party meet. ■ FILE PHOTO

The J&K administration is setting up 6,000 transit flats for migrant Pandit employees in Kashmir, which included 208 in south Kashmir's Kulgam and 96 in central Kashmir's Budgam.

Mr. Sinha said many people yearned for their old lives and would like to return to their homeland.

"It's the government's responsibility to make sure this dream of thousands of people turns into reality with the proactive approach of the administration," he added.

Arunachal told to set up child friendly court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Gauhati High Court has asked the Arunachal Pradesh government to set up at least one child-friendly court and make it functional soon.

The advice was in connection with a June 3 order by a district court asking the Child Care Institute (CCI) in Roing to hand over a minor rape victim to the sister-in-law of the accused.

CSIR - Central Drug Research Institute
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research)
Sector 10, Janakipuram Extension, Sitapur Road, Lucknow-226031 (India)

SCIENTIST RECRUITMENT
Advertisement No-07/2021
URL for Online Application : <https://recruit.cdri.res.in>

OR

Access link 'SCIENTIST RECRUITMENT-07/2021' on <https://cdri.res.in>

Start Date for Registration for Online Application : 19 July, 2021, 13:00 Hrs IST
Last Date for Registration & Submission of Online application : 27 August, 2021, 17:30 Hrs IST
Last date of Receipt of physical copy of application at CDRI : 20 Sept., 2021, 17:30 Hrs IST

Applications are invited from motivated young Indian Nationals with requisite qualification and experience for the following posts as per the details given below. The emoluments and age limit for various posts as per norms is summarized as below:-

Designation	No. of Posts	Pay Level	Basic	*Total Emoluments	**Upper Age Limit not exceeding (as on 27.08.2021)
Scientist	01 [UR-1] & 01 ST Backlog Post	11	Rs. 67700/-	98465/-	32 years
Senior Scientist	07 UR/Lateral Entry	12	Rs.78800/-	113228/-	37 years
Principal Scientist	02 UR/Lateral Entry	13	Rs. 123100/-	172147/-	45 years

Note: For detailed advertisement and filling up online application form please visit our website <https://cdri.res.in> and access link 'SCIENTIST RECRUITMENT-2021' or <https://recruit.cdri.res.in>.

Controller of Administration

OFFICE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR, SPMU, ATAL BHUJAL YOJANA
GROUND WATER DEPARTMENT, JAIPUR

72-B, JHALANA INSTITUTIONAL AREA, JHALANA DOONGRI, JAIPUR
EMAIL ID:- PD.ATL@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN CONTACT: 0141-2703799
NO.F.22(PD)/SPMU/GWD/JPR/2020/406 DATED: 11.07.2021

Notice Inviting Bid 3-10/2021-22

On behalf of his Excellency the Governor of Rajasthan, bids are invited through E-Procurement for the Selection of District Implementation Partners to Support in Implementation of Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal) in 8 clusters through 8 NIBs amounting Rs. 4373.8 Lac.

Other particular of bids may be visited on procurement portals (www.eproc.raajasthan.gov.in, <http://sppp.raajasthan.gov.in>) and <http://phedwater.raajasthan.gov.in/> Departmental website.

UBN: GWD2122SLOB00108, GWD2122SLOB00109, GWD2122SLOB00110, GWD2122SLOB00111, GWD2122SLOB00112, GWD2122SLOB00113, GWD2122SLOB00114, GWD2122SLOB00115

PROJECT DIRECTOR
DIPRC/6790 SPMU, ATAL BHUJAL YOJANA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Construction of All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Bibinagar (Telangana) on EPC Basis

Tender No: HITES/IDS/21/07 dated 19.07.2021
HLL Infra Tech Services Ltd. (HITES), as Executing Agency of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India for this Project, invites online bids on Design, Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) including Operation & Maintenance basis through e-tendering from eligible contractors/firms in two bid system for the following work:-

Name and Description of work	Estimated cost	Completion period of Work	Last date to fill/ upload the bid through e- tendering
Design, Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) including Operation & Maintenance of All India Institute of Medical Sciences at Bibinagar (Telangana), INDIA	Estimated cost Part A:- Design, Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC): Rs. 776.13 Cr Part B :- Operation & Maintenance: Rs.23.50Cr Total (Part A + Part B): Rs.799.63 Cr	Part A:- 24 Months Part B:- In phased manner as per bid document	25.08.2021 Upto 15:00 Hrs.

The bid document shall be available online from 23.07.2021.
For submission & other tender details, please refer detailed NIT available on websites www.hllhites.com, e-tender portal <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app> and <http://pmssy-mohfw.nic.in>. Corrigendum/amendments etc., if any, will be notified on these websites only and separate advertisement will not be made for the same.
HITES reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason or incurring any liability whatsoever.
Associate Vice President & Head (IDS)

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
"Samparka Soudha", No.8, Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Tele Fax: 080-22024000
E-mail: cekrdcl@gmail.com Website: www.krdcl.in

No. KRDC/IFB/2021-22/03 Dated: 17-07-2021

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(on e-procurement basis)

1. Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDC) invites offer from agencies having experience in respect of following work as per the requirement of Bangalore City Traffic Police on item rate tender basis in two cover system as detailed below:

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Amount put to tender (Rs. in Crore)	Earnest Money Deposit through e-portal & remaining in the form EMD Declaration to be provided by Tenderers as per the Annexure provided in tender document (Rs. in Lakhs)	Period of Completion (including monsoon)
1	Supply, Installation and maintenance of Body Worn Camera and Dock Station to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT363	4.55	Rs. 6.825 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.5.825 Lakh through EMD form)	02 Months
2	Supply, Installation and maintenance of Alcometer's to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT364	2.25	Rs. 3.375 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.2.375 Lakh through EMD form)	01 Month
3	Supply, Installation and maintenance of Walki-Talkie to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT365	5.25	Rs. 7.875 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.6.875 Lakh through EMD form)	02 Months
4	Supply of Reflective Jacket to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT366	1.00	Rs. 2.00 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.1.00 Lakh through EMD form)	01 Month
5	Supply of Collapsible Barricade to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT367	1.00	Rs. 2.00 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.1.00 Lakh through EMD form)	02 Months
6	Supply and Installation of Hazard Boards, Median Markers and LED Black Light Sign Boards to Bengaluru City Traffic Police under B-TRAC / Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project in Bengaluru City bearing Tender Number KRDC/2021-22/BT/WORK_INDENT368	0.967	Rs. 1.935 Lakh (Rs.1.00 Lakh through e-portal & Rs.0.935 Lakh through EMD form)	03 Months

2. Interested applicants may download bidding documents from the e-procurement portal www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in and submit the bids and EMD (electronically) through e-procurement portal only.

3. The calendar of events for various activities are as follows:

(i) Pre-bid meeting will be held on 30-07-2021 at 11:30 hours in the KRDC, Board Room, Bengaluru at the above address. The applicants may submit their queries through electronic mail: cekrdcl@gmail.com

(ii) The Last Date and time for submission of Bids is 19-08-2021 up to 17:30 hours.

(iii) Date & Time of opening of Technical Bids is on 21-08-2021 at 11.00 hours

Note: Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through News Papers and further changes will be updated only on e-procurement portal Website.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, KRDC, Bengaluru

DIPR/Bengaluru/R.O.No.878/2021-22

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask Follow Physical Distancing Maintain Hand Hygiene

SC mulls limit to role as policy watchdog

Division Bench remarks on judiciary's reach runs counter to earlier judgment that courts cannot be silent spectators

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The resolve voiced by a Division Bench of the Supreme Court in July to "examine" the extent to which the judiciary can question the government's COVID-19 policies drifts from the court's three-judge Bench judgment in May, which held that courts cannot be "silent spectators when constitutional rights of citizens are infringed by executive policies".

The May 31 judgment by a Supreme Court Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud, L. Nageswara Rao and S. Ravindra Bhat is associated with the Centre's reversal of its dual vaccine pricing policy.

On July 14, a Bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari said courts should not undermine the executive at a time when a "collective effort" was required to overcome the public health crisis.

"Can the court tell the Executive to get the formula



Keeping track: In May 2021, the Supreme Court had asked the Centre to come up with a formula for allocation of oxygen to States. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

(for vaccines) from companies abroad or decide the number of ventilators... These are times of crisis when everybody has to be cautious... Is this when the court should get into all this? Executive has the benefit of experts with their expert knowledge... We will hear submissions on how far con-

stitutional courts should go into these matters... How much we should restrain ourselves," Justice Saran had observed orally.

"There are certain norms based on which every institution should function," Justice Maheshwari had noted.

The oral remarks from the Division Bench hardly gel

with the observations made under a sub-heading 'Separation of Powers' in the May judgment authored by Justice Chandrachud that a public health crisis like COVID-19 does not mean the Constitution should be "kept away and forgotten" by the government.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Justice Saran Bench was hearing an appeal by the Uttar Pradesh government against an Allahabad High Court order of May 17, which had described the medical system in smaller cities and villages of the State during the pandemic as "Ram Bharose" (at the mercy of the gods). The High Court had issued a slew of directions for the government, which included ensuring that nursing homes in the State have oxygen facility for every bed and provide ventilators, among other facilities.

The top court had stayed

the High Court order just days before the Justice Chandrachud Bench pronounced judgment in a *suo motu* case titled 'In Re: Distribution of Essential Supplies and Services During the Pandemic'.

Constitutional mandate "Our Constitution does not envisage courts to be silent spectators when constitutional rights of citizens are infringed by executive policies. Judicial review and soliciting constitutional justification for policies formulated by the executive is an essential function, which the courts are entrusted to perform," Justice Chandrachud had said.

Responding to the government's argument that it should have "room for free play in the joints" while dealing with the pandemic, Justice Chandrachud said the court had no intention to "second-guess the wisdom of the executive".

"However, it (judiciary) continues to exercise juris-

dition to determine if the chosen policy measure conforms to the standards of reasonableness, militates against manifest arbitrariness and protects the right to life of all persons. This Court is presently assuming a dialogic jurisdiction where various stakeholders are provided a forum to raise constitutional grievances with respect to the management of the pandemic," Justice Chandrachud had clarified.

The judgment highlighted that courts across the globe have responded to constitutional challenges to executive policies which violate rights and liberties of citizens.

Justice Chandrachud took the example of the United States' Supreme Court, which said "a public health emergency does not give Governors and other public officials *carte blanche* to disregard the Constitution for as long as the medical problem persists".

2.57 crore jobs available with States, says Centre

'41.99 crore doses provided so far'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Over 41.99 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses have so far been provided to States and Union territories, and more than 2.56 crore jobs are available with them and private hospitals, the Health Ministry said on Sunday.

In a statement, the Ministry said 15,75,140 more doses are in the process of being supplied.

It said 41.99 crore (41,99,68,590) vaccine doses have been provided to States and Union Territories (UTs) so far through all sources.

39.42 cr. doses used Of this, the total consumption, including wastage, is 39,42,97,344 doses, according to data available at 8 a.m. on Sunday.

The Ministry said 2,56,71,246 Covid vaccine doses are still available with the governments of States and Union Territories and



The Central government will procure 75% of doses from vaccine makers.

private hospitals. The new phase of universalisation of COVID-19 vaccination programme commenced from June 21.

In the new phase of the drive, the Union government will procure and supply free of cost 75% of the vaccines being produced by vaccine manufacturers in the country to States and Union Territories.

The remaining 25% can be procured by private hospitals.

Students unable to travel to Italy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Indian students who had rushed back home from Italy to be with their family members or take part in last rites of the loved ones at the peak of the second wave of COVID-19 are now stranded here as air travel remains banned to the European country.

Those who returned to India before April 28, when air travel to and from Italy was suspended, are now stuck in India even though their peers back in Italy have gone back to their normal lives in universities.

Zeeshan Ahmed, a cyber security student at Sapienza University of Rome, arrived in India when he got news of his sister being ill due to COVID-19. He is now unable to go back.

Aligarh resident Owais R. Khan, who is pursuing an M.Sc. in Computer Science at the same university in Rome, says he came back to India in February.

"We have been reaching out to the Embassy, sending emails to the Ministry to raise the issue with their counterparts in Italy but nothing has worked," Mr. Khan said.

While there is no official update on the expected timeline of the travel ban being eased, Indian Ambassador to Italy Neena Malhotra on July 9 had a virtual meeting with community representatives where she briefed them about the efforts on seeking relaxations.

Fair and square



Preventive steps: Students maintain social distancing amid the COVID-19 pandemic as they queue up to enter an examination hall to sit for the West Bengal Joint Entrance Examination in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ AFP

Move to hold CUCET for all Central varsities postponed

Admissions to be done as in previous years, announces UGC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre has postponed its proposal to introduce a common entrance test for admissions to all 45 Central universities to 2022-23. Given the situation caused by the pandemic, all admissions to Central universities for 2021-22 will be done as in previous years, the University Grants Commission announced on Sunday night.

This comes as a relief for a section of students, especially Delhi University aspirants, who had pleaded for the continued use of Class 12 marks as the basis of admission even in a year when Class 12 board examinations were not held.

As in previous years, the Central Universities Common Entrance Test (CUCET)

will still be conducted by the consortium of 14 newer Central universities who already use it for their admissions, Higher Education Secretary Amit Khare told *The Hindu*. However, the proposal for CUCET to be conducted by the National Testing Agency for all 45 central universities has been shelved until next year, he said.

"All admissions will be done as in previous years. Those [Central universities] who used CUCET will use CUCET. Those who used their own entrance exams will continue to do so. Those who did admissions directly on marks basis will still use that," said Mr. Khare. He added that the NTA also has a full plate at this time as it is yet to complete the premier engineering and medical en-

trance tests JEE and NEET, which were postponed due to the second wave of the pandemic.

In March, 45 Central universities were told that the NTA would conduct the CUCET for admissions to their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes this year.

Some universities had welcomed the development, saying that independently conducting entrance tests would be a challenge during the pandemic. However, some of the older, more prestigious institutions including Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University and Visva Bharati University preferred to use their own unique admission processes, according to attendees at the March consultation.

J&K colleges to reopen in phases

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The J&K administration on Sunday decided to allow on-site re-opening of higher educational institutions and skill development centres for the vaccinated population from July 31, in the wake of a significant dip in the number of cases in the past two months.

"Higher educational institutes and skill development centres may be considered from phased re-opening for on-site learning after July 31,

subject to the vaccination status of the students and staff. The public and private educational institutions are permitted to seek personal attendance of limited vaccinated staff for administrative purposes," a government order said.

Testing and tracking

All Deputy Commissioners have been directed to keep active track of the positivity rates and consider implementing stricter control measures in case the weekly

positivity rate goes beyond 4%.

In the wake of the upcoming Id festival, shops will be allowed to open at 6 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. "to avoid rush on July 19 and 20".

The Union Territory on Saturday recorded 179 new cases and one death, a significant dip compared to the figures of April-May.

"99% targeted population of 45 and above age group have been inoculated with the first dose of vaccine," an official said.

Civil services aspirants to be heard today

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A young man from a farming family, the son of a frontline worker and the father of a six-month-old are among several aspirants who will urge the Supreme Court on Monday to intervene on their behalf with the government for a second chance after their final attempt at cracking the rigorous civil services exam was marred by the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown in 2020.

"The measures related to



curbing the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty attached to it had immense negative ramifications on the mental health of the candidates. It was in these circumstances, coupled with lack of

proper infrastructure, poor preparation, lack of study materials, that the applicants appeared for their final attempt at fulfilling their dreams of becoming a civil servant," Shambhu Sharan Kumar, one of the aspirants, told the court in his plea.

The candidates are age-barred from appearing in the exam in 2021. However, they have asked the court to take a "lenient view" and grant them a second chance as a one-time measure.

A Bench of Justices A.M.

Khanwilkar and Sanjeev Khanna is scheduled to hear their case on Monday.

In fact, two categories of UPSC aspirants have moved the top court separately. The first are candidates who were unable to take their final attempt on October 4, 2020.

The second group are aspirants who managed to take the exam on October 4. These applicants, who are last attempters, have requested a one-time age relaxation to appear this year.

Never go off the grid. We are digital now. Come solve online. @ <https://qr.go.page.link/jjptn>

THE CROSSWORD + 13303 (set by Dr. X)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
				9			
10							11
12				13			
		14					15
16		17					
						19	20
21		22					
24							25
26							27

- ACROSS
- 1 Caught with opium and cocaine at party quickly (4,4)
 - 5 Melodious performance by two singers enrals many at college (6)
 - 10 Beat scoundrel, one leaving niece shattered (7)
 - 11 Orchid petals given by the French boy meeting girl (7)
 - 12 Bird's resting place in base over head of statue (5)
 - 13 Doglike marsupial in chalet, wandering around yard (9)

- 14 Movement of migrants ultimately let pandemic spread (12)
 - 18 Spectacular cooking, eating hot treat happily (12)
 - 21 New Time edition features essentially amazing Italian composer (9)
 - 23 Confusion after snorting drug, getting more miserable (5)
 - 24 Saw English force arresting brute (7)
 - 25 Tigers easily consuming large cartilaginous tissue in meat (7)
 - 26 Design in brown patterned cloth (6)
 - 27 Scrap given by junk dealers kept in empty flat (8)
- DOWN
- 1 Diamonds in set, cut for Roman statesman (6)
 - 2 Unusual boy, very likely to succeed (4-2)
 - 3 Check fraud by firm (9)
 - 4 How an arthritic patient might climb stairs gradually (3,4,2,1,4)
 - 6 Medium brazenly welcomes ghost (5)
 - 7 Back hurt during stunt? Get a splint (8)
 - 8 Attempt to hide an undergarment in farce (8)
 - 9 Artiste devouring awfully big snack is Kishore Kumar, perhaps (8,6)
 - 15 Honouring ace coming up to receive new fancy jewellery (9)
 - 16 Old criminal nursing desire to be law-abiding (8)
 - 17 More tiny bananas seen in row (8)
 - 19 Model in launch, on ecstasy and speed (6)
 - 20 Taser used to tackle perpetrator finally in capture (6)
 - 22 Thread made from fine gold by associate in Nigerian city (5)

SUDOKU

9	1		7		5			
	5		9		4			
			3					
6	2			7		1	3	
5								7
1	3		8		5		4	
		6		8			4	
		9		3			6	2

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13302

T	O	W	E	R	I	N	G	I	D	E	A	L	S
G	U	N	F	I	G	H	T	E	M	B	R	Y	O
H	K	O	D	O	G	O	I	N	E				
T	H	E	O	S	O	P	H	Y	C	R	A	Z	E
S	D	E	V	E	R	T	A						
S	T	I	R	E	R	A	S	I	N	G			
S	S	A	C	C	C	E							
T	H	E	R	A	N	O	N	L	X				
A	R	I	A	O	R	E	P	S					
S	T	E	R	N	S	O	B	R	I	Q	U	E	T
H	D	T	E	I	N	J	E	R					
I	N	D	I	L	E	S	T	A	C	C	A	T	O
N	E	E	L	E	A	R	A	N					
G	E	R	M	A	N	F	R	I	S	K	I	N	G

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	9	1	4	3	5	7	6	8
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2
7	8	6	1	2	9	3	5	4
4	1	8	2	6	7	5	3	9
9	6	2	3	5	1	8	4	7
5	7	3	8	9	4	1	2	6
1	3	7	9	4	2	6	8	5
8	2	9	5	1	6	4	7	3
6	5	4	7	8	3	2	9	1

Taliban leader seeks 'political settlement'

Afghanistan will not let anyone pose any threat to any other country using its soil: Akhundzada

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DOHA

The Taliban's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada on Sunday said he "strenuously favours" a political settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan, even as the hardline Islamist movement pursues a sweeping offensive across the nation.

The announcement came as representatives of the Afghan government and Taliban insurgents sat down for a new round of talks in Doha over the weekend, stirring hopes that the long-stalled peace talks were being resuscitated.

"In spite of the military gains and advances, the Islamic Emirate strenuously favours a political settlement in the country," Akhundzada said in a message released ahead of next week's Id-ul-Adah holiday.

"Every opportunity for the establishment of an Islamic system, peace and security that presents itself will be made use of by the Islamic Emirate," he added.

"We fully assure neigh-



Eyes on target: Afghan militia keeping a watch at an outpost against Taliban insurgents at Charkint in Balkh Province. • AFP

bouring, regional and world countries that Afghanistan will not permit anyone to pose a security threat to any other country using our soil."

Doha talks

For months, the two sides have been meeting on and off in the Qatari capital, but have achieved little if any notable success, with the discussions appearing to have lost momentum as the militants made enormous gains on the battlefield.

The two sides were due to talk again on Sunday.

The Taliban leader said his group remained committed to forging a solution to end the war, but slammed "the opposition parties" for "wasting time".

"Our message remains that instead of relying on foreigners, let us resolve our issues among ourselves and rescue our homeland from the prevailing crisis," he added.

The insurgents capitalised on the withdrawal of U.S.

Afghanistan recalls envoy to Pakistan over 'threats'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

Afghanistan on Sunday said it was recalling its Ambassador to Islamabad and all senior diplomats over "security threats" after the top envoy's daughter was briefly kidnapped in the Pakistani capital this week.

"Following the abduction of the daughter of Afghan Ambassador in Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan have recalled the Afghan envoy and senior diplomats back to Kabul until all the security threats are removed," the Foreign Ministry said.

and other foreign troops from Afghanistan to launch a series of offensives across the country.

The group is now believed to control roughly half of the nation's 400 districts, several border crossings, and has laid siege to a string of vital provincial capitals.

A spokesman for the Afghan security forces said that pro-government fighters had conducted 244 operations, killing 967 "enemy" fighters — including key commanders.

"We have recaptured 24 districts so far, our goal is to retake all the territories... We are ready to defend our country," Ajmal Omar Shinwari told reporters.

Questions remain over how firm a hand the Taliban's leaders have with commanders on the ground, and whether they will be able to convince them to abide by a potential agreement if signed. The leader's statement notably made no mention of a formal ceasefire call for the Id holidays.

Floods hit southern Germany as European toll rises to 184

Rescue workers continue clean-up in Belgium

REUTERS
BERCHTESGADEN

Flash floods hit southern Germany on Sunday, killing at least one person, turning roads into rivers and adding to the flooding devastation that has claimed the lives of more than 180 people across Europe in recent days.

Some vehicles were swept away and swathes of land were buried under mud as the Berchtesgaden Land district of Bavaria became the latest region to be hit by record rainfall and floods.

Hundreds of rescue workers were searching for survivors in the district, which borders Austria.

"We were not prepared for this," said Berchtesgaden Land district administrator Bernhard Kern, adding that the situation had deteriorated "drastically" late on Saturday, leaving little time for emergency services to act.

Sunday's death brought Germany's death toll to 157



Debris all around: A man walks past a pile-up of vehicles after flooding in Bad Neuenahr, Germany. • GETTY IMAGES

in its worst natural disaster in almost six decades, and the European toll to 184.

The European floods, which began on Wednesday, have mainly hit the German states of Rhineland Palatinate, North Rhine-Westphalia as well as parts of Belgium. Entire communities have been cut off, without power or communications.

In Belgium, which will hold a national day of mourning on Tuesday, water levels were falling on Sunday and the clean-up operation

was under way.

Emergency services officials in the Netherlands said the situation had somewhat stabilised in the southern part of Limburg province, where tens of thousands were evacuated in recent days, although the northern part was still on high alert.

Parts of Switzerland remained on flood alert, though the threat posed by some of the most at-risk bodies of water like Lake Lucerne and Bern's Aare river has eased.

ELSEWHERE



Won't perform till father controls career: Britney

LOS ANGELES
Britney Spears, in a furious Instagram post, said she has "quit" doing live performances and slammed her father's control over her affairs. For weeks the pop superstar has been pleading with a judge in Los Angeles to free her from the years-long conservatorship largely governed by her father, Jamie. "I'm not gonna be performing on any stages anytime soon with my dad handling what I wear, say, do, or think," she wrote. • AFP

Zuma graft trial to resume despite protests

JOHANNESBURG
A long-running corruption trial of South Africa's jailed ex-president Jacob Zuma will resume on Monday, despite violence that swept the nation after his imprisonment in an unrelated case. Mr. Zuma faces 16 charges of fraud, graft and racketeering related to a 1999 purchase of fighter jets, patrol boats and military gear from five European arms firms when he was Deputy President. • AFP

Fuel tanker blast kills 13 in Kenya

NAIROBI
A fuel tanker exploded in Kenya while people were siphoning fuel from it, killing 13 people, police said on Sunday. Residents started siphoning fuel from the tanker after it collided late on Saturday with a trailer in Siaya county, Gem subcounty Police commander Charles Chacha said. In 2009, at least 120 people were killed after a huge crowd descended on an overturned gasoline tanker, which then blew up. • AP

China denies politics behind UNESCO move on Barrier Reef

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

A top Chinese official said on Sunday that political tensions between Beijing and Australia were not behind a UNESCO recommendation to place the Great Barrier Reef on its endangered list.

Deputy Education Minister Tian Xuejun is chairing the meeting of the UN cultural agency's heritage committee, which comes amid worsening relations between China and Australia.

The Great Barrier Reef has been put on a list of World Heritage sites that could be put on the in-danger list after losing half of its corals since 1995.

Australia has assailed the move, blaming global warming for the loss, while UNESCO experts argued that pollution run-off has contributed to the loss.

When asked about "Australian government allegations" that Beijing pressed to have the Barrier Reef listed

as endangered, Mr. Tian said the decision was based "on reports and data provided by Australia itself." "Australia should fulfil its obligations to protect world heritage sites instead of making baseless accusations against other members" of UNESCO, he added. Both China and Australia are among the 21 nations on heritage committee, which is evaluating nearly 50 sites that could be added to its more than 1,100 World Heritage list.

Nepal's new PM wins confidence vote

Deuba says combatting COVID-19 will be the government's first priority

REUTERS
KATHMANDU

Nepal's new Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba won a vote of confidence in Parliament on Sunday, days after the Supreme Court reinstated the legislature that was dissolved in May.

The 75-year-old, who has held the office four times before, won 165 votes — exceeding the 136 required — with 83 votes against him, Speaker Agni Sapkota said.

He faces the immediate task of procuring vaccines and controlling the spread of COVID-19, which the government says has infected 6,67,109 people and killed 9,550. Public health experts say an under-reporting of cases in the country means the figures could be higher.

Fewer than 4% of the country's 30 million people have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. More than 1.3 million people, who have



Sher Bahadur Deuba

had a first dose of a vaccine, are awaiting a second as the government scrambles to procure shots.

"Combating COVID-19 will be the first priority of the new government," Mr. De-

uba said in Parliament.

The new government has pledged to vaccinate a third of its people in the next three months and every Nepali by next April.

Last Monday, the Supreme Court ordered Mr. Deuba to be appointed premier in place of K.P. Sharma Oli. It ruled that Mr. Oli, who had been in power for three years, had breached the Constitution by dissolving Parliament. Mr. Oli, 69, says he had been unfairly removed by the court and has vowed to "go to the people" to explain his position.

Johnson in quarantine ahead of 'freedom day'

U.K. set to ease pandemic curbs today

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Sunday urged the public to remain prudent against COVID-19 on the eve of lifting pandemic curbs in England, as he confirmed he is self-isolating until July 26.

"Please, please, please be cautious, and go forward tomorrow into the next step with all the right prudence and respect for other people, and the risks that the disease continues to present," he said in a video message.

Mr. Johnson and Finance Minister Rishi Sunak were required to isolate after Health Secretary Sajid Javid said on Saturday he had tested positive for COVID-19.

The development came just as Mr. Johnson's government prepares to ditch most restrictions in England on



Boris Johnson

Monday, which has been dubbed "freedom day" by many U.K. media, despite daily infection rates now topping 50,000 — behind only Indonesia and Brazil.

Keir Starmer, leader of Labour party, said the government was in "chaos" after sending mixed messages about what it expects the public to do from Monday.

The government insists that with two-thirds of the adult population now vaccinated, the risk can be managed.

Iran insists on prisoner swap deal with U.S.

REUTERS
DUBAI

Iran insisted on Sunday that a prisoner swap deal has been agreed with the U.S., the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said, a day after Washington denied such an agreement had been reached.

"Outrageous" — the U.S. denying simple fact that there IS an agreed deal on the matter of the detainees. Even on how to announce it," Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a tweet. "Humanitarian swap was agreed with U.S. & U.K. in Vienna — separate from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action — on release of 10 prisoners on all sides. Iran is ready to proceed TODAY."

The U.S. on Saturday accused Tehran of an "outrageous" bid to deflect blame for impasse in nuclear talks and denied claims of a prisoner swap deal.

Julia Ducournau's *Titane* wins big at Cannes

She becomes the second woman director to receive the Palme d'Or

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Julia Ducournau, the 37-year-old French director of *Titane*, a freaky and provocative body-horror drama has become the first female director in 28 years to win the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or.

The awards of the 74th Cannes Film Festival were decided by a jury chaired by Spike Lee and handed out at the event's closing ceremony in the Grand Theatre Lumiere on Saturday.

Women-led jury

For the first time in history, women outnumbered men five to four in the Cannes Film Festival's main international competition jury.

The women members of the jury were Mati Diop, My-



Top prize: Julia Ducournau on stage with her trophy after winning the Palme d'Or for her film *Titane* in Cannes. • AFP

lene Farmer, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Jessica Hausner and Melanie Laurent. Kleber Mendonca Filho, Tahar Rahim and Song Kang-ho served alongside the quintet.

Ms. Ducournau burst on the scene with *Raw*, which bowed in the International Critics' Week in 2016. She is

only the second woman director to ever win the Cannes top prize.

New Zealand's Jane Campion was the first woman to win the Palme d'Or for *The Piano* in 1993.

The Grand Prix, regarded as the festival's runners-up prize, was shared by two

films — Iranian Asghar Farhadi's *A Hero* and Finnish director Juho Kuosmanen's *Compartment No. 6*.

Leos Carax won the Best Director Award for the pop-opera musical *Amette*, the Marion Cotillard-Adam Driver starrer with which the festival kicked off on July 6.

The Camera d'Or for the best first film screened in Cannes this year went to the coming-of-age drama *Murina*.

The jury gave the Best Actor prize to Caleb Landry Jones for his lead performance in *Nitram*, a disturbing peep into the mind of a mass killer.

The Best Actress prize was bagged by Norwegian late-bloomer Renate Reinskov for her performance in *The Worst Person in the World*.

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ASK US



Q. I am planning to start SIP in the NPS Tier 2 account instead of investing in mutual funds. On redemption, how will the capital gains be taxed?

KUMARAVEL K.S.

Aarati Krishnan answers: NPS Tier 2 account offers an opportunity to choose from among equity, corporate bond and government bond options and is a very low-cost vehicle like the Tier 1 account.

The corporate and government bond options have also tended to beat comparable options from mutual funds. The corporate bond option invests mainly in high-quality bonds rated AA and above. However, the equity option has not managed to consistently beat benchmarks like the Nifty50. Do look at index funds as an alternative before opting for equity under the Tier 2 account. The NPA Tier 2 account is not specifically mentioned in the Income Tax Act. But given that the account offers no tax benefits on your contributions, some tax experts believe that your redemption amount will not be subject to any special restrictions. NPS being a market-linked vehicle, its maturity proceeds should be subject to capital gains taxation.

As NPS units are not chargeable to securities transaction tax, long-term capital gains will apply if they are held for 3-years plus and short-term capital gains, if held for a shorter period. The long-term capital gains tax rate would be at 20% with indexation benefits. But this is just an interpretation of the tax rules and could be subject to debate.

Q. I am 25 and work in a PSU bank. Recently, I received salary arrears payment in one lump sum on which a greater portion was deducted under the head 'Income Tax'. I am of the view that the deducted tax amount will be refunded by ITR filing. I want to know how far it is correct and how and on what basis it will be refunded. Also, in the present monthly-salary sheet, after an increase in salary, a portion of salary credited is also being deducted as income tax. Will this deduction in monthly salary be nullified by any investments in tax-saving schemes? If so, how much do I have to invest in tax-saving schemes? Also, will the deducted tax amount be refunded; and by when?

RAJESH ANDE

N. Sree Kanth answers: Your employer, the PSU bank, is obligated to deduct tax (known as TDS) on its employee's total income if the total income exceeds the taxable limits (above ₹5 lakh where rebate u/s 87A of the Income Tax Act, 1961 cannot be claimed). Depending on your salary structure, your employer will compute your tax obligation based on the slab rates after considering all the components such as deductions, exemptions, other income, rental income, among others, and deduct the same over the year at the time of disbursement of salaries each month.

In case of arrears of more than 12 months' salary, wherein the salaries are assessed at a rate higher than that at which it would otherwise have been assessed in the respective previous years, relief under Section 89 of the Income Tax Act, 1961 can be claimed, for which you are to file form 10E.

If the arrears are less than 12 months' salary, the same will be included in your total income and the corresponding additional tax will be deducted from that. Usually, you have to declare your investments/spending that qualify for tax deduction to your employer so that the TDS is deducted accordingly and no excess TDS is deducted. At the end of the year, your employer will provide you with Form 16 which contains the particulars of your salary, corresponding tax liability and the TDS deducted over the year. Post that, you as an income tax assessee are required to file your respective ITR by incorporating these details along with any other income which will not be covered in your Form 16 such as capital gains.

In case you have missed out any, you may include the same at the time of filing your ITR and avail of the corresponding refund if it applies. You will be entitled to refund only if your employer has deducted TDS more than your tax liability and not otherwise. This may be on account of non-consideration of your deductions/exemptions. A few examples of deductions that you may avail of are: payment of life insurance premium for self, spouse and children; investing in ELSS, ULIPs, PPF and NSC among others, payment of tuition fee for children etc.

You may refer Chapter VI-A of the Income Tax Act, 1961, to further know the various exemptions and deductions that may be suitable to you and the corresponding conditions.

Q. My husband is a senior citizen and a regular income tax payer. For the assessment year 2021-2022, he plans to opt for 'yes' with IT Sec.115 BAC. In case he opts for 'yes', can he get the benefit of deduction of ₹50,000 u/s 80 TTB, an additional boon for senior citizens?

LAKSHMI VISHWANATH

A. Under Section 115BAC of the Income Tax Act, 1961, deductions under Chapter VI-A cannot be claimed except Section 80CCD(2) and 80JAA. Deduction under Section 80TTB falls under Chapter VI-A, thereby opting to pay tax under the new tax regime will restrict the benefit of deduction in respect of interest on deposits in case of senior citizens.

(N. Sree Kanth is partner, GSS & Associates, Chartered Accountants, Chennai)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

Beware of new low-risk, HIGH-RETURN PROMISE

Products such as perpetual bonds may carry an aura of safety but in reality there is little to cheer

VIDYA BALA

Sellers of equity products never fail to tell you that their products are subject to market risks. It is a different matter that you understand those risks only with experience. But when it comes to debt, risk is not the key word. After all, your debt investment is supposed to hedge your other risks!

In the past couple of years, sellers of debt products have become better at a narrative of high returns with no or least risk. Yes, we are talking of products such as perpetual bonds, market-linked debentures/covered bonds, home loan-backed bonds and even some of your debt funds.

At a time when your bank FD rates are at a low, a promise of disproportionate returns for low risks can be an easy lure for you. But at such times, it is best to get back to basics of investing: when you have a product that delivers far higher returns than your FDs, where from and how does that return come? Let us take a few examples to highlight the risks in such products and why the doctrine of 'buyer beware' is more important now than ever before if you are a retail investor.

Perpetual attraction

In 2019 and early 2020, perpetual or Additional Tier 1 bonds (ATI bonds) issued by banks were sold to retail investors by the banks issuing them. What was the selling proposition? That ATI bonds are high-return substitutes to bank FDs or non-convertible debentures. But this promise was far from the truth. First, these products are allowed to skip interest payouts



if their Tier I capital falls below a certain level or they suffer losses or have insufficient reserves. They have no obligation to pay you later nor can they be sued for it. If that isn't a significant variation from your humble FD, here's more.

Second, although there is no maturity date, perpetual bonds were often mis-sold as limited-period bonds. These bonds only have a 'call option' and not a maturity date. This gives the borrower the right to redeem the bond at the end of, say, 5 or 10 years. But this is an 'option' and not a mandate. So, if you need the money any time, you will need to sell in the market. This can also be at a loss if they are poorly traded, or the inter-

est rate cycle is adverse.

The final nail is that the RBI can direct a bank to fully write off this bond (remember Yes Bank's perpetual bonds?) liability if it thinks the bank is at a point of non-viability (PONV) or requires capital infusion by another public sector bank to prevent going defunct. Yes, your principal can be written off and you will have no recourse. Now, this is worse than holding equity, where you can at least get a market price for your assets.

Safety illusion

A more recent popular product among retail investors are covered bonds/market-linked debentures/structured products.

These alternative investment products, earlier made available only for risk-taking HNIs, are now being made available to retail investors, seemingly to provide them with 'access to high returning products.' Let's take the case of the now-popular covered bonds. These bonds, which are nothing but a pool of loans, are sold with the safety of an asset backing, typically property or gold – two assets that immediately provide you with an illusion of safety!

But if these bonds are safe, why are they paying you 10-11% returns as opposed to 6% in banks? So, here's what you will not know unless you dig in. The loan pool that is packaged to give you this bond typically

In your fear of missing out (FOMO), do not break the cardinal rule: if an investment product comes with the promise of higher returns, it also comes with the baggage of higher risks. In debt, this risk can not only mean just zero returns but also zero capital!

comes from an NBFC that is not top-notch. Why do they need this money at such a high rate? Likely because they are unable to source funding through the regular channels or they come at a high cost. Why so? Because, these NBFCs do not have a high credit standing – with an A-rating or even BBB rating.

THINK INVESTOR: OBJECTIVE-DRIVEN CHOICE

Active or passive? Why investment grammar is important

Choosing the right fund for investment can be an uphill task as several factors are at play

VENKATESH BANGARUSWAMY

Your decision to choose investment products depends on your investment objectives. Are you, for instance, investing to achieve a life goal or are you investing your surplus cash? This is important because you can give up significant liquidity if you are investing surplus cash. Whereas, you need liquidity if you are saving to achieve a life goal.

This week, we focus on your goal-based investments and delve into a related question: what factors should you consider before investing in active funds for your goal-based portfolios?

Alpha trade-off

All of us like more money than less. So, our default choice ought to be active funds. These are mutual funds that strive to beat the benchmark index. The excess return that these funds provide over their appropriate

benchmark is referred to as the alpha. Positive alpha is good for us; for excess return translates into more cash flows to achieve our goals.

There is another positive aspect to alpha. Suppose, the benchmark index returns minus 10% in a year and your fund generates minus 7.5%. You save 2.5 percentage points of loss on your investment.

But there is a trade-off. A fund manager has to take active bets to generate alpha. In an attempt to generate positive alpha, the fund could generate negative alpha returns, lower than the benchmark index.

That would lead to lower returns, translating into a shortfall in the amount you want to accumulate to achieve your goal. Can you simply buy a fund that has generated positive alpha in, say, the past five years? That would be a meaningful decision only if a fund that generated positive alpha in the last five years is likely to continue

An active fund exposes you to both active risk and market risk. A passive product such as an exchange-traded fund exposes you to only market risk

generating alpha in the future. The point is that alpha generation is dependent on two factors viz. skill and luck. The problem is that you cannot differentiate luck from skill.

Choice regret

A good portfolio manager can generate negative alpha because of bad luck whereas a not-so-skilful manager can generate positive alpha because of good luck. So, looking at only the alpha returns for the past five or ten years may not suffice. You have to also analyse the fluctuation in the fund's alpha over the years. Typically, greater the fluctuation, lower the confidence that the fund



Correct bet: Statistical analysis can only lower your chances of picking a wrong fund, as luck is always a factor. *GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

will be able to sustain its alpha in the future.

Now, statistical analysis can only reduce the error of picking a wrong fund because luck is a factor in alpha generation. Besides, will you be able to continually engage in rigorous analysis to take decisions?

Also, how many funds will you analyse? For instance,

there were 33 large-cap funds as of June according to the Association of Mutual Funds of India. So, you have to apply a rule to narrow your choice to three or four funds before doing any analysis. It is possible that several funds you did not choose could outperform the fund you invested in. Will you shift to one of those funds? What if the fund

you shift to underperforms the following year? The more the choices, the more the regret because the ones you do not choose can potentially do better than the ones you did!

Investment decision making can, indeed, be overwhelming. An active fund exposes you to both active risk (negative alpha) and market risk. A passive product such as an exchange-traded fund or an index fund exposes you to only market risk.

So, you have to clearly define your objectives. Which is more important: generating alpha or achieving a life goal? Remember, there are active funds that will generate positive alpha. Do you have the confidence of picking such a fund, and managing your choice regret? If yes, you should invest in active funds. If not, you should settle for a passive product.

(The writer offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank fixed deposit rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure
SMALL FINANCE BANKS				
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	6.75	6.25	6.00	6.00
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	6.75	6.50	6.25	6.25
Ujivan Small Finance Bank	6.75	6.50	6.75	6.75
Jana Small Finance Bank	6.75	6.25	6.50	6.50
Equitas Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.35	6.35	6.25
Fincare Small Finance Bank	6.00	5.50	5.75	6.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	6.50	6.50	5.75	5.25
AU Small Finance Bank	6.25	5.00	6.25	6.00
Capital Small Finance Bank	6.25	6.00	6.00	6.00
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS				
DCB Bank	6.50	5.80	6.50	6.50
RBL Bank	6.50	6.10	6.30	6.50
State Bank of Mauritius	6.50	6.50	6.50	6.00
IndusInd Bank	6.50	6.00	6.50	6.00
Nainital Bank	6.35	5.25	5.35	5.35
IDFC First Bank	6.00	5.50	5.75	6.00
Karur Vysya Bank	6.00	5.25	5.50	5.75
CSB Bank	5.75	5.00	5.25	5.25
Axis Bank	5.75	5.10	5.40	5.75
South Indian Bank	5.65	5.40	5.50	5.65
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	5.60	5.50	5.25	5.25
Karnataka Bank	5.60	5.20	5.50	5.50
Dhanlaxmi Bank	5.60	5.25	5.40	5.50

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure
PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS				
Bandhan Bank	5.50	5.50	5.25	5.00
HDFC Bank	5.50	4.90	5.15	5.30
ICICI Bank	5.50	4.90	5.15	5.35
DBS Bank	5.50	4.25	5.50	5.50
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	5.30	5.10	5.30	5.30
Kotak Mahindra Bank	5.30	4.50	5.10	5.30
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS				
Union Bank of India	5.60	5.00	5.40	5.50
Canara Bank	5.50	5.20	5.50	5.50
State Bank of India	5.40	5.00	5.30	5.40
Punjab & Sind Bank	5.30	5.15	5.30	5.30
Indian Bank	5.25	5.00	5.25	5.25
Bank of Baroda	5.25	4.90	5.10	5.25
IDBI Bank	5.25	4.90	5.25	5.25
Punjab National Bank	5.25	5.10	5.10	5.25
Indian Overseas Bank	5.20	5.15	5.20	5.20
Bank of India	5.15	5.10	5.15	5.15
Bank of Maharashtra	4.90	4.90	4.90	4.90
FOREIGN BANKS				
Deutsche Bank	6.25	3.85	4.50	6.25
HSBC Bank	4.00	3.10	4.00	4.00
CitiBank	3.50	2.75	3.50	3.50

Home loan interest rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Up to 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & up to 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS			
Punjab & Sind Bank	6.65-7.60	6.65-7.60	6.65-7.60
State Bank of India	6.70-7.50	6.95-7.65	7.05-7.75
Bank of Baroda	6.75-8.35	6.75-8.35	6.75-8.60
Union Bank of India	6.80-7.60	6.90-7.65	6.90-7.65
Punjab National Bank	6.80-7.75	6.80-7.90	6.80-8.00
Central Bank of India	6.85-7.30	6.85-7.30	6.85-7.30
Bank of India	6.85-8.35	6.85-8.35	6.85-8.35
Canara Bank	6.90-8.90	6.90-8.90	6.90-8.90
UCO Bank	6.90-7.25	6.90-7.25	6.90-7.25
Bank of Maharashtra	6.90-8.05	6.90-8.40	6.90-8.40
IDBI Bank*	6.95-10.05	6.95-10.05	6.95-10.05
Indian Bank**	7.00-7.25	7.10-7.35	7.20-7.40
Indian Overseas Bank	7.05	7.15	7.30
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS			
Kotak Mahindra Bank ^	6.65-7.30	6.65-7.30	6.65-7.30
ICICI Bank ^^	6.75-7.30	6.75-7.45	7.10-7.55
Axis Bank	6.90-11.50	6.90-11.50	6.90-8.55
HSBC Bank***	7.20-7.75	7.20-7.75	7.20-7.75
Karur Vysya Bank	7.35-9.55	7.35-9.55	7.35-9.55
Karnataka Bank	7.50-8.75	7.50-8.75	7.50-8.85
Federal Bank	7.65-7.70	7.70-7.75	7.75-7.80
Dhanlaxmi Bank	7.85-9.00	7.85-9.00	7.85-9.00
South Indian Bank	7.95-9.45	7.95-9.45	7.95-9.45

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Up to 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & up to 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (HFCs)			
LIC Housing	6.66-7.85	6.66-8.05	6.90-8.05
HDFC Ltd.***	6.75-7.45	7.00-7.70	7.10-7.80
Bajaj Finserv	6.75-8.50	6.75-8.50	6.75-8.50
Tata Capital	>=6.90	>=6.90	>=6.90
PNB Housing	7.35-9.35	7.35-9.55	7.70-9.55
GIC Housing Finance	>=7.45	>=7.45	>=7.45
Repco Home Finance	>=7.75	>=7.75	>=7.75
Indiabulls Housing	>=8.65	>=8.65	>=8.65
Aditya Birla Capital	9.00-12.50	9.00-12.50	9.00-12.50
Reliance Home Finance	9.75-13.00	9.75-13.00	9.75-11.00

*10 bps concession for women borrowers under limited period offer. Conditions apply. **Interest rate of 6.85%-7.00% p.a. offered under IND AWAS Scheme. ^ Special HBLT rates starting at 6.65% p.a. for any loan amount. ^^ HBLT interest rate range of 6.75%-7.55% p.a. for any loan amount, with repayment from ICICI Bank Account. *** HBLT offered at an interest rate of 6.64% p.a. ****Special interest rates available under limited period offer. Valid for disbursements availed on or before September 30. Rates as on July 13. Source: Paisabazaar.com

Neeraj spearheads India's challenge

It promises to be a memorable outing considering the good form some athletes are in

TOKYO OLYMPICS

STAN RAYAN

Two years ago, Kamalpreet Kaur was in the 60m range but this season the discus thrower has hit a heady high. The 25-year-old, who could manage just 55.59m at the 2019 Doha Asians, broke the National record and bettered her personal best by more than five metres! That 66.59m throw has placed her sixth in this year's world list.

Every time the Olympics come around, many Indian athletes raise their performance magically and become world class. This time too, despite COVID-19 messing up their foreign trips and much of training, the athletes have pleasantly surprised everybody by making the cut for Tokyo in a number of events.

Record-breaking deeds
When the entry standards for Tokyo were announced, many felt that very few would qualify as athletes needed to break National records in almost all events. Surprisingly, they did just that.

Nine of the 16 qualifiers in individual events have broken National records this year and while 12 achieved



Well-equipped: Neeraj Chopra has the talent and temperament to unleash a throw worthy of a medal. • FILE PHOTO

the qualification standards, four – 400m hurdler M.P. Jabir, 50km walker Gurpreet Singh, sprinter Dutee Chand and discus thrower Annu Rani – made it through the World rankings route.

That has raised expectations sky high in a country that is yet to win its first Olympic medal in athletics.

Sticking one's head out and predicting medals or finalists is risky business, es-

ATHLETICS

pecially during this pandemic period when out-of-competition doping testing has been weak, but considering the awesome form the athletes are in, this promises to be a very memorable Olympics for the country.

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra could end indepen-

dent India's long wait and could even return with a silver if he is at his best. A shoulder sprain spoiled his hopes of making it to the last Olympics but a few days after the entry doors closed, Neeraj won the under-20 Worlds gold with a junior world record throw that would have fetched him a bronze in Rio.

He missed the 2019 Doha Worlds after an elbow surgery but early this year, Neeraj

raised his National record to 88.07m which placed him fourth in the world list.

German Johannes Vetter, who produced a series of 90-plus throws (season best 96.29m) but whose two recent meets ended meekly (85.25m and 86.48m), is the favourite for the gold while Marcin Kruskowski (89.55m), 2012 Olympic champion Keshorn Walcott (89.55) and Gatis Cakss (89.12) will give the Indian a fight.

Other contenders

Long jumper M. Sreeshankar, shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor, steeplechaser Avinash Sable among men and javelin thrower Annu Rani and Kamalpreet should also make the final if they repeat their season's best.

Of the two 4x400m relays, the men have a better chance of entering the final than the mixed.

But then, though quarter-miler Amoj Jacob improved stunningly with every meet, national record holder Muhammed Anas has run the individual 400m in just one meet while another star Noah Nirmal Tom has not run any. That makes predictions difficult. And the mixed team is without any of the leading girls.

REWIND

STAN RAYAN

There's a nice little asterisk every time Norman Pritchard's name is mentioned in Olympic record books that should make every Indian miss a heartbeat.

It's more than 120 years since Pritchard won two silver medals, in 200m and 200m hurdles, at the second Olympics in Paris in 1900 but nobody is sure whether the Calcutta-born Pritchard represented India or Great Britain.

Well, the scene appears very gloomy when one removes the Pritchard angle.

Only 10, so far

Just 10 Indians – five from track and five in field events – have qualified for the finals (not counting straight finals) at the Olympics since independence.

They are Milkha Singh (1960, 400m, 4th), G.S. Randhawa (1964, 110m hurdles, 5th), Sriram Singh (1976, 800m, 7th), P.T. Usha (1984, 400m hurdles, 4th), Lalita Babar (2016, 3000 steeplechase, 10th) on track and Henry Rebbello (1948, triple jump, 5th in qual., NM), Baldev Singh (1948, long



Icons: P.T. Usha and Milkha Singh have attained legendary status thanks to their creditable efforts at the Olympics. • FILE PHOTO

jump, 11th in qual., DNS), Anju Bobby George (2004, long jump, 5th), Krishna Poonia (2012, discus throw, 6th) and Vikas Gowda (2012, discus throw, 8th).

Injury woes

While the near-miss stories of Milkha and Usha are well known, Rebbello pulled a muscle after he was forced to wait nearly 30 minutes for his first triple jump because of victory ceremonies in 1948 where long jumper Bal-

dev also missed the final with an injury.

And there was Lavy Pinto who entered the semifinals in both the 100 and 200m at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics and would have been in the final in the shorter sprint had he been running in 1964 Games or after.

Unlike today's eight lanes, the 100m was run in six lanes in 1952 and Pinto was fourth in one of the two semifinals in a hand-timed 10.7s.



Shushila Likmabam. • FILE PHOTO

A tough prospect for Shushila

JUDO

ASHWIN ACHAL

Shushila Likmabam, who made the cut via the Additional places (Asia) continental quota in the women's extra-lightweight (48 kg) category, is India's lone judoka entry for the Tokyo Olympics.

This will be Shushila's first

Olympic appearance.

Shushila, silver medalist at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, took up the sport under the guidance of her uncle and judoka Dinit Likmabam.

The Manipuri athlete's bid to qualify for the Olympics was put in jeopardy when the Indian contingent was forced to withdraw from the Asia-Oceania Olympic quali-

fiers in Kyrgyzstan after two judokas tested positive for COVID-19.

Shushila's return to competition was unimpressive, as she lost in the first round of the World Championship to reigning Pan American champion Mary Dee Vargas.

With an Olympic ranking of 46, Shushila stands little chance of winning a medal at Tokyo.

India's chances ride on Fouaad Mirza

An extraordinary effort needed to make a mark

EQUESTRIAN

ASHWIN ACHAL

A little over a month ago, Fouaad Mirza was a relieved man. Fouaad had finally sealed India's lone equestrian Olympic berth, after overcoming several hurdles along the way.

Fouaad was affected by multiple lockdowns in his base at Germany, and was also forced to keep his horse Dajara 4 in quarantine after an outbreak of Equine Herpes Virus.

As the Olympic qualification deadline fast approached, Fouaad was desperate to gain the Minimum Eligibility Requirement (MER) needed to book a Tokyo spot. That several qualifying events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic only made his task harder.

The breakthrough came in May, when Fouaad achieved the necessary MER on both his horses, Seigneur Medicott and Dajara 4, in the CCI4*-Long eventing competition in Baborowko (Poland).

The Bengaluru rider,



Big task ahead: Fouaad Mirza, astride Dajara 4, will need to be at his best to have a go at the medals. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

backed by Embassy Group, has chosen Dajara 4 as his equine partner for the Olympics.

"At the Olympics, we have two rounds of show jumping after cross-country, which is Medicott's weak link. That was the main reason why we chose Dajara," Fouaad explained during a recent media interaction.

Fouaad made headlines by bagging two silvers in the 2018 Asian Games. He became the first Indian to win an individual medal (eventing) in equestrian at the Asian Games since 1982. He also won a silver in the team event alongside Jitender

Singh, Akash Malik and Rakesh Kumar. In 2019, Fouaad received the Arjuna award. Fouaad was encouraged to take up the sport at a young age by his father and renowned equine veterinarian, Hasneyn Mirza.

Fouaad, who trains under triple Olympic medalist Sandra Auffarth, will compete against the German at Tokyo. It will take an extraordinary show for Fouaad to make a mark in the Olympics. The sport is dominated by Great Britain, Germany, USA, Netherlands and France, while Asian nations have struggled to create an impact.

Anees, only rider to complete a competition

REWIND

ASHWIN ACHAL

In 1980 at Moscow, four eventers – J.S. Ahluwalia (astride Shivalik), Hussain Singh (Rajdoor), Mohammed Khan (I-Am-It) and Darya Singh (Bobby) – became the first Indian equestrians to compete in the Olympics.

Their entry was made easier due to the boycott, with entries received from only 11 nations. None of the four riders could record a finish.

Suffering a fall

In the 1996 Atlanta Games, Indrajit Lamba (Karishma) competed in eventing, but was eliminated after a fall.

Imtiaz Anees (Spring Invader) became the first Indian first rider to complete an Olympic competition, when he finished 23rd in individual eventing, at the Sydney Games in 2000.

Not much to show

REWIND

ASHWIN ACHAL

Shushila Likmabam will be the 13th judoka from India to feature in the Olympics and in seven Olympic Games appearances (1992-2016), Indian judokas have managed to win only four bouts.

In 2004, Akram Shah defeated USA's Williams Murray in the men's 60 kg Repechage 1 round. Since then, – Tombi Devi, Divya Tewari in 2008, Garima Chaudhary in 2012, and Avtar Singh in 2016 – failed to record a win.

Hearty welcome



Touchdown: The Indian archery team is greeted by enthusiastic volunteers on arrival on Sunday. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

Pedal power



Tadej Pogacar claimed a second straight Tour de France title on Sunday. • REUTERS

England draws level

REUTERS
LEEDS

England beat Pakistan by 45 runs in the second T20 international at Headingley on Sunday as the hosts levelled a three-match series at 1-1. Stand-in captain Jos Buttler top-scored with 59 in England's 200.

The scores: England 200 in 19.5 overs (Buttler 59, Moeen 36, Livingstone 38, Hasnain 3/51) b Pakistan 155/9 in 20 overs (Rizwan 37, Shadab 36 n.o., Saqib 3/33).

Shaw, Dhawan and Kishan star for India

The visitors begin the ODI series with a comprehensive victory over Sri Lanka

INDIA IN LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO

Ishan Kishan celebrated his 23rd birthday with a dazzling half-century (59) on debut while Shikhar Dhawan (86 not out), in his first match as captain, anchored India to a walk-in-the-park seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the opening ODI here on Sunday.

The inexperienced Sri Lankan batters managed to get 262 for nine. But India achieved the target in just 36.4 overs.

Prithvi Shaw, with his new found swagger in 50-over

cricket, butchered the Lankan pacers during his brief stay by hammering nine boundaries in a 24-ball 43.

That set the pace for Kishan to come in and hit a six off the very first delivery he faced. He then decided to use his bat like a sledgehammer, scoring the second fastest ODI fifty on debut – off 33 balls – to kill the contest inside the first 20 overs.

Dhawan then took over to finish off the match with an unbeaten 86 off 95 balls.

Earlier, Indian bowlers combined to restrict Sri Lanka to 262/9 in 50 overs despite a late cameo of 43 by Chamika Karunaratne.



Captain's knock: After a quiet start, Shikhar Dhawan found his range of shots to guide India home with much to spare. • AFP

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA

Avishka Fernando c Pandey b Chahal 33 (35b, 2x4, 1x6), Minod Bhanuka c Shaw b Kuldeep 27 (44b, 3x4), Bhanuka Rajapaksa c Dhawan b Kuldeep 24 (22b, 2x4, 2x6), Dhananjaya de Silva c Bhuvneshwar b Krunal 14 (27b, 1x4), Charith Asalanka c Kishan b Deepak Chahar 38 (65b, 1x4), Dasun Shanaka c Hardik b Chahal 39 (50b, 2x4, 1x6), Wanindu Hasaranga c Dhawan b Deepak Chahar 8 (7b, 1x4), Chamika Karunaratne (not out) 43 (35b, 1x4, 2x6), Isuru Udana c Deepak

Chahar b Hardik 8 (9b), Dushmanta Chameera run out 13 (7b, 1x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-2, w-12, nb-1): 16; Total (for nine wkts. in 50 overs): 262.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-49 (Avishka, 9.1 overs), 2-85 (Rajapaksa, 16.1), 3-89 (Minod, 16.4), 4-117 (de Silva, 24.4), 5-166 (Asalanka, 37.2), 6-186 (Hasaranga, 39.3), 7-205 (Shanaka, 43.5), 8-222 (Udana, 46.5), 9-262 (Chameera, 49.6).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 9-0-63-0, Deepak Chahar 7-1-37-2, Hardik

5-0-33-1, Chahal 10-0-52-2, Kuldeep 9-1-48-2, Krunal 10-0-26-1.

INDIA

Prithvi Shaw c Avishka b de Silva 43 (24b, 9x4), Shikhar Dhawan (not out) 86 (95b, 6x4, 1x6), Ishan Kishan c Minod b Sandakan 59 (42b, 8x4, 2x6), Manish Pandey c Shanaka b de Silva 26 (40b, 1x4, 1x6), Suryakumar Yadav (not out) 31 (20b, 5x4); Extras (lb-5, w-12, nb-1): 18; Total (for three wkts. in 36.4 overs): 263.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-58 (Shaw, 5.3), 2-143 (Ishan, 17.5), 3-215 (Pandey, 30.4).

SRI LANKA BOWLING

Chameera 7-0-42-0, Udana 2-0-27-0, de Silva 5-0-49-2, Sandakan 8.4-0-53-1, Asalanka 3-0-26-0, Hasaranga 9-1-45-0, Karunaratne 2-0-16-0.

Toss: Sri Lanka. MoM: Shaw.

India won by seven wickets with 13.2 overs to spare and took a 1-0 lead in three-match series.

Second ODI: July 20, R. Premadasa Stadium, Colombo, 3 p.m. IST.

BRITISH GP

REUTERS
SILVERSTONE

Lewis Hamilton won his home British Grand Prix for a record-extending eighth time on Sunday despite a 10 second penalty for a first lap collision that sent Red Bull rival Max Verstappen crashing out of the race. The Dutchman was taken to hospital for precautionary tests.

The win was the 99th of seven-time World champion Hamilton's career.

The Mercedes driver, now only eight points behind Verstappen after 10 races, passed Ferrari's Charles Leclerc for the lead with two laps to go.

The results: 1. Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes); 2. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) +3.871; 3. Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) 11.125; 4. Lando Norris (McLaren) 28.573; 5. Daniel Ricciardo (McLaren) 42.624; 6. Carlos Sainz (Ferrari) 43.454; 7. Fernando Alonso (Alpine) 72.093; 8. Lance Stroll (Aston Martin) 74.289; 9. Esteban Ocon (Alpine) 76.162; 10. Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri)

82.065; 11. Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri) 85.327; +1 Lap: 12. George Russell (Williams); 13. Antonio Giovinazzi (Alfa Romeo); 14. Nicholas Latifi (Williams); 15. Kimi Raikkonen (Alfa Romeo); 16. Sergio Perez (Red Bull); 17. Nikita Mazepin (Haas); 18. Mick Schumacher; DNF: Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin); Max Verstappen (Red Bull).

Standings: Drivers: 1. Verstappen 185; 2. Hamilton 177; 3. Norris 113; 4. Bottas 108; 5. Perez 104. **Constructors:** 1. Red Bull 289; 2. Mercedes 285; 3. McLaren 163; 4. Ferrari 148; 5. AlphaTauri 49.

Morikawa triumphs

BRITISH OPEN

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SANDWICH

American debutant Collin Morikawa produced an ice-cold final round to win the British Open by two strokes on a blazing hot afternoon at Royal St George's on Sunday.

The 24-year-old began the day a stroke behind Louis Oosthuizen but played faultless golf in a four-under round of 66 to overhaul the South African and resist resurgent fellow American Jor-

dan Spieth. Morikawa barely missed a fairway all day as he made four birdies and showed incredible composure when he came under pressure late in the day.

Spieth, finished on 13-under with Oosthuizen ending in a tie for third with Spain's U.S. Open champion Jon Rahm, four shots back.

Morikawa, who only turned pro in 2019, has now won two of his first eight Majors having also won his PGA Championship debut last year.



Collin Morikawa with the Claret Jug. • GETTY IMAGES

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Berrettini out of Olympics with injury
Matteo Berrettini, who lost the Wimbledon final to Novak Djokovic, has been forced to pull out of the Olympics with a muscle strain, the Italian Olympic Committee announced on Sunday. AFP



Aditi-Pajaree pair finishes third
MIDLAND (USA)
Aditi Ashok and Thailand's Pajaree Anannarukarn finished tied third at the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational here. The 19-under total fetched them a career-best third place finish. Thai sisters Ariya and Moriya Jutanugarn (24-under) took the title. PTI

ICC fines Ireland's Little, reprimands Adair, Tector
DUBAI
Ireland pacer Josh Little was on Sunday fined 15 per cent of his match fee while teammates Mark Adair and Harry Tector were reprimanded for breaching the ICC Code of Conduct during Friday's third ODI against South Africa. PTI

Mongolia, Tajikistan, Switzerland join ICC
DUBAI
The International Cricket Council inducted Mongolia, Tajikistan and Switzerland as its new members at the 78th Annual General Meeting on Sunday. The ICC now has 106 members, including 94 associates. ANI

Bucks on brink of ending drought

Holiday-Antetokounmpo combine steals Suns' move

NBA FINALS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PHOENIX
Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 32 points, including a clinching slam dunk in the final seconds, and Milwaukee Bucks beat Phoenix Suns 123-119 on Saturday to move within one win of a first NBA title since 1971.

Middleton shines

Khris Middleton added 29 points and Jrue Holiday contributed 27 points and 13 assists for the visiting Bucks, who seized a 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven NBA Finals.

With the Suns seeking a go-ahead basket in the dying seconds, Holiday stole the ball from Devin Booker and made an alley-oop pass to Antetokounmpo for a slam



Bated-breath moment: The Phoenix Suns defence anxiously follows the path of the ball as Giannis Antetokounmpo shoots. AFP

dunk and Middleton added a final free throw to seal the Suns' fate.

The Bucks could become only the fifth team in NBA Finals history to win the crown after dropping the

first two games.

Teams winning game five to take a 3-2 edge in the Finals have won the title 72% of the time, 21 of 29 in all.

Paul had 21 points and 11 assists for Phoenix while Ba-

hamas big man Deandre Ayton had 20 points and 10 rebounds.

The result:

Milwaukee Bucks 123 bt Phoenix Suns 119 (Bucks lead series 3-2).

Anand triumphs

CHESS

P.K. AJITH KUMAR KOZHIKODE

In a fascinating battle between two former World champions fought over four games in a brand new format of chess, Viswanathan Anand defeated Vladimir Kramnik to win the Sparkassen Trophy at Dortmund on Sunday.

Just draw needed

Anand needed only a draw in the final game of the No-Casting Chess event, and he got it in 40 moves.

It was once again an English Opening – all the three previous games had also begun thus – with Anand having the black pieces.

The Russian, who started the day 1-2 down, had to win the game if he wanted to stop his old rival from claiming the trophy.



Viswanathan Anand.

FILE PHOTO

Kramnik, who conceived this variant of chess with the intention of making the game less predictable and more dynamic, however, was forced to draw the game by giving perpetual checks. Anand was just one move away from putting a second queen on the board.

The Chennai maestro won the match 2.5-1.5.

Bangladesh beats Zimbabwe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE HARARE

All-rounder Shakib Al Hasan hit an unbeaten 96 as Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by three wickets on Sunday after a thrilling run chase to take a winning 2-0 lead in a three One-Day Internationals series here.

Zimbabwe made 240/9 off 50 overs and Bangladesh reached 242/7 through a four from Shakib off the first ball of the final over.

The scores: Zimbabwe 240/9 in 50 overs (Wesley Madhevere 56, Brendan Taylor 46, Shoriful Islam 4/46) lost to Bangladesh 242/7 in 49.1 overs (Shakib al Hasan 96 n.o.).

Toss: Zimbabwe.

MoM: Shakib Al Hasan. Bangladesh won by three wickets and leads series 2-0.

Coimbatore finishes third, says Rohan Bopanna

TENNIS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT COIMBATORE

Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna was quite excited with his Academy (RBTA) stitching a partnership with RaK's Pallikoodam here a few days ago.

It is Bopanna's first venture outside his home State (Karnataka) and he plans to bring in a new dimension to tennis coaching in Coimbatore. "I will be focussing on enabling holistic development at the grassroots level," he said.

"We will be introducing a balanced curriculum with equal emphasis on fitness and tennis skills to young children looking to learn the sport," he added.

The junior development centre will be headed by



Rohan Bopanna.

coach Arpan Lakhani. "He has been with me for the past four years, running the junior development programme in Bengaluru. He, along with the entire team, will be moving to Coimbatore," said Bopanna.

Lakhani from Maharashtra, along with a team of highly-trained coaches and qualified fitness trainers will oversee the programme that

offers an integrated routine at various levels – from beginners to intermediate.

Bopanna will also be actively involved. "The entire programme will be monitored by me and our most experienced coach (M. Balachandran), who has a coaching experience of 30 years," he said.

"Coimbatore has always had some amazing talents but now I feel it just an added structure in place to help these young children turn into champions," he added.

RaK's had earlier tied-up with Pulella Gopi Chand's Academy and Raman Vijayan Sports School. It is the first of its kind facility that provides sports training along with school education as well as on-site residential facilities.

Their dream is to just take part

There is no realistic talk of medals for the four Iraqi athletes

OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BAGHDAD

For the four Iraqi athletes who have made it to Tokyo, there is no realistic talk of medals. Having overcome war, politics and pandemic, their dream is simply to participate.

Right up to November of last year, when a new national Olympic chief was elected Iraq's very participation in the Games was in doubt.

Despite the loss of state financial support and the difficulties of travelling to qualifying events during the coronavirus pandemic, two Iraqi hopefuls managed to qualify for Tokyo.

Rower Mohammed Ryadh, 27, will take part in the men's single sculls for the second Games in a row.



Gearing up: Mohammed Ryadh, who will take part in the men's single sculls, practises on the Tigris river. AFP

But he has no illusions about his medal chances after his French coach of the past nine years, Vincent Tassery, was prevented by restrictions linked to the pandemic from travelling to Baghdad.

To date, Iraq has won just a single Olympic medal – a silver for weightlifting in Rome in 1960.

Sprinter Dana Hussein, 35, left it to mid-June to claim

her women's 200 metres berth with a qualifying time of 22.51 seconds with a gold in the pan-Arab athletics championship in Tunisia.

Two other Iraqis were handed wildcard slots after coming close to their qualifying scores – 400 metre specialist Taha Hussein and shooter Fatima Abbas. The four make up Iraq's smallest squad of Olympians since London in 1948.

Vidit, Hari, Pragm take lead

CHESS WC

RAKESH RAO NEW DELHI

Vidit Gujrathi outplayed B. Adhiban before P. Harikrishna and R. Praggnandhaa took the lead in the third round of chess World Cup in Sochi, Russia, on Sunday.

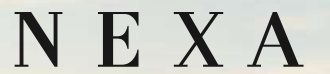
Sarin, Harika lose

Nihal Sarin lost to Dmirty Andreikin and so did D. Harika after facing Russia's Valentina Gunina.

The results (involving Indians):

Round 3, Game 1: Men: Vidit Gujrathi bt B. Adhiban; Nihal Sarin lost to Dmirty Andreikin (Rus); P. Harikrishna bt Constantin Lupulescu (Rom); R. Praggnandhaa bt Michal Krasenkow (Pol).

Women: Valentina Gunina (Rus) bt D. Harika.



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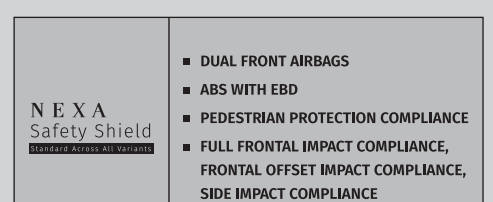
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