



Will return power back to the people, says Navjot Singh Sidhu

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Monsoon lull may force oilseed farmers to shift to cotton, maize: CRISIL

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England lifts COVID-19 curbs as scientists warn of a surge in cases

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Dhawan's men look to seal ODI series against Sri Lanka

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## NEARBY



### Protecting children a priority, Centre tells HC

NEW DELHI  
The Centre has informed the Delhi High Court that it has asked the States to ensure immediate rehabilitation of children orphaned due to COVID-19, in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act and leveraging the facilities under child protection services.

### DU to hold entrance tests for 13 courses

NEW DELHI  
Delhi University will conduct entrance tests for 13 courses for the coming academic session, with four courses being added this year, said officials. The university is also planning to increase the number of test centres for the entrance test, conducted for all PG and select UG courses.

### Women's groups want U.P. population Bill nixed

NEW DELHI  
The U.P. government's proposed law on population control is "unconstitutional" as it violates the right to equality and should be "immediately withdrawn", demanded women's organisations, health networks and academics in a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday.

# Rahul, Prashant Kishor, ex-EC Lavasa on list of spyware targets

Analysis confirms Pegasus attack or attempts on 10 Indian numbers, says report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, former Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, election strategist Prashant Kishor, Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee and Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnav and Prahlad Patel appeared on a leaked list of "potential" or actual targets for spying by the Israeli company NSO's Pegasus spyware, news website *The Wire* and other international publications reported on Monday.

Two mobile phones used by Mr. Gandhi appeared on the list — one was added in 2018 when he was the president of the Congress and the other after the 2019 Lok Sabha election, according to the reports. Numbers belonging to at least five of Mr. Gandhi's close friends and other Congress officials, including Sachin Rao and Alankar Sawai, also figured on the list, which has the names of dozens of journalists, activists and healthcare experts.

At least one number once used by Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan as well as hundreds of others in the country also appeared on the list.

The phones targeted were infiltrated by a malicious software called Pegasus,

## Decoding Pegasus

Pegasus is a spyware, developed and licensed by an Israeli company, NSO Group. It can be used to infiltrate smartphones that run on both iOS and Android operating systems, and turn them into surveillance devices. A low down:

- Pegasus's method of attack is called zero-click attacks, which do not require any action by the user. The spyware can hack a device simply by giving a missed WhatsApp call
- It will alter call logs so that the user has no knowledge of what happened

- It can also be installed manually on a device or over a wireless transceiver
- If it fails to connect with its command-and-control server for more than 60 days, it self-destructs and removes all traces

- If it detects that it was installed on the wrong device or SIM card, it will self-destruct
- Amnesty International noted that despite issuing security updates, Android and iOS devices were breached

- Once the spyware enters the device, it installs a module to track call logs, read messages, emails, calendars, Internet history, and gather location data to send the information to the attacker



which is sold by the NSO Group. The spyware can secretly unlock the target's phone, computer or other devices, collect information and transfer it to another device without the permission of the user. The Israeli company has said it sells Pegasus only to government agencies to fight terrorism and other serious crimes and that it does not operate the spyware licensed to its clients.

Those who were targeted in India included *The Wire*'s editors Siddharth Varadarajan and M.K. Venu, journalist

Sushant Singh and Mr. Kishor, a forensic analysis found. The phone of Mr. Kishor, who worked with the Trinamool in West Bengal and the DMK in Tamil Nadu that went to the polls in April, was found to have been compromised as recently as July 14.

Investigations confirmed the Pegasus attack, or signs of potential targeting, on phones linked to 10 Indian numbers and 27 phones around the world, according to *The Guardian*.

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MORE REPORTS ► PAGE 9

# Why were curbs relaxed for Bakrid, SC questions Kerala

State files affidavit, case will be heard today

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday gave the Kerala government less than 24 hours to explain the reasons for relaxing COVID-19 restrictions between July 18 and 20 for Bakrid celebrations, while noting that any incident that



directly affected lives would be viewed sternly and result in "prompt action".

Kerala filed a 29-page affidavit late on Monday after a Bench of Justices Rohinton F. Nariman and B.R. Gavai asked the State to do so by evening and posted the case as the first to be heard on Tuesday. The affidavit said the State's strategy was to achieve "a rational balance between life and livelihood". The government said traders were expecting Bakrid to alleviate their misery.

Continued on ► PAGE 8

# Amid protests, Parliament session off to a turbulent start

PM was unable to introduce new Ministers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The monsoon session saw a stormy start on Monday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi unable to introduce his new Ministers, as is customary after a reshuffle, on the first day of Parliament due to the Opposition's protest against the fuel price hike and the farm laws.

As soon as the Lok Sabha convened and Mr. Modi rose to speak, Opposition members protested, carrying placards on fuel price hike and



Raising their voice: Trinamool MPs arrived in Parliament on bicycles on Monday to protest against the fuel price hike. •PTI

raising slogans demanding the repeal of the three farm laws. Mr. Modi responded by pointing out the diversity in his new Ministry and the

"disrespect" shown to them by Opposition members.

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RAJYA SABHA DISRUPTED ► PAGE 8

# SC orders Manipur activist's immediate release

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the release of Manipur-based activist Erendra Leichongbom, detained under the National Security Act for his social media posts allegedly on the efficacy of

cow dung and urine as cures for COVID-19 in the context of the death of a BJP leader.

A Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah said the activist could not be detained in jail even for one night and ordered his release by 5 p.m. on Monday.

The court said his continued detention would be a violation of his fundamental right to life and the due process of law.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta said the government would file a response but did not pose any objections. Ad-

vocate Shadan Farasat, for Mr. Leichongbom's father L. Raghuramani Singh, said the government was using preventive detention in cases where even ordinary penal sections did not apply.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 8

## Rain fall



In deep waters: Riders lose balance as a motorbike skids on a waterlogged road amid heavy downpour in New Delhi and Gurugram on Monday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA (REPORTS ON PAGES 2 & 4)

## RT-PCR report a must for entering U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

Those travelling to Uttar Pradesh from States with high cases of COVID-19 or more than 3% test positivity rate will need to produce a negative RT-PCR test report.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed officials to follow the new protocol, amid a rise in cases in some States. The RT-PCR report should not be more than four days old. Those fully vaccinated will be given relaxations.

Mr. Adityanath said that though the pandemic was now under control, there was a need to be vigilant.

# Villagers string ropeway across missing highway

30-metre bridge reconnects four Arunachal districts

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

Villagers on either side of a missing 30-metre stretch of the strategic Trans-Arunachal Highway (TAH) waited 15 days for the government to start work.

Thereafter, they took turns for a week to string a ropeway across the gap and reconnect parts of four districts — Siang, West Siang, Upper Siang and Shi Yomi. Two of these districts border Tibet.

Many villages and towns in these districts were cut off as heavy rainfall washed away



Stopgap: Ropeway strung by villagers across the damaged portion of NH-13 at Lelek in Siang district. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

30 metres of TAH, also National Highway 13, at Lelek in Siang district. More than a week ago, the people in Pangin, Kebang and adjoining villages decided they could not wait for the State's Highway Department to start work. Pangin is the circle headquarters about 30 km downhill of the damaged portion of the TAH and Kebang about 20

km uphill. "People of 10 villages nearest the damaged portion got together to collect local materials and about 50-60 volunteers took turns to string the suspension bridge with bamboo, ropes and aluminium wires over seven days," Lelek Bridge Construction Committee chairman Tagum Sitang told *The Hindu*.

The Power Department provided high-tension wires to be used temporarily for the bridge that was completed on July 18. The "temporary" period, villagers said, could stretch to six months because of rain and soggy conditions and the repair was unlikely to take place soon.

"For 21 days, people were forced to climb a steep 50-metre rocky mound near the damaged portion to bring in essentials or carry patients to the only major hospital in Pasighat (headquarters of East Siang district)," Mr. Sitang said. "Vehicles are now coming to the safest point near the damaged portion for people to cross over and goods to be transhipped," he added.

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# Youth drowns taking selfies in waterlogged underpass

Heavy rain brings traffic to a standstill; constable's car falls into sinkhole in Dwarka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

As heavy rain lashed the Capital on Monday, a 27-year-old man drowned while allegedly clicking selfies in a waterlogged railway underpass in south-east Delhi's Pul Prahladpur.

Eyewitnesses told the police that Ravi Chautala from Jaitpur had gone to the waterlogged underpass to shoot videos when he drowned.

"We got information about the incident at 1.40 p.m. Fire brigade and divers were sent to the spot for the rescue operation," said DCP (South-East) R.P. Meena. The body has been sent to AIIMS for an autopsy, the police said, adding that further probe is under way.

Waterlogged streets, wall collapses, uprooted trees and traffic jams were reported from across the city.

In Dwarka's Sector 18, a car fell into a sinkhole as a portion of the road caved in.

The white car belonged to a constable in Delhi Traffic Police, who was safely rescued. The car was also taken out from the pit with the help of a crane.

## 108 mm of rainfall

The Met department said the Safdarjung weather station - official record of the city - received 108 mm of rainfall over the past 24 hours with 69.8 mm of rainfall occurring overnight and 38.4 mm between 8.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. on Monday.

Other weather stations like Palam and Najafgarh received 165.9 mm and 159.5 mm of rainfall, respectively over the past 24 hours.

Gurugram received 185 mm of rainfall. The all-time record for the heaviest rainfall for July was recorded on



A waterlogged street; a car falls into a sinkhole in Dwarka after heavy rain lashed the city on Monday.

\*SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA; PTI

July 21, 1958 - 266.2 mm.

According to the IMD, rainfall measuring 15 mm is considered "light", between 15 and 64.5 mm is "moderate", between 64.5 mm and 115.5 mm is "heavy", between 115.6 mm and 204.4 mm is "very heavy", and above 204.4 mm is considered as "extremely heavy".

The rain brought down the maximum temperature on Monday, which settled at 26.5 degrees Celsius, eight degrees cooler than normal. The minimum was 24.2, three degrees below normal. Rain is likely to continue on Tuesday with the weatherman predicting partly cloudy sky with light rain/thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle between 32 and 24 degrees Celsius respectively.

Traffic snarls were witnessed in areas, including ITO, Pul Prahladpur, Ring Road near Millennium Park,



Rain is likely to continue today. Day temperature to settle around 32 degrees Celsius

Sarai Kale Khan, Kilokri, near IP Flyover, Dhaura Kuan, Vikas Marg, Azadpur, among others. Waterlogging was reported from Ring Road, Pragati Maidan, Palam, Kirari and Rohtak road. "Waterlogging reported at Pul Prahladpur under a railway bridge. Traffic is diverted from MB [Mehrauli-

Badarpur] road towards Mathura road," the Delhi traffic police tweeted.

In other tweets complaining of waterlogging, Delhi Traffic Police tagged the Public Works Department (PWD) for swift action.

According to data shared by the municipalities, waterlogging was recorded at 37 locations under SDMC and at seven under North body.

Nineteen incidents of trees being uprooted, and six cases of wall collapse were reported in the area under SDMC jurisdiction.

# Incessant rains wreak havoc in Gurugram

One person drowns; houses vacated fearing collapse in Naharpur Rupa village

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

Incessant rains from the early hours of Monday till the afternoon wreaked havoc on Millennium City. While water gushed inside houses and basements in several parts of the city, heavy waterlogging was reported from roads, intersections and underpasses on the highway.

Meanwhile, water leakage through the roof of Ambience Mall forced the management to shut it down.

One person drowned in an underpass for non-motorised transport at Rajiv Chowk, said Assistant Divisional Fire Officer Gulshan Kalra. He also said a couple of houses on the verge of collapse in Naharpur Rupa village were evacuated.

The Flood Control Room set up by the district administration received 127 complaints of waterlogging throughout the day.

## Sheetla Mata Mandir

The district received a record 160 mm rainfall in less than 36 hours since Sunday morning, said the State Revenue and Disaster Management Department.

Though all major roads and intersections in the city



Commuters wade through the waterlogged Delhi-Gurugram Expressway on Monday. ■PTI

were waterlogged, including Suncity Township (Sector-54), IFFCO Chowk, Hero Honda Chowk, Signature Towers intersection, Galleria Market, Rajiv Chowk, Basai Road and HUDA City Centre Road, the Sheetla Mata Mandir Road - a perennial waterlogging point in the old city - bore the brunt. Videos of devotees, including women and children, wading through waist-high water were widely shared on social media platforms.

Temple officer Yogdutt Sharma said power supply to the shrine had to be cut to avoid any untoward incident after rainwater entered the

temple premises.

Hari Om, 70, a resident of Sector 7 and vice-president of the BJP Zila Mandal, said: "When I woke up at 5 a.m., I found my house inundated with two-three feet of foul-smelling sewage water. I tried calling the helplines, but there was no response."

The underpasses on the National Highway at Rajiv Chowk, Hero Honda Chowk, Medanta and IFFCO Chowk were also inundated. A senior NHAI official said pumps were installed to flush out stagnant water, but the heavy rains led to waterlogging. He claimed that underpasses were opened to traffic later in the day.

Besides, water leakage occurred at some points on the second and third floors of Ambience Mall.

"The Mall management decided to get all the electrical circuitry checked as a safety measure. The mall will reopen tomorrow [Tuesday]," said the Ambience Mall spokesperson.

## Measures taken

The district administration said 113 pumps were installed at as many critical flooding points, and 32 suction tankers were deployed to flush out water from basements, besides pressing 14 excavators into service to deal with traffic jams on the roads.

# Protesting farmers refuse to budge

Leaking tents and wet mattresses fail to dampen spirits at the Capital's borders

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Their tents are broken and leaking, rotten vegetables are strewn all over the grounds, and the mattresses are soaking wet. Yet, nothing can budge the farmers protesting the Centre's agricultural laws at Delhi's borders.

Protest sites at Tikri, Ghazipur and Singhu border witnessed heavy rain in the early hours of Monday.

The farmers, however,

said that no extreme weather can deter their will to continue the agitation.

Jagseer Singh, the district president of Bharatiya Kisan Union from Barnala, who has been protesting at the Tikri border said that it started raining around 2 a.m. on Monday. "The tarpaulins, which protect the tents from the rains, were put up months ago. They are not equipped to hold rainwater, due to which most of them

came down, resulting in water inside the tents," he said.

Sukhbir Singh from Patiala said, "Vegetables that were stored inside a trolley specially designed for them remained safe. But the rest along with the flour was destroyed. Cooking remained a big problem all through Monday." He added that people spent the night on wet mattresses, "many protesters are lodging in wet trucks and trolleys".

Sukhwinder Singh Barwa from Ropar, who has been protesting at the Singhu border and is a member of Sanjhi Sathh - an initiative by protesters to help children study at the border - said water reached up to two feet on Monday. "It was impossible to walk. Many elderly people couldn't get out of their trolleys for breakfast or lunch in the morning. We arranged food for them and delivered it in their trolleys," he said.



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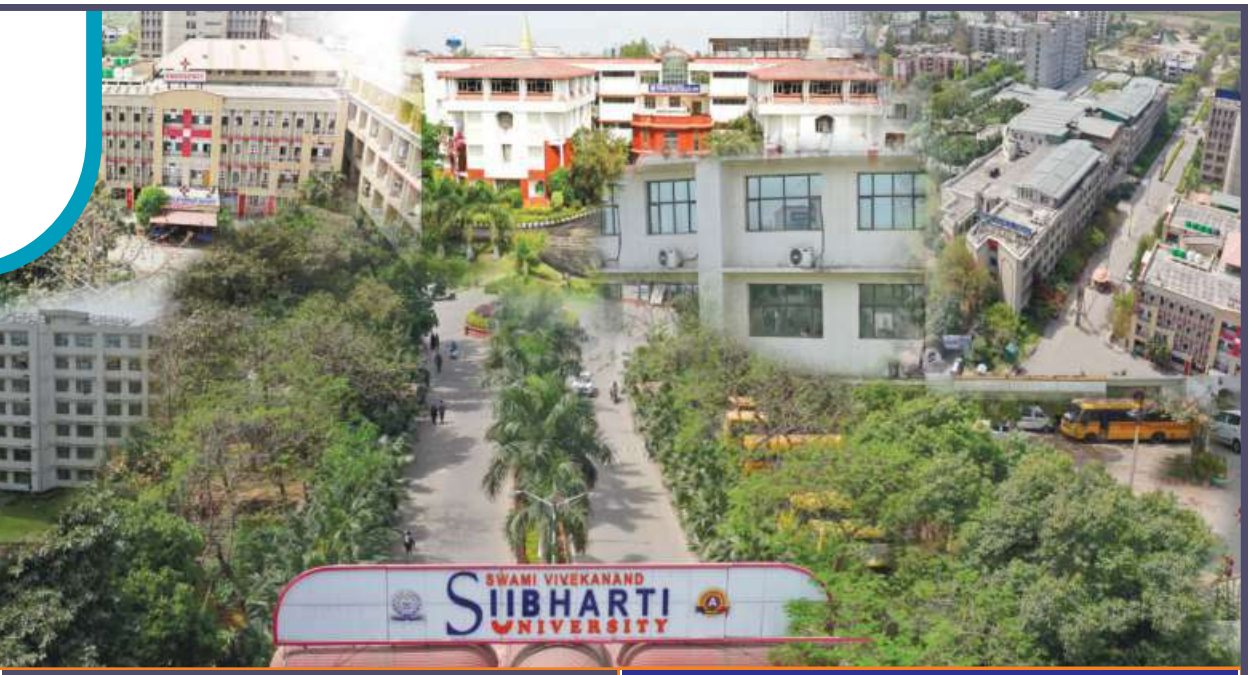
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**Timings DELHI**

**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

**THURSDAY, JUL. 22**  
RISE 05:38 SET 19:18  
RISE 17:58 SET 03:20

**Delhi Weather**

	max	min
Delhi City	26	24
Safdarjang	26	24
Palam	26	24

**Delhi Palam Today**  
32°C Light rain spells & thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky. Warm and humid day.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
35°C Warm and humid day. Short spells of light rain and thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky.

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# DU to hold entrance tests for 13 courses

University plans to increase number of centres for DUET; registration process for PG courses from July 26

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University (DU) will conduct entrance tests for 13 courses for the upcoming academic session, with four courses being added this year, according to officials.

The varsity is also planning to increase the number of test centres for the Delhi University Entrance Test (DUET), which is conducted for all postgraduate courses and select undergraduate courses, officials said.

For the upcoming academic session, admissions to Bachelors in Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Prosthetics and Orthotics and Masters in Physiotherapy will be conducted through DUET, according to the an-



Students outside Delhi University's School of Open Learning. • FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ouncements made by senior officials of the university.

**NTA to conduct**  
"DUET for all postgraduate programmes, selected undergraduate programmes

and MPhil and PhD programmes will be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) for which dates will be announced soon. Non-NET candidates who are desirous of seeking admissions to PhD and MPhil pro-

grammes have to appear for DUET 2021," said Rajeev Gupta, chairperson of DU Admissions.

Mr. Gupta added, "This year, Delhi University is planning to increase the number of test centres for DUET. This was one of the prominent demands of candidates. All entrance tests will be conducted through NTA's computer-based mode."

## Registration process

The university on Saturday had announced that the registration process for undergraduate courses will begin on August 2 and continue till August 31 while applicants seeking admissions to PG, MPhil and PhD programmes can complete the registra-

tion process between July 26 and August 21.

The varsity had said that admissions to undergraduate courses will be based on merit like previous years. "The admission branch is working with principals of colleges on modalities for deciding cut-offs so as to avoid over and under admissions," Mr. Gupta said.

## Cut-offs in Sept.

The cut-offs are likely to be announced early September, at least a week after the registration process closes. The admission process will be completely online and students will not be required to visit colleges or departments for any purpose, the officials specified.

# City continues to face job shortage

Delhi sees 36 new COVID cases, 3 deaths

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The stock of COVID-19 vaccines in the city will last for only less than one day, as per a vaccination bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The city faced a similar situation on most days of last week. Health Minister Satyendar Jain had said on July 12 that 500 vaccination centres were shut due to the shortage.

Only 11,358 doses of vaccine were administered in the city on Sunday. The figure is usually less on Sundays as government vaccination centres are shut.

On Monday morning, the

city had only 72,240 doses of Covishield and 2,05,630 of Covaxin, as per the data.

The city continued to see a downward trend in COVID-19 cases with only 36 new infections being reported over 24 hours, taking the total to 14,35,565, according to a health bulletin. There were three deaths reported in a single day and the total number of deaths stood at 25,030.

A total of 59,410 tests were done in a day and the test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.06%.

Of the total cases, 14,09,968 people have recovered and there are only 567 active cases.

# BJP should stop spying on journalists, says AAP MP

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

AAP MP Sanjay Singh on Monday attacked the BJP over the Pegasus controversy and dubbed it as "Bharatiya Jasoos Party".

"Abki baar jasoos sarkar. BJP = Bharatiya Jasoos Party," Mr. Singh said in a tweet in Hindi. He said the BJP should stop "spying" on journalists and Opposition

leaders. He also protested against the Central government at Parliament.

"On the back of 'Digital India' they have hatched 'Surveillance India,'" said AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha.

No comment on issue made by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Deputy Minister Manish Sisodia till 7 p.m. on Monday.

# Interfaith U.P. couple gets interim protection

High Court to hear matter on July 27

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday granted interim protection to an interfaith couple from Uttar Pradesh seeking to get married and have it registered under the Special Marriage Act here.

Justice Mukta Gupta granted protection through the local police station and posted the case for further hearing on July 27.

The petition stated that the couple have known each other for the past two years and wanted to get married. The man, who practices Islam, said that his family, after much convincing, has agreed to their relationship.

However, the family of the woman, who are Hindu by religion, has "clearly refused to accept their relationship". The woman said in June this year, her family

asked her to get married to a boy from their community. When she refused, her father physically harassed and abused her, the plea said.

The couple said they don't want to apply for the solemnisation of marriage from their hometown. "As by doing it, both the families of the petitioner no. 1 and no. 2 will be informed by the police during the verification process," the plea said.

The couple said they are "scared of groups and individuals who are against interfaith marriage". They said that the woman's father has political influence and has many contacts in Lucknow, so they fear getting harmed. The couple said they want to solemnise their marriage under the Special Marriage Act as they want to practice their own respective religion.

# 'When Venice comes to you!': it rains funny tweets as Gurugram goes under

Residents post pictures, videos, satirical takes on situation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

With several parts of the Millennium City left inundated, houses flooded, and roads virtually turned into rivers due to rain, the Twitterati had a field day posting pictures and videos of waterlogged areas accompanied with hilarious comments aiming apparently at the administration for doing little to prevent the repetition of the situation every monsoon.

Tweeting a picture of a water-logged street, Jeeveshu, a stand-up comic, wrote: "When you can't go to Venice for a vacation, Venice comes to you! #Rain #WaterLogging #GurgaonRain [sic]".

Kuldeep Kadian, a software engineer, posted a video of devotees wading through waist-deep water



An autorickshaw stuck on a waterlogged road in Gurugram on Monday. • PTI

outside Sheela Mata mandir in old city with a tweet in Hindi, tagging Haryana CM Manohar Lal, that read: "Thanks Mr. Khattar for making a swimming pool outside Sheela Mata Mandir...the devotees will get a relief from the scorching heat and can also enjoy swimming." "BREAKING !! Tau Devi Lal Stadium newly converted to Tau Devi Lal Lake will be inaugurated to-

day. #GurgaonRain [sic]," read a tweet from Khushal, an AAP member.

Twitter handle @ranjoydey thus commented on a video showing flooded Sohna Road: "As u can see, Gurgaon authorities hv successfully started multiple swimming pool projects at Sohna Road."

#GurgaonRain #GurgaonRain [sic] Rofl Gandhi 2.0, a parody account, posted a month-old picture of Mr. Lal riding a water scooter at Panchkula on the occasion of inauguration of adventures sports at Morni Hills with a caption in Hindi: "Hero Khattar on his way to Hira Honda Chowk from IFFCO Chowk for a meeting."

Vaishali, another Twitter user, said: "Urgent requirement of a boat, gotta go to market to buy dhaniya #Gurgaon#GurgaonRain."

## IN BRIEF

### Cong. attacks Delhi govt over waterlogging

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi Congress on Monday hit out at the Delhi government and the BJP-ruled municipal corporations for not desilting drains in the Capital ahead of monsoon and said that their lies had been exposed as several areas of the city were waterlogged after the first heavy rains of the season. Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar said that it has become a recurring feature for the Capital to get waterlogged and flooded. Meanwhile, L-G Anil Bajjal and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal conducted a review meeting on Monday and called for enhancing the city's drainage system to make it "world class".

### Infant among three dead in Dwarka road accident

NEW DELHI  
Three persons from two families were killed when their car collided with a DJB tanker in Dwarka's Jafarpur Kalan on Saturday. The accused driver has been arrested, the police said. The victims include a four-month-old toddler, the police said.

### Govt. makes suggestions on draft MPD-2041

NEW DELHI  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday chaired a review meeting on the draft Master Plan for Delhi 2041. The Delhi government put forth several suggestions to the draft MPD-2041. The government proposed that multilevel parking at public parks should be allowed, affordable housing be increased and sports activities be permitted in all categories of land use.

**THE HINDU**  
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Tender Reference No.: ME5 / 016381 / 2020

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1. Place of Purchase	Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation, Head Office, 12, Thambuswamy Road, Chennai - 10.
2. EMD payable for by means of DD payable at Chennai	Rs. 1,05,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Five Thousand only)
3. Last date and time for receiving / opening of sealed tender documents	Closing : 28.07.2021, 3.00 P.M. Opening : 28.07.2021, 3.30 P.M.

The tender documents can be downloaded from [www.tncsc.tn.gov.in/](http://www.tncsc.tn.gov.in/) or [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) at free of cost till 12.00 P.M. on 28.07.2021.

DIPR/2156/TENDER/2021 Managing Director

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General Public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Rajeshwari, D/o: Hazari Lal, R/o: C-128, Gali No. 1, Swaroop Nagar, Delhi, Age: 21 Years, Height: 4'11", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Grey Colour Suit & Black Pajami & Red Colour Slippers in feet has been missing since 03.07.2021 from her house. In this regard DD No. 82A, Dated 04.07.2021 has been lodged at PS. Swaroop Nagar, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing girl please inform the undersigned.

Web-site : <http://cbi.nic.in> SHO  
E-Mail ID: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Fax: 011-24368639  
DP/1143/ON/2021 Ph.: 011-27811415, 27811738

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LOCAL HEAD OFFICE, PATNA  
TENDER NOTICE

STATE BANK OF INDIA, LHO, PATNA, Seeks Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed private security agencies for providing security guards for its ATMs/Offices etc. For details, please visit Bank's Website [www.bank.sbi](http://www.bank.sbi) under "Procurement News". Last date for submission of the EOI is upto 16:00 Hrs. on 10.08.2021

Circle Security Officer  
Phone No. 0612-2209040

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a male namely Abhinash, S/o: Hari Chand, R/o: H.No. C-50/1, Gali No.5, SSN Colony, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi has been missing since 08.06.2021 from the area of P.S. Bhalswa Dairy. In this regard DD No. 124A dated 15.06.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi. The description of missing male is as under:

Name: Abhinash, Age: 27 Years, Height: 5'8", Face: Long, Built: Thin, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Blue Colour T-Shirt, Green Colour Pajama and Black Colour Sleeper's in Feet.

If anyone has any information about this missing male please inform P.S. Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO  
Police Station, Bhalswa Dairy, Delhi  
Ph: 011-27811933, 7065036328  
DP/1137/ON/2021

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\*NOTICE INVITING TENDER\*

The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division Anni District Kullu (H.P.) invites tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following work through offline process:-

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time Limit	Cost of Form
1.	A/R & M/O of WSS Soidhar in Anni block Distt Kullu (H.P) (S.H: C/O Storage tank 10000 Ltrs. Cap.)	138204.00	2764.00	2 Months	250/-
2.	A/R & M/O WSS Bail Drops in Nirmand Block Distt Kullu (H.P) (S.H: C/O Storage Tank 15000 Ltr Capacity)	111458.00	2229.00	1 Months	250/-
3.	PWSS to dried up sources of G.P. Bari, Tunnan, Bahwa etc in Nirmand block Distt. Kullu H.P. (S.H: C/O RCC Storage tank 25000 Ltr cap)	212264.00	4245.00	2 Months	250/-
4.	PWSS to dried up sources of G.P. Bari, Tunnan, Bahwa etc due to c/o RHEP in Nirmand block Distt. Kullu H.P. (S.H: White washing, Distemper/painting, C/O Pedestal and other works)	115229.00	2305.00	1 Months	250/-
5.	Providing by pass pipeline to village Panagri from Augmentation of WSS Nirmand in Nirmand Block Distt Kullu(SH: L/J and Testing of GMS Tube pipe of 25mm dia Rd 0/0 to 0/810 =810.00 Rmt).	128318.00	2566.00	1 Months	250/-
6.	A/R & M/O WSS Aezar Chillage in G.P. Bakhan in Nirmand block Distt. Kullu H.P. (S.H: RCC Jacketing of slow sand filter and sedimentation tank at Tikkar)	440456.00	8809.00	2 Months	250/-
7.	A/R & M/O WSS Anas Baibeel in GP Dehra in Nirmand block Distt Kullu (H.P) (S.H: C/O Tube Settler Sedimentation Tank ).	267442.00	5349.00	2 Months	250/-
8.	A/R & M/O WSS Anas Baibeel in GP Dehra in Nirmand block Distt Kullu (H.P) (S.H: C/O Storage Tank 25000 Ltr. Capacity at Anas.)	166934.00	3339.00	2 Months	250/-
9.	Tapping of additional spring source to PWSS Nag temple Kandagal Garh from Gad in Anni block Distt. Kullu (H.P)(SH: Laying, jointing and testing of HDPE pipe 25mm OD PN-6 (PE-63) from spring source RD 0 to 2200)	237307.00	4748.00	6 Months	250/-
10.	PLWSS to Thachwa -Jagatkhana in GP Tunan in Nirmand Block Distt Kullu HP (SH: Providing/fixing and commissioning of pumping machinery with allied accessories of 15 BHP Submersible Pump Set with Automation & allied accessories)	375000.00	7500.00	6 Months	250/-

1. Last Date of Submission of tender:-27.07.2021 up to 3:00 P.M. and opened on same day 3:30 P.M.  
2. Last Date of sale of tender form Divisional Office:-26.07.2021 upto 04:00 P.M.

The tender forms and other detailed conditions can be downloaded from the website [www.hpip.org](http://www.hpip.org) or from office of above Executive Engineer, up to date specified above.

Executive Engineer,  
Jal Shakti Division, Anni,  
District Kullu-H.P.

HP / 2548/21-22 HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

**Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir**  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL HOSPITAL AND CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR  
Telefax:- 0194-2496089, Email ID:- [xennmhchdk@yahoo.in](mailto:xennmhchdk@yahoo.in)

**Gist of e-tender (Short-term)**  
NIT No: MHCHD/TS /2021-22/79/e-tendering  
Dated:-16.07.2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir state, e-tenders, valid for 180 days, are invited from the Registered, reputed & experienced firms as detailed in the NIT for below mentioned works

Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	TS No.	Time of completion (in Days)	Position of funds	Position of AAA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SITC of 250 KVA Servo-stabilizer along with allied works at Govt. CD Hospital, Srinagar	21.00	1000	65 of 07/21	20	Available	SHS/NHM/ J&K/ PS/6247-56 Dt:- 05.07.21
SITC of 400 KVA Servo-stabilizer along with allied works at Govt. SMHS Hospital, Srinagar	27.00	1000	66 of 07/21	20	Available	SHS/NHM/ J&K/ PS/6247-56 Dt:- 05.07.21

1. Downloading of Bids:- The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen from the departmental website [www.itenders.gov.in](http://www.itenders.gov.in) from 16.07.2021 (18.00 hrs) and can be downloaded from 16.07.2021 (18.00 hrs) to 24.07.2021 (14.00hrs.) in two (02) covers.

2. Uploading: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above web site 17.07.2021 (10.00 hrs) to 24.07.2021 (14.00hrs.) in two (02) covers.

3. Opening of Bids :- The bids received upto due date and time shall be opened on 24.07.2021 at 16.00 hrs or any date convenient to the department in the office of Executive Engineer, MHCHD, Srinagar

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
MHCHD, Srinagar  
DIP/K- 4972

**BALURGHAT DEVELOPMENT BLOCK**  
Abridged E-Tender Notice  
2nd Call

Tender for NIT No.-2066 Dated 17/07/2021 of Block Development Officer, Balurghat Development Block is invited by the undersigned. Last date of submission is 02/08/2021. The details of NIT may be viewed & downloaded from the website of Govt. of West Bengal <http://wb.tenders.gov.in> & viewed from office notice board of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/-  
Block Development Officer  
Balurghat Development Block  
Balurghat, Dakshin Dinajpur.

**BALURGHAT DEVELOPMENT BLOCK**  
Abridged E-Tender Notice  
2nd Call

Tender for NIT No.-2073, 2074 Dated 19/07/2021 of Block Development Officer, Balurghat Development Block is invited by the undersigned. Last date of submission is 03/08/2021. The details of NIT may be viewed & downloaded from the website of Govt. of West Bengal <http://wb.tenders.gov.in> & viewed from office notice board of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/-  
Block Development Officer  
Balurghat Development Block  
Balurghat, Dakshin Dinajpur.



IN BRIEF



Enforce plastic ban in Tirumala, officials told

TIRUMALA  
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) additional executive officer A.V. Dharma Reddy on Monday appealed to devotees not to carry plastic water bottles to Tirumala town. At a meeting, he directed the heads of various TTD departments to enforce total ban on plastic in Tirumala. He asked officials to thoroughly check vehicles at the Alipiri tollgate to prevent pilgrims from carrying plastic bottles.

Driver dead, 15 injured in bus accident in Kerala

KANNUR  
The driver of a bus belonging to the Karnataka State Road Corporation died and 15 passengers were injured when the vehicle went out of control and hit a tree on the Makootam road, which connects Kerala and Karnataka. The sleeper coach, coming from Bengaluru to Kannur, met with the accident at Methiyadipara around 4.30 a.m. owing to poor visibility in heavy rain and thick fog. The injured passengers were shifted to various hospitals in Iritty and Virajpettal.

YSRCP MPs' appeal in Rajya Sabha turned down

VIJAYAWADA  
A notice served by YSR Congress Party MP V. Vijaya Sai Reddy to Rajya Sabha Secretariat on Monday, requesting the Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu to take up a discussion on the Special Category Status (SCS) to the residuary State of Andhra Pradesh by suspending the day's listed business was turned down. This led to the trooping of YSRCP MPs into the well of the House in protest against the denial of an opportunity to flag the issue.

# Telangana Cong. MP under house arrest

Revanth Reddy says he couldn't attend Parliament, where he wanted to raise Kokapet 'land sale scam'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president and Congress MP A. Revanth Reddy and several senior party leaders were on Monday placed under "house arrest" at different places here, the police said.

Mr. Reddy, MP from Malkajgiri, had alleged that there were irregularities to the tune of ₹1,000 crore in the auction of lands in Kokapet conducted by the Telangana government last week.

Dharna plan

The Telangana Congress was planning to hold a dharna at Kokapet on Monday over the land auctions. As a precautionary measure,



Land row: TPCC chief A. Revanth Reddy addressing a press meet in Hyderabad on Monday. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the police were deployed outside the houses of the Congress leaders. Ahead of the protest, scores of party leaders including Mr. Reddy, Sanga Reddy MLA and State

"They were placed under house arrest to maintain law and order," a senior police official said.

'Violation of rights'

Mr. Reddy, in a letter addressed to the Lok Sabha Speaker, said he was "prevented" from attending the monsoon session of Parliament, which began on Monday. This violated his parliamentary privileges, he said.

Mr. Reddy said he wanted to raise in Parliament the sale of government land at "throwaway prices to ruling TRS functionaries and relatives by the State government".

"Despite knowing that I have to attend the Parliament session and repeated requests to the officials concerned, the Telangana police at the instance of Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu, Chief Secretary and the DGP have obstructed discharge of my duties as a parliamentarian and voice the people's concerns," Mr. Reddy said in the letter.

The TPCC chief also tweeted: "Fearing I will take up the Kokapet land sale scam in Parliament, the police at the instance of the CM and the DGP prevented me from attending Parliament. No matter what @incTelangana will bring truth to light."

However, the ruling TRS had rejected the allegations made by Mr. Reddy and said the land auction was transparent.

# Clip rips apart confidence in Yediyurappa camp

CM goes into a huddle with his confidants

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

A 47-second audio clip, allegedly of Karnataka BJP president Nalin Kumar Kateel, created ripples in the political circles on Monday as it hinted at leadership change. Though Mr. Kateel denied it was his voice and sought a probe into the 'fake' clip, many party legislators, cutting across camps, took the contents at face value, triggering further speculation, disappointment and intense lobbying.

In the purported clip, the person speaking in Tulu indicates there will be leadership change, "three people are in the race and the next



B.S. Yediyurappa

Mr. Yediyurappa huddled with his confidants, which included Ministers Basavaraj Bommai and R. Ashok, over lunch at a star hotel in Bengaluru on Monday.

Party's call: Minister Mr. Eshwarappa, saying he believed Mr. Kateel's claim, also said he would abide by the party decision.

"It would not even pain me. I will be a Minister until the organisation asks me to. I am 72 years old now and it is evident that the organisation is giving opportunities to youngsters both in the party and in administration. If that is the party's call, I will go," he said.

Meanwhile, several Ministers, especially those who defected from the Congress and Janata Dal (S), are also anxious of their positions.

Chief Minister will come from Delhi", and that "Jagadish Shettar and Eshwarappa's teams will be removed from the Cabinet".

The audio clip created anxiety and panic in the Chief Minister's camp, many of whom were confident till Sunday of Mr. B.S. Yediyurappa completing the full term. Some rushed to the Chief Minister's residence. Adding fuel to speculation,

# Karnataka opposes river linking project by T.N.

It stakes claim to surplus Cauvery water

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Karnataka has approached the Supreme Court staking claim to 91 tmc ft of surplus water annually in the Cauvery Basin while opposing the Cauvery-Vaigai-Gundar (CVG) link project planned by Tamil Nadu for transferring 45 tmc ft of surplus water yearly.

In an original suit, Karnataka averred that the Supreme Court, in a February 2016 judgment, had modified the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal decision to ensure 177.25 tmc ft of flows at the inter-State border, Biligundlu, in a normal water year for the benefit of Tamil Nadu. Karnataka, however, stated that after ensuring this share of 177.25 tmc ft and allowing Kerala to divert 21 tmc ft of flows in Kabi-



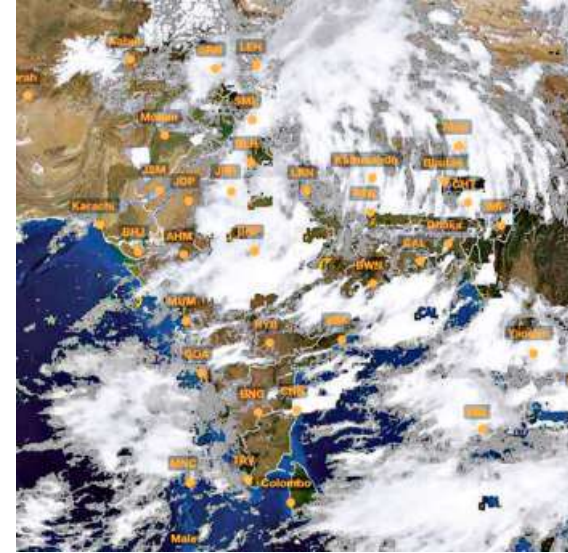
Excavators breaking ground for the Cauvery-Vaigai-Gundar project in February.

ni tributary, the remaining flows of 284.75 tmc ft and the surplus water of 91 tmc ft fell into its kitty.

The State said the main reason for filing the suit was the CVG link planned by T.N. to transfer 45 tmc ft of surplus water. Karnataka said the project would compel an advance commitment of the surplus water, much to its own prejudice.

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 Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at a few/isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Assam, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Vidarbha, Puducherry, Karaikal and Lakshadweep.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	39	32.0	25.7	Kozhikode	19	30.7	23.6
Ahmedabad	0.7	33.7	27.0	Kurnool	0.6	32.5	24.1
Aizawl	75.2	26.0	20.0	Lucknow	2	32.8	26.1
Allahabad	36.1	26.0	20.0	Madurai	38.8	24.6	
Bangaluru	4.3	27.6	20.3	Mangaluru	37.6	27.6	23.0
Bhopal	34.0	26.7	20.0	Mumbai	70	27.9	25.0
Bhubaneswar	32.3	35.8	27.4	Mysuru	8	27.9	19.2
Chandigarh	0.6	32.7	26.3	New Delhi	70	26.5	24.2
Chennai	3	36.1	25.0	Patna	77	34.2	25.4
Coimbatore	6	32.6	22.0	Port Blair	71	28.7	22.1
Dehradun	66	25.2	23.1	Puducherry	35.2	25.8	
Gangtok	18	21.7	17.9	Pune	12	26.3	21.7
Goa	147	26.0	23.2	Raipur	34.0	26.0	
Guwahati	0.2	32.7	26.4	Ranchi	6	30.2	22.7
Hubbali	24.0	21.0	17.0	Shillong	40	23.1	17.6
Hyderabad	38	29.2	21.6	Shimla	17	22.5	18.6
Imphal	18	22.0	17.0	Srinagar	2	27.3	20.0
Jaipur	9	28.8	25.0	Thiruvananthapuram	0.2	31.6	23.4
Kochi	5	30.2	23.4	Tiruchi	36.5	26.0	
Kohima	20	20.0	18.0	Vijayawada	5	34.5	25.0
Kolkata	34.1	28.9	21.0	Visakhapatnam	3	34.0	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	27	31	20	62	93	1	In observation made at 4:00 p.m., Narnaul, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 123 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 11
Bangaluru	3	46	108	38	38	2	
Chennai	11	5	34	25	72	2	
Delhi	5	15	50	36	129	3	
Hyderabad	2	64	15	11	17	1	
Kolkata	11	22	27	46	64	2	
Lucknow	8	39	90	38	103	2	
Mumbai	44	10	57	21	92	2	
Pune	129	20	57	21	92	2	
Visakhapatnam	13	44	39	31	64	2	

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO<sub>2</sub>: 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.

NO<sub>2</sub>: 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

# U.P. caps Bakrid gatherings at 50

Orders also issued against animal sacrifice at public places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government on Monday issued fresh directives ahead of Bakrid, prohibiting gatherings of more than 50 people at any place to celebrate the festival, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government also issued orders against animal sacrifice at public places in the State.

Charing a meeting with senior officials to review the COVID-19 situation in Uttar



CM Yogi Adityanath

Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed them to make all necessary arrangements in view of the festival, an official spokesperson said here.

In view of the pandemic, not more than 50 people should gather at any place at a given time for any event related to Bakrid, the official

said. It should also be ensured that no cow, camel or any other banned animal is sacrificed anywhere. Only designated places or private premises should be used for animal sacrifices, he said.

Special care should be taken for cleanliness, the official added. The festival is scheduled to be celebrated later this week.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh recorded 40 fresh COVID-19 cases and seven deaths in the last 24 hours, taking the number of infections and fatalities to 17,07,884 and 22,728 respectively, the health bulletin said on Monday.

The latest deaths were reported from Kanpur at

three, followed by one each from Allahabad, Amethi, Mirzapur and Chandauli, it said.

A total of 99 persons were discharged after recovery from the infection in the last 24 hours, Additional Chief Secretary, Information, Navneet Sehgal said.

Active cases at 1,188

The total number of recoveries in the State reached 16,83,968, he said, adding that the number of active cases stood at 1,188.

The recovery rate of the State is now 98.6%, he said. So far, over 6.35 crore samples have been tested for COVID-19 in the State, including 2.18 lakh that were collected on Sunday, Mr. Sehgal said.

# High Court seeks Centre's reply on CHRI petition

Suspension of registration challenged

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought response from the Centre on a petition by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) challenging the suspension of its registration for 180 days for alleged violations of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA).

The High Court also granted time to the Centre's counsel to get instructions on permitting the CHRI to utilise 25% of the amount received as foreign funding till the suspension of its registration is revoked.

Foreign fund

The court also asked the Centre's counsel to take instructions if it would allow CHRI to receive foreign fund in the future, subject to not utilising them without per-

mission of the authorities or of the court. During the hearing, Central government standing counsel Anil Soni said as per the rules, they have 180 days' time to respond to the NGO seeking to revoke the suspension order.

'Endless time'

Justice Rekha Palli, however, said, "I am not going to give you this endless time of 180 days".

The CHRI had moved the court challenging a June 7 order passed by the Home Ministry, suspending its registration for 180 days.

CHRI's counsel said that the suspension order is contrary to the framework of the scheme set out under the Act and even the suspension was passed without initiating any inquiry and is liable to be set aside.

# 22 children in detention camps for foreigners

They are with nine women: Assam CM

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

Assam's detention camps for foreigners are currently housing 22 children, 20 of them below 14 years of age, the 126-member State Assembly was told on Monday.

Replying to a question from Congress MLA Sherman Ali Ahmed, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the children are with nine women convicted as foreigners, distributed among the Kokrajhar, Tezpur and Silchar detention camps.

The State has six detention camps for foreigners and they currently have 181 inmates, 61 of whom are declared foreign nationals and 121 convicted foreign nationals awaiting deportation, Dr. Sarma said.

Replying to another question by All India United Democratic Front MLA Nazrul

Hoque, the Chief Minister said 2,551 people were sent to the detention camps from December 29, 2009, to June 30, 2021, after they were declared non-citizens by various Foreigners' Tribunals. The first detention camp inmate was Krishna Biswas of Goalpara district, he said.

'29 died in camps'

The Chief Minister said 29 declared foreigners have died in the detention camps since 2009 while many were granted bail over the years.

"According to a Supreme Court order on May 10, 2019, seeking the release of declared foreigners after three years in detention, 273 were released. Similarly, 481 others were released after another Supreme Court order on April 13, 2020, reducing the detention period to two years," Dr. Sarma said.

# Three killed in building collapse

Three-storey structure had crashed in Pataudi on Sunday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

Three persons died in a multi-storey building collapse inside the premises of a logistics firm in Pataudi on Sunday. A First Information Report has been registered against the company's manager and the building owner on charges of causing death by negligence.

"Three bodies were pulled out from under the debris of the building during the rescue operation spanning around 19 hours. A young man was rescued a few hours after the collapse on Sunday and is under treatment at a hospital. The operation was completed at 3 p.m. on Monday," said Gul-



Police and fire personnel looking for survivors at the collapse site in Pataudi in Haryana. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

shan Kalra, Assistant Divisional Fire Officer.

The deceased have been identified as Pradeep, Robin and Rahul. While Pradeep and Rahul belonged to Bhivani in Haryana, Robin was from Etawah in Uttar Pradesh. All three were aged between 28-35 years. The young man, who has been

# Three killed

Three members of a family, including a mother-daughter duo, were killed while one person was reportedly missing after a cloudburst hit two adjacent villages in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district, officials said on Monday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DEHRADUN

Three members of a family, including a mother-daughter duo, were killed while one person was reportedly missing after a cloudburst hit two adjacent villages in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district, officials said on Monday.

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Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research  
No.1-10-153-156, AMD Complex, Begumpet, Hyd-500016

**BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE**

The Director, (AMD), Begumpet, Hyderabad invites for and on behalf of the President of India, sealed tenders in two parts (TECHNICAL and COMMERCIAL) from eligible Core Drilling contractors, for the following works in the parts of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.

Item No.	NIT No., TENDER NO. & SCOPE OF WORK	Estimated job value (in Lakhs INR)	Earnest Money (in INR)	Last Date and time of availability of Tender Documents for download	Last Date and time of Submission of online Tender	Date and Time of Opening of Part I	Period of completion in months
1.	NIT No. AMD/CD/SR/CORE/2021-22/T-(208), Date: 09.07.2021 TENDER NO. AMD/CD/SR/HLK(E)-HBV/CORE/2021-22/T-208 10,000 m core drilling in Hulkul East, Halbhavi, Dornahalli Sector, Yadgir District, Karnataka with borehole depth varying from 330 to 500 metre.	309.80	NIL *	03-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	09-08-2021 at 17:00 hrs.	10-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	14 (FOUR TEEN)
2.	NIT No. AMD/CD/CR/CORE/2021-22/T-(209), Date: 12.07.2021 TENDER NO. AMD/CD/CR/LHR-DNG/2021-22/T-209 11,000 m core drilling in Lohara - Dongargaon area, Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh, Bijepandharwanitola - Nawatola area, Gondia District, Maharashtra & Magarkund and Koilara area, Kawardha and Rajnandgaon District, Chhattisgarh & borehole depth varying from 200 to 500 metre.	333.85	NIL *	03-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	09-08-2021 at 17:00 hrs.	10-08-2021 at 15:30 hrs.	14 (FOUR TEEN)

\* The Bidder including MSE registered firms shall submit the Bid Security Declaration in lieu of Earnest Money Deposit. Without Bid Security Declaration, the bid will not be considered. It is mandatory for the bidders to upload the Bid Security Declaration in Website [www.tenderwizard.com/DAE](http://www.tenderwizard.com/DAE) along with the Tender document. Detailed tender notice along with other documents are available on website: [www.tenderwizard.com/DAE](http://www.tenderwizard.com/DAE). Detailed NIT is also available on website [www.amd.gov.in](http://www.amd.gov.in) for view only. For further clarification, please contact on: 040-27776342/27776335/27776387.





## Health above faith

SC lays down salutary principle that right to life must override religious sentiments

It does not require any higher wisdom to know that there is considerable risk to public health during massive religious gatherings in the midst of a pandemic. Yet, it took some prodding by the Supreme Court for Uttar Pradesh to cancel the annual Kanwar Yatra. The yatra, in which Kanwaris, devotees of Shiva, make a pilgrimage to collect water from the Ganga, was not held last year due to COVID-19. This year, it was scheduled to start on July 25. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath appeared keen that the pilgrimage be held this year, and had convened a meeting on July 9 to discuss preparations and security arrangements, along with putting measures in place to avoid the spread of COVID-19 infection. However, the Court was perturbed by reports of the plan to conduct the yatra, resulting in the initiation of *suo motu* proceedings. Disagreeing with even the idea of a 'symbolic yatra' in deference to religious sentiment, the Court had reiterated a principle that is being observed in most places: the idea that the health of the public and their right to life are paramount. "All other sentiments, albeit religious, are subservient to this most basic fundamental right," the Court had observed on July 16, while giving the State government time till July 19 to call off the gatherings on its own. The Uttarakhhand government had earlier cancelled the yatra in its territory, rightly heeding warnings by experts that such large gatherings posed a major risk, amidst fears and expectations of a third wave. Uttar Pradesh was helped by the various Kanwar Sanghs that offered to avoid taking out the yatra this year too.

Despite the fact that the organisation of the Kumbh Mela earlier this year was seen as responsible for a surge in infections in the run-up to the disastrous second wave that overpowered the country's health system for weeks, there are sections that believe that rituals and gatherings associated with religious faith must be allowed with some restrictions. There may be a case for relaxations aimed at economic revival and restoration of normality in most parts of the country, but there really is none when it comes to choosing between religious rights and the right to life and safety. The easing of lockdown restrictions for three days in Kerala to help people celebrate Bakrid is a case in point. It has attracted justified criticism, as any relaxation after a long spell of severe curbs will have to be based on a scientific assessment of the number of daily infections, the rate of positivity and signs of abatement. Kerala is one of the States whose daily numbers are causing concern, and the easing of restrictions defies logic and flies in the face of science. The State government will be hard pressed to explain its decision to the top court, which will quite rightly demand much more than a routine clarification that the relaxations were accompanied by instructions for maintaining the COVID-19 protocol.

## Laughter challenge

The Congress seems intent on undermining strong regional leaders, as seen in Punjab

Deciphering the political calculus of the Congress can be a tough task. The latest example is the appointment of Navjot Sidhu as the President of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee. After mounting a relentless public attack against CM Amarinder Singh and publicly praising other parties, Mr. Sidhu is now tasked with leading the Congress. He spent 13 years in the BJP, five in the Congress, while flirting with the idea of joining the AAP in between. He joined the Congress ahead of the 2017 Assembly election which the party won mostly on account of Mr. Singh's skills. Mr. Sidhu got a cabinet berth but fell out with the CM soon enough. Mr. Singh opposed Mr. Sidhu's visits to Pakistan, and a ticket for his wife in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The Congress won eight of the 13 Lok Sabha seats from Punjab. Punjab constitutes 15% of the Congress's total Lok Sabha strength of 52. Mr. Sidhu had little support among MPs, MLAs or party workers until the Gandhis – Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka – tilted the scales in his favour. On the one hand there is strong evidence of his opportunism, lack of maturity, unprincipled greed for power that includes claiming a Lok Sabha seat for his wife within two years of defecting to the Congress, and inability to work as part of a team. On the other hand, he has absolutely no track record of any political activism, public service or being ideologically aligned to the Congress in any manner.

Opportunists without any convictions might be used for particular roles in a party's strategy, but handing over the command to such a turncoat shows the complete bankruptcy of the Congress and an insult to those who fight the long battle. The misplaced assertion of authority by the Gandhis in riding roughshod over the CM and MPs, is a repeat of the old mistakes that pushed regional satraps out of its fold. Mamata Banerjee, Himanta Biswa Sarma, and Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy are outstanding political minds who command power in their respective States as CMs of West Bengal, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. They felt suffocated in the durbar politics of the Congress, in which Mr. Sidhu has flourished. Strong regional leaders deliver results but also behave in an assertive and even authoritarian manner, as it appears to be the case with Mr. Singh. But then, humiliating them is no way to rein them in. Now that the deed has been done, perhaps the Gandhis will explain to the party workers what their rationale is, and what they expect Mr. Sidhu to deliver. In the absence of a convincing explanation, the only message is that the high command would stoop low to promote any court jester to undercut a leader who builds any independent standing. If Mr. Sidhu is the future of the Congress, that future appears bleak at this point.

# The crisis ahead, from learning loss to resumption

If schools revert to business as usual, India has to be prepared to confront a disaster in educational outcomes



R. RAMANAUJAM

Since school closure has led to a great loss of nutrition and schooling for the poorest sections of our society, there is some urgency in the calls we hear to reopen schools. However, the important question remains this: if schools were to reopen tomorrow, are we prepared for their resumption? Will it be merely business as usual?

### The disruption

In what has been perhaps an educational disruption in history without parallel since the mass education system took root in India, schools have been closed for 16 months now, with no clarity on or a timeline for their resumption as yet. The country has promoted online classes and e-connectivity as the solution, perhaps inevitably so, since physical contact between teachers and children has not been possible. The focus has been on secondary and higher secondary education, with most States ensuring some form or other of online classes for this segment. However, due to a lack of connectivity as well as a lack of access to e-devices, only a fraction of children even in this age group has had online education of any kind. When it comes to children in the primary and upper primary classes, even such access has been limited to a minuscule fraction. Children of the poor, studying in government schools, have been especially disadvantaged in this regard.

Further aggravating the situation is the quality of online education – it is largely abysmal. As most studies show, the percentage of teachers in the country capable of handling digital platforms for pedagogic purposes is very small. The educational material provided

by them has also been mere reproduction of what is used in a physical classroom. Hence, even where online classes have taken place regularly – as in the case of urban schools, with students largely from middle and high income groups – the teaching-learning processes have by and large been poor.

As has been well documented by now, all this has resulted in what commentators have termed nutrition loss and learning loss. Worldwide, many studies in the last year have documented a loss of learning in children. In the Netherlands, despite a short lockdown, equitable school funding, and excellent broadband access, researchers found that among eight to 11 year olds, "students made little or no progress while learning from home" and that "learning loss was most pronounced among students from disadvantaged homes" (<https://bit.ly/3hORC5N>). A large multi-State study in the United States records that the pandemic "has also prompted some students to leave the public school system altogether".

According to a study by the Azim Premji Foundation (<https://bit.ly/2UqW81h>) in January 2021, covering more than 16,000 children in the age group six to 11 years, and across five States, 92% of children on average have lost at least one specific language ability from the previous year across all classes; the figure is 82% when it comes to mathematical ability.

A question that looms large in the minds of teachers, parents and especially the children, is a basic one: will a child, who was in Class four in March 2020, and did not get to attend a single class during the academic year 2020-2021, be admitted into Class six now in (say) August 2021? In areas where this means admission to a different school, is this automatic? In some States this has already been addressed and answered this year. Age-appropriate enrolment, as guaranteed under the Right to Education Act, is being uniformly



FILE PHOTO/V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

implemented. But this has not been ensured across India, with many States not taking up enrolment for this year as yet.

Even assuming that enrolment is not an issue, if we return to the child in the illustration above, as the child enrolls into Class six, will she start with Class five textbooks, or Class six textbooks, or some new "bridge" material?

This is, of course, a decision to be taken by the State government, but what is the rationale to be used? And what are the implications?

### International experience

'One way of addressing the learning crisis might be to repeat the entire academic year. The government in Kenya has decided to do just this'. Some countries, such as the Philippines, allow extended time for classes on resumption, both in duration of school hours and more calendar days of interaction. 'Another approach is to reduce and synthesize the curriculum so that students are able to focus on a few subjects and learn them well'. This is followed, for instance, by the State of Ontario in Canada.

One-to-one tutoring for the most disadvantaged learners has been taken up in many countries. Among the most prestigious such programmes is the National Tutoring Programme in the United Kingdom for which the government has announced funding to the tune of £350 million. Ghana has also announced a national programme of tutoring. There are several such programmes in different States in the U.S. In Italy, university students are volunteering to conduct one-one-one classes for

middle school children from poor immigrant backgrounds.

Accelerated education programmes or "bridge courses", which condense several months (or even years of schooling) into a few weeks or months, are another option. This concept has been taken up in several countries.

One strong voice emerging from all these experiences is: "Acceleration, not remediation". The advice is to go with exposure to age-level grade-level content, and plug the holes where necessary. Many educators warn against a deficit model that starts with measuring "loss" and tries to "fill the void", before returning to the "normal". Such models tend to ignore the complexity of psychological preparedness in children, and reduce learning to a single dimension of achievement, which invariably works against children in low-resource contexts.

Some have even asserted that "... there is no such thing as learning loss", and that students have learned a great deal about life, home economy, health and much else during the pandemic that cannot be measured by standardised tests; that learning should begin with acknowledging this and building on such informal learning.

In the words of Tony Cotton (<https://bit.ly/3wRM0f0>), a renowned mathematics educator from the U.K., "The curriculum should not be seen as a fixed list of content that must all be covered before the learner can leave school. If the curriculum can be seen as a map, as a landscape, there is always plenty of time to explore."

### The agenda ahead

Given the state of preparedness of our education system, and based on what we have seen during the last year, it is hard to see our schools taking up a curriculum based on where the children are, in terms of what they have learnt from life during the novel coronavirus pandemic. The most likely event is that schools will simply

revert to business as usual, with a reduced syllabus, and no change whatsoever in the overall curriculum or pedagogy, and racing through the syllabus to "catch up". Children who cannot keep up would simply be left behind. This would be a great disaster. It is very likely that children from the poorest sections will be the ones who are affected the most, by having to race in accelerated learning programmes with no support at home. Teachers, without preparation for handling such a new context, can only fall back on covering the syllabus, leading to the alienation of already marginalised students.

What we need now is nothing less than a national rejuvenation programme for elementary education. The school system cannot do what is needed by itself. We need a vast body of volunteers engaging in small groups with children from the most disadvantaged sections, working in tandem with schools, which will need to focus on safety measures and average performance. It is critical that we should not reduce education to foundational literacy and numeracy, but treat children as they are, study the experiences they bring, and address their nutritional, emotional and intellectual well-being as a whole. This requires a flexible curriculum rooted in local reality, working with physical material, and pedagogy based on sound principles of psychology of learning.

The country has already shown during the pandemic that it lacks the capability to re-imagine examinations, whether it be at the secondary school level, or at university. Now, with the education of small children, a similar lack of imagination in curriculum and pedagogy will be splendidly ironic: without ourselves learning any lesson from the pandemic, we would be demanding that the children learn their lessons.

R. Ramanaujam was faculty at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, until recently. The views expressed are personal

## Egypt takes centre stage in West Asian affairs

The instrument that Cairo is using to assert its diverse interests in a complex region is not military force, but diplomacy



TALMIZ AHMAD

Most important developments in West Asia are increasingly revealing an Egyptian fingerprint. Egypt's diplomats and intelligence officers recently negotiated the end of the 11-day Israel-Palestine conflict, with the new Israeli government looking to Egypt to manage the turbulent cauldron of Gaza. Turkey, which has been hostile to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi for the coup in July 2013, when he overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood government in Cairo headed by President Mohammed Morsi, is anxious to reopen relations.

Egypt, after long years of neglect, has now become active in re-engaging with its neighbours in Africa, with substantial economic and defence partnership agreements. Finally, Egypt, with Iraq and Jordan, announced in Baghdad at the end of June that a new tripartite grouping of these West Asian States had been set up, proclaiming the advent of *al-Sham al-Jadid*, the "New Levant".

### Political, economic changes

Just a few years ago, after the overthrow of the country's first democratically elected government, Egypt survived with a \$12 billion aid package from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait. These West Asian deposits were supplemented by grants in 2013-14 for the import of petroleum products, valued at another \$16 billion (<https://bit.ly/3exXb6w>).

West Asian politics was also lar-

gely influenced by the active role of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, in Syria, Yemen and Libya. Egypt found itself a reluctant partner in these ventures, though it was low key in Yemen and maintained ties with the Assad government in Damascus. In Libya, it was pushed into a more active role to confront the Tripoli-based administration, but here, too, it refused to deploy troops in the country.

Egypt's role in the blockade of Qatar from June 2017, initiated by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, was also relatively lukewarm. Egypt allowed Qatari LNG to pass through the Suez Canal, while Qatar made no effort to dilute its investments in Egypt or order the repatriation of 2,50,000 Egyptian workers in the country.

The failure of Saudi Arabia and the UAE to achieve any success in their military interventions, or in the blockade of Qatar, has opened the space for Egypt to regain the influence it has traditionally enjoyed in Arab counsels. This has been greatly facilitated by the good management of its economy through difficult times. Economic reforms from 2015 finally provided foreign exchange reserves of \$40 billion by 2018 and a growth rate of 5.6% in 2019 (<https://bit.ly/3eAlfbb>).

The instrument that Egypt is using to assert its diverse interests in a complex and conflictual region is not military force, but diplomacy.

### Regional challenges

The principal challenge that Egypt presently faces relates to Ethiopia's plan to construct the "Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam" (GERD) on the Blue Nile. Egypt fears this project could restrict its access to the waters of the Nile, the source of 95% of its fresh water. Seeing the project as an "existential threat", the Egyptian officials have said that "all options" are on the



AFP

table. However, Egypt has actually embarked on robust diplomatic engagements in its African neighbourhood, with defence agreements with the "ring countries" around Ethiopia – Sudan, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and Kenya – to safeguard its interests.

Ethiopia has initiated its own diplomatic effort in the Horn of Africa by firming up ties with Somalia, Eritrea and South Sudan. In response, Egypt has agreed to build a major dam and hydropower project in Tanzania, so that the latter will compete with Ethiopia in the export of power in the region. At the end of June, Egypt wrote to the UN Security Council seeking international intervention on the dam issue; it said that, with this effort, "we will have exhausted all the peaceful means".

Egypt's other challenge is relations with Turkey. The two countries met at the deputy Foreign Minister level in Cairo in early May and discussed the issues that divide them: Libya and the East Mediterranean. In Libya, Turkey has deployed about 500 soldiers and another 2,000 fighters from its militia in Syria in support of the Tripoli-based authority. Egypt and the UAE have so far backed the Tobruk-based administration and supported the rival Libyan force, led by Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, with weaponry and mercenaries. In March 2021, an interim government of National Unity was formed that brings together the two rival administrations in one

national order until elections are held in December this year. But this arrangement is still fragile, and competitions for power between the Tripoli and Tobruk-based rivals are ongoing.

Libya's peace process demands that foreign troops leave the country. Though the Syrian militants have started leaving, Turkey asserts that its own soldiers have been invited by the government and is showing no signs of withdrawing them, while Russia insists that withdrawal of foreign troops will be a "step-by-step" process so that a power balance is maintained. In the East Mediterranean, Egypt, with other littoral partners, has delineated energy claims in the sea which conflict with Turkey's claims. With neither side willing to compromise, there are serious fears of conflict. On July 3, Egypt affirmed its interest in Libya by inaugurating a new naval base close to the Libyan border.

### Coalition for cooperation

The just-announced tripartite coalition of Egypt, Iraq and Jordan is clearly an attempt by the partners to broaden their regional engagements: Iraq would like to free itself from the Iranian grip and expand ties with its Arab neighbours. Jordan is unhappy with the recent Saudi role in trying to topple King Abdullah and replace him with a disgruntled half brother, Prince Hamza. Egypt views the partnership as an opportunity to move beyond its traditional dependence on Saudi Arabia and the UAE and assert its own leadership in the region.

Together, the partners constitute a near-contiguous land mass, with a total population of 150 million (<https://bit.ly/3kwy2g6>) and considerable domestic agricultural and industrial capacity. They are looking at extensive cooperation in energy connectivity and re-

construction areas. Membership is open and, later, Syria and Lebanon could also join this group.

### The outlook

While Egypt's diplomacy has already placed it in the vanguard of regional affairs, it also faces serious challenges. As of now, Ethiopia is not budging on GERD, raising fears of a military confrontation.

At home, due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, unemployment has increased, recovery has been slow, and the percentage of workers without adequate income has gone up from 55% to nearly 75%. The poverty rate is still 2% higher than in 2015, when reforms had started. Further deterioration in the economy could compel Egypt to seek assistance from the Gulf States, which would dilute its independent posture in regional affairs.

Again, under the country's stringent counterterrorism laws, tens of thousands of government critics are in detention. During the election campaign, Joe Biden, now U.S. President, had promised that there would be "no more blank checks for Trump's favourite dictator", a reference to al-Sisi. However, it remains to be seen if the U.S. will actually go through with this.

As of now, Egypt is riding high. The Egyptian President recently revamped the museum of ancient history in Cairo and presided over parades of mummies of former Egyptian pharaohs as they moved to their new home. Perhaps, he feels a kinship with those old rulers who had brought Egypt so much glory all those centuries ago.

Talmiz Ahmad is a former Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE, and Ram Sathe Chair for International Studies, Symbiosis International University, Pune

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

### State of the Congress

The Congress faces a crisis as winning an election and forming the government seems to be in the past now. In such a situation, it needs to act prudently at least to save the handful of States it rules. In Punjab, Captain Amarinder Singh

commands the respect of the people. Navjot Singh Sidhu's stand will harm the government and the party too. If Mr. Sidhu is genuinely interested in the party retaining power in Punjab, he should have settled the issue amicably with the Chief Minister.

Despite past experiences, the Congress high command is still in a learning stage when it comes to sorting out differences between powerful leaders in States under its control (Inside pages, "Sonia's move comes despite unease among

Punjab MLAs", July 19).

D. SETHURAMAN,  
Chennai

### Noon meals

It is encouraging to read that girls who had access to free lunches at government schools, later had children with a higher height-to-age

ratio than those who did not (Page 1, July 19). Can we hope that food and education advocates will find a way out to ensure the continued supply of nutritional midday meals for children hailing from poor economic backgrounds till schools

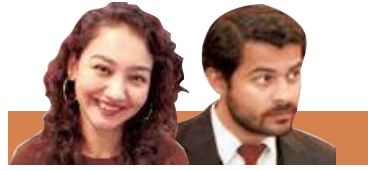
reopen? Localised distribution/supply of meals under the guidance and leadership of local body representatives can be thought of.

C.G. KURIKOSSE,  
Malappara, Kothamangalam, Kerala



# Surveillance reform is the need of the hour

The proposed legislation related to the personal data protection of citizens fails to consider surveillance



ANUSHKA JAIN & TANMAY SINGH

It is worth asking why the government would need to hack phones and install spyware when existing laws already offer impunity for surveillance. This unsettling query arises on the basis of reports emerging from a collaborative investigation by journalists from around the world, including from India's *The Wire*, titled the 'Pegasus Project'. Reports say that over "300 verified Indian mobile telephone numbers, including those used by ministers, opposition leaders, journalists, the legal community, businessmen, government officials, scientists, rights activists and others", were targeted using spyware made by the Israeli firm, NSO Group.

## Threat to press freedom

Subsequent reporting showed that the Pegasus spyware had been used to target 37 phones, of which 10 belonged to Indians. Amnesty International's Security Lab was then able to confirm that Pegasus was used to compromise the phones of former journalist of *The Indian Express* Sushant Singh, former editor of the *Economic and Political Weekly* Paranjay Guha Thakurta, former *Outlook* journalist S.N.M. Abdi, and *The Wire*'s two founding editors Siddharth Varadarajan and M.K. Venu.

These revelations highlight a disturbing trend with regard to the use of hacking software against dissidents and adversaries. In 2019, similar allegations were made about the use of Pegasus against journalists and human rights activists. Most of them were situated in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh as the hack targeted lawyers related to the Bhamra Koregaon case and Dalit activists, respectively. However, despite repeated calls for investigations, the relevant State governments failed to do so.

A significant number of Indians reportedly affected by Pegasus this time are again journalists. This is not surprising since the World Press Freedom Index produced by Reporters Without Borders has ranked India 142 out of 180 countries in 2021. What is shocking, however, is that



the press requires (and in democracies is afforded) greater protections on speech and privacy. Privacy and free speech are what enable good reporting. They protect journalists against threats of private and governmental reprisals against legitimate reporting. This has been recognised in Supreme Court decisions. In the absence of privacy, the safety of journalists, especially those whose work criticises the government, and the personal safety of their sources is jeopardised. Such a lack of privacy, therefore, creates an aura of distrust around these journalists and effectively buries their credibility.

## Problematic provisions

The government, in its purported undated and unsigned response, relied on existing provisions of law under the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885 and the Information Technology (IT) Act of 2000. Even without the use of Pegasus or any other hacking software and surveillance, these provisions are problematic and offer the government total opacity in respect of its interception and monitoring activities. While the provisions of the Telegraph Act relate to telephone conversations, the IT Act relates to all communications undertaken using a computer resource. Section 69 of the IT Act and the Interception Rules of 2009 are even more opaque than the Telegraph Act, and offer even weaker protections to the surveilled. No provision, however, allows the government to hack the phones of any individual since hacking of computer resources, including mobile phones and apps, is a criminal offence under the IT Act. Nonetheless, surveillance itself, whether under a provision of law or without it, is a gross violation of the fundamental rights of citizens.

The very existence of a surveillance system impacts the right to privacy and the exercise of freedom of

speech and personal liberty under Articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution, respectively. It prevents people from reading and exchanging unorthodox, controversial or provocative ideas. Regardless of whether a citizen knows that their email is being read by the government, the perceived danger, founded on reasonable suspicion that this may happen, itself impacts their ability to express, receive and discuss such ideas.

There is also no scope for an individual subjected to surveillance to approach a court of law prior to or during or subsequent to acts of surveillance since the system itself is covert. In the absence of parliamentary or judicial oversight, electronic surveillance gives the executive the power to influence both the subject of surveillance and all classes of individuals, resulting in a chilling effect on free speech. Constitutional functionaries such as a sitting judge of the Supreme Court have reportedly been surveilled under Pegasus without any checks outside the executive wing of government. Vesting such disproportionate power with one wing of the government threatens the separation of powers of the government. In response to a Right to Information (RTI) request in 2013, the Central government had revealed that 7,500 to 9,000 orders for interception of telephones are issued by it every month. However, RTI requests for such information are now denied citing threats to national security and to the physical safety of persons.

The government, in its purported response, stated that any surveillance which takes place through a "due process of law". However, the existing provisions are insufficient to protect against the spread of authoritarianism since they allow the executive to exercise a disproportionate amount of power. Such surveillance, when carried out

entirely by the executive, curtails Articles 32 and 226 of the Constitution (empowering the Supreme Court and High Courts, respectively, to issue certain writs) as it happens in secret. Thus, the affected person is unable to show a breach of their rights. This violates not only the ideals of due process and the separation of powers but also goes against the requirement of procedural safeguards as mandated in *K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd) v. Union of India* (2017).

## Role of judiciary

Thus, in order to satisfy the ideal of "due process of law", to maintain an effective separation of powers and to fulfill the requirements of procedural safeguards and natural justice, there needs to be oversight from another branch of the government. Only the judiciary can be competent to decide whether specific instances of surveillance are proportionate, whether less onerous alternatives are available, and to balance the necessity of the government's objectives with the rights of the impacted individuals. The need for judicial oversight over surveillance systems in general, and judicial investigation into the Pegasus hacking in particular, is also essential because the leaked database of targeted numbers contained the phone number of a sitting Supreme Court judge, which further calls into question the independence of the judiciary in India.

Surveillance reform is the need of the hour in India. Not only are existing protections weak but the proposed legislation related to the personal data protection of Indian citizens fails to consider surveillance while also providing wide exemptions to government authorities. When spyware is expensive and interception is inefficient, the individuals surveilled will be shortlisted by priority and perceived threat level to the existing regime. But as spyware becomes more affordable and interception becomes more efficient, there will no longer be a need to shortlist individuals. Everyone will be potentially subject to state-sponsored mass surveillance. The only solution is immediate and far-reaching surveillance reform.

Anushka Jain is the Associate Counsel (Surveillance and Transparency) and Tanmay Singh is the Litigation Counsel at Internet Freedom Foundation

# Making India a sporting nation

India can compete better in the international arena if different States are developed as centres of excellence for different sports



GAUTAM BHATTACHARYA

Two econometricians, Bernard A.B. and Busse M.R., in a paper in *The Review of Economics and Statistics* (February 2004) tried to establish that "total GDP is the best predictor of the national Olympic performance". They also claimed that host countries are "likely to win an additional 1.8% of the medals beyond what would be predicted by their GDP alone". Since then, many studies have attempted to understand the factors that influence most the ability of a nation to win medals at the Olympics. One such work after the Rio Olympics showed that medals per hundred billion of dollars (based on purchasing power parity data of 2015) are highest in some Caribbean nations and lowest in some Asian and African nations. These results negate to a considerable extent the hypothesis that total GDP is the best predictor of the performance of a nation at the Olympics.

## Factors that determine performance

There are many factors which are important in determining the performance of a nation in various sports. Beyond a threshold level, the average standard of living in a nation and the country's population size may be important determinants for its performance at the Olympics. The size of total GDP is hardly important in countries like India where a sizeable segment is fighting hunger. A person of poor health can never be a good sportsman. In countries where there are high levels of stunted growth, malnutrition and anaemia, we cannot expect good athletes. Thus, South Asian countries and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa don't fit in the econometric models built on total GDP.

Genetic factors are also no less important. The U.S., Australia and the Netherlands are powerhouses in swimming, but not China. Perhaps, taller people have an advantage in swimming or basketball but height is not important in shooting or gymnastics. China excels in shooting along with the U.S. and Germany. East Asian nations do better at table tennis than Western nations. Russia, East European nations and Central Asian countries do well in amateur boxing whereas China and Central Asians countries do better in weightlifting and wrestling.

Mobilising resources in world-class training provides an edge to sportspeople. Such infrastructure makes the U.S. the superpow-

er in athletics and gymnastics, Germany in equestrian, and the U.K. in diving, sailing and cycling. For poor nations, creating such infrastructure is a luxury.

During colonial rule, India got some exposure to international sporting events earlier than many Asian and African nations. The Calcutta Football League, for example, is the oldest football league in Asia. Durand Cup is the oldest existing football tournament in Asia. This exposure gave India an edge over other "Third World" nations in the 1950s and early 1960s. Resources in India were spread thinly across sports disciplines. As more and more nations started coming into the international sports arena, India's relative position started declining from the 1970s.

Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Singapore and Malaysia may stand below India in the medal's tally at the Asian Games, but are ahead of it at the Olympics. This is primarily because India is moderately good at many sports but not good enough to be the best at any of them. In contrast, Jamaica does well at the Olympics in sprinting and Kenya gets medals in long-distance running. They perform better than India though they are not great sporting nations. In recent years, India has shown promise in shooting, amateur boxing, wrestling, gymnastics and badminton. We need to concentrate more on sports where the physical build of an average Indian will not stand as a disadvantage.

## One State, one sport

States need to be integrated in a bigger way in India's sports policy. Can we not develop different States as centres of excellence for different sports? People of different States have different food habits and build. It's not impossible to develop training infrastructure for different sports in different parts of the country depending on the inclination of people of that area and their habits and build. Unless we start grooming our children, who show potential, for international sports, India can hardly succeed at the Olympics. Individual talent alone cannot take us ahead. The policy of "One State, One Sport" can be a game-changer in India.

India's best performance at the Olympics was in London (2012) where it won two silver medals and four bronzes and ranked 56th in the medal's tally. At the Rio Olympics (2016), with one silver and one bronze, India's rank came down to 67. Whatever the predictions of the econometricians, if India can find a place in the top 50 sporting nations in the medal's tally of the rescheduled Summer Olympics at Tokyo commencing on July 23, that will be good enough to boost the nation's morale.

Gautam Bhattacharya is a former civil servant

# A more humane police force

Political will is an essential component in bringing about any major reform in the Indian police force

VIKRAM VINCENT

While improvements in pay scale and promotions are necessary aspects of police reforms, little has been spoken about reforms needed at the psychological level. Why do citizens fear going to a police station or dealing with the lower ranks of the police force?

## Custody-related deaths

The answer lies in numbers. Between April 1 and November 30, 2015, 25,357 cases were registered under police category which included 111 deaths in police custody, 330 cases of custodial torture and 24,916 in others. These numbers were shared by the former Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju, in the Lok Sabha in response to a question. In comparison, according to the Australian Institute of Criminology, from 1989-90 to 2010-11, the deaths in police custody and custody-related operations were 700. In the U.K., England and Wales, the total deaths in police custody or following contact with the police (1990 to 2015) was 1,542. In the U.S., according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the number of state prisoners' deaths between 2001 and 2007 was 21,936 although one could argue that an unaccounted number of political prisoners from the U.S. disappear into privately maintained black holes called the supermax prisons both on and off U.S. soil. However, not considering the different time periods, an off-hand comparison would show that custody-related deaths in India are more than the sum total of the countries mentioned.

One question on the minds of the common people is: how can a human being inflict so much pain on another without the slightest remorse? Two famous experiments provide an explanation. In the Stanford Prison Experiment, people who had applied to be a part of the experiment were randomly divided into two groups: prison guards and prisoners. Under duress, the participants who played the role of prison guards started exploiting and torturing the participants playing the role of prisoners. Milgram's experiment on obedience to authority showed that people obey if

they are coerced. A staggering 65% of the participants applied the maximum level of pain on the "victim" while the remaining 35% remained in a range. Only a minuscule number refused to inflict any pain even under coercion. The results of Milgram's experiment were shown to be true even in variations of the experiment.

## Behaviour with the citizenry

In the Indian police force, the lower ranks of police personnel are often verbally abused by their superiors. Many are not considered as individuals, are not shown compassion by the senior ranks, and work in inhuman conditions. While the alleged excesses of the police cannot be justified, it is important to look at how the treatment meted to police constables has affected the interaction of the police with the public. Many policemen deal with citizens in the manner that they do only because their work environments are not harmonious. Their relationship with their superior officers is stressful and sycophantic. There is no concept of welfare and this manifests in their improper behaviour with the citizenry.

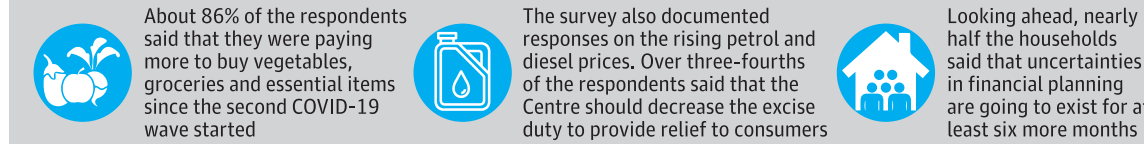
Several committees have made several recommendations on the issue of reforms for a healthy police system. The Supreme Court of India was forced to intervene as neither the Central government nor the State governments acted upon those recommendations. It is clear that the problem is with the political apparatus considering the history of the Police Act. The Police Act of 1861 was legislated by the British right after the revolt of 1857 to bring in efficient administration of police in the country and to prevent any future revolts. This meant that the police were to always comply with those in power. Considering the results of the privatisation of the prison system in the U.S., it would be disastrous to even consider this as a solution in India. Thus, political will is seen as an essential component in bringing about any major reform in the Indian police force.

Vikram Vincent holds a PhD from IIT Bombay

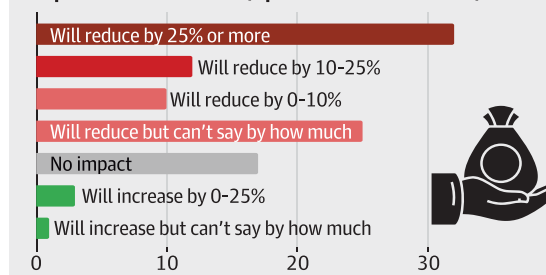
## DATA POINT

### A hole in consumers' pocket

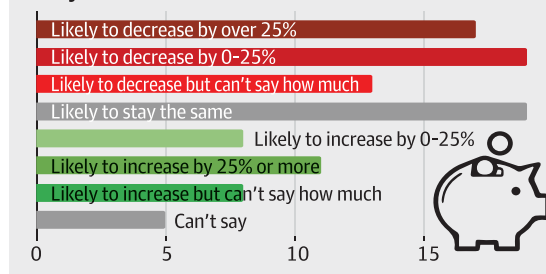
A majority of households in India felt that their income levels are likely to reduce by at least 25% in the next year compared to the pre-COVID-19 levels. Also, one in five said that their household savings would decrease up to 25% in the next year. The responses are excerpts from the recent Mood of the Consumer survey conducted by LocalCircles, a community social media platform. The survey received 70,500 responses from 382 districts. The survey was conducted online, and the participants were verified citizens registered with LocalCircles



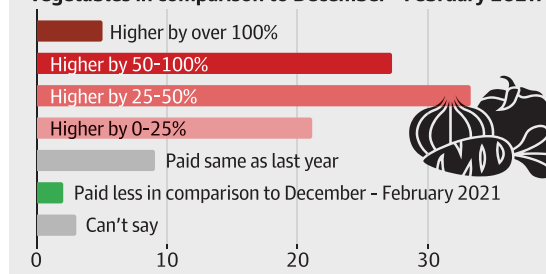
### How do you believe your household income will be impacted between April 2021 and March 2022 compared to pre-COVID-19 levels (April 2019 - March 2020)?



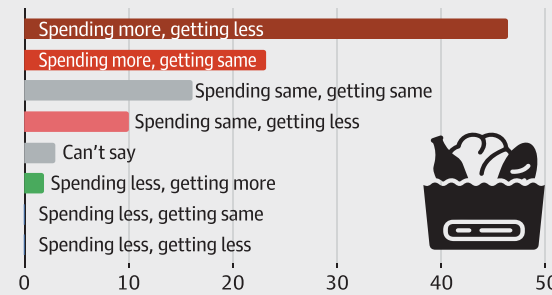
### As an estimate, how will your household savings for the period April 2021 to March 2022 be impacted by COVID-19 this year?



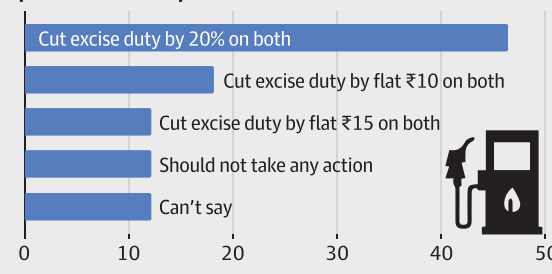
### Since the second wave of COVID-19 started in March 2021, how much more has your household paid on average for vegetables in comparison to December - February 2021?



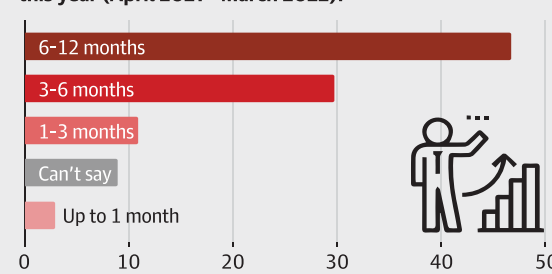
### Since the second wave of COVID-19 started, how have your monthly household grocery and essential costs changed?



### Though the government is in a tight spot financially, what should it do to provide immediate relief to consumers on petrol and diesel prices?



### At this time, in your household finances planning, how long are you expecting uncertainty due to COVID-19 last this year (April 2021 - March 2022)?



## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 20, 1971

### Eventful years

(From an Editorial)

The two years since the nationalisation of 14 major banks have certainly been the most eventful in the history of Indian banking. They have brought about hectic branch banking and a distinct change in the pattern of lending. In the first 18 months, 2,900 new branches were opened, most of them in rural and semi-urban centres. Deposits with the 14 banks have increased by Rs. 882 crores to about Rs. 3,408 crores. There was also an increase in the number of accounts of small borrowers to 11.7 lakhs by March this year from only 2.8 lakhs in June 1969. These developments have no doubt great significance, especially as 30 to 40 per cent of fresh credit extended by all banks has been in favour of borrowers in the priority sectors. The pace of deposit growth has obviously been stimulated by the strengthening of the infrastructure and by a new class of people taking seriously to the banking habit.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 20, 1921

### Improving inheritance laws.

Mr Cousins writes:- The Committee meetings of Madras Women have been held at the Gokhale Hall on Saturday last and the previous Saturday at which arrangements have been made to hold a representative meeting in support of the legislation which is being brought forward by Mr. T. Seshagiri Aiyer, M.L.A. to improve the present inheritance laws, relating to Hindu women. The meeting will be held in the Small Hall of the Senate House, on Saturday the 23rd instant, at 4:30 P.M. under the joint auspices of practically all the Women's Associations of Madras. Lady T. Sadasivier has consented to preside and the members of Committee include Sister Subbalakshmi, Dr. Muthulakshmi, Miss Chattopadhyaya, Mrs. Cousins, Mrs. Lakshmi-pathi, Mrs. C. B. Rama Rao, Mrs. Lakshman Rao, Mrs. Kasi Vishvanathan Mudeliar, Mrs. Rajammal, Mrs. Mahadeva Shastri etc. There is a strong feeling among women that the present laws are not treating women justly, and especially widows in cases where no will has been made and all over India, women welcome the efforts of Mr. Seshagiri Aiyar to reform the existing laws in this connection. The Madras meeting is one of a number which is being held throughout Indian cities to give public expression to those opinions.



FROM PAGE ONE

## Rahul, Kishor, Lavasa on list of spyware targets

The family members of a Supreme Court employee who had accused the then Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi of sexual harassment in 2019 are on the list. Mr. Lavasa, who is on the list, served as an Election Commissioner between January 2018 and August 2020, and had expressed dissenting views on the three-member election panel's ruling that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had not violated the Model Code of Conduct in 2019.

Others on the list include Gagandeep Kang, a well-known virologist, M. Hari Menon, the India country head for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and two employees of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention based in Delhi.

Forbidden Stories, a Paris-based non-profit organisation, and Amnesty International got access to the list of thousands of potential targets worldwide and shared it with 17 media publications, including *The Wire*, *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post*. Am-

nesty's International's Security Lab provided forensic analyses and technical support, while Forbidden and the media houses conducted the investigation, called the Pegasus Project.

Responding to the reports, Mr. Gandhi called targeted surveillance "illegal and deplorable".

"If your information is correct, the scale and nature of surveillance you describe goes beyond an attack on the privacy of individuals. It is an attack on the democratic foundations of our country. It must be thoroughly investigated and those responsible be identified and punished," he said in a statement.

India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, according to *The Washington Post*, said the claim of government surveillance of specific people "has no concrete basis or truth associated with it whatsoever." However, the government refused to answer to a question on whether it is a client of NSO, *The Post* reported.

## Why were curbs relaxed for Bakrid, SC asks Kerala

The traders had stocked up goods early. They had started to agitate against the stringent curbs. The Opposition had also raised the traders' issue in the public domain. The State, while relaxing restrictions for Bakrid, had specifically ordered that "as far as possible", customers should have had at least one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine and must strictly follow the protocol.

Earlier, the Bench took into consideration "the situation and the celebrations going on in the State of Kerala". Kerala counsel G. Prakash, said only some shops had been opened in a controlled manner.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for P.K.D

Nambiar, intervened to say that while Uttar Pradesh had stopped the Kanwar Yatra, Kerala had displayed a "casual" attitude to lockdown restrictions owing to Bakrid.

"Kerala relaxed lockdown curbs on the occasion of Eid on the day the Prime Minister called for caution... Kerala has continued to throw up alarming numbers [of COVID cases] even while many other States have improved their situation," Mr. Nambiar said in his plea.

The court closed its *suo motu* case on the conduct of the Kanwar Yatra, after U.P. informed on Monday that "there will be no Kanwar Yatra at all, it has been completely postponed" in 2021.

## Parliament session off to a turbulent start

"I thought there would be an atmosphere of excitement in the House today, because women, Dalits, Adivasis have been made Ministers in large numbers... I would have been happy to introduce them," he said.

"It should make everyone proud that several women, several people belonging to the SC/ST community have taken oath as Ministers. Several new Ministers are children of farmers and also belong to OBC communities. It seems some people cannot digest more women, SC, ST, and OBC community members becoming Ministers," he added.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that in his 24-year career as a parliamentarian he had never witnessed such a disruption of the customary introduction of Ministers, while Congress MP Manickam Tagore asserted that the BJP had done the same when Manmohan Singh, as Prime Minister, had sought to introduce his

Ministers in the House. "In my last 24 years of parliamentary life, I have not seen a single instance where the Prime Minister could not introduce his Council of Ministers, even if it's one. It is sad, unfortunate and not a healthy trend," Mr. Singh said.

The House was then adjourned till 2 p.m. and when the din did not subside, it was adjourned again till 3.30 p.m., when Minister for Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnav read out a statement on the allegations of snooping of journalists and other public figures. After the statement, the House was adjourned for the day.

Later speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Tagore said: "The BJP had also done the same to Dr. Manmohan Singh when he tried to introduce his Ministers to the House. The government is not ready for a discussion on issues raised by the Opposition and we, therefore, protested."

## SC orders activist's immediate release

Mr. Farasat submitted that the Facebook posts were criticism against the advocacy of cow dung and urine as cure. He said stringent NSA provisions had been slapped against the activist to chill his free speech. His client's son had spent days in custody pursuant to criminal cases initiated against him followed by a spell of preventive detention after grant of bail.

The petition sought the quashing of a May 17 detention order and the grounds of detention issued by District Magistrate, Imphal West District. It contended that the detention was in violation of an April 30 order of the Supreme Court that barred the authorities from taking legal action or muzzling voices critical of the government's COVID-19 management.

# Raise issues but allow govt. to respond, Modi tells Opposition

At media briefing, PM repeats invite for special meeting on COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked the beginning of the monsoon session of Parliament urging Opposition members to raise "the most difficult and sharpest questions" in the House, but also told them to allow the government to respond in a "disciplined atmosphere".

He also repeated his invitation to floor leaders of all parties to a meeting with him on Tuesday evening to discuss the vaccination policy and management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Modi had made the same offer at the all-party meeting on Sunday, which had been rebuffed by Opposition leaders who demanded a discussion in Parliament rather than a "PowerPoint presentation".

The remarks by Mr. Modi to the media were made just before the session got underway. The session had a stor-



Point of view: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing the media at Parliament House. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

my start, with both Houses of Parliament being repeatedly adjourned for the day without the customary introduction of newly appointed Ministers.

"I would like to urge all the MPs and all the parties to

ask the most difficult and sharpest questions in the Houses but they should also allow the government to respond in a disciplined environment. This will boost democracy, strengthen people's trust and improve

the pace of development," Mr. Modi said. "I hope every issue related to the pandemic and our fight against it would be discussed. I would like all floor leaders to attend a session tomorrow evening to have a presentation on the pandemic situation. It can be discussed on the floor of the House too," he added.

### 'Get vaccinated'

The Prime Minister also made an appeal that everyone should be vaccinated against COVID-19 and follow protocols related to it strictly. "Vaccine is given in the 'bahahu' (arm) and those who take it become 'bahubalis' (strongmen) in the fight against COVID-19. It's being taken forward," he said.

The offer for a meeting over COVID-19 comes despite Opposition leaders terming it "highly irregular" and not according to norms of a Parliament session.

## Modi conveys 'best wishes' to new Nepal PM Deuba

We will work together to enhance cooperation, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

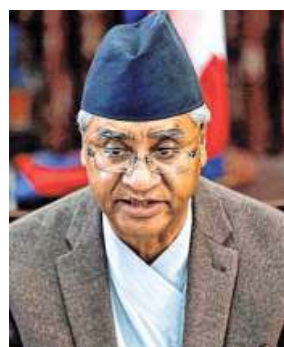
Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with the newly appointed Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on Monday.

The call has established a communication line between Mr. Modi and Mr. Deuba, who won a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives on Sunday night.

"Spoke with Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to convey my congratulations and best wishes. We will work together to further enhance the wide-ranging cooperation between India and Nepal, including in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic," said Mr. Modi in a social media message after the conversation.

### Taking over

Mr. Deuba was appointed as Prime Minister on July 12 by a Constitutional Bench of



Sher Bahadur Deuba

the Supreme Court of Nepal, which observed that his predecessor, K.P. Sharma Oli, had violated constitutional norms and had to step down.

Mr. Modi had congratulated Mr. Deuba after he won the vote of confidence. In a message to Mr. Deuba, he said both sides should work on "all sectors". The Ministry of External Affairs said the two leaders focused primarily on battling the pandemic.

Mr. Oli had been criticised

for his alleged failure to contain COVID-19, which has left at least 9582 people dead.

### Vaccine challenge

Nepal's main challenge is its inability to access COVID-19 vaccine, for which it had initially depended on the Serum Institute of India. Supply of Indian vaccines was interrupted during March-May when the second wave peaked in India. Subsequently, the U.S. stepped up efforts and Nepal will receive 1.5 million vaccine doses from it.

Bilateral interaction between the two neighbours turned cold last year owing to the Kalapani territorial dispute and top-level visits were blocked because of the pandemic and diplomatic spat. However, in January last, Oli's Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali visited India. Mr. Deuba has appointed a five-member Cabinet but he is yet to appoint a foreign minister.



The day after: Punjab Congress Committee chief Navjot Singh Sidhu in Chandigarh on Monday. ■ PTI

## Sidhu pushes 18-point agenda for Punjab

'Will return power back to the people'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

A day after he was appointed president of the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee, former State Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu said on Monday that he would work towards giving power back to the people through the Congress's 18-point agenda for the State.

"Will work along with every member of Congress family in Punjab to fulfil the mission of #JittegaPunjab as a humble Congress worker to Give Power to the People Back to the People through the #PunjabModel & High Command's 18 Point Agenda... My Journey has just begun!!," Mr. Sidhu said in a tweet.

"Today, to work further for the same dream & strengthen the invincible

fort of @INCIndia, Punjab. I am grateful to Hon'ble Congress President Sonia Gandhi Ji, Shri @RahulGandhi Ji & Smt @priyankagandhi Ji for bestowing their faith in me & giving me this pivotal responsibility," he said.

The All India Congress Committee appointed Mr. Sidhu president of the Congress State unit, besides Sangat Singh Gilzian, Sukhwinder Singh Danny, Pawan Goel and Kuljit Singh Nagra as working presidents.

The 18-point programme was suggested by the three-member AICC panel set up to resolve the power tussle between Mr. Sidhu and Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

The agenda includes issues surrounding action in the 2015 sacrilege cases and against the drug menace.

## Women's groups want U.P. draft population Bill nixed

'Proposed law is unconstitutional'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh government's proposed law on population control is "unconstitutional" as it violates the right to equality and should be "immediately withdrawn", demanded women's organisations, health networks, academics in a memorandum to President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday.

The Draft Uttar Pradesh Population Control, Stabilisation and Welfare Bill, 2021, proposes a two-child policy and those violating it would be barred from contesting local body elections, applying for government jobs and getting subsidies under government welfare schemes.

According to the memo-

randum, the Bill will result in people not registering their marriages because of the disincentives mooted by the government, which is likely to make women and children in situations of domestic violence or abusive relationship vulnerable and could result in denial of maintenance and support as well as right to property.

The signatories of the memorandum include the All India Democratic Women's Association, Sama, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, Saheli, National Federation for Indian Women, AIDWA, former Union Health Secretary Sujatha Rao, Dr. Mira Shiva of Initiative for Health & Equity in Society and Aruna Roy of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, among others.

## 'Convene Labour Conference'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh on Monday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to convene the Indian Labour Conference (ILC), the most recent session of which was held in 2015, at the earliest.

In a letter, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-affiliated Central trade union said the ILC was "required to

uphold the noble tradition of tripartism in the country" and that India being a founding member of the International Labour Organisation had traditionally "upheld the high ideals of tripartism". The letter, written by BMS general secretary Binoy Kumar Sinha, said the ILC was held every year or after two years in exceptional circumstances.

The BMS added that it was

## Multiple adjournments mar RS proceedings

Protests by Opposition over price hike

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Veheement protests from the Opposition parties on repeated fuel price hikes, ongoing farmers' agitation and the alleged mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic among other issues led to multiple adjournments in the Rajya Sabha on the first day of the monsoon session of Parliament.

The protests also prevented Prime Minister Narendra Modi from introducing his new Ministers. The Congress, TMC, AAP, YSR Congress and Left members were in the well of the House, protesting about different issues when Mr. Modi rose to speak.

Mr. Modi said it should make everyone proud that several women, several people belonging to the SC and ST communities, have taken oath as Ministers. Many new Ministers were children of farmers and belonged to OBC communities.

"It seems some people

cannot digest that more women, SC, ST and OBC community members are becoming Ministers," he stated.

### 17 notices

The Opposition was up in arms after House Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu disallowed 17 notices by different Opposition parties to suspend the scheduled business.

He said it was not feasible to take 17 issues in one go, and assured the members that all the important matters would be taken up in due course of time.

But the Opposition continued the protests, forcing Mr. Naidu to adjourn the House first till 2 p.m. and then till 3 p.m.

As soon as the House reassembled at 3 p.m., Opposition members entered the well of the House. The House was adjourned within 20 minutes, for the final time with the Opposition continuing the protest.

### IN BRIEF



#### Naqvi appointed Deputy Leader of House in RS

NEW DELHI  
The BJP on Monday appointed Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi as the Deputy Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha. Leader of the House Piyush Goyal made the announcement in Parliament. Mr. Goyal was holding the post till now. He was promoted after the outgoing Leader of the House, Thawarchand Gehlot, was appointed as the Governor of Karnataka. Mr. Naqvi had also served as the Parliamentary Affairs Minister.

#### Pramanik a Bangladeshi citizen, says Trinamool

NEW DELHI  
The Trinamool Congress on Monday alleged that the Minister of State for Home Affairs Nishith Pramanik is a Bangladeshi citizen. The party, at a press conference in Delhi, said they would not let Mr. Pramanik make any intervention in Parliament. In an online press conference, party leader Derek O'Brien said, "It would have been our pleasure to let Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduce his new Council of Ministers. But we did not because all Ministers have to be citizens of India. The Minister of State for Home Affairs is not. He is a citizen of Bangladesh."

#### Afghanistan's Army chief scheduled to visit India

NEW DELHI  
Amid the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, the nation's Army chief Lt. Gen. Wali Mohammad Ahmadzai is scheduled to visit India on a three-day visit from July 27. He is scheduled to meet Army chief General Manoj Naravane and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, a defence official said. Lt. Gen. Ahmadzai was appointed the Army chief last month. Another visit by the Afghan Deputy Minister for acquisition and technical planning, which was scheduled from July 11 to 16, has been postponed. Afghanistan has long requested India for offensive military hardware.

#### T.N. will face Mekedatu issue legally: Stalin

CHENNAI  
Ruling out any scope for negotiations on the Mekedatu dam issue, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday said the State would face the issue legally. Mr. Stalin, who was in New Delhi to invite President Ram Nath Kovind to various events in Tamil Nadu, said he had already met the Prime Minister and expressed his opposition to Karnataka's move to build the dam. Mr. Stalin said, "The Prime Minister has given an assurance. The Union Minister for Jal Shakti has given his word. The case is already in court. We will face it legally."

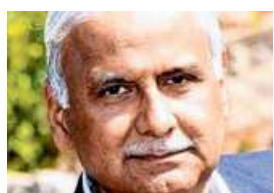


# A peephole that both shocks and surprises polity



**Pegasus report is dirty, worthless: Bihar CM**

**PATNA** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday called the Pegasus report "dirty and worthless". "All this is dirty and worthless. It is not good to disturb anyone like this. All this new technology has its misuse. People are troubled and their work is hindered," Mr. Kumar told presspersons on the sidelines of the weekly *Janata Durbar* (people's court). Mr. Kumar's party, the Janata Dal (United), is a partner of the BJP at the Centre and in the State. To a question on the farmers' protest, Mr. Kumar said their agitation was confined to a few regions. "Bihar has been taking initiatives for farmers and, therefore, there is no agitation here," he said.



**'Those snooping have wasted their resources'**

**NEW DELHI** The co-founder of the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), Jagdeep S. Chhokar, on Monday said whoever was snooping on him had wasted their resources. Mr. Chhokar was reacting to reports of his name figuring on a list of potential snooping targets of the Pegasus spyware. Mr. Chhokar said his work with the ADR was "all in the public domain".



**MVA leaders slam BJP govt. over report**

**PUNE** Leaders in the tripartite Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government slammed the BJP government amid reports of alleged "snooping" using the Israeli spyware, Pegasus. Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Monday demanded clarifications from both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the issue, while stating that the reports proved that the Union government was "weak".

## 'Illegal surveillance is not possible in India'

IT Minister's statement followed Opposition protests on the first day of the monsoon session

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI** Information Technology (IT) and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday told the Lok Sabha that illegal surveillance was not possible in India, given its laws and robust institutions. He alleged that news reports about the Pegasus software being used to illegally tap phones was "an attempt to malign the Indian democracy".

In a *suo motu* statement, he said there was no factual basis to the reports, as multiple checks and balances in India did not allow any unauthorised person to snoop on people.

The Minister's statement followed Opposition protests on the first day of the monsoon session over reports that several prominent personalities, including Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi, were potential targets of surveillance.

In a collaborative investigation by an international



**Quick rebuttal:** Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in the Lok Sabha in New Delhi on Monday. •PTI

media consortium, more than 300 verified mobile phone numbers, including two serving Ministers, over 40 journalists, three Opposition leaders, one sitting judge, and several business persons and activists in India, were identified as potential targets of hacking.

News portal *The Wire* carried reports about possible hacking using Pegasus, the

Israeli software that is sold only to government agencies to tackle terror and crime.

"A highly sensational story was published by a web portal last night. Many over-the-top allegations were made around this story. The press reports appeared a day before the monsoon session of Parliament. This can't be a coincidence," Mr. Vaishnaw said.

"In the past, similar claims were made regarding the use of Pegasus on WhatsApp. Those reports had no factual basis and were denied by all parties, including in the Supreme Court. The press reports of July 18 also appear to be an attempt to malign the Indian democracy and its well-established institutions," he observed. The only basis of these re-

ports was the fact that the media consortium had access to a leaked database of 50,000 numbers and the individuals linked to these phone numbers were taken as people who were being spied upon, he noted.

The news portal's report admitted that the mere presence of the phone in the list did not indicate spying unless the devices were put through technical analysis, he asserted.

The Minister quoted the Israeli company NSO, rubbishing the claims and pointing out factual inaccuracies in their report.

He explained the "well-established procedure" for lawful interception of electronic communication for the purpose of national security by agencies at the Centre and the States.

"When we look at this issue through the prism of logic, it clearly emerges that there is no substance behind this sensationalism," Mr. Vaishnaw stated.

## 'Opposition trying to obstruct development'

They are using conspiracies: Shah

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah responded to disruptions in Parliament amid news reports on large-scale snooping on journalists and prominent public figures via the software Pegasus, terming them as attempts by the Opposition to obstruct "India's development trajectory" through "conspiracies".

He wrote this in a blog on his website after both Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day as the Opposition parties raised protests on fuel price hikes, the three controversial farm laws and the Pegasus snooping scandal. They demanded a Joint Parliamentary Commission (JPC) probe on the snooping and Mr. Shah's resignation.

Mr. Shah wrote, "People have often associated this phrase with me in a lighter vein but today I want to seriously say the timing of the selective leaks, the disruptions...*Aap Chronology Sa-*

*majhiye!* [please understand the chronology]. This is a report by the disruptors for the obstructors."

"Disruptors are global organisations which do not like India to progress. Obstructors are political players in India who do not want India to progress. People of India are very good at understanding this chronology and connection," he said.

The BJP, which held a briefing by former IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, also alleged a conspiracy in the timing of the scandal.

"The BJP strongly refutes and condemns the baseless and bereft of political propriety comments levelled by the Congress against the BJP," he said. "If over 40 countries are using this software, why target only India? Any form of illegal surveillance isn't possible with checks and balances in our laws and robust institutions," he said citing the Telegraph Act.

## A wake-up call for security on the Internet: WhatsApp CEO

'Governments, companies need to hold NSO accountable'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

Following revelations that the NSO group's Pegasus software may have been used to snoop on journalists, politicians and activists worldwide, including holders of 300 Indian phone numbers, WhatsApp CEO Will Cathcart has called on governments and companies to take steps to hold the Israeli technology firm accountable.

In a tweet, Mr. Cathcart said, "This is a wake-up call for security on the Internet. The mobile phone is the primary computer for billions of people. Governments and companies must do everything they can to make it as secure as possible. Our security and freedom depend on it."

WhatsApp in 2019 sued the NSO group, accusing it of using the former's messaging service to conduct cyber-espionage on roughly 1,400 user accounts, including



those of journalists and human rights activists.

Mr. Cathcart added that there was a need for more companies and governments to take steps to hold the NSO group accountable.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, in a jibe aimed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, tweeted, "We know what he's been reading - everything on your phone! #Pegasus".

In a statement, the CPI(M) said the Union government must answer and come clean on using the software

for the surveillance of Indian citizens in an illegal and unauthorised manner.

"Use of a cyber spy software to hack smartphones even by the government is prohibited under Indian laws. Under what law has the government undertaken such surveillance activities over citizens?" the CPI(M) asked.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said, "It seems this government is very close to the Israeli administration. The revelations are extremely shocking."

## Several Delhi-based envoys, staff of NGOs on Pegasus list

Diplomats from Iran, Afghanistan, China and Nepal on it

**SUHASINI HAIDAR NEW DELHI**

While reports of Indian politicians and journalists being targets of surveillance operations carried out with the help of the Pegasus spyware took centre stage on Monday, French newspaper *Le Monde* reported that several Delhi-based diplomats were on the list of potential targets for phone hacking from 2017 to 2021, along with a phone associated with Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan.

On Monday, media organisations in the 17-member consortium published more details of the leaked database allegedly belonging to Israeli technology company, the NSO group, that developed Pegasus. The U.S.-based *Washington Post*, the U.K.-based *The Guardian* and *The Wire* in India reported that the telephone numbers of a British High Commission official and two officials of the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and employees of international NGOs such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation were in the database of those targeted.

lations with China and Pakistan at present, and their diplomats are under close watch, but it is significant that the list included several countries that India has very friendly ties with as well.

"The numbers of [Pakistan Prime Minister] Imran Khan and several of his Ambassadors in India appear on the list as potential targets. Dozens of other Delhi-based diplomats and Ambassadors are also included, from Iran, Afghanistan, China, Nepal and Saudi Arabia," the report published on Monday in *Le Monde* said, adding that the number of Pakistan's High Commissioner to India was on the list too.

*The Hindu* requested responses from each of the Embassies and High Commissions listed in the reports, but did not receive any. Officials in the External Affairs Ministry said they were unaware of the issue being raised by the diplomatic missions with the government thus far.

Both the Gates Foundation and the CDC have had some run-ins over Foreign Contribution Act (FCRA) regulations with the Modi government in the past few years. While a Gates-backed

NGO was barred from receiving any foreign funds in 2017, the CDC was placed on a "prior permissions" watch list for foreign funding in December 2019.

"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has no comment," the CDC said in a statement to *The Hindu*.

According to the report in the *Le Monde*, the use of the Pegasus software began "just after" Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Israel in July 2017, a visit that was marked by his close interactions with then Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In response to the media stories, the NSO group had made it clear that the Israel government had to approve all exports of technology such as Pegasus, and that it was sold "solely to law enforcement and intelligence agencies of vetted governments".

More than 50,000 phone numbers of citizens clustered mainly in Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been studied as part of the international collaboration by NGOs and media organisations investigating phone surveillance.

## Gehlot seeks SC probe in snooping case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR**

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday sought the Supreme Court's intervention in the Pegasus spying case, adding that *suo motu* action and an order for an investigation from the apex court would bring out the truth and set all allegations and counter-allegations to rest.

"It is the most appropriate case for judicial inquiry by the Supreme Court," Mr. Gehlot said. He said the reports on the hacking of mobile phones and spying using the Pegasus software were "very shocking and worrisome".

"Now the list of people who were snooped includes former Congress president Rahul Gandhi [as well]. It is not yet clear where the list will end," he tweeted.

The senior Congress leader pointed out that if the Union government had been honest, it would have taken the issue seriously and had it investigated when former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh raised it in the Rajya Sabha in 2019.

"This is a very serious matter whose truth should be brought out before the public," Mr. Gehlot said.

In fond memory of  
**Sri P. BRAHMAYYA GARU**  
on the occasion of the  
**FORTY FIRST**  
Death Anniversary

Born: 02-10-1908 Died: 20-07-1980  
Inserted by:  
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## Govt. compromised national security: Cong.

Party demands dismissal of Amit Shah

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

The Congress on Monday accused the Narendra Modi government of "treason" and compromising national security amid reports of the Pegasus software being used to spy on people. They demanded the dismissal of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and an inquiry into the role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Following reports that former party chief Rahul Gandhi could have been a potential target of illegal hacking, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala addressed a joint press conference.

Terming Information Technology (IT) Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's statement in the Lok Sabha as ambiguous and roundabout, the Congress leaders said they would demand a debate on the floor and jointly formulate a strategy with other Opposition parties.

"The person responsible for the deployment of this illegal spyware Pegasus is no less than the Home Minister, who must be sacked," Mr. Surjewala said. "Our first demand is the immediate sacking of Mr. Shah and a probe into the role of the Prime Minister in the matter," he added.

Targeting Mr. Shah, Mr. Kharge said, "If you can't run the office you hold as per the rule of law, then you should not be occupying such an office."

The Congress posed a set of questions to the Prime Minister, including whether the Prime Minister or the Home Minister - ordered the purchase of Pegasus and how much money had been spent.

"Is spying on India's security forces, judiciary, Cabinet Ministers, Opposition leaders, journalists and oth-



Randeep Surjewala

er activists through a foreign entity's spyware not treason and an inexcusable breach of national security," Mr. Surjewala asked.

The party also contended the IT Minister's claim that illegal surveillance was not possible, adding that former IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on November 28, 2019, in a reply to a call attention motion in the Rajya Sabha, had admitted that there were 121 names where WhatsApp was possibly infected due to the software and that a notice had been issued to the NSO group, the company that produces the spyware.

**'Lies in tatters'**

"The Constitution has been trampled upon, the rule of law has been murdered, and the oath of office that the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and this government took lies in tatters," Mr. Surjewala said.

Shashi Tharoor, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on IT, tweeted, "If GOI did it that's very bad; if somebody unauthorized did it, that's worse. If a foreign govt say China or Pakistan did it, then national security demands that our govt should investigate and this is why an independent investigation is absolutely indispensable."

Targeting Mr. Vaishnaw for starting his innings on the wrong foot, former Union Minister P. Chidambaram tweeted, "The Minister should answer a simple question: Did the government acquire the Pegasus software/spyware?"

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National Law University Odisha, a premier Law University in India inviting applications for admission to 05 full-time and 10 part-time Ph.D. vacancies for the year 2021-22. Interested candidates are required to send duly filled in application along with Demand Draft of Rs 3,000/- (Rs.2000/- for ST/SC candidates) in favour of "Registrar, National Law University Odisha" on or before **21 August 2021**.

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2	2021_KMML_429775_1	For fabrication and supply of Water Cooled Condenser E206A.
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## Negative RT-PCR report must for flyers to Kolkata

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

The West Bengal government on Monday made it mandatory for flyers to Kolkata to either produce proof of full vaccination or a negative RT-PCR test report even as the city recorded zero COVID-19 deaths for the second time in three days.

"As per latest guidelines of W.B. Govt, all in bound flight passengers (commercial & non-commercial flight) shall produce at time of boarding either proof of full vaccination or RT-PCR negative test report for test conducted within 72hrs of such flight departure," Kolkata airport tweeted.

The State recorded 12 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking its toll to 18,001, but Kolkata did not record a single death.

## 'Protecting children is a priority'

Govt. tells HC that it has directed States to ensure rehabilitation of COVID orphans

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Centre has informed the Delhi High Court that it has asked the States to ensure immediate action for rehabilitation of children orphaned due to COVID-19, in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and leveraging the facilities under child protection services.

The Ministry of Woman and Child Development, in an affidavit, said children in distress situations, such as those affected by the pandemic, are mandated care and protection under the JJ Act, 2015.

"The Act provides a safety net of statutory service delivery structures, along with provisions of Institutional and Non-Institutional care and protection of children in need of care and protection of Children in conflict with



Timely help: A patient being administered medication at a COVID-19 isolation centre in New Delhi. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

law," the Ministry said. It added that "implementation of the Act is the primary responsibility of the States and Union Territories".

The Ministry's affidavit came in response to a petition before the High Court seeking directions to safeguard the interests of the children who lost their parents to COVID-19 and who do not have any one else to take care of them and face the risk of being trafficked.

The petition also sought

grant of appropriate financial compensation to the family members of those citizens who lost their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic after being denied access to adequate health care infrastructure in terms of hospital admission, oxygen cylinders, injections and medications.

### Mental health care

The Ministry acknowledged that the second wave of the pandemic, "given its spread

and severity, has created much anxiety and panic across the country".

"As it is a matter of fact, children have been particularly vulnerable to the psychosocial and mental health impacts of the pandemic. Under these circumstances, service providers might also be finding it challenging to support children with their psychosocial and mental health care needs, along with other decisions about placement and safety," the Ministry admitted.

The Ministry said it had decided that calls from women and girls seeking psychological counselling or showing aggravated behaviors landing on '181-WHL' may be diverted to the National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS) on helpline number 080-46110007 for them to provide psychological support to the affected persons.

## Pakistan accuses India of 'using' FATF for political ends

It says Jaishankar's remarks at meeting revealed manipulation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India is "using" the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for political designs against Pakistan, said the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, criticising External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for a statement claiming credit for Pakistan's continuance on the world body's watchlist.

According to a Pakistan MFA statement on Monday, Mr. Jaishankar's reported comments made to a group of BJP members as part of a training workshop, "vindicated" Pakistan's repeated accusation that India had pushed for Pakistan's grey listing in 2018 for "political" rather than "technical" reasons, which continues to date.

"India's credentials for as-



S. Jaishankar

sessing Pakistan in FATF as co-chair of the Joint Group or for that matter any other country are subject to questions, which we urge FATF to look into," the MFA in Islamabad said, adding that the Pakistani government was also considering contacting the FATF president for "appropriate action", although it is unclear what that action would be.

On Sunday, news agency

ANI reported that Mr. Jaishankar had addressed BJP members as part of a series of "e-Chintan" workshops on Indian foreign policy achievements under the Modi government. According to the report, Pakistan's grey listing for the past three years, including the most recent decision of the FATF plenary session to keep Pakistan on its "increased monitoring" list, were cited as the outcome of Indian efforts by the Minister.

"Due to us (government), Pakistan is under the lens of FATF and it was kept in the grey list. We have been successful in pressurising Pakistan and the fact that Pakistan's behaviour has changed is because of pressure put by India by various measures," Mr. Jaishankar was quoted as saying.

## Assam government bans mass gathering on Id

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A fresh set of COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Assam government on Monday said the upcoming festival of Id should be celebrated at home.

The directive on Id-ul-Zoha, or Bakrid, scheduled on July 21, came a week after the Assam government tabled a cattle protection Bill in the 126-member Assembly. The Bill seeks to restrict transportation of cattle within and through the State besides preventing the sale of beef within a 5 km radius of temples and religious places of non-beef-eat-

ing communities.

"All persons to celebrate Id from their homes. Religious rituals, e.g., Namaaz at a mosque is allowed with not more than five persons including the religious head," the guidelines issued by Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua said.

All other religious places will continue to remain closed for devotees, the order said besides capping the number of attendees at marriages and funerals in districts not under total lockdown at 10.

Assam had on Sunday recorded 1,329 new COVID-19 cases and 15 deaths.

## Speedy trial a fundamental right: HC

For how many years will people languish in jail without trial, Bombay HC asks

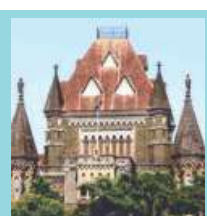
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday said "speedy trial is a fundamental right", highlighting the issue of people languishing in prisons waiting for the trial to begin.

A Division Bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and N.J. Jamar made the comment with respect to those accused in the Bhima Koregaon caste violence case.

The Bench said, "Charges are not framed in the case... How many witnesses will be examined, how many years will it take? They are languishing in jail. For how many

Charges are not framed in the case... How many witnesses will be examined, how many years will it take? They are languishing in jail. For how many years without trial can people languish in jail? Bombay HC



years without trial can people languish in jail? Speedy trial is a fundamental right."

The court was hearing a petition, filed through senior advocate Mihir Desai, seeking a judicial probe into the death of tribal rights activist Stan Swamy on July 5. Mr. Desai told the court that he

was not looking for the cause of the death, but an inquiry into what happened in jail that ultimately led to his death.

### Filing of report

He also sought the filing of a report in court and that the next of kin of Father Frazer

Mascarenhas be allowed to participate in the inquiry.

He said, "I want the probe to follow the guidelines issued by the National Human Rights Commission and the report should be filed in the High Court."

Justice Shinde said, "We have every respect for his work to society. We watched his funeral online and that it was done in a very dignified and gracious manner."

The matter will be heard on July 23. Swamy, 84, was the last of the 16 to be arrested in the Bhima Koregaon case and sent to prison.

## Govt. sanction must for prosecution, says Purohit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Lieutenant-Colonel Prasad Purohit, who is accused in the 2008 Malegaon blasts case, told the Bombay High Court on Monday that sanction should be sought from the government before prosecuting him in the case.

Advocate Shrikant Shivade, representing Mr. Purohit, said the special National Investigation Agency court conducting the trial said the issue of sanction would be decided at the end of the trial. However, the Supreme Court had ruled that it should be decided at the time of framing of charges.

Mr. Shivade argued that prior sanction should be sought under Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (prosecution of judges and public servants). He went on to say that Mr. Purohit was playing his role and discharging his official duty by gathering information and that he was an "unsung hero" of the Army.

Stating that the trial was going on and 181 witnesses had been examined, NIA counsel Sandesh Patil said approximately 150 more witnesses were left. Hence the issue of sanction could be considered at the end of the trial, he said.

## SC raps Gujarat for fire safety violation

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Gujarat government if more innocent people should lose their lives to blazes in poorly-equipped private hospitals and nursing homes after learning that the State has given a long rope to violators of building and fire safety norms despite a top court direction for immediate compliance in December 2020.

A notification issued by the Gujarat Urban Development and Urban Housing Department on July 8 has effectively allowed errant building owners time till March, or even June, 2022 to obtain a Building Use permission.

## Rain deficit may hit oilseed farmers

Monsoon lull could force them to shift to less water-intensive crops, says study

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The lull in the monsoon post June 23 has resulted in a 32% rainfall deficit during that period, and is likely to push farmers into changing their kharif crop patterns, according to an analysis by CRISIL research issued on Monday.

Especially in northwest and central India, which are seeing rainfall deficits as high as 55%, farmers may be forced to move from oilseeds such as soybean and groundnut to crops which have lower water requirements, such as cotton and maize.

Overall, sowing was slower than last year, with the total sown acreage lagging behind 12%.

The southwest monsoon arrived in the country on



Slow start: Overall kharif sowing was slower than last year, with the total sown acreage lagging by 12%.

June 3 this year, and had covered almost 93% of kharif acreage by June 23, a week before its usual onset. Until that point, there had been a 28% surplus rainfall. After that point though, the monsoon yielded truant, resulting in a 32% deficit compared with the long period average, between June 23 and Ju-

ly 12. The highest deficit of 55% was in the northwest region, with Punjab and Haryana recording 70% and 80% deficits respectively. However, CRISIL noted that this may not have too much of an impact on sowing as these States have high levels of irrigation. It's a different story in Rajasthan, which

saw a 58% deficit during that period. "If not recovered within the next 10 days, [this] may effectuate a shift from soybean to maize in key deficit areas," said the report.

Central India saw a 39% rainfall deficit, with Gujarat hit particularly hard. "A continued dry spell in the State this marketing year could effectuate a major crop shift from groundnut to cotton," said CRISIL. By July 16, Maharashtra's total kharif acreage was down 11% in comparison to the previous year, and farmers may shift from soybean to cotton if the rainfall deficit does not recover. Similarly, Karnataka farmers, facing a 37% deficit during this period, are likely to opt for cotton and maize.

## Oxfam report highlights sharp inequalities in health indicators

General category is better off than SCs and STs, it says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Sharp inequalities exist across different caste, religious, class and gender categories on various health indicators, according to a report by Oxfam India.

The report, titled "India Inequality Report 2021: India's Unequal Healthcare Story", shows that the "general category is better off than SCs and STs, Hindus are better off than Muslims, the rich are better off than the poor, men are better off than women, and the urban population is better off than the rural population" on most health determinants, interventions and indica-

tors. The findings are primarily based on secondary analysis from rounds 3 and 4 of the National Family Health Survey and various rounds of National Sample Survey. The report shows that while women's literacy has improved across social groups over the years, SC and ST women lag behind the general category by 18.6% and 27.9% respectively.

There exists a gap of 55.1% between the top and bottom 20% of the population in 2015-16. Though the female literacy rate among Muslims (64.3%) is lower than all religious groups, inequality has reduced over time.

As far as sanitation is concerned, 65.7% households have access to improved, non-shared sanitation facilities in the general category while SC households are 28.5% behind them and ST are 39.8% behind them.

An examination of health interventions too shows disparities.

The share of institutional deliveries in India has increased from 38.7% in 2005-06 to 78.9% in 2015-16, but inequalities persist, with ST households 15% below the general category, Muslims 12% behind Hindus and a 35% gap between the poorest and richest 20% of the population.

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

TH CROSSWORD + 13304 (set by Dr. X)

15 Give boy practical type of experience (5-2)  
18 Pour gin out for exclusive circle (7)  
20 Proceeded to prosecute in conclusion (6)  
22 Hard criminal kills fellow consequently (5)  
24 Revolving associate facing sack over consuming heroin and crack (9)  
25 Polar explorer managed to tackle small problem around southern base (9)  
26 Stap face of country bumpkin (5)  
27 Love THCC, say, taking new shape (6)  
28 Girl pays attention and shines (8)

■ DOWN  
1 Cruel person from Mossad is terrifying (6)  
2 Snubbing drug addict in band (9)  
3 Discovered one footprint beside container in decisive moment (5,2,2,6)  
4 Worried by snake, one entering hotel (2,1,4)  
6 What artist recording another's songs might do to conceal evidence? (5,4,6)  
7 A drink around middle of day? Another time (5)  
8 Group visiting isle served wine (8)  
9 Bird going around lake is duck (6)  
16 One in the dock with girl found dead in warehouse (9)  
17 Sensation! Celebrity invites model to date (8)  
19 Honour president by increase in salary (6)  
20 Elizabeth, an oldster consuming alcohol (7)  
21 Communicates with leading performer, briefly reviewing scene (6)  
23 Stentorian as always, somewhat twangy (5)

■ ACROSS  
1 Freshly made chips are heavenly (8)  
5 Pastry, not zero-calorie perhaps (6)  
10 Shoot around excellent city in Middle East (5)  
11 Relieve sozzled valet, one overwhelmed by drink (9)  
12 Clasp wheel to conduct fantastic feat by end of rally (6,3)  
13 Problem near hilum at centre of the kidneys (5)  
14 On the contrary, prepared most exceptional lunch (6)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13303

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

## The divine couple

Both Sivananda Lahari and Saundarya Lahari are excellent bhakti granthas of Adi Sankara that extol the innumerable facets of the boundless grace of the divine couple, Siva and Sakti. The acharya begins these two hymns by paying obeisance to their inseparableness. Kalidasa too, in his Kumara-sambhava, propitiates Parvati and Parameswara as the parents of the jagat and compares their oneness to the organic unity of word and meaning. The first verse in Sivananda Lahari highlights the fact that Siva and Sakti are forever engaged in penance to help the jivatmas cope with the dangers of samsara and also to lead them out of it to salvation, pointed out Sri B. Sundarkumar in a discourse.

Being united in their love and dedication to art, each sports the Chandra Kala on their head. Many have been inspired by the exceptional sincerity and commitment of their severe penance by which they attained each other. Kalidasa mentions how great risish were impressed by the perfection in Parvati's penance which she performed to attain Siva. Siva's penance as Dakshinamurthy is to impart the highest jnana through the chin mudra in silence. Srishti, Stiti, Laya and all other activities are under their control. They are the very essence of all auspiciousness. They are always ready to grant fruits and benefits such as wisdom, knowledge, prosperity, worthy children, good conduct, etc, on those devotees who worship them with love and devotion in the heart. Even the highest Purushartha, salvation is attainable by those who bow down to them in all humility. The true devotee will soon realise the enormous value of their grace. A strong feeling of contentment settles down in his inner being and he has nothing to fear, not even death. He knows that at the end of this lifetime, he is sure to reach their feet.



# Global call for 'end' to Taliban offensive

Over a dozen nations say 'offensive is in contradiction to their claim to support a negotiated settlement'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL  
More than a dozen diplomatic missions in Afghanistan on Monday called for "an urgent end" to the Taliban's ruthless military offensive, saying it was at odds with claims they want to secure a political deal to end the conflict.

The statement – signed by the U.S., EU, and more than a dozen other missions in Kabul – follows another round of inconclusive talks in Doha over the weekend between the Afghan government and the Taliban that many hoped would kickstart the ailing peace process.

"The Taliban's offensive is in direct contradiction to their claim to support a negotiated settlement," it read. "It has resulted in loss of innocent Afghan lives, including through continued targeted killings, displacement of the civilian population, looting and burning of buildings, destruction of vital infrastructure, and damage to communication networks."

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 battlefield gains.

A joint statement released late on Sunday said little more than they had agreed on the need to reach a "just solution", and to meet again next week.

"We also agreed that there should be no pause in the negotiations," Abdullah Abdullah, who oversees the Afghan government's delegation, said on Monday.

## No talks on truce

He noted, however, that neither side was currently pursuing a joint ceasefire during the talks, despite urgent calls from Afghan civil society and the international community to end the surge in fighting.

Ahead of the second day of talks, Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada had said "the Islamic Emirate strenuously favours a political settlement" despite the groups lightning victories on the ground.

Akhundzada has said his group remained committed to forging a solution to end the war, but slammed the group's opponents for "wasting time".

But the Qatari facilitator of the talks said at the end of



Afghan government negotiator Abdullah Abdullah, left, and Taliban representative Abdul Ghani Baradar, right, in Doha. AFP

the two days that the sides had merely agreed to "work to prevent civilian casualties", far short of previously agreed ceasefires.

"The two sides agreed to continue negotiations at a high level until a settlement is reached. For this purpose, they will meet again next week," said Qatar's counterterrorism envoy Mutlaq al-Qahtani who oversees the talks for Doha.

## Fighting continues

Despite the latest round of shuttle diplomacy, fighting continued to flare in Afghanistan with both the Taliban and government making claims of taking and re-taking territory in various areas across the country.

Despite coming days

ahead of the Id-al-Adha holiday, the statement notably made no mention of a formal call for a ceasefire.

Over the years, the Taliban have announced a series of short truces during Islamic holidays.

However, the group has been criticised for using them to resupply and reinforce their fighters, allowing them to launch devastating onslaughts on Afghanistan's security forces once the truces expire.

With foreign forces in the last stages of a withdrawal due to be complete by the end of August, the Taliban have cut a huge swath across Afghanistan, capturing hundreds of districts, seizing key border crossings and encircling provincial capitals.

# Turkey to talk to Taliban over Kabul airport

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ISTANBUL

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday said Turkey plans to hold talks with the Taliban over its refusal to let Ankara run Kabul airport. "God willing, we will see what kind of talks we will have with the Taliban and see where these talks take us," Mr. Erdogan said.

# Russia to hold drills near Afghan border

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MOSCOW

Russia said on Monday it will stage military drills next month with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan at the Kharbmaidon training ground near the Afghan border with Afghanistan, where the Taliban has led an offensive against government troops.

# Gotabaya Rajapaksa to seek second term as President

This is a shift from his earlier position to serve only one term

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Monday said he would seek a second term in office, shifting from his earlier position to serve only one term.

Mr. Gotabaya, in a meeting with owners of local media institutions, spoke of having not just three years of his remaining term, but an additional five years, implying a second term, to fulfil his pledges, according to a tweet from the President's spokesman Kingsly Rathnayaka.

President Gotabaya's announcement comes less than a fortnight after his younger brother Basil Rajapaksa was sworn in as Minister of Finance, a move that increased the first family's presence in the Cabinet to five members. Mr. Basil Rajapaksa, known as the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna's (SLPP or People's Front) architect and chief strategist, has a growing support base within the party, setting off speculation about his



Gotabaya Rajapaksa

probable presidential bid in 2024.

"Looks like President Gotabaya wanted to set the record straight, by telling the people of the country and party workers who is really in charge," said a senior government official, who requested not to be named.

Mr. Gotabaya's remarks coincide with growing criticism, including from his voters, of the government's apparent inability to address the acute financial strain on ordinary families, amid an unprecedented economic crisis stifling the country.

In a recent meeting with provincial officials, the newly-appointed Finance Minis-

ter Mr. Basil remarked that reducing prices of essential goods will be the government's immediate focus, as families were "struggling to have three meals", Tamil daily *Virakesari* reported on Sunday.

Mr. Gotabaya, 72, had promised a people-centred economy in his poll manifesto titled 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour', which was later adopted as his government's policy framework following his big win in November 2019. With the pandemic affecting the country's revenue – mainly from exports, tourism, and worker remittances – and its foreign reserves, Colombo faces the risk of defaulting on its external debt for the first time in the country's borrowing history.

Mr. Gotabaya's intention to run for President again makes him the second Rajapaksa eyeing a second term at the country's most powerful office. His brother and PM Mr. Rajapaksa served two terms, contested for the third time in 2015, and lost.

# Microsoft hack caused by China: U.S., allies

U.S. officials describe the attack on email servers as a 'pattern of irresponsible behaviour in cyberspace'

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

The Biden administration and Western allies formally blamed China on Monday for a massive hack of Microsoft Exchange email server software and accused Beijing of working with criminal hackers in ransomware attacks and other cyber operations.

The announcements, though not accompanied by sanctions against the Chinese government, were intended as a forceful condem-

nation of activities a senior Biden administration official described as part of a "pattern of irresponsible behaviour in cyberspace." They highlighted the ongoing threat from Chinese government hackers even as the administration remains consumed with trying to curb ransomware attacks from Russia-based syndicates that have targeted critical infrastructure.

The broad range of cyberthreats from Beijing dis-

closed on Monday included ransomware attacks from government-affiliated hackers that have targeted victims – including in the U.S. – with demands for millions of dollars.

Meanwhile, the Justice Department on Monday announced charges against four Chinese nationals who prosecutors said were working with the Ministry of State Security in a hacking campaign that targeted dozens of computer systems, including

companies, universities and government entities. The defendants are accused of stealing trade secrets and confidential business information.

## No sanctions announced

Unlike in April, when public finger-pointing of Russian hacking was paired with a raft of sanctions against Moscow, the Biden administration did not announce any actions against Beijing. The European Union and

Britain also called out China. The EU said malicious cyber activities with "significant effects" that targeted government institutions, political organisations and key industries in the bloc's 27-member states could be linked to Chinese hacking groups.

The U.K.'s National Cyber Security Centre said the groups targeted maritime industries and naval defense contractors in the U.S. and Europe and the Finnish Parliament.

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

The Biden administration on Monday transferred a Guantanamo Bay detainee to his home country for the first time, a policy shift from the Trump presidency that sent a Moroccan man back home years after he was recommended for discharge.

The prisoner, Abdullah Nasser, who is in his mid-50s, was cleared for repatriation by a review board in July 2016. The board determined that Nasser's detention was no longer necessary to protect U.S. national security, the Pentagon said

on Monday. The board recommended his repatriation, but that couldn't be completed during Obama administration, it said.

Nasser arrived on Monday in Morocco, where police arrested him and said they would investigate him on suspicion of committing terrorist acts – even though he was never charged while in Guantanamo. Nasser was a member of a Moroccan Sufi Islam group in the 1980s. In 1996, he was recruited to fight in Chechnya but ended up in Afghanistan, where he was captured, and sent to Guantanamo in 2002.

# U.S.: journalists don't need to reveal sources

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The U.S. government pledged on Monday to steer clear of legal orders that force journalists to reveal their sources, with only rare exceptions.

The new policy, announced by Attorney General Merrick Garland, comes after revelations that former President Donald Trump's Justice Department secretly obtained phone records of journalists investigating his administration, including from CNN and *Washington Post*.

# U.S. duo jailed over Carlos Ghosn escape

REUTERS  
TOKYO

A Tokyo court on Monday doled out the first sentences in Japan related to Carlos Ghosn's arrest and escape, imprisoning U.S. Army Special Forces veteran Michael Taylor for two years and his son Peter for one year and eight months for helping the former Nissan Motor Co Ltd chairman flee to Lebanon in 2019.

"This case enabled Ghosn, a defendant of serious crime, to escape overseas," Hideo Nirei, the Chief Judge, said.

"One year and a half has passed, but there is no prospect of the trial being held."

The judge said the elder Taylor played a "leading role" in the escape by escorting Mr. Ghosn onto the jet, while his son had taken care of his luggage and provided him with a key to a hotel room where he changed clothes.

# U.K. lifts curbs as scientists warn of pandemic surge

'Clinically vulnerable youngsters to be vaccinated'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

The British government on Monday lifted pandemic restrictions on daily life in England, scrapping all social distancing rules in a step slammed by scientists and opposition parties as a dangerous leap into the unknown.

Nightclubs reopened and other indoor venues were allowed to run at full capacity, while legal mandates covering the wearing of masks and working from home were scrapped.

"We're planning to make full vaccination the condition of entry to nightclubs and other venues where large crowds gather. Proof of a negative test will no longer be enough," Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Monday.

He defended the reopening – dubbed "freedom day" by some media – despite scientists' grave misgivings after daily infection rates in Britain topped 50,000, behind only Indonesia and Brazil.

"If we don't do it now, we've got to ask ourselves, when will we ever do it? So this is the right moment,

but we've got to do it cautiously," he added.

In a bid to demonstrate a bit of caution, Vaccine Minister Nadhim Zahawi told the BBC he would continue to wear a mask in "crowded indoor places".

But Jonathan Ashworth, the opposition Labour Party's health spokesman, said the government was being "reckless", echoing experts who say the reopening endangers global health.

"We are against opening up without any precautions in place," Mr. Ashworth said.

But professor Neil Ferguson from Imperial College London warned that Britain was on course for 1,000,000 cases a day, as the Delta variant runs out of control.

Meanwhile, Mr. Zahawi said the government will administer vaccines to clinically vulnerable youngsters, including those aged 12 to 15 with severe neuro-disabilities, Down's Syndrome, immunosuppression and multiple or severe learning disabilities, but not to all children due to an ongoing review into potential side effects.

# Climate change has added over 1,000 lakes in Swiss Alps: study

Glaciers there lost a full 2% of their volume last year alone

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
GENEVA

Climate change has dramatically altered the Swiss Alps landscape – at a quicker pace than expected – as melting glaciers have created more than 1,000 new lakes across the mountains, a study published on Monday showed.

The inventory of Swiss Glacial lakes showed that almost 1,200 new lakes have formed in formerly glaciated regions of the Swiss Alps since the end of the Little Ice Age around 1850.

Around 1,000 of them still exist today, according to the study published by the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag).

That is far more than the few hundreds the researchers had expected to find at the beginning of the project.

"We were surprised by the sheer numbers," Daniel Odermatt, head of the Eawag Remote Sensing Group that carried out the study, said in a statement. He said the "marked accelera-

tion in formation" was also surprising, pointing out that "180 have been added in the last decade alone".

Glaciers in the Swiss Alps are in steady decline, losing a full 2% of their volume last year alone, according to an annual study by the Swiss Academies of Science.

And even if the world were to fully implement the 2015 Paris Agreement two-thirds of the Alpine glaciers will likely be lost, according to a 2019 study by the ETH technical university.

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**e-Procurement Re-Tender Notification**  
No: 31/T3/2021 Dated: 19-07-2021  
Andhra Pradesh Live Stock Development Agency, Guntur is inviting e-tenders from the interested and eligible bidders for supply of High Genetic Merit (HGM) more than 4500kg lactation yield Murrah Frozen Semen Doses to their semen stations in the state. For further details the interested and eligible bidders can visit [www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in) and participate in the tender. Contact No. 9949123937, mail ids - [apladyh@gmail.com](mailto:apladyh@gmail.com), [t3sectionaplda@gmail.com](mailto:t3sectionaplda@gmail.com)  
Sd/- Chief Executive Officer  
DIPR 267P/CL, DL, 19.07.2021 Andhra Pradesh Live Stock Development Agency, Guntur

**TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD**  
Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003  
Phone: 0471-2314288. E-Mail: [dcotdb@gmail.com](mailto:dcotdb@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.travancoredevaswombd.org](http://www.travancoredevaswombd.org)  
**TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD INVITES E-TENDERS FOR THE SUPPLY OF:**  
Dry Rice, Raw Rice, Jaggery Powder, Sugar Candy, Black Raisins, Cardamom, Dry Ginger, Cuminseed, Green Gram Dal, Beaten Rice, Butter Paper Bag, Pure Ghee, Ghee Pouch, Carton Box, BOP Tape, Composite Cans, Easy Open Lids in connection with the festival period 1197 ME (2021-2022) of Sree Dharmasastha Temple, Sabarimala.  
E-Tender Closing Date : 04-08-2021 - 05.00 PM  
E-Tender Opening Date : 06-08-2021 - 11.00 AM  
Venue : Sumangali Kalyana Mandapam, Travancore Devaswom Board Compound, Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003  
Detailed e-tender notifications and special instructions to the bidders are available on [www.travancoredevaswombd.org](http://www.travancoredevaswombd.org). For the submission of tender visit the website : [www.e-tenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.e-tenders.kerala.gov.in)  
ROC NO : 4/21/Sab. Sd/- DEVASWOM COMMISSIONER  
Dated : 19-07-2021 (For and behalf of Travancore Devaswom Board)

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER & BASIN MANAGER**  
**BRAHMANI BASIN, SAMAL, DIST-ANGUL, ODISHA, PIN: 759037**  
Tel No. (06760)266333, E-Mail: [cebmbbs@gmail.com](mailto:cebmbbs@gmail.com)  
Tender Reference No-CEBS-MID-01/2021-22 (Bid Id No. BBS-MID-UGP-1 of 2021-22)  
Online tenders are invited from Super Class or Equivalent Grade Bidders on EPC Contract  
**DETAILED NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Name of Work	Class/EMD/Tender Fee/Period of completion
"CONSTRUCTION OF UNDER GROUND PIPELINE SYSTEM (GRAVITY FLOW) FOR DISTRIBUTARY, MINOR / SUB-MINOR FOR IRRIGATION TO 2013.5 HA CCA FOR MANJORE IRRIGATION PROJECT, ATHAMALLIK IN ANGUL DISTRICT,ODISHA" ON EPC MODE OF CONTRACT.	(1) Class of Contractor - Super Class or Equivalent Grade (2) EMD: The agencies have to execute a "Bid Security Declaration" with stipulation that if they withdraw or modify their bids during period of validity etc., they will be suspended for the time specific in the tender documents. (3) Tender Cost: Rs.10,000.00 to be transferred online (non Refundable). (4) Period of completion: 12 (twelve) calendar months including rainy seasons.

A. Date & Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal : From Dt. 26.07.2021 at 10.00 AM to Dt.25.08.2021 up to 5.00 PM  
B. Period of Sale of Bidding Document : From Dt.26.07.2021 at 10.00 AM to Dt.25.08.2021 up to 5.00 PM  
C. Date & time For Pre-Bid Conference : Dt.09.08.2021 at 11.00 AM  
D. Last Date and Time for Receipt of Bid : Dt.25.08.2021 up to 5.00 PM.  
E. Place of Sale & Receipt of Bid : On-Line through e-Procurement.  
F. Time and Date of Opening of Technical Bid : Dt.31.08.2021 at 11.00 AM.  
G. Place of Opening of Bid : O/o The Chief Engineer & Basin Manager Brahmani Basin, Samal  
G. Further details can be seen from E-Procurement Portal "<https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>"  
Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Brahmani Basin, Samal.  
A-311: OIPR-32046/11/0001/2122

**DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**  
**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**  
Expression of Interest (EOI) for Engagement of Block Level Facilitating Agency for Special Programme for Promotion of Integrated Farming in Tribal Areas 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 Block Level Facilitating Agency for selected blocks of Gajapati, Koraput, Nuapada, Rayagada District for Special Programme for Promotion of Integrated Farming in Tribal Areas of Odisha. Interested Organizations/ Agencies are required to submit proposals in sealed envelope super-scribed as "Application for Engagement of Block Level Facilitating Agency for Special Programme for Promotion of Integrated Farming in Tribal Areas 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 Office of the Chief District Agriculture Officer, Gajapati/ Koraput/ Nuapada/ Rayagada. 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/](http://www.odisha.gov.in/) [www.agrisnetodisha.ori.nic.in](http://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- 01034/11/0011/2122  
L-32



## MARKET WATCH

	19-07-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,553	-1.10
US Dollar	74.88	-0.42
Gold	46,967	-0.74
Brent oil	69.31	-4.72

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	673.70	-13.90
Asian Paints	2981.95	-7.35
Axis Bank	755.20	-15.95
Bajaj Auto	3882.85	-49.10
Bajaj Finserv	12721.10	-24.60
Bajaj Finance	6015.40	-13.05
Bharti Airtel	538.45	-2.70
BPL	453.90	5.90
Britannia Ind	3450.15	9.15
Cipla	974.00	-3.15
Coal India	144.45	-1.10
Divis Lab	4807.45	-49.85
Dr Reddys Lab	5419.35	12.80
Eicher Motors	2579.75	-37.50
Grasim Ind	1558.80	-13.50
HCL Tech	1000.20	-4.80
HDFC	2481.65	-55.25
HDFC Bank	1471.00	-51.35
HDFC Life	678.70	-19.30
Hero MotoCorp	2887.10	-17.60
Hindalco	396.95	-8.55
Hind Unilever	2408.65	-8.75
ICICI Bank	655.90	-4.40
Indusind Bank	1015.85	-28.45
Infosys	1541.70	-13.75
IndianOil Corp	105.95	-0.15
ITC	207.75	-0.15
JSW Steel	698.40	-5.20
Kotak Bank	1722.80	-26.70
L&T	1609.60	-9.15
M&M	775.80	-4.00
Maruti Suzuki	7165.55	-138.00
Nestle India Ltd.	17752.45	98.25
NTPC	121.40	2.30
ONGC	114.60	-2.20
PowerGrid Corp	233.15	-0.70
Reliance Ind	2098.95	-13.45
SBI Life	1037.85	-12.40
State Bank	427.90	-2.10
Shree Cement	27996.85	-99.30
Sun Pharma	689.25	0.65
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	765.55	2.55
Tata Motors	308.85	-2.40
Tata Steel	1266.40	-12.05
TCS	3184.60	-10.20
Tech Mahindra	1094.20	-8.95
Titan	1680.35	-15.00
UltraTech Cement	7312.35	-22.20
UPL	833.25	-4.30
Wipro	573.80	-3.95

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.67	74.99
Euro	87.92	88.30
British Pound	102.39	102.83
Japanese Yen (100)	68.02	68.31
Chinese Yuan	11.51	11.56
Swiss Franc	81.04	81.40
Singapore Dollar	54.83	55.07
Canadian Dollar	58.35	58.61
Malaysian Ringgit	17.67	17.76

## IN BRIEF



## Hyundai gets 11,000 bookings for Alcazar

CHENNAI Hyundai Motor India Ltd. has received more than 11,000 bookings within a month of unveiling the Alcazar SUV. One-third of bookings are for the top-of-the-range signature variant, and diesel powertrains contributed to 63% of bookings, HMI said. "So far we have sold more than 5,600 units of Hyundai Alcazar," said Tarun Garg, Director (Sales, Marketing & Service).

## FY21 tea exports fall to 203.8 million kg

KOLKATA Tea exports dipped to 203.8 million kg during the 2020-21 fiscal compared with 241.31 million kg in the corresponding period a year earlier, official data showed. The value of exports fell marginally to ₹5,311.53 crore in 2020-21 as against ₹5,457.10 crore in the year-earlier period, according to data available with the Tea Board. PTI

## Nuvoco Vistas gets SEBI nod for ₹5,000-cr. IPO

NEW DELHI Cement maker Nuvoco Vistas Corporation Ltd., part of the Nirma Group, has received capital markets regulator SEBI's go-ahead to raise ₹5,000 crore through an Initial Public Offer (IPO). The share sale comprises fresh issue of shares worth ₹1,500 crore and an offer-for-sale of ₹3,500 crore by promoter Niyogi Enterprise, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP). PTI

## Mahindra recalls 600 vehicles to fix engines

NEW DELHI Mahindra & Mahindra on Monday said it was recalling about 600 vehicles to inspect and replace faulty diesel engines. M&M said it was undertaking proactive inspection and replacement of diesel engines in some of its vehicles manufactured at Nashik factory, on suspicion of premature wear of engine parts due to contaminated fuel received at the factory on a particular date. PTI

## 'India on course for 11% growth this fiscal, to meet deficit goal'

CEA says capex will boost construction, but warns of 'irrational exuberance'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Playing down concerns about high inflation and rising commodity prices, Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) Krishnamurthy Subramanian said on Monday that India was on course to grow at about 11% and meet the fiscal deficit target of 6.8% of gross domestic product this year.

Asserting that the Union Budget's plan to scale up capital spending by 35% in FY22 would boost construction activity and create jobs in the informal sector, Mr. Subramanian said this would boost demand and enable the country to get growth without high inflation. "I don't foresee a problem



**Urging restraint:** We must not repeat the mistakes of bank-led infra funding which led to the NPA problem, says the CEA. ■ AP

at all in meeting those estimates for infrastructure spending," the CEA said in an interaction with the Indian Construction Equipment Manufacturers Association, before warning

them against a potential risk of 'irrational exuberance' over the coming few years.

"We should not repeat the mistakes of bank-led infra funding which led to this entire bad assets' problem. The

main lesson for all of you should be not to repeat the mistakes we had after the global financial crisis," he said, asserting that a limited focus on revenue expenditure after the 2008 crisis had led to runaway inflation.

Inflation, he contended, was a 'touch higher' due to temporary supply-side effects from recent economic restrictions. "I don't anticipate inflation to be a problem when you create growth by working on the supply side," he said, arguing that India's failure to undertake supply-side reforms after the 2008 crisis led to a triple whammy of high fiscal and current account deficits with runaway inflation.

## NCLAT stays Twin Star's Videocon takeover bid

Appellate body lists hearing on Sept. 7

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal on Monday stayed industrialist Anil Agarwal's Twin Star Technologies' ₹2,962.02 crore-takeover bid of debt-ridden Videocon Industries.

A two-member NCLAT bench headed by Officiating Chairperson Justice A I S Cheema stayed the order passed by the National Company Law Tribunal's Mumbai bench on June 9.

The appellate tribunal's direction came over two petitions filed by unsatisfied creditors - Bank of Maharashtra and IFCL Ltd.

The NCLAT has issued notices to the Committee of Creditors, the Resolution

## After considering Bank of Maharashtra's contentions, NCLAT stayed the orders of the NCLT

Professional of Videocon and the successful resolution applicant Twin Star. It has asked them to reply within two weeks and posted hearing on September 7.

"NCLAT after considering the contentions of Bank of Maharashtra stayed the orders of the NCLT," advocate Chaitanya B Nikte, who had filed on behalf of Bank of Maharashtra, told PTI.

Videocon Industries and its 12 group companies had a total admitted claims of ₹64,838.63 crore.

## Revival signs seen since 2nd wave peak: FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Asserting that the Indian economy is showing signs of revival since the peaking of second COVID-19 wave in May, the government on Monday said the country's strong fundamentals and market size would continue to attract market-seeking greenfield investments.

Quoting the World Investment Report 2021, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in a written reply to Lok Sabha said FDI inflows into India rose by 25.4% to reach \$64 billion in 2020, from \$51 billion in 2019, becoming fifth largest recipient in the world in 2020, up from eighth position it held in the previous year.

## SEBI, DRI probing Adani group companies: Chaudhary

Entities under lens not named; shares of group firms slide

REUTERS  
CHENNAI

India's securities regulator and customs authorities are investigating some Adani Group companies for non-compliance of rules, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary told Parliament on Monday.

It was not immediately clear when the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), or the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) initiated the investigation.

Mr. Chaudhary, did not say which companies were involved. Shares of Adani group companies, which operate airports and ports, power generation and trans-

## Govt. mops up ₹2.41 lakh cr. in direct taxes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The government has collected more than ₹1.01 lakh crore in excise duty in the April-June period, while direct tax collection stood at more than ₹2.41 lakh crore, the Finance Ministry said on Monday.

Giving details of the tax collected, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary told the Lok Sabha that ₹41,831 crore was collected from Customs duty and ₹1,01,564 crore from excise duty.

In 2020-21, the mop-up from Customs duty and excise was ₹1.34 lakh crore and more than ₹3.89 lakh crore. The government last year raised the excise duty on petrol and diesel which led to an increase in excise collections.

## SC reserves order on telcos' pleas in AGR case

Firms flag 'errors' in dues calculation

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday reserved orders on pleas made by telecom majors such as Vodafone-Idea and Bharti Airtel for a chance to place their grievances about "arithmetical errors" in the calculation of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) dues before the Department of Telecom (DoT).

A Special Bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao, S. Abdul Nazeer and M.R. Shah, meanwhile, gave a fortnight to Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for the government to check the compliance reports filed by the companies on the payment of their first 10% instalment towards their AGR dues. In September 2020, the top court had ordered that the annual 10%

instalments would commence from April 1, 2021 up to March 31, 2031.

Airtel, Vodafone-Idea and Tata were among some of the companies that assured the court on Monday that they have paid "more than" their expected instalment.

At the beginning of the hearing, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, for Vodafone-Idea, complained about the "arithmetical errors" in the calculation of AGR dues. "If I have paid ₹1, only 50 paise is reflected... In one entry, the actual payment made is ₹155 crore, payment shown in DOT is ₹153 crore," Mr. Rohatgi submitted. However, the Bench reminded the firms about the express bar imposed by the Supreme Court on the reassessment of AGR dues.

## GST: ₹81,179 cr. due to States for 2020-21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

More than ₹81,000 crore GST compensation is due to States for 2020-21, while for April-May this year, ₹55,345 crore is outstanding, Parliament was informed on Monday.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, MoS for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said GST compensation of ₹91,000 crore had been released to all States/UTs to partly meet the compensation payable for last fiscal year as the amount in GST compensation fund was not adequate to meet the full requirement.

"The economic impact of the pandemic has led to higher compensation requirement," he added.

## Retail sales down by 50% in June: RAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Retail sales in India declined by 50% in June due to the continued restrictions in the wake of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, compared with the same month in 2019 before the health crisis hit, according to RAI.

In its latest business survey, the Retailers Association of India (RAI) said the highest decline was witnessed in the sports goods category at 66%, while foods and grocery had the least with a dip of just 7% as compared to June 2019.

"Retail businesses continue to be stressed and are finding it difficult to sustain due to restricted timing of operations and weekend closures," Kumar Rajagopal, the chief executive officer of the industry body said in a statement.

## HCL Tech net rises 9.9%, sees double-digit growth

Vijayakumar is MD as Nadar, 76, retires

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

HCL Technologies on Monday reported a 9.9% rise in consolidated net profit to ₹3,214 crore for the quarter ended June. It said it expected revenue to grow in double digits in constant currency in FY22, driven by a strong deal pipeline.

The firm added that founder Shiv Nadar would take on the role of Chairman Emeritus and Strategic Adviser after stepping down as MD and director on completing 76 years of age. President and CEO C. Vijayakumar has been named CEO and MD for five years effective July 20.

Revenue grew 12.5% to ₹20,068 crore. "We posted 11.7% year-on-year (y-o-y) revenue growth in constant currency and 29% y-o-y growth in Mode 2 services in



C. Vijayakumar

constant currency headlined by cloud and digital transformation deals," Mr. Vijayakumar noted. "Both booking and pipeline remain very healthy," he said.

Contract value of new deal wins rose 37% from a year earlier to \$1,664 million. Chief human resources officer Apparao V.V. said that last year the company had onboarded 14,600 freshers. "This year, we are targeting between 20,000-22,000 freshers," he added.

## Brent falls \$2.5 on OPEC+ pact to raise output

REUTERS  
LONDON

Oil prices fell sharply on Monday after OPEC+ overcame internal divisions and agreed to boost output, sparking concerns about a crude surplus as COVID-19 infections rise in many countries. Brent crude was down \$2.54, or 3.4%, at \$71.05 a barrel by 1235 GMT. U.S. oil was down \$2.64, or 3.6%, at \$69.17. Both benchmarks recorded their largest declines since early April.

OPEC+ ministers agreed on Sunday to raise oil supply from August to cool prices that this month hit their highest level in more than two years as the global economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

OPEC+ producers have gradually eased output curbs, which now stand at about 5.8 million bpd.

## 'Air traffic may hit 83% of pre-COVID level in Q3'

'FY22 to see 9.2 crore domestic fliers'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

India's aviation industry, battered by the pandemic, is expected to see 83% of average pre-COVID capacity by the third quarter of this fiscal, assuming no further impact or third wave, Morgan Stanley said in a report.

According to the report, India could witness 90% of average pre-COVID capacity in the fourth quarter.

Estimating 9.2 crore domestic passengers in India for FY22, Morgan Stanley said this number was likely to grow to 14.4 crore in FY23, surpassing FY20's pre-COVID average of 14.1 crore.

In line with the growth projections, the aviation industry is fundraising to strengthen balance sheets.



IndiGo's parent, which posted an annual loss of ₹5,806.4 crore for FY21, is to raise funds through a QIP of ₹3,000 crore and debt as well as sale and leaseback of aircraft deals amounting to ₹4,500 crore.

Go Airlines (India) has filed papers for an IPO to raise about ₹3,600 crore. SpiceJet is also reportedly raising ₹2,500 crore.

## Indian Bank Q1 net profit jumps to ₹1,182 crore

Lender reaping synergy benefits: MD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Public sector lender Indian Bank reported standalone net profit for the first quarter of FY22 more than tripled to ₹1,182 crore, from ₹369 crore a year earlier.

"After successfully completing the amalgamation with Allahabad Bank during the previous year, the bank is now reaping the synergy benefits," said Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO, Indian Bank.

During the quarter, total income remained largely flat at ₹11,500 crore, net interest income rose 3% to ₹3,995 crore, and non-interest income grew 41% to ₹1,877 crore. Net interest margin improved to 2.85% from 2.83% and the current



Padmaja Chunduru

year's target is pegged at 3%. Provisions and contingencies declined to ₹2,290 crore from ₹2,384 crore and operating expenses contracted by 2% to ₹2,399 crore. Gross non-performing assets contracted to 9.69% from 10.9%, and net NPAs to 3.47% from 3.76%.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN)**  
DEPARTMENT OF EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN)  
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AN ISO 9001:2015 INSTITUTION

Manovikas Nagar, Secunderabad-500 009, Telangana Tel: 27751741-745, Fax: 040-27750198. www.niepid.nic.in

**ADMISSION NOTIFICATION 2021-22**

The National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (Divyangjan) is a registered society established in the year 1984 as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India. The Institute is an apex body having tripartite functions of training, research and services in the field of intellectual disability in the country. Since past 37 years, the institute has been making striking advances in building capacities to empower persons with intellectual disabilities.

**Director I/C, NIEPID invites applications for admission into the following courses for the Academic Year 2021-22:**

COURSES at NIEPID, Headquarters, Secunderabad	Criteria for admission	DD in favour of towards cost of Applications	Last date of receipt of applications without late fee	Last date of receipt of applications with late fee of Rs.200/-
1) M.Phil Rehabilitation Psychology (2 years)	Entrance Date: Will be announced later	DIRECTOR, NIEPID	30.08.2021	13.09.2021
2) M.Ed Special Education (ID) (2 years)				
3) B.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 years)				
4) PG Diploma in Early Intervention (PGDEI) (1 year)				
<b>NIEPID Regional Centre, Kolkata, Ph.No.033-25311357/25314222</b>		NIEPID REGIONAL CENTRE payable at Kolkata	30.08.2021	13.09.2021
B.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 years ) M.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 Years) (Subject to affiliation from State University of West Bengal)	Entrance Date: Will be announced later			
<b>NIEPID Regional Centre, Navi Mumbai. Ph.No.022-27746889/27743983</b>		Officer Incharge NIEPID RC, Navi Mumbai	30.08.2021	13.09.2021
B.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 years ) M.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 Years) (Subject to affiliation from University of Mumbai)	Entrance Date: 17.09.2021 (Tentative)			
<b>NIEPID Regional Centre, NOIDA, Ph.No.0120-2500230 /240/260</b>		Visit website: www.ipu.ac.in for details.		
B.Ed. Special Education (ID) (2 years )				

- Reservation for SC/ST/OBC/EBC as per rules.
- Hostel facility available at Secunderabad, Kolkata and in Navi Mumbai.
- Students of North east states and foreign students will be considered against supernumerary seats for applicable courses.
- Applications for Government of India Scholarships/State Government Scholarships will be forwarded to respective Governments for consideration.
- Candidates appearing for the final examination are also eligible to apply for admission into the courses.
- Admission into the courses will be based on Ranks secured in the Entrance examination conducted by Concerned University and for the candidates applied in response to the notification issued by this Institute. Detailed Notification and Prospectus-cum-Application Forms with Cost of applications, intake capacity, Admn. fee can be downloaded from NIEPID website: www.niepid.nic.in. In case of any queries please write to email: nimbhacademics@gmail.com or contact on Ph.No.040-27751741-745, Ext.No.246. **DIRECTOR I/C**

NIEPID Toll Free Service No. 1800 572 6422 | Kiran Mental Health Helpline Number 1800 599 0019

**DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVERNMENT OF NCT OF DELHI**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW)-III**  
**STP YAMUNA VIHAR, WAZIRABAD ROAD DELHI-110053**  
Tele-22814128, Email: eesdw3.djb@nic.in

**"STOP CORONA: WEAR MASK, FOLLOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING, MAINTAINING HAND HYGIENE"**

**Addendum**

In reference to Press NIT No.02(2021-22) dated: 15.06.2021 [Tender ID: 2021\_DJB\_204393\_1] all prospective bidders are hereby inform to download the reply of bidders query received in Pre-bid meeting dated: 28.06.2021 from the portal of <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>.

**NOTE: Last date of Bid submission is remain same i.e. 26.07.2021 upto 03:00 PM.**

Issued by P.R.O. (Water) (Bhushan Verma)  
Advt. No. J.S.V. 196(2021-22) **Exe. Engineer (SDW)-III**



# Unprecedented medal haul on the cards

The nine pugilists in the fray have the experience and class to land the winning punches

## TOKYO OLYMPICS

Y.B. SARANGI

India has fielded its biggest boxing squad, consisting of nine pugilists of class and calibre, for the Olympics and expects an unprecedented medal haul.

Worlds silver medallist and No.1 ranked Amit Panghal (52kg), Worlds bronze medallists Manish Kaushik (63kg) and Vikas Krishan (69kg), the talented Ashish Kumar (75kg) and the experienced Satish Kumar (+91kg) form the men's squad.

Six-time World champion and London Olympic bronze medallist M.C. Mary Kom (51kg), Worlds bronze medallists Simranjit Kaur (60kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg), and two-time Asian champion Pooja Rani Bohra (75kg) are the women boxers in the fray.

### In top form

Amit is in top form and has landed medals in recent international events. If he gets a chance, avenging his loss



**Power-packed:** The Indian contingent that will don the gloves to do battle in Tokyo.

\*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

against World and Olympic champion Shakhobdin Zoirov will be on top of his agenda.

Amit may also face leading competitors, such as double Worlds medallist Mohamed Flissi, former World champion Yosbany Veitia, Olympic light flyweight silver medallist Yuberjen Martinez and Olympic silver medallist Yoel Finol.

Manish, who has recovered from surgery and COVID-19, and can pose problems for his opponents.

Vikas is hungry for success in his third appearance. His weight has boxers like former World and Olympic champion Roniel Iglesias,

## BOXING

Worlds silver medallist and Commonwealth Games champion Pat McCormack, Olympic silver medallist Lorenzo Sotomayor and World champion in welterweight and Olympic medallist Andrey Zamkovoy.

Ashish and Satish can beat

any opponent on their day.

Among the women, 38-year-old Mary will attract maximum attention.

Olympics bronze medallist Ingrid Valencia, Worlds bronze medallist Virginia Fuchs, World champion Huang Hsiao-wen, Worlds silver medallist Buse Naz Cakiroglu and double Worlds silver medallist Stoyka Krasteva and others will look to hinder Mary's gold quest.

The fourth-ranked Simranjit is rated highly and will be no less than her competi-

tors, including World champion Beatriz Ferreira, two-time Worlds medallist Sudaporn Seesondee, former World champion Kellie Harrington and World and Olympic bronze medallist Mira Potkonen.

Lovlina, ranked fifth, has overcome hiccups to be fighting fit. She may have to take on elite rivals such as former World champion Chen Nien-chin, current World champion Busenaz Surmeneli, Worlds silver medallist Angela Carini and twice Worlds bronze medallist Nadine Apetz.

### Giant-killer

The fifth-placed Pooja will look to enhance her reputation as a giant-killer. She will have company in Worlds bronze medallists Khadija El Mardi and Tammara Thi-beault, ex-World champion and Olympic medallist Li Qian, World champion Lauren Price and World and Olympic silver medallist Nouchka Fontijn.

Tracking Indian boxers' progress will be exciting.

# Vijender, Mary Kom bring cheer

## REWIND

Y.B. SARANGI

Indian boxing began its Olympics journey after Independence with representation in the 1948 and 1952 Games. However, there was no participation for the next 20 years owing to different issues.

The country's boxers competed in the mega event from 1972 onwards, but without any significant results for several decades.

### Heartbreak

Gurcharan Singh's controversial quarterfinal loss in the 2000 Sydney Games was the first instance of an Indian boxer getting close to an Olympic medal.

In the 81kg last-eight bout, in which Gurcharan and his rival Andriy Fedtchouk were tied on 12 points, the Ukrainian was declared the winner based on a tie-break score of 60-42.

Eight years down the line, Vijender Singh (75kg) claimed a bronze in Beijing to become the first Indian to land an Olympic medal.

The creditable perfor-



Vijender Singh and M.C. Mary Kom. ■ FILE PHOTOS

### Roll of honour

■ **Bronze:** Vijender Singh (Beijing, 2008); Mary Kom (London, 2012)

mance of Akhil Kumar (54kg) and Jitender Kumar (51kg), who reached the quarterfinals, also won hearts and made the sport popular.

Four years later, eight boxers qualified for the London Olympics.

Even as the men returned empty-handed, M.C. Mary Kom (51kg) – then a five-time World champion – secured a bronze medal on women's boxing's Olympics debut.

After drawing a blank in Rio, the Indian boxers are keen to get back on the medals tally in Tokyo.

# Mirabai capable of a podium finish

She has improved dramatically in the last seven years

## WEIGHTLIFTING

Y.B. SARANGI

Saikhom Mirabai Chanu, India's lone representative in weightlifting, has had a roller-coaster ride the last five years.

The diminutive 26-year-old, who came into prominence by securing the silver medal in 48kg with a total of 170kg at the 2014 Commonwealth Games, experienced ignominy in Rio as she recorded three 'no lifts' in clean and jerk following an 82kg effort in snatch.

However, Mirabai bounced back to win the World title with an aggregate of 194kg in 2017 and improved her total (196kg) to take the 2018 Commonwealth Games gold in Gold Coast.

### Fighting back

Lower back pain snatched away nearly a year from Mirabai, but the gritty lifter fought back to register 201kg in the revamped 49kg in the



**Exciting prospect:** Mirabai, snapped at a training session in Tokyo, has the acumen to come good. ■ TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

World championships in 2019. She bettered it (203kg) at the Nationals at Kolkata in 2020.

Mirabai raised the bar further by aggregating 205kg, including a clean and jerk world record of 119kg, in the Asian championships in Tashkent this year.

Notwithstanding the absence of North Korean Ri Song Gum, the second-ranked Mirabai is expected to be challenged by some riv-

als, including Hou Zhihui (China), Jourdan Elizabeth Dela Cruz (USA), and Beatriz Candelario (Dominican Republic).

Mirabai, who has increased her performance by 35kg in the last seven years, is considered a strong medal prospect.

She has been working on her snatch performance in order to give India its second weightlifting medal after 21 years.

# Grapplers hold much promise

Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat headline a strong squad

## WRESTLING

Y.B. SARANGI

Studded with world-beaters, the Indian wrestling contingent will be a force to reckon with in Tokyo.

Three-time World Championships medallist Bajrang Punia (65kg) and Worlds medallists Ravi Kumar Dahiya (57kg), Deepak Punia (86kg) and Vinesh Phogat (women's 53kg) instil confidence in the Indian camp.

The competent trio of Seema Bisla (50kg), Anshu Malik (57kg) and Sonam Malik (62kg) complete a squad that has the potential to produce the best-ever performance in the Olympics.

Twenty-seven-year-old Bajrang, ranked No. 2 in the toughest weight class which has 12-13 medal contenders, will try to achieve his long-cherished dream in his Olympic debut.

### Tough challenge

Bajrang may face tough challenge from the likes of World champion Gadzhimurad Rashidov, two-time Worlds medallist Daulet Niyazbekov, former World

champion Takuto Otoguro, double Worlds bronze medallist Alejandro Valdes and Individual World Cup winner Vazgen Tevanyan.

The fourth-placed Ravi and Deepak, ranked second, are young but have shown their class.

Two-time World champion Zaur Uguev, double Worlds medallists Suleyman Atli and Nurislam Sanayev, former Worlds silver medallist Arsen Harutyunyan and ex-World and Asian champion Yuki Takahashi will be some top names in Ravi's category.

Deepak's weight division has leading wrestlers including World and Olympic champion Hassan Yazdani, Worlds bronze medallist Artur Naifonov, former World champion David Taylor, four-time Worlds medallist Ali Shabanov and ex-Worlds silver medallist Sosuke Takatani.

### Proving her worth

Among the women, Vinesh, 26, is ranked number one and has proved her worth time and again.

Vinesh, who exited the Rio Olympics after injuring

her leg midway through a contest, fought back to win gold medals in the 2018 Commonwealth Games and Asian Games and a bronze in 2019 World championships.

The determined Vinesh, who was infected with Covid last year, has collected four gold medals this year to exhibit her current form.

In a world class field – including two-time World champion Mayu Mukaida, twice Worlds medallist Pang Qianyu, Individual World Cup gold medallist Maria Prevolaraki, World champion in 55kg Jacarra Winchester and World and Olympic medallist Sofia Mattsson – Vinesh will have to give her best to live her dream.

The young Anshu and Sonam, who graduated to the elite level in a fast-forward manner, have underlined their potential by grabbing quota places in the Olympics. Late bloomer Seema has also hurdled over several obstacles to qualify.

With no fear and nothing to lose, these lesser-known wrestlers will leave no stone unturned to achieve glory.

# Malleswari makes history at Sydney

## REWIND

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Indian lifters' participation in the Olympics was occasional until 1992 and their performances, mostly ranks obtained in double digits, were forgettable in the previous century.

Sanamacha Chanu (53kg) and Karnam Malleswari (69kg) finished inside the top-10 when women's weightlifting debuted in the 2000 Sydney Games.

Malleswari, hailing from Andhra Pradesh, made his-



Karnam Malleswari. ■ FILE PHOTO

tory as she claimed a bronze with a total of 240kg (snatch 110kg, clean and jerk 130kg), while Sanamacha finished

### Roll of honour

■ **Bronze:** Karnam Malleswari (Sydney, 2000)

sixth with an aggregate of 195kg.

Malleswari not only became the first Indian woman to land a medal in the Games but remains the lone lifter from the country to have bagged an Olympic medal.

Kunjarani Devi did 190kg to place fourth in the 48kg weight class in Athens in 2004.



**Well-equipped:** Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat are capable of handling world-class opponents in their quest for Olympic success. ■ FILE PHOTOS



## REWIND

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Since its debut in the 1920 Antwerp Olympics, India has taken a long time to make its mark in the sport.

Independent India's first individual Olympic medal came from wrestling when K.D. Jadhav secured a fly-weight bronze at Helsinki in 1952.

Despite a rich wrestling tradition, India could not make an impression for several decades as some of its grapplers narrowly missed out on medals.

### Missing out

Randhir Shindes (featherweight, 1920), Sudesh Kumar (flyweight, 1972), Prem Nath (bantamweight, 1972), Jagmender Singh (lightweight, 1980) and Rajinder Singh (welterweight, 1984) finished fourth when just the top three medals were awarded.

Indian freestyle wrestlers began to shine in the qua-

drennial event after rules changed to give two bronze medals, via repechage rounds, in each weight division from the 2008 Games.

### Going one better

56 years after Jadhav's feat, Sushil Kumar surprised all claiming a bronze medal in 66kg at Beijing.

By bagging a silver in 2012, Sushil became the first Indian to take two individual Olympic medals. Yogeshwar Dutt's bronze in 60kg in London raised the profile of the sport. Four years later in the Rio Games, Sakshi Malik picked up a bronze in the 58kg weight class.

### Roll of honour

■ **Silver:** Sushil Kumar (London, 2012)

■ **Bronze:** K.D. Jadhav (Helsinki, 1952), Sushil Kumar (Beijing, 2008), Yogeshwar Dutt (London, 2012), Sakshi Malik (Rio, 2016)

# Adhiban beats Vidit

RAKESH RAO  
NEW DELHI

B. Adhiban hit back against Vidit Gujrathi to force the tie-break games while R. Praggnanandhaa lost the second game against Michael Kraneckow in the third round of chess World Cup on Monday. P. Harikrishna, Nihal Sarin and D. Harika drew their must-win games and were eliminated.

**The results (involving Indians):** Third round (Game Two): B. Adhiban bt Vidit Gujrathi; Dmitry Andrekin (Rus) drew with Nihal Sarin; (Andrekin wins 1.5-0.5); Constantin Lupulescu (Rom) drew with P. Harikrishna; (Lupulescu wins 1.5-0.5); Michael Kraneckow (Pol) bt R. Praggnanandhaa. **Women:** D. Harika drew with Valentina Gunina (Rus); (Valentina wins 1.5-0.5).

# India's young guns target series win

It will take a special effort from struggling Sri Lanka to pull one back

## INDIA IN SRI LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
COLOMBO

India's young guns will get another opportunity to flaunt their exceptional talent and secure a series win against Sri Lanka in the second ODI here on Tuesday.

Skipper Shikhar Dhawan was left in awe as Prithvi Shaw, Ishan Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav made batting look ridiculously easy in the first ODI.

India wants to play more aggressively in the shorter formats, and the trio's performance served as a perfect template. It also reinforced the might of India's bench strength.

India is unlikely to make



**Stunning:** Ishan Kishan and Prithvi Shaw made batting look ridiculously easy in the first ODI. ■ AFP

changes as it would like to first pocket the series.

It will take a special effort from the struggling Sri Lankan side to pull one back.

The inexperienced team showed it has the talent to compete. Most of the bat-

smen got starts but could not convert. Both teams might be interested in chasing, with the slow pitch playing better in the evening.

### The squads:

**India:** Shikhar Dhawan (captain), Prithvi Shaw, Devdutt Pa-

dikkal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Suryakumar Yadav, Manish Pandey, Nitish Rana, Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson, Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Krishnappa Gowtham, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy, Rahul Chahar, Deepak Chahar, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Chetan Sakariya, and Navdeep Saini.

**Sri Lanka:** Dasun Shanaka (captain), Dhananjaya de Silva, Avishka Fernando, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Pathum Nissanka, Charith Asalanka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Ashen Bandara, Minod Bhanuka, Lahiru Udara, Ramesh Mendis, Chamika Karunaratne, Dushmantha Chameera, Lakshan Sandakan, Akila Dhananjaya, Shiran Fernando, Dhananjaya Lakshan, Ishan Jayaratne, Praveen Jayawickrema, Asitha Fernando, Kasun Rajitha, Lahiru Kumara, and Isuru Udana.

Match starts at 3 p.m. IST.

# Mayank on trial in warm-up

Rahul to don 'keeping gloves in Pant's absence

## INDIA IN ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DURHAM

Mayank Agarwal's fight to reclaim his place in the Indian Test XI starts on Tuesday when he walks out to open in a three-day game against County Select XI. The match has been accorded First Class status.

Donning the big gloves in Rishabh Pant's absence will be K.L. Rahul. The latter has been doing 'keeping drills ahead of the game.

### Recovering well

According to BCCI sources, Pant, who had tested positive for COVID-19, has completed his stipulated 10-day isolation and is "recovering



Mayank. ■ FILE PHOTO

well" but he is yet to join the team bubble here.

"In any case both Pant and Wriddhiman, who is isolated as a precautionary measure, will be available for the first Test," said a senior BCCI official.

Mayank will be closely monitored as he is likely to partner Rohit Sharma in the first Test after Shubman Gill was ruled out of the series with shin splints. While Rahul has scored the bulk of his 2,000 runs opening the innings, it is understood that he is being considered as a middle-order batsman and may be used later in the series in case one of the senior batsmen (read Ajinkya Rahane) doesn't find form.

In the bowling department, Mohammed Siraj will like to give a good account of himself and Jasprit Bumrah wouldn't mind getting a few wickets under his belt just like R. Ashwin did last week for Surrey.



## Indian men's doubles hopes end in tennis

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India's hopes of fielding a men's doubles team at the Tokyo Olympics ended on Monday.

After Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan had failed to make the cut, the All India Tennis Association (AITA) had explored the possibility of pairing Bopanna with Sumit Nagal, after the latter earned a singles spot on Friday.

The rationale behind the move was the ITF's 'Singles Priority' rule in place for Tokyo, which allows players in the singles draw to play doubles if any spot was available after 24 Direct Acceptance places (based on combined doubles ranking) and a quota of 86 athletes per gender was reached.

### ITF clarifies

The ITF, however, clarified to Bopanna that the rules did not allow for any change of nomination after the June 22 deadline.

### TV PICKS

**Sri Lanka vs India:** 2nd ODI: Sony Ten 1, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 3 p.m.

**TNPL 2021:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

**England vs Pakistan:** 3rd T20I, Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 11 p.m.

**NBA:** 55 Select 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m. (Wednesday).

### IN BRIEF



### Lahiri finishes T-3 at Barbasol championship

NICHOLASVILLE (US)

Anirban Lahiri fired a seven-under 65 to finish tied third at the Barbasol golf championship for his best result of the season. Lahiri ended on 20-under 268, one stroke behind the play-off duo of Seamus Power and J.T. Poston. Power went on to take his first PGA Tour title.

### John Woodcock passes away

LONDON

John Woodcock, one of the most respected cricket writers, who covered the game for *The Times* for more than three decades, passed away aged 94. He also edited *Wisden's Cricket Almanack* between 1981 and 1986. The veteran scribe is also remembered for driving to India, along with Henry Blofeld, in a Rolls Royce to cover England's tour in 1976-77.



### Kevin Anderson wins seventh ATP title

NEW YORK

World No. 113 Kevin Anderson defeated 20-year-old American Jensen Brooksby 7-6(8), 6-4 to win the Hall of Fame Open on Sunday. This was the seventh career ATP title for the 35-year-old South African, who last won a title in 2019 at Pune.



### Krejčíková inches towards the top 10

PARIS

French Open champion Barbara Krejčíková, who continued her fine form with victory at the WTA event in Prague over the weekend, edged ever closer to the top 10 in the rankings released on Monday. The 25-year-old eased past fellow Czech Tereza Martincová in the Prague Open final on Sunday to collect a third title in four tournaments and climb two places to 11th in the world, just two points behind Romania's Simone Halep.

## India in Tokyo



**Ultimate challenge:** Gymnast Pranati Nayak, rowers Arjun Lal and Arvind Singh, archer Deepika Kumari and swimmers Sajani Prakash, Maana Patel and Srijani Nataraj will be eager to make their presence felt at the Olympics.

## Under-fire Olympic composer steps down

Bullied classmate during childhood

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TOKYO

Keigo Oyamada, a Japanese composer working on the Tokyo Olympics opening ceremony, resigned on Monday after coming under fire for bullying a classmate during his childhood.

"I sincerely accept the opinions and advice I have received, express my gratitude, and will keep them in mind for my future actions and thoughts," he said on his social media accounts.

"I apologise from the bottom of my heart."

Reports of his past verbal abuse of a child with disabilities surfaced online recently, sparking a backlash on social media and demands for his resignation.

The Tokyo Games organisers said on Sunday that he would stay on because he had shown remorse about his past actions.

Oyamada, also known as Cornelius, apologised online last week. Some critics had said he should hold a news conference and apologise in person. Others also questioned why he hadn't apologized earlier.

Oyamada, whose works have been compared to the American rock musician Beck, talked about the abuse in Japanese magazine interviews he gave in the 1990s.

It was not immediately clear if the music for Friday's opening ceremony would be modified. Oyamada's is the latest resignation to plague the Games.

## Tadej Pogacar — cycling's boy next door

He has a precious racing instinct that makes him dangerous

### TOUR DE FRANCE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PARIS

Tadej Pogacar rode into Paris in triumph on Sunday, celebrating a second successive Tour de France triumph in a victory for a 'nice boy' from Slovenia.

### Winning machine

Off the bike, Pogacar is a smiling, polite and articulate 22-year-old who resembles the cartoon character Tintin, but morphs into an enthralling winning machine once in the saddle. With three stage wins on the 2021 Tour de France, Pogacar was fearless in the defence of his 2020 title, blowing away the old Sky-Ineos outfit that won seven titles in eight years.



**Top athlete:** UAE Team Emirates made Pogacar one of the highest paid cyclists in the world.

It is easy to see why the UAE Team Emirates made Pogacar one of the highest paid cyclists in the world.

Given the stage wins he has racked up on his three grand tours, three each on

## Olympic movement deserves Nobel: Yunus

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TOKYO

The Olympic movement deserves to win the Nobel Peace Prize, former award winner Muhammad Yunus said Monday.

Yunus, a Bangladeshi banker who was awarded his Nobel in 2006 for pioneering micro-credit loans to impoverished people, has worked with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on a business program for athletes.

"I think it has a very good case to establish itself as a candidate," Yunus said in an online conference call ahead of receiving an Olympic award at the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Games on Friday.

Yunus cited North and South Korean athletes marching under one flag at the opening ceremony of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Games as an example of the Olympics using sports to create peace.

"If that is not peace-making I don't know what it is," Yunus said. "Definitely the Olympics has a tremendous reason to believe it can win the peace prize one day."

Asked if sports should be rewarding or engaging with China, Yunus referred to the ancient tradition of the Olympic truce revived by the modern Olympics.

On Friday, Yunus will receive the IOC's Olympic Laurel award.

### TOKYO TITBITS



### Gauff tests positive, pulls out of Games

WASHINGTON

Teen tennis star Coco Gauff of USA will miss the Olympics after testing positive for COVID-19, she announced on Sunday. Gauff tweeted her sadness at missing out on "a dream come true".

### Beach volleyballer and gymnast test positive

PRAGUE

Czech beach volleyball player Ondrej Perusic has tested positive for COVID-19 in the Tokyo Olympic Village, officials said. Also, an American woman gymnast tested positive at a training camp in Inzai. Another team member, who was in close contact, is self-isolating, an official said on Monday.

## Investigation into trouble at Euro final

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

The English Football Association (FA) has commissioned an independent review to investigate the "disgraceful scenes" which marred the national team's shoot-out loss to Italy in the Euro final. The FA announced on Monday that it had informed the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of the review and vowed to identify those responsible for the trouble that occurred before and during the match.

"We are determined to fully understand what happened outside and then inside Wembley Stadium," the FA said in a statement.

## Racist abuse of Hamilton condemned

Red Bull too voices its displeasure at the incidents

### FORMULA ONE

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

Mercedes, Formula One and its governing body the FIA issued a joint statement Monday condemning the online racist abuse aimed at Lewis Hamilton.

Hamilton was targeted following the Mercedes driver's crash with rival Max Verstappen on the opening lap of Sunday's British Grand Prix that sent the championship leader hurtling out of the race.

"Formula One, the FIA and the Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team condemn this behavior in the strongest possible terms," the statement said. "These people have no place in our sport and we urge that those responsible should be held accountable for their actions."

### Diverse and inclusive

"Formula One, the FIA, the drivers and the teams are working to build a more diverse and inclusive sport, and such unacceptable in-



**Tough days:** Hamilton was targeted following his crash with Verstappen on the opening lap of British GP.

stances of online abuse must be highlighted and eliminated."

Verstappen's team Red Bull also issued a statement criticising the attacks on Hamilton.

"While we may be fierce rivals on-track, we are all united against racism," the team said.

"We condemn racist abuse of any kind towards our teams, our competitors and our fans."

"As a team we are disgusted and saddened to witness the racist abuse Lewis endured yesterday on social media after the collision

with Max. There is never any excuse for it. There is certainly no place for it in our sport and those responsible should be held accountable."

### Dossier compiled

It is understood that F1 is compiling a dossier of the offensive posts and will raise them directly with the platforms and call on them to take action.

Facebook, which owns Instagram, said it tried to remove harmful content as quickly as possible and encouraged people to use the tools it offers to block abuse.

## Vedant Mohan — a precocious talent

The talented left-hander is currently training in Spain

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

Vedant Mohan is a talented left-hander, very quick on his feet, training with good coaches in Spain, at the Soto Tennis Academy, Sotogrande.

His parents Dhruv Mohan and Anisha Nair, were so impressed by the boy's drive for tennis excellence that they left their jobs in Oman Airlines and Infosys to groom him in Spain.

"They had options to train Vedant at the John McEnroe academy in the US, apart from academies in Australia and Spain."

"They chose Spain as the boy got a considerable scholarship and Europe was viewed as the best place for tennis," said the grandfather of Vedant, Air Commodore K.N.V. Nair, from Chennai.

Even though the boy was nine years old, and entry was only for kids 12 years and above, McEnroe was willing to make an exception for Vedant after seeing his training/playing videos.

It was, in fact, tennis ace Vijay Amritraj who had advised the parents after see-



**Bright future:** Vedant Mohan's maturity on court and mental strength are way above his age, according to his coach Andrei Razwan.

ing the boy's videos, to give him the best possible training.

From the age of 7, Vedant — who started playing tennis in Muscat, where his father

worked as a commercial pilot — has been winning matches and tournaments in the under-10 and under-12 age groups.

As a 10-year-old he conti-

He is the most talented player I have ever coached. I see a bright future for him

— ANDREI RAZWAN, coach

nues to win events above his age group in Spain.

"The boy has technique equal to a 12-year-old. His maturity on court and mental strength are way above his age."

"He is the most talented player I have ever coached. I see a bright future for him," said coach Andrei Razwan of Romania, who has been coaching Vedant for a year.

Two other coaches of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) also believe that Vedant is 'special'.

"The tennis academy is in a village. So, the parents have no job opportunities there. They are spending from their savings to support the bright kid," said the grandfather.

The family hopes that Vedant would get matching support for his fledgling career, so that he can make a big mark in the game.

## Morikawa — taking the pro circuit by storm

Becomes first player to win two Majors on first attempt

### GOLF

ASSOCIATED PRESS

In a year of firsts in the Majors, Collin Morikawa might have topped them all.

His performance over four days at the British Open was unlike anything seen at Royal St. George's.

### Confidence personified

He played with the confidence of a Major champion, which he is from his PGA Championship title last year. "When you make history — and I'm 24 years old — it's hard to grasp," Morikawa said.

The silver claret jug in his possession as he stood on

the 18th green, Morikawa first paid tribute to Matthias Schmid of Germany, who won the silver medal as low amateur. "It feels like literally two years ago I was an amateur," Morikawa told him. That is entirely literal.

Two years ago, the ink was barely dry on his diploma from the University of California. He has won two of the eight Majors he has played since then. The last player to win two professional Majors in so few attempts was Bobby Jones nearly a century ago.

### Season of firsts

The Major season began with Hideki Matsuyama becoming the first Japanese player to win the Masters. Phil Mick-

elson became the first player at age 50 to win a Major at the PGA Championship. No one had ever birdied the last two holes at the US Open to win by one shot until Jon Rahm at Torrey Pines.

And then along came Morikawa, as pure an iron player as there is in the game today, making his own brand of history. He is the first to win two Majors that he played for the first time.

Just under a year ago in his first time playing the only Major restricted to pros, he won the PGA Championship at Harding Park.

And then he won the British Open on his debut with a four-under 66 to finish at 265, the second-lowest score

in the history of golf's oldest Major.

Morikawa has moved to World No. 3. In his 52 individual events since he turned pro, his five victories include two Majors and a World Golf Championship. He is leading the points list on the PGA Tour and European Tour. He is atop the Ryder Cup standings.

### Elite company

His status is better defined by the company he now keeps.

In the last century of golf, only seven other players have won two Majors before turning 25 — Spieth, Jones, Gene Sarazen, Jack Nicklaus, Seve Ballesteros, Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy.



**Major player:** Collin Morikawa has caught the world's attention with his exploits in quick time.