



India, China likely to reach a deal on Gogra, Hot Springs soon

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PM Narendra Modi calls for a 'unite India movement'

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Bhuvneshwar, Suryakumar help India go 1-0 up in T20I series

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Manika causes an upset; Sindhu and Mary Kom register wins

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NEARBY



There is no substitute for dialogue, says Farooq

SRINAGAR
National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Sunday said there was no substitute for dialogue and called upon India and Pakistan "to be consistent, coherent and serious in their nascent engagement".

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Rajasthan reshuffle put off as stand-off continues

JAIPUR
The expectations of an early Cabinet reshuffle in Rajasthan turned out to be a damp squib with senior Congress leaders on Sunday leaving the decision to the party's central leadership. AICC members returned to Delhi as Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot refused to act under pressure.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8

Agencies put on alert for drone attacks on I-Day

NEW DELHI
After a recent drone attack in Jammu and several other instances of drones entering prohibited zones, the Ministry of Home Affairs has instructed all security agencies to be extra vigilant about such flying objects ahead of Independence Day celebrations.

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EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 3

9 killed as boulders hit vehicle following Himachal landslip

Bridge in Kinnaur district collapses due to impact

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SHIMLA

Nine tourists were killed after heavy boulders fell on their van following a landslip near Basteri in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday.

Multiple landslips triggered by recent rain occurred near Basteri on the Sangla-Chitkul road at 1.25 p.m., resulting in a bridge collapse and damage to some vehicles, the police said. A video of the incident, which has gone viral on social media, shows several boulders rolling downhill and smashing into the bridge, causing it to collapse. According to the police, nine persons died and two were injured after heavy boulders fell on the van. The passengers were going to Sangla from Chitkul.

In a similar incident, a pedestrian was injured in another landslip in Kinnaur district, they added. President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed condolences over the death of people due to the landslips in Kinnaur.

"Deeply saddened by the news of the death of many people in a landslip in Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh. Express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families and wish the injured people a speedy recovery," Mr. Kovind tweeted in Hindi. Mr. Modi said all arrangements were being made for the treatment of those injured and announced an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur also expressed grief over the deaths, and asked the district administration to carry out immediate relief and rescue operations.



Disaster site: The collapsed bridge seen after multiple boulders hit it during a landslip at Basteri in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday. •PTI

Uddhav for posting NDRF teams in high-risk areas

STAFF REPORTER PUNE

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who visited flooded Chiplun in the Konkan on Sunday, said he would request the Centre to permanently station National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams in the State's disaster-prone districts to tackle rain-related calamities.

Amid uncertainty over exact figures, sources esti-

mated that the death toll in the State had risen to nearly 130 with the recovery of nine more bodies in Taliye village in Mahad (taking the toll there to 45) and seven more in Posare village of Ratnagiri district. Around 80-100 persons (including more than 30 in Taliye) are still believed to be missing in the flood-hit districts, including Raigad and Khed.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Excess deaths in West Bengal 11 times official COVID-19 tally

Difference in numbers seen in both first and second wave

SRINIVASAN RAMANI CHENNAI

The number of "excess deaths" registered by the Civil Registration System (CRS) in West Bengal ever since the COVID-19 pandemic hit (from April 2020 to May 2021) was an estimated 1,20,227, which is 11.1 times the official reported figure of 10,787 deaths for the same period.

Five districts — Darjeeling, Jhargram, Kalimpong, North 24 Parganas and Paschim Medinipur — were not considered for this analysis as either the online registration data was incomplete for all years (Darjeeling and Kalimpong) or for some years, 2018, in particular (Jhargram, North 24 Parganas and Paschim Medinipur). The high multiple of excess deaths over the COVID-19 toll was a characteristic of both the first wave in 2020 and the more lethal second wave in 2021.

The "excess deaths" figure for April to December 2020 of 64,520 was 9.4 times the COVID-19 toll (6,833) while the same for 2021 (55,207) was 14.1 times the COVID-19 toll (10,787).

In April and May 2021 alone — a period that coincided with election in the State — there were 51,353 "excess deaths", 14.4 times the official COVID-19 death

Missed count? Excess deaths, calculated as the difference between the registered deaths in the pandemic period (Apr 2020 to May 2021) and the average of those registered in 2018 and 2019 for the same months were 8.2 times the official COVID-19 tally for these eight States listed

State	Excess deaths	COVID-19 deaths	Multiple
West Bengal*	1,20,227	10,787	11.1
Himachal Pradesh	6,081	3,127	1.9
Haryana	60,397	8,303	7.3
Tamil Nadu	1,54,965	24,232	6.4
Karnataka	1,25,732	29,090	4.3
Kerala	4,178	9,954	<1
Andhra Pradesh	1,95,422	10,930	17.9
Madhya Pradesh	1,92,004	8,068	23.8
Total	8,59,006	1,04,491	8.22

* Five districts in West Bengal were not considered for the analysis

toll of 5,212 in these districts. The overall COVID-19 death toll for all 23 districts till May 31, 2021, was 15,536, which increased to 18,073 on July 25.

The figures were arrived at from data on deaths registered month-wise in the online Civil Registration System from January 2018 to May 2021 in West Bengal and accessed by *The Hindu*. Data for Kolkata was added to the tally from the Kolkata Municipal Corporation figures.

As with other States, not all excess deaths could be related to COVID-19 but a bulk of them will be during the

pandemic period. The estimated undercount factor of 11.1 for the State (without five districts in the analysis) is higher than the factor for States such as Haryana (7.3), Tamil Nadu (6.4 adjusted to 4.4 if CRS COVID-19 tally is considered), Karnataka (4.3) and Kerala (0.42 based on reconciled COVID-19 tally) but is lower than that for Madhya Pradesh (23.8) and Andhra Pradesh (17.9) if the same baseline is considered (deaths registered in 2018 and 2019).

HIGHER IN RURAL AREAS ▶ PAGE 8
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Suspense continues over Karnataka leadership row

No message from high command: CM

KARNATAKA BUREAU BENGALURU

Suspense continued in Karnataka over a possible leadership change in the government, on the eve of the B.S. Yediyurappa-led BJP government completing two years in power on Monday, as the party high command did not send the much-anticipated "message" till late on Sunday.

Mr. Yediyurappa, meanwhile, reiterated that he was expecting a message latest by Monday and would "work till the last minute" and step down if asked to.

The presence of some Chief Minister-hopefuls in Delhi, including Murugesh Nirani and Aravind Bellad, added to the air of uncertainty. The Chief Minister's



B.S. Yediyurappa

son, B.Y. Vijayendra, has also been camping in Delhi for the past three days.

Mr. Yediyurappa meanwhile was away from the capital Bengaluru, inspecting the flood-hit district of Belagavi.

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SEERS BACK CM ▶ PAGE 5

CPI(M) MP moves SC for probe into snooping

Govt. response evasive, says Brittas

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha member John Brittas has moved the Supreme Court for a court-monitored investigation into allegations of snooping on activists, politicians, journalists and constitutional functionaries using the Israeli spyware Pegasus.

The parliamentarian said the government's response in the House to the allegations was "evasive".

Mr. Brittas, a Communist Party of India (Marxist) MP, said allegations pointed to a "critical invasion into privacy". It actually amounted to a "cyberattack" on citizens. He termed Pegasus a "weapon" used to "hack" into private smartphones to cause a chilling effect on free

speech and expression. So far, the MP said the only response from the Centre was a statement by IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in the Rajya Sabha that "time-tested processes in our country are well-established to ensure that unauthorised surveillance does not occur".

Mr. Brittas asked the court whether the statement meant if the surveillance was authorised by the government. If so, the MP asked, were the procedures under the Indian Telegraph Act, Information Technology (Amendment) Act, Section 92 of Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Telegraph Rules for "lawful interception" followed.

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It's showtime!



Readying up: A worker sprays disinfectant to sanitise seats at a cinema hall in Delhi on Sunday. Theatres in the Capital have been permitted to reopen at 50% seating capacity from Monday. • R.V. MOORTHY

Metro, buses to allow only sitting travel

DMRC issues clarification, says only 50 passengers will be allowed in each coach

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro and city buses will run at '100% seating capacity' from Monday, after the Delhi government eased some COVID-19 restrictions. However, long queues outside metro stations and bus stops during peak hours are likely to continue as passengers will not be permitted to stand inside buses or metro coaches.

Confusion over new rules

The Delhi Metro on Sunday clarified that only 50 passengers will be allowed to sit in each coach and entry to stations would continue to be regulated. Several sections of the public are under the impression that the metro will be operating at 100% capacity — this is not the case, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation said in a statement.

"The DMRC would like to make it clear that from Mon-



A long queue of commuters outside the Adarsh Nagar metro station in Delhi. • FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

day, a maximum of 50 passengers per coach are permitted, as against 300 prior to COVID-19. As a result, though queues outside stations may slightly reduce, they might still be there during peak hours," it said.

The DMRC appealed to the public to travel by metro

only when absolutely necessary and to observe all COVID-related travel protocols.

A notification issued by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority on Saturday had said that metro trains can operate at "100% seating capacity of the coach", but specified that standing travel

is not permitted. Standing travel comprises around 80% of the total capacity of each coach.

Since the resumption of metro services following relaxation of lockdown norms in the Capital, commuters were permitted to sit on alternate seats and standing travel was not permitted.

At 50% seating capacity, 25 people could travel in each coach. Under the revised rules, around 50 passengers can sit in one coach. **17-20% coach capacity** With standing travel still barred, metro trains will be able to utilise only 17-20% of their coach capacity. According to sources, an eight-coach metro train can accommodate around 2,400 passengers. With the revised guidelines, an eight-coach train will be able to accommodate 400 passengers seated next to each other.

Telangana temple gets World Heritage tag

In a diplomatic triumph, 17 countries back India's proposal despite ICOMOS verdict

SERISH NANISSETTI HYDERABAD

In a major diplomatic triumph, the 13th century Ramappa temple in Palampet, Telangana, was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Sunday. At the ongoing online meeting of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) in Fuzhou, China, the decision was reached after a consensus, with Norway opposing the inscription while Russia led an effort for the immediate inscription of the temple at 4.36 p.m. IST.

A consensus with 17 countries backing the move ensured the inscription.

The nomination for a World Heritage Site for the Ramappa and Kakatiya temples was made in 2014. The site was in the reckoning for inscription in 2020 but the WHC meeting



Valuable site: The Ramappa temple in Palampet is known for its exquisite craftsmanship. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Built by Racherla Senapati Rudrayya, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapatideva, in the 13th century, the main temple is flanked by the collapsed structures of the Kateshwarayya and

Kameshwarayya temples in Palampet, about 220 km from Hyderabad.

The temple, known for its exquisite craftsmanship and delicate relief work, is a savvy blend of technical know-how and materials of its time. The foundation is built with the "sandbox

technique", the flooring is granite and the pillars are basalt. The lower part of the temple is red sandstone while the white gopuram is built with light bricks that reportedly float on water.

Earlier, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) cited nine shortcomings at the site after an initial visit in 2019, but on Sunday a majority veered round to India's view about the site's outstanding universal value.

Norway was the only country which opposed the move citing ICOMOS's conclusion.

India mounted a diplomatic offensive to ensure the World Heritage Site status for the Ramappa temple by reaching out to other countries whose representatives were to vote on the proposal.

Most people in the area are migrants from across India doing menial jobs

ASHOK KUMAR
FARIDABAD

“We are not going to leave this place, not until the government makes an arrangement for us. We have lost all our savings and now have nowhere to go,” says Vijay Prajapati, 35, a daily wage, staying at Khori Basti for over a decade.

The local municipal body, following the directions of the Supreme Court a month ago, has razed a majority of the houses in this 170-acre colony spread across Delhi and Haryana on the forest land. Most of its inhabitants – the migrants from across the country engaged in menial jobs – have covered the remnants of their partially demolished homes with plastic covers to continue to live in them and are reluctant to leave.

Families with elderly members, pregnant women and even newborns are determined to stay put under the open sky with the intermittent rain leaving their clothes and beddings drenched and power and water supply snapped for almost a month now.

“We have a little choice,” says Raman Chaudhary, a native of Bihar, who too lost his home in the demolition drive four days ago, but decided to stay back with his family, including aged parents, wife and two children. He says he had bought the plot for ₹1.5 lakh more than two decades ago, and now staying in tents on the same plot.

Chander Shah, a painter, says that most of the people in this colony have been jobless for over a year due to the pandemic and are on the verge of starvation. “We would prefer to die here than to move out. Had we encroached upon the land, we would not have felt the pain. But we had bought it with our hard-earned money,” he adds.



Families in Khori Basti after the local municipal body razed a majority of their houses in the 170-acre colony. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



KHORI RESIDENTS STAY PUT ON THE DEBRIS, WAIT FOR GOVERNMENT HELP

Habiba Parvin, 27, alleges that the police did not even allow them enough time to remove their belongings and demolished their home and shop. She says that her husband, when protested, was arrested on charges of preventing the government officials from discharging their duty. Her family has been staying in the colony for two decades now and recently bought another 120 sq m plot for ₹5 lakh.



“My husband is in jail. I have all my belongings. I am the most unfortunate,” says Habiba.

Many have rented rooms in the neighbouring colonies to shift



their expensive belongings, such as television and refrigerators, but continue to stay in the colony with bare minimum essentials.

Sitting amid the rubble of her home with her belongings pushed under a plastic covering across a wooden plank to resemble an improvised tent, Bimlesh breaks down and says that the trees that they had plant-

ed and raised are their only companions in this time of adversity. “No one has come to help us. Neither the administration nor the netas [politicians]. These trees are our lone companions of offering us shelter and shade,” says the 48-year-old, adding that they had been surviving only on tea and bread for a couple of days. Her husband Bhola Singh, a

private security guard, adds that at least one member of the family would continue to stay at the site of their demolished home even after they move to a rented room.

Rehabilitation policy

The couple had gone to the camp to apply for the government's rehabilitation policy for the Haryana residents but did not have the requisite documents. Bimlesh holds a voter identity card for Haryana, but her husband and son have identity proofs for Delhi.

“The staff at the camp told us that the entire family should have the identity cards for Haryana. I don't think the government will find more than 700-800 people eligible for the policy after the scrutiny,” says Bhola.

But not many seem enthusiastic about the government's rehabilitation policy for different rea-

sons. Though Bimlesh and her husband went to apply for the flats offered under the policy, the couple said that it was difficult to find any work in its neighbourhood.

“The Dabua colony, where the flats are located, is around 15 km from here. There are no jobs for daily-wagers in that area. You need to have a two-wheeler to commute for work,” says Bhola. Chander says the rehabilitation policy is nothing but an attempt by the government to “loot” them by offering more than a decade old flats in ruins. He says the government is trying to “extort” money from the poor by selling off its flats in the name of rehabilitation and make them tenants for another 15 years.

“Instead of the flats, we would prefer the government to compensate us monetarily for our loss,” suggests Bhola.

Dhansa metro station to adorn cultural artwork

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on Sunday said the upcoming Dhansa Bus Stand Metro station on the Dwarka-Dhansa Bus Stand Grey Line corridor will be a reflection of south-west Delhi's “deep cultural roots”. It said the station will be adorned with artworks and photographs displaying the rich heritage, culture, flora and fauna of the suburban locality.

The Najafgarh-Dhansa region of south-west Delhi is rich in historical content and is also home to a marshy ecosystem, which encourages the visit of migratory birds and flourishing of local wildlife. The artworks and photographic displays have tried to capture such unique characteristics of the area, the DMRC said. The decoration of the station has been done in line with DMRC's efforts to utilise its premises as a platform to showcase the rich heritage and culture of the nation.

The approximately 1-km-long Najafgarh-Dhansa Bus Stand corridor is ready for operations after receiving the mandatory approval from the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety. The DMRC said the exact date for the opening of the corridor shall be intimated shortly.

The artworks on display at the metro station will include photographs on printed glass panels, showcasing the rich biodiversity of the area and the various migratory birds that visit the *jheel* – waterbody located between Najafgarh and Dhansa.

Nine held for looting man of ₹30 lakh

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Nine people have been arrested for allegedly looting a businessman of ₹30 lakh in north-west Delhi's Pitampura, the police said on Sunday.

The five men involved in the dacoity – Rajat (21), Santosh (24), Deepak (23), Parvez Siddiqui (24) and Sameer (25) – have been arrested along with the four conspirators – Zafar (25), Rakesh (26), Vikas (26) and Sumit (21), they said.

The entire cash has been recovered.

The incident happened on July 5 when Parveen Jain and his two other staffers were present at their office. At 2.30 p.m., four unknown men entered his office on the pretext of checking rice samples and took cash and mobile phones from them at gunpoint. Next, they sped off on motorcycles.

CCTV footage

The incident was captured on CCTV camera. On analysing the CCTV cameras installed at the routes taken by them, the police said they found out that the accused had come from Kirari, Suleman Nagar side.

The police noted the registration numbers of the two motorcycles used in the commission of crime.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North-West) Usha Rangani said through local intelligence, accused Vikas and Sumit were arrested, and the two motorcycles were recovered. Next, the rest of the accused were held.

The police said four knives and a country-made pistol along with two live cartridges were also recovered from their possession.

Ahead of I-Day, MHA orders strict vigilance to prevent drone attack

Order details set of preventive measures to be taken by all district DCPs

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

After a recent drone attack in Jammu and several other instances of drones entering prohibited zones, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) instructed all security agencies to be extra vigilant about such flying objects ahead of Independence Day celebrations.

The MHA has ordered stricter adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) that was framed to handle threats from Sub-Conventional Aerial Platforms like drones, paragliders, micro-light aircraft, hot-air balloons etc. The order details a set of preventive measures to be taken by all district DCPs, precautions while shooting down any Sub-Conventional Aerial Platforms and if the flying object try to land near the rampart of Red Fort.

“We have identified the buildings near Red Fort where policemen with long-

range weapons will be deployed to shoot down any flying object approaching restricted space,” said a police officer.

The SoP mentioned shooting the object if it tries to go near the sensitive area. It reads that if any object approaches the sensitive area, then wave a red flag to draw its attention and indicate it to land at a safe distance away from the vital installation or sensitive area. Shout on the loud hailer to draw its attention and instruct it to land immediately, failing which it will be shot down. The order states that if it does not follow the instructions, and there is no time to seek instructions from superior officers or seek clarification from the Indian Air Force agencies, the security personnel may shoot at it with the intention to de-capitate the individual/aerial vehicle.

In the SoP, DCP of North

We have identified the buildings near Red Fort where policemen will be deployed to shoot down flying object approaching restricted space

POLICE OFFICER

District – under whose jurisdiction Red Fort falls – may identify building's rooftops from where the entire aerial view of the district can be seen. Watchers should be deployed on these rooftops.

Trained manpower on rooftops around the sensitive locations and on the route of WVIP movements to prevent anybody from taking off from such platforms, read the order.

These personnel shall be equipped with wireless sets, binoculars, red flag mounted on a stick and a loud hailer. “Each identified roof-top

watcher should be accompanied by well-trained police marksmen equipped with a long-range weapon to bring down the flying object, if required,” it reads. The other district DCPs have been instructed for special patrolling particularly in the rural areas of Delhi, long stretches of lesser-used roads and bridges, large grounds to keep a watch on any such attempts of flying Para Motors.

IAF is responsible to identify between ‘friendly’ and ‘unknown’ airborne objects and initiate appropriate ‘tactical action’ to destroy the object, if it is declared ‘hostile’, the SOP reads.

It instructs district DCPs to activate human intelligence as it is the most reliable way to prevent such an attack. Beat constables should be trained to deal with such objects when they see it in the air or near vital installations/sensitive areas.

Illegal call centre busted, 12 held

They duped people on pretext of getting them jobs in airlines

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A call centre racket was busted and 12 people were arrested for allegedly duping over 100 job seekers by promising them employment in a private airline, the police said on Sunday.

Surjeet (24) and his accomplice Sundaram Gupta (25) set up the illegal call centre on the third floor of a commercial building in Ghazipur village.

They also hired 10 employees on monthly salaries ranging from ₹6,000-₹9,000.

The police initiated a probe following a complaint from Indigo that stated many people were being cheated in the name of getting employed in their airline.

The police claimed the accused duped hundreds of people mainly from south India, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The accused also gave them forged appointment letters of Indigo Airlines and collected over ₹10 lakh.

Deputy Commissioner of



Accused in police custody. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Accused would lure the victims to pay a ‘processing fees’ ranging from ₹1,500 to ₹30,000 on the pretext of getting them jobs...

PRIVYANKA KASHYAP
Deputy Commissioner of Police (East)

Police (East) Priyanka Kashyap said: “A raid was conducted by our team following which Surjeet, Sundaram and 10 others were nabbed. They cheated people by promising them jobs in the Indi-

go Airlines.”

Items recovered

Sixteen mobile phones and SIM cards, seven computers, ₹26,000 cash along with other incriminating documents have been seized, she said.

“They posted advertisements on online job portals. Based on the data received, they would call up job aspirants. They would lure the victims to pay ‘processing fees’ ranging from ₹1,500 to even up to ₹30,000 on the pretext of getting them jobs,” she added.

Delhi could get up to 5 high-mast Tricolours by Aug. 15

PWD to instal national flag on 100-foot-high poles at 500 locations in the Capital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has started implementing the schemes announced under its ‘Deshbhakti budget’ with officials saying up to five high-mast Tricolours will be installed in the city by August 15.

The Public Works Department (PWD) has been tasked with the project under which it will install the national flag on 100-foot high poles at 500 locations in the city.

The officials said initially they will install high-mast Tricolours at about five locations in as many constituencies as a sample exer-

cise. “To celebrate the country's 75th Independence Day, we are planning to set up high-mast Tricolours in 4-5 Assembly constituencies including New Delhi and Patparganj. We are hoping to set up these by August 15. In total, the PWD will install 500 such flags across the city,” said a senior PWD official, who wished not to be named.

₹45 crore set aside

In March this year, the Delhi government had announced its annual budget themed on patriotism and named ‘Deshbhakti budget’ under which ₹45 crore

has been set aside to install high-mast Tricolour at 500 locations across the national capital.

The officials said that high-mast flags will be set up on the lines of the one at the Connaught Place in such a fashion that at least one is visible at every two-three kilometres.

A PWD official said that a tender for the project has also been floated.

Another senior PWD official said that initially five assembly constituencies have been identified where these flags are to be installed by August 15.

These assembly constituencies include New Del-

hi, Patparganj, Shakurbasti, Kalkaji and Dwarka.

New Delhi is Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's constituency while his Deputy Manish Sisodia is elected from Patparganj. Shakurbasti is represented in the Assembly by PWD minister Satyendar Jain.

“The PWD has also been directed to conduct a survey and identify public places, parks, grounds, big commercial buildings complexes, big school premises, residential complexes to install high-mast Tricolours. The deadline of installing 500 Tricolours is yet to be fixed,” an official said.

HC to hear petition against Ramdev for ‘spreading misinformation’ amid COVID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court will hear on Monday a plea by seven doctors' associations against Yoga guru Ramdev for allegedly spreading misinformation by his statements against allopathy amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The matter will be heard by Justice C. Hari Shankar who had earlier asked the counsel for the associations to place on record the videos pertaining to the alleged misinformation.

The associations before court are three Resident Doctors' Association of the All India Institute of Medical

Sciences at Rishikesh, Patna and Bhubaneswar, Association of Resident Doctors, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh, Union of Resident Doctors of Punjab (URDP), Resident Doctors' Association, Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Medical College, Meerut and Telangana Junior Doctors' Association, Hyderabad.

They alleged that Ramdev was misleading and misrepresenting to the public at large that allopathy was responsible for the deaths of several people infected by COVID-19, and insinuating that allopathic doctors were causing

deaths of the patients.

‘Sowing doubts’

In their plea, the associations have submitted that the yoga guru was sowing doubts in the minds of general public with respect to the safety and efficacy of not only allopathic treatments but also COVID-19 vaccines.

Being a highly influential person, it is apprehended that Ramdev's statements can influence lakhs of people and divert them from allopathic treatment which are prescribed as the standard form of care even by the government, the plea submitted.



When TIMES get tough

How has the pandemic impacted students? A look at the various issues

R. W. ALEXANDER JESUDASAN

Global studies have shown that youngsters are struggling to cope with the varied challenges thrown up as a result of the pandemic. Anxiety, elevated stress levels and depression have been cited as some of the problems.

When it comes to education, interrupted study programmes has been the main issue, despite the adoption of online learning methods.

Academic insufficiency
With online learning being the mode since March 2020, both teachers and students have been experiencing difficulties due to connectivity issues.

For economically-challenged students, the lack of access to devices is

another problem. This means that, despite a teacher's best efforts, the question of how many students they reached remains.

Also innovative and exploratory models of assessment and evaluation would not have been possible during this time. Dealing with this requires a great deal of self-learning by students.

Emotional instability

Over the past year and a half, many students have had to deal with the loss of loved ones. While philanthropists and the governments have come forward to help them continue their education, the trauma of the loss has also to be dealt with.

In the case of those whose parents have lost their jobs, there is a lot of

For economically challenged students, the lack of access to devices means that, despite a teacher's best efforts, the question of how many students they reached remains

stress due to having to find funds to pay the fees.

A third aspect is that having to complete their education virtually has led to an emotional strain and worry about placements.

This year has also seen many students worry about falling victim to the virus.

No public gathering

Youth often like to 'chill' at beaches, malls, theatres, parks and common

places but this is now prohibited for their safety. Neither can they gather in other public places like places of worship, which may have offered some measure of solace.

This has led to a lack of fellowship and social structure. Unfortunately, students are now glued to laptops or mobile phones for hours and their social life is also virtual.

While this situation was unexpected and no one is sure when a degree of normalcy will be restored, it is important for us to address these issues so that the youth can come through to the other side without too much ado.

The writer is Pro Vice-Chancellor, Hindustan Institute of Technology & Science (Deemed to be University)

Career prospects for you

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This Q&A column by Nandini Raman, practising counsellor and trainer, may help



OFF THE EDGE

NANDINI RAMAN

I am pursuing a B.Tech. in CSE from Bihar Engineering College and also preparing for the UPSC exam. I have studied in a Hindi medium school till Class 10. But my preparations for the exams are in English. I understand what I read but am not able to write well in English. What can I do to improve? - Ankit Kumar

Dear Ankit,
Here are a few tips that might help - write a journal every day. Short, brief sentences that can over time expand and become more elaborate. Brush up on your grammar, read as much as you can, so that drafting, framing, expressing and articulating will not be a challenge. Try and see if you can write small blogs / notes / stories / essays on varied topics and get a mentor who can give you feedback and help clean it up with some sound suggestions and recommendations. It will help build your confidence!

I am doing an UG course in Economics from SN University Kerala. I opted for this because I wanted to enter the civil services. But now I want to start a business in aerospace. I am very confused about what I should do. - Anoop Kumar U

Dear Anoop,
That a huge shift in orbit both in terms of education and interest. I would suggest a career profile first and, then if you are still insistent on the aerospace business idea, get a job in that industry and see what it entails - the challenges and the difficulties before you commit to starting a business with no knowledge and backing!

I have finished my Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. I have a keen interest in the textile industry and am considering a Master's in Textile Design. Should I do this in India or abroad? What are my prospects? - Akshay Tomar

Dear Akshay,
Certainly the U.S. is a step ahead of other countries in providing the best textile

engineering courses globally. I suggest you start doing your research asap to shortlist good schools and the costs. Textile is a growing industry and Textile Engineering offers a bright career because the demand and supply will never diminish. Various job opportunities available are as a Medical Textiles Engineer, Process Engineer, Operations Supervisor, Quality Control Supervisor, Process Improvement Engineer and so on.

I have finished my graduation and have completed the CPT exam. I am stuck at CA inter. My parents are forcing me to go for coaching for the banking exams. They want me to get a job first and then do the CA. What should I do? - Abhishek Dhore

Dear Abhishek,
What do you want to do? How long do you want to crack inter? How many

more attempts have you planned? What is your Plan B, in case CA takes very long? I think your parents are only looking at a secure option for you - to start being independent and earn your own finances. First, spend some time to get clarity in what you

want and then have an open conversation with your parents.

Disclaimer: This column provides advice, guidance and suggestions on education and careers. It is a guiding voice from a practising career counsellor.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line 'Off the edge'.

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SCHOLARSHIPS

HDFC Bank Parivaran's COVID Crisis Support Scholarship Programme
This scholarship programme aims to support students who have been through a COVID-led crisis to continue their education.
ELIGIBILITY: Indian students from Class 1 up to postgraduate (professional and non-professional) courses who have either lost their parent(s)/earning members or whose earning family members have lost their employment (or livelihood) during the pandemic. They should be enrolled and continuing their education. Annual family income must be less than or equal to ₹6 lakh from all sources.
PRIZES AND REWARDS: Up to ₹75,000
DEADLINE: October 31
APPLICATION: Online b4s.in/edge/CCSS1

IET India Scholarship Awards 2021
The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) aims to recognise and nurture future engineering leaders of India.
ELIGIBILITY: Open to students studying in any year of a full-time regular undergraduate engineering programme (in any field) at an AICTE/UGC approved institution. They must have cleared all regular credit courses in a single attempt and scored at least 60% in aggregate or equivalent CGPA of at least 6.5 in a 10-point scale in the semesters cleared so far. Also, applicants must have obtained more than 60% or equivalent grades in Class 12 (or equivalent).
PRIZES AND REWARDS: Scholarships worth ₹5 lakh
DEADLINE: August 15
APPLICATION: Online b4s.in/edge/IETI

ISEC Bangalore Post-Doctoral Research Programme (PDRP) 2021
The Institute for Social Economic and Change, Bengaluru invites applications for this fellowship, which is for a maximum of five years.
ELIGIBILITY: Open to candidates who have completed the Ph.D. degree in the last 10 years with at least two publications in refereed National/International journals.
PRIZES AND REWARDS: Certificate of completion of the PDR Programme
DEADLINE: July 31
APPLICATION: Via post only b4s.in/edge/ISECI
Courtesy: buddy4study.com

SAVE THE DATE

KL Deemed-to-be University opens admissions
KL Deemed-to-be University has opened admissions and started counselling process for its undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
Eligibility: Candidates who have qualified KL Engineering Entrance Exam (KLEEE) or obtained required scores in intermediate/state/national entrance exams.
Last date: July 29
https://bit.ly/3iDSJEU
Admissions open at JKLU
JK Lakshmiipat University (JKLU), Jaipur, Rajasthan, has opened admissions for all UG programmes for 2021. Students looking for scholarship can apply on https://bit.ly/3rwxCbM
Eligibility: In the absence of Class 12 Board examination marks, consideration will be given to Class 10 scores and performance in co-curricular activities. JEE Mains percentile will also count for B.Tech Programmes.
Last date: August 2.
https://bit.ly/3f6zKl9

Hero Vired Scholarships announced
Hero Vired has announced Hero Vired Scholarship Advantage to make its programmes accessible to a broader spectrum of learners and working professionals in India. Vired Toppers offers up to 100% fee waivers to batch-wise toppers based on performance; Vired Achievers gives up to 50% fee waivers for those with exceptional academic or industry-related experience; with Women of Vired: women with outstanding professional experience, academic performance and interest in the domains will receive up to 50% fee waiver; and those with outstanding past performance and need for financial assistance will get up to 50% fee waivers with Vired Winners. For details on each scholarship, eligibility and process, visit https://herovired.com/scholarship/

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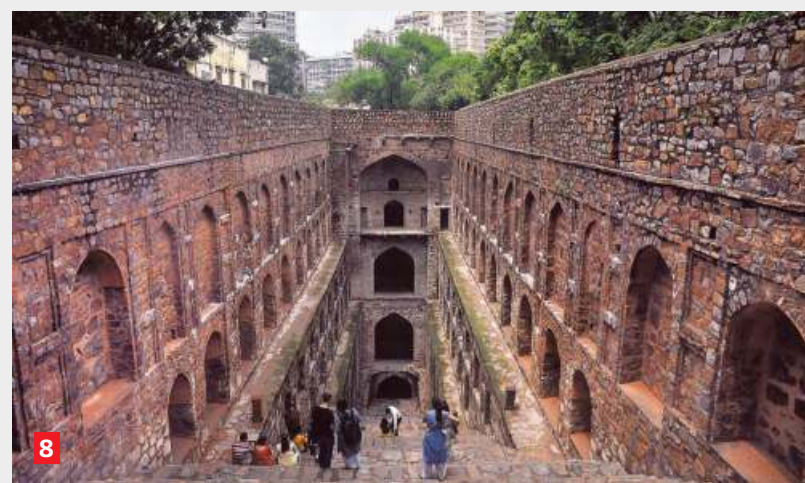
MHRD India Rankings (NIRF) 2020

- 20th Best in University Category

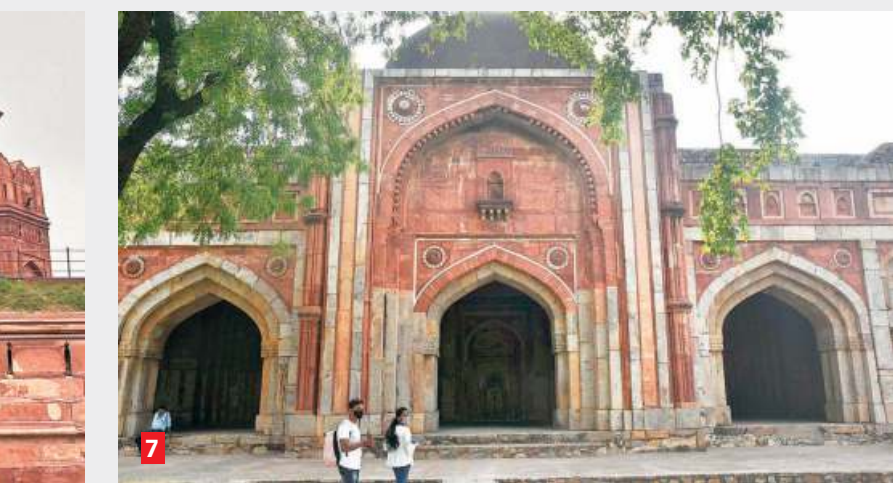
To apply for admission, please visit : www.soa.ac.in

Historic low

Centrally protected monuments that reopened on June 16, after closure due to the second wave of the COVID-19 in Delhi, are seeing just a fraction of their average pre-pandemic daily footfall



1. A couple takes a selfie during their visit to Qutub Minar in Mehrauli; 2. Shahi Masjid at Qudsia Bagh complex; 3. visitors at the Safdarjung Tomb; 4. Humayun's Tomb at Nizamuddin; 5. Rajon Ki Baoli at Mehrauli Archaeological Park; 6. the historic Red Fort; 7. Jamali Kamali Mosque in Mehrauli; 8. Agrasen Ki Baoli on Hailey Road near Connaught Place. •
PHOTOS: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION TENDER

ABRIDGE NIT

The Director General (Civil), KMC invites tender online item/percentage rate two bid system for the following works:

1) NIT No. : KMC/DG(C)/BR.-XVI/143/001/21-22 (2nd Call)
Name of work : Supply, installation & operation of 4" Dia Portable Pump with P.O.L. Helper, Operator at different places of Ward No. 143; Estimated cost : N.A. (including CESS); Earnest Money : ₹14,000/-; Period of Completion : 183 Days;

2) NIT No. : KMC/DG(C)/BR.-XVI/144/011/21-22
Name of work : Const. of Road by laying Hot-Mix at Mondal Para (Bakrahat Road) near Pre. No. 16/16 in Ward No. 144; Estimated cost : ₹ 9,57,342.68 (including GST & CESS); Earnest Money : ₹20,000/-; Period of Completion : 30 Days; Last date & time of submission of bid : 04.08.2021 - 12.00 noon (for Sl. No. 1 & 2); Tender will be opened on : 06.08.2021 - 12.00 noon (for Sl. No. 1 & 2); The bid forms and other details are available on and from 27.07.2021 (5.00 p.m.) from the website <https://etender.wb.nic.in> (for Sl. No. 1 & 2). 247/21-22

THE HINDU

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EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: ELD-125-WC-OT-11-21, Date: 23.07.2021. E-tender is invited by the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Eastern Railway, Howrah 711101 for the following work. Tender No. : ELD-125-WC-OT-11-21. Name of work with its location : Outsourcing for PSI Maintenance Activities of 25KV AC Traction Sub-Stations (03 Nos), Switching Stations (SP/SSP) (21 Nos), Feeding Post (02 Nos) and Auxiliary Transformer (207 Nos) of KWAE-AZ, BDC-KWAE, BWN-KWAE and KWAE-AMP section in Howrah Division of Eastern Railway (12 Months). Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 23,96,026. Earnest Money to be deposited : Nil. Tender closing date & time : 15.00 hrs. on 16.08.2021. Opening of tender: Tender will be opened any time after closing of tender. Tenderers may visit website www.ireps.gov.in for full details/description/specification of the tenders and submit their bid online. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender. (HWH-68/2021-22) Tender Notices are also available at website: www.er.indianrailways.gov.in/www.ireps.gov.in

Delhi Weather

max	min
Delhi City	37 28
Safdarjang	37 28
Palam	36 28

Delhi Palam Today
34°C Few spells of light to moderate rain and thunder-shower likely at some places with cloudy sky and gusty moderate winds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
31°C Spells of rain and thunderstorm likely at some places with cloudy sky. Day would remain humid.

Air quality of Delhi-NCR

Delhi	Gurgaon	Noida	Greater Noida
107	115	92	92

Legend: Good (0-50), Satisfactory (51-100), Moderate (101-200), Poor (201-300), Very poor (301-400), Severe (>401)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform the General Public that I, M. Muthu Lakshmi W/o Late Shri B. Mariappan R/o Qtr. No. 133, Block No. 9, Type-II, Aliganj, New Delhi-110033 aged 43 years inform that my husband B. Mariappan has passed away on dated 25.02.2021. I requested to Superch Limited to transfer of booked Unit No. (R018A301901/Flat No.-1901) in Tower 'A3' project situated at Eco Village-1, Plot No. 08, Sector-1, Greater Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201303 in the name of M. Muthu Lakshmi (Co-Applicant). If any body has any objection he/she may contact Superch Ltd., E-Square, C-2, Sector-96, Noida within 15 days of this notice being published by M. Muthu, Lakshmi W/o late B. Mariappan. Sd/- M. Muthu Lakshmi

PERSONAL CHANGE OF NAME

I, E YAMINI, spouse of GP CAPT NATESAN ELANGO resident of 247/2, Vikram Vihar, Delhi Cantt, New Delhi-110010 have changed my Name from E YAMINI to YAMINI ELANGO vide Affidavit dated 22/07/2021 before Notary Public Delhi.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Shri D.R.SANTHANAM (PMG's office ret'd.) aged 91 Passed away on 24/7/2021 at his daughter's residence in Pune

Deeply mourned by
Wife: Smt. R. Vedavalli,
Daughter: Sushruti,
Son-in-law: Yogesh Wadadekar,
Grandsons: Sunandan & Abhiram,
Brother: D.R. Aravamudhan,
Sisters, Nieces & Nephews
Mail: ssushruti@gmail.com

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

2nd ANNIVERSARY

In loving memory of our dear **V K IYER** Another year has gone by. You live in our hearts forever **KALPAGAM, SHANKAR and LALITHA NITHYA and NANDINI (M) 98410 72158.** shankar_vishwana@yahoo.com

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Capital logs 66 cases, 2 deaths

69,896 inoculated; less than one day's stock of vaccine left

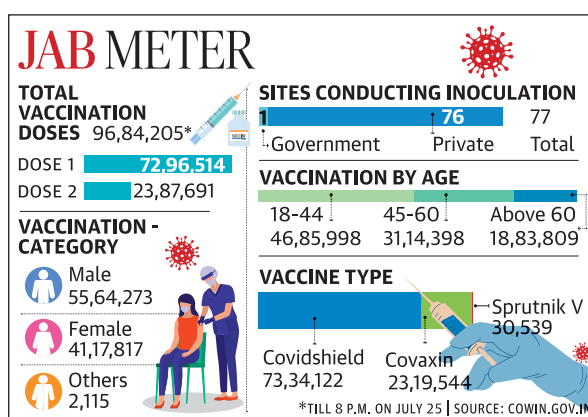
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 66 new COVID-19 cases along with two deaths, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday.

The bulletin added that 70,756 tests have been conducted with a positivity rate of 0.09%. The number of active cases now stands at 579, out of which 167 are under home isolation.

The total number of COVID-19 cases now stands at 14,35,910 and the total fatalities has gone up to 25,043. On Saturday, the Capital recorded zero deaths due to COVID-19.

The bulletin added that 69,896 beneficiaries had been vaccinated in the past 24 hours, out of which



21,256 had been given the first dose. The total number of people vaccinated has reached 96,57,900, out of which 23,84,468 have received both doses.

The government said that it had less than one day's stock of vaccine left.

As of Sunday morning, the government had with it 2,16,140 doses of Covaxin out of which 20% can be used for first dose. The stock of Covidshield that can only be used for second dose till July 31 is 70,900 doses.

HC relief to homebuyer from loan recovery

'Bank has disbursed amount to builder'

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted interim protection to a homebuyer of 'Shubhkamna City' residential project in Greater Noida West against a loan recovery proceedings initiated by a bank.

While staying the proceedings pending before the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) in Delhi, initiated by Bank of Maharashtra, a Bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Jasmeet Singh said: "In our view, prima facie, it appears that the petitioner [homebuyer] has been taken for a ride by the builder and it is not the petitioner who has received the loan amount."

"The bank has disbursed the loan amount to the builder, and in these circumstances, it remains to be seen as to whether or not the petitioner is at all liable," the Bench said.

The court's direction

came on a plea by Hridesh Kumar Pathak, who booked a unit in the 'Shubhkamna City' project developed by Shubhkamna Buildtech Private Limited in 2016. As per the buyer builder agreement executed in October 2016, the possession of the flat was to be delivered within 45 months, including a grace period of six months, after commencement of construction.

Flats not constructed

Advocate Anshul Gupta, representing Mr. Pathak, submitted that the homebuyer and the builder entered into and executed a tripartite agreement in January 2017 with Bank of Maharashtra for the sanction of loan amounting to ₹32.5 lakh in order to finance the purchase of the flat. The bank has disbursed a total amount of ₹27,63,000 towards the builder. However, the flats have not been constructed.

Explain how grounds of arrest are conveyed: HC

It issues notice to RJD MP on ED's plea

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has asked the Director of Enforcement Directorate to explain how the grounds of arrest are informed to an arrested person in terms of the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court.

Justice Mukta Gupta gave the order while hearing ED's plea challenging a trial court's order directing it to supply a copy of the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) to RJD Rajya Sabha MP Amarendra Dhari Singh, arrested in a money laundering case related to an alleged fertiliser scam.

The court also issued notice to Mr. Singh on ED's plea seeking to set aside the trial court's July 15 order. Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, appearing for ED, argued that there is no specific power with the trial court to pass directions to the agency to supply the co-

Delhi Cong. to expand social media reach

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

With an eye on the Municipal Corporations of Delhi elections, which are due next year, the Delhi Congress on Sunday started to prepare a roadmap to expand its social media reach.

The party said it was preparing to expand its social media teams at the booth level to expose the "lies and failures" of the AAP and BJP governments.

Social media operations head for the Delhi Congress Rahul Sharma said that the party would expand the social media outreach to expose the "mismatch" of the AAP government and the BJP-ruled Municipal Corporations at the booth level, besides popularising Delhi Congress' works.



py of the ECIR. The ASG stated that no prejudice has been caused to Mr. Singh by "non-supply of the ECIR, which is not like an FIR on the basis whereof investigation is started".

The court, however, directed the Director of ED to submit whether the ECIR "is merely a number or records some substantive information therein for the petitioner (ED) to start the investigation thereon prior to filing of the complaint case".

The case pertains to an alleged fertiliser scam linked to the IFFCO and India Postash Limited.

With Godavari in spate, A.P. issues first flood alert

10 lakh cusecs of water being discharged

STAFF REPORTER
DOWLESWARAM/POLAVARAM

The authorities issued the first flood warning for the Godavari in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday as the discharge of water reached about 10 lakh cusecs at the Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage in Dowleswaram by 7.30 p.m.

Issuing the warning, G. Srinivasa Rao, Godavari River Flood Conservator and Godavari Head Works Division executive engineer, said, "However, the forecast indicates a fall in flood level by Monday."

The first warning alert would enable district authorities to gear up for the flood mitigation exercise, particularly downstream Dowleswaram.



Alert mode: Water gushing through the gates of the Polavaram project in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Meanwhile, the National Disaster Response Force's (NDRF) 10th Battalion, and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), police, revenue and Integrated Tribal Development Agency officials swung into action at the flood-affected villages.

The Andhra Pradesh State

Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) directed officials deployed on flood duty in West and East Godavari districts to evacuate people from the low-lying areas.

APSDMA Commissioner K. Kanna Babu said that two NDRF teams had been deployed in Chintoor, while

one team was positioned in V.R. Puram mandal.

Advice to villagers

"Villagers are requested to cooperate with officials. They are advised against venturing into the flood waters for fishing, taking a bath or travelling on small boats as

Coal production hit

STAFF REPORTER
BHADRADRI-KOTHAGUDEM

Though heavy rain that battered the coal belt region of Telangana last week abated since Saturday, the downpour impeded coal production in almost all the open-cast projects (OCPs) of Singareni Collieries Company Limited spread across six districts including Bhadradi-Kothagudem district.

The State-owned SCCL reportedly suffered a huge production loss of more than five lakh tonnes in all the 21 OCPs together in the company's II areas due to heavy last week, sources said.

The average daily coal output fell by almost 50% from 1.90 lakh tonnes to little over 90,000 tonnes in the past five days, sources added.

the flood is heavy," Mr. Babu said.

Water level at the Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage was 11.75 feet, and the Irrigation officials were releasing 10.08 lakh cusecs of water as of 7.30 p.m., Mr. Rao told *The Hindu*.

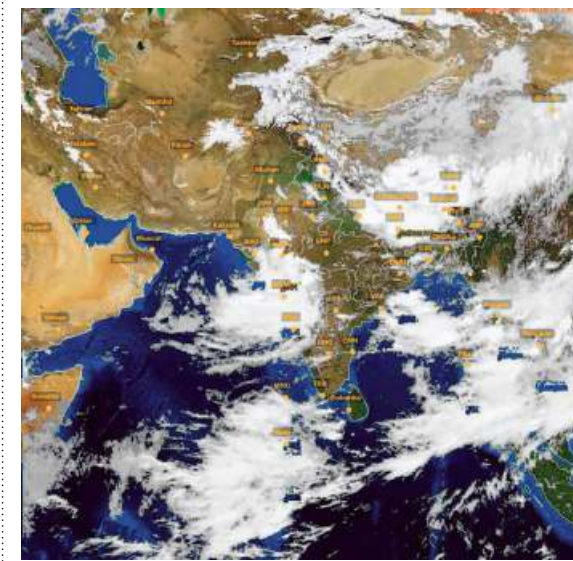
"We are discharging flood

water into the Bay of Bengal by lifting all the 175 gates. We have cautioned officials and villagers staying in the low-lying areas and on the riverbed to be alert as the discharge is heavy," Mr. Rao said.

At the Polavaram spillway, the water level was 33 metres, officials said.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall expected at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, eastern Rajasthan, Assam and Meghalaya. Heavy rainfall expected at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat, central Maharashtra, coastal Karnataka and Kerala.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	26.8	33.0	27.0	Kozhikode	19.0	29.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	13.0	30.0	24.0	Kurnool	34.0	34.0	25.0
Aizawl	1.2	26.0	19.0	Lucknow	34.0	34.0	27.0
Allahabad	—	—	—	Madurai	36.0	36.0	25.0
Bengaluru	24.4	29.0	20.0	Mangaluru	32.0	29.0	24.0
Bhopal	40.3	28.0	24.0	Mysuru	32.0	32.0	25.0
Bhubaneswar	5.9	34.0	27.0	New Delhi	33.0	33.0	29.0
Chandigarh	19.0	32.0	27.0	Patna	34.0	34.0	27.0
Chennai	—	34.0	27.0	Port Blair	7.0	29.0	26.0
Coimbatore	—	30.0	23.0	Puducherry	—	34.0	28.0
Dehradun	—	29.0	24.0	Pune	6.2	31.0	22.0
Gangtok	6.0	23.0	18.0	Raipur	9.4	32.0	25.0
Goa	22.0	31.0	25.0	Ranchi	3.0	31.0	24.0
Guwahati	—	33.0	26.0	Shillong	—	25.0	18.0
Hubballi	—	—	—	Shimla	—	22.0	15.0
Hyderabad	—	31.4	23.5	Srinagar	—	32.0	22.0
Imphal	0.5	30.0	22.0	Thiruvananthapuram	12.0	30.0	24.0
Jaipur	—	34.0	25.0	Tiruchi	—	37.0	27.0
Kochi	19.0	30.0	26.0	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kohima	1.0	26.0	18.0	Visakhapatnam	—	33.0	28.0
Kolkata	0.5	33.0	29.0				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	6	—	—	108	108	—
Bengaluru	11	6	72	35	48	—
Chennai	4	22	106	28	69	—
Delhi	9	17	38	212	124	—
Hyderabad	—	62	6	18	36	—
Kolkata	9	18	18	32	43	—
Lucknow	6	13	63	68	110	—
Mumbai	41	10	—	63	103	—
Pune	36	15	42	19	139	—
Visakhapatnam	14	51	34	54	111	—

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday
High levels of particulate matter pollution recorded in most cities across the country. Going by Central Pollution Control Board data, Ambala in Haryana recorded the worst with PM2.5 pollution levels touching a moderate 160. Gorakhpur was the least polluted with PM10 readings of 18.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Let Yediyurappa continue at the helm, seers urge BJP

CM has been working efficiently, says council

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In a show of strength by the Lingayat religious maths, a council of seers that met here on Sunday urged the BJP high command to continue B.S. Yediyurappa as the Chief Minister even as the latter in Belagavi put the onus on high command for his continuation.

Mr. Yediyurappa should be allowed to complete his term since he had been working with efficiency, the seers said at the council meeting here that had been convened to discuss the "current crisis".



Lingayat seers at a gathering in Bengaluru on Sunday. *PTI

They refused to call the event an attempt at show of strength by the Lingayat community. In the light of speculations that the meeting had been "engineered" by Mr. Yediyurappa's camp to bring pressure on the high command, they also clarified that they had gathered "voluntarily".

"We had to come to the

fore since the high command is not taking any action against those casteist people within the BJP who had been conspiring against Mr. Yediyurappa," Balehosur Math seer Dingaleshwara Swamy claimed. He urged the party high command to consider this.

Stating that Mr. Yediyurappa had given higher grants to maths "to enable social, religious and educational service," the seer said it was their "duty to show gratitude to the leader."

Responding to those asking the religious leaders not to interfere in politics, the seer said they were not interfering in politics. He reminded that maths existed even before political parties came into existence.

INL factions come to blows; general secretary expelled

Party sets up new organising committee

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The organisational crisis in the Indian National League (INL), a constituent of Kerala's ruling Left Democratic Front, reached a flashpoint with party general secretary Kasim Irrikur being expelled from the organisation.

A.P. Abdul Wahab, the State president of the organisation, announced the expulsion of Mr. Irrikur at a press conference here on Sunday. He also announced the formation of a new organising committee.

At the same time, Mr. Irrikur is said to have the back-



Out in the open: Police personnel dispersing INL workers who clashed in Kochi on Sunday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ing of party president Muhammed Sulaiman.

Earlier, the two factions of party workers clashed outside a hotel in Kochi, where the State committee and the State secretariat of the party was scheduled to meet. Serious differences of opinion surfaced at the com-

mittee meeting forcing the party to call off the State secretariat meet. Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkovil was also present at the meeting. The police intervened to disperse the warring factions.

The INL was formed in 1994 after a split in the Indian Union Muslim League.

Bihar Assembly monsoon session likely to be stormy

Oppn. plans to corner State govt. on armed police Bill, fuel prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA

The monsoon session of the Bihar Assembly, which will begin on Monday, is likely to witness noisy scenes as the ruckus during the last meeting of the House over a special armed police Bill may cast a shadow on the upcoming proceedings.

Chaos in budget session
Unprecedented chaos had erupted on March 23 in the budget session when police was called to assist the marshals in evicting unruly Opposition members who tried to physically prevent Speaker Vijay Kumar Sinha from taking his chair.

The bone of contention was Bihar Special Armed Police Bill, 2021, which the Nitish Kumar government had introduced in a bid to give its police more teeth.

The Opposition had termed it "black" legislation, taking strong exception to the provisions that

empower the Special Armed Police, previously known as the Bihar Military Police, to conduct searches and arrests without producing a warrant.

The Bill was passed, amid a "walkout" by the Opposition MLAs who had squatted outside the building and raised slogans, slighted by the manner in which they were ousted from the Hall on that day.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav has already written to the Speaker, saying the Opposition legislators were scared to enter the House. "Let us know the result of the investigation on the March 23 incident. That was a black day," Mr. Yadav wrote in his letter.

2 policemen suspended
Two policemen were recently suspended after they were found guilty of assaulting Opposition MLAs in the Assembly on March 23.

The Opposition parties have also chalked out a strategy to corner the State government on issues such as rising prices of fuel, cooking gas, fertilizers and edible oil.

Haryana withdraws order on land consolidation in Kot village

It's for the 4th time in 9 years that consolidation orders were given, rolled back

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

More than two years after the Haryana government ordered the consolidation of 3,184 acres of land in Kot village in Faridabad amid strong opposition from the locals and the environmentalists, the controversial orders have now been withdrawn.

Those opposed to the consolidation then had argued that it was illegal and aimed at benefiting an influential yoga guru owning large chunks of "Gair Mumkin Pahaar" (non-cultivable land) in the village.

It is for the fourth time over the past nine years that the government ordered the consolidation of the Kot village land, but then withdrew the orders.

Withdrawing the latest orders for consolidation issued on February 1, 2019, the Director, Consolidation of Holdings, Haryana, said that "in case the consolidation exercise... is carried



A view of Kot village. *ASHOK KUMAR

out, it would wrongly benefit certain influential outsider purchasers.

'Non-cultivable land'
Of the total 3,184 acres notified for consolidation in village, an area of 2,565 acres is "Gair Mumkin Pahaar".

"The aim of the Consolidation Act is to consolidate the agricultural holdings for the betterment of agriculture, for prevention of the fragmentation of agricultural holdings and for the reservation of land for common purposes of the village. The object of the Consolidation Act would be defeated

aimed at benefiting the yoga guru to usurp the forest land. Most of the villagers rear cattle and need forest land for the grazing of the animals. The consolidation would have hit us hard. Now we demand that the illegal structures and boundaries constructed in the forest land be demolished to free it from encroachment," said Mr. Kesar.

Chetan Agarwal, a forest analyst, said this was for the fourth time the consolidation process was stopped on grounds of misuse to create plots in the Aravalis and forests. He expressed hope that it was also for the "final time" that the orders were withdrawn.

Lt. Colonel (retd.) Sarvadam Singh Oberoi, an environmentalist, said the consolidation process had been misused in Aravali villages like Mangar, Bandhwari, Ankhir, Mewla and Maharajpur etc. to create private plots and must be rolled back.

"The consolidation was

Issue fresh notice in decade-old case, says Orissa HC

Petitioner had sought compensation for her arrest in a 'false' murder, dacoity and sedition case

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
BHUBANESWAR

The Orissa High Court ordered the fresh issuance of notices in a case upon finding that it was listed only twice for hearing in a decade. This case pertained to a lawyer activist moving court seeking compensation for being jailed in a "false" sedition case.

The lawyer activist, Pratima Das, was arrested on August 12, 2008, on allegations

of participating in subversive activities of the banned organisation CPI (Maoist). She was charge-sheeted in two cases under various charges, including murder, dacoity and sedition. Ms. Das had to stay in jails for over two years before the courts acquitted her. After her acquittal, she moved the HC seeking compensation and punishment for the officers involved in the cases that caused her to suffer mental trauma and pu-

blic humiliation. "In neither of the two cases was the prosecution able to substantiate its case against the petitioner. But she suffered humiliation and harassment in jail for two years, three months and five days," said Prashant Jena, her lawyer.

Counters not received
Mr. Jena said notices were issued to the State Home Department, three IPS officers and other police officers, for

the "malicious cases". However, the counters to the notices were never received.

When it came up for hearing on July 22, a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Dr. S. Muralidhar and Justice B.P. Routray observed, "Although this petition was filed in 2011, in the last 10 years, it was listed only twice - on February 23, 2012, and September 6, 2012, - for hearing."

Stating that the serving of notices was not complete, and the report of the serving of notices to opposite parties was not available, the Bench directed the Home Department to provide the present addresses of the opposite parties within four weeks.

Ms. Das said, "The cases badly impacted my life. Media outlets presented my case going by the police's version. I was branded a terrorist, apart from my painful days in jail."

NORTH & EAST

Three dead after drinking 'spurious' liquor in M.P.

One person is undergoing treatment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MANDSAUR

Three persons have died after drinking suspected spurious liquor at a village in Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh, while one more person is undergoing treatment at a hospital, officials said on Sunday.

Following the incident, a sub-inspector of the Excise department was suspended, they said.

The Opposition Congress said the deaths reported from Khakhrai village in Mandsaur district were caused due to spurious liquor, while the police said the exact reason could be known only after the post-mortem reports come.

The police have arrested one person for illegally selling liquor and demolished a part of the house used for this work on Sunday night. District Collector Manoj Pushp and Superintendent of Police (SP) Siddharth Choudhary visited the village after the incident.

Sub Divisional Officer of Police of the area, Trilokchand Pawar, said three persons, identified as Modiram Meghwal (41), Ghanshyam Mogia and Manohar Bagri (both 35) died in Khakhrai village under Piplia Mandi police station area. According to him, post-mortem was being carried out. "One person is undergoing treatment in district hospital."

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A climate risk

Only proper planning can insure against the inevitable extremities of nature

The monsoon is nearing its halfway mark and July, which is among the rainiest months, began with a rainfall deficit but has since seen a revival. For most of last week, all-India rainfall has been over 50% more than what is normal for this time of the year. Many regions in the Konkan coast and the southern peninsula have been seeing instances of extreme rainfall. According to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data on the regional distribution, the 'South Peninsula' has seen 29% more rain from June 1-July 25 than what is normal for this period. Rainfall in Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra, was torrential enough to beat its all-time record, according to the IMD. The monsoon is characterised by unexpected variability that forecast models can capture only in a limited way. However, much evidence is accumulating that there is a distinctive change in climate patterns. The frequency and the strength of cyclones over the Arabian Sea have increased in the last two decades. There has been a 52% increase in the frequency of cyclones over the Arabian Sea from 2001-2019 and an 8% decrease over the Bay of Bengal compared to 1982-2002, when, historically, most cyclones have been in the Bay of Bengal, according to a new study in *Climate Dynamics*.

Even the duration of these cyclones has increased by 80%. More cyclones are bringing in more moisture from the Arabian Sea and contributing to extreme rainfall events over the western coast, the most recent example being cyclone Tauktae in May, which at 185 kilometres per hour was among the strongest cyclones to approach Mumbai. They drive storm surges that flood the coast. Studies show that a heating globe has increased atmospheric moisture levels, contributing to short, intense spells of rains. The interaction between warming, rainfall and temperature is complex and variables such as aerosol emissions, particulate matter pollution, agriculture and forestry patterns must be accounted for. However, the broader picture is that extreme events – bursts of torrential localised rainfall and prolonged droughts and heatwaves – are likely to increase, making the role of accurate forecasts that are able to warn of such events at least three to five days ahead even more important. But the bigger challenge is to undertake so-called climate-proofing of the most vulnerable regions and taking warnings of scientific risk assessment seriously. Evacuations ahead of a flood or a cyclone are not always effective and what is needed is limited construction in places that have been marked vulnerable. Just as it is possible to plan earthquake-resistant structures and site them scientifically, but hard to anticipate a major quake, similarly, proper planning can insure against the inevitable extremities of nature. International climate change agreements to limit greenhouse gas emissions will yield benefits only in the very long term but what is done in the near future will mean the difference between surviving and thriving.

Money changer

India needs to move forward on introducing an official digital currency

In contrast to India's continued ambiguity over the legality of cryptocurrencies, its stance on introducing an official digital currency has been reassuringly clear and consistent over time. And, four years after an inter-ministerial committee recommended that India launch fiat money in digital form, the Reserve Bank of India has indicated that pilot projects to figure out its viability are likely to be launched soon. In a speech a few days ago, T. Rabi Sankar, Deputy Governor, RBI, said, "RBI is currently working towards a phased implementation strategy and examining use cases which could be implemented with little or no disruption." The clarity is welcome, given that the much-awaited Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, is yet to be introduced. In recent years, the significant rise of private cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ether has spooked central banks throughout the world, and pushed the case for official digital currencies. Mr. Rabi Sankar himself cited a 2021 BIS survey of central banks, which found that 86% were actively researching the potential for such currencies, 60% were experimenting with the technology, and 14% were deploying pilot projects. China, having already engaged in pilot projects for its digital RMB, is in fact planning a major roll-out soon. There has been little doubt, therefore, that India needs a digital rupee. The important questions are about the details and the timeline.

There are crucial decisions to be made about the design of the currency with regards to how it will be issued, the degree of anonymity it will have, the kind of technology that is to be used, and so on. It is possible that the question of the degree of anonymity, especially, will be quite a challenging one. While official digital currencies can borrow the underlying technology feature of private cryptocurrencies, they significantly differ from the latter in their philosophy and goals. Also to be considered are possible impacts of the introduction of an official digital currency on people, the monetary policy, and the banking system. There are risks to be considered as well, not the least of which will be those emerging from cyberattacks. What is more, many laws need to be amended to make the digital rupee a reality. So, while India might have done exceedingly well in digital payments in recent years – the Deputy Governor said they have grown at a compounded annual growth rate of 55% over the last five years – the digital rupee will be something else altogether. Notwithstanding all these challenges, it would seem that the answer to Mr. Rabi Sankar's speech title, 'Central Bank Digital Currency - Is This the Future of Money?', is a yes.

Joining the dots in the second coming of Pegasus

This time, Pegasus shines a light on the Government for civil society to see it as a clear accountable entity



PARAKALA PRABHAKAR

Pegasus is not a stranger to our shores. It first surfaced in our public discourse towards the end of 2019. Researchers from University of Toronto's Citizen Lab called up some telephone numbers in our country and informed them that their WhatsApp chats were compromised. There were some stirrings, but the controversy died out quietly and disappeared from our public discourse. The attention then was predominantly on the issue of how secure WhatsApp was and how weak its claims of end-to-end encryption were. WhatsApp's public relations exercise to reassure its customers of its safety and privacy grabbed disproportionate attention. All these deflected the public's attention from our Government's involvement in the ugly saga and the misuse of NSO of Israel's spyware to snoop on its own citizens. Parliament and civil society let the Government off easily. Perhaps, the impression that the surveillance then was largely confined to the Bhima-Koregaon happenings also contributed to its limited appeal.

Signs of a surveillance state

Most of us failed to connect the dots. The frequent and prolonged instances of Internet shutdowns; use of the sedition law on critics of the Government's policies; use of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA); rushing of crucial pieces of legislation affecting core sectors of our economy through the Houses of Parliament; consigning the data privacy Bill to a select committee; the framing of rules to rein in digital news platforms, and the demonic efficiency with which State governments were toppled appeared less dramatic and had no shock value as unconnected events. But if connected with each other, and the Pegasus spyware running in the

background, they present a picture of India's descent into a surveillance state.

Treated separately, each one of those incidents, caused little more than a few days of screaming headlines, reprimanding editorials, raucous prime-time television debates, weak and short-lived protests by political parties and rights activists. The probability that the second coming of Pegasus into our political discourse will not be very different from its first appears very real, if this too is treated as a separate and isolated event. Fortunately, this time it came with two major differences.

The targets now

This time the attention is exclusively on the Government's role and there are no red herrings in the form of questions about the safety of encryptions offered by service providers. The people involved in the revelations are not just little known activists. They range from the Leader of the Opposition, a constitutional authority, a number of journalists, human rights activists, Ministers in the Government, ruling party leaders, several political leaders, serving or retired officers. The list also revealed that the government agencies made no distinction between state interests and the interests of the ruling party. The expansiveness of the global list of people named as intended targets of the spyware and the prestige of publications involved in cross-border collaboration are indeed arresting.

Pegasus's second coming has yet another distinction. It foregrounds the collusion between government and weapons grade surveillance tech that has no intermediary functions to confuse us. The episodes that were hitherto played out as government versus tech in our country allowed the combatants to compete for our support. The government and the tech companies claimed to fight one another on our behalf. However, they were actually fights between tech and government for possession and control of our data. Government sought its possession to control society, to eliminate dissent and opposition. But it



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

tried to portray to us that it sought to tame the tech companies to protect our interests, privacy, and the security of the realm. Tech companies sought to possess our data sets to make prediction products out of them and sell them to advertisers. Both the Government and tech companies vied for surveillance over us. One for control and the other for profits. However, there is always the undetected possibility of their interests coalescing. In the case of Pegasus the collusion is evident. The NSO Group does not compete with the Government for the possession of data surplus of its application. It is a pure and simple provider of surveillance-as-a-service to the Government. In the event, Pegasus this time shines a light on the Government for civil society to see it as a clear accountable entity.

Government stonewalling

It is evident that the Indian government till now is acting out of a standard play book. It is stonewalling. It has so far evaded the essential questions that are raised by the revelations. Ministers and representatives of the ruling party are questioning the credibility of claims made by the global consortium of media organisations that announced the startling revelations. They are accusing the publications of acting with ulterior motives to undermine India's democratic institutions. Supporters of the Government's narrative charge the publications with attempting to defame the country. The Government's, and its supporters', defence so far is essentially semantic quibble and based on raising doubts on the source of the telephone numbers that the media consortium says is from a leaked list accessed by media portal Forbidden Stories.

Getting India's military convergence formula right

For genuine military jointness, a blending of minds and tailor-made solutions are critical



G. PRAKASH

The Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat's recent description of the Indian Air Force (IAF) as a supporting arm – in an interview on July 2 – and the IAF chief Air Chief Marshal R.K.S. Bhadauria's rebuttal, is the newest bump in the turbulent journey marking the reorganisation process of the armed forces. Unfortunately, this bump, probably caused by misinterpretation of an oversimplification by the Chief of Defence Staff, comes just when the process appears to be touching down after being airborne for long. Whatever the cause, the differences do not speak well of the intellectual underpinnings of the reorganisation process. Is there a problem with air power? What about the IAF warning against splitting it into 'penny packets'? Is air power an adjunct?

Armies and navies will see air power as an adjunct, history being the reason. Analysing the experience of the United States, the greatest exponent of air power in history, the air power theorist Tami Davis Biddle wrote in 2019 that 'aerial bombing cannot control the ground. It is fundamentally a coercive activity in which an attacker seeks to structure the ene-

my's incentives – using threats and actions to shape and constrain the enemy's options, both perceived and real. It is an important and much-utilized military instrument for both deterrence and compellence. However, its ability to produce results varies, and students of strategy must understand the circumstances under which it is more or less likely to achieve particular results or political ends' (<https://bit.ly/3iHHRza>). Holding and controlling land or water is essential in conflict. From Vietnam to Afghanistan, air power failed to deliver the promised results to the U.S. But everyone acknowledges how greatly air power can aid victories though.

Issues before the IAF

Media reports suggest that counting even ageing aircraft, the IAF is 25% short on fighter squadrons. A pan service shortage of about 400 pilots, almost 10% of their authorised strength, further aggravates this. Therefore, the IAF has a point when it warns against splitting assets, for, there may be nothing much to split. Whether now, or in any future joint arrangement, the service chief is responsible for the operational availability of assets. He alone will be blamed for failures. So he must protest with all his might. Vulnerabilities should be known to all stakeholders. When the U.S. Navy faced a budget cut in 2015, Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations told the Senate that '(if the budget gets cut) more ships and



PTI

aircraft (will be) out of action when in battle, more sailors, Marines and merchant mariners (will be) killed, and (there will be) less credibility, to deter adversaries and to assure allies in the future' (<https://bit.ly/2TxLITJ>). But shortage alone is not at the core of the IAF's objections. It is also the prospect of operational plans for the IAF being made outside the service.

Finding common ground

A common understanding of the nuances of military air power is the key. Towards this, it has to be accepted that others too understand air power. The 67-year-old naval air arm figures among the top 10 air forces of the world. With the experience of operating almost every kind of aircraft the IAF operates, and with the benefits of the operational wisdom borne of the harsh integrity of the supremely tough aircraft carrier and other small deck operations, the naval leadership understands air power. This applies to the Indian Army too, in its own way. Confidence needs to be developed that rightly staffed apex joint organisations

The uncommonly cautious wording of the preface to the consortium's admittedly limited claims to their findings is sought to be used to undermine the extraordinary significance of its revelations. The consortium desisted from making sweeping claims. It said, the leaked list of 50,000 numbers "are believed to have been selected as those of people of interest by government clients of NSO Group". The consortium also said that the list "indicates the potential targets" identified in advance by the NSO's clients for "possible surveillance". The list is only "an indication of intent" and the appearance of a number in it does not reveal "whether there was an attempt to infect the phone" or "whether any attempt succeeded".

But amidst all this extraordinary caution is this devastating revelation which the Indian government chooses to deliberately ignore to indulge in semantic wrangling: "However, forensic examination of a small sample of mobile phones with numbers on the list found tight correlations between the time and date of a number in the data and the start of Pegasus activity – in some cases in as little as a few seconds." Amnesty International's forensic lab found that of the 67 phones examined, 23 were infected and 14 showed signs of attempts to penetrate. The rest were cases of possible change of devices or those using the Android operating system that did not keep record of logs needed for forensic work. By any standard this is considered an overwhelming basis for further investigation. It establishes an unquestionable basis for subjecting all the rest of the numbers from the list of 50,000 numbers for investigation. And in India's case, all the 300 numbers from the country that were found in the list. Already, over 10 of them were forensically examined and found to be either successfully infected by Pegasus or attempted to be penetrated. That is enough of a case for a comprehensive investigation into the claims of the media consortium. But the Government narrative harps on words such as 'indica-

tive,' 'possible' and 'potential' as being too general and dismisses snooping charges.

The Indian government's defence that rests on questioning the source of the list has little merit. Investigative journalism is under no obligation to reveal its sources. In fact, it is ethically bound to not reveal in order to protect the identity of its sources.

As important as the questions that the Government forcefully articulates is its remorseless stonewalling of the most important question repeatedly asked of it. It does not tell us in unequivocal terms whether it has or has not purchased the Pegasus spyware. It did not answer that question during the country's first brush with the spyware in 2019 too. Even today it seems to be firm in its resolve not to answer. It hopes to wear down the political opposition, activists, human rights groups, and civil society. It evidently thinks that it can wait out the news cycles to run their course. It probably can. Civil society and the media, cannot, beyond a point, keep the pressure on. A government with brazen determination, brute majority in the legislature, and as yet unchallenged political capital, can afford to wait out the limited firepower of its political opponents' artillery.

Judiciary as bulwark

The only institution in the present situation that can make the Government accountable is the judiciary. The track record of our top court on major issues of defining importance to our national life is at best mixed in the recent past. What it chooses to do or not do now can make a difference to India. The options before it are clear as they are stark. To allow the present government a free run in turning India into a surveillance state is one. The other is to stop the Government in its tracks, restore to its people the gift of a free and liberal state that the founding fathers of the Republic gave them. The country has very little time.

Parakala Prabhakar is a political economist and heads RightPOLIO, a Hyderabad-based knowledge enterprise

can draw up professional operational plans for air power. This will need some effort in the short term towards enhancing professional military education though, at the staff level.

Synergy and hurdles

With dwindling budgets, a steadily deteriorating security situation and the march of technology, the armed forces understand the need to synergise. But natural human faults interfere. For instance, different services do not co-exist well where they are colocated. Bitter fights over land, buildings, facilities, etc. mar optimal operational synergising. Then there is the issue of giving each other the best, or of wanting to be with each other. The Andaman and Nicobar Command suffered from the lack of a substantial operational charter, and the services not positioning appropriate personnel or resources there. Moreover, as a joint tenure did not benefit career, no one strove for it. The U.S., when faced with the same problem, made joint tenures mandatory for promotions. Steamrolling with decrees is useful in such areas.

Major reorganisations must strictly follow the sequence of written concepts, their refinement through consultation, simulation or table top war gaming, field evaluation and final analysis before implementation. This would help address command and control, asset adequacy, individual service roles, operational planning under new circumstances and the ade-

quacy of joint structures. Who gets to lead what also matters. The Western Command between the Indian Army and the IAF, the Northern Command with the Indian Army, Maritime Command with the Indian Navy and the Air Defence Command with the IAF may be an acceptable formula.

What is needed

As we hurtle towards inevitable reorganisation, some specifics are required. The first is the need for a comprehensive National Security Strategy to guide the services develop capacities required in their respective domains. The second is the need to transform professional education and inter-service employment to nurture genuine respect for others. The third is that the armed forces must resolve their differences among themselves, as the politicians or bureaucrats cannot do it. The fourth is to ensure good quality staff, in adequate numbers, at apex joint organisations, to reassure individual services and those in the field that they are in safe hands. The fifth is the acceptance of the fact that what works for other countries need not work for us. We may need tailor-made solutions which may need more genuine thinking. For genuine military jointness, a genuine convergence of minds is critical. Decrees have limitations.

Commadore G. Prakash, a Nau Sena Medal recipient, served the Indian Navy for 35 years. He is a specialist in aviation and anti-submarine warfare

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Vaccination drive

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is spot on when he says that the private sector is lagging behind in the vaccination drive. This is a national health emergency, with the responsibility resting with one and all. A gigantic process needs total commitment and a strong determined focus. The private sector would do well in assisting the nation in vaccination. Though December is still some

distance away, all-out efforts in vaccination are the only ray of hope.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI,
Secunderabad

Pass percentage rate

Should we feel elated over the astronomical examination pass percentage rate, especially in the Kerala school final examinations and also in the ISCE and ISC exams? In the 1980s, the pass percentage for Class 10 was between 40% and 50%, and

for the pre-degree and degree examinations it was even less. Are we to surmise that present day students are more intelligent and far smarter than their counterparts of those days? Or is it just that the valuation process is largely liberal? The stupendous rate of pass percentage may help the weaker students but one wonders how the students with calibre will feel.

SANATH KUMAR T.S.,
Thrissur, Kerala

A reckless stand

The protests in some parts of the West and also in Australia against lockdown restrictions are baffling. Do citizens in these countries not know that the novel coronavirus is still there? And that the respective governments have their well-being as top priority? Back in India, lockdown measures have certainly been taken by the people in their stride.

K. PRADEEP,
Chennai

Silver at Tokyo

Mirabai Chhanu's silver medal in the weightlifting event at Tokyo Olympics is worth its weight in gold. Considering the fact that a medal in weightlifting has come years after Karnam

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Malleswari won a bronze, this is indeed a great achievement by any yardstick.
C.V. ARAVIND,
Bengaluru

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The reference to Taliye village in Satara district, in the picture caption of the front-page story on Maharashtra rain disaster (July 24, 2021), should be corrected to Taliye village in Raigad district.

The caption of a front-page picture titled "Let the Games begin!" (some editions, July 24, 2021) misidentified the flag-bearer as Harmanpreet Singh. He is Manpreet Singh.

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Lessons from India's food security response

Government measures to tackle the food crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic were effective



BISHOW PARAJULI

With a reduction in COVID-19 infections as the second wave weakens in India, it is important to focus on the pandemic's disruptive impact on the food security and livelihoods of the poor and marginalised.

The deadly virus has been around for two years and it is not clear as to how and when it will end. However, we do have enough in terms of a hindsight analysis of policies and interventions that promise food and livelihood security, along with the strengthening of health support, for millions facing the wrath of the pandemic.

It is imperative to also note an alarming escalation in the global hunger that is unfolding right now. There was a 'dramatic worsening' of world hunger in 2020, much of it likely related to the fallout of COVID-19. While the pandemic's impact has yet to be fully mapped, a multi-agency report, 'The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World', estimates that around a tenth of the global population - up to 81.1 crore persons - were undernourished last year.

India has made enormous progress in food production over the years, with an inspiring journey towards self-sufficiency in food production marked by the Green Revolution. In 2020, India produced over 30 crore tonnes of cereals and had built up a food stock of 10 crore tonnes. The country has registered record harvests over the last few years. India exported a record 1.98 crore tonnes of rice and wheat in FY21.

Pivoting safety nets

Coming to the impact of COVID-19's fallout, vulnerable and marginalised families in India continued to be buffered against the food crisis by its robust Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

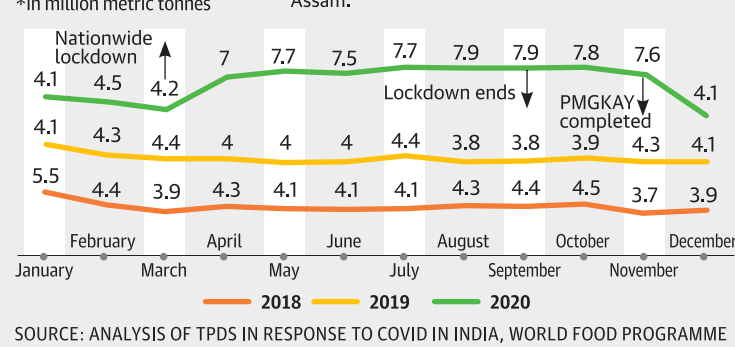
Key measures initiated by the Union government included allowing the States to lift their allocations for six months in one go, in anticipation

Food for all

In light of the impact of COVID-19, vulnerable families in India continued to be buffered against the food crisis by its robust Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). The graphic shows the monthly distribution of grains* under the system



Heavy load: Two women carrying a bag of rice as others wait in queue for ration in Guwahati, Assam.



SOURCE: ANALYSIS OF TPDS IN RESPONSE TO COVID IN INDIA, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

of a surge in demand for foodgrains through the public distribution system. As data shows, there was an unprecedented spike in the uptake of subsidised and free foodgrains during the lockdown. The public distribution system became a lifeline for millions hit by the pandemic.

Increase entitlements

A dynamic analysis of the food security scenario and feedback from different stakeholders allowed the Government of India to increase entitlements given to National Food Safety Act (NFSA) beneficiaries in 2020. For instance, under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), 81.3 crore NFSA beneficiaries received an additional 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month and 1 kg of pulses per family per month, free of cost, for eight months from April to November 2020. Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package, 8 crore migrants were provided 5 kg of foodgrains per month, free of cost.

The government also allowed NGOs/civil society organisations to buy rice and wheat at subsidised prices directly from nearby Food Corporation of India (FCI) warehouses. Rice was sold at ₹22 per kg (market price is ₹35 per kg) and wheat at ₹21 per kg (market price is ₹27 per kg) last year.

The PMGKAY was introduced in

2020 for eight months to provide relief to 80 crore beneficiaries covered under NFSA from COVID-induced economic hardships. The scheme was reintroduced this year for the third phase implementation for two months till June, and later extended till November under the fourth phase.

During the third phase of PMGKAY, about 89% of the allocated foodgrains were distributed to beneficiaries. The distribution reached 94% in May. Implemented for eight months last year and for seven months this year, the PMGKAY outlay will add up to a total expenditure of ₹2,28,000 crore over 15 months.

Addressing challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has once again drawn attention to addressing the aspects of access and portability of food entitlements. It is critical to leave no one behind in times such as these and crucial for states to find solutions so that no one goes hungry.

Ensuring that food support focuses on at-risk groups, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, single women-led households, transgender persons, HIV-affected persons, displaced persons, refugees and orphan children, is at the heart of 'Leave No One Behind'.

The scale of India's public food distribution systems is immense and

has gone through constant navigation and improvement, which is commendable. But more needs to still be done to improve access and inclusion among the missing vulnerable population.

Way ahead

First, the introduction of the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme is an innovation that can be a game changer, allowing beneficiaries to access their food entitlements from anywhere in the country. This is especially important for a country like India with a massive mobile population and migration between States. The scheme takes the massive digitisation of the supply chain, distribution and access to the next step, ensuring anyone benefits from anywhere in India.

Second, climate change will continue to affect agriculture and food security, and the impact on the poor and vulnerable can be devastating. Massive efforts are needed towards programmes that focus on building resilient agriculture that is adaptive to changing weather and needs through the introduction of newer varieties of crops, efficient irrigation systems, and the promotion of crops as per the agro-climate zones.

Thirdly, a third of all food produced is wasted. There should be enhanced efforts to prevent losses. Lost or wasted energy used for food production accounts for about 10% of the world's total energy consumption, and annual greenhouse gas emissions associated with food losses and food waste reaches to around 3.5 gigatonnes of the CO₂ equivalent.

Finally, 2021 offers a unique opportunity for advancing food security and nutrition through transforming food systems with the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit, the Nutrition for Growth Summit and the COP26 on climate change. The outcomes of these events will certainly shape the actions of the second half of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition. India has a central role to play in this transformation and offering experiences and solutions to address the thought processes and models for a resilient, equitable, and food-secure world.

Bishow Parajuli is UN World Food Programme Representative and Country Director for India

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Time to reflect

The role of an ombudsman is not only to identify what went wrong but also to work on a visible mending process



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

In less than two months, my tenure as the Readers' Editor will come to an end. After being a journalist for nearly four decades, which includes the past nine years as a news ombudsman, I am moving on to pursue research on a range of subjects that are close to my heart. I would like to use this interregnum to look at the changing nature of the news industry, and the challenges it poses to a news ombudsman. Along with my personal reflections, I would like to hear and share the views of the readers about how they assess this institution in general, and within *The Hindu* in particular.

First, we need to contextualise the role of a news ombudsman and how it is different from all other journalistic assignments. While every journalistic assignment goes on to create a body of public information, the evaluation by an ombudsman is clearly a *post facto* act.

Autopsies help to understand the factors that led to the death of an individual - which is a significant contribution. The role of an ombudsman is not only to identify what went wrong but also to work on a visible mending process. The idea of a visible mending process is to ensure that the society makes its choices based on right information rather than a faulty one.

'Required revolution'

Joshua Benton, founder of the Nieman Lab at Harvard University, in his article "From public to publics" has argued that "a strong, proactive public editor can be part of this current reckoning in journalism that is looking increasingly like a required revolution in journalism culture".

Over the course of next few weeks, I will also be touching upon some of the crucial questions about the role of a news ombudsman raised by Kathy English, who was *Toronto Star's* public editor for thirteen long years and my fellow board member at the Organisation of News Ombudsmen and Standards Editor.

What is the need for this extended reflection and engagement? Is it an attempt to understand digital disruption? Is it an attempt

to locate the elements of journalism within the changing contours of the news media industry? The answer is yes to all these questions and much more. I earnestly hope this extended engagement will deepen the compact between the newspaper and its readers.

Integral for self-regulation

A news ombudsman is an integral part of self-regulation for news media. According to a UNESCO framework, "Self-regulation is a combination of standards setting out the appropriate codes of behaviour for the media that are necessary to support freedom of expression, and process how those behaviours will be monitored or held to account."

The framework further states that "self-regulation preserves independence of the media and protects it from partisan government interference. It could be more efficient as a system of regulation as the media understand their own environment better than government". The framework also alerts citizens that this approach may be used by the news industry to further its "commercial interests rather than the public interest".

While the Terms of Reference that govern this office give general guiding principles, individual Readers' Editors evolve their own approach to effectively ensure that the newspaper does not stray from its core principles and editorial values. In my first column on September 24, 2012, I spelt out my approach: "The Terms of Reference defines my role and the Code of Editorial Values defines the role of the editorial team. Readers' concerns, complaints and suggestions shall not be evaluated in an arbitrary fashion, but within a rigorous framework set out in these two documents, as they provide for an institutional framework for a mutual dialogue between *The Hindu* and its millions of readers. My job is to see that this dialogue takes place for mutual benefit."

The fulcrum of my ombuds universe is a value system that is deeply embedded in the notion of the commons and common good, where the central concern is to effect course correction and not to be punitive.

I have both boundaries and possibilities, and I respect the prerogative of editorial freedom. The perimeter is set by the Terms of Reference and it would be unfair to breach this. Respecting the well-defined perimeter is an enabling quality as it opens up many avenues to look at the best practices of journalism. This debate is crucial to preserve public interest in journalism.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

Are law and technology a solution to fake news?

Stakeholders are attempting to find a robust and effective solution to sift fact from fiction

VIKRAM VINCENT

Fake news and its associated social problems have been a major concern and the Indian government has been attempting to bring in several legal amendments to deal with its creation, propagation and effects. Social media companies, too, are investing billions of dollars into technological solutions such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify fake news and its proliferation. Are these the best solutions to solve a problem as old as humanity or is there any other effective solution?

Looking at statistics on the justice delivery system in India, the legal system needs to become more robust before it can be considered an effective solution. Further, the formulation of laws in themselves do not prevent a wrong action.

When Timnit Gebru, former co-lead of Google's ethical AI team, made an unceremonious exit, the *MIT Technology Review* identified the key aspects of her unpublished paper that had caused a stir within Google. In summary, to train large AI models, massive computing power and energy is required and this has been expanding since 2017, along with an ever-increasing carbon footprint. The *Technology Review* stated that the "Transformer" model, as on January 2019, used 6,56,347 kilowatt-hour (kWh), producing a carbon footprint of 6,26,155 lbs of CO₂ equivalent at a cloud computing cost between \$9,42,973 and \$32,01,722 for a single training of the AI model. Further, since the models tend to use text already present on the Internet, there is a tendency for the AI to reflect strong negative human biases.

Fake news is disinformation that has no basis in reality, but is presented as fact. Being designed to manipulate both the intellect and emotions of a person, it can evoke strong emotional reactions in its reader, which could sometimes result in violence.

In an experimental study conducted among first-year undergraduate History students, who were given some historical content, it was found that novice learners made claims that

did not have supporting evidence, were either inaccurate or unrelated.

India's diversity is its strength, but also the source for numerous conflicts that have persisted over the decades. These conflicts, being rooted in historical claims around politics, culture and religion, will intensify if the historical assumptions and data behind related fake news are not contextually analysed. The problem is aggravated with the decline in history learning programmes worldwide. While the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) curriculum has elements of historical thinking, State boards are primarily focused on the memorisation of content.

The Constitution of India provides a long-term solution under Article 51A (h), which says, "It shall be the duty of every citizen to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform." While the National Education Policy, 2020, captures the needs of the nation, it misses out on historical thinking.

Historical thinking is the set of thinking skills required for learning history. It consists of concepts like points of view, evidence, validity and reliability of the source, contextualisation, and corroboration, apart from other skills. Historical thinking skills can also be applied to law, forensic science, politics and research, and dealing with 'fake news'.

In the case of fake news, a person would have to be able to read a piece of news, examine the source for bias and ascertain whether the claims being made are factual or whether they constitute deliberate misinformation. Since fake news is designed to appeal to emotion, it becomes all the more important that a person is skilled at interrogating evidence, contextualising the information and corroborating it with alternate sources. If historical thinking has such widespread application, why is it missing from active public discourse and in the education system?

Vikram Vincent has a Ph.D in Educational Technology from IIT Bombay

DATA POINT

Disparity in supply

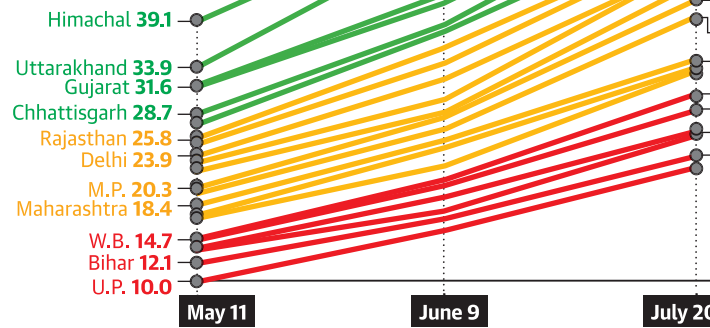
States such as Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar continue to experience a crunch in their COVID-19 vaccine supply, while Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttarakhand are enjoying a relatively better stock position. Among the States experiencing a crunch, Tamil Nadu, W.B. and A.P. have wasted minimal doses, while T.N. has extracted the most extra doses. Moreover, India's vaccine utilisation rate is about 93% on July 20. By Jasmin Nihalani, Vignesh Radhakrishnan and Sumant Sen

■ Tamil Nadu has extracted 5,88,243 extra doses between May 1 and July 13, the highest in the country, which forms 3.91% of the doses supplied to the State by July 20

■ As the State-wise split of public and private vaccine doses received and administered was not available, an accurate State-wise utilisation rate could not be computed. However, India's overall rate of 93% indicates that the usage will hover over that number in most States

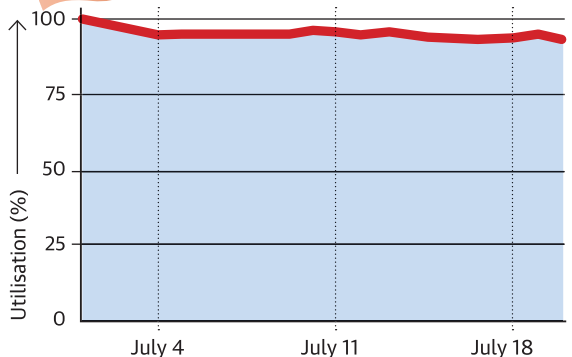
SHARE OF POTENTIAL DOSES

The slope graph shows the % of the population that can be potentially administered with at least one dose of the vaccine, with the supply available at three different time periods - May 11, June 9 and July 20. Data doesn't include vaccines supplied to private hospitals

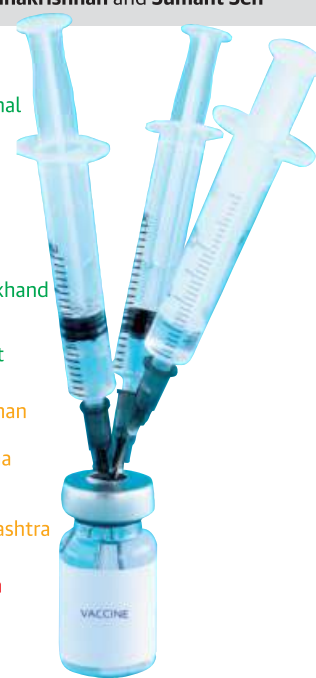


UTILISATION PERCENTAGE

While the wastage of doses is low across most States, the utilisation of supplied doses is also very high. Of all the vaccines supplied to the States by the Centre, 93% have been utilised as on July 20. The State-wise split of the utilisation % could not be depicted due to inconsistent data



Source: Lok Sabha, Health Ministry



WASTAGE FACTOR

The table lists the extra vaccine doses extracted as a % of supply on July 20 and the absolute number of doses wasted by select States. Tamil Nadu tops the States in extra doses extracted, followed by Kerala and W.B.

State/UT	Extra vaccine doses extracted as a % of supply on July 20	No. of vaccine doses wasted
Tamil Nadu	3.9%	0
Kerala	2.7%	0
W.B.	2.2%	0
Gujarat	1.7%	0
M.P.	1.5%	0
Haryana	1.4%	0
Karnataka	1.4%	0
Andhra	1.2%	0
Maharashtra	1.1%	0
Telangana	1.1%	0
Rajasthan	0.9%	0
Himachal	0.9%	0
Jharkhand	0.6%	0
Uttarakhand	0.4%	0
Odisha	0.3%	0
Chhattisgarh	0.2%	0
Bihar	0%	1,26,743
J&K	0%	32,680
Punjab	0%	13,613
U.P.	0%	13,207

Data in the table is for the May 1 to July 13, 2021, period

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 26, 1971

A switch to save astronauts

For nearly 12 minutes after the Apollo 15 astronauts leave earth on their 12-day round trip to the moon, Major Kenneth Aisler will have his finger poised over a switch that could end it all abruptly. That finger against the Red "Destruct" switch would start a series of events resulting in the jettisoning of the command module containing the three Apollo 15 astronauts, the destruction of the Saturn 5 booster rocket, and the ultimate descent to earth of the Apollo spacecraft from its recovery parachutes. From that moment on, it would be up to "Beach Boss" Col. Robert A. Van Arsdall and his air, land and sea forces standing by for just such a disaster. These two Air Force officers have in their hands the fate of astronauts David R. Scott, James B. Irwin and Alfred M. Worden. They also are responsible for other life and property should the Saturn rocket stray from its programmed path. Although all of America's 24 manned space flights have made it safely through those tenuous early minutes, safety crews are never sure. They constantly are working to perfect techniques and find new equipment. More than one million people are expected at the Cape area to watch the giant Saturn 5 blast-off. The weather is expected to be good for launch time. Scott and Irwin are scheduled to land on the moon at 3.45 I.S.T. on July 31 and return to earth, north of Hawaii, on August 8 at 2.16 I.S.T.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 26, 1921

Notes forgery case

As a sequel to the Rajahmundry currency notes forgery case, proceedings under Sections 489 A, 489 B, 489 C and 489 D of I.P.C. were started against Mula Subbaya, the alleged approver in the currency notes forgery case. It will be remembered that after the acquittal of the accused in the Sessions Court in the main case, the case against the approver was withdrawn by the District Superintendent of Police, Godavari, and a petition was filed in August last in the High Court for sanction to prosecute him for perjury. While this petition is still pending judgment, the main case once withdrawn was again launched. It is being inquired into by the Co-canada Sub-Magistrate. Dewan Bahadur Venkatachalam Pantulu is conducting the prosecution while the accused is defended by P.V. Subbarao of the Rajahmundry bar. Eight witnesses for the prosecution have so far been examined and the case is proceeding.

T.N. to create databank of migrant workers

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu will soon create a digital databank of migrant workers employed in industries, particularly the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and hospitality sectors, Minister for Industries Thangam Thennarasu said on Sunday.

"There are a few lakhs of labourers from various States engaged in industries across Tamil Nadu. A majority of them went home during the peak of COVID-19. We need to have a clear record on how many returned to work, their vaccination status and other identification details," Mr. Thennarasu told *The Hindu*.

Major industries rely on a few labour contractors. Each contractor has about 50,000 workers from States such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal.

Deal on Gogra, Hot Springs likely soon

India, China could reach an agreement for disengagement at the next round of military talks, say officials

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

India and China are set to hold the 12th round of Corps Commander-level talks aimed at resolving the stand-off in eastern Ladakh soon, and an agreement for disengagement at Gogra and Hot Springs is likely to be reached.

China had suggested July 26 as a possible date for the talks, but the Indian side conveyed that the day being Kargil Vijay Diwas, it would not be convenient. Fresh dates are expected to be agreed upon soon.

"The situation on the ground is stable. There have been no attempts to reoccupy the peaks vacated. The sense is they (China) are ready to disengage from all places. We got positive inputs and it will happen," a senior defence official said. "We continue to talk at all levels."

The two sides are also looking at a Major General-level talks to be held after the 12th round of talks, a second



Fresh deployment: An Army convoy travelling towards Leh through the Zoji La pass. ■ GETTY IMAGES

official said. Since the stand-off began, the two sides have held 10 Major General-level talks, 55 Brigadier-level talks and around 1,450 calls over the two hotlines. India and China have two hotlines for communication at Chushul and Daulat Beg Oldi.

Friction points While disengagement was completed on both banks of Pangong Tso in February, the other friction points that

remain to be resolved are Gogra and Hot Springs, Demchok and Depsang. The buffer zones established in some places as part of earlier talks remain in place. "Buffer zone varies from place to place," the first official said.

In eastern Ladakh, India and China have two mutually agreed disputed areas - Trig Heights and Demchok - and 10 areas of differing perception. Officials said since the stand-off last year, additional

five friction points have emerged. These are Km 120 in the Galwan area, Patrolling Points 15 and 17, and Rechin La and Rezang La on the south Bank of the Pangong Tso, the second official said.

"China wants de-escalation first and disengagement later which is not acceptable to India as they can bring back troops and equipment much faster than we can do," the second official said. Some of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) peace locations are located as far as 3,000 km from the LAC, but they can mobilise much faster, the official said.

Access issues

For India, the area is cut off for several months a year which is not the case with China. Both the Zoji La and Rohtang passes were kept open longer than usual last year due to the stand-off and are available for seven or eight months. Construction work on several tunnels is

under way on a priority basis, including at Baralacha La and Tanglang La, among others, the officials said.

Stating that they have a clear picture of what the PLA is doing and they have vacated and gone back in some places, the official said China has not increased its troop levels since the stand-off began but has rotated its troops. The PLA, too, is closely watching the movements of the Indian military. "We have about 1,000 vehicles going up and down the Rohtang axis everyday," the official added.

However, at least two officials said the Line of Actual Control (LAC) will not become like the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan with very close deployments by both sides. "The LAC will not become like the LoC. But the force levels have gone up as the trust is lost. All agreements are broken," the first official stated. New protocols have to be worked out, another official stated

President Ram Nath Kovind completes 4 years in office

He gave assent to 63 Union, State Bills

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday completed four years in office, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said on Twitter and shared an e-book highlighting activities of the fourth year of his presidency. Apart from giving assent to 43 Bills of the Union government and 20 Bills of different States, the e-book noted that the President had invited frontline COVID-19 warriors for the "At Home" reception on Independence Day.

He also celebrated Raksha Bandhan with nurses of the Trained Nurses' Association of India, Military Nursing Service and the President's Estate Clinic, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said.

Mr. Kovind, 76, who took oath as the 14th President of India on July 25, 2017, administered oath of office and secrecy to the members of the Council of Ministers and the Chief Justice of India and accepted credentials from

23 foreign Heads of Mission via videoconference, the e-book said.

As "Everyone's President", Mr. Kovind visited 13 States and two Union Territories and met 780 people during these visits, it said.

As the Supreme Commander of the armed forces, he visited the National War Memorial and paid tributes to those who made the supreme sacrifice while defending the nation, inaugurated the General Thimayya Museum at Madikeri in Kodagu (Karnataka), and witnessed Joint Services Operational demonstrations by the Andaman and Nicobar Command at Swaraj Dweep.

The e-book also noted the President's convocation addresses to various universities. He also presented national awards to teachers via videoconference and attended a Governor's Conference on the 'Role of National Education Policy 2020 in Transforming Higher Education' in the virtual mode.

President on four-day visit to J&K

On 22nd anniversary of Kargil War, he will pay homage at Drass war memorial

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Amid a tight security blanket, President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday arrived in Srinagar on a four-day visit to the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh, as the country prepares to observe the 22nd anniversary of the 1999 Kargil War.

J&K Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha received the President at the Srinagar airport around 11.15 a.m. Mr. Kovind was accorded a guard of honour.

Officials said Mr. Kovind interacted with the Army's top brass in Srinagar. In the evening, he attended a function at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre located on the banks of the Dal Lake.

A thick security blanket has been put in place in Srinagar. Several stretches on the access to the venue have been closed to civilian traffic for the next three days.

This has evoked sharp reactions from locals as well



Warm welcome: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha greeting President Ram Nath Kovind, left, in Srinagar on Sunday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

as tourists. Scores of tourists were stranded at the famous boulevard near the lake due to barricades erected at multiple points. The President will leave for Ladakh on July 26, and will pay homage at the Kargil War Memorial in Drass. He will return to Srinagar to address the 19th convocation of the University of Kashmir on July 27.

Ahead of the President's Kargil visit, Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrations were kicked off on Sunday.

An official said senior Army officers met war veterans and "veer naaris (brave women) at the Lahmochan View Point, and remembered the soldiers who laid down their lives fighting Pakistani intruders.

Indian soldiers recaptured peaks, including Tiger Hill, Tololing Top, Three Pimples and Trishul HT, and Drass town.

General Officer Commanding, 16 Corps, Lt. Gen. M.V. Suchindra Kumar participated in the interaction with retired Army personnel, war veterans and "veer naaris", officials said.



Condition of Muivah stable, says NSCN(I-M)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The condition of Thuingaleng Muivah, the general secretary of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, is stable, the extremist group said on Sunday.

The 87-year-old NSCN(I-M) leader was rushed to a private hospital in Nagaland's commercial hub Dimapur on Saturday evening after he complained of "uneasiness". Doctors at the hospital said he was admitted in the intensive care unit after a drop in the oxygen saturation level.

Mr. Muivah had reportedly tested positive for COVID-19 a day after a meeting with the members of the Core Committee on Nagaland Political Issue led by Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio on July 21. He tested negative on July 23, a spokesperson of the outfit said. "His condition is not serious as of now," the spokesperson told journalists in Nagaland. Five other NSCN (I-M) leaders who had attended the meeting had tested negative.

Ready to engage on rights, says India

Proud of achievements in domains of democracy, human rights, say officials

KALLOL BHATTACHARJEE
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday stressed that issues such as human rights and democracy were universal in nature, and said these values were not limited by "national or cultural perspectives".

Informed sources here elaborated on the current Indian perspective on human rights as it is likely to feature prominently during the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken this week. Officials said India would place Pakistan's alleged links with financing of terrorists on the agenda of talks with Mr. Blinken.

"Issues such as human rights and democracy are universal and extend beyond

a particular national or cultural perspective. India is proud of its achievements in both domains and is always glad to share experiences. As a long-standing pluralistic society, India is open to engaging those who now recognise the value of diversity," said a source. The statement indicates that India prefers a general conversation on human rights instead of bringing its own record on that front to the table.

The argument about the condition of human rights and democratic values in India appears to have been made in clear response to the comments by Dean Thompson, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs.



Antony Blinken

Mr. Thompson on Saturday laid out the agenda of Mr. Blinken's tour and said, "With respect to the human rights and democracy question, yes, we will raise it, and we will continue that conversation, because we firmly believe that we have more values in common on those fronts than we don't."

The alleged use of Pegasus

spyware to track journalists and activists in India is also expected to be taken up by Mr. Blinken. "Undemocratic uses of tech/Internet are a major concern for Mr. Biden. His administration has already been critical of Internet bans in India and Mr. Blinken will likely bring up Pegasus," said Michael Kugelman, South Asia Senior Associate at the Wilson Center.

"On the regional situation, implications of withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Afghanistan, and the need for sustained pressure on Pakistan on terror financing and terror havens will be part of the agenda," said the source on growing Indian concern about the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

'PM played key role in solving NE problems'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi played a decisive role in solving the northeast's problems of extremism and restoring peace in the region, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said here on Sunday.

He underscored the resolution of long-pending issues such as the rehabilitation of the internally displaced Brus and bringing Bodo extremist groups to the talks table. "Peace eluded the northeast because of a slew of irritating problems. Modiji has been solving the problems one by one. I have seen the process closely after becoming the Home Minister."

Union Ministries owe ₹147 crore to newspapers

Oldest unpaid bill for advertisement dates back to 2004, reveals RTI query by law student

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

The Union government owes more than ₹147 crore to various print media outlets as payment for advertisements, according to a recent response to a Right to Information (RTI) query made by law student Aniket Gaurav.

There are more than 76,000 outstanding bills for print media campaigns pending with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), the oldest of which dates as far back as

2004. For electronic media, the pending amount is ₹67 crore, while the unpaid bills for outdoor publicity amount to almost ₹18 crore.

Gaurav, a first year law student at Meerut University, said he had sent the query as he was concerned about the number of newspapers which were being shut down. "As a reader, I feel that the major reason for any newspaper shutting down would be because of loss of revenue. As government ads constitute a large part of re-

venue, so I thought I should find out whether the government is paying for its ads on time, and which Ministries have unpaid bills," he said. "I was shocked to find that there are ads which have not been paid for 17 years."

Defence Ministry dues

The RTI response from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting provided data on the outstanding bills that Central Ministries owed to the DAVP, which in turn pays media organisations for run-

ning advertising campaigns. The largest pending amounts for print media come from the Defence Ministry, which has 12,271 unpaid bills worth more than ₹16 crore, followed by the Finance Ministry, with 6,668 unpaid bills worth ₹13 crore. The information is updated until June 21, 2021.

With regard to electronic media, the Ministry said a full list of the number of outstanding bills was not readily available, nor were records maintained regarding the

date of the bills. However, the information available indicated that more than ₹67 crore is yet to be paid to TV channels.

For context, the total pending amount of ₹147 crore is higher than the ₹118 crore "commitment" made by the government to all newspapers during 2020-21, as well as the ₹65 crore actually paid out as "expenditure" for print ad campaigns during the same period, according to data available on the DAVP website.

No substitute for dialogue, says Farooq

'India, Pakistan should be consistent'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Sunday said there was no substitute for dialogue and called upon India and Pakistan "to be consistent, coherent and serious in their nascent engagement".

"There is no substitute for dialogue. The moves and the messages indicating a thaw in relations between the neighbouring countries did put brakes on the escalating tensions. Both the countries should ensure that people of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh live a life free from unending miseries," Dr. Abdullah, who was addressing party workers in Kulgam, said.

He emphasised that his party had all along been a strong votary of Indo-Pak. dialogue, and underlined that the dialogue should result in J&K-centric confidence building measures, including resumption of cross-LoC trade through a proper banking mechanism and doing away with the present barter system.

"It will indeed help the two countries solve their disagreements amicably and in an objective manner for the greater good of the people of J&K, Ladakh and the entire region," he said.

The five-party amalgam Gupkar alliance president



Farooq Abdullah

Dr. Abdullah's statement comes one month after the alliance's engagement with the Centre "failed to bring any change on the ground or saw any push on Kashmir-specific CBMs".

It is Dr. Abdullah's first major political statement since he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 24 in New Delhi.

He stressed that a result-oriented dialogue between India and Pakistan will benefit the people of J&K the most. "Both the nations, I have maintained all along, have to live side by side. It is up to them, if they want to live as enemies or supportive friends and partners in development. Both countries can achieve much by joining hands in progress," he added. He said if the ties between the two nations were to improve then they have to come out of their shells and narrow down the space of their differences and source of conflict.

Snooping allegations baseless, says Nadda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Sunday termed as baseless the Pegasus snooping allegations, and hit out at the Opposition parties for disrupting Parliament.

"It is baseless... It is issueless. The Opposition parties led by the Congress do not have any issue which they want to raise for people. That is why they raise this kind of issue," he told reporters here.

'Ready for talks'

Mr. Nadda said although the Centre was ready to hold talks over different issues, the Opposition parties, led

by the Congress, were disrupting the proceedings of Parliament.

"The Congress, along with other Opposition parties, has become disappointed and issueless and hence resorts to such disruptions... They do not know what to do. They want to stop Parliament over issueless things."

"But people know that despite all their efforts, the productivity of Parliament has broken all the records under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, the business has broken all the records," he added.

Bharat Coking Coal Limited
'A Mini Ratna Company'
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

Notice

All the tenders issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of **BCCL www.bcclweb.in**, Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement Portal **https://eprocure.gov.in** In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal **https://gem.gov.in**. *This is applicable to all Open (Domestic / Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board
Headquarter: 4 Institutional Area, Ushalana Dongri, Jaipur-302004
Phone : 0141-2716814, 2716832 e-mail : member-secretary@rpsc.nic.in

क्रमांक- एफ 13(33)/राप्रनिम/आई.टी./320-326 दिनांक - 23.07.2021

बोली सूचना
पुराने/अनुपयोगी/अप्रचलित/नकारा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक सामान/उपकरण (ई-वेस्ट) की बोली है जिसका इलेक्ट्रॉनिक सामान/उपकरण (ई-वेस्ट) की बोली को जायगी जिसकी न्यूनतम विक्रय राशि रुपये 2,86,291.00 (दो लाख अठ्ठासी हजार दो सौ रुपये) है। ई-वेस्ट सामग्री की बोली में मांग लेने वाली फर्म केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण मण्डल (CPCB) / राज्य प्रदूषण नियंत्रण मण्डल (SPCB) / प्रदूषण नियंत्रण समिति (PCC) से E-Waste (प्रचलित) नियम, 2016 के तहत अधिकृत डिसेम्बलर (Dismanter) / रिसाइक्लर (Recycler) / रजिस्टर्ड PRO/EPR अधिकृत प्रोड्यूसर होना अनिवार्य है। बोली में मांग लेने हेतु बोलीकर्ता अपनी बोली संलग्न 'प्रस्ताव प्रारूप' में भरकर सील बंद लिफाफे में दिनांक 16.08.2021 को अपरान्ह 4:00 बजे तक जमा करा सकते हैं जो उसी दिन अपरान्ह 4:30 बजे उपस्थित बोलीदाता / उनका प्रतिनिधियों के समक्ष विभागीय क्रय समिति द्वारा खोली जायेगी। विस्तृत विवरण राज्य मण्डल की वेबसाइट <http://environment.rajasthan.gov.in/rpcb> पर उपलब्ध है।
राज.संवाद/सी/21/3896 सदस्य सचिव

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In collaboration with the private sector, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is implementing a project to promote sustainable plastic waste management practices. The socio-technical model promotes segregation, collection, and recycling of plastic waste and is aligned with India's Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission, Solid Waste Management Rules 2016, and Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2018.

The Project Request for Information from NGOs across India to join as Service Provider through e-tendering portal. National and or/International CSOs/NGOs, who have experience managing the solid waste/plastic waste management and operations and network with waste collectors in city/state are encouraged to apply.

For details, please visit
<https://bit.ly/3AADfsT>

Rahul slams slow pace of vaccination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

On a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered his monthly radio broadcast, *Mann Ki Baat*, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi took a dig at the government by questioning the pace of COVID-19 vaccination.

"Had you understood the country's *Mann ki Baat*, such would not have been the state of vaccinations," Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

The Congress leader also posted a video highlighting the reported slow rate of vaccination, and media reports on people not being able to get vaccines. A graph highlighted that the required vaccination rate is 93 lakh per day but the actual average vaccinations per day in the last seven days is 36 lakh per day.

Civil Aviation Security gets new chief

STAFF REPORTER
AHMEDABAD

Nasir Kamal, a 1986 batch IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) in the Ministry of Civil Aviation till his superannuation on July 31, 2022. BCAS is a wing of the Civil Aviation Ministry looking after civil aviation security. His appointment was cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister.

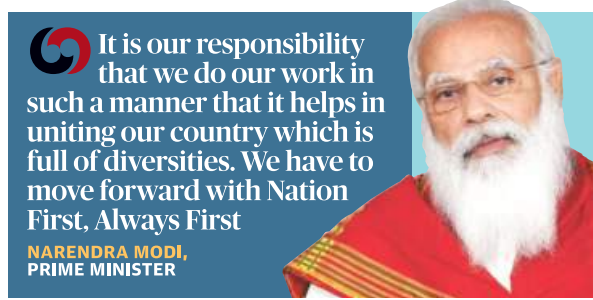
PM calls for a 'unite India movement'

Participate in 'Amrit Mahotsav' to mark the 75th year of Independence, says Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged Indians to participate in the "Amrit Mahotsav" launched to mark the 75th year of Independence, asking citizens to forge a unity of purpose or "Bharat Jodo Andolan" in the same manner as Mahatma Gandhi's "Quit India" or "Bharat Chhodo Andolan".

"Just like Babu [Mahatma Gandhi] led the 'Bharat Chhodo Andolan' [Quit India movement], every Indian must lead the 'Bharat Jodo



Andolan [unite India movement]. It is our responsibility that we do our work in such a manner that it helps in uniting our country which is full of diversities," Mr. Mo-

di said, adding, "We have to move forward with 'Nation first, Always first'."

Many programmes in connection with Amrit Mahotsav were being run, the Prime

Minister said, adding that the Ministry of Culture had started an initiative to have maximum number of Indians sing the national anthem together. For this, a website too has been created.

Cautions on COVID

While greeting citizens on the upcoming festival season, he cautioned that the threat of COVID-19 still loomed large and that all precautions must be taken to prevent its spread.

Noting that on July 26 the nation would mark Kargil Vi-

jay Diwas, the Prime Minister asked the people of the country to pay tributes to those who made the nation proud in 1999.

In the broadcast, he also cited a study done by MyGov to highlight that out of those sending messages and suggestions for *Mann Ki Baat*, close to 75% were below 35 years. "I view this as a very good indicator. *Mann Ki Baat* is a medium which has positivity, sensitivity. In *Mann Ki Baat*, we talk about positive things; its character is collective," he said.

'Centralisation not a risk worth taking'

Y.V. Reddy flags worrying asymmetry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Fourteenth Finance Commission Chairman Y.V. Reddy said on Sunday that the Centre did not support States enough at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, resorting to "burden-sharing" instead, and questioned the move to abandon the existing inoculation system of the Centre providing free vaccines and the States using their resources to deliver the shots.

Warning against a growing tendency towards centralisation even on State subjects under the Constitution, Dr. Reddy said the idea of different development models adopted by States is no longer on the table under the Narendra Modi government and there is a worrying asymmetry between the responsibilities of States and the resources available to them.

"There is an impression gained that the Central government feels it can do a better job in regard to various activities even if they are in the State list. On fiscal federalism too, the Fifteenth Finance Commission recommendations were accepted but not fully implemented and its terms of references were controversial," he said, adding that the States' borrowing limits have also been made conditional which is a "real problem".

"There is a rebalancing going on between the State and the market and also between the Centre and States in India, but in the process of rebalancing, we should not underestimate the



Y.V. Reddy

strong sub-national sentiment within loyalty to the country," he averred in a talk on Centre-State relations hosted by the Manthan Foundation.

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government's decade in office saw the emergence of different development models among States, as their governance capabilities matured and policies unique to their needs were adopted, Dr. Reddy recalled.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi, however, has been able to project a national agenda, and the idea of different States having different models is not very much on the table now. And there are some tensions also," he said, stressing that pressures and tensions between the Centre and States may be counterproductive.

"The basic problem is centralisation in a diverse country can produce risks which are not worth taking," he said, stressing that the underlying logic for India's federal structure is to recognise the diversity of States in order to strengthen national unity.

'Over 3 crore doses with States'

Over 42 crore vaccine doses have been administered, says Health Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

More than 3.29 crore (3,29,38,559) unutilised COVID-19 vaccine doses are still available with the States and the Union Territories and private hospitals, the Union Health Ministry said in a release on Sunday.

"India's COVID-19 vaccination coverage crossed the landmark of 43 crore yesterday [Saturday]," the release said.

It said more than 45.37 crore (45,37,70,580) vaccine doses had been provided to the States and the Union Territories so far through all sources, and a further 11,79,010 doses were in the pipeline. Of this, the total consumption, including wastage, was 42,08,32,021 doses (according to data available at 8 a.m. on Sunday).

The Ministry said



Reaching out: A man getting vaccinated during a mega COVID-19 vaccination drive in Ahmedabad on Sunday. • VIJAY SONJJI

51,18,210 vaccine doses were administered in the 24 hours for which latest figures were

available. With substantially ramped-up testing capacity, 17,18,756 tests were conducted

in the 24 hours. Cumulatively, India has conducted over 45.62 crore tests so far.

'Identify COVID-19 orphans'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central government has written to all States and Union Territories urging them to ensure identification of COVID-19 orphans and their registration on the online portal set up by it within 15 days.

The government has launched www.pmcareforchildren.in for enrolment of beneficiaries of the scheme under the PM CARES Fund announced for children who have lost both parents, or the lone surviving parent or the legal guardian or the adoptive parent.

The scheme provides ₹10 lakh to each child on reaching 23 years of age, apart from assistance with school education and health insurance. The scheme came into effect from March 11.

Today's Kisan Sansad at Jantar Mantar will be all-woman affair

Samyukt Kisan Morcha to launch 'Mission U.P.' in Lucknow

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

When farmers return to Jantar Mantar to continue their parallel parliament protest on Monday, the participants will look different from their counterparts inside Parliament as well as the delegates of previous Kisan Sansads in one major way: they will all be women.

"The Mahila Kisan Sansad will reflect the key role that women play in Indian agriculture, and their critical role in the ongoing movement too. Convoys of women farmers from various districts are reaching the morchas for the Mahila Kisan Sansad," said a statement from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) joint platform of farm unions

coordinating the protest. According to Census data, 30% of all cultivators and 43% of all agricultural labourers are women, though the few of them have land rights in their own names. At the height of the ongoing agitation against the three farm reform laws in January, 15-20% of protesters were women, according to Kavitha Kuruganti of the Mahila Kisan Adhikaar Manch, an alliance of women farmers organisations and supporters.

However, few women have been in the leadership of the movement. None of the SKM's nine core committee members are women, nor are the leaders of the individual unions that make up the platform. Ms. Kuruganti herself was the only

woman among the 30-odd delegates sent by the farm unions to negotiate with the Central government earlier in the year. On July 22, the first day of the Kisan Sansad, only seven of the 200 protesters allowed each day were women.

As the women take over the stage at Jantar Mantar on Monday, most of the SKM leadership will head for Lucknow, where they will launch 'Mission U.P.' to outline their plans for next year's Assembly election. "In the panchayat elections held earlier this year, the farmers' movement left its mark, with the BJP candidates punished in many places and Independents gaining most number of seats," said the SKM statement.

35% of govt. schools, anganwadis have no tap water

Jal Jeevan Mission fails to meet goals 10 months after 100-day campaign was launched

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Over a third of government schools and anganwadis still do not have tap water access even 10 months after the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) launched a 100-day campaign to provide the facility. There has been minimal progress since a Parliamentary Standing Committee pulled up the JJM in a March report, pointing out the importance of repeated washing of hands as part of COVID-19 safety protocols for schools to reopen.

However, the Jal Shakti Ministry considers the current progress an achievement. "Big boost to children's health & hygiene in the country!" said a tweet from Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Sunday, linking to an official statement from the Ministry. "PM



Of the 2,146 anganwadi centres, only 247 have access to tap water under the JJM in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.

@narendramodi ji's desire to see all centres of learning provided with clean water has resulted in 66% schools & 60% anganwadi centres across the nation getting FHTC [Functional Household Tap Connections] through the #JalJeevanMission in just 10 months," he added.

The 100-day campaign to

achieve 100% coverage, and provide potable piped water supply for drinking and cooking purposes as well as tap water for hand washing and in toilets in every school, anganwadi and ashramshala or residential tribal school, was launched on October 2, 2020. At the time, about 40% of schools and anganwadis already had tap water ac-

cess. From 4.1 lakh before the campaign started, the number of schools with taps rose to 6.35 lakh by February, according to the JJM dashboard. For anganwadis, the increase was from 4.3 lakh to 6.3 lakh.

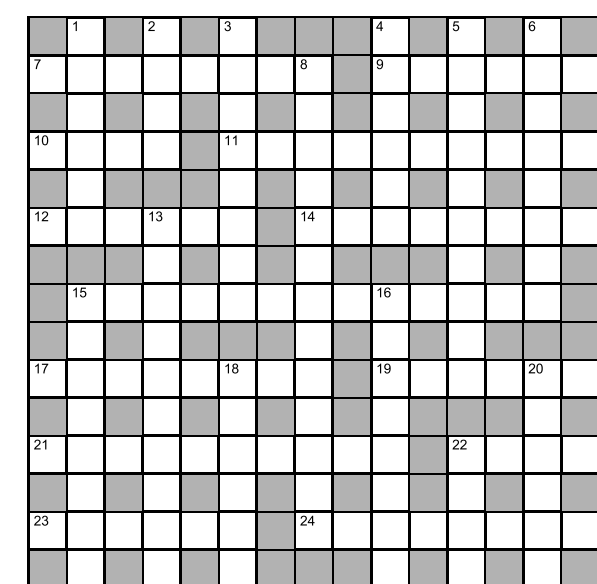
In its report on the demand for grants submitted to the Lok Sabha in early March, the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Water Resources deplored the slow rate of progress, pointing out that "children are more susceptible to waterborne diseases, more so, when there is also a need for repeated washing of hands as a precautionary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic". The Jal Shakti Ministry told the panel that "some States/UTs have indicated that they need more time to complete the task and sustain the efforts" and said the

campaign had been extended till March 31, 2021.

Almost four months after that extended deadline, the JJM is yet to achieve its goals. In fact, it has only added tap water access in about 50,000 schools and 40,000 anganwadis since that time. In its statement on Sunday, the Ministry said the progress came "despite Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown".

In fact, there is widespread disparity among States, with a few laggards pulling down the national average, despite the fact that nine States and Union Territories have already achieved 100% coverage. In Jharkhand and West Bengal, less than 15% of schools and less than 10% of anganwadis have tap water access. On the other hand, 80% of the schools in Uttar Pradesh have access to tap water.

TH **CROSSWORD** + 13309 Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers into our online grids. @ <https://qr.go.page.link/jjpTn> SCAN TO PLAY



- 15 Must beards be trimmed often over mouth to be a useful accessory? (13)
- 17 European noodle variant essentially causes great well-being (8)
- 19 Taking a couple of layers off - heard amour can find passion (6)
- 21 Film on King's fine new weapon (5,5)
- 22 Skip meals and pass away over time (4)
- 23 Second gentleman takes hand - pirouettes for dance (6)
- 24 Make English bank lose pounds (8)

DOWN

- 1 Zinfandel lacking body bottled in mass makes hissing sound (6)
- 2 Lightshow? (4)
- 3 Satisfied subs fill dugout (8)
- 4 Horse ordered to lead black sheep (3,3)
- 5 EU marine facilities task-force starts releasing thermomodifying plastic that can be used to catch food (7,3)
- 6 After opening session, member of parliament makes noise, gets raise and takes drugs (6,2)
- 8 Recovering mailman? (13)
- 13 Drug dealer has 3 drugs in a car at the end of driveway (10)
- 15 Kitchen worker's turn to take out second layer in onion (8)
- 16 Wise to control speed these days? (5,3)
- 18 Dissolute artist's drunk kiss? (6)
- 20 Messaging system seen hacked in Utah (6)
- 22 Study at the end of lobby has counter (4)

- ACROSS
- 7 High-speed show's a failure (8)
- 9 Change hands during dismount correctly (6)
- 10 Emperor's final letter found in coach (4)
- 11 Group that supports women wears rose dhotis (10)
- 12 Fat man inwardly turning around for support (6)
- 14 Rain and smog affected every single living thing (8)

SUDOKU

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					6		4	
3	8	7						
	7			5		4		
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8		9			1			
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13308

S	W	E	L	L	W	A	T	E	R				
E	A	N	A	C	X	N							
S	W	A	D	D	L	E	R	E	C	L	O	S	E
T	R	Y	W	M	R	R	E						
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E	H	E	L	L	E	I	L						
M	A	R	T	I	A	L	L	A	W	R	A	C	E
G	O	B	S	H	I	G	H	O	C	T	A	N	E
A	A	L	E	O	I	D	I	N					
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L	B	N	E	M	I	C	E						
S	T	R	E	W		A	N	G	E	R			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Steps to realisation

Most of us who are involved in worldly concerns are said to be in Pravritti Marga. This kind of preoccupation ties us down to samsara, the cycle of birth. Vedanta vichara shows that there is also another marga, Nivritti, which leads us to release from this cycle. Tremendous effort is needed to travel in this path and realise the subtle self as the abode of everlasting peace and bliss.

In the Ashtavakra Gita, the preceptor Ashtavakra imparts to Janaka this highest knowledge of the self, praised in the Gita as Raja Vidya and Brahma Vidya, in clear cut terms, pointed out Sri R. Rajagopala Sarma in a discourse. At the outset itself, Janaka is taught to differentiate between the body and the self. Understanding this dichotomy can bring about equanimity in any individual, a most difficult ideal to attain even for realised souls. We can say and feel the self as distinct and as the essence of consciousness. But the bondage caused by the body is also very real and makes a great impact on us all the while. We are constantly aware of the limitations of the body, birth, old age, disease, death, and we cannot escape all kinds of misery that life plunges us in.

But once one is able to leave aside the bodily concerns, he can sense the freedom and joy of being only conscious of the self and not the body. The thought that 'I am the doer' is the greatest hurdle to be overcome in this quest. Instead one should repeatedly evoke the thought that 'I am the consciousness and the one and only self, existing eternally and always apart from the created universe.' Listening to such explanations of Ashtavakra, Janaka, the disciple, who is already well versed in Vedanta and is also a ruler par excellence, is overwhelmed with the awareness felt within and is grateful to his preceptor.

INTERVIEW | PETER MARTIN

'China's wolf warrior approach is here to stay'

India is perhaps the best example of how this approach has backfired by pushing it much closer to the U.S., and alienating a billion plus-person economy, says the author

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China's assertive new diplomatic approach in the Xi Jinping era has come to be dubbed "wolf warrior diplomacy", marked by a muscular posture in pursuing China's interests. Peter Martin, author of the new book "China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy" and previously a foreign correspondent in China, says the approach is not exactly new and is rooted in the Communist Party's history. The current state of relations with India, he says, is "the best example" of how it has often backfired although, he argues, wolf warrior diplomacy is likely here to stay. Excerpts from an interview:

Where does the idea of 'wolf warrior' diplomacy come from?

■ There was this blockbuster movie that came out in 2017 about this Chinese action hero fighting foreign bad guys on the continent of Africa and avenging China's ene-

mies. It was this unexpected commercial success, the highest grossing movie ever at the Chinese box office. It came to symbolise this new mood in Beijing.

How much of this new approach is down to Xi Jinping, and how much is

shaped by broader trends?

■ I think of Xi Jinping as both a cause and a consequence of changes that have taken place in China. The new assertive turn in Chinese diplomacy really started in 2008-09 in the wake of the global financial crisis. China had just hosted the Olympics. The West's response to the financial crisis was sluggish and China's was very, very decisive. In the ensuing years, China watched Western political systems deal with gridlock at home while its own economic growth continued. There are these trends taking place in China that are quite independent of Xi Jinping. But I think what Xi did was take a more confi-



I think there are a lot of people who are very uncomfortable with this trend of picking apparently unnecessary fights and insulting foreign counterparts

dent and assertive tone, and accelerate it and make it more decisive and more permanent.

At the time of Xi taking over, there was a debate on whether China should continue with the Deng Xiaoping era approach of "hiding brightness, biding time". Has that debate been resolved now?

■ I think the debate is still ongoing beneath the surface, although, in public, Xi Jinping, and those who want to continue this very brash, assertive tone, have certainly won out. There are large parts of China's scholarly community on foreign affairs, and in fact some people in the Foreign Ministry, who would still like China to take a quieter, more humble approach to foreign policy. I don't know that those people

necessarily think that returning to the policy of the 1990s is realistic. There's a refrain I heard quite a lot in Beijing that you can't hide an elephant. The idea is China has gotten too big to really take that kind of low profile that it had in the past. But I think there are a lot of people who are very uncomfortable with this trend of picking apparently unnecessary fights and insulting foreign counterparts.

How are domestic changes in China shaping its current diplomacy?

■ In Chinese diplomacy, domestic politics is always king. We look on with bewilderment sometimes and

think, why are they possibly doing this because these are the people who are charged with improving China's reputation? In truth, we're not the audience. They're doing this to signal to people in Beijing that they are loyal to the regime, they're loyal to Mao or Xi Jinping or whoever is in charge. Foreign audiences are really a kind of by-product there.

How successful has this approach been on the whole?

■ In the grand scheme of things, I find it really hard to come up with any kind of net positive assessment of it. It's one of the factors which has contributed to this incredi-

ble decline in global perceptions of China in Pew polling that you'll have seen recently. In my mind, India is perhaps the best example of where this approach has kind of backfired. Wolf warrior tactics, combined with, of course, great military assertiveness on the China-India border, has ended up pushing India much closer to the U.S., and alienating a billion plus-person economy, an emerging power on the global stage with good relations with the United States, and that shares a border with China. To me, there's no better example of that kind of counterproductive approach than what's going on there. (Read the full interview at <https://bit.ly/XiDiplomacy>)

China, Pak. outline 'joint action' to align Afghanistan strategies

Focus on preventing escalation of war, resolutely combating terrorist forces

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China and Pakistan on Saturday said they would more closely cooperate and work together in Afghanistan amid the changing situation in the country, as their Foreign Ministers proposed building the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into "a hub of regional connectivity".



Common ground: Shah Mahmood Qureshi with Wang Yi, right, in Beijing, in this file photo. ■ AFP

Meeting in the Chinese city of Chengdu at the third strategic dialogue, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi outlined a five-point joint plan on working in Afghanistan, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Mr. Wang described the current situation as arriving "at an important juncture" as he criticised "the hasty U.S. withdrawal of troops" for having "neither fulfilled the purpose of fighting terrorism nor brought peace to Afghanistan but created a new security black hole," the statement said.

He said "both China and Pakistan are most directly affected by the situation in Afghanistan" as its neighbours and it was "necessary for both sides to strengthen cooperation to cope with the change", which he described as one of the focuses of the dialogue.

Mr. Wang outlined "joint actions" in five areas, starting with "the immediate priority of avoiding the expansion of war and preventing Afghanistan from falling into a full-scale civil war." The second focus would be to promote the intra-Afghan negotiations between Kabul and the Taliban and establish "a broad and inclusive political structure".

He said the third joint action would be "to resolutely combat terrorist forces". Mr.

Wang only named the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, which China has blamed for attacks in its western Xinjiang region, underlining China's concern that instability in Afghanistan could spill over into Xinjiang.

There do, however, appear to be stark differences in how both countries appear to view the terror issue and the role of other outfits in Afghanistan. Earlier this month, Mr. Wang said in a meeting with his Afghan counterpart Mohammed Haneef Atmar in Dushanbe that the "Taliban should stand clear of any and all terrorist forces." At the same summit on connectivity, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani publicly slammed Pakistan for failing to take actions to stop foreign terrorists from entering the country amid "an influx of over 10,000 jihadi fighters".

The fourth joint action would be to "promote cooperation among Afghanistan's neighbours" and "explore the construction of a platform for cooperation among them". Both would also more closely work on international fora on the Afghan issue, Mr. Wang said.

Terror attack in Pakistan Both sides, in a "joint press release" issued after the

talks that was put out by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "reaffirmed their commitment to facilitate and support 'Afghan-led and Afghan-owned' peace and reconciliation process" and "their support for the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan".

Both also "vehemently condemned" the recent terrorist attack in Pakistan in which nine Chinese engineers working on the Dasu hydropower plant were killed, along with four Pakistani nationals. Both sides "expressed their firm resolve to expose the culprits and their reprehensible designs through the ongoing joint investigation, give exemplary punishment to the perpetrators, ensure comprehensive safety and security of the Chinese projects, nationals and institutions, and prevent recurrence of such incidents", the statement said.

The joint release also carried the now customary reference to Kashmir, saying the Pakistani side "briefed the Chinese side on the deteriorating situation in Jammu & Kashmir" while China "reiterated" its stand that it "opposes any unilateral actions that complicate the situation", a position it has repeated in the wake of India's 2019 reorganisation.

The Chinese side "reiter-

Thousands of Afghan families flee fighting

KANDAHAR More than 22,000 Afghan families have fled from their homes to escape fighting in the former Taliban bastion of Kandahar, officials said on Sunday, as authorities arrested four suspected insurgents over this week's rocket attack on Kabul. Four camps have been set up for about 1,54,000 displaced people. ■ AFP

ated its firm support to Pakistan in safeguarding its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence" and "striving for a better external security environment," the joint release said, adding that both sides had agreed to push forward the CPEC "with the aim to continuously unleash the great potential of CPEC to make it a hub of regional connectivity."

On CPEC

China's Foreign Ministry said in May both countries had been in communication with Afghanistan over extending the corridor. "Afghanistan has imported and exported related goods through the Gwadar Port and Karachi Port. China, Pakistan and Afghanistan are discussing issues related to extending roads and expressways in Pakistan to Afghanistan," spokesperson Zhao Lijian said, adding that "the CPEC is an economic initiative that is not aimed at third parties, and has nothing to do with territorial sovereignty disputes... and won't affect our principled position on the Kashmir issue."

India has opposed the CPEC, which passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, although China has pushed ahead with projects and stepped up its investments in PoK.

States come together as wildfires rage in the U.S.



Extreme peril: A firefighter spraying water on a propane tank as a house burns in California. ■ AFP

ASSOCIATED PRESS OREGON

Crews from multiple States are battling wildfires in Montana, where five firefighters were injured combating blazes that have ravaged lands and destroyed homes across the U.S. West. The nation's largest wildfire, southern Oregon's Bootleg fire, was over 40%

contained on Saturday as more than 2,200 crew members worked to corral it, fire officials said.

California has declared a state of emergency for four northern counties.

In northcentral Washington, firefighters battled two blazes in Okanogan County that threatened hundreds of homes.

Pak. bans domestic air travel for unvaccinated

COVID-19 cases cross 1 million mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has banned the domestic air travel for unvaccinated people as the COVID-19 cases crossed the 1 million-mark in the country on Sunday, according to officials.

The travel restriction, imposed by the National Command and Operation Centre, will be applicable from August 1 on unvaccinated people of over 18 years of age. "Restriction is for domestic air travel and people travelling from Pakistan to abroad or from abroad to Pakistan are exempted from restriction. It is also not applicable on link flights if these are within 72 hours of arrival or departure," according to an NCO document.

Partially vaccinated people, foreign nationals, Pakistani nationals having documentary proof of vaccination abroad and patients with clinical conditions will be exempted from the restriction, it said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of National Health Services said that 45 people died in the last 24 hours due to the COVID-19, taking the death toll to 23,016.

It said that 2,819 new cases were reported, taking the national tally to 10,04,694.

The positivity rate reached 6.32% which is the highest during the fourth wave of the pandemic which hit the country this month.

Minister for Planning Asad Umar, who is also the chief of the NCO, urged people to get vaccinated.

Pelosi plans to appoint Trump critic to Capitol probe panel

She had earlier rejected two of five Republican nominees

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Sunday said she plans to appoint additional Republicans, including a staunch Trump critic, to the committee probing the January 6 U.S. Capitol insurrection, amid a fierce partisan showdown over who will serve on the body.

Asked whether she would appoint a new set of Republicans, including lawmaker Adam Kinzinger, who voted to impeach former president Donald Trump, Ms. Pelosi told ABC "that would be my plan."

Earlier this week House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy withdrew the names of the five Republicans he had appointed to

serve on the select committee, after Ms. Pelosi took the rare step of rejecting two of them, congressmen Jim Jordan and Jim Banks, out of what she said was concern for the investigation's integrity.

Hours after the Capitol insurrection, both were among several Republicans who voted against certifying election results in some states. "The two that I would not appoint are people who would jeopardise the integrity of the investigation and there's no way I would tolerate their antics as we seek the truth," Ms. Pelosi said on Sunday.

The tit-for-tat moves represent the latest bickering over what many were hoping would be a united effort:

investigating the riot in the citadel of American democracy.

Ms. Pelosi's Democrats had sought to create a bipartisan, independent 9/11-style commission to investigate the Capitol insurrection.

Ms. Pelosi said that Republicans including Mr. Kinzinger, a strong Trump critic and six-term congressman from Illinois, "have expressed an interest to serve on the select committee."

Ms. Pelosi herself had already appointed to the committee Republican congresswoman Liz Cheney, who was also among the 10 Republicans who voted to impeach Mr. Trump in January.

The first hearing of the commission is scheduled for Tuesday.

28 abducted students freed in Nigeria

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KANO

Bandits who abducted 121 students at a high school in northwestern Nigeria in early July have released another 28 teenagers, a school official said on Sunday.

The attackers stormed the Bethel Baptist High School in northwestern Kaduna state on July 5, abducting 121 students sleeping in their dorms.

"The bandits released them yesterday (Saturday)," Joseph Hayab, a senior official of the school, said. Mr. Hayab said 34 children were now free, while 87 were still being held. "Five children escaped on July 21 but only two were found by the police. The other three made it to the school on their own," he said.

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ASK US

N. SREE KANTH

Q. I am a central government pensioner aged 79. I have recently received ₹6,00,000 as part of a share (one among four surviving heirs) on sale of our old house. The house, as per records, was purchased by my deceased parents in 1937 for a sum of ₹2,650 only. I want to know the amount of tax with surcharge to be paid on this transaction. Secondly, in January, I also received a sum of ₹30,000 on account of sale of shares. Tax liability on this also may kindly be stated.

K. NATARAJAN

A. Proceeds from sale of ancestral property (immovable in nature) is taxable and it falls under the head 'capital gains'. The amount of ₹6,00,000 received by you as part of your share will be considered the full value of consideration, you may deduct any directly related expenses to the transfer such as brokerage paid to this value. As the property was acquired by your parents prior to 2001, you can adopt the fair market value of the property as on 1.4.2001 as the cost of acquisition.

You may enquire about the fair market value with the respective Registrar. The property being a long-term capital asset, you are to adjust the fair market value by using the cost inflation index (CII) to arrive at the indexed cost of acquisition. In case any capital expenditure was incurred post 1.4.2001, it will be considered as cost of improvement and will have to be adjusted by using the CII if it is older than 2 years. The difference between the full value of consideration, expenses and indexed cost of acquisition, indexed cost/cost of improvement will either be the long term capital gains/loss.

In case of long term capital gains, 20% plus surcharge (surcharge depends on new and old tax regime) plus cess of 4% will be the tax liability.

In case of sale of shares, wherein the shares are listed and STT was paid both at the time of purchase and sale, long term capital gains (listed shares held for more than 1 year) under ₹1 lakh will not be taxed and in your case the receipt is ₹30,000 whereby the capital gains should be lower than that. In case of short term capital gains it will be taxed at 15% plus surcharge (surcharge depends on new and old tax regime) plus cess of 4%.

Q. I am a retired bank employee aged 84 years. My wife and I are covered under a group medical insurance scheme of my bank. During [FY21], I had paid around ₹30,000 towards insurance premium. I had also spent around ₹10,000 for purchase of medicine and lab investigations. Kindly advise whether I can claim both the above amounts under section 80D.

T.K. KANNAN

A. For senior citizens, under Section 80D of the Income Tax Act, 1961, deduction can be claimed up to ₹50,000 for self and dependents towards payment of health insurance premium. Amounts paid towards preventive health check-ups can also be claimed up to ₹5,000 provided that the limit of ₹50,000 has not been exceeded.

In your case, the total deduction will be ₹30,000 towards health insurance premium and ₹5,000 (if the cost of preventive health check-ups are greater than ₹5,000 of the ₹10,000 spent by you) or if the amount pertaining to preventive health check-ups are less than ₹5,000 the actual amount spent towards preventive health check-ups can be claimed.

Q. I had opened a PPF account a couple of years ago for 80C tax savings. However, now I have got myself an LIC policy and the total annual premium of LIC policy and my EPF contribution together exceed ₹1.5 lakh. Should I continue to invest in PPF in FY21-22, given I would not be having any tax savings under 80C? If yes, any recommended percentage or amount? Do we have some better alternatives to PPF?

ASHISH

A. Deposit into PPF account is to be done every year for the first 15-year block. Minimum investment that is to be done into PPF is ₹500. By investing this amount, the PPF account will be active. Investment in PPF is to be looked beyond tax deductions as investing in PPF has multiple advantages such as interest rates being one of the highest risk-free returns that are available for investment in India, guaranteed by the Government of India and is free from attachment in case of default of any kind of loans borrowed.

Q. I'm working in BHEL, a central government undertaking. I have earned leave (EL) of 170 and half pay leave (HPL) of 260 and my basic pay plus dearness allowance will be ₹89,500 per month. I will be retiring in September 2021. I need to know how much I would get at the time of retirement and whether it is tax exempt or not. If not, what will be the tax amount?

CHIDANAND

A. Employees of Public Sector Undertakings cannot be treated on a par with government employees for the purposes of Section 10(10AA) of the Income Tax Act, 1961. In your case, the leave salary that would be paid to you at the time of your retirement will not be completely exempt. The exemption that will be available to you at the time of receipt of leave salary at your retirement will be the least of ₹3,00,000, leave salary actually received, 10 months' salary (basic plus DA), cash equivalent of leave to the credit of the employee at the time of retirement.

The cash equivalent of leave to the credit of the employee at the time of retirement is calculated in the following manner ((AxB)-C)xD where A is the number of completed years of service, B is the number of days' leave credited each year (maximum 30 per year), C is the number of days' leave taken or leave encashed during the period of employment and D is the average salary of the past 10 months.

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

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

Inflation isn't in your control, so worry not

If prices are rising quickly, your investments should compensate for the trend; but that does not mean changing your portfolio allocation strategy

JOYDEEP SEN

These days, a lot of opinions are being voiced on how high inflation is eating into your returns on investments, and how net-of-inflation return, particularly from debt investments, is negative. Those arguments have merit. However, there is a counter to that, too.

The fact that you have a disease and medicines are available does not mean you take the medicines — they should be appropriate for your symptoms and suitable for you. How do you determine what is appropriate or suitable?

Investment objectives

The primary aspects on which your investment portfolio should be based are your investment objectives, financial goals, time horizon, risk appetite and the risk-return profile of the investments.

While your net-of-inflation real return ought to be positive, your portfolio allocation should not be distorted when inflation is high. As an illustration, if your appropriate portfolio allocation is 60% equity and 40% debt, it should not be 100% equity when inflation is high. If you

have the risk appetite for 100% equity in your portfolio, it should have been 100% even when inflation was low. It is generally agreed that for retired senior citizens, equity allocation should be on the lower side. If that is dis-

Q. If you have the risk appetite for 100% equity in your portfolio, it should have been 100% even when inflation was low

torted when inflation is high, it means going against the grain.

When inflation rate is high, the relevance for you is that prices of goods and services you consume are rising and that should be compensated for by your investments. If the return on investments (RoI) is lower than inflation, then at the end of the period, the worth of your principal will be less than earlier as it can help buy fewer goods and services than it could before. If your returns are higher than inflation, then it enhances value.

For example, if inflation is 5% and your RoI is 10%, you are well off. If your RoI is 5%, your investment is not making you any better off. Now, if

your RoI is 5% and inflation is 6%, your principal is worth less than earlier. In such a situation, what should you do? Nothing much. If you increase the equity allocation in your portfolio just to beat inflation, it may not suit your risk profile. If you take lower-credit-rated, higher-yielding debt, it would raise the credit risk in your portfolio and that also may not be suitable.

Pace of rising prices

Inflation is the pace of rising prices. Of what? If you are basing the allocation in your investment portfolio on inflation, it should be on the basket of goods and services you consume. But that is not the case. The inflation data we see monthly, announced by the Centre, is the inflation for a given basket of goods across the country. But every individual's lifestyle is different.

Consumption baskets vary across profession, age, location, gender, taste, preference and the like. Hence, the inflation number is at best an approximation of trends in the economy.

Then how would you know what part of the inflation number is re-

levant for you i.e. your consumption basket? Unfortunately, in a country of 138 crore people, it is not possible to measure as many unique inflation rates.

What does the consumer price inflation basket in India comprise? Almost half the basket constitutes food and food products.

While food is the major chunk of expenses for many people, it is not so for everybody, particularly in upper-income brackets.

Services are missing in the CPI basket, except for house rent and certain aspects of transport / communication. We consume services such as doctor consultation, dining at restaurants, haircuts at salons, app-based cab services, data/wi-fi, education/coaching, driver and domestic help. Net-net, if the headline inflation data for the month, as we see in the media, is say, 5%, then the inflation for your unique individual consumption basket may be, say 7% or even 3%, which is not evident to us. So, it may not be appropriate to build your investment

portfolio based on a variable that may not apply to you. What does it all boil down to? The issue at hand is negative real returns in debt investments. Inflation is high, but does not typically remain as high forever. In 2020, CPI inflation averaged 6.6%.

The forecast for FY22 from the RBI, in the last policy review on June 4, was 5.1%. The projection can go wrong as there are certain pressures on inflation such as high crude oil prices, high metal prices, money circulation in the economy being higher than earlier or lockdown-induced supply constraints. These pressures could mean that even if inflation is higher than 5.1%, it could be lower than 6.6%. If you change your allocation,

e.g. from debt to a more volatile asset class or high-yielding debt, you are reacting to something not in your control. Inflation and its measurement via a generic basket of goods is not in your control. Market movement, i.e. equity price levels or interest rate levels are not in your control. What is, is your investment portfolio. That should be based on proper, logical criteria about which you must be clear.

(The writer is a corporate trainer and author)

COVER NOTE: INSURANCE OMBUDSMAN

A shoulder to lean on when your insurer lets you down

There are 17 ombudsmen across the country to listen to your grievances and sort the issue out

K. NITYA KALYANI

It's nice to have a wise and friendly uncle who will sort out misunderstandings between you and your parents or siblings! When you have a problem with your insurance company, the Insurance Ombudsman is such an uncle. There are 17 of them across the country; their only job is to listen to your complaints and sort the issue out with your insurance firm. The advantage is that the ombudsman knows all about insurance and his quasi-judicial orders are binding on the insurance company. You, however, have further recourse.

If you have a grievance, you should approach the Insurance Ombudsman of your jurisdiction, depending on your place of residence. You can find the list of 17 ombudsmen and their contact and jurisdiction details on the website of the Council for Insurance Ombudsmen set up by the government.

Firstly, the ombudsman en-

tertains only complaints where the amount under dispute is less than ₹30 lakh. It should pertain to policies issued under personal lines of insurance, group insurance policies, and policies issued to sole proprietors and micro-enterprises.

Any individual with an unresolved grievance against his insurance company can approach an ombudsman. The complaint can pertain to any policy purchased in his individual capacity like life, health, motor or property insurance, which are termed personal lines of business.

Proprietors of microenterprises can also approach the ombudsman with their insurance grievances. Microenterprises are defined as manufacturing units where investment in plant and machinery is

not more than ₹25 lakh or service providers where the investment in equipment is not more than ₹10 lakh.

In both cases, the nominees, legal heirs or assignees of the policyholder can also approach the ombudsman.



*GETTYIMAGES

Complaints can relate to claim settlement delay, partial or total repudiation of claims by the insurer, dispute over the premium paid or payable, misrepresentation of policy terms and conditions in the policy document or policy contract, any dispute on the legal construction of the policies in so far as such disputes relate to claims, grievances relating to policy servicing by insurers and their agents and intermediaries, issuance of life, general or health insurance policy not in conformity with the proposal form submitted by the proposer and non-issue of life, general or health insurance policy after receipt of premium.

You have to make the complaint in writing duly signed and with supporting documents. You can send it by fax or email but you need to send the hard copy too. A pre-condition is that you should

have gone through the process of making a written representation to the insurer about your grievance.

When to complain

You can complain to the ombudsman within a year of the insurer either rejecting the representation or sending his final reply to it. In case the insurer fails to reply to your representation within a month of receiving it, you can approach the ombudsman a month after that. You cannot take a matter that is already before a court or consumer forum to the ombudsman and there is no provision for you to involve a lawyer in ombudsman complaints and there is no fee you have to pay anywhere in the process. What happens after you make a complaint?

If both you and the insurer agree for mediation, the ombudsman goes through the matter, conducts hearings of both parties if necessary, and makes a recommendation within a month of receiving all docu-

ments from you. If not, he will pass an award in three months. If the terms of the award are acceptable to you, it is binding on the insurance company which has to comply within 30 days.

The recommendation or award will be based on the principles of natural justice and the compensation can be up to the loss you have suffered because of the action of the insurer and cannot exceed ₹30 lakh, including expenses.

However, if you don't find the award satisfactory you have the right to take recourse to the normal legal processes by approaching a consumer court or regular courts. The process has been constructed in such a way so as to put back some balance of power in favour of the individual consumer at odds with a large corporation to whom he has already paid premium, and from whom he is expecting succour at his time of need as promised by the insurance policy.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance and corporate history)

PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
		Loan amt 5 lakh Tenure - 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure - 5 years	
HDFC Bank	10.50-21.00	10,747-13,527	2,149-2,705	Upto 2.5% (Max Rs 25,000)
ICICI Bank	10.50-19.00	10,747-12,970	2,149-2,594	Upto 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	10.00-15.60	10,624-12,053	2,125-2,411	Rs 1,000-10,000
State Bank of India	9.60-13.85	10,525-11,595	2,105-2,319	Upto 1.5% (Max Rs 15,000)
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.75-24.00*	10,809-14,384	2,162-2,877	Upto 2.5%
Punjab National Bank^	8.95-14.50	10,367-11,764	2,073-2,353	Upto 1%
Federal Bank	10.49-17.99	10,744-12,694	2,149-2,539	Upto 3%
South Indian Bank	10.15-14.45	10,660-11,751	2,132-2,350	2%
Bank of Maharashtra	9.55-12.90^^	10,513-11,351	2,103-2,270	Upto 1%
Indian Overseas Bank	12.05	11,135	2,227	Upto 0.75%
Indian Bank	9.05-13.65	10,391-11,544	2,078-2,309	1%**
Dhanlaxmi Bank	11.90-15.70	11,097-12,079	2,219-2,416	Upto 2.5% (Min Rs 1,250)
*Digital Personal loan starting at 10.50% p.a.				
**For pensioners, NIL processing fees for loan upto Rs 25,000, and fees of Rs 250 for loan above Rs 25,000.				
^0.10% additional concession in applicable interest rate to customers who opt for coverage under Credit Life Insurance.				
^^ Interest rate of 8.55% p.a. offered to BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd) employees				
Rates and charges as on July 22				

Source: Paisabazaar.com

NEW CAR LOAN-RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Bank	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee (% of loan amount)
		Loan amt 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	
Bank of Baroda	7.00-10.25	9,901-10,685	0.50% (Rs 2,500-10,000)
Union Bank of India	7.15-7.50	9,936-10,019	Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	7.15-7.65	9,936-10,055	Up to Rs 1,500
Canara Bank	7.30-9.90	9,972-10,599	0.25% (Rs 1,000-5,000)
Bank of India	7.35-8.55	9,983-10,270	Up to 0.25% (Max: 5,000) For Rural Areas: Rs 1,500-20,000
UCO Bank	7.45-7.70	10,007-10,067	1% (Max: Rs 1,500)
State Bank of India*	7.50-8.45	10,019-10,246	Up to 0.40%
IDBI Bank	7.50-8.10	10,019-10,162	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra**	7.55-10.40	10,031-10,722	Up to Rs 25,000 (No processing charges for women borrowers under Maha Combo Scheme)
Indian Overseas Bank	7.55	10,031	Rs 500-Rs 10,000
ICICI Bank	7.90-9.85	10,114-10,587	Rs 3,500-Rs 8,500
HDFC Bank	7.95-8.30	10,126-10,210	0.5% (Rs 3,500-Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	7.95-10.00	10,126-10,624	0.5% (Rs 2,500-Rs 10,000)
Dhanlaxmi Bank	8.10-9.20	10,162-10,428	1%
Federal Bank	8.50	10,258	Rs 2,000-4,500
Axis Bank	8.65-10.90	10,294-10,846	Rs 3,500-Rs 5,500
South Indian Bank	9.05-10.50	10,391-10,747	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)
*Further interest rate concession of 0.20% on purchase of electric vehicle (Green Car Loan)			
**0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holder			
0.05% concession on interest rate to women & armed forces personnel subject to minimum floor ceiling of LLR			
Rates and charges as on July 23			

Source: Paisabazaar.com

Manika causes an upset, Sathiyan exits

The former stuns World No. 20 Pesotska while the latter yields ground from the verge of victory



AMOL KARHADKAR

Manika Batra stunned 20th seed Margaryta Pesotska of Ukraine to storm into the women's singles third round while G. Sathiyan was beaten by Lam Siu Hang of Hong Kong in a men's second round contest of the table tennis event on Sunday.

On Saturday, Manika had refused to let National coach Soumyadeep Roy advise her during her first round match after personal coach Sanmay Paranjape was denied access to the competition area. This led to table tennis team leader M.P. Singh publicly rebuking her.

On Sunday, however, Manika did not let the controversy affect her.

Not only was Pesotska



Eye on the ball: Manika rallied brilliantly to beat the higher-ranked Pesotska. ■ REUTERS

ranked 43 spots above Manika, the Ukrainian was also renowned for doing well against players with long pimples, like Manika.

That showed as Pesotska won the first two games in quick time. Stung by the losses, Manika changed tactics and started playing deep.

She also began unleashing forehand winners on a consistent basis.

Manika's tactics and newfound confidence helped her pull level 2-2. However, she couldn't withstand her opponent's onslaught in the fifth.

In the do-or-die sixth

game, the lanky Indian was down 2-5 when she opted for a time-out. It proved a masterstroke as she returned with renewed vigour and confidence.

She started firing on all cylinders, rattling Pesotska with a series of winners and going on to win the game

11-5. The decider was a see-saw affair before Manika prevailed 11-7. The final scoreline: 4-11, 4-11, 11-7, 12-10, 8-11, 11-5, 11-7.

Tough test awaits

Manika will now face 10th seed Sofia Polcanova of Australia for a place in the pre-quarterfinals.

While Manika survived a tough test, Sathiyan, the most consistent Indian paddler for the last few years, fell to a lower-ranked Hang. The World No. 95 had lost both his previous matches against Sathiyan.

Brilliant fightback

The Hong Kong player staged a stupendous comeback after being on the verge of defeat at 1-3 games down.

While Hang had every reason to celebrate, Sathiyan — whose personal coach S. Raman wasn't allowed to travel to Tokyo — would have felt disheartened to see his Olympic debut end in a 7-11, 11-7, 11-4, 11-5, 9-11, 10-12, 6-11 loss in the round of 64 after being a game away from progressing.

Sindhu hardly breaks sweat in opener

The World champion takes just 29 minutes to beat her Israeli opponent

BADMINTON

RAKESH RAO

World champion P. V. Sindhu warmed up for the tougher battles with an easy 21-7, 21-10 victory over Israel's Ksenia Polikarpova in her opening Group 'J' badminton match at the Tokyo Olympics.

Sindhu's 29-minute on-court 'workout' on Sunday saw her break away from 5-5 to win the next 14 points in the first game.



Swift and agile: Sindhu was on top of game in her first round match against Polikarpova. ■ PTI

In the second, from 4-3, Sindhu won seven straight points to assert her superiority before converting her fourth match point.

Polikarpova, ranked 58th, was often foxed by Sindhu's deft placements at the net. The Indian often finished points by setting them up through powerful smashes and forcing feeble responses.

In the second league match on Tuesday, sixth seed Sindhu faces Hong Kong's Cheung Ngan Yi.

Broken pistol scuttles Manu Bhaker's chances

Angad stays in contention in skeet

SHOOTING

SHYAM VASUDEVAN TOKYO

The Indian shooting contingent continued to suffer heartbreak at Tokyo 2020 as the 19-year-old Manu Bhaker — troubled by a broken pistol — battled valiantly but failed to qualify for the 10m air pistol final on Sunday.

The biggest disappointment on Sunday was Bhaker who struggled with her gun, costing her crucial time and a spot in the final. She started strong and was third at the end of the first series, but a freak incident midway through the second disrupted her rhythm.

The metal cocking lever, which has to be retracted to place a pellet in the gun prior to each shot, had broken. It was something her coach Ronak Pandit defined as a "never-seen-before" scenario.

While Manu finished 12th. Yashaswini Singh Deswal ended a spot below her.



Manu Bhaker. ■ PTI

In 10m air rifle, Dipak Kumar shot a below-par 624.7 to place 26th, while Divyansh Singh Panwar totalled 622.8 to finish 32nd.

In men's skeet, Asian champion and world record holder Angad Vir Singh Bajwa shot 73 following rounds of 24, 25 and 24 to stay in the race for a final berth after three rounds. However, Olympian Mairaj Ahmad Khan spoils his chances with a third round of 22 after having shot 25 and 24 in the first two.

Sania-Ankita duo crashes out

Barty loses in first round; Osaka returns to the court in style

TENNIS

ANIL TOKYO

India's women's tennis duo of Sania Mirza and Ankita Raina suffered a disappointing defeat in the first round here on Sunday.

Ukrainians Lyudmyla Viktorivna Kichenok and Nadiia Viktorivna Kichenok knocked out the Indian pair 0-6, 7-6(0), [10-8] in one hour and 33 minutes.

The Indian duo began with a bang, handing the Ukrainians a bagel inside 21 minutes, before losing its way.

Meanwhile, World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty crashed out losing 6-4, 6-3 to Spain's 48th-ranked Sara Sorribes Tormo.

Also, Japan's Naomi Osaka won her highly-anticipated return to the court. Osaka, the star of the opening ceremony, defeated China's Zheng Saisai 6-1, 6-4.



Osaka. ■ GETTY IMAGES

TOKYO TITBITS



Arjun and Arvind make rowing history

Rowers Arjun Jat and Arvind Singh were out of contention for a medal, but created history on Sunday by becoming the first Indian double sculls pair to make it to the semifinals of the Olympics. "This is the greatest day of my coaching career... our first target was to finish between 10th and 14th, and we are close to finishing 12th now," said coach Ismail Baig. India's previous best was 18th by Manjeet Singh-Sandeep Kumar in London 2012.

Pranati fails to qualify for all-around final

Indian artistic gymnast Pranati Nayak failed to qualify for the all-around final on Sunday. Pranati came 12th in subdivision 1 after recording a total score of 42.565 over four categories. The 26-year-old registered a score of 10.633 in the Floor exercise and completed a perfect vault for a score of 13.466. She then registered a score of 9.033 and 9.433 in the Uneven Bars and Balance Beam categories respectively.

Australia steamrollers insipid India

HOCKEY

SHYAM VASUDEVAN TOKYO

The Indian men's hockey team was no match for Australia as the world No. 1 side stomped to a 7-1 win in their Pool A match at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on Sunday.

The result steadied Australia's seat at the top with two consecutive wins, while India slipped to fourth spot. The top four teams from the six-member Pool will advance to the quarterfinals.

Australia romped ahead in the 10th minute through James Daniel Beale, who cleverly guided Jacob Whetton's flick into the back of

the net. India had chances to restore parity within five minutes, but Ravinder Pal Singh was denied by a sublime goal-line block from Andrew Ogilvie. India will rue

that missed opportunity as the Aussies snatched the game away in the second quarter with three goals in five minutes. Jeremy Hayward struck a thumping drag



Powering on: Blake Govers, second right, celebrates after slotting in the team's sixth goal. ■ GETTY IMAGES

INDIAN ODYSSEY

Badminton: Women's singles (group stage): P.V. Sindhu bt Ksenia Polikarpova (Isr) 21-7, 21-10.

Boxing (round of 32): Women's flyweight: Mary Kom bt Miguelina Hernandez (Dom); **Men's lightweight:** Manish Kaushik lost to Luke McCormack (GBR).

Gymnastics: Women's artistic all-round: Pranati Nayak, Did Not Qualify (DNQ) for final.

Hockey: Men (Pool A): lost to Australia 1-7.

Rowing: Men's lightweight double sculls (Repechage 2): 3. Arjun Jat and Arvind Singh (qualified for the semifinals).

Shooting: Women: 10m air pistol: Qualification: 12. Manu Bhaker, 13. Yashaswini Singh Deswal. DNQ for final.

Men: 10m air rifle: Qualification: 26. Deepak Kumar, 32. Di-

INDIANS IN ACTION

Archery: Men's team: Atanu Das, Pravin Jadhav, Tarundeep Rai vs Ilfat Abdullin, Denis Gankin, Sanzhar Mussayev (Kaz), 1/8 eliminations, 6 a.m.; quarterfinals, 10.15 a.m.; semifinals, 11.45 a.m.; bronze medal match, 12.45 p.m.; gold medal match, 1.10 p.m.

Badminton: Men's doubles (group stage): Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty vs Marcus Fernaldi Gideon & Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo (Ina), 9.10 a.m.

Boxing: Women's middleweight (round of 32): Ashish Kumar vs Tuoheta Erbieke (Chn), 3.05 p.m.

Fencing: Women's Sabre individual: Bhavani Devi vs Nadia Ben Azizi (Tun), table of 64, 5.30 a.m.; table of 32, 6.25 a.m.; table of 16, 10.05 a.m.; quarterfinals, 11.55 a.m.; semifinals, 2.30 p.m.; bronze medal bout, 4.20 p.m.; gold medal bout, 5.15 p.m.

Hockey: Women (Pool A): vs Germany, 5:45 p.m.

Sailing: Men: Laser (from 8.35 a.m.): Vishnu Saravanan; **Women: Laser Radial (from 11.05 a.m.):** Nethra Kumanan.

Shooting: Men's skeet: Anagad Vir Singh Bajwa, Mairaj Ahmad Khan, Qualification Day 2, 6.30 a.m.; Final, 12.20 p.m.

Swimming: Men's 200m Butterfly (Heat 2): Sajan Prakash, 3.50 p.m.

Table tennis: Men's singles (second round): Sharath Kamal vs Tiago Apolonia (Por), 6.30 a.m.

Women's singles: Second round: Sutirtha Mukherjee vs Fu Yu (Por), 8.30 a.m.; **Third round:** Manika Batra vs Sofia Polcanova (Aut), Noon.

Tennis (from 7.30 a.m.): Men's singles, second round: Sumit Nagal vs Daniil Medvedev (ROC).

Live on Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD). All times IST.

MEDAL EVENTS

21 Gold medals are on offer at the Games on Monday

Archery: Men's team
Artistic gymnastics: Men's team

Canoe Slalom: Men
Cycling Mountain bike: Men's cross-country

Diving: Men's synchronised 10m platform

Fencing: Men's foil, Women's sabre

Judo: Women's 57kg, Men's 73kg

Shooting: Skeet men, Skeet women

Skateboarding: Women's street

Swimming: Women's 400m freestyle, Women's 100m butterfly, Men's 100m breaststroke, Men's 4x100m freestyle

Table tennis: Mixed doubles

Taekwondo: Men's 80kg, Women's 67kg

Triathlon: Men
Weightlifting: Women's 55kg

GOLDIES

South Korea: Archery: Women's team

Anna Kiesenhofer (Aut): Cycling: Women's road race

Shi Tingmao & Wang Han (Chn): Diving: Women's synchronised 3m springboard

Lee Kiefer (USA): Fencing: Women's foil individual

Romain Cannone (Fra): Fencing: Men's epee individual

Uta Abe (Jon): Judo: Women's 52kg

Hifumi Abe (Jpn): Judo: Men's 66kg

William Shaner (USA): Shooting: Men's 10m air rifle

Vitalina Batsarashkina (ROC): Shooting: Women's 10m air pistol

Yuto Horigome (Jpn): Skateboarding: Men's skeet

Yui Ohashi (Jpn): Swimming: Women's 400m ind. medley

Australia: Swimming: Women's 4x100m freestyle relay

Ahmed Hafnaoui (Tun): Swim-



ming: Men's 400m freestyle
Chase Kalisz (USA): Swimming: Men's 400m ind. medley
Ulugbek Rashitov: Taekwondo: Men's 58kg
Anastasija Zolotic (USA): Taekwondo: Women's 57kg
Li Fabian: Weightlifting: Men's 61kg
Lijun Chen (Chn): Weightlifting: Men's 67kg

Suryakumar's knock, Bhuvneshwar's spell help India take 1-0 lead

Former scores a half-century while latter claims a four-for

INDIA IN LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO

Suryakumar Yadav's golden run with the bat was complemented by the Indian bowling unit led by Bhuvneshwar Kumar, as the visitors defeated Sri Lanka by 38 runs in the first T20I on Sunday.

If Suryakumar's second T20I half-century — an attractive 50 off 34 balls with five fours and two sixes — ensured a decent total of 164 for five, Yuzvendra Chahal (4-0-19-1) was niggardly. Deepak Chahal (two for 24 in three

overs) and Bhuvneshwar (four for 22 in 3.3 overs) struck when it mattered most, bowling the hosts out for 126 in 18.3 overs. From 111 for four in the 16th over, Sri Lanka lost its last six wickets for 15 runs.

After the hosts' whirlwind start in the first two overs, skipper Shikhar Dhawan introduced Krunal Pandya, who quickly removed Minod Bhanuka. Chahal bowled perhaps the delivery of the match — a flighted ball that completely foxed Dhananjaya de Silva. Opener Avishka Fernando paid for the slow-

ness of the track when he tried to pull Bhuvneshwar.

However, debutant Charith Asalanka (44, 26b, 3x4, 3x6) kept Sri Lanka in contention. He waded into Varun Chakravarty, also making his debut, and smashed him for two sixes. Asalanka was dismissed by Chahal, caught in the deep going for another maximum. The hosts slid from there.

Earlier, Suryakumar was supported by contributions from Dhawan (46, 36b, 4x4, 1x6), Sanju Samson (27, 20b, 2x4, 1x6) and Ishan Kishan (20 n.o., 14b, 1x4, 1x6).

SCOREBOARD

India: Prithvi Shaw c Minod Chameera 0 (1b), Shikhar Dhawan c Bandara b Karunaratne 46 (36b, 4x4, 1x6), Sanju Samson lbw b Hasaranga 27 (20b, 2x4, 1x6), Suryakumar Yadav c sub (Mendis) b Hasaranga 50 (34b, 5x4, 2x6), Hardik Pandya c Minod b Chameera 10 (12b), Ishan Kishan (not out) 20 (14b, 1x4, 1x6), Krunal Pandya (not out) 3 (3b); Extras (lb-2, w-6); 8; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 164.
Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Shaw, 0.1 ov), 2-51 (Samson, 6.1), 3-113 (Dhawan, 14.1), 4-127 (Suryakumar, 15.2), 5-153 (Hardik, 18.4).
Sri Lanka bowling: Chameera 4-0-24-2, Karunaratne 4-0-34-1, Akila Dananjaya (not out) 1 (1b); Ex-

tras (w-6); 6; Total (in 18.3 overs): 126.
Fall of wickets: 1-23 (Minod, 2.3), 2-48 (Dhananjaya, 6.2), 3-50 (Avishka, 7.1), 4-90 (Bandara, 12.6), 5-111 (Asalanka, 15.3), 6-111 (Hasaranga, 15.5), 7-122 (Karunaratne, 16.6), 8-124 (Shanaka, 17.4), 9-125 (Udana, 18.1).
India bowling: Bhuvneshwar 3.3-0-22-4, Deepak Chahal 3-0-24-2, Krunal 2-0-16-1, Varun 4-0-28-1, Chahal 4-0-19-1, Hardik 2-0-17-1.
Toss: Sri Lanka; **Man-of-the-Match:** Bhuvneshwar.
India won by 38 runs and took a 1-0 lead in three-match series.

First T20I: July 27, Colombo, 8 p.m. IST.



Swing factor: Bhuvneshwar put the skids on Sri Lanka's chase, striking at crucial junctures. ■ TWITTER/BCCI

IPL 2021 Schedule

Date	Teams	Time	Venue
Sept. 19	CSK vs MI	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 20	KKR vs RCB	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 21	PBKS vs RR	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 22	DC vs SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 23	MI vs KKR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 24	RCB vs CSK	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Sept. 25	DC vs RR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 25	SRH vs PBKS	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Sept. 26	CSK vs KKR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 26	RCB vs MI	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 27	SRH vs RR	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 28	KKR vs DC	3.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Sept. 28	MI vs PBKS	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 29	RR vs RCB	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 30	SRH vs CSK	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 1	KKR vs PBKS	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 2	MI vs DC	3.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 2	RR vs CSK	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 3	RCB vs PBKS	3.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 3	KKR vs SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 4	DC vs CSK	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 5	RR vs MI	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 6	RCB vs SRH	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 7	CSK vs PBKS	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 7	KKR vs RR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 8	SRH vs MI	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 8	RCB vs DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
PLAYOFFS			
Date	Teams	Time	Venue
Oct. 10	Qualifier 1	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 11	Eliminator	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 13	Qualifier 2	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 15	Final	7.30 p.m.	Dubai

All times IST

Ramkumar in final

CARY (USA): Eighth seed Ramkumar Ramanathan defeated Stefan Kozlov of the USA 1-6, 6-3, 6-1 in the semifinals of the \$52,080

Challenger tennis tournament here.

In the final, Ramkumar will face sixth seed Mitchell Krueger of the USA.

Mirabai realises another dream: Mission Pizza!

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

Having passed Mission Tokyo with flying colours, Mirabai Chanu entered a new mission on Saturday evening: Mission Pizza. This would be the tastiest pizza of her life — one that is garnished with the glee of achieving her life's dream of winning an Olympic medal.

The 26-year-old weightlifter, who carved her name in history with a silver in the 49kg category, wanted to celebrate it with a big cheesy pizza.

She had, in fact, been building her appetite by keeping an eye on the pizza counter at the Games Village here.

"Among all the varieties of junk food, I like pizza the most. And I've noticed since we got here that they have been serving pizzas at the Games Village. I've been eyeing the pizzas all along and I can finally eat one now!" she said.

Her yearning for a pizza became the talk of the town and Domino's India joined the party by throwing a small pizza party with her family back in Imphal. Mira-



Mirabai Chanu... devouring her favourite. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

bai, who has not been home in nearly two years, is expected to land in New Delhi on Monday and travel home a few days later.

The 49kg section is a particularly tough one as the lifters have to eat clean and stay within a certain weight limit throughout the year. The Manipuri weighed 51 ki-

Hafnaoui strikes gold

Australian women set world record in 4x100m freestyle

TOKYO OLYMPICS

REUTERS
TOKYO

Tunisia and Japan celebrated unexpected golds on the opening day of swimming events before normal service was resumed with the Australian women's 4x100m freestyle relay team smashing its own world record on the way to the title in Tokyo.

Chase Kalisz settled American nerves by delivering the country's first gold of these Games, winning the men's 400m medley as part of a US one-two with Jay Litherland.

On a day of surprises, Tunisian teenager Ahmed Hafnaoui pulled off the biggest shock of all with a stunning victory in the men's 400m freestyle.

The 18-year-old, the slowest qualifier, produced a blistering finish to pip Australia's Jack McLoughlin to gold with a time of 3:43.36s, American Kieran Smith taking bronze. Hafnaoui's gold is only the fifth by a Tunisian athlete at the Olympics, but his third in swimming.

Japan's Yui Ohashi won the women's 400m medley in 4:32.08s. American Emma Weyant took the silver 0.68s behind and compatriot Hali Flickinger took the bronze.



Roar of triumph: Ahmed Hafnaoui of Tunisia celebrates winning the men's 400m freestyle gold. •GETTY IMAGES

While it was a disappointing day for Australia in the men's events, the women set a world record of 3:29.69s in the 4x100m freestyle relay, with Canada taking silver, 3:09 behind the winners, and the United States in bronze position.

The quartet of sisters Bronte and Cate Campbell, Meg Harris and Emma McKeon ensured a third straight gold in the event for Australia, taking 0.36 off the previous record of 3:30.05.

Maana, Srihari out Meanwhile, Indian swimmers Maana Patel and Srihari Nataraj made their debut in the 100m backstroke heats. However, neither could progress to semifinals. Maana and Nataraj, to-

gether with Sajjan Prakash in the 200m freestyle, 100m and 200m butterfly, make up the largest Indian swimming contingent since 2008, when four swimmers qualified.

Maana swam a time of 1:05.20 in the 100m backstroke. "I am pretty happy because it was my best time. Going into the heat I was really fidgety and shivering. All the emotions piled up and I was overwhelmed," the 21-year old said.

Srihari placed fifth in his heat in a time of 54.31s. "It was fine and not so great at the same time. I felt ready for the race but I didn't feel like it clicked. Maybe I let the pressure get to me. I am disappointed but I can live with it," he said after his race.

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Tokyo 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 3 a.m. onwards (Tuesday).

Vidit draws with Vasif

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Vidit Gujrathi drew with Azerbaijan's Vasif Durarbayli in 56 moves in the first game of the fifth round in the chess World Cup in Sochi on Sunday. On Monday, Vidit will play with black pieces in the second game of the mini-match.

Norrie wins first ATP title

LOS CABOS (MEXICO): Cameron Norrie collected his first ATP tour title when he defeated American teenager Brandon Nakashima 6-2, 6-2 to win the Mifel Open on Saturday.

The 25-year-old Briton, ranked 30 in the world, did not drop a set en route to the trophy and lost just 10 games in his final three matches. But he still needed four championship points before he could secure the title.

"It was always a goal of mine to get my first title," said Norrie. "Obviously I'd lost three finals this year, so it was very nice to get over the line today." AFP

Ledecky, Titmus to face off in 400m freestyle

Adam Peaty on course to defend 100m breaststroke title

REUTERS
TOKYO

Katie Ledecky can become a six-times Olympic gold medalist on Monday if the American wins her long-awaited 400m freestyle showdown with Australia's World champion Ariarne Titmus.

The big duel of the Tokyo pool will be one highlight of a morning that is also likely to see Adam Peaty take the 100m breaststroke gold and make history as the first British swimmer to defend an Olympic title.

"It's going to be a great race with Ariarne. I'm really excited to be in that first final tomorrow," said Ledecky, who won four of her golds in Rio in 2016 and the other in London in 2012. The American is the defending 400m champion and world record holder and goes into the final with the fastest time from the heats.

Ready for challenge

Titmus, 20, also won her heat comfortably enough and said: "I'd like to think I've got a bit more in the tank for the final."

Ledecky would once have been the day's nailed-on certainty for gold but that role has been taken by world record holder Peaty,

whose times so far have been faster than any other swimmer has ever managed in the event.

USA will again be in the medal hunt later in the morning after qualifying second fastest behind Italy for the 4x100 freestyle relay, with Australia third.

The women's 100m butterfly could be a big moment for China's top medal hope Zhang Yufei, fastest in the semifinals, but France's Marie Wattel and Australian Emma McKeon will be pushing hard.

Test for Sjostrom

Sweden's world record holder and reigning champion Sarah Sjostrom, American Torri Huske and Canadian Maggie MacNeil are also very much in contention.

Sjostrom had surgery for a broken elbow after slipping on ice in February and a medal would be a remarkable turnaround in her fourth Games.

"When I started swimming again after my surgery, I was like, 'I'm never, ever going to be able to swim again.' I couldn't physically take a stroke in the water," she said after Saturday's heats. "I couldn't do anything. So, I am super proud to do this comeback."

Biles makes a flawed entrance

Veteran Chusovitina departs after a remarkable career

GYMNASTICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

American gymnastics superstar Simone Biles got off to a shaky start in her quest for five gold medals and Olympic history in Tokyo on Sunday, as an Uzbeki mother-of-one bid a poignant farewell after a remarkable career spanning eight Games.

At 46 years old, Oksana Chusovitina, gold medalist at her debut Olympics in Barcelona in 1992, has earned the right to occupy her time in more sedate ways than exploding up a 25 metre runway and somersaulting backwards over a vault against competitors younger than her son.

She received a hugely affectionate ovation from her team, rivals, media and photographers when she narrowly failed to qualify for the vault at her eighth and last Olympics.

Born in 1976, Chusovitina's Olympic odyssey began in Barcelona in 1992, where she won team gold, adding silver in the vault in Beijing 2008.

Biles, who kept the wheels on her bid to level



A champion exits: Uzbekistan's Oksana Chusovitina, who has an Olympic gold and silver in a career spanning eight Games, bid a poignant farewell on Sunday. •AFP

Soviet great Larisa Latynina's record of nine gymnastics gold medals, but her qualifying performances were peppered with rare imperfections.

On the floor, Biles over-rotated after one series of mesmerising tumbles and went off the mat, drawing a gasp from at least one onlooker in the near-deserted Ariake Centre.

Disbelief

She rolled her eyes after another unsteady landing over the vault, and her performance director Tom Forster expressed disbelief after an untidy end to her

beam routine. Biles qualified top in the all-around and vault, and was second on the floor, with the USA occupying the same position behind the Russians for Tuesday's team final.

But in the beam standings she paid for her flawed ending to lie sixth of the eight progressing. Biles also booked a place for the uneven bars final, though, which the 19-time World champion missed at Rio 2016, as the eighth qualifier.

Another gold medalist, but from much further back than Rio, departing Tokyo was the evergreen Chusovitina.

Bavuma leads SA to series sweep

Proteas cruise to 49-run win in final T20I

IRELAND VS SA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BELFAST

Captain Temba Bavuma and Reeza Hendricks were the stars as South Africa overpowered Ireland in the third and final T20 International at Stormont on Saturday to seal a 3-0 series win.

The pair's first-wicket partnership of 127 set up a

49-run victory. Bavuma made 72 off 51 balls with six 4s and two 6s, while Hendricks added 69 off 48.

David Miller chipped in with an unbeaten 36 as South Africa posted 189 for two from its 20 overs.

Big total

It was a total that was too much for Ireland, which finished at 140 for nine.

Ireland captain Andy Bal-

birnie top-scored with 27 while George Linde, Wiaan Mulder and Lizaad Williams two wickets each for South Africa.

The scores: South Africa 189/2 in 20 overs (Tamba Bavuma 72, Reeza Hendricks 69, David Miller 36) bt Ireland 140/9 in 20 overs (Andy Balbirnie 27).

Toss: South Africa; MoM: Bavuma; MoS: Miller; South Africa won the match by 49 runs and the three-match series 3-0.

Sarkar stars as Bangladesh wins series

Sets the tone for a brilliant run chase against Zimbabwe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HARARE

Opener Soumya Sarkar top-scored with 68 as Bangladesh won a thrilling run chase to defeat Zimbabwe by five wickets and win a T20I series 2-1 in Harare on Sunday.

Set a challenging target of 194 to triumph, the tourists reached the target with four balls to spare.

Inspired by Wesley Madhever (54 runs) and Regis Chakabva (48), Zimbabwe

posted 193/5 as it sought a first success in a two-nation T20 series.

A sweep But all-rounder Sarkar, who won the 'Player-of-the-match' and the 'Player-of-the-series' awards, set the tone for a brilliant run chase that gave Bangladesh an all-format sweep in the southern Africa nation.

Not only did he top score, but his right-arm medium fast deliveries yielded 2/19,

the most impressive figures among the six Bangladesh bowlers.

The scores: Zimbabwe 193/5 in 20 overs (Wesley Madhever 54, Regis Chakabva 48, Soumya Sarkar 2/19) lost to Bangladesh 194/5 in 19.2 overs (Soumya Sarkar 68, Mahmudullah 34, Shamim Hossain 31 n.o., Blessing Muzarabani 2/27, Luke Jongwe 2/42). Toss: Zimbabwe. MoM & MoS: Sarkar.

Bangladesh won by five wickets with four balls remaining to clinch three-match series 2-1.

Pooran powers Windies' victory

Holder, Joseph and Hosein play their part in levelling series

AUSTRALIA IN WI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRIDGETOWN

Half-centuries from Nicholas Pooran and Jason Holder guided the West Indies to a series-levelling four-wicket win in the second ODI against Australia on Saturday.

Replying to the visitors' 187, the home side slipped to 72 for five before Man-of-the-Match Pooran and former captain Holder, who contributed an invaluable 52, put on 93 for the seventh wicket.

West Indies reached the target with four wickets and 12 overs to spare.

Australians had to recover from an even more desperate situation. With the decision to bat made on Thursday before the match was suspended due to a positive COVID-19 test returned by a member of the West Indies staff, Australia slumped to 45 for six.

Matthew Wade and Mitchell Starc put on 51 for the seventh wicket. Then, Adam Zampa and Wes Agar put on 59 for the ninth wicket.

The scores: Australia 187 in 47.1 overs (Matthew Wade 36,



Hand on the tiller: Nicholas Pooran charted his team's course to victory from troubled waters on Saturday. •AFP

Adam Zampa 36, Wes Agar 41; Alzarri Joseph 3/39, Akeal Hosein 3/30) lost to West Indies 191/6 in 38 overs (Shai Hope 38, Nicholas Pooran 59 n.o., Ja-

son Holder 52; Mitchell Starc 3/26). Toss: Australia. MoM: Pooran; West Indies won match by four wickets, three-match series 1-1.

Ashwa Bravo for feature

HYDERABAD: Ashwa Bravo should score over his rivals in the Three Wishes Plate, the chief event of the opening day's races of the monsoon season on Monday. There will be no false rails.

1 CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1.05 p.m.: 1. Espom (12) Kuldeep Singh 56, 2. Indian Glory (4) Md. Ismail 56, 3. N R 1 Sport (15) Uday Kiran P 56, 4. One More Time (1) C.P. Bopanna 56, 5. Sorrento (14) B.R. Kumar 56, 6. Starwalt (5) Surya Prakash 56, 7. Angelita (11) R. Manish 54.5, 8. Ashwa Pushkin (7) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 9. By The Bay (9) P.S. Chouhan 54.5, 10. Furious Fun (2) Kiran Naidu 54.5, 11. Golden Lady (10) B. Nikhil 54.5, 12. Good Tidings (3) Ajeeth Kumar 54.5, 13. Maximum Glamour (13) Akshay 54.5, 14. Neftereti (16) P. Sai Kumar 54.5, 15. Racing Rani (8) G. Naresh 54.5 and Total Darc (6) Afroz 54.5.

1. BY THE BAY, 2. ASHWA PUSHKIN, 3. MAXIMUM GLAMOUR

2 TENACITY PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m) rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1.35: 1. Mark My Day (10) B.R. Kumar 62, 2. Cheltenham (5) N.B. Kuldeep 59, 3. Fire Power (6) Trevor 59, 4. Umatched (2) P. Sai Kumar 58, 5. Explosive (11) Gaurav Singh 57.5, 6. Fatuma (8) Ashad Asbar 57.5, 7. Royal Pal (1) Nakhat 56.5, 8. Fashion Universe (4) Akshay 54, 9. Polonsky (3) R. Ajinkya 54, 10. Sun Dancer (9) Afroz 53.5 and 11. Bedazzled (7) Abhay 52.

1. FIRE POWER, 2. FASHION UNIVERSE, 3. FATUMA

3 CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. I) (2,000m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 2.05: 1. Dream Jewel (11) Koushik 56, 2. First In Line (9) Surya Prakash 56, 3. My Master (14) Nakhat 56, 4. Paladino (10) Kuldeep Singh 56, 5. Shivash (8) Ashad Asbar 56, 6. Star Cruise (6) Kiran Naidu 56, 7. Tenth Azmatena (16) G. Naresh 56, 8. Zamazenta (2) B. Nikhil 56, 9. Able Love (5) Gaurav Singh 54.5, 10. City Of Bliss (3) Ajeeth Kumar 54.5, 11. Hard To Toss (1) B.R. Kumar 54.5, 12. Hot Seat (15) Md. Ismail 54.5, 13. Moonlight Ruby (7) Akshay 54.5, 14. Muuser (4) Afroz 54.5, 15. Secret Circle (12) Santosh Raj N R 54.5 and 16. Spectacular Cruise (13) P. Sai Kumar 54.5.

1. MOONLIGHT RUBY, 2. SIYAVASH, 3. CITY OF BLISS

4 TENACITY PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.40: 1. Miss Marvellous (11) N.B. Kuldeep 62.5, 2. Just Incredible (4) Ajeeth Kumar 60.5, 3. Dillon (3) B. Nikhil 59, 4. Pedro Planet (2) Kiran 59, 5. Sweet Melody (6) B.R. Kumar 59, 6. Ashwa Arjun (7) Rafique Sk 58, 7. King Roger (10) Koushik 57.5, 8. Flamingo Fame (8) G. Naresh 55.5, 9. Francis Bacon (12) Trevor 55.5, 10. Team Player (9) Nakhat 54, 11. Win Vision (5) R. Ajinkya 53.5 and 12. Lightning Pearl (10) Surya Prakash 50.

1. JUST INCREDIBLE, 2. TEAM PLAYER, 3. FRANCIS BACON

5 SCARLET PRINCE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100m) 4-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.15: 1.

Hidden Hope (15) Santosh Raj N R 62, 2. Bedford (6) Kiran 61.5, 3. Mind Reader (12) B.R. Kumar 61.5, 4. Four One Four (10) Kuldeep Singh 60, 5. Flying Jet (Ex: Beautiful Luv) (8) Afroz 59.5, 6. Sublime (4) Ajit Singh 58.5, 7. Look Of Love (1) Rafique Sk 57.5, 8. Blink Of An Eye (7) N.B. Kuldeep 57, 9. Beauty On Parade (3) Md. Ismail 56, 10. Appenzelle (2) Akshay 55.5, 11. Star Racer (9) Ajeeth Kumar 55, 12. Hashtag (13) Praveen Gaddam 54, 13. Red River (11) R.S. Jodha 54, 14. Moringa (16) Surya Prakash 53, 15. Hurricane (14) Abhay 52.5 and 16. Berkeley (5) B. Nikhil 51.

1. HIDDEN HOPE, 2. APPENZELLE, 3. HURRICANE

6 THREE WISHES PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.50: 1. Ashwa Bravo (3) Trevor 60.5, 2. Sporting Smile (8) R.S. Jodha 59.5, 3. Lagos (12) A.A. Vikrant 59, 4. Southern Legacy (6) S.S. Tanwar 58.5, 5. Vijays Simha (10) P.S. Chouhan 57, 6. House Of Diamonds (2) Ashay 56, 7. Incredible (7) R. Manish 55.5, 8. Rapid Fire (4) Ajeeth Kumar 55, 9. Chuckit (11) B. Nikhil 54, 10. Big Brave (5) Santosh Raj N R 50, 11. Loch Stella (1) Nakhat 50 and 12. Proud (9) Surya Prakash 50.

1. ASHWA BRAVO, 2. HOUSE OF DIAMONDS, 3. SPORTING SMILE

7 RANDOM HARVEST PLATE (1,400m) 5-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4.25: 1. Mark My Word (13) C.P. Bopanna 60.5, 2. Blazer (8) Kuldeep Singh 56.5, 3. Full Volume (Ex: Marinetti) (10) P.S. Chouhan 56.5, 4. Shaquille (3) Md. Ismail 56.5, 5. Kesariya Balam (2) Akshay 56, 6. Kalusiya (7) P. Sai Kumar 55.5, 7. Dandy Man (1) Trevor 55.5, 8. Ashwa Yashobali (5) Gaurav Singh 55, 9. Red Sniper (6) N.B. Kuldeep 54.5, 10. The Special One (4) Abhay Singh 54.5, 11. Maxwell (14) Ajeeth Kumar 54, 12. Once More (15) Nakhat 52, 13. Mystery (11) G. Naresh 51, 14. King Maker (12) Surya Prakash 50 and 15. Rhythm Selection (9) Afroz 50.

1. KESARIYA BALAM, 2. DANDY MAN, 3. ASHWA YASHOBALI

8 SCARLET PRINCE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,100m) 4-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 5.00: 1. Amyra (13) N.B. Kuldeep 61.5, 2. Kamyar (12) Santosh Raj N R 61.5, 3. N R 1 Magic (15) Uday Kiran P 61.5, 4. Dancing Doll (5) Praveen Gaddam 59.5, 5. Gusty Note (3) A.A. Vikrant 59, 6. Colachel Battle (6) Trevor 57.5, 7. Gazebo (7) B.R. Kumar 57.5, 8. Star Dancer (8) Kiran 56.5, 9. Art In Motion (2) Afroz 56, 10. Thunder Road (10) Kuldeep Singh 55.5, 11. Destine To Be (4) Rafique Sk 55, 12. Classy Dame (1) Nakhat 54, 13. Healthandhappiness (9) Ajit Singh 53, 14. Elmira (11) B. Nikhil 52.5, 15. La Lady (14) P. Sai Kumar 52 and 16. Jo Malone (16) R. Manish 51.

1. COLACHEL BATTLE, 2. AMYRA, 3. STAR DANCER

Day's best: ASHWA BRAVO Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8; Mini Jackpot: (i) 2, 3, 4 & 5;