



President Kovind pays tributes to Kargil War bravehearts

page 9



Uttar Pradesh got a huge portion of Clean Ganga funds

page 8



Clashes in Tunisia after President ousts PM amid COVID protests

page 11



Sharath battles his way into the third round; Manika, Sutirtha lose

page 13

NEARBY



Women hold 'parliament' at farmers' protest site

NEW DELHI
Women from all walks of life came together to hold a 'Mahila Kisan Sansad' here on Monday and discussed their role in farming and the farmers' agitation. They said during the protest against the farm laws, women and men shared the stage and continued the agitation shoulder to shoulder.

CITY • PAGE 2

Delhi police move HC over fine for 'farical probe'

NEW DELHI
Delhi Police has approached the High Court challenging a recent order passed by a local court that imposed a cost of ₹25,000 on it for "miserably" failing in its investigation into a case of a man who received gunshot injuries in his left eye during the north-east Delhi riots last year. The court had censured Delhi Police for resisting registration of FIR.

CITY • PAGE 2

Yediyurappa bows out, suspense rises over new Karnataka CM

78-year-old BJP veteran quits 'voluntarily'; party yet to reveal name of successor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Putting to rest endless speculation over a leadership change in Karnataka, B.S. Yediyurappa on Monday submitted his resignation as Chief Minister to Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot, ending his fourth stint at the helm exactly two years after he took charge. This was the 78-year-old veteran leader's fourth tenure as Chief Minister, none lasting a full term.

With this, the stage is now set for a new BJP Chief Minister, and all eyes are on the party high command's decision following a Parliamentary Board meeting in Delhi and the BJP Legislature Party meeting to be held in Bengaluru this week.

Mr. Yediyurappa, who had been saying that he was waiting for the "high command's message" on his future, announced his resignation tear-eyed at the end of an emotionally charged speech



Short term: Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa during a function in Bengaluru on Monday. • MURALI KUMAR K.

at a function to mark two years of his government in the morning. He said he had done it "happily and voluntarily".

Mr. Gehlot accepted Mr. Yediyurappa's resignation, dissolved the Council of Mi-

BJP leadership to take a call

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

As Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa resigned, a part of the action shifted to New Delhi and the national leadership of the BJP, which now has the task of evolving a consensus over his replacement. According to BJP sources, general secretary organisation B.L. Santhosh has left for Bengaluru.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Hero's welcome



Dream come true: Olympics silver medallist Mirabai Chanu celebrating at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi upon her arrival from Tokyo on Monday. • MOORTHY R.V.

Bengal forms panel to look into snooping allegations

Two-member committee to submit report within 6 months

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

The West Bengal government on Monday set up an inquiry commission, comprising retired Supreme Court judge Madan B. Lokur and former Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court Jyotirmoy Bhattacharya, to look into the allegations of snooping on politicians, activists and journalists using the Israeli spyware Pegasus.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said the Cabinet had approved the appointment of the commission. "Everyone is under surveillance... We had hoped the Centre will start an inquiry into the Pegasus row under the supervision of the Supreme Court. But this government did nothing even when Parliament is in session"

Everyone is under surveillance... We had hoped the Centre will start an inquiry into the Pegasus row under the supervision of the Supreme Court. But this government did nothing even when Parliament is in session



MAMATA BANERJEE
West Bengal Chief Minister

mission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 (60 of 1952) to "enquire into and report on *inter alia* the reported interception and the possession, storage and use of such information collected through such interception, in the hands of state actors and non-state actors."

'Phones tapped' Since there were "aggrieved parties" in the State whose phones had been put under surveillance, the commission would investigate the matter, she added.

Last week, she had urged the Supreme Court to take *suo motu* cognisance of the issue. The West Bengal government issued a notification for setting up the com-

mission under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 (60 of 1952) to "enquire into and report on *inter alia* the reported interception and the possession, storage and use of such information collected through such interception, in the hands of state actors and non-state actors."

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8
MAMATA-PM MEET TODAY • PAGE 9

6 policemen killed in Assam-Mizoram border row

Violence comes days after Amit Shah's meet with CMs on inter-State disputes

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

Six Assam police personnel were killed in an exchange of fire with their Mizoram counterparts after the protracted border row between the two northeastern States took a violent turn on Monday. The clashes in the border town of Vairengte also left at least 60 persons from Assam injured.

The incident comes less than two days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a meeting with the Chief Ministers of the northeastern

States in the Meghalaya capital of Shillong for resolving the inter-State boundary disputes. The injured included Nimbalkar Vaibhav Chandrakant, Superintendent of Police of Cachar district in Assam, and the officer-in-charge of the Dholai police station in the district. Officials said the SP, in the intensive care unit with a bullet injury in the hip, could be airlifted to Mumbai. His personal security officer, Liton Suklabaidya, was among those killed.

"I am deeply pained to in-



Tense moments: Police personnel during a clash at the Assam-Mizoram border at Lalapur in Cachar district. • PTI

form that six brave jawans of @assampolice have sacrificed their lives while defending constitutional boundary of our State at the Assam-Mizoram border. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved

families," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who holds the Home portfolio, tweeted.

Mizoram's Home Minister Lalchamliana said the chain of events began at 11.30 a.m.

when some 200 Assam police personnel came to the Vairengte autorickshaw stand and "forcibly" closed the duty post of the Central Reserve Police Force and a section of Mizoram police personnel. The CRPF is deployed as a neutral force on disputed stretches along the 164.6-km Assam-Mizoram border.

"The Assam police damaged some Mizoram-bound vehicles and committed arson. They did not listen to our officials and lobbed tear gas shells and grenades and started firing around 4.30 p.m.," he said.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Rahul drives tractor to House to protest farm laws

'Centre will have to take back black laws'



Show of support: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi driving a tractor to Parliament on Monday. • PTI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, accompanied by his parliamentary colleagues, drove a tractor to Parliament on Monday to express solidarity with the farmers protesting against the three farm laws.

Mr. Gandhi, along with Rajya Sabha members Parpat Singh Bajwa (Punjab), Deepinder Singh Hooda (Haryana) and Lok Sabha member Ravneet Singh Bitu (Punjab), carried a banner and raised slogans. "We have brought the message of farmers to Parliament. A discussion is not allowed inside the House and the farmers are being suppressed. That's why we are here and they [the Centre] will have to take back these black laws," he said.

'No benefit for farmers' The tractor ride was also aimed at highlighting the cause of the farmers' unions that have been protesting

just outside the Delhi borders for over eight months now. "These laws are aimed at helping only two or three industrialists. The entire country knows for whom and whom these laws have been brought about. These laws are not for the benefit of farmers and that is why they have to be withdrawn," Mr. Gandhi said.

His tractor drive from Moti Lal Nehru Marg to one of the peripheral gates of Parliament took the police by surprise, as the area was under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code and no gathering of more than four people was allowed.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala and Youth Congress chief B.V. Srinivas and a number of party leaders were detained outside Parliament and taken to the Mandir Marg police station by bus amid sloganeering for the withdrawal of the farm laws.

LS PASSES TWO BILLS • PAGE 9

SC turns down plea of Gambhir foundation

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea by BJP MP Gautam Gambhir's foundation to

stay the proceedings in a case of illegal procurement and distribution of COVID-19 drugs, saying "individuals cannot monopolise the distribution of drugs

during the pandemic". The Bench advised the foundation to move the Delhi High Court for relief.

DETAILS ON • PAGE 10

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WEDNESDAY, JUL. 28
RISE 05:41 SET 19:15
RISE 22:22 SET 09:41

THURSDAY, JUL. 29
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RISE 22:53 SET 10:36

Delhi Weather max min
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Safdarjang 33 28
Palam 33 27

Delhi Palam Today
32°C Few spells of moderate rain and thundershower likely at some places with cloudy sky. Day would remain humid.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
31°C Few spells of rain and thundershower likely at some places with cloudy sky and gentle winds.

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City continues to face vaccine shortage, sees 39 new cases

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Capital continues to face a shortage of COVID-19 vaccines and stock is likely to last for less than a day, according to a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The city has been facing a similar situation for more than two weeks. The Health Minister had, earlier this month, said 500 vaccination centres were shut due to the shortage.

On Monday morning, the city had only 70,900 doses of Covishield and 2,16,140 doses of Covaxin, as per the data. Till now, 96,84,216 doses have been administered in the city.

Also, 10,614 doses were administered in the city on Sunday. Fewer people are vaccinated on Sundays as government centres are shut.

The city reported 39 new COVID cases in 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,35,949, according to the government bulletin.

There was only one death reported and the total number of deaths stood at 25,044. A total of 56,435 tests were done in a day and that test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.07%.

Over 45,000 construction workers get ₹5,000 each

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government distributed one-time COVID-19 relief of ₹5,000 each to 47,996 construction workers who are registered with the government, said authorities.

"I urge all construction workers to get registered with the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board to avail the benefits of welfare schemes for education, marriage, maternity, pension, etc," said Deputy CM Manish Sisodia.

In April, the government had paid ₹5,000 each to 2,16,602 construction workers as a one-time relief. The 47,996 workers are people, whose applications were approved between May 28 and July 18, said the government.

"When the first lockdown was imposed, the Delhi government was one of the first governments to grant relief disbursement to all the 39,600 workers who were registered with the Construction Board in March 2020. We have carried a series of reforms in the Labour Department and as a result of this, within 8 months the number of workers registered with the board has increased to 3 lakhs," Mr. Sisodia said.

Delhi government has also started a 24x7 helpline for construction workers.



Though standing travel is banned, metro commuters stand shoulder to shoulder during peak hours on Monday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

Jam-packed metro coaches on Day 1 of new travel guidelines

'People are not aware that metro is offering only 20% of its passenger capacity'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on Monday resumed operations with 100% seating capacity, permitting 50 commuters to travel in each coach. With entry continuing to be restricted at stations, as standing travel is not permitted, queues were seen outside some stations.

In a notification issued on Saturday, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) had permitted the operation of metro trains with 100% seating capacity but specified that no standing travel would be permitted.

However, on the first day of operations, several passengers were seen standing during the metro journey in crowded coaches.

Stating that flying squads were present for enforcement across the network, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) said that several people were not "fully aware that the metro is offering only 20% of its passenger capacity" and not 100%.

With the revised guideline, the DMRC can accommodate 50 passengers seated next to each other and 80% of its carrying capacity, which constitutes of around 250 people who can stand and travel, are still out of bounds.

DMRC Spokesperson Anuj Dayal said: "Some people are still under the impression that alternate seats are not to



Commuters in a DTC bus on Monday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

be occupied and preferred to stand during travel causing such a temporary situation in certain trains in some sections. DMRC has taken note of such a situation arising in morning peak hours and to avoid recurrence, will further strengthen its regulated entry and also advise public to occupy all seats during travel and abstain from travel by standing as it is still not permissible according to guidelines."

"The public are advised to avail metro services only when absolutely necessary to adhere to the prevalent guidelines," Mr. Dayal said.

Strict enforcement
Several experts said strict enforcement of the guidelines was of prime importance while relaxing the norms.

Sewa Ram, Head of Transport Department at the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) said: "In a way

we can say that there has been an upgradation with the relaxation but it is still far less than the actual capacity. Since only sitting has been permitted, we should not be that concerned. However, some kind of social distancing has to be ensured. The DMRC should ensure that there are people monitoring as there needs to be strict enforcement. Even though people are sitting next to each other, they are not facing each other and hence, the impact might be less."

Vaccinated commuters can also be incentivised in some manner, suggested Amit Bhatt of the WRI, while stating that people sitting next to each other "defeats the whole purpose of social distancing."

"We have to incentivise people who are vaccinated either through some kind of preference in terms of easy check-ins or discounts. The

question is how to do that. These are mass transit systems and there is only a certain amount of relaxation one can do. It defeats the purpose if these systems are treated like private vehicles. How to strike a balance is what is important and needs to be thought of," said Mr. Bhatt.

Further Mr. Bhatt added, "Typically how ticketless people are fined, the same kind of mechanism should be adopted. Some standing commuters on earmarked places should also be permitted."

Ridership

The DMRC said that the average passenger journeys with full seating and no standing travel till 8 p.m. on Monday was approximately 17.5 lakh.

Since the resumption of services on June 7 with the stipulated 50% capacity, Delhi Metro had witnessed around 16 lakh passenger journeys on an average till July 25, officials said.

Between June 7 and July 25, the daily average number of commuters who were counselled and penalised stood at 470 and 285 respectively, officials said.

With nine flying squads deployed on Monday, across the metro network, 432 passengers were boarded from trains and 159 commuters were penalised for flouting norms, the DMRC said.

Restrictions eased, but most cinema halls remain closed

Owners say they are waiting for big-ticket film releases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Though the decks have been cleared by the Delhi government for the reopening of cinema halls at 50% capacity, many theatres in the city are taking it slow with most of them staying closed on the first day of operations.

While a few film buffs landed up outside theatres on Monday morning hoping to catch a film on the big screen, owners said they are waiting for a big-ticket film release, 100% vaccination of employees and proper sanitisation of their premises before welcoming audiences.

Private screening

A spokesperson from INOX, which runs several screens across the Capital, said they would open their cinemas on July 30 with 100% of employees vaccinated with the first dose. INOX also plans to introduce private screening, where guests can reserve an entire auditorium for a private show and choose the content, either from the current playlist, or an old blockbuster.

"INOX believes the new and innovative offering full



A worker sanitising a cinema hall in Delhi.

of delights would be safe and secure, and will become a new way of celebrating special occasions. With simple and easy pricing, and a convenient booking process, INOX aims to curate memorable banqueting experiences with features like welcome message on the screen and other personalised services," the spokesperson said.

Gautam Dutta, CEO, PVR Limited, said the company is aiming at 100% vaccination of its employees before reopening, apart from following all standard protocols issued by the government, and conducting deep EPA-approved ULV sanitisation at cinemas to make them safe.

"We are hopeful to re-

ceive a positive response from the audience as the content pipeline for Bollywood, Hollywood and regional languages is promising for the year ahead," Mr. Dutta said.

Film buffs disappointed

A few film buffs eager to watch a film in a theatre were seen outside a cinema hall in Jangpura early in the day but were disappointed to find the ticket counter shut. "We could not find tickets online so decided to give it a shot at the ticket window, but it is not open. I was really looking to do something different as I am an avid movie watcher," said Aarav Singh, a student.

Another moviegoer at Connaught Place said he had hoped to catch a movie before an appointment later in the day but was left disappointed.

Online bookings and app-based bookings have not started yet with sources from app-based ticket booking companies saying that they are waiting for information from cinema hall owners to provide their schedules before going live.

BJP demands relief for COVID-19 victims' kin be raised from ₹50,000 to ₹10 lakh

Party says scheme is 'an insult to the memory of the dead'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP termed Delhi government's ₹50,000 compensation to families of those who died due to COVID "an insult to the memory of the dead". The party demanded that the compensation be increased to ₹10 lakh.



Ramvir Singh Bidhuri

'Transparent policy'

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said the sum being distributed is inadequate. He also said a discriminatory policy is being followed in giving compensation and demanded a completely "transparent and streamlined policy" be

put in place.

"During the second COVID wave, Delhi's healthcare facilities had completely crumbled, and the hospitals proved to be inadequate to deal with the situation. A large number of citizens had to go to Haryana, Rajasthan, and Punjab for treatment," Mr. Bidhuri said.

He added: "If someone

from Delhi has died in these States, then their families should also be paid compensation as per a transparent policy. There cannot be discrimination over the distribution of compensation as all of those who died in Delhi or outside were citizens of the Capital."

Mr. Bidhuri said the second wave unleashed its wrath on people in a way that had ruined them emotionally and financially. In such a situation, the Delhi government "should not play politics or take arbitrary decisions" but instead be compassionate in its approach to compensate the impacted families, he added.

'Spas need to abide by reopening conditions'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Monday remarked that all spa operators in the Capital have to abide by the conditions imposed laid down by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) for their reopening amid the pandemic.

"...all spa operators will abide by the conditions set out in the order," the Delhi

HC said while hearing pleas to reopen spas, which have been shut since April due to the second COVID wave. The latest unlock guidelines by the DDMA have allowed spas to open from July 26 but all employees have to be fully vaccinated or undergo RT-PCR test fortnightly. In its plea, the Delhi Wellness Spa Association said the government's decision to not open spas was arbitrary.

DCW writes to government on scheme for widows

It claims to have identified 791 women who lost their husbands due to COVID-19

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Monday wrote to the Women and Child Development (WCD) department after identifying 791 women who have lost their husbands due to COVID-19.

The women's panel sought the implementation of schemes announced by the Delhi government for financial aid to such families.

The DCW said 79 Mahila Panchayats under the Commission carried out surveys in their respective areas to collect the data. According to the data provided by the DCW, 92.79% of the widows were in the 18-60 years age group, while the rest of them were senior citizens.

The report added 774 women had children. In its letter to the WCD department, the women's panel said that around 384 women had up to

two children while over 45% of women had three to five children.

The DCW stated that the survey showed that 28.57% of the widows had no source of income and were financially dependent on their husbands. Also, the family income of 60.93% of the women was ₹15,000 or less.

DCW Chairperson Swati Maliwal said: "We are sending a detailed social survey report to the government so

that the benefits of the scheme can be passed on to these women."

In the letter, Ms. Maliwal said: "The WCD department is requested to ensure that the schemes of the government, especially the 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Parivar Arthik Sahayta Yojna', reach them. It is also requested that the District Magistrates concerned be given instructions to ensure the vaccination of these women on priority."

Microbes from human, animal excreta found above desirable limits in Yamuna

Very difficult to achieve bathing quality standards: govt. report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Levels of fecal coliform (microbes from human and animal excreta) is above desirable limits in all points tested in the Yamuna in Delhi, except for Palla where the river enters the Capital, as per a Delhi government report.

The report submitted to the Union Ministry of Jal Sakti also stated that in the absence of a "minimum environmental flow" (flow of water) of the Yamuna in Delhi, it is very difficult to achieve even bathing quality standards of the river water.

"Minimum environmental flow for the dilution of the polluted water in the Yamuna in Delhi is required to meet the desired water



Toxic foam floating in the Yamuna in Delhi. • FILE PHOTO

quality levels in the river for bathing purpose i.e. BOD<3 mg/l and DO>5 mg/l," the report read.

For bathing in a river, the desirable level of fecal coliform in the water is 500 MPN/100 ml or lesser, as per the Central Pollution

Control Board.

But the level was as high as 1,40,000 MPN/100 ml – 280 times the desired level – at Okhla Barrage, a point along the river in Delhi, as per the report.

Over 80% polluted

The 22 km stretch of Yamuna from Wazirabad to Okhla in Delhi, which is less than 2% of the river length, accounts for about 80% of the pollution load in the river.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, an environmental flow is the water provided within a river, wetland or coastal zone to maintain ecosystems and their benefits where there are competing water uses and where flows are regulated.

AAP alleges graft in BJP-led civic bodies

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Monday alleged corruption in the BJP-governed municipal corporation in processing of waste using machines and it runs into "crores of rupees".

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bhadraj said the municipal corporation is renting machines to process waste at landfills but the rent is more than the machine's cost. "Trommel machines help in processing the garbage and reducing the height of the garbage pile (in landfills). According to that report of the Chief Auditor of the civic body, the corporation has taken these trommel machines on rent. The price of these machines, as stated in the audit report, is ₹17.7 lakh. But, the municipal corporation has taken these machines on rent for ₹6.3 lakh/month. That means within three months, the rent of these machines surpasses the actual price of these machines...interestingly, the civic body has spent ₹26 crore rupees till now to pay the rent," Mr. Bhadraj said.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said AAP is trying to "mislead people" on the issue. "What AAP calls rent of Trommel machines is actually its operation cost..." Mr. Kapoor said.

अधिसूचना - जाहिर प्रगटण
कॉलेज ऑफ फिजिशियन्स अँड सर्जन्स ऑफ मुंबई

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In view of the above all the Fellows, who have completed 10 years from the date and year of convocation are hereby directed to renew the membership as fellow by paying fees of Rs. 1000/- (Rs. One Thousand Only) on or before 17th September, 2021 as decided by Executive Committee. It is hereby made clear that, if anyone fails to renew his/her membership, his/her name shall be removed from electoral roll without giving any further notice. The renewal form is made available on our official website www.cpsmumbai.org and/or in the office, during office hours.

All the fellows are further instructed to check in person whether their names are included in the present electoral roll, kept in the office of the Secretary of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Mumbai, during office hours, at CPS house, Dr. E. Borges road, Parel Mumbai 400 012, till 30th September, 2021 up-to 12:00 noon.

To update their addresses, please email addressed to Secretary, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Mumbai, CPS house, on cpsadmin@cpsmumbai.org

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U.P. BJP MLA claims 'hundreds died due to oxygen scarcity'

Later, Shyam Prakash blames media for 'making a mountain out of a molehill'

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Days after the Central government claimed that nobody died due to lack of oxygen in the second wave of COVID-19, a BJP MLA in Uttar Pradesh has claimed that "hundreds of people died in agony due to lack of oxygen."

Shyam Prakash, BJP MLA from reserved seat Gopamau in Hardoi, made the statement in a comment on a Facebook post by a local journalist on Sunday.

The scribe had posted the paper cutting of his newspaper's coverage of the Centre's claim that nobody died of oxygen scarcity and countered it with assertions made by the BJP's own MLAs



A COVID-19 patient getting free oxygen at a gurdwara in Gaziabad. • FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

During the peak of the crisis. Many BJP MLAs had written letters outlining the crisis in their constituencies.

Commenting on journalist Anand Mishra's post, which he had captioned as

"the world not does write the stories of the mute," Mr. Prakash said, "You have spoken the truth. I agree with you." He went on to state that hundreds of people died due to lack of oxygen.

"Nobody can see the pain of MLA Rajkumar Agrwal and lakhs of other families," he said, referring to his colleague from Sandila whose son died of COVID-19 in April. Mr. Agrwal had then alleged negligence on behalf of the hospital administration and even tried to get an FIR lodged.

'Spoke about country'

On Monday, Mr. Prakash clarified his comments and blamed the media for making a mountain out of a molehill. "Where in my comment have I written that deaths only took place in U.P. and only during the second wave? I spoke of the entire country, and that is the truth," he said.

Schools reopen in Odisha

They were closed for months due to second wave of COVID

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

Schools across Odisha reopened on Monday after months of closure due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With COVID-19 situation gradually improving in the State, the Odisha government had announced the resumption of Classes X and XII.

According to Satyabrata Sahu, School and Mass Education Secretary, school education had been impacted due to the pandemic in two back to back academic sessions.

Moreover, the online classes were not effective, as only 40% students could be reached through the mode.

The situation had deteriorated in interior pockets, especially the tribal dominated districts, where access to



A teacher checks the temperature of a student as she enters her school in Bhubaneswar on Monday. • BISWARANJAN ROUT

Internet connectivity and ability to purchase smartphones remained a nagging issue.

COVID precautions

Both private and government high school managements have been asked to open the institutions by following COVID-19 precautions. However, students are required to take the consent

of their parents prior to attending physical classes.

The decision to open schools evoked an encouraging response. On the first day, more than 50% of attendance was noticed in most schools.

The school timing has been scheduled from 10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. to enable students have their lunch at home.

Encounter death: OHRC seeks report

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has taken suo motu cognisance of the killing of criminal Sheikh Haider in police firing during his alleged escape bid on Saturday.

The OHRC has issued notices to the Additional Chief Secretary (Home), the Director General of Police, the Director General of Prisons and the Commissioner of Police for Bhubaneswar-Cuttack in this connection.

The officials have been asked to submit reports within four weeks.

Family members of Haider had alleged that it was a deliberate killing by the police. The OHRC has fixed September 6 as the next date of hearing in the matter.

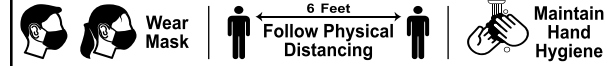
THE HINDU
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TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT
Office of the Commissioner for Transport and Road Safety,
1st Floor, TTMC Building, KH Road, Shanthinagar, Bangalore-560 027.
NO.:CT/IRGN-1/PR-64/2018-19 DATE: 22-07-2021
PUBLICATION FOR INVITING TENDER
(Through e-procurement portal)

The Transport Department, Government of Karnataka intends to select private agencies for Introduction of High Security Registration Plates (HSRP) for the vehicles registered in Karnataka prior to 31-03-2019. In this regard, Transport Department, Government of Karnataka invites tender bids [Expression of Interest (EOI)] from eligible investors/ bidders. The bid documents and agreement can be downloaded from Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in). Last date for submission of bid (EOI) is 16-08-2021 @ 05.00 pm.

Sd/-
COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT & ROAD SAFETY, BANGALORE.

DIPR/DDU/JA/930/2021-22
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.



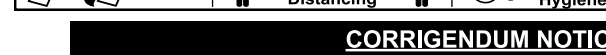
KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED (R)
Public Health Institute, Sheshadri Road, Opp S.J.P College, K.R Circle, Bengaluru - 560001. Email: ad.kdlws@gmail.com, md.ksmscl@gmail.com
No:HF/WKSMSC/COVID/5ParaMonitor/EQPTTND/2021-22 Date:26/07/2021

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref:1) Tender Notification:HF/WKSMSC/COVID/5ParaMonitor/EQPTTND/2021-22. Dated:26/07/2021(IND- 814) 2) Tender Notification HF/WKSMSC/COVID/5 Para Monitor&CrashCart/EQPTTND/21/2021-22, Dated:26/07/2021(IND-815) Nation wide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KPPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tenders: 1) Tender for Supply and installation of 5 Para Monitors for Covid-19 2) Tender for Supply and installation of 5 Para Monitors and CrashCart for Covid-19. The tenders who have registered under e-Procurement department may participate through e-tendering system. Details regarding specification, EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information is available through website <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from 26/07/2021. The eligible tenders shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

Sd/- Managing Director,
Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Limited, Bengaluru.

DIPR/DDU/JA/945/2021-22
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19. NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.



CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Tender No. OP2/08/2021-22 - for the replacement of existing old/outlived/burnt ACSR with ACSR 103mm2 in Ram Darbar, Phase-I & II for improvement of LD System under electricity 'op' S/ Divn. No-5, Indl. Area, Ph-I, U.T. Chandigarh.

The subject cited tender due to be opened on dated i.e. 26.07.2021 at 16.00 Hrs. is hereby extended upto 09.08.2021 at 14.00 Hrs. for uploading and opening date i.e. 09.08.2021 at 16.00 Hrs. due to administrative reason.

All the other terms and conditions shall remain the same.

Former MLA 'manhandled'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR

A former BJP MLA was allegedly manhandled and his vehicle damaged by farmers protesting against three agri laws at Rajasthan's Shahjahanpur, following which his supporters on Monday held a demonstration in Sikar and demanded arrest of the perpetrators.

Puri becomes India's first city to provide quality drinking tap water

The project will help reduce plastic waste, says CM Patnaik

SATYASUNDAR BARK
BHUBANESWAR

Puri on Monday became the first city in India where people can avail high quality drinking water directly from the tap on 24-hour basis.

"Puri has become the first city in the country to implement a project of this kind. It has enabled the people of Puri to collect quality drinking water directly from the tap. Henceforth, people need not have to store or filter drinking water," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said while inaugurating the 'Drink from Tap project'.

"The inauguration of 'Drink from Tap' project marks a new chapter. No

metropolitan city in India have such facility yet. Similar facilities are available only in world-class cities like London, New York and Singapore," Mr. Patnaik said.

Water fountains

"The project would benefit 2.5 lakh citizens of Puri and 2 crore tourists who visit the tourist place every year. They need not have to move around with water bottle. Puri would no more be burdened with 400 metric tonne of plastic waste," he pointed out. Water fountains have been developed at 400 locations in Puri.

Narrating the sequence of events leading to the imple-

mentation of the project, Mr. Patnaik said that cyclone Fani had made landfall in Puri on May 3, 2019, and he arrived there on May 5.

The Odisha Chief Minister said he was deeply shocked to find the condition of Puri and on the same day, he vowed to develop Puri into a world heritage city. "The Srikshetra scheme is going on as per plan and with Puri will reach a new peak of development," he said.

According to Pratap Jena, Urban Development Minister, a similar project is under various stages of implementation in 16 other urban centres of Odisha.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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Phone : 0130-2216666
Website : www.jaschindustries.com, Email : skverma@jasch.biz

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice under Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013, read with Rule 10 of Companies (Management & Administration) Rules, 2014 and provisions of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015 is hereby given to general public that Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company shall remain closed from 31-07-2021 to 02-08-2021 (both days inclusive) in connection with 35th Annual General Meeting ("AGM") scheduled to be held on Friday, 03-08-2021 at 10.00 A.M.

Further notice is hereby given that in accordance with Section 96 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and circular No. 02/2021 dated 13-01-2021 read with its earlier circulars dated 05-05-2020, 13-04-2020 and 08-04-2020 issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the aforesaid AGM will be held through Video Conferencing/Other Audio Visual Mode. The process of sending notices of the AGM through the registered email ids of the Members of the Company is expected to be completed by 05-08-2021. The notice will contain detailed instructions for participating in the AGM and for e-voting. Any member who does not receive the Notice may download a soft copy of the same from Company's website www.jaschindustries.com or from website of BSE www.bseindia.com.

Advance opportunity is hereby given to the members who are holding shares in physical form to register their email ids to their DP or before 31-07-2021 by sending an email to ramap@alankit.com with the subject line "Unit - Jasch - Updation of email id" and attaching therewith signed and scanned request letter and self-attested copies of PAN Card, Aadhar Card and both sides of share certificates. Such members are also requested to dematerialize their shares at the earliest. Members holding shares in demat form, who have not provided their email ids to their DP or whose email ids have changed, are requested to provide/update their email ids with their respective DPs. Such members may also temporarily update their email id with the Company by providing scanned copies of the above documents (except share certificates) and their client master, to the above email id by 31-07-2021.
for Jasch Industries Ltd
Sonipat, 26/07/2021 Sd/- (S.K. VERMA) COMPANY SECRETARY

EDUCATIONAL
CONTACT : 708 - 218 - 97 - 97

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DR. S.K. JHA ECONOMY	ASHIRWAD SIR CURRENT AFFAIRS
DIWAKAR GUPTA GOVERNANCE	RAVI MISHRA

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PERSONAL CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHD Sharique Habib S/O Mohammad Habib Ur Rehman born on 11th July 1984, residing at F-121/3, 5th Floor, Flat No 402, Shaheen Bagh, Abul Fazal Enclave Part II, New Delhi-110025, have corrected my name to Mohammad Sharique Habib vide affidavit dated 24th July 2021 at Delhi.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely Dali Singh, D/o: Sh. Dalip Singh, R/o: H.No. 16/1449-E, Arya Samaj Road, Bapa Nagar, Karol Bagh, Delhi has been missing since 18.07.2021 from the area of P.S. Prasad Nagar, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 257/21 dated 18.07.2021, u/s 363 IPC has been registered at Police Station Prasad Nagar, Delhi. The description of missing girl is as under:
Name: Dali Singh, Age: 14 Year and 5 Months, Height: 5'1", Face: long, Complexion: Wheatish, Build: thin, Wearing: Black Colour Jeans, Blue Colour top and White Shoes in Feet.
If anyone has any information about this missing girl may kindly be informed to the following:-
Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO
Police Station, Prasad Nagar, Delhi Ph: 011-25751048, 8750870432
DP/893/CD/2021

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that an one male person was found dead by train accident at K.M Pole No.14/8-14/10, DN Rly Line Mangolpuri Halt, Delhi dated 18.07.2021 at 12:25 pm. In this regard a DD No. 12A, dated 18.07.2021, has been registered at P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 30-35 years, Height: 5'8", Complexion: Sallow, Injury Mark: Head Injury. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.
SHO
P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi Ph.: 011-28711697, 28714802, 8750871308
DP/191/RLY/2021

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unidentified dead body of male Namely: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 30-35 years, Height: 5'6", Wearing: White colour Banyan & black colour pant who was found dead at KM Pole No. 1524/16 near Okhla Rly Station. In this regard a case DD No. 18-A dated 22.07.2021 has been registered at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, Delhi.
Any person having any information or clue about the above deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.
DP/194/RLY/2021 Sd/- SHO
P. S: Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station, Delhi Tel. No. 011-24356743, 24358593

Rail Land Development Authority
(A Statutory Authority under Ministry of Railways, Government of India)
Unit No. 702-B, 7th Floor, Connetxus Tower-II, DMRC Building, Ajmeri Gate, Delhi-110002; Phone: + 91-11-23232854, Fax: +91-11-23232835

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL THROUGH E-TENDER
(RFP/Notice No. RLD/A/RFP/CD/30 of 2021 Dated 25.06.2021)
GRANT OF LEASE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON RAILWAY LAND PARCEL OF APPROX. AREA 65588 SQM., PLOT-A, AT SHAHAMATGANJ, BARREILY (U.P.) FOR 99 YEARS

Land	Approx. Area of site (to be leased)	FAR	Bid Security	Reserve Price
Plot-A, Shahamatganj, Barreily (U.P.)	65588 Sqm.	1.20 (w.r.t. Complete Land Plot Area)	Rs. 1.00 Crore	Rs. 68.00 Crore

ONLINE PRE-BID MEETING ON WEBEX: 29th JULY, 2021 AT 11:30 HRS. (Online Pre-bid meeting details to be obtained from Dy. General Manager/Project-III) Last Date of Submission of E-bid Online: 09.08.2021 UPTO 15:00 HRS
For further details of the project, please visit our website www.rlda.indianrailways.gov.in or on e-procurement Portal www.tenderwizard.in/RLDA Under the heading "e-tender" For any clarifications, may please contact:-

Manager/Lucknow M: 94503 80457 mgrldako@gmail.com	Deputy General Manager/Project-III M: 98189 77221 hksrdas19@gmail.com	Chief Project Manager/Lucknow M: 78542 55556 gmrldako@gmail.com	Consultant/RLDA - Mr. R. K. Dua M: 98111 13130 rkdonline@gmail.com
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Note: Any Corrigendum or Addendum shall be published only on RLDAs website. Assistant Manager, (Mob): 875054811

TIRUPATHI SMART CITY CORPORATION LIMITED
Tirupati, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh
Roc No: TSCL/NIT/JPP/01 Dt. 26-07-2021

PRESS NOTE
Tirupati Smart City Corporation Limited (TSCL) intends to undertake Establishment of Implementation of PAN City Solutions & Setup of City Operations Centre (CoC) in Tirupati under Implementation of the Smart City Mission in Tirupati, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh with @ 65% CAPEX and 35% OPEX. All the stake holders i.e., Service Providers, Aspirant Bidders and General Public are requested to furnish their advices, comments, remarks and objections if any to the judicial review committee through the following online websites on or before : 04-08-2021 upto 5.00 PM.
Website: <https://judicialreview.ap.gov.in>
E-Mail IDs: 1) judge-jpp@ap.gov.in, 2) ajudicialreview@gmail.com
Sd/- Sri GIRISHA .P.S., I.A.S.,
Managing Director, Tirupati Smart City Corporation Limited, TIRUPATI.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

12th ANNIVERSARY

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IN BRIEF



7 kg gold looted from Kerala cooperative bank

PALAKKAD
Cash and gold, worth more than ₹3 crore in total, have been stolen from a cooperative bank in Palakkad town. The burglary is suspected to have taken place on Saturday or Sunday at the Marutharoad Cooperative Rural Credit Society Bank at Chandranagar. About seven kg of gold jewellery was looted from the bank locker, as per early estimates. It was not immediately clear how much money was stolen.

Singareni Collieries raises retirement age to 61

HYDERABAD
The management of Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. (SCCL) has approved the decision to increase the retirement age of workers and employees from the existing 58 to 61, on a par with other employees of the State government. The decision will benefit 43,899 workers and officials of the coal company. A total of 767 employees, who retired during March 31-June 30, would be allowed to rejoin service in view of the increase in retirement age.

Hyderabad firm hands over fuselage to HAL

HYDERABAD
The first central fuselage for a supersonic plane made in the private sector for the indigenous single-engine fighter plane Light Combat Aircraft-Tejas by city-based VEM Technologies was handed over to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) here on Monday. The carbon composite-based fuselage is among the eight contracted to be made by the firm and involves fusion of about 1,595 parts, inspected at every stage before being assembled.

A CM who never completed a full term

The five-decade political saga of Yediyurappa was marked by constant struggle and firefighting

B.S. SATISH KUMAR
BENGALURU

B.S. Yediyurappa, who holds the record of being Chief Minister of Karnataka four times, could not complete the full term even once.

Two of the terms were short as he failed to muster the support of an adequate number of MLAs to sustain the government. But he failed to complete the other two terms because of bickering in his own party, which he had built brick by brick in the State.

A close look at the turn of events, particularly in the past two years, shows that there was a clear indication of him not completing the term this time too as the gulf between him and the party cadre, as well as the high command, had begun widening from the very beginning.

Also, past mistakes, particularly with respect to administration, continued this time too, with his own party members raising allegations of corruption and nepotism.

But unlike his previous stint when he had stepped down unceremoniously following a report on illegal mining, the 78-year-old Mr. Yediyurappa had a honourable exit this time.

The five-decade-long political saga of Mr. Yediyurappa, who began his public life as president of the Shikaripur taluk unit of the then Jan Sangh in 1972, was marked by constant struggle and firefighting.



Unhappy cadre: Supporters of B.S. Yediyurappa protesting at Shikaripur in Shivamogga on Monday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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Despite making a quantum leap in terms of seats won, the party marginally fell short of the majority mark. That is when Mr. Yediyurappa resorted to the controversial strategy of getting several Opposition MLAs to quit their Assembly membership and re-contest on BJP ticket – a move code-named 'Operation Kamala'.

Also, Mr. Yediyurappa's fourth stint in power was marked by alleged interference in the administration by his younger son B.Y. Vijayendra.

It now appears that what is often called "subversion of democracy" in the form of 'Operation Kamala' was the origin of troubles for the BJP stalwart, who had to step down despite taking the party to its peak in Karnataka.

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Repatriation plea: HC seeks Centre's response

Nimisha, daughter in Afghan prison

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Monday asked the Centre to respond to a petition by the mother of Nimisha Fathima, a Keralite woman languishing in a prison in Afghanistan, for the repatriation of her daughter and granddaughter.

Justice P.B. Suresh Kumar passed the order on a plea by K. Bindu, mother of Nimisha. According to the petitioner, her daughter's husband, an Islamic State (IS) fighter, was killed in an attack. As per news reports, after the killing of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, former leader of the IS, in 2019 by the United States Armed Forces, a group of 10 women and 21 children had surrendered to



Nimisha Fathima

the Afghanistan police. Her daughter was among those in the group.

Afghanistan wanted to deport Nimisha and her minor child and other Indians detained in jail. However, the Indian government refused to take them back. It was the responsibility of the Centre to bring back its citizens, said the petitioner.

SC says CBI should collect its own evidence in ISRO case

FIR says ex-police officers framed space scientist

Two get anticipatory bail

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday recorded that the CBI had registered an FIR against former Kerala police officers who allegedly framed space scientist Nambi Narayanan in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) espionage case of 1994 after perusing a report filed by the court-appointed Justice D.K. Jain Committee.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar said the CBI probe would proceed in accordance with law. The CBI should not let the committee report either over-

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Monday granted interim anticipatory bail of two weeks to S. Vijayan and Thampi S. Durga Dutt, former Kerala police officers accused in the ISRO

whelm or influence its independent investigation. The report was only meant as an "initial basis" for the court to better understand the case. The CBI probe should not be coloured by the committee report. The agency should collect its own evidence, the Bench said.

It said that while the committee report need not be

frame-up case. The court, however, said the petitioners would have to cooperate with the probe.

The court also extended the interim bail granted to former central intelligence officer P.S. Jayaprakash for two weeks.

made public, the FIR registered by the CBI ought to be uploaded on the website.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta orally undertook to publish the FIR in the course of the day.

In April, the court asked the CBI to look into the committee report on the roles of senior Kerala police officials in the case.

Thane sanctuary proposed as MMR's Ramsar site

Mangrove Cell awaiting approval from State Wetland Authority

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region is likely to get its first Ramsar site at the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary, with the Maharashtra Mangrove Cell submitting the proposal for approval to the State Wetland Authority.

A Ramsar site is a wetland area designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention, an intergovernmental environmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Virendra Tiwari, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Mangrove Cell, announced the move at the 4th Climate Resi-

lient Maharashtra Townhall. "A proposal to declare Thane creek as a Ramsar site has been submitted and we are working on it with the Environment Department," he said.

The Mangrove Cell is awaiting approval from the State Wetland Authority, which is headed by Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray, and is closely working with the Environment Department for its speedy approval. "Following this, it can be sent to the Central government," Mr. Tiwari said.

The townhall was organised by Climate Voices, a collective of three organisations – Purpose, Asar and Climate Trends – along with the Environment and Climate Change Department's Majhi Vasundhara initiative on

Monday, which was observed as International Day for Conservation of Mangroves.

Task force to be set up
Manisha Patankar-Mhaiskar, Principal Secretary, Maharashtra Environment and Climate Change Department, said the department would be setting up a task force to conduct a fresh exercise to identify, demarcate, and preserve wetlands left out of coastal zones and inland areas in the State.

"We will be looking at all the wetlands [even those that may have been left out] for our latest inventory in an attempt to protect as many wetlands as possible across Maharashtra. The Minister is already planning to meet with all the District Collectors in the State," she said.

Sea always gives it back



Clean-up: Civic workers collect the garbage thrown out after high tides on Marine Drive promenade on Monday. *EMANUAL YOGINI

State will cooperate with Jharkhand police: NCP

Team is probing BJP leaders' role in bid to topple govt.

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), an alliance partner in the tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi government in Maharashtra, on Monday said that the State would cooperate with the Jharkhand police team which would be arriving here to probe the role of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders in attempting to destabilise the government there.

have arrested one journalist, Abishek Dubey, who has named former Maharashtra minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule from the BJP and also exposed the plan to topple the government there by bribing MLAs. He has also named two MLAs from the BJP's State unit, Minister and NCP chief spokesperson Nawab Malik said.

The NCP said three BJP office-bearers from Maharashtra – Mohit Kambok, Amit Yadav and Ashutosh Thakkar – had gone to Jharkhand on July 21 to bribe the MLAs. "They ran away after the police got hint of the happenings."

First in country: Maharashtra fully vaccinates over one crore people

State reports 11,077 recoveries, 4,877 new COVID-19 cases

STAFF REPORTER
PUNE

Maharashtra on Monday became the first State in the country to fully vaccinate more than one crore people against COVID-19.

The number of people who had been administered both doses had reached 1,00,64,308, said additional chief secretary (Health) Dr. Pradeep Vyas. Officials said 3,75,974 people had been vaccinated through 4,100 inoculation centres in the State till 4 p.m. on Monday. "The State has set a record

after more than one crore people have been administered both doses of COVID-19 vaccine and they have been given full protection against the virus," Health Minister Rajesh Tope said.

Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray tweeted, "Despite tremendous natural calamities, today Maharashtra set a benchmark of being India's first and only (as yet, and we hope for many more states soon) to have fully vaccinated 1 crore people. Congratulations to our doctors, nurses, medics and

other officials for this!" Meanwhile, Maharashtra reported a robust 11,077 recoveries against 4,877 new COVID-19 cases on Monday, causing the active cases to dip sharply to 88,729.

As many as 53 deaths pushed the State's cumulative fatalities to 1,31,605 with the case fatality rate climbing to 2.09%.

Mumbai reported 297 fresh cases to take its total tally to 7,34,415 while the active cases dropped to 7,186. Eight fatalities took the city's death count to 15,845.

Raigad landslide: rescue efforts called off

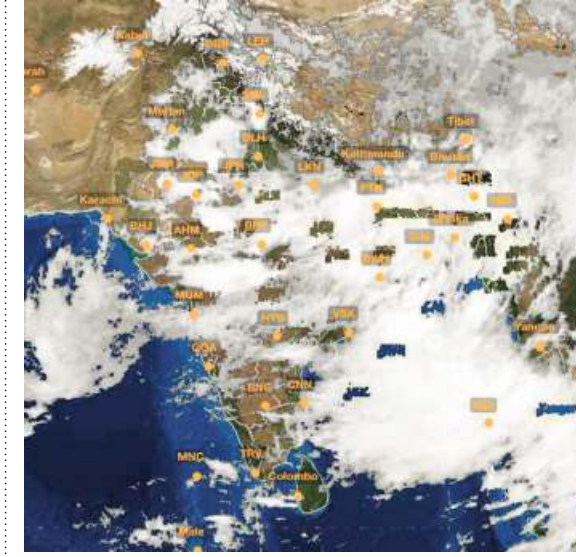
RAINA ASSAINAR
NAVI MUMBAI

Four days after a landslide hit Taliye village in Mahad tehsil in Raigad district, authorities called off rescue operations on Monday. Raigad Collector Nidhi Choudhari said the 31 missing people would be declared dead after following due process. In the evening, the families paid their respects at the spot of the landslide by offering flowers and prayers.

Bharatshet Gogavale, Shiv Sena MLA from Mahad, said the bodies stuck under the soil would have got decomposed. "They deserve dignity in death. After having a meeting with villagers and rescue teams, we decided to call off the efforts as none

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 Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka and Kerala. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	34.7	26.8	Kozhikode	85	30.0	23.6
Ahmedabad	12.8	28.0	25.1	Kurnool	—	34.4	25.7
Aizawl	—	28.2	23.4	Lucknow	—	35.7	29.1
Allahabad	—	33.5	28.4	Madurai	—	38.7	25.7
Bengaluru	59.8	28.3	20.5	Mangaluru	75.8	27.2	23.1
Bhopal	16.9	26.1	23.8	Mumbai	4	31.5	26.6
Bhubaneswar	—	31.8	26.6	Mysuru	7	28.7	20.2
Chandigarh	2.2	31.9	28.7	New Delhi	—	33.1	28.3
Chennai	0.8	36.2	26.0	Port Blair	—	35.4	27.4
Coimbatore	—	32.0	23.0	Puducherry	3.4	36.4	24.6
Dehradun	37	25.8	24.0	Pune	10	27.7	22.5
Gangtok	18	21.9	18.5	Raipur	0.8	32.4	24.2
Goa	15	31.0	25.6	Ranchi	—	31.6	24.1
Guwahati	—	36.0	27.6	Shillong	0.8	24.1	18.0
Hubbli	—	27.0	21.0	Shimla	6	20.8	18.3
Hyderabad	1	31.1	23.5	Srinagar	—	33.3	24.8
Imphal	3	30.7	22.1	Thiruvananthapuram	7	30.4	23.0
Jaipur	—	34.6	28.6	Tiruchi	—	37.7	26.4
Kochi	5	29.6	24.8	Vijayawada	15	34.6	25.4
Kohima	1	28.6	17.8	Visakhapatnam	—	33.0	25.8
Kolkata	—	35.1	28.0				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	33	35	26	47	47	Good
Bengaluru	11	46	38	116	56	Good
Chennai	5	16	69	24	41	Good
Delhi	8	19	66	210	116	Moderate
Hyderabad	4	50	20	25	—	Moderate
Kolkata	11	24	23	76	95	Moderate
Lucknow	6	13	88	71	101	Moderate
Mumbai	7	51	31	35	67	Moderate
Pune	33	33	109	16	78	Moderate
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	Good

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

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.

NORTH & WEST

Rajasthan seeks increase in NFSA beneficiaries

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

Rajasthan has sought an increase in the number of beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) on the basis of the present population instead of the 2011 Census. With the State's population increasing during the last 10 years, a large number of families have come within the purview of food security.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the request to refix the ceiling of food security for extending the benefits of the NFSA to the needy families.

This should be done taking into consideration the estimated population of 2021, Mr. Gehlot said.



Families performing last rites of the missing members at Taliye village on Monday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

had any hopes to find anyone alive after so many days. Every relative of the missing person submitted their consent letter to the district administration in this regard," he said. According to authorities,

53 bodies have been recovered – 27 men and 26 women – which included five children. Of the 31 missing, 17 are women and 14 men, including a one-year-old girl. There are five people who have suffered injuries.



Change at the helm

As the BJP seeks to widen its social base, it should avoid the politics of polarisation

By unseating B.S. Yediyurappa from the Chief Minister's chair in Karnataka, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has set in motion a new strategy for its consolidation in the State. Considering that this change of guard has been in the making for a while, the party must have accounted for the ramifications. The BJP had to change its Chief Minister in Uttarakhand twice within a span of four months recently, pointing to the pitfalls in effecting changes even when they are premeditated. Mr. Yediyurappa is no pushover and remains agile and active even at the age of 78. He has already said he would remain active in politics. At least for now, he has no intention of crossing swords with the central leadership of the party, which gave him the marching orders. But the Lingayat community that he belongs to has left no opportunity to express its displeasure. Community leaders and seers have come out openly in support of the displaced Chief Minister. Lingayats form the axis of the BJP's social base in Karnataka. Mr. Yediyurappa has been the mastermind of the party's rise in Karnataka and became the party's first Chief Minister in a southern State, in 2008. In 2018, the BJP did not win a majority, but a year later, he undermined the Congress-Janata Dal(S) coalition government by engineering defections. Two years later, he is handing over the baton, leaving the fate of the defectors in the hands of his successor.

The BJP high command has been wary of strong regional leaders, and Mr. Yediyurappa has given it no reason to relax. His cunning has been a double-edged sword for the party. On the one hand it helped the party's rise, but on the other he used it to consolidate his own personal power. He parted ways with the party once and even went to jail on corruption charges. He has been brazen in promoting a son, B.Y. Vijayendra, in the BJP, and as the inheritor of the Lingayat mantle. The BJP's game plan appears to be to hold the community within its tent, but loosen its grip over power, mimicking its approach to the Patels in Gujarat who had turned the party into a vehicle of their domination until Narendra Modi arrived on the scene. It took a while before the Patels reconciled to their changed status in the BJP. The high-command party that the BJP has become may like to promote a Lingayat leader, though not necessarily as the new Chief Minister, who will be more compliant to its wishes than Mr. Yediyurappa. A lot will also depend on Mr. Yediyurappa's plans and his command over the Lingayats, once out of power. But the BJP's new strategy should not involve communal polarisation and its new Chief Minister must refrain from playing competitive Hindutva with other Chief Ministers of the party.

Wounded mountains

Tourist tragedy in Himachal Pradesh points to the importance of preserving ecology

The tragic death of nine tourists in a landslide in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh is another pointer to the fragility of the ecology of the Himalayan States. Extraordinarily heavy rain pummeled the State recently, leaving the hill slopes unstable and causing floods in built-up areas including Dharamshala. The descending boulders from destabilised terrain, which crushed a bridge like a matchstick, are a source of worry even for cautious local residents, and for unwary visitors, such as the tourists travelling in a van, they can turn into sudden disaster. Himachal is famed for its scenic vistas and welcoming summer climate, and drew a few hundred thousand tourists in June this year as States began relaxing the controls for COVID-19. There was justified alarm at the prospect of a fresh surge in infections, prompting Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur to appeal for COVID-appropriate behaviour. Unfortunately, there was not enough vigil against travel to risky areas, in the wake of a disastrous year for tourism, resulting in the mishap in Kinnaur's Basteri area. What should worry Himachal, and neighbouring Uttarakhand, is that the States may be entering a phase of irreversible decline because of losses to their ecology; frequent landslides may become inevitable. Bootstrapping an incompatible model of development in the hills, represented by big hydroelectric projects and large-scale construction activity involving destruction of forests and damming of rivers, is an invitation to harm.

Mega hydropower, which Himachal Pradesh is working to tap as a significant source of "green" power that substitutes energy from fossil fuels, could alter several aspects of ecology, rendering it vulnerable to the effects of extreme events such as cloudbursts, flash floods, landslides and earthquakes. The parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy during 2018-19 noted that the State could more than double its existing harnessed hydropower potential of 10,547 MW. Kinnaur is a focus point for such development, centred around the potential of the glacially-fed Sutlej valley, but one scientific estimate warns that avaricious tapping of the river through all planned projects would impound nearly a quarter of its waters in dams, and divert a staggering 72% through tunnels. Other researchers, studying the 2015 Nepal earthquake, point to high seismicity causing fatal landslides and severe damage to hydropower structures in the Himalayas; the cost of power produced was underestimated, while the potential was overestimated. Evidently, it is impossible to assign a real value to the costs to people and communities, together with the loss of pristine forests that weak afforestation programmes cannot replace. As catastrophic weather events inflict frequent, heavy losses, Himachal Pradesh and other Himalayan States can only watch their ecological base erode. Changing course may yet preserve a lot of their natural riches.

Evaluating India's options in Afghanistan

With the West done with Afghanistan, New Delhi needs to adopt a layered approach in finding a political solution



STANLEY JOHNY

It is not a coincidence that the United States is exiting Afghanistan at the same time that the focus of its foreign policy is shifting to East Asia. There is growing consensus in Washington DC that the U.S., instead of staying engaged in the lost wars, which adds little value to American power, should now urgently prepare itself for the unfolding geopolitical contest with China. America's strategic response to China's rise is its Indo-Pacific strategy, which seeks to build a bloc of Indian and Pacific Ocean democracies aimed at containing China's rise and challenging its high-functioning single party dictatorship. The U.S. wants India to play a key role in this bloc, which along with Australia and Japan, make up the so-called Quad grouping.

But there is one problem. India, unlike the other members, is the only continental Asian power in the Quad, which shares a contested land border with China and is vulnerable to the geopolitical changes in the Eurasian landmass. The U.S. may have retreated from Afghanistan as part of a grand strategy to take on China in maritime Asia, in which it needs India's involvement, and India might find it tempting to join the ranks, especially after China's aggression on the Line of Actual Control last year. But the irony is that the American withdrawal and the vacuum it leaves in Afghanistan and continental Asia in general – which is being filled by China and Russia – is reinforcing India's identity as a continental Asian power. Barring a brief interregnum in

the 1990s, India has historically enjoyed good ties with Afghanistan, which go back to the 1950 Treaty of Friendship. Indian interests and influence suffered when the Taliban, backed by Pakistan, captured Kabul in 1996. But India was back in action as soon as the Taliban were ousted from power after the U.S. invasion in 2001. It has made huge investments and commitments ever since, which run into over \$3 billion, and cultivated strong economic and defence ties with the Afghan government. Now, it is again staring at uncertainty with the U.S. pullback having effectively changed the balance of power in Afghanistan and the Taliban making rapid territorial gains.

The U.S.'s strategic objectives in Afghanistan were limited, as U.S. President Joe Biden himself pointed out earlier this month – killing Osama bin Laden and disrupting al-Qaeda networks. Defeating the Taliban and nation-building were part of the neoconservative ideological project, which has evidently failed. This means, the U.S., having met its realist objectives, can abandon the Afghan government and exit the theatre – which is what Mr. Biden is doing. But India cannot. It has to protect its investments, prevent Afghanistan from becoming another safe haven for anti-India terrorist groups, and also check Pakistan deepening its influence in Kabul.

Talking with the Taliban

So what should India do? One option, as many commentators have already pointed out, is to hold talks with the Taliban. India has already established contacts with the Taliban in Doha. Talking to them would allow New Delhi to seek security guarantees from the insurgents in return for continued development assistance or other pledges (in the 1990s, India had backed the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance) as well as explore the



AFP

possibility of the Taliban's autonomy from Pakistan. At this point, talking to the Taliban looks inevitable. But India should not overlook the deep ties between Pakistan's security establishment and the Haqqani Network, a major faction within the Taliban that's driving the successful campaigns on the battlefield. The U.S. overlooked it while fighting the Taliban along with Pakistan, and it paid a heavy price for it. There is no guarantee that India's quest for engagement with the Taliban would produce a desirable outcome. So India should broad-base its options. While talking to the Taliban to protect its interests, New Delhi should also enhance aid to Afghanistan's legitimate government and security forces and work with other regional powers for long-term stability in the country.

Kabul versus the Taliban

True, the Taliban now control or contest most of Afghanistan's countryside. But still, it is not a foregone conclusion that they could take Kabul easily. The Afghan military has some 200,000 battle-hardened soldiers, including the highly trained special forces. In the cities, which saw relative freedoms and rights compared to the dark period of the Taliban regime, the government, despite its infighting, corruption and incompetence, still commands support. There is no Northern Alliance this time. The Taliban have already taken northern districts, including Badkhashan and Takhar. The only

force that is standing up to the Taliban is the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. India should urgently step up training Afghan forces and provide military hardware, intelligence and logistical and financial support so that Kabul can continue to defend the cities. New Delhi should also coordinate with other regional powers to support the Afghan government because if the government forces crumble before the Taliban, the prospects for a political settlement would be narrowed. Why should a winning Taliban make concessions?

Regional solution

There is a convergence of interests between India and three key regional players – China, Russia and Iran – in seeing a political settlement in Afghanistan. These three countries have already opened public, direct talks with the Taliban. But these contacts are largely tactical in nature. For China, whose restive Xinjiang province shares a border with Afghanistan, a jihadist-oriented Taliban regime would not serve its internal interests. Russia, which fears that instability would spill over into the former Soviet Republics, has already moved to secure its Central Asian perimeter. For the Shia theocratic Iran, a Sunni Deobandi Taliban with which it had almost gone to war in 1998, will continue to remain an ideological, sectarian and strategic challenge. None of these countries would like to see the Taliban taking over Kabul militarily, which means there would be an isolated Sunni Islamist regime in a country with fractured ethnic equations. There would neither be legitimacy for a Taliban regime nor peace in Afghanistan.

India, to break this impasse, should take a layered approach. Its immediate goal should be the safety and security of its personnel and investments. The long-term goal should be finding a political

solution to the crisis. And if a political solution is not achieved, it should seek non-conventional methods, like what it did in the 1990s, to offer support to its allies within Afghanistan and retain some influence. None of this can be achieved unless it works together with the regional powers.

Russia has cultivated links with the Taliban in recent years. India would need Russia's support in any form of direct engagement with the Taliban. When it comes to Afghanistan, Iran is an irreplaceable country. It shares a long border with Afghanistan and has built contacts through several stakeholders in the country, especially the ethnic minorities. The original objective of India's Chabahar project in Iran was to create a direct access to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan. This direct access is critical for India in all different scenarios – move supplies to Kabul in larger quantities, retain its presence in the event of a civil war or carry out covert operations if the Taliban take power by force. But India, under pressure from the U.S., slowed down on the Chabahar connectivity projects, which finally prompted Iran to drop India and go ahead. Building strategic ties with Iran, irrespective of the U.S.'s policy towards the Islamic Republic, is essential for India's Afghan bets. Finally, India should talk with China, with the objective of finding a political settlement and lasting stability in Afghanistan.

Central to this approach is India striking the right balance between its continental realities and the U.S.'s pivot to maritime Asia. The U.S., and the West in general, are done with Afghanistan. India, as one of the countries that would be impacted by the consequences of American withdrawal, has to work with Eurasian powers to protect its interests and stabilise Afghanistan.

stanley.johny@thehindu.co.in

An emigration Bill that does not go far enough

The new Bill is better than the Emigration Act 1983, but more reforms are needed to protect Indian workers



NIKHIL EAPEN

In early June 2021, the Ministry of External Affairs invited public inputs to the Emigration Bill 2021 (<https://bit.ly/2VerwzX> and <https://bit.ly/2ULrNdS>). The Bill could be introduced in Parliament soon and presents a long overdue opportunity to reform the recruitment process for nationals seeking employment abroad.

Exploitative conditions

For years, independent investigations into migrant worker conditions have underlined serious exploitative practices which include large recruitment charges, contract substitution, deception, retention of passports, non-payment or underpayment of wages, poor living conditions, discrimination and other forms of ill-treatment. In recent months, media reports have highlighted how the majority of migrant worker deaths in the Arab Gulf States/West Asia are attributed to heart attacks and respiratory failures, whose causes are unexplained and poorly understood. Labour migration is gov-

erned by the Emigration Act, 1983 (<https://bit.ly/3i4gfvD> and <https://bit.ly/2Vcj6m6>) which sets up a mechanism for hiring through government-certified recruiting agents – individuals or public or private agencies. It outlines obligations for agents to conduct due diligence of prospective employers, sets up a cap on service fees, and establishes a government review of worker travel and employment documents (known as emigration clearances) to 18 countries mainly in West Asian states and South-East Asian countries (<https://bit.ly/2WmfmHp>).

Improvements, drawbacks

The Emigration Bill 2021 is an improvement over the 1983 Act. It launches a new emigration policy division, establishes help desks and welfare committees, requires manpower agencies to conduct pre-departure briefings for migrants, and increases accountability of brokers and other intermediaries who are also involved in labour hiring. But the Bill does not go far enough.

First, the 2021 Bill's purpose "to consolidate and amend the law relating to emigration of citizens of India", lacks a human rights framework aimed at securing the rights of migrants and their families. Progressive labour regimes do so. For example, in a country such as the Philippines, it explicitly re-



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

cognises the contributions of Filipino workers and "the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Filipino citizens".

Another significant drawback is that the Bill permits manpower agencies to charge workers' service fees, and even allows agents to set their own limits. International labour standards such as International Labour Organization (ILO) Private Employment Agencies Convention No. 181 and the ILO general principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment recognises that it is employers, not workers who should bear recruitment payments including the costs of their visas, air travel, medical exams, and service charges to recruiters. Large-scale surveys by the ILO and the World Bank show that Indian workers pay exorbitant charges for their jobs and that poorer workers pay progressively larger fees – Indians in Saudi Arabia paid on average \$1,507 in recruitment charges; their counterparts in Qatar paid \$1,156 (<https://bit.ly/3zzxLxh>).

To some, recruitment charges might appear like a justified ser-

vice fee, but the tens of thousands of rupees that workers pay far exceed the real cost of recruitment. When low wage migrants pick up the tab it makes them vulnerable to indebtedness and exploitation. Worker-paid recruitment fees eat into their savings, force them to take high-interest loans, live on shoe-string budgets, and in the worst cases of abuse, leave workers in situations of debt bondage – a form of forced labour.

But perhaps the Bill's most glaring inclusion is that it permits government authorities to punish workers by cancelling or suspending their passports and imposing fines up to ₹50,000 for violating any of the Bill's provisions. When enforced, it can be used as a tool to crackdown on workers who migrate through unregistered brokers or via irregular arrangements such as on tourist visas. Criminalising the choices migrant workers make either because they are unaware of the law, under the influence of their recruiters, or simply desperate to find a decent job is deplorable, runs contradictory to the purpose of protecting migrants and their families, and violates international human rights standards. Recruiters and public officials could misuse the law to instil fear among workers and report or threaten to report them. Migrants in an irregular situation who fear that they could be

evicted or have their passports revoked, are also less likely to make complaints or pursue remedies for abuses faced.

Scant gender dimensions

This Bill does not also adequately reflect the gender dimensions of labour migration where women have limited agency in recruitment compared to their counterparts and are more likely to be employed in marginalised and informal sectors and/or isolated occupations in which labour, physical, psychological, and sexual abuse are common. The Bill also provides limited space for worker representation or civil society engagement in the policy and welfare bodies that it sets up.

To ensure that labour recruitment works for the tens of thousands of Indian women and men who migrate outside our borders each year, the Ministry of External Affairs must start at the top, and draft a clearer purpose which explicitly recognises the contributions of Indian workers, the unique challenges they face, and uphold the dignity and human rights of migrants and their families. Then it must address the specific provisions that diverge from this purpose.

Nikhil Eapen is a freelance journalist and researcher at Equidem, a labour rights non-governmental organisation

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.

India and the Taliban

Whether it is moral or not, justifiable or not, ethical or not, India should engage with the Taliban. If the Taliban are neglected, Pakistan will join hands with them and the combination will be very deadly for India. It should not be forgotten that not so long ago, the Afghan President accused Pakistan of letting in thousands of the Taliban from the Pakistan border. India's position is still worse. The Americans just want to end the endless war. They want to escape, leaving the entire region in turmoil. It would be just a matter of months before the Taliban overrun Kabul. The situation is deteriorating with each passing day. My heart also goes out to the youngsters in Afghanistan born after

the invasion. They have so far enjoyed education and freedom. It will all be crushed under the Taliban. Though India should never engage with such entities, it has no other choice.

T. ANAND RAJ,
Chennai

Migrant details

The proposed creation of a data bank of migrant workers, announced in Tamil Nadu, is timely. In the aftermath of the sudden lockdown last year, the Centre was left clueless following the Supreme Court's pointed queries on the exact number of migrant workers across the country. The role of migrants in the infrastructural development of any State cannot be underestimated or quantified. However, the

data bank should not be limited to just identifying and weeding out illegal immigrants. There is a need to make available provisions through fair price shops and also free medical facilities. It is to be noted that migrants are from the lower rungs, forsaking family life to eke out a living by migrating. A well streamlined data system covering all aspects, right from their legality of existence to extending welfare measures would provide a template for other States to follow.

V. SUBRAMANIAN,
Chennai

From the RE

Monday mornings have always been extra special. The weekly columns of Mr. A.S. Panneerselvan, the Readers' Editor, *The Hindu*,

are thought provoking and make newspaper reading interesting, especially in times when the reading habit is said to be on the decline. It is sad to note that the tenure of the Readers' Editor would be coming to an end. As stated, the central concern needs to be course correction and not punitive steps. One wishes him well in his future undertakings.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI,
Secunderabad

As the RE, Mr. Panneerselvan has been a true ombudsman between *The Hindu* and its readers. His deft replies to the queries put to him on journalism stand testimony to his proficiency in the subject. That he is leaving makes for a sad reading but the point is

that he will be leaving behind a rich journalistic legacy.

K. PRADEEP,
Chennai

House proceedings

It is unlikely that parliamentary proceedings will be smooth in the monsoon session especially in the background of a whole range of sensitive issues – from snooping using Pegasus to the ongoing stir of farmers. There is nothing novel or new for the proceedings of both Houses of the Parliament to be stalled, but if this becomes a 'permanent' feature, it only makes a mockery of democracy. It becomes distressing when documents are snatched from Ministers and torn and there is high decibel shouting. Why are errant MPs not punished?

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The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs needs to act and set an example in dealing with such aberrations.

MANI NATARAJAN,
Chennai

Steamrolled

The 7-1 drubbing that India got in its hockey match against Australia at the Tokyo Olympics should not surprise anyone given the quality of hockey played in India ('Sport' page, July 26). The issue needs to be introspected over as the Indian hockey team was once synonymous with glory. It is embarrassing every time the team crosses a cropper. A few hard decisions may have to be taken.

V. LAKSHMANAN,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

Did 'Orange' counter 'Saffron' in Karnataka?

The Lingayat mutts' influence and their heterogeneity have been a tough nut for the BJP to crack



JANAKI NAIR

Why was it so difficult, but necessary, for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to retire an old warhorse such as B.S. Yediyurappa? After all, he clearly defied all that the party publicly stands for. He shows no distaste for engaging in old-style corruption, and has even paid the price for it. He makes no bones about extending his 'rule by next-of-kin' in promoting the *de facto* power of B.Y. Vijayendra. But above all, he showed a degree of fairness to the Muslim population of the State (approximately 13%) when he categorically stated, at the height of the pandemic in 2020, that 'no one should say a word against Muslims; this is a warning'. Such fairness is quite alien to many other members of the party, which obliges its members to foster a hatred of Muslims. His warning flew against the successful ethnic profiling of Muslims following the Tablighi meeting at Nizamuddin Markaz in March 2020. Naturally, it only earned him greater displeasure.

He has symbolically ended two years of a troubled time as Karnataka's Chief Minister in a blaze of advertisements recounting his achievements. As he counts his days to the *Margdarshak Mandal*, or to a safe sinner elsewhere, Mr. Yediyurappa has revealed his capacity to rally support from the local men in orange - the *mathadishas* (head of mutts) of several Lingayat (and a few other) mutts, of which Karnataka has a dense and active network. Small groups meeting in his support coalesced into a gathering of about 450 who convened at Bengaluru's Palace Grounds on Sunday.

Generous grants

Mr. Yediyurappa had inaugurated his last victory in 2008 with generous grants to these mutts. Between 2008 and 2013, the BJP government had granted at least ₹152 crore to 20 named institutions. In his new, though illegitimately obtained, time in power, he steered Karnataka's decades-long legacy of development in



In solidarity: Seers from the Lingayat community gathering to show support for Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa in Bengaluru on Sunday.

completely new directions through the creation of caste-based development corporations - one of which was the Veerashaiva-Lingayat Development Corporation that was endowed with ₹500 crore last year. Mr. Yediyurappa made development all about caste.

But did the men in orange come out on the streets of Karnataka to express their gratitude for this largesse? The public engagements of the mutts, particularly in the world of education, have been about a century in the making, when Lingayat mutts first began to build institutions to serve those of their own caste, and later, a much larger community of Kannadigas. From the 1970s, they have expanded their educational engagements to set up professional colleges and related facilities. Today, for instance, the Jagadguru Sri Shivarathreshwara (JSS) group of institutions number close to 350 educational institutions, while the Sree Siddaganga Mutt at Tumkur has an enviable 125.

To add to their institutional strength, there has been an increased involvement of mutts and *mathadishas* in all parts of Karnataka in the developmental works of their regions. This may range from building bridges and irrigation works. They are even involved in establishing a balance between new livelihoods and ecological sustainability. For example, making iron ore mining companies in Chitradurga more accountable to the communities that they have thoroughly ravaged.

The Karnataka mutts have been, as M.M. Kalburgi so well described it, an 'unauthorised government'. Wielding a moral, rather than a legal

authority, *mathadishas* of especially the Lingayat mutts have long established themselves as the arbiters of everyday life in Karnataka.

What of their engagement with the world of electoral politics? It could consist of nudging adherents towards a particular candidate. Former Karnataka Chief Minister S. Nijalingappa was a 'victim' of this process. Participating in public protests became common as *mathadishas* and political representatives together demanded Other Backward Class (OBC) reservation for the Vokkaligas and the Lingayats in the late 1980s. In 2017, they demanded separate religious status for the Lingayats.

This engagement has gone further today. Attempts are being made to reduce the cacophony and expense of electoral politics, particularly in local body elections, by urging electorates to 'unanimously' choose one or another candidate, who then wins without a contest. This does not bode well for a democracy, but reveals the mutt's formidable local political power.

Current assertion

What of the current assertion by the men in orange in support of Mr. Yediyurappa or another Lingayat leader? Is it to enlarge the powers they already enjoy, free of the accountability of the elected representative?

Or has the promised 'double-engine *sarkara*', in fact, shown signs of disobediently pulling in a direction quite opposed to the Union government? Ironically, the power of the *mathadishas*, strengthened no doubt by the wider political climate that privileges all men in orange, may precisely be that which under-

mines the homogenising Hindutva project. It was the dangerous threat to Hindu unity that was exposed in the 2017 campaign for the recognition of the Lingayats as belonging to a separate religion, a demand that was successfully beaten back - at least temporarily - by the Union government.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Chief Minister were able to get away with yoking '*sanatana*' (eternal or absolute dharma) to '*pragathi*' (progressive) when inaugurating the renovations to Anubhava Mantapa at Basavakalyan in Bidar - a move that sent up a futile cry of protest among those who saw this as a contradiction of Basava's ideals.

But again, it was the radical heterogeneity of the mutts that came into public display for three months after January 2021, when the *mathadishas* of a sub-sect of the Lingayats, the Panchamasali Lingayats, marched towards Bengaluru, demanding a rearrangement of reservation categories to better represent their sub-caste.

Mr. Yediyurappa was himself besieged in this war that broke out between the castes and sub-castes. The second wave of COVID-19 arrived as a grotesque succor, but he still had to claw back the dangerous tilt in power towards the men in orange when he physically rapped the wrist of Vachananda Swami, after the latter publicly asked him to accommodate more Panchamasali Lingayats in his Cabinet.

We have, therefore, witnessed the contradictory process by which the unity that the Union government strives for is continually undermined by the fractious struggles of the region and its castes.

Karnataka's *mathadishas* - whom no political party can do without - are a mixed bunch. Some such as the then Nidumamidi Swami, and the current Nijagunananda Swami, have publicly campaigned against the BJP's communal politics. Their commitment to their caste ironically staved off the precipitous plunge towards the Uttar Pradesh 'model', which other members of the party have eagerly embraced. For some time, Basava tattu's orange may well run counter to Hindutva's saffron.

Janaki Nair taught Modern Indian History at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

Diriliş: Ertuğrul is more than just a Turkish delight

Turkey's influence through its TV show has not waned



NITHYA SUBRAMANIAN

As Turkey's geopolitical and regional ambitions grow, its soft power influence through its most popular television export, *Diriliş: Ertuğrul* (Resurrection: Ertuğrul), does not seem to wane. Recently, its first publicly-owned floating liquefied natural gas (LNG) storage and regasification vessel - also named *Ertuğrul Gazi* - was inaugurated. Present at this event, which would enable the country to cover much of its energy needs, was President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Returning to its Islamic roots and re-establishing the Ottoman glory have been a top priority for Mr. Erdoğan and his AK Party. Hence, last September, while commemorating the 739th death anniversary of Ertuğrul Ghazi, he reiterated the "goal of preserving Anatolia as a homeland". *Ertuğrul* reflects that ambition for prestige and national assertion.

Produced by Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), the national broadcaster, this historical extravaganza, set in the 13th century, has been inspired by the life of Ertuğrul Ghazi, whose son, Sultan Osman, became the first Caliph of the Ottoman Empire. His heroic acts managed to capture the hearts of billions of viewers across 72 countries and became popularly known as the *Muslim Game of Thrones*.

Mr. Erdoğan, a great proponent of this show, has been playing an active leadership role in the Islamic world - whether it is in Afghanistan, supporting Bangladesh with regard to the Rohingya issue, aiding Azerbaijan against Armenia or extending its presence in North Africa. For someone who has been modelling himself as an Ottoman sultan, a drama series like *Ertuğrul* is an effective communication vehicle.

In 2019, Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia had proposed setting up a television channel to promote Muslim heroes and counter Islamophobia. While that did not take off, the following Ramzan, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan recommended the show to his youth. Soon, a quarter of the global audience were Pakistanis and by July 2021, Pakistan Television Corporation's (PTV) YouTube channel gained 14.9 million subscribers.

Extending beyond its political leadership, the 'Turkey-Pakistan brotherhood' is wit-

nessed across shops and hotels in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan, where the two flags fly together.

Recently, Bangladeshis turned fans after some Bengali-dubbed episodes became available. The Turkish Ambassador there, Mustafa Osman Turan, after visiting DeepTo, the popular private TV channel, said such shows would help bring two fraternal countries together. Meanwhile, DeepTo has planned to purchase the series. Incidentally, Bangladesh has become the fourth-largest arms buyer from Turkey, reportedly receiving weapons worth about \$60 million in the first quarter of 2021.

The historical conquests of the hero have also resonated with Kashmiris in India. In May 2020, a TRT official tweeted that more Indians searched for these videos on YouTube than for Shah Rukh Khan. Many parents in Kashmir have even chosen to name their newborns Ertuğrul, and a restaurant in downtown Srinagar is themed around it.

In August 2020, Azerbaijan became a major gas supplier in Turkey. A month later, the latter supported the former after intense fighting broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia. During this time, it was also announced that *Ertuğrul* would be dubbed in the Azeri language and aired on its state television channel, AZ TV.

However, not the entire Muslim world has taken to it. In a bid to curb Turkey's soft power influence, some religious organisations in Egypt and Saudi Arabia called for a ban. Saudi Arabia, which holds a grudge against the Ottomans, launched a big budget production titled *Mamalik el-Nar* (Kingdoms of Fire) that has not caused any ripple.

The popularity of *Ertuğrul* is in a way reflective of Turkey's growing influence around the world, including Venezuela where Mr. Erdoğan shares a warm relationship with President Nicolas Maduro. Mr. Maduro not only endorsed the series but also visited the sets during his trip to Turkey in 2018. For now, it seems that wherever Mr. Erdoğan goes, *Ertuğrul* follows.

With the christening of an LNG vessel, it wouldn't be wrong to assume that *Ertuğrul*, which has become a symbol of Turkish power, has expanded beyond being a historical hero to other critical sectors of its society and economy. At the inauguration, Mr. Erdoğan said his government was "determined to ensure a more prosperous life" for each one of its 84 million citizens.

Nithya Subramanian is an Editor at the Institute of South Asia Studies (ISAS), an autonomous research institute at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Yet another colonial legacy

India's regulatory regime needs a radical overhaul

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

A recent event in Kerala, though far from the industrial centres of India, may hold a clue to understanding the malaise crippling the nation's industry. This event took the form of one of the State's major employers making a much publicised investment outside Kerala. What is unusual about this is that the company had earlier announced that it would make an even larger investment within the State itself.

The negative publicity given to its departure by the company was considered unnecessary by the State government and experts have pointed out that the original promise of investing this larger amount in the State is incredible, as its volume is several times the firm's market capitalisation. The investor, however, announced that he had been hounded out by the regulatory authorities. Independently, journalists have confirmed that the company's premises had been subjected to 11 inspections in one month by the concerned government departments, and its CEO had stated on public television that he had been charged with over 70 compliance failures following these.

In a swift move, Kerala's Minister for Industries appeared on public television, where he opened himself to questioning. He stated categorically that the inspections had been in response to alleged violation of human rights and labour laws by the company, and that they had not been ordered by the Industries Ministry of the State. We have no reason to disbelieve him, but are left wondering about the legitimacy of a regulatory arrangement under which the elected government of the day has no say on inspections, even if some of them are related to court rulings.

The picture of an ungoverned bureaucracy that emerges from this incident is breathtaking in its implications for the kind of democracy that we are living in. But it is not difficult to see where this originates from. It was the governance model during colonial rule in India. In an insightful commentary on his compatriots of the East India Company, the economist Adam Smith had observed that their only concern was to build a fortune by any means and to get out of

the country as fast as possible, no matter what the consequences for its inhabitants. However, even this understanding of the rationale of colonialism is not enough to appreciate its debilitating consequences for India. To hold India, the British invented an intermediary class standing between themselves and the natives. For the latter, there was no redress against the depredations of this class, whose excesses the colonial regime tolerated as a small price for retaining their colony.

Crippling effect

The colonial administrative apparatus has been retained intact in Independent India. Of course, this was not inevitable. The toxic measures that enslaved Indians could have been removed forthwith, but for reasons that are not difficult to comprehend, India's political class kept them. Now, it has the Supreme Court asking why stick with a sedition law that had been used to immobilise Indians. While many understand the absurdity of the sedition law today, and the more aware among them can see how it kills our democracy, the crippling effect of colonial practices that govern economic activity have gone unscrutinised. Random inspection of a company's premises by State functionaries sits at their pinnacle, preventing India's industry from achieving its potential.

On the 30th anniversary of the economic reforms, a puzzle that needs resolution is that while they have been focused on the manufacturing sector, the manufacturing sector has not expanded relative to the economy. Its share has remained quite the same. We may just have received a clue from Kerala to comprehend this outcome. While the elegantly crafted trade and industry reforms have addressed the policy regime, they have not addressed the conditions under which production takes place in this country. This may have held back investment, standing in the way of the expansion of the manufacturing sector as intended. India's regulatory regime needs a radical overhaul.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches Economics at Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana

DATA POINT

Comparing excess deaths

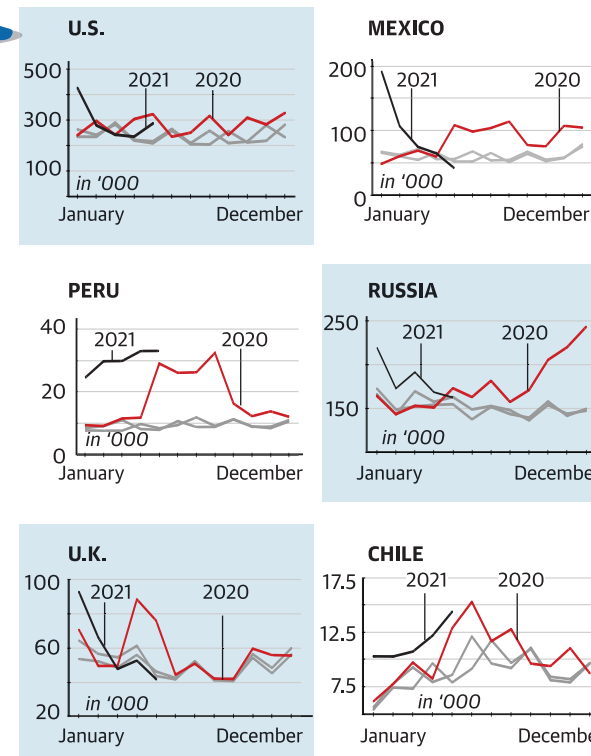
The Hindu has estimated that "excess deaths" registered during the pandemic period, based on the Civil Registration System (CRS) data from eight States, was 8.22 times the recorded COVID-19 death toll, a figure that will rank the highest among nations with the most recorded fatalities due to the virus. Not all excess deaths are related to COVID-19, but a bulk of them would be during the pandemic. While only close to 20.7% of those dead in the country were medically certified, registration of deaths in India has improved to more than 90% according to the CRS' 2019 annual report on "Vital Statistics". A preliminary comparison of excess deaths measured in India and other countries is attempted here. By **The Hindu Data Team**



- While Peru's undercount factor of 1.1 was relatively low, it is likely that many deaths may have gone uncounted as death registration was less than 75%
- The share of registered deaths where the cause was medically certified, was the lowest for India among the countries considered
- In Peru, the number of deaths registered in May 2021 alone was four times the average number of deaths registered in the country in May 2018 and 2019

3. MONTH-WISE DEATHS

The charts depict the month-wise registered deaths between January 2018 and May 2021 in the five countries with the highest recorded COVID-19 fatalities along with Chile



1. STATE-WISE UNDERCOUNTING | The table lists the major States for which excess deaths and the undercount factor were calculated for the period from April 2020 to May 2021. Excess deaths were calculated as the difference between the registered deaths in the pandemic period and the average number of deaths registered in 2018 and 2019 for the same months

State	Excess deaths ¹	COVID-19 deaths	Multiple ²
West Bengal@	1,20,227	10,787	11.1
Himachal &&	6,081	3,127	1.9
Haryana&	60,397	8,303	7.27
Tamil Nadu**	1,54,965	35,087	4.42
Tamil Nadu*	1,54,965	24,232	6.4
Karnataka	1,25,732	29,090	4.32
Kerala*	4,178	9,954	0.42
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

@ Registered deaths for 2018 and 2019 for 18 districts in the State. Deaths in accessed data was -90-94% of deaths reported in CRS 2019 | && Registered deaths for 2018 and 2019 in accessed data was -94-96% of deaths reported in CRS 2019 | *Registered deaths for 2018 and 2019 in accessed data was -96-97% of deaths reported in CRS 2019 | **Baseline mortality: Average of 2018 and 2019 figures | *Reconciled COVID-19 death toll released by State | **Reconciled COVID-19 death toll mentioned by State CRS | @Based on State's official COVID-19 tally

2. COUNTRY-WISE UNDERCOUNTING

The table lists the excess deaths and the undercount factor for the five countries with the highest recorded COVID-19 death toll apart from India. Chile was also included because it has a relatively high case fatality rate. Excess deaths were calculated as the difference between the registered deaths in the period from March 2020 and May 2021 and the average number of deaths registered in 2018 and 2019 for the same months

Country	Excess deaths	COVID-19 deaths	Multiple	Death registration (%)	Death registered with the cause of mortality (%)
U.S.	7,19,993	5,94,423	1.21	99.9	100
Mexico	4,84,271	2,23,569	2.17	90-99	100
Peru	2,02,031	1,83,783	1.10	50-74	57
Russia	4,42,409	1,19,464	3.70	>90	100
UK	1,04,567	1,29,446	0.81	100	100
Chile	1,67,216	29,300	5.71	90-95	95
India***	8,59,006	1,04,491	8.22	92	20.7

*** Partial analysis for eight States alone

Data for Brazil were insufficient for analysis

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 27, 1971

Graves for blacks not yet dead

A black New York criminal court judge who returned from a visit to South Africa has said that he saw dozens of news graves of South African black infants and 62 open graves waiting for those expected to die of malnutrition. The Judges, Mr. William Booth, talked to U.N. committees inquiring into South Africa's racial separation practices. He said he saw the new and expectant graves in a cemetery for blacks in the Dimbaza area. He also told of visiting a prison for blacks, which the authorities called one of the best, where he found "35 to 40 inmates crowded into a 30' by 30' cell, where they are expected to live for 10 to 15 years." He said in Dimbaza, described as a settlement for 7,000 blacks in the southern part of the republic, 50 per cent of all children born there die of malnutrition before they are one year of age. Parents decorate their sorry little graves with milk bottles, rattles and toys so they will be happy in death as they were unhappy in life.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 27, 1921

City Tenants' Protection Bill

A Bill entitled "The Madras City Tenants Protection Bill" is published for information in the current "Fort St. George Gazette." The following is the statement of objects and reasons:- In many parts of the city of Madras, dwelling houses and other buildings have, from time to time, been erected by tenants on land belonging to others in the full expectation that, subject to payment of a fair ground-rent, they would be left in undisturbed possession notwithstanding the absence of any specific contract as to the duration of the lease or the terms on which the buildings were to be erected. Recently, steps taken to evict a large number of such tenants have shown that such expectations are likely to be defeated. The tenants, if they are evicted, can at the best only remove the superstructures. Congested parts of the city will become more congested. It is reasonable that the landlords when they evict the tenant should pay for and take the buildings. There may, however, be cases where the landlord is unwilling to eject a tenant if he can get a fair rent for the land. The Bill provides for the payment of compensation to the tenant in case of ejection to the value of any buildings which may have been erected by him. It also provides for the settlement of a fair rent at the instance of the landlord.

JEE Advanced to be held on October 3

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The JEE Advanced, used for admission to the elite Indian Institutes of Technology, will be held on October 3, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has announced. "The examination will be conducted adhering to all COVID-protocols," he tweeted on Monday night.

It was earlier scheduled to be held on July 3, but was cancelled due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The IIT-Kharagpur is responsible for conducting the examination this year.

The final session of the JEE-Main examination, used as a qualifying test for JEE-Advanced as well as an entrance test for other engineering institutions, will conclude on September 2. Once JEE-Main results are released, qualified students may then appear for JEE-Advanced.

As a one-time measure, students who had qualified and registered to write JEE-Advanced last year but had failed to appear for the examination will be allowed to attempt it this year without having to re-qualify through JEE-Main.

Death toll in rain and landslips climbs to 164 in Maharashtra

100 persons are still missing while nearly 2.3 lakh people have been evacuated

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Maharashtra officials on Monday said that 164 persons had lost their lives while 100 persons were missing in the landslips and rain-related accidents caused by the unprecedented downpour that has lashed the western part of the State and the coastal Konkan region since July 22.

In Raigad district alone, 71 persons died in the landslips which buried Taliye village in Mahad tehsil and Sakhar Sutarwadi and Kevnale in Poladpur taluk.

Satara district reported 41 deaths in the landslips at Mirgaon and Ambeghar villages. More than 25,500 head of livestock have been engulfed by the floodwaters or buried.

The scale of the destruction and loss is estimated to be even worse than the 2019 floods which ravaged Kolhapur and Sangli in western Maharashtra or the Malin landslip of 2014 when more than 150 persons were killed.

It is estimated that 1,028 villages have been afflicted



Towards safety: An NDRF team undertaking a rescue operation at Shirloli village in Kolhapur on Monday. @GNDRFVADODARA/PTI

by the rain since July 22, with nearly 400 of these in Kolhapur district and 120 in Satara. A consolidated assessment of the damage in the Konkan, especially in Chiplun and Khed in Ratnagiri district which are among the worst-hit, is expected soon.

Nearly 2.3 lakh people have been evacuated, said official reports while the livelihood of 1.95 lakh people is said to have been hit in Kolhapur alone. The damage as-

essments from other districts in Konkan and western Maharashtra have yet to come in.

After four days of arduous efforts in severely inclement weather, authorities have finally called off rescue operations in Taliye village with the 31 missing persons to be declared dead after due process.

"After seeking the opinion of the NDRF, the SDRF and other rescue teams and re-

sponding to the sentiments of the survivors and relatives of the missing people, we have accordingly withdrawn our rescue teams from Taliye," said Raigad Collector Nidhi Chaudhary.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who was due to visit rain-battered Satara on Monday, was compelled to abandon his visit after the helicopter in which he was travelling could not land owing to poor visibility.

Land use change disrupted Kinnaur's ecology, says study

Development projects could up the risk of landslips

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

After nine people lost their lives in a landslide in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur district, a debate surrounding the degradation of the environment in this ecological sensitive hill terrain is bound to gain momentum.

A recent study suggests that both hydropower projects and afforestation efforts, carried out as compensation for the forest land diverted for hydropower projects in the name of 'mitigation', have altered land use and are negatively impacting the forest ecosystems.

The study, titled 'Mitigation or myth? Impacts of hydropower development and compensatory afforestation on forest ecosystems in the high Himalayas', was undertaken by Manshi Asher and Prakash Bhandari, environmentalists associated with the Himdhara Environment Research and Action Collective. It was published in the *Land Use Policy* journal of January 2021.

The study, conducted between 2012 and 2016, used information from govern-



A stretch of road that was damaged by the recent landslide in Kinnaur.

ment records and ground research to examine the extent, nature and impact of forest diversion for hydropower projects in Kinnaur.

"Our study found that not only have construction activities for hydropower projects impacted existing land use, disturbed forest biodiversity and fragmented the forest landscape, but the related compensatory afforestation plantations are also ridden with problems. These include abysmally low presence of surviving saplings [up to 10%], inter-species conflict, infringement on local land usage and damage by wildfires and landslips," said Ms. Asher.

She said studies show that

the tunnelling in mountain areas will result in risk of more landslips as large amounts of water percolate into surfaces. "The use of dynamite for blasting through the surfaces and underground components of the projects disturb existing slopes and the fragile geology."

Shanta Kumar Negi, president of the Kinnaur-based environment conservation organisation Hangrang Sangharsh Samiti, told *The Hindu* that over the years, climate change is visible. "The conditions of Kinnaur are not favourable for hydropower projects. Construction activities include blasting, which has to be done in a scientific manner, but the ground reality is that there's hardly any check on the frequency of blasting. We are not against development but Kinnaur is environmentally fragile, and this fact should not be ignored. Development at the cost of human lives is not acceptable," said Mr. Negi.

Nine tourists were killed after boulders fell on their vehicle in a landslide near Basteri in Kinnaur district on July 25.

CBSE, UGC asked to assess vaccination rate among staff

Immunisation is key to reopening educational institutions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Educational bodies under the Central government have been asked to assess the status of COVID-19 vaccination among staff and teachers in schools and colleges, according to a senior Education Ministry official. This comes amid demands from a section of faculty, parents and students that vaccination be made a pre-requisite for reopening educational institutions to ensure that the infection does not spread on campuses.

The official said the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the University Grants Commission (UGC) were among those who had been asked to make such an assessment regarding vaccination of both teaching and non-teaching staff in institutions under their purview. Such data could be key to decisions regarding reopening campuses.

These regulatory and administrative bodies have also been asked to provide top-down encouragement and pressure to speed up the rate of vaccinations and move quickly toward 100%



A teacher getting vaccinated at a camp organised in her school.

coverage. However, the official said that there is no move as of now to set a formal deadline for mandatory vaccination of teachers.

At a press conference last week, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director General Balram Bhargava had urged that not only teachers, but also all support staff such as school bus drivers should be vaccinated on a priority basis. He had suggested that it would be wise to reopen the primary school sections first, once staff are vaccinated, as young children are at lower risk of infection.

Many States have begun reopening schools this month for the higher class-

es, especially Classes 10 and 12. Several States have already taken steps to encourage vaccination among educational staff. The Delhi government set up a special vaccination centre for teachers and their families, while the Goa educational department warned teachers that if they do not get vaccinated or do not have a medical exemption, they may be required to produce negative RT-PCR tests on a weekly basis. Karnataka has launched a drive to vaccinate all college-going students and higher education faculty by the end of July.

The Education Ministry is likely to convene a virtual meeting of education officials in States - including those in charge of schools, higher education, technical education and skill development and vocational education - after Independence Day to take stock of the current situation after 16 months of school closure.

However, Education Ministry officials emphasised that the onus for reopening schools as well as for assessing learning gaps caused by the extended closures largely rest with State governments.

Revenue from monuments down

Ticket sales fall from ₹336.23 crore in 2019-20 to ₹40.32 crore in 2020-2021

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

Ticket sales at monuments fell from ₹336 crore in 2019-20 to a little over ₹40 crore in 2020-21, the year that saw the start of travel bans and lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Culture Ministry data given to the Lok Sabha on Monday.

In response to a question from MPs Chandeshwar Prasad, Vinayak Raut and Rekha Verma, Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy's written reply said there were 1.19 crore visitors at the Centrally protected monuments and ₹40.32 crore in revenue in 2020-21. In 2019-20, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) monuments had seen 4.82 crore visitors that brought in



The entrance to the Fatehpur Sikri mosque, which is protected by the ASI.

a revenue of ₹336.23 crore, while in 2018-19, there had been 5.31 crore visitors and ₹317.2 crore in revenue. While the ASI maintained 3,693 monuments across the country, 143 of them were ticketed, an ASI official said. Replying to another question by MPs Bhagwant Mann

and Vijayakumar (Vijay Vasanth), the Minister said the Centrally protected monuments, including the World Heritage Sites, were closed for 61 days from April 16 to June 15 during "lockdown 2.0 in view of COVID-19 situation", referring to the second wave of the pandemic earlier this year.

Funding ideas

A "pay as you wish" entry fee at monuments and outsourcing the maintenance of archaeological sites were among the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report on the condition of museums in the country. The panel's report, which was presented in the

Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha on Monday, acknowledged the inadequate budget of the Culture Ministry as one of the biggest stumbling blocks. "The committee feels that it is imperative for the Ministry to seek the participation of private sector in order to have the necessary investment needed to make our museums and archaeological sites/monuments at par with international standards..." the report said.

The committee that is headed by T.G. Venkatesh recommended that donation drives, including allowing visitors to pay what they wish, beyond a minimum amount, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives be taken up.

SC turns down plea of Gambhir foundation

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea by BJP MP Gautam Gambhir's foundation to stay the proceedings in a case of illegal procurement and distribution of COVID-19 drugs, saying individuals cannot monopolise the distribution of drugs during the pandem-

ic when medicines were scarce.

"People were going helter-skelter to procure drugs during the second wave. And then suddenly, one person started distributing drugs. This is not done," Justice D.Y. Chandrachud observed orally. Justice M.R. Shah, also on the Bench, objected to the submissions of the founda-

tion's lawyer, senior advocate Kailash Vasdev, that his client was working for people. Mr. Vasdev sought a stay of the proceedings initiated under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

"We saw how the common man was suffering. Individuals cannot distribute drugs... Do you want us to go into the merits of this case?"

Justice Shah asked the lawyer. The Bench advised the foundation to move the Delhi High Court for relief. Mr. Vasdev withdrew the case.

The Delhi government's drug controller had accused the foundation in the High Court of unauthorised stocking, procuring and distributing the Fabiflu medicine for COVID-19 patients.

IN BRIEF



Sidhu holds first meeting as Punjab Cong. chief

CHANDIGARH Days after taking charge as the Punjab Congress chief, Navjot Singh Sidhu on Monday held his first meeting with four working presidents and representatives of different wings of the party's State unit. He had detailed discussions about rebuilding the organisation and strengthening the party, the party said. He also met representatives of the party's frontal organisations. PTI

Biocon Biologics to make monoclonal antibody

BENGALURU Biocon Biologics Ltd., a biosimilars firm and subsidiary of Biocon Ltd., on Monday said it had further stepped up its fight against COVID with the addition of a novel antibody. The firm has been granted an exclusive licence by the U.S.-based Adagio Therapeutics to manufacture and commercialise an antibody treatment based on ADG20 for India and select emerging markets, it said in a statement. ADG20, a novel monoclonal antibody, targets the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 and related coronaviruses.

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

THE CROSSWORD + 13310 (set by Gussulufz)

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ACROSS

- She may be interested in taking some men out: essentially easy going and without disrespectful speech (8)
- Transmitter's extent of some long-wave signal cut back (6)
- So, Atlas Shrugged is not making a profit? (2,1,4)
- Massaged closer, finding model's protective garment (7)
- Add fifty eggs at first and mix up (5)
- Organelle initially released in intimate ecstasy (8)

- Really aced cooking this vegetable with a dal! (6)
- Anand, perhaps countered joke about a kind of Hindu philosophy (8)
- Survey is old and unfavourable, choose rejecting to participate (4,4)
- Spy agitated by Marxist mentality (6)
- Varying by the time of the year? Nothing's irrelevant in sales modelling (8)
- Happens to be standing in cool wind (5)
- Behaviour of a certain tiger: primarily charges (7)
- Active, ripped, hot gent wearing glasses (2,3,2)
- League's leader drops out of final game for bribe! (6)
- Once batter's spooned, they might use their hands (8)

DOWN

- Husband wrapped up in drapery after a big fall (9)
- Outrage of upwardly mobile young man when under examination (7)
- Coronets made with the top part of pretty flowering plant (9)
- Bat crossed the line, absolutely - guarantee! (6)
- Coins term in neuroscience (5)
- Shy about hugging, well, without restraints? Set boundaries! (7)
- Regularly gathered erotica for retired judge (4)
- Animal captures boy (quintessentially Watterson's boy!) in intricate trap (6)
- High? (Hesitate about appealing) (9)
- Exceptionally nice costs and special deliveries! (1-8)
- Afghans avoiding alien spaces? (6)
- Setter has set plenty without competence! (7)
- Foreigners popular for some eccentricity in Old Amsterdam, perhaps? (7)
- Tumour covered up in cream, oil, gelatin (6)
- Laugh very loudly after saucy comic operetta starts (5)
- Division of a million pence by one hundred (4)

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13309

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

Tunisian President sacks government

Kais Saied orders Parliament closed for 30 days, a move the largest party decried as a 'coup d'etat'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TUNIS

Street clashes erupted on Monday outside Tunisia's Army-barricaded Parliament, a day after President Kais Saied ousted the Prime Minister and suspended the legislature, plunging the young democracy into a constitutional crisis.

Mr. Saied sacked Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi and ordered Parliament closed for 30 days, a move the biggest political party Ennahdha decried as a "coup", following a day of angry street protests against the government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Soldiers from early Monday blockaded the Assembly in Tunis while, outside, the President's backers hurled stones, bottles and insults at supporters of the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha, whose leader was barred entry to the complex.



On the boil: Security officers holding back protesters outside the Parliament in Tunis on Monday. • AFP

Troops also surrounded the office of Mr. Mechichi who was yet to officially react to the events rocking the North African country.

On Monday afternoon, the presidency announced the dismissals of Defence Minister Ibrahim Bartaji and Hasna Ben Slimane, the acting Justice Minister.

Mr. Saied's move – a de-

cade on from Tunisia's 2011 revolution, often held up as the Arab Spring's sole success story – comes even as the Constitution enshrines a parliamentary democracy.

It "is a coup d'etat against the revolution and against the Constitution," Ennahdha, the lead party in Tunisia's ruling coalition, charged in a Facebook post,

warning that its members "will defend the revolution".

Months-long deadlock

The crisis follows months of deadlock between the President, the premier and Ennahdha chief Rached Ghannouchi, which has crippled the COVID-19 response as deaths have surged to one of the world's highest per capita rates. The rivalry has blocked ministerial appointments and diverted resources from tackling economic and social problems.

Mr. Saied declared that he had "taken the necessary decisions to save Tunisia, the state and the Tunisian people," after a day where street protests over COVID-19 flared in multiple cities.

The President, who under the Constitution controls the armed forces, warned his opponents against taking up arms, threatening that if anyone "fires a single bullet,

our forces will respond with a rain of bullets".

Tunisian police also shuttered the local bureau of Qatari-based Al Jazeera television, the network's Tunis director Lotfi Hajji said, warning that "what is happening is very dangerous, it is proof that freedom of the press is threatened".

The President's power-grab sparked jubilant rallies on Sunday by thousands of his supporters who flooded the streets of the capital, waving the national flag and sounding their car horns as fireworks lit up the sky.

But the shock move was criticised abroad, with Germany urging a rapid "return to constitutional order".

The Foreign Ministry in Turkey, where the government supports Ennahdha, said it was "deeply concerned" and called for "democratic legitimacy" to be restored.

Solih asks Maldivians to rise against extremism

President's comments come after Nasheed urged him to 'course-correct'

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih on Monday called upon citizens to rise against religious extremism, in order to safeguard the country's independence and sovereignty.

In a special address to mark the Indian Ocean island nation's 57th Independence Day, Mr. Solih said some "erroneously" believe in and "propagandise bloodshed" in the name of Islam. "Everyone of us who wish to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of the Maldives must readily

rise against this dangerous movement," he said, adding, "those countries, particularly a number of Islamic countries embattled by war and unrest have been swept by this very extremist ideology."

The President's reference to threats of religious extremism comes weeks after Parliamentary Speaker and former President Mohamed Nasheed urged him to "course-correct before it is too late", amid a growing rift between the two leaders from the country's ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP).

Mr. Nasheed is currently



Mohamed Solih

in the U.K., recovering from the multiple injuries sustained in an explosion targeting him in Male on May 6. Maldivian police who termed the incident a "terror attack" have so far arrested 10 persons in connection with the case. No evidence of

a direct link between them and ISIS has been found yet, the police chief told a media conference on Saturday. However, the suspects "support ISIS", and are involved in "propagating the terror group's ideology" in the Maldives, he said.

Recurring concern

Religious extremism has been a recurring concern in the Maldives, from where dozens are known to have joined the Islamic State terror group as fighters in Syria and Iraq. Further, extremist groups in the Maldives have in the past been linked to the murder cases of dissident journalists and bloggers who sought to challenge their ideology. While acknowledging

the problem in his speech on Monday, President Solih emphasised that legal actions alone will not solve the issues of religious extremism, or blasphemy directed at Islam that caused "social discord". "The lasting solution to these two issues is instilling Islamic faith in our children," he said. His government "exploring options" within the education system to resolve the matter.

"As long as such divisive forces exist in our society, our peace and harmony will be at persistent risk of disruption. Our position to manage other major crises will be consequently weakened if we allow our national affairs to spiral to that extent," President Solih said.

46 Afghan soldiers seek refuge in Pak.

REUTERS
ISLAMABAD

Forty-six Afghan soldiers sought refuge in Pakistan after losing control of military positions across the border following advances by Taliban insurgents, Pakistan's Army said on Monday.

Hundreds of Afghan Army soldiers and civil officials have fled to Tajikistan, Iran and Pakistan in recent weeks after Taliban offensives in border areas. The Afghan military commander requested refuge at the border crossing in Chitral in the north, the Army said.

'Afghan conflict is having devastating impact'

Around 1,659 civilians killed, 3,254 wounded in first half of 2021, says UN report

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

The United Nations warned on Monday that Afghanistan could see the highest number of civilian deaths in more than a decade if the Taliban's offensives across the country are not halted.

Violence has surged since May when the insurgents cranked up operations to coincide with a final withdrawal of U.S.-led foreign forces.

In a report released on Monday documenting civilian casualties for the first half of 2021, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said it expected figures to touch their highest single-year levels since the



Mounting toll: A convoy of Afghan Special Forces at a checkpoint in the Kandahar province on July 13. • REUTERS

mission began reporting over a decade ago.

It also warned that Afghan troops and pro-government forces were responsible for a quarter of all civilian casualties.

"I implore the Taliban and Afghan leaders to take heed to the conflict's grim and chilling trajectory and its devastating impact on civilians."

During the first half of 2021, some 1,659 civilians were killed and another 3,254 wounded, the UNAMA report said – a 47% increase on the same period last year.

The rise in civilian casualties was particularly sharp in May and June with 783 civilians killed and 1,609 wounded, it added. "Particularly shocking and of deep concern is that women, boys and girls made up of close to half of all civilian casualties," the report said.

ELSEWHERE



Lebanon picks billionaire Mikati as Prime Minister

Lebanese businessman Najib Mikati secured enough votes in parliamentary consultations on Monday to be designated the next Prime Minister, raising hopes for an urgently needed government to tackle a crippling financial crisis. Mr. Mikati received 72 out of 118 votes in Parliament. Lebanon has been run by a caretaker administration for nearly a year. • REUTERS

Junta cancels results of Myanmar polls

Myanmar's junta on Monday cancelled the results of 2020 polls won by Aung San Suu Kyi's party, announcing they were not "free and fair", almost six months after depositing the Nobel laureate in a coup. Investigations had uncovered more than 11 million cases of fraud, the junta's Election Commission said. • AFP

Southern Europe battles wildfires as north cleans up after floods

France, Greece send aircraft to tackle Italy fires



Situation worsens: A firefighting helicopter in front of a thick cloud of smoke from a forest fire at Spathovouni village, near Corinth, in Greece. • AP

REUTERS
ATHENS

Wildfires burned in regions across southern Europe on Monday, fuelled by hot weather and strong winds, as some northern countries cleaned up after a weekend of torrential rain and flooding.

In Greece, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said firefighters had battled around 50 fires during the past 24 hours and it was likely there would be more with meteorologists warning that a further heatwave was in prospect.

On the Italian island of Sardinia, firefighting planes from France and

Greece reinforced efforts to battle blazes. More than 4,000 hectares of forest were destroyed in the fire.

In Spain, the northeastern region of Catalonia saw more than 1,500 hectares destroyed near Santa Coloma de Queralt, forcing dozens to be evacuated, although the blazes were 90% stabilized on Monday, firefighters and authorities said.

Conditions in southern Europe were in sharp contrast to the rainstorms that lashed northern countries from Austria to U.K. following the catastrophic flooding in Germany and neighbouring countries last week.

'Stalemate' in ties as U.S., China officials trade barbs

Neither side appeared willing to concede ground in talks

ANANTH KRISHNAN

Monday's talks between senior American and Chinese officials in the city of Tianjin underlined a "stalemate" in relations, officials said, as both sides traded barbs and demands with little prospect of either appearing willing to concede any ground.

Chinese officials for the first time presented "two lists" of demands to visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, while the U.S. side repeated its concerns over Xinjiang, Hong Kong and other Chinese actions – concerns that Beijing has rebuffed as "interference" in its internal affairs.

China's Vice Foreign Minister Xie Feng slammed U.S. calls for a "rules-based international order" – calls also voiced by the U.S., India, Australia, Japan Quad grouping – describing it as "an effort by the United States and a few other Western countries to frame their own rules as international rules and impose them on other countries". "The purpose is to resort to the tactic of changing the rules to make life easy for itself and hard for others, and to introduce 'the law of the jungle' where might is right and the big bully the small," the Chinese Foreign Ministry quoted him as saying.

China put forward "two lists" during the talks, called the "List of U.S. Wrongs" and the "List of Key Individual Cases that China Has Concerns



Tough talks: U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Tianjin. • REUTERS

With," the *South China Morning Post* reported. In the first, Beijing demanded Washington "unconditionally revoke the visa restrictions over Communist Party of China (CPC) members and their families, revoke sanctions on Chinese leaders, officials and government agencies, and remove visa restrictions on Chinese students". Beijing has also asked the U.S. to revoke the extradition request for Chinese tech giant Huawei's chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou, also the daughter of Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, who has been under house arrest in Canada pending extradition.

Downturn in relations

While the Chinese side entirely blamed the U.S. for the downturn in relations, with Mr. Xie accusing the U.S. of "treating China as an imagined enemy," Ms. Sherman underlined U.S. concerns "about a range of PRC actions that run counter to our values and interests and those of our allies and partners, and that undermine the

international rules-based order," State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a statement.

"In particular, she raised our concerns about human rights, including Beijing's anti-democratic crackdown in Hong Kong; the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang; abuses in Tibet; and the curtailing of media access and freedom of the press," he said. "She also spoke about our concerns about Beijing's conduct in cyberspace; across the Taiwan Strait; and in the East and South China Seas." The Deputy Secretary also raised concerns "about the PRC's unwillingness to cooperate with the World Health Organization and allow a second phase investigation in the PRC into COVID-19's origins".

She also "affirmed the importance of cooperation in areas of global interest, such as the climate crisis, counterterrorism, non-proliferation, and regional concerns including DPRK, Iran, Afghanistan, and Burma," the State Department said.

Will accept woman linked to IS: Ardern

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WELLINGTON

New Zealand announced on Monday it would accept a woman linked to the Islamic State group and her two children.

The New Zealand-born woman – widely identified as Suhayra Aden – moved to Australia at age six and was a dual national until Canberra stripped her of citizenship last year.

Australian PM Scott Morrison had said "terrorists who fought with terrorism organisations" have forfeited their citizenship.

New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern said cancelling her citizenship would leave them stateless. "They are not Turkey's responsibility, and with Australia refusing to accept the family, that makes them ours," she said in a statement on Monday.

'U.K. could bar China firm from nuclear projects'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Britain is investigating ways to block China's state-owned nuclear energy company from all future power projects in the U.K., amid chilling relations between London and Beijing, according to reports Monday.

The move could see China General Nuclear (CGN) excluded from several projects, including a consortium planning to build a nuclear plant on the Suffolk coast in eastern England, according to the *Financial*

Times newspaper.

British government sources said the decision could also impact another planned plant in Essex, southeast England.

It comes as U.K.-China relations have become increasingly strained on issues ranging from espionage and cyberattacks to human rights and Hong Kong.

CGN is already working with France's EDF in the construction of a nuclear plant at Hinkley Point, in southwest England.

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NOTICE INVITING BID FOR
"Formation of wood chips storage open yard, side drain and collection tank at TNPL Unit II under MEP Phase 1"

Due date for submission at Kagithapuram - 07/08/2021

Interested bidders may purchase a complete set of Bid Document, against submission of a written application to TNPL and upon payment of applicable non-refundable fee of Rs.5,900/-, by way of Demand Draft / Banker's Cheque in favour of Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Limited, payable at Trichy. Alternatively, details of the bid may be viewed at TN Govt. / TNPL website and a soft copy of the Bid Document can be obtained against request by e-mail.

DIPR/2208/Tender/2021 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS:TIRUPATI
S.V.GOSAMRAKSHANA SHALA, TIRUPATI.

e-TENDER-CUM-REVERSE TENDERING NOTICE
NIT No.TTD-30021(43)/5/2021-SV GOSHALA, Dt:26-07-2021

S.V.Gosamrakshana Shala, TTD, Tirupati is inviting "e-tender-cum-reverse tendering" (3rd call) on Work Contract mode (Activity based) for Management of cattle at Sri Venkateswara Foundation for indigenous Cattle, Palamaner and Goshala, Kamalaihagarh Palle, Yerravari Pallam (M), Chittoor (Dist.). The details of the tender document can be downloaded by login to <https://tender.eprocurement.gov.in> and select on current tenders and click on more and then select "Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams at department field and "S.V.Gosamrakshana Shala Dairy Farm in the circle / Division field and click on search button. NIT No.TTD-30021(43)/5/2021-SV GOSHALA.

SEARCH DOCUMENT DOWNLOAD: • Start Date: 29-07-2021 from 05.00 p.m.
• End Date: 12-08-2021 up to 05.00 p.m. **DATE OF OPENING OF TENDER:** • Technical Bid: 13-08-2021 at 11.00 a.m. • Financial Bid: 16-08-2021 at 11.00 a.m. • Reverse Auctioning / Reverse Tendering Date & Time: 16-08-2021 from 02.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. For further details contact Phone No.0877-2284570.

Roc.No.PRA/13932/Adv.No.104/PRO/2021/Dated:26-07-2021 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED REGION I JODHPUR
Tele-0291-2651750 E-Mail : r_j_acejo@nic.in

No.ACE/Region I/Ju/ Ar. Dist./ 2021-22/2991-99 Dated : 14/7/2021

Notice Inviting Bid (NIT No. 13-16/2021-22)

Bids for work of "Work of Augmentation of various RWSS to provide FHTC in NIT No. 13/2021-22 (Village BORUNDA AND MAHADEO NAGAR AND HARIYADHANA), 14/2021-22 (Village JAWASIYA JASPALI, BOYAL, SINDHIPURAND JALUPUR), NIT No. 15/2021-22 (Village ARTIYA KHURD AND JHALAMLIYA, ASOP, MALAR AND VISHNU NAGAR) and NIT No. 16/2021-22 (Village BANJARA BEERAWAS, KHEJARLA AND RAWANIYANA THEENGLA NAGAR) including one year Defect Liability period with O & M for 5 years up to VTC under JUM in the jurisdiction of District Division-I, Jodhpur" are invited from interested bidders upto 6.00 pm (time) 16.08.2021 (date). Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajsasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state; and PHED department website.

UBN No. PHE2122VLOB04999
UBN No. PHE2122VLOB05000
UBN No. PHE2122VLOB05001
UBN No. PHE2122VLOB05002

(Neeraj Mathur)
ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED REGION (I) JODHPUR

DIPR/C/7015

Government of Tamil Nadu
Highways Department, Superintending Engineer (H)
Chennai Metropolitan Development Plan Circle, Saidapet, Chennai - 15

TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No: 02/2021-22/CMDP/DO/dated:26.07.2021 (Online only)

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, **Percentage Tender under Two Cover System, through online only for Division - I** sub work of 'Ground improvement using prefabricated vertical drain' in the main work of 'Forming Link Road and Construction of Bridge across Buckingham Canal connecting Rajiv Gandhi Salai and ECR km 0/0 - km 0/860 including LA for entire link road from OMR to ECR' will be received upto **01.09.2021, 15.00 hours** by the Superintending Engineer (H), Chennai Metropolitan Development Plan Circle, Saidapet, Chennai-15.

Detailed scope of work, approximate value, EMD, availability of tender document and all other details are available from **30.07.2021** onwards in the Government website <https://tenders.gov.in> If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc to the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer(H), CMDP Circle, Saidapet, Chennai-15.
DIPR/2207/Tender/2021

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C), IDCO,
IDCO TOWERS, BHUBANESWAR - 751022

Tender Call Notice No. H.O./P&C/EST-E-1535/04/2021- 11859 Dt :- 23.07.2021

NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER e-Procurement
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Value of Work (Approx.)	Period of Completion
1.	Construction of IDCO CDP Proposed Internal Road of 15,00 mtr. & 12,00 mtr. ROW at I/E Ramdaspur, Baranga, Dist.: Cuttack.	₹ 173.54 lakh (Apprx.)	04 (Four) Calendar Months

Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding
1	2	From To
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Bhubaneswar-751022.	Bid ID.No., PC-EST-E-17/2021-22	17.00 Hours of 02.08.2021 17.00 Hours of 17.08.2021

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in. Corrigendum or addendum if any will not be published in news papers and can only be seen in the e-procurement portal www.tenderodisha.gov.in as well as IDCO website www.idco.in.

Sd/- **Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, Bhubaneswar**
CAD-698: OIPR-14003/11/0046/2122

MARKET WATCH

	26-07-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,852	-0.23
US Dollar	74.42	-0.02
Gold	46,753	0.11
Brent oil	74.07	

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	682.80	2.75
Asian Paints	3061.20	-22.55
Axis Bank	756.30	0.90
Bajaj Auto	3836.35	-5.55
Bajaj Finserv	13525.05	323.85
Bajaj Finance	6162.45	-18.45
Bharti Airtel	544.05	-4.25
BPL	456.00	-5.35
Britannia Ind	3482.00	42.20
Cipla	950.55	2.55
Coal India	144.00	-0.10
Divis Lab	4921.15	96.40
Dr Reddys Lab	5411.25	-10.90
Eicher Motors	2563.20	13.55
Grasim Ind	1550.25	0.75
HCL Tech	1000.30	6.30
HDFC	2464.30	-18.20
HDFC Bank	1434.55	-8.20
HDFC Life	663.10	-2.25
Hero MotoCorp	2810.25	-24.75
Hindalco	400.05	8.30
Hind Unilever	2348.70	-9.40
ICICI Bank	676.75	0.10
IndusInd Bank	981.30	-8.00
Infosys	1603.90	13.45
IndianOilCorp	104.65	-1.35
ITC	211.15	-1.25
JSW Steel	704.55	-13.00
Kotak Bank	1740.60	17.65
L&T	1597.60	-14.15
M&M	754.30	-9.90
Maruti Suzuki	7235.80	-58.05
Nestle India Ltd.	18101.35	-42.60
NTPC	119.35	0.85
ONGC	114.55	-0.75
PowerGrid Corp	232.70	-0.30
Reliance Ind	2076.85	-28.85
SBI Life	1076.65	26.20
State Bank	423.30	-5.60
Three Cement	27968.30	-18.10
Sun Pharma	703.40	9.40
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	776.35	1.20
Tata Motors	293.15	-2.40
Tata Steel	1297.95	16.55
TCS	3197.55	-15.30
Tech Mahindra	1120.20	-10.80
Titan	1722.85	21.90
UltraTech Cement	7616.70	126.40
UPL	819.95	0.25
Wipro	590.45	-8.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 26

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.22	74.54
Euro	87.53	87.91
British Pound	102.39	102.83
Japanese Yen (100)	67.27	67.57
Chinese Yuan	11.45	11.50
Swiss Franc	80.85	81.20
Singapore Dollar	54.57	54.83
Canadian Dollar	59.12	59.38
Malaysian Ringgit	17.54	17.62

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Govt. cuts import levy on Masoor Dal to 10%

NEW DELHI
The government has reduced the effective customs duty payable on imports of Masoor Dal from 30% to 10%, the Finance Ministry said, citing 'public interest' and added this will bring down the retail price of the lentil. The latest notification, issued by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, does not mention a cut-off date.

Coromandel Q1 profit surges 35% as sales rise

HYDERABAD
Agri-solutions provider Coromandel International has reported an almost 35% rise in consolidated net profit to ₹338 crore for the quarter ended June on higher sales. Total income stood at ₹3,686 crore (₹3,224 crore). The healthy show was driven by strong revenue growth in the crop-protection business and sustained performance in the nutrient and allied businesses, said Sameer Goel, managing director.

Commodity prices boosting exports' value: Moody's arm

'Modest fiscal support to SMEs, low-income groups may cause deep scarring'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

High commodity prices have boosted the value of India's exports, which have hit a record \$95 billion in the first quarter of 2021 and outbound trade is likely to lead the country towards a recovery after the pandemic's 'one-two punch' hit the economy, Moody's Analytics said in a report on Monday.

Stating that India is struggling to accelerate COVID-19 vaccination, the firm reckoned that 'herd resilience' — when 65% of the population is fully immunised — is now expected in the fourth quarter of 2022. Only Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand are expected to reach those le-



A leg-up: Higher commodity prices have helped reinvigorate India after the COVID-19 first wave, the firm said. ■ FILE PHOTO

vels of vaccination later, among India's peers in the region. In an economic outlook report on the Asia Pacific Region titled 'The Delta Roadblock', the financial intelligence firm said the delta variant of COVID-19 is among

the key factors adversely affecting economies.

'Exports, a lifeline'

It termed exports a lifeline for the region which are now well above pre-pandemic levels and continued to rise in

the April-June quarter.

"Even in India and Indonesia, where exports make up relatively small shares of the economy, high commodity prices have boosted the value of exports. This is one factor that helped reinvigorate India after its first devastating wave of COVID-19," the firm said in its report.

"[India has] suffered lengthy economic shutdowns, accompanied by only modest fiscal support provided to SMEs and low-income households, that could lead to very deep and lasting scarring as they struggle to reopen businesses, pay back loans, or find employment as the economy finally recovers," it concluded.

Axis Bank Q1 net jumps 94% to ₹2,160 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Axis Bank on Monday saw its net profit almost double to ₹2,160.15 crore in the June quarter on the back of healthy loan-book growth and a fall in bad loan provisions. The lender had posted net profit of ₹1,112.17 crore a year earlier.

Total income rose to ₹19,591.63 crore from ₹19,032.15 crore, according to a regulatory filing. Sequentially, it was down from ₹20,162.76 crore in the quarter ended March 2021. Interest income fell to ₹16,003.46 crore in Q1 FY22 from ₹16,445.47 crore a year earlier. However, income on investments rose to ₹3,428.20 crore from ₹2,973 crore. The loan book grew 12% year-on-year.

'High inflation transitory, RBI may remain dovish'

MPC announcement due August 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Describing the recent two consecutive spikes in retail inflation beyond 6% as a 'transitory hump,' a Wall Street brokerage said it expects the RBI to overlook it and unanimously stick to the dovish stance at the forthcoming policy review, though further upward revision of its already-revised inflation target is more likely.

The Reserve Bank-led monetary policy panel (MPC) is scheduled to announce the third monetary policy review on August 6, amid the continuing spike in retail inflation that has breached the 6% upper-tolerance level for the past two consecutive months.

"We expect the MPC to stick with a dovish pause in

The governor is likely to argue against a hasty withdrawal of policy support

the August 6 policy, overlooking the 'transitory hump' in inflation," Bank of America Securities (BofA) India house economists said. "Thereafter, the normalisation path will depend on the evolution of growth, inflation and the pandemic. The governor is likely to reiterate a dovish message and argue against a hasty withdrawal of monetary policy support," they added.

But they were quick to warn that abnormally high crude prices may force the Reserve Bank to adapt to the normalisation process sooner than later.

'Indian airports turned ₹7,000-crore loss in FY21'

AAI accounted for 69% of losses: CAPA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Indian airport operators are estimated to have posted a consolidated loss before tax of ₹7,000 crore in FY21 compared with a profit of ₹5,160 crore in FY20, according to aviation consultancy CAPA.

Of the losses, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) accounted for 69% with the balance incurred by airports operating under public-private partnership (PPP). The combined operating revenue of the airports declined by an estimated 64.1% to ₹8,310 crore in FY21. However, as most airport expenses are fixed, the airports saw their operating costs decline by only 13.8%, said CAPA in its Indian Airport Outlook report.

The airport sector's EBIT-

'Orders passed in 166 cases for ₹8,216-cr. tax'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

More than 107 prosecution complaints have been filed under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

As on May 31, assessment orders were passed in 166 cases, wherein a demand of ₹8,216 crore has been raised. Besides, undisclosed income of about ₹8,465 crore has been brought to tax and a penalty of ₹1,294 crore levied in HSBC cases. In the Panama and Paradise Papers cases, undisclosed credits of ₹20,078 crore and ₹246 crore, respectively, have been detected.

L&T Q1 profit zooms to ₹1,531 crore on higher income

'New orders grow 13%; external demand strengthening'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro (L&T) on Monday posted a more than twofold jump in consolidated profit after tax to ₹1,531.66 crore for the quarter ended June, helped by higher income.

A year earlier, "net profit after tax from continuing operations" was at ₹543.93 crore, L&T said in a filing.

Total income in the April-June quarter of FY22 rose to ₹29,982.70 crore from ₹22,037.37 crore.

The engineering and construction conglomerate's expenses were at ₹27,708.08 crore as against ₹21,367.63 crore earlier. Project progress was impacted with re-



gional lockdowns, shortage of industrial oxygen and supply chain disruptions.

International revenues at ₹11,186 crore constituted 38% of total revenue. The company bagged orders worth ₹26,557 crore at the group level during the quarter, a growth of 13%. Orders were received in various segments across metros, rural

water supply, minerals and metals, residential, power transmission and distribution, power and hydrocarbon offshore sectors. International orders comprised 34% of order inflow.

With expectation of a repeat normal monsoon, the agriculture sector is likely to remain buoyant, it said, adding the economy is expected to gain lost ground, aided by the fiscal stimulus packages announced, adoption of new COVID compatible occupational models by businesses and vaccination efforts gathering momentum.

With external demand strengthening, a rebound in global trade is expected, providing a fillip to the country's exports, it said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The board of Equitas Holdings Ltd. (EHL) on Monday approved the scheme of amalgamation with subsidiary Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd. (ESFBL).

The appointed date for the scheme is November 1, 2021, EHL said in a filing. For every 100 shares of EHL, shareholders will get 226 shares in ESFBL. Earlier this month, Equitas SFB had received Reserve Bank's nod to apply for amalgamation of the promoter into itself, in compliance with SFB norms that mandate the promoter to lower stake in the subsidiary to 40% within 5 years of the SFB beginning operations. As of June 30, EHL held 81.75% in Equitas SFB. (With PTI inputs)

Rane Brake Lining turns ₹1.73-cr. profit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Rane Brake Lining Ltd. has reported a standalone net profit of ₹1.73 crore for Q1 FY22 against a loss of ₹6.89 crore in the year-earlier period. Revenue from operations more than doubled to ₹94 crore, the firm said in a regulatory filing.

"Q1FY22 was an eventful quarter with the country weathering the second wave of coronavirus," said L. Ganesh, chairman, Rane Group. "Plants operated during the quarter albeit at lower utilisation levels.

"Demand environment in India looks encouraging for the upcoming quarter. However, commodity price increase remains a concern," he added.

Tata Motors Q1 net loss narrows to ₹4,450 crore

Revenue surges to ₹66,406 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Tata Motors Ltd. said its consolidated first-quarter net loss narrowed to ₹4,450 crore compared with ₹8,444 crore loss in Q1 FY21.

Consolidated revenue more than doubled to ₹66,406 crore.

Retail sales at JLR rose 68% to 1,24,537 vehicles as customer uptake continued to recover from the impact of the pandemic. However shortage of semiconductor supplies constrained production resulting in a pre-tax loss of ₹110 million.

Revenue rose 74% to ₹5 billion, 73.7% higher than Q1 of FY21, reflecting a 73% year-on-year growth in wholesales to 84,442 vehicles.



The Indian operations of Tata Motors showed significant improvement. However, the second COVID wave along with the supply issues slowed down the growth momentum.

As a result the company reported standalone pre-tax loss of ₹1,314 crore for Q1 FY22 against a loss of ₹2,191 crore. Revenue surged fourfold to ₹11,904 crore.

Byju's buys Great Learning for \$600 mn

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Edtech platform Byju's has acquired Singapore-based Great Learning in a deal valued at \$600 million.

Great learning focuses on professional and higher education.

Byju's said it would invest a further \$400 million, making a total commitment of \$1 billion in the professional upskilling and life-long learning space. "With this acquisition, Byju's would expand... beyond the K12 and test-prep segments," it said in a statement. "Great Learning would continue... as an independent entity of Byju's under the leadership of its founder and CEO, Mohan Lakshmaraju, it added.

Auto parts sector likely to grow 20-23%: ICRA

'Strong demand, low base to aid growth'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Indian auto components industry is expected to witness a 20-23% growth in revenues in the current financial year on the back of strong demand in domestic as well as global markets, aided by the low base, ratings agency ICRA said on Monday.

The agency noted that the industry bounced back 'handsomely' during the second half of last fiscal (FY21), with many auto components suppliers registering record revenue and profits during the fourth quarter. Exports, which account for 29% of the industry's turnover, also witnessed healthy recovery,



supported by strong traction in the key markets of the U.S. and Europe, it said.

"COVID 2.0" applied a temporary brake on the auto component industry's recovery prospects in Q1 FY22," said Ashish Modani, V-P and sector head, ICRA.

"The aftermarket sales were also impacted for close to 4-6 weeks, because of the lockdowns," he added.

'NPAs fell to ₹8.34 lakh cr. at March-end'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans of banks have declined by ₹61,180 crore to ₹8.34 lakh crore at the end of March 31, 2021, as result of various steps taken by the government, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat K. Karad said on Monday.

Scheduled commercial banks were carrying NPAs worth ₹8.96 lakh crore on their balance sheet at the end of March 2020. As a result of government's strategy NPAs have since declined to ₹7,39,541 crore on March 31, 2019, ₹6,78,317 crore on March 31, 2020, and further to ₹6,16,616 crore as on March 31, 2021 (provisional data), he said.

SPORT

Ramkumar happy despite losing in the final

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Eighth seed Ramkumar Ramanathan was defeated 7-6 (4), 6-2 by sixth seed Mitchell Krueger of the US in the final of the \$52,080 Challenger tennis tournament in Cary, USA.

The 26-year-old Ramkumar was pleased with his fighting performance as he had won his first four rounds in three sets each. It included a victory over second seed and compatriot Prajnesh Gunneswaran.

"It was a long week for me, but a good one here in North Carolina. I could sustain a good game thanks to the grace of God. Also, I was in touch with coach T. Chandrasekaran sir before every



Good augury: Ramkumar was pleased with his performance in the Challenger event. ■ FILE PHOTO

match, and he guided me well. I am grateful to him," said Ramkumar.

Incidentally, it was Krueger who had beaten Ramkumar in the second qualifying

round of the Newport ATP event last week.

After the heart-breaking 9-11 loss in the fifth set of the final qualifying round in Wimbledon, the 227th ranked Ramkumar has stepped up his performance with increased confidence.

Taste of Grand Slam

He did get the taste of playing in his first Grand Slam as he got into the mixed doubles draw with Aniketa Raina, and ended up playing Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza in the first round.

"It was a wonderful feeling, playing first time in Wimbledon. It was an extremely tight last round of qualifying event, but I will take the positives and keep working hard," said Ramkumar.

RACING

Ashwa Bravo obliges in Three Wishes Plate

HYDERABAD: Trainer M. Srinivas Reddy's Ashwa Bravo (P. Trevor up) claimed the Three Wishes Plate, the feature event of the opening day of the monsoon season races, here on Monday (July 26).

The winner is owned by Mr. Zavaray S. Poonawalla, Mrs. Behroze Z. Poonawalla rep. Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Private Limited. Mr. Yohan Z. Poonawalla, Mrs. Delna Z. Poonawalla & Ms. Simone Z. Poonawalla & Mr. Ravinder Pal Singh Chauhan. P. Trevor stole the limelight by riding four winners, while trainers M. Srinivas Reddy and L.V.R. Deshmukh saddled three winners each.

1. CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): BY THE BAY (Chouhan) 1, Total Darc (Afroz Khan) 2, Maximum Glamour (Ashay Kumar) 3 and Angelita (R. Manish) 4. 6, 5 and 1/2. Im, 13.33s. 12 (w), 11, 17 and 12 (p). SHP: 51, THP: 43, FP: 85, Q: 80, Tanala: 188. Favourite: By The Bay. Owner: Mr. Teja Gollapudi. Trainer: Laxman Singh. 2. TENACITY PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m) rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III):

FIRE POWER (Trevor) 1, Cheltenham (N.B. Kuldeep) 2, Explosive (Gaurav Singh) 3 and Royal Pal (Nakhat Singh) 4. 4-1/2, 1/2 and 2. Im, 26.72s. 13 (w), 11, 66 and 34 (p). SHP: 234, THP: 72, FP: 339, Q: 283, Tanala: 11,164. Favourite: Fire Power. Owners: Col. S.B. Nair & Miss Ameeta Mehra. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

3. CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): SIYAVASH (Ashad Ashbar) 1, City Of Bliss (Ajesh Kumar) 2, Hard To Toss (B.R. Kumar) 3 and Paladino (Kuldeep Singh) 4. 1/2, 2 and 1-1/4. Im, 13.76s. 143 (w), 13, 13 and 43 (p). SHP: 33, THP: 90, FP: 140, Q: 69, Tanala: 1,411. Favourite: City Of Bliss. Owners: Mr. S. Daljeet Singh & Mr. Mohammed Rashed Ali Khan. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy. 4. TENACITY PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): FRANCIS BACON (Trevor) 1, Ashwa Arjun (Rafique Sk) 2, Just Incredible (Ajesh Kumar) 3 and King Roger (Koushik) 4. 2-3/4, Sh and 2. Im, 27.39s. 140 (w) 14, 130 and 10 (p). SHP: 355, THP: 51, FP: 1,687, Q: 771, Tanala: 2,436. Favourite: Just Incredible. Owners: Mr.

Aditya P. Thackersey & Mr. M. Satyanarayana. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

5. SCARLET PRINCE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100m), 4-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45: APPENZELLE (Ashay Kumar) 1, Star Racer (Ajesh Kumar) 2, Blink Of An Eye (N.B. Kuldeep) 3 and Hidden Hope (Santosh Raj N R) 4. Not run: Bedford and Berkeley, 2-1/2, 1 and Sh. Im, 06.82s. 122 (w), 12, 75 and 41 (p). SHP: 347, THP: 106, FP: 836, Q: 749, Tanala: 23,548. Favourite: Hidden Hope. Owner: Mr. S. Pathy, Trainer: D. Netto. 6. THREE WISHES PLATE (1,200m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): ASHWA BRAVO (Trevor) 1, House Of Diamonds (Ashay Kumar) 2, Vijays Simha (Chouhan) 3 and Lagos (A.A. Vikrant) 4. Not run: Chuckit, 3-1/2, 2-1/4 and Nk. Im, 12.26s. 112 (w), 12, 10 and 13 (p). SHP: 22, THP: 29, FP: 33, Q: 27, Tanala: 68. Favourite: Ashwa Bravo. Owners: Mr. Zavaray S. Poonawalla, Mrs. Behroze Z. Poonawalla rep. Poonawalla Racing & Breeding Private Limited. Mr. Yohan Z. Poonawalla, Mrs. Delna Z. Poonawalla & Ms. Simone Z. Poonawalla & Mr. Ravinder Pal Singh Chauhan. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy.

7. RANDOM HARVEST PLATE (1,400m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65: ASHWA YASHOBALI (Gaurav Singh) 1, Maxwell (Ajesh Kumar) 2, Full Volume (Chouhan) 3 and King Maker (Surya Prakash) 4. Not run: Kesariya Balam, Balius and Mystery, 1/2, 2 and 1-1/2

Sharath surmounts Apolonia's challenge

Manika unable to handle 10th seed Polcanova; Sutirtha blown away by Fu Yu in second round



AMOL KARHADKAR

A Sharath Kamal, the flag-bearer of Indian table tennis, entered the round of 32 in men's singles while the country's campaign in women's singles ended on Monday in Tokyo.

Sharath overcame stiff resistance from Portugal's Tiago Apolonia to make it to the third round. While 10th seed Sofia Polcanova of Austria proved too hot to handle for Manika Batra in the women's third round, Sutirtha Mukherjee failed to put up any re-



Winning gameplan: A. Sharath Kamal used his power-packed backhand to precision to subdue his UTT teammate, Portugal's Tiago Apolonia. •AP

sistance against 32nd seed Fu Yu of Portugal.

Sharath, seeded 20th, used his power-packed backhand winners to precision while overpowering his

Chennai teammate in the Ultimate Table Tennis league in six games. Sharath won 2-11, 11-8, 11-5, 9-11, 11-6, 11-9.

Sharath will next face defending Olympic and World

champion Ma Long of China.

Later as Manika — a day after surprising 20th seed Margaryta Pesotska of Ukraine — took to the table, Sharath may have been in a bit of a di-

TABLE TENNIS

lemma. After all, it was a clash between his partners for India and UTT franchise.

Forehand targeted

The left-handed Polcanova gave an exhibition of how to negate the advantage that Manika derives from her long-pimped rubber that she prefers to use on the backhand. For a majority of the first three games, Polcanova targeted Manika's forehand and the European was far too superior and quick in the rally.

Despite getting her act together in the fourth set, Manika couldn't snatch a set from her fancied opponent to go down 11-8, 11-2, 11-5, 11-7 in 27 minutes.

In the women's second round, Sutirtha lost 11-3, 11-3, 11-5, 11-5 to the 42-year-old veteran of Chinese origin.

Mirabai accorded a grand reception

Says she was confident of doing her best and returning with a medal



Mobbed: Security personnel had their hands full as they escorted Mirabai on her arrival in New Delhi. •R.V. MOORTHY

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Olympic silver medallist Mirabai Chanu returned from Tokyo to a rousing welcome amidst tight security at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here on Monday.

Quite thoughtfully, Mirabai retained her face shield and mask when she was escorted by security personnel and other officers.

"It is a fruit of five years of hard work. I learnt a lot from the Rio failure. Winning an Olympic medal was my dream.

"I was confident that I would do my best and return with a medal this time. I am very happy," said Mirabai.

Top support

While Mirabai thanked the Prime Minister and Sports Ministry (for the Target Olympic Podium Scheme) for providing the best support when required, coach Vijay Sharma put things in perspective.

"After the first lockdown, it was thanks to TOPS' sanc-

tion of ₹60 lakh that we could train in the US. The reward for that training came in the Asian Championship. Later, before the Olympics we got the clearance and US visa in time to train tension-free when TOPS sanctioned ₹75 lakh.

That played a huge role in this Olympic medal. If TOPS had not supported this well, the result may not have been that great," said Vijay.

Both Mirabai and the coach said that it could have been a far better fight for the gold against the Chinese, but for the 49kg lifter facing a 'biological situation', a day prior to the competition.

"I was tense. I thought that it would have been better if it had not happened at this time. Then, I told myself that it keeps happening. So, better to forget about it, and focus on my competition," Mirabai said about dealing with her menstrual cycle.

It will be a busy schedule for Mirabai over the next few days in the capital before she returns home to Imphal.

INDIANS IN ACTION

Badminton: Men's doubles (group stage): R. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty vs Sean Vandy & Ben Lane (GBR), 8.30 a.m.

Boxing: Women's welterweight (round of 16): Lovlina Borgohain vs Nadine Apte (Ger), 10.55 a.m.

Hockey: Men (Pool A): vs Spain, 6.30 a.m.

Sailing: Women: Laser Radial (from 8.35 a.m.): Nethra Kumanan.

Men: Laser (from 8.45 a.m.): Vishnu Saravanan.

49er (from 11.20 a.m.): K.C. Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar.

Shooting: Mixed 10m air pistol: Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary, Yashaswini Singh Deswal and Abhishek Verma. Qualification stage 1, 5.30 a.m.; qualification stage 2, 6.15 a.m.; bronze medal match, 7.30 a.m.; gold medal match, 8.05 a.m.

Mixed 10m air rifle: Elavenil Valarivan and Divyansh Singh Panwar, Anjum Moudgil and Deepak Kumar. Qualification stage 1, 9.45 a.m.; qualification stage 2, 10.30 a.m.; bronze medal match, 11.45 a.m.; gold medal match, 12.20 p.m.

Table tennis: Men's singles (third round): Sharath Kamal vs Ma Long (Chn), 8.30 a.m.

GOLDIES



Hancock... third gold in skeet after 2008 and 2012 Olympics. •GETTY IMAGES

South Korea: Archery: Men's team

Russia: Artistic gymnastics: Men's team

Benjamin Savsek (Slo): Canoe Slalom: Men

Tom Pidcock (GBR): Cycling Mountain bike: Men's cross-country

Thomas Daley & Matty Lee (GBR): Diving: Men's synchronised 10m platform

Cheung Ka Long (HK): Fencing: Men's foil

Sofia Pozdniakova (ROC): Fencing: Women's sabre

Nora Gjakova (Kos): Judo: Women's 57kg

Shohei Ono (Jpn): Judo: Men's 73kg

Vincent Hancock (USA): Shooting: Skeet men

Amber English (USA): Shooting: Skeet women

Momiji Nishiya (Jpn): Skateboarding: Women's street

Ariarne Timus (Aus): Swimming: Women's 400m freestyle

Margaret MacNeil (Can): Swimming: Women's 100m butterfly

Adam Peaty (GBR): Swimming: Men's 100m breaststroke

USA: Swimming: Men's 4x100m freestyle

Jun Mizutani & Mima Ito (Jpn): Table tennis: Mixed doubles

Maksim Khramtsov (Rus): Taekwondo: Men's 80kg

Matea Jelic (Cro): Taekwondo: Women's 67kg

Kristian Blummenfelt (Nor): Triathlon: Men

Hidilyn Diaz (Phi): Weightlifting: Women's 55kg

MEDAL EVENTS

21 medals are on offer at the Games on Tuesday

Artistic gymnastics: Women's team

Canoe Slalom: Women's kayak

Cycling mountain bike: Women's cross-country

Diving: Women's synchronised 10m platform

Equestrian: Dressage team

Fencing: Women's epee team

Judo: Women's 63kg, Men's 81kg

Shooting: 10m air rifle mixed, 10m air pistol mixed

Surfing: Men and women

Swimming: Women's 100m backstroke, Women's 100m breaststroke, Men's 200m freestyle, Men's 100m backstroke

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

Triathlon: Women's individual

Weightlifting: Women's 59kg, Women's 64kg

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

Sri Lanka vs India: 2nd T20I, Sony Ten 1, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 8 p.m.

Tokyo 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 4.30 a.m. onwards (Wednesday)

Bhavani makes history but goes down fighting

FENCING

K. KEERTHIVASAN

Bhavani Devi created history as she became the first Indian fencer to participate in the Olympics and also register a win.

Her campaign, however, came to an end as she lost to fourth-seeded Manon Brunet of France 15-7 in the women's sabre second round on Monday.

It was always going to be difficult for Bhavani against the Frenchwoman, ranked third in the world. In fact, the 27-year-old Indian had lost all four previous encounters to Brunet.

However, Bhavani wasn't overawed by the opponent and took the battle to Bru-



Shortlived joy: Bhavani, right, had it easy against Azizi before losing to Brunet. •AFP

net with some wonderful riposte and attack.

But, the Frenchwoman, who had finished fourth in the 2016 Rio Olympics,

seemed to have all the answers. At the turn, the score read 8-2, summing up the difference between the two.

Though Bhavani showed

her skill and won a few points, it wasn't enough.

Earlier, Bhavani had put it across Tunisia's Nadia Ben Azizi 15-3 in the first round.

I did my best, says Bhavani Devi

K. KEERTHIVASAN

Bhavani Devi was satisfied with her maiden Olympic campaign at Tokyo.

The 27-year-old said she couldn't have possibly done anything better in the second round against France's Manon Brunet, ranked third in the world.

"I am very happy. Olympics has been a dream for me. I realised that it was true a few minutes before my first match [against Nadia Ben Azizi of Tunisia],"

she said. Ranked 42nd in the world, Bhavani said she was nervous before the start of the opening contest as she hadn't participated in any event after the 2021 World Cup in Budapest in March.

"The way I fought in the first round showed that I was well prepared for the Games," she said.

About the bout against Brunet, Bhavani revealed that the Frenchwoman was too quick in the first half and admitted that she couldn't

understand her opponent's strategy. She felt that she had a plan and put up a better fight.

"I did my best," she said, adding that she had defeated Brunet in a training camp in France a few weeks before the Olympics.

Bhavani will return to Livorno, Italy, before taking a flight back to Chennai, her hometown.

"I want to rest my mind and body, and get ready for future competitions."

Indian shooters draw a blank in skeet

Angad and Mairaj fail to make it past qualification round

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

India drew a blank in shooting for the third consecutive day as Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Mairaj Ahmed Khan failed to advance from the men's individual skeet qualification round at the Asaka Shooting range on Monday.

Angad finished 18th and Mairaj 25th. The former, making his Olympic debut, had been in raging form on Sunday when he shot 24, 25 and 24 to total 73.

With only the top six qualifying for the final, Angad, who holds the world record of 60/60 in a final (Asian shot

gun championship, Kuwait City, 2018), had to come out all guns blazing to remain in contention.

However, he shot 23 and 24 in the last two rounds to slip down the ladder and ended his campaign with a score of 120.

Mairaj, who managed only a 22 in his third round and was on the back foot coming into the second day, registered 23s in both rounds to finish 25th out of 30 shooters.

France's Eric Delaunay topped the qualification standings with a new qualifying Olympic record of 130.

However, it was skeet legend Vincent Hancock who ruled the final.

He clinched his third Olympic gold with a new Games record of 59, while Denmark's Jesper Hansen, who won the 2013 skeet World championship, bagged silver.

Kuwait's Abdullah Alrashidi, who had bagged the bronze at the 2016 Rio Games as an Independent Olympic athlete, finished third again.

He represented his nation this time and was not wearing an Arsenal jersey and causing a social media flutter as he did in Rio.

Indian women put up a better show, but lose to Germany this time



Dominating possession: The Indians were left chasing the game against the Germans most of the time. •GETTY IMAGES

HOCKEY

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

The Indian women's hockey team put up a brave fight but failed to take its chances and lost 0-2 to Germany in its Pool A encounter on Monday.

Showing vast signs of improvement from its opening 5-1 loss to The Netherlands, Sjoerd Marijne's side played a high-intensity game for most part. The Indians began well, but were soon left to chase the

ball as Germany settled in and dominated possession.

India goalkeeper Savita Punia was kept on her toes from the word go but could do nothing to stop Nike Lorenz's accurate shot off a penalty corner. The 12th-minute goal gave Germany the early advantage and saw the side seize control of the game. The German defence shut out any attack attempted by the Indians.

Germany won a penalty stroke early in the second

Nishiya wins gold

Nails her last three landings

SKATEBOARDING

REUTERS
TOKYO

Japanese teenager Momiji Nishiya won the gold in the women's street skateboarding competition on Monday, adding to the host nation's gold haul at the Olympics. Rayssa Leal of Brazil won silver and Funo Nakayama of Japan clinched the bronze.

All three medalists are in their teens, with Nishiya and Leal both 13

is 16. Though she initially stumbled and missed the landings on her first two tricks, Nishiya nailed her last three, bringing her total above Brazilian prodigy Leal.

Nishiya's victory came after Japan's Yuto Horigome won the men's gold on Sunday.

Medvedev proves too hot for Nagal

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Sumit Nagal bowed out of the Tokyo Olympics losing to second-seeded Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 6-1 in just 66 minutes in the second round on Monday.

The Russian World No. 2 did not even need his A-game as he cruised past the 160th-ranked Nagal.

Too big a gap

The gap between the two was evident as Medvedev hit thunderous serves and shots that brooked no reply.

Novak Djokovic smacked 14 aces in a 6-4, 6-3 win over



Tough luck: Nagal was unlucky to run into Medvedev so early in the tournament. •REUTERS

Germany's 48th-ranked Jan-Lennard Struff.

Naomi Osaka raced into the last 16 as she powered past Switzerland's Viktorija

Golubic 6-3, 6-2 in just over an hour, playing her second match in as many days after lighting the Olympic cauldron on Friday.

was denied by a stunning save from Julia Sonntag.

The missed chance would come back to torment India as Anne Schroder scored in the 35th minute with a ferocious strike.

Vandana was one of the better players on the Indian side and made repeated forays into the circle. She forced a fine save from Sonntag late in the third quarter. The Germans, with a 2-0 lead, were content to hold on to possession and control proceedings.

Titmus wins duel in the pool against American great Ledeccky

Dressel launches seven-gold bid spearheading USA's triumph in the 4x100m relay; Peaty defends 100m breaststroke title

TOKYO OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TOKYO
Australia's Ariarne Titmus won a thrilling 400m freestyle duel with American great Katie Ledeccky in the Olympic pool on Monday as Caeleb Dressel launched his bid for a seven-gold spree in style.

The Tokyo Aquatics Centre also witnessed another dominant 100m breaststroke swim by world-record holder Adam Peaty, who defended his title to give Britain its first gold medal of the Games.

Absorbing encounter

Ledeccky came to Japan on the back of four gold medals and a silver at Rio in 2016, but Titmus has been snapping at her heels, ousting her as World champion in 2019 and topping the timesheets this season.

Titmus inched clear over the final 50m to touch in



Making a splash: World champion Ariarne Titmus pulled off a fantastic sprint in the last lap to dethrone Katie Ledeccky in the 400m freestyle, while Adam Peaty underlined his credentials by retaining the 100m breaststroke crown. ■ GETTY IMAGES, AP

3min 56.69sec after an absorbing encounter.

Only world record-holder Ledeccky has ever gone quicker.

The United States team spearheaded by Dressel stormed to the men's 4x100m relay gold medal in the third-quickest time ever.

Zach Apple brought them home after Dressel led off, with sizzling legs from Blake Pieroni and Bowen Becker ensuring they touched in

3:08.97s, ahead of Italy and Australia.

It could be the start of a seven-title spree for Dressel, 24, whose 13 world titles

have prompted inevitable comparisons with Michael Phelps – winner of eight golds in 2008 and 23 in total. The unstoppable Peaty ex-

tended his dominance of the 100m breaststroke event, powering to the line in 57.37s ahead of Dutchman Arno Kamminga while Canada's

AQUATICS

Maggie MacNeil dethroned Sarah Sjöström to win the women's 100m butterfly.

Britain's Tom Daley paid tribute to his late father after he and Matty Lee edged hot favourites China to the gold in synchronised 10m platform diving.

Finally, a gold!

Daley, 27, who revealed that he might have missed the Games after knee surgery, wiped away tears on the podium as he finally added gold to the bronzes he won at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Games.

The Britons held their nerve on the last dive to win the final with 471.81 points, with the Chinese Chen Aisen and Cao Yuan second on 470.58 and Russians Aleksandr Bondar and Viktor Minibaev a distant third.

Daley's thoughts turned to his father, Rob who died of cancer in 2011, aged 40.



'I am mentally strong and I'll remain that way'

My aim is 2024, so I have to train harder once I return, says Manika Batra



No sync: Manika Batra admitted that her game and mind weren't on the same page on Monday. ■ PTI

TABLE TENNIS

AMOL KARHADKAR

Hours after she ended her second Olympic journey by becoming the first Indian female paddler to win two singles rounds in Olympics, Manika Batra opened up about the last fortnight that has kept her in the headlines, not just for her exploits on the table.

How have the last eight days been?

Overall, it went really well, but not today. If you compare my stint in first Olympics (in 2016), I am – not satisfied, but – really happy with my performance over here. My aim is 2024, so I have to train harder once I return. I am really happy with the way I played against the higher-ranked Ukrainian (Margarita Pesotska, 20th seed and World No. 32) in the second round.

What went wrong in mixed doubles?

They (Lin Yu Jun and Cheng I Ching) are a real strong opponent. They are World No. 1, were seeded third over here but they are really strong. The boy (Lin) was just way too fast and had a strong ball. He was attacking relentlessly. We did try and put up our best (but, it wasn't enough).

Against Sofia Polcanova today (Monday), you never looked to be in the game...

Yes, I think my game and my mind weren't on the same page. I was a bit nervous and perhaps expected too much from myself. Of course, you have to aim higher but I think I tried way too hard. I think I was desperate to win rather than enjoying the game. I will blame myself on that. I should have enjoyed myself and taken it point by point.

The Team Leader of the table tennis contingent (M.P.

Singh) has said that you refused to let national coach Soumyadeep Roy sit for your matches. Your response?

I think sometimes it's portrayed wrongly. Roy da is Sutirtha's (Sutirtha Mukherjee) personal coach and Sanmay (Paranjape, Manika's personal coach) was in the gallery. Sanmay knows my game and I would prefer that Sanmay would advise me (in singles). Once that didn't happen, I thought I would play alone since Sanmay and I were devising strategies ahead of every match and he was also telling me from the gallery.

So was there an ego issue between you and Roy?

He sat for our mixed doubles match. Later, he asked me and I told him I would play alone. He was fine with it. He didn't say anything. I don't know if anyone said anything in the media but it's okay. I am mentally strong and I'll remain that way only.

A rare gold for Russian men

Nagornyy at the fore in artistic gymnastics team triumph

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TOKYO

Nikita Nagornyy led the Russian team to the coveted men's artistic gymnastics gold at the Tokyo Olympics on Monday to add to its world title.

The Russians turned the tables on Japan, which had piped it to the title in Rio 2016. China had to settle for bronze.

Nagornyy joined Artur Dalaloyan, David Belyavskiy and Denis Ablyazin.

The Russians last won the men's team title in 1996.

And they swelled with pride on top of the podium as Tchaikovsky's concerto No. 1 filtered out through the sound system at the Ariake Gymnastics Centre. The Russian composer was called up to play the role of super sub as Russia's national anthem cannot be used because the country is under a doping suspension and their athletes are competing under a neutral banner.



Emotional moment: Team ROC's David Belyavskiy, Artur Dalaloyan, Nikita Nagornyy, and Denis Ablyazin after their gold was confirmed. ■ GETTY IMAGES

The outcome of the first gold on offer at the gymnastics competition was in the balance until the final tumble on the floor.

China was within less than a point of the Rio silver medalist going into the sixth rotation, with Japan set for third.

But a brilliant last throw of the dice on the horizontal bars from Tokyo teenager

Daiki Hashimoto, earning a high 15.100 points, propelled the Games' hosts back into at least second.

Nagornyy chalked up his feet and hands and took to the floor to try to get the Russian Olympic Committee team over the line. And the world all-around champion pulled it off superbly, his score of 14.666 securing the ROC a memorable win.

I've made my mark at the Olympics, says gymnastics judge Deepak Kabra

SHYAM VASUDEVAN TOKYO

Deepak Kabra is living his dream at the Tokyo Olympics, but lack of flights to the Japanese capital due to the COVID-19 pandemic nearly robbed him of the chance of becoming the first Indian gymnastics official at the Games.

At 33, he is the second-youngest judge here and is

officiating in the men's gymnastics events. A category-two judge, he arrived here just in time for the Games.

"Four of the flights I had booked got cancelled and all the other judges had come here four days before me. I'd say it was special to just be able to reach in time and judge my event. I am quite relieved after judging one event. I've made my mark at

the Olympics," said Kabra. A former gymnast, Kabra decided to pursue a career as a technical judge at 21.

Late start

"I started gymnastics very late. Simone Biles began gymnastics at the age of six and people say she was late – others normally start at four. I began when I was 12! My fundamentals were

not great and I knew I wouldn't go far as a gymnast. So I decided to pursue a role as a judge at 21.

Kabra began his international career at the 2010 Commonwealth Games and has officiated in 20 global events including the Youth Olympics, World Championships and the Asian Games.

"A gymnast's total score is based on the level of difficul-

ty they attempt and its execution. The difficulty level is based on the move performed by the gymnast and execution is how they perform it.

Strike a balance

"You need to balance both to achieve the highest final score and get a better ranking."

Having worked in legal

portfolio management and corporate finance at Reliance Industries for eight years, he made the full-time switch to sports to join Reliance Foundation Youth Sports. He now aims to upskill himself to a category-1 judge.

"No judge from India has ever done that. Only the top 25 judges in the world are given category-1 certification. That's where I want to be."



Deepak Kabra. ■ FILE PHOTO

Vidit into the last eight

RAKESH RAO NEW DELHI

Vidit Gujrathi overpowered Azerbaijan's Vasif Durarbayli with a splendid display in the second game of the fifth round for a place in the quarterfinals of the chess World Cup in Sochi on Monday. Following his 38-move win for a 1.5-0.5 triumph, Vidit became the first Indian to enter the quarterfinals since 2002 when Viswanathan Anand won the title.

Suryakumar, Shaw to join team in UK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON

Opener Prithvi Shaw and middle-order batsman Suryakumar Yadav have been added to the Indian Test squad for the five-match series against England starting on August 4 as replacements for injured players Shubman Gill and Washington Sundar.

Bengal opener Abhimanyu Easwaran, who was a stand-by, has been added to the main squad after Avesh Khan also having to go back home with a fractured left thumb.

The squad: Rohit Sharma, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli (Capt.), Ajinkya Rahane (Vice-Capt.), Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant (wk), R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Shardul Thakur, Umesh Yadav, K.L. Rahul, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Abhimanyu Easwaran, Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav. Standbys: Prasidh Krishna & Arzan Nagwaswalla.

Eyes on Samson as India aims to wrap it up

Team management unlikely to change winning combination

INDIA IN LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO

India will want Sanju Samson to translate his phenomenal talent into consistent performances when it tries to wrap up the T20 International series against Sri Lanka by winning the second match here on Tuesday.

Having won the opening encounter, India is unlikely to change the winning combination unless the team management decides to rest Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav, who are getting ready to link up with the red-ball team in the United Kingdom.

However, it is expected that both will play on Tuesday and be rested for the last game once India has sealed the series.

In case there is an alternative plan, Devdutt Padikkal and Rituraj Gaikwad may get a look-in.

Minor worry

The other minor worry for the team would be Hardik Pandya's batting form. His bowling has been steady, but



Expectation: Team India would like Sanju Samson to be more consistent. ■ AP

is nowhere near what he used to be as a skiddy pacer before his back surgery.

The Indian bowlers put up a fantastic show in the first game and Yuzvendra

Chahal would like to do an encore with Varun Chakravarty.

For Sri Lanka, the T20 series is a tougher test than the ODIs. Charith Asalanka did

try to put pressure on India in the first match, but the inexperience of Dasun Shanaka's team during crucial phases was exposed. The silver lining will be Wanindu Hasaranga's leg-breaks which have been causing a few issues for the Indians.

The teams (from):

India: Shikhar Dhawan (Capt.), Prithvi Shaw, Devdutt Padikkal, Rituraj Gaikwad, Suryakumar Yadav, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Nitish Rana, Ishan Kishan (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Yuzvendra Chahal, Rahul Chahar, K. Gowtham, Krunal Pandya, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarty, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (Vice-Capt.), Deepak Chahal, Navdeep Saini and Chetan Sakariya.

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

Match starts at 8 p.m. IST.

Chahal determined to secure T20 World Cup spot

Leg-spinner looks to perform 'at every given opportunity'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO

Intense competition among a rich pool of players is driving leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal to perform "at every given opportunity" and firmly cement his place in the India squad ahead of the T20 World Cup.

With a good haul of wickets in the ongoing limited-overs series against Sri Lanka, Chahal wriggled out of the rough patch that had confronted him during the truncated 2021 IPL.

After contributing in India's win over Sri Lanka in the first T20I here, he acknowledged that one must perform to be in the side. "It's definitely (a healthy competition). If you have a pool of around 30 players, you definitely have the quality. All the spinners are doing well. As a spinner, you know that there are at least two guys who are ready, who have performed here and in the IPL.

"All I can do is think for myself and perform at every



Raring to go: Yuzvendra Chahal flanked by Deepak Chahal and Bhuvneshwar Kumar. ■ TWITTER

given opportunity. If you perform, you get to play, and if you don't, then you are out. "So, whenever I have the ball in my hand, I focus on getting the job done," Chahal said.

Watching video clips of him bowling at his prime and speaking to men who matter, about the line he should pursue, to regain his

mastery over the craft, helped him.

Chahal spoke about the work he did in the lockdown. "When I was not playing, I worked hard with my bowling coach on where to bowl. (I looked at) why I was not able to perform in a couple of matches. So, I worked on these even during the lockdown," he said.