



Basavaraj Bommai sworn in as the 30th CM of Karnataka

page 5



M.P. has seroprevalence of 79%, while Kerala has 44%, shows ICMR study

page 10



Deposits up to ₹5 lakh in ailing banks to be repaid in 90 days: govt.

page 14



Sindhu sails into elimination round; Pooja, Deepika advance

page 15



PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

NEARBY



HC notice on plea against cost for probe failure

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued notice on the city police's plea challenging a local court's order imposing a cost of ₹25,000 for "miserably" failing in their investigation into a riots case. Justice Subromon Prasad said there could not be a stay on the strictures made by the court against the police officers without hearing the case.

CITY PAGE 2

What is 'contingent worker', HC asks Twitter

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Wednesday expressed reservations about Twitter changing the status of its chief compliance officer from "interim" to "contingent" in its latest affidavit. Justice Rekha Palli remarked that the rules mandated the appointment of a senior employee as CCO but Twitter had appointed a "contingent worker" through a third party contractor.

NORTH & WEST PAGE 5

VIJETHA IAS ACADEMY
Strive for continuous improvement
www.vijethaiasacademy.com
ANTHROPOLOGY
CLASSES & TEST SERIES
Starts: 9th Aug, 2021
011-42473555, 9650852636
7/50, 1st Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-60

Democratic values bind India, U.S., says Blinken

Modi welcomes Biden's commitment to strengthening ties

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Democratic values and free citizenry bind India and the U.S. together, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said here at the end of talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Wednesday.

The two sides discussed cooperation on a wide range of issues, including Afghanistan, countering COVID-19, the Indo-Pacific strategy and the Quad. During his day-long visit to New Delhi, Mr. Blinken also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, members of civil society and a representative of the Dalai Lama.



Sharing views: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday. *AFP

After meeting Mr. Blinken, who is the third member of the Biden administration to visit India, Mr. Modi said he welcomed U.S. President Joe Biden's "strong commitment to strengthen the India-U.S. strategic partnership that is anchored in our shared democratic values and is a force for global good".

After the bilateral talks, Mr. Blinken and Mr. Jaishankar told mediapersons about their conversation on "shared values" of democratic freedoms.

"The relationship between our two countries is so important and so strong be-

'Facing great challenges'

Inter-religious relations, media freedom, farmers' protests, love 'jihad' violence and minority rights were part of the discussion that U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had with a group of people, including a representative of the Dalai Lama.

Mr. Blinken spoke of the "great challenges" for all democracies, particularly India and the U.S. *PAGE 9

Mr. Jaishankar said he had responded to the U.S. concerns on the issues with a number of points, making it clear that the "quest" for a more perfect democracy applied to both the U.S. and India.

He said the Modi government's policies "of the last few years" had been done to "right wrongs done historically", and that while freedoms are important, they should not be "equated with the lack of governance".

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
A PIVOTAL FORCE PAGE 13

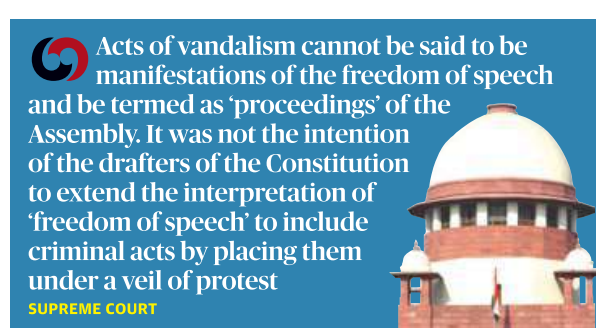
No immunity for acts of vandalism: SC

It refuses Kerala plea in Assembly ruckus case

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday held that lawmakers cannot indulge in criminal acts on the Parliament or Assembly floors and then take cover behind the right to free speech.

The court refused the Kerala government's plea to withdraw prosecution of top Left Democratic Front (LDF) leaders accused of vandalism and wanton destruction



Acts of vandalism cannot be said to be manifestations of the freedom of speech and be termed as 'proceedings' of the Assembly. It was not the intention of the drafters of the Constitution to extend the interpretation of 'freedom of speech' to include criminal acts by placing them under a veil of protest

of public property on the Assembly floor during a Budget speech in 2015.

"Acts of vandalism cannot be said to be manifestations of freedom of speech and be termed as 'proceedings' of

the Assembly. It was not the intention of the drafters of the Constitution to extend the interpretation of 'freedom of speech' to include criminal acts by placing them under a veil of prot-

est," a Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah held in a 74-page judgment.

Legislators cannot unleash violence, run riot in Parliament or a Legislative Assembly and then claim parliamentary privilege and immunity from criminal prosecution.

Parliamentary privileges and immunities are not "gateways" for legislators to claim exception from the law of the land, especially criminal law, Justice Chandrachud, who authored the verdict, observed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

United Opposition can make a difference in 6 months: Mamata

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

There have been many examples in the past when political fortunes changed overnight, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Wednesday, adding that if the Opposition parties worked together seriously "six months is enough".

"Now we want to see 'sachhe din' [days of truth]. For long we have endured 'achhe din' [a BJP slogan]," said Ms. Banerjee, who is on a five-day visit to the national capital. "It is going to be Narendra Modi versus the nation," she added.

Ms. Banerjee said, "Khela hobe [the game is on, the



Forging ties: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, right, with Congress chief Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday. *PTI

Trinamool Congress slogan for the West Bengal election] will ring through the nation."

"What happened in 1977? Indira Gandhi was voted out. Atal Bihari Vajpayee lost his popularity within a year. There are many such prece-

dents in our democracy. If you [the Opposition] are serious, all you need is six months," she added.

Ms. Banerjee met Congress chief Sonia Gandhi in the evening.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Mizoram and Assam to solve row amicably

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The governments of Assam and Mizoram, at a meeting chaired by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Wednesday, agreed to the deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces in the disturbed areas along their border and National Highway 306.

"Both agreed for deployment of a neutral force under a senior CAPF officer," a Union Home Ministry official said, adding that they also agreed to continue discussions to resolve the border issue amicably.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Sons of the soil



Hard work: A boy helping his father prepare their field for transplantation of paddy seedlings in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, on Wednesday, after water was released from the Krishnagiri reservoir for irrigation. *BASKARAN N.

Govt. officials skip House panel meet

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Standing Committee on Information Technology, headed by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, could not deliberate on "Citizens' Data Security and Privacy" on Wednesday, as none of the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Department of Telecom attended the meeting, citing various reasons for their absence. A discussion would have entailed questions on the alleged Pegasus cyberattack in India.

The BJP members, for the second consecutive day, staged a walkout refusing to sign the attendance register, forcing the meeting to be cancelled in the absence of quorum.

DETAILS ON PAGE 8

18 crushed under bus as truck rams it

Accident took place on the Lucknow-Ayodhya highway

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Eighteen people were killed and 10 injured when a stationary double-decker bus fell on them after a truck rammed it in Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh, the police said on Wednesday.

The victims were bus passengers who slept in front of the vehicle or on its side after it broke down, said S.N. Sabat, Additional Director-General of Police, Lucknow. The driver had told them that the



The double-decker bus which was hit by speeding truck in Barabanki on Wednesday. *PTI

repairs would take time. The accident took place in the Ramsanehi Ghat area on the Lucknow-Ayodhya high-

way around midnight. The victims, labourers working in Haryana and Punjab, were returning home to Bihar.

The axle of the bus broke and it was parked on the road when the speeding truck coming from behind hit it, the police said.

It was raining heavily when the accident happened and this posed some problems in the rescue operation, a senior police officer said.

(With inputs from PTI)

HC pulls up Uttarakhand govt. for violation of SOPs

Court extends stay on Char Dham Yatra till the matter pending in SC is decided

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAINITAL

The Uttarakhand High Court on Wednesday pulled up the State government for violation of COVID-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs) in tourist places and extended the stay on the Char Dham Yatra until the matter pending in the Supreme Court is decided.

Observing that 75% of tourists coming to Nainital were not following the COVID-19 SOPs, contributing to a rise in positive cases last week, a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice R.S. Chauhan and Justice Alok Kumar Verma expressed concern over the increasing crowds at tourist places on weekends and

inquired about the steps taken to control them.

The High Court had put a stay on the Char Dham Yatra on June 28 in view of the risks involved in conducting the pilgrimage amid the pandemic. The State government had approached the Supreme Court against the stay order. The apex court is yet to hear the matter.

During the hearing on a bunch of PILs related to the State government's preparations for the yatra amid the pandemic, advocate Shiv Bhatt said the special leave petition presented by the government regarding the Char Dham Yatra has not yet been heard in the Supreme Court, so the order banning it



A view of the Badrinath temple, one of the Char Dham shrines, in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. *FILE PHOTO

should be taken forward. Since the stay issued by the High Court was to expire on Wednesday, it was duly extended until the next date of hearing—August 18—or till the Supreme Court decides the matter.

The court directed the State to file a detailed reply on a slew of issues related to

the COVID situation by August 18. It asked the district authorities about how they planned to control crowds at tourists spots.

Rise in COVID cases

The court observed that in Nainital itself, 75% of tourists were not following the SOPs, while no one was following

social distancing. Due to this, 10 COVID-19 positive cases were reported in Nainital last week, it said.

The court asked as to how many cases have been registered against people disobeying the COVID-19 SOPs. It also asked the State government about the number of vacancies of doctors, nurses and technical staff in government hospitals and about the steps taken to fill them.

The High Court asked the district hospitals to bring forth the actual status of ambulances. Health Secretary Amit Negi apprised the court that there are 95 blocks in the State. Uttarakhand has 54 ambulances of 'Dial 108' service and 41 more ambulances are required to provide one in each block. For this, an application has been sent to the Union Ministry of Health.

VISIONIAS
INSPIRING INNOVATION
LIVE/ONLINE Classes Available
www.visionias.in

Heartiest Congratulations To All Successful Candidates

7 IN TOP 10 SELECTIONS IN CSE 2019

JATIN KISHORE (2 AIR), PRATIBHA VERMA (3 AIR), VISHAKHA YADAV (6 AIR), GANESH K BASKAR (7 AIR), ABHISHEK SARAF (8 AIR), RAU JAIN (9 AIR), YOU CAN BE NEXT

FOUNDATION COURSE GENERAL STUDIES PRELIMS CUM MAINS 2022

PERSONAL GUIDANCE SIMPLIFIED
Receive One-to-One Mentoring via phone / email / in-person sitting

LIVE / ONLINE cum Offline classes

English Medium 3 Aug | 1 PM | 8 July 5 PM
हिन्दी माध्यम 15 जुलाई | 5 PM

JAIPUR: 28th June 7 AM | 5 PM

Monthly CURRENT AFFAIRS Revision 2022 GENERAL STUDIES (PRELIMS + MAINS)
Start: 25 July | 1 PM

#PrelimsComing ABHYAAS 2021 ALL INDIA PRELIMS MOCK TEST SERIES (ONLINE)
GS TESTS - 25 Apr | 9 May | 4 July | 8 Aug | 5 Sept
CSAT TESTS - 13 June | 22 Aug
Register at: www.visionias.in/abhyas

DELHI • HEAD OFFICE: Apsara Arcade, Karol Bagh | CONTACT: 8468022022, 9019066066
JAIPUR | PUNE | HYDERABAD | AHMEDABAD | LUCKNOW | CHANDIGARH | GUWAHATI
9001949244 | 8007500096 | 9000104133 | 9909447040 | 8468022022 | 8468022022 | 8468022022

Man held for assaulting minor girl

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A 27-year-old man was arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor girl in north-west Delhi's Shalimar Bagh, the police said on Wednesday.

The accused was identified as Salim Ahmed, a resident of Rampur district of Uttar Pradesh, the police said.

On Sunday, the nine-year-old girl stepped out of her house to buy something when Ahmed met her and offered to buy her clothes. The girl went with him after which he sexually assaulted her.

The girl narrated her ordeal to her parents after she returned home. A medical examination of the girl confirmed sexual assault, a senior police officer said.

A case was registered under sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, the officer said.

DCP (North-West) Usha Rangnani said it was a blind case since the victim did not know the accused.

HC issues notice on police plea challenging ₹25,000 fine

'No stay on strictures made by lower court against officers without hearing case'

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued notice on the city police's plea challenging a recent order of a local court here imposing a cost of ₹25,000 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.

Justice Subromonim Prasad said there could not be a stay on the strictures made by the court against the Delhi police officers without hearing the case. He, however, said that the Delhi police need not deposit the ₹25,000 till the next date of hearing on September 13.

Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju said the Delhi police's grievance was mainly against the "cost and the strictures passed against the police officers". He said the court had imposed the cost even before hearing the officers concerned.



Security personnel deployed in Mustafabad after the north-east Delhi riots last year. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Advocate Mehmood Pracha, representing the victim (complainant), asked for a short date saying, "The complainant in this case is being threatened...We are under tremendous pressure to withdraw all these cases".

The court, in its July 13 order, censured the police for resisting registration of FIR based on the complaint of the victim, Mohammad Nasir, a resident of North Ghonda in Delhi.

The court had directed the DCP (North-East) to deposit the cost money with the Delhi Legal Services

Authority. It also said the amount should be recovered from the Station House Officer, Bhajanpura police station, and his supervising officers, "who have miserably failed in their statutory duties in this case after holding a due inquiry in this regard".

'Not given a chance' In its petition challenging the July 13 order, Delhi Police said, the court "imposed cost to be deposited by the office of DCP North-East without giving any opportunity to the DCP to make his submissions, which is

against the principle of natural justice".

The Delhi police also said that, "the imposition of such cost would seriously affect not only the career of the government officials but would certainly cause serious dent to the reputation of the officers". "The court has made very serious remarks against the investigation even prior to the commencement of the trial which is contrary to the basic law that no finding should be given in the midst of trial," the Delhi police's plea stated.

The court had concluded, "I have also applied my mind to the facts and circumstances of the case as also perused the case diaries in case FIR..., PS Bhajanpura, which reveals a very shocking state-of-affairs".

The court had also queried how the police was unable to trace any eyewitness in the case despite the MLC (medicolegal cases) of Mr. Nasir clearly showing his address.

Rakesh Asthana takes charge as Delhi Police Commissioner

He praises city police force for its 'good work' in the past

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Rakesh Asthana, senior IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, took charge as the Commissioner of Delhi Police on Wednesday.

He was accorded the ceremonial guard of honour by the police force upon his arrival at the Delhi Police headquarters at Jai Singh Marg.

"I took charge as the Delhi Police Commissioner today. I believe in the basic concepts of policing, that is, maintenance of law and order, prevention of crime that is the basic thing which we are supposed to do. If these things are done properly, peace prevails in the society. There are certain specialised problems, for which there are separate SOPs. We will work accordingly," he told reporters.

Mr. Asthana also praised the city police for its past performances.

"Delhi Police has a brilliant past. A lot of good work has been done by the force in the past. A lot of compli-



I believe in teamwork... I hope we [Delhi police] will be able to put our best foot forward for the betterment of society and prevalence of peace
RAKESH ASTHANA
Commissioner of Delhi Police

ated situations have been handled by the Delhi police. I believe in teamwork and I hope with this, we will be able to put the best foot forward for the betterment of society and prevalence of peace," he said.

Superannuation date

In an order issued on Tuesday, the Ministry of Home Affairs had said that Mr. Asthana, who was serving as the Director General of the Border Security Force, would join as the Delhi Police Commissioner with immediate effect.

His appointment came just days before his superannuation on July 31. He will have a tenure of one year.

This is one of the very few instances when an IPS officer outside of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre has been appointed as the Delhi police chief.

A 1984-batch IPS officer, Mr. Asthana had earlier served as the special director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). During his stint in the CBI, he was engaged in an unsavoury spat with the then CBI director Alok Verma with both of them levelling allegations of corruption against each other.

Senior IPS officer Balaji Srivastava was given the additional charge of police chief after the retirement of S.N. Shrivastava in June-end.

Sisodia seeks feedback on reopening schools

Parents' body says govt. shifting its responsibility on to hapless guardians, students

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Thursday asked teachers, parents and students studying in educational institutions in the country to email their suggestions regarding reopening of schools to the Delhi government so that it may consult all stakeholders before arriving at a decision.



Manish Sisodia

Safety of students Mr. Sisodia said that over 5 lakh parents have met with teachers at the PTM organised for all Delhi government schools and many of them were eager to have schools reopened while some expressed mixed feelings as they feared for their safety of their children.

Teachers, parents, and students can send their suggestions regarding the opening of educational institu-

tions by emailing to delhischools21@gmail.com the Minister said.

He added that the Delhi government had closed schools and colleges keeping in mind the safety and security of children but now that schools have opened or are opening in many nearby States and the situation of COVID-19 in Delhi is under control, the government was reviewing the decision.

"Approximately 70,000-

75,000 COVID-19 tests are being conducted daily in Delhi, with only 40-50 COVID-positive people. Therefore, before making any decision to open institutions, the Delhi government wants to take their suggestions from parents, teachers, principals, and children as to when and how to open educational institutions. After the suggestions are received, the government will decide when and how to reopen the education system," Mr. Sisodia said during a digital address.

Several student groups have been pressing on the government to open educational institutions as they feel that they have been missing out on learning.

Scientific considerations

Ashok Agarwal, national president of the All India Parents' Association, questioned why the Delhi

government was asking for suggestions whether to open school or not as such a decision should be taken on scientific considerations.

"When schools were closed, did Mr. Sisodia ask for suggestions from parents/students? Why are they asking for suggestions now? Is the Delhi government not capable to take decision on reopening of schools/colleges on its own? Parents/students are not experts. The decision required to be taken on scientific considerations," he said.

The Delhi government on Wednesday evening said that over 5,000 suggestions had already been received by the government within three hours of the announcement of the email address.

Schools in the Capital were ordered to shut last year in March ahead of a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19.

'Asthana appointment breaches SC judgment'

Congress questions 'special circumstances' of selection days before retirement

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday alleged that the appointment of Gujarat-cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana's appointment as the Delhi Police Commissioner is a direct contravention of a Supreme Court judgement.

Party spokesperson Pawan Khera asked if there was a "quid pro quo" and reminded the government that Chief Justice N.V. Ramana had rejected Mr. Asthana for the post of CBI director for having less than six months of retirement.

Mr. Khera questioned the "special circumstances" because of which Mr. Asthana was appointed four days before his retirement.

"Not just is it an issue of inter-cadre appointment; the issue expands to another instance of blatant disregard towards the Supreme Court of India and the laws of the land," he alleged.

While appointing Mr. Asthana, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also approved the inter-cadre deputation from Gujarat to

Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre.

Clear rules

Mr. Khera argued that the landmark judgment in Prakash Singh and others versus Union of India and others, the Supreme Court had laid down clear rules.

The appointment to the post of Director General of Police should be done by the Union Public Service Commission and preparation of panel should be purely on the basis of merit from officers who have at least six

months or more to retire, he said.

"With just four days left before the retirement of Rakesh Asthana, this notification by the Modi government issued under the seal of approval by [Home Minister] Amit Shah is downright illegal and in direct contravention of the judgment of the Supreme Court," Mr. Khera said. "His appointment coming after his name was revealed among the list of those snoopied upon using NSO's Pegasus begs us to ask the question: Is there some quid pro quo?" he added.

3 killed in accident, driver absconding

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Three men were killed while another was injured after the car they were travelling in was hit allegedly by a cluster bus, the police said on Wednesday.

The deceased, Akhil (35), Pardeep (32), Kuldeep (30) and injured Sahil (32), were known to each other. All of them were travelling in the same car when their vehicle met with an accident on Tuesday night on Jhatikra

Mor near Chhawla.

DCP (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said, "We got a PCR call around 10.07 p.m. about an accident on Jhatikra Mor near Chhawla. When the investigating officer reached the spot, both the car and a cluster bus was found in an accidental condition but no eyewitnesses were found at the spot."

All the four injured men were shifted to a nearby hospital where Akhil, Pardeep and Kuldeep were declared

brought dead while Sahil, was later shifted to another hospital where he is undergoing treatment and is stated to be stable, the senior police officer said.

Efforts on to nab him

Preliminary investigation suggests accident due to negligence of bus driver, who absconded after the incident and efforts are being made to nab him, he said. A case was registered against the bus driver, the DCP said.

CITY UNION BANK LIMITED
Credit Recovery and Management Department
Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar,
Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in,
Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

PUBLICATION - DEMAND NOTICE
Notice under Section 13(2) of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 - Sent on 11-06-2021 by Registered Post with Acknowledgement Due and the same was returned by all. Herewith this:
No.1) Mrs. Babli, W/o. Shree Ram Mahoor, at 09 3151, Siddarth Vihar, Ghaziabad - 201001. No.2) Mr. Shree Ram Mahoor, S/o. Manushuk Mahoor, at E 886, Sector - 11, Pratap Vihar, Ghaziabad - 201009.
Dear Sir/Madam,
Sub: Loan account / Overdraft with City Union Bank Limited, New Delhi Laxmi Nagar Branch in the name of Ms. Babli.
The Bank issued Notice under the SARFAESI Act on 11-06-2021 calling upon Nos. 1 & 2 of you jointly and severally towards the loan account 501312030017144 is Rs.20,58,522/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty Two Only). Nos. 1 & 2 of you jointly and severally towards the loan account 501812080064561 is Rs.1,00,632/- (Rupees One Lakh Six Hundred and Thirty Two Only) as on 03-06-2021 with further interest for 501812080064561 (CUB OSL SPECIAL-BR), 501312030017144 (OTHER HOUSING LOAN - 25 L) at 12.25% plus 2.00% penal interest p.a. (not compounded) with monthly rests from 04-06-2021 till the date of repayment. The notice sent to you by Registered Post have been returned by all.
Therefore, we hereby once again call upon Nos. 1 & 2 of you jointly and severally towards the loan account 501312030017144 is Rs.20,58,522/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty Two Only). Nos. 1 & 2 of you jointly and severally towards the loan account 501812080064561 is Rs.1,00,632/- (Rupees One Lakh Six Hundred and Thirty Two Only) with further interest for 501812080064561 (CUB OSL SPECIAL-BR), 501312030017144 (OTHER HOUSING LOAN - 25 L) at 12.25% plus 2.00% penal interest p.a. (not compounded) with monthly rests from 04-06-2021 till the date of repayment within 60 days from the date of this notice falling which Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights of enforcement of security interest as against the secured assets given in the schedule hereunder. This Notice is published/issued without prejudice to any other right/remedy available to the Bank.
Immovable Property mortgaged to our Bank (Property Owned by Mrs. Babli, W/o. Shree Ram Mahoor)
Unit No.002 / Ground Floor / 2 BHK / B Plot No.A-093, Pocket A, Type - G Khalsa No.838, Shouryapuram, Shehpur, Bhamela NH-24, Ghaziabad UP - 201002 Adm. Suring - 850 sq.ft. Bounded as under: East - Flat No.002 & Plot No.A-094, West - Flat No.001 & Road, North - other Flat, South - entry/Road.
Place: Kumbakonam, Date : 26-07-2021
Authorised Officer
Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu - 612 001, CIN - L65110TN1904PLC001287,
Telephone No. 0435-2402322, Fax : 0435-2431746, Website : www.cityunionbank.com

CM okays DoE proposal to take over pvt. school

Institution failed to roll back fee hike

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Education (DoE) on Wednesday has decided to issue a show-cause notice for taking over the management of Apeejay School, Sheikh Sarai, after the school repeatedly failed to comply with multiple orders of the Delhi government asking it to rollback its fee hike.

The Delhi government said that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal approved the proposal of the directorate to take over the management of the school and that the decision had been sent to the L-G.

"The Kejriwal government will not let any kind of injustice prevail, we are with the parents. They should be assured that we will stand with them against

such injustice," Deputy CM Manish Sisodia said.

The DoE said that it had conducted an inspection of the financial statement of the school for fiscal years 2012-2013 to 2018-2019.

After a detailed inspection, the department found that the total funds for the year 2018-2019 amounted to ₹49.72 crore of which the expenditure was estimated to be ₹18.87 crore implying that there was a net surplus of ₹30.85 crore upon which the department concluded that the school had no actual need to increase the fees of the school.

The government said that the directorate issued several notices to the school, asking them to stop charging the increased fee and submit a reply which the school did not.

Come rain or shine



Security personnel at Jantar Mantar as farmers (not in picture) continue their Kisan Sansad despite the heavy rain in Delhi on Wednesday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

DU virtual open-day session

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi University on Wednesday held a virtual open-day session for postgraduate aspirants. The registrations for various courses began on Monday while the registration process for the undergraduate courses will begin on August 2.

Officials said that in the first two days since the portal was launched, more than 20,000 applicants had registered and over 15,000 aspirants had submitted the applications by completing the payment process as well.

Sanjeev Singh, head of DU's computer centre said, "We are trying to minimise the number of problems faced by students. There are dedicated volunteers who are clearing various queries of the applicants."

Senior officials also added that entrance examinations for postgraduate courses is likely to begin from September 26.

During the virtual session, aspirants posed several queries to senior DU officials who were on the panel.

JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
CIN No. U40108JH2013SGC001702
Regd. Office : Engineering Building, H.E.C., Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004,
Telephone :-0651-2400799 & Fax : 0651-2400799 / https://www.jbvnl.co.in

7th Extension Notice
Tender extension notice for NIT No. 303/PR/JBVNL/20-21 the date extension for above NIT is available on the site www.jharkhand.gov.in.
A revised Date and Time for Bid Submission and Technical Bid Opening is as follows:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Details
1	Name of Work	Supply, Installation, Operation and FMS of AMI System for consumers having load above 10 KW in JBVN. Estimated cost Rs. 20 Crores (Rs. Twenty Crores)
3	Last Date / Time for receipt of bids	17.08.2021 at 04:00 PM
4	Date and Time for Opening of Technical bid	17.08.2021 at 05:00 PM

स्वीडित एव चतुर्दशित में कर्जा बचती। कृपया कर्जा विकारतों को टोल फ्री नं० 1800 346 6670 पर दर्ज कराया।
PR.No. 247662 PR.No.250371 Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd(21-22):D
Sd/-
General Manager (IT)

IN BRIEF

AAP MLAs elected as DU court members

NEW DELHI
Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel on Wednesday said AAP legislators Atishi and Vinay Mishra have been elected as members of the Court of University of Delhi. The court is the supreme authority of the university and has the power to review the acts of the executive council and the academic council. The MLAs were elected unopposed, the Assembly Speaker said. BJP MLA Ajay Mahawar had withdrawn his nomination which led to their election. PTI

IIT-D exploring steps to implement NEP

Institution to introduce new interdisciplinary programmes from this year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, has started to examine the structure and nature of its existing programmes so that it may be compliant with the National Education Policy (NEP), director, IIT Delhi, V. Ramgopal Rao said on Wednesday.

He said that IIT, Delhi, had taken a proactive stance towards assessing the pro-

posed guidelines and was exploring appropriate measures for the implementation of the NEP 2020 recommendations.

The institute said that it will be introducing interdisciplinary programmes like BTech programme in Energy Engineering this year and a Bachelor of Design in 2022-23. It has been also planned to start a BTech programme in Design from 2025-26.

IIT, Delhi, is also starting

two new multidisciplinary programmes at the PG-level like an MTech in Electric Mobility, and Master of Public Policy from 2021-22. Discussions are under way for an MTech programme in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science, the institute said.

"Over the last many months, a committee for the implementation of NEP 2020 has carefully considered all higher education-related guidelines. Current-

ly, feedback on the committee's report is being sought from all academic units for further deliberations", Mr. Rao said.

He added that recently initiatives have recently been taken to form new schools, departments and centres at the institute with multidisciplinary teaching and research programmes, which dovetail nicely with the broad objectives of the NEP 2020.

Timings DELHI

THURSDAY, JUL. 29
RISE 05:42 SET 19:15
RISE 22:53 SET 10:36

FRIDAY, JUL. 30
RISE 05:42 SET 19:14
RISE 23:22 SET 11:31

SATURDAY, JUL. 31
RISE 05:43 SET 19:13
RISE 23:53 SET 12:24

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	28	25
Safdarjang	28	25
Palam	27	27

Delhi Palam Today
30°C Humid weather would continue. Light to moderate rain and thunderstorm may occur with cloudy sky.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
32°C Light to moderate rain and thundershower likely at some places with cloudy sky.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING PVT. LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

AAP to ask govt. to probe 'scam' in North body

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday said that the party will request the Delhi government to inquire into an alleged scam in the BJP-governed North Delhi Municipal Corporation regarding processing waste using machines taken on rent.

"The BJP-ruled civic body is to pay a yearly rent of ₹2.20 crore for trommel machines that can be bought for ₹17.70 lakh and the proposal has been passed by the standing committee on Tuesday. Our North body Leader of Opposition, Vikas Goyal, will file a complaint to the Delhi government under Section 207 of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Amendment Act 2011, so that it can undertake a special audit and make everything crystal clear," AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said.

He claimed that the monthly rent of each trommel machine is ₹6.3 lakh and questions were being raised by their own auditor that this amount is too high.

60% expecting mothers vaccinated in Mohanpur

Kits given away at the special drive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Health Department of Rewari district held a special vaccination drive for pregnant and lactating women at Mohanpur village in which around 60% were vaccinated.

Paediatrician Balraj Yadav from Mohanpur village said the pregnant and lactating women were reluctant to get vaccinated despite the approval from the authorities that vaccination was safe for them. Therefore, he decided to take an initiative to hold a special camp for them in his village.

"I discussed the idea with the local health officials and they readily agreed to it. Around 70 vaccination doses were administered during the drive held last Sunday," said Mr. Yadav, who runs a clinic in Gurugram.

The drive was called "Roko and Toko Abhiyan", and a separate pink vaccination centre was set up for the women of the village. "We made an announcement in the village a day before the scheduled drive. The response was overwhelming. We registered around 150 people, but could vaccinate only 70 as per the availability of the doses. Besides the

Monsoon session of Assembly likely to run into rough weather

Appointment of Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner likely to be a hot topic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The two-day monsoon session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly beginning Thursday is likely to be a stormy one with the day-old appointment of Rakesh Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner allegedly in violation of the Supreme Court guidelines scheduled to be discussed in the House.

According to AAP sources, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who on Tuesday announced the government's decision to nominate only doctors and healthcare personnel for the Padma Awards to the Central government, is likely to move a resolution to this effect in the House on the final day.

On the first day, the House is scheduled to move and pass a resolution to recommend the conferment of the Bharat Ratna on environmentalist and Chipko Movement leader Sunderlal Bahuguna.

Cornering AAP

On its part, the 8-member BJP opposition will seek to corner the AAP Delhi government on its alleged fail-



The two-day monsoon session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly will begin today. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

ture during the second wave of the pandemic, besides other issues like public transport infrastructure and the quality and supply of potable water.

The AAP, on the first day, will initiate a discussion on the alleged failure of the Capital's BJP-run civic bodies in relation to waterlogging issues followed by a discussion on the appointment of the Delhi Police Commissioner in alleged violation of the Supreme Court guidelines.

Conversely, the BJP Opposition will seek to initiate

a discussion on the alleged failure of the Delhi government to open a new schools or colleges as well as the alleged shortage of teachers in government schools.

Assembly gherao

Meanwhile, BJP Delhi president Adesh Gupta and Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri will lead the party in a gherao of the Assembly on Thursday in protest of multiple alleged scams in Delhi government departments.

BJP MLA Abhay Verma has also given a contempt

notice to a reply by Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot to a discussion on calling attention motion under Rule 54 by BJP MLA Vijender Gupta on March 11 in the Assembly.

According to the BJP, the Transport Minister had stated: "Whatever our low-floor buses are, the maintenance is not done by DTC staff themselves, it is all outsourced and there are about 71 items that are not covered by the warranty."

In this regard, Mr. Verma said the Transport Minister informed the House that there were 71 items of purchase and maintenance of buses that are not covered under warranty. These will be included under maintenance.

"He had said that these 71 items are neither mentioned in the tender document nor in the work order issued. There isn't any such list. Prima facie there is a case of contempt of the House against him," he said.

"The Speaker should take cognisance and take action against the Transport Minister as per rules," Mr. Verma added.

Faridabad to demolish all illegal structures on PLPA notified land

District has around 130 structures; move comes after SC order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
FARIDABAD

The Faridabad district administration on Wednesday said all illegal structures, including farmhouses and educational institutes, on the land notified under the Punjab Land Preservation Act, 1900, would be demolished to clear the encroachment on the forest land. The district has around 130 illegal structures spread across 500 acre PLPA notified land.

The announcement came in the wake of the Supreme Court observation on July 23 in a matter pertaining to Khori Basti demolition that "the direction to remove all unauthorised structures standing on the forest land applies to all such structures without any exception".

Holding a joint press conference with the Municipal Corporation of Faridabad and the District Forest Department, Deputy Commissioner Yashpal Yadav said that notices would be served to the owners of the illegal structures to remove the encroachment and the demolition would be carried out in case they don't adhere to the directions within four days. Mr. Yadav added that forest department was the nodal office in this matter since the land was notified by it.

Issuing notice

Of the 5,430 acre land in Faridabad district notified under the PLPA, around 500 acre was encroached with 130 odd structures, said Raj Kumar, Divisional Forest Of-

ficer, in the press conference. He said the notices would be served soon on the encroachers.

MCF Commissioner Garima Mittal said all logistical support would be extended to the forest department for the removal of encroachment on PLPA land belonging to the municipal body.

Aravallis Bachao Group, a citizens group working to protect environment, demanded that all illegal constructions in Gurugram and Nuh in the forest area be removed in adherence to the SC directions. "We had sent an email to the Haryana government on June 16 giving a list and locations of some of the encroachments in Aravalli based on our visit to these areas," it said.

AAP tight-lipped on Kejriwal-Mamata meet

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday called on his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee here.

According to AAP sources, the meeting took place at Trinamool Congress (TMC) Lok Sabha MP Abhishek Ba-

nerjee's residence in Central Delhi and lasted for almost an hour.

"Met @MamataOfficial di today. It was our first meeting since her resounding victory in West Bengal assembly elections. Conveyed my best wishes and discussed several political is-

sues with her [sic]," Mr. Kejriwal tweeted after the meeting.

AAP sources were tight-lipped about the goings-on of the 50-minute-long meeting where only Mr. Kejriwal, Ms. Banerjee, AAP MLA Raghav Chadha and Mr. Abhishek were present.

City gets fresh stock, but vaccination remains low

67 COVID-19 cases, 3 deaths reported

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the national capital remained low even though the city received fresh supplies of vaccines, as per government data.

Only 37,825 doses of vaccine were administered on Tuesday, compared to 57,372 on Monday, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday. The number of doses on Tuesday is almost one-third of vaccinations done on several days earlier this month.

The vaccine stock of the city on Wednesday morning would last for three days and there were 4,87,410 doses of Covishield and 2,23,970 doses of Covaxin, as per the data. Till now, 97,79,440 doses have been administered in the city.

Meanwhile, the city reported 67 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,36,026, according to another bulletin. There were three deaths and the total number of deaths stood at 25,049.

A total of 73,392 tests were done in a day with a test positivity rate was 0.09%. Of the total cases, 14,36,093 people have recovered and there are 573 active cases, of which 165 are in home isolation.

Scheme extended

Meanwhile, Health Minister Satyendar Jain said the government has extended its cashless surgery scheme of Delhi Arogya Kosh for the treatment of patients suffering from black fungus or mucormycosis. The govt. on March 27 had declared black fungus an epidemic.

Taken for a ride



Commuters caught in the rain near ISBT Kashmere Gate on Wednesday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Petition claims new excise policy aims to lower drinking age

HC asks Delhi govt. to reply to plea; NGO says revised rules will increase alcoholism among students

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Delhi government to respond to a petition challenging a provision in the new Excise Policy, claiming it seeks to reduce the age of consumption of liquor from 25 to 21.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Jyoti Singh issued notice on the petition, which has also sought to

quash a provision in the new Excise Policy that there shall be no government-owned liquor vends and only privately-owned vends.

Vulnerable strata

NGO All India Bhrashtachar Virodhi Morcha, in its plea, said there is an opinion among a lot of people that reducing the age of consumption of liquor will increase alcoholism amongst

students and younger generation of the society, leading to other consequent problems and the decision to close government vends is not in public interest.

The minimum age of consumption of liquor in Delhi is 25 years, but in the neighbouring States of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, it is 25 and 21 respectively. The plea claimed that the Delhi government is effectively seek-

ing to reduce the minimum age of consumption of liquor from 25 to 21 years, as is the case in neighbouring State of Uttar Pradesh.

The petitioner said Article 47 of the Constitution states that the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of consumption of intoxicating drinks, except for medicinal purposes, which are injurious to health. It said the consumers of li-

quor will also be affected as they are assured about the quality of alcohol when they purchase it from the government vends and this assurance would not be there in case of private vends.

Several petitions have been filed in the High Court challenging the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22 alleging that it was illegal, unfair, arbitrary and violative of the Delhi Excise Act, 2009.

'25 sanitation workers died in harness amid lockdown'

Relief paid in some cases, says panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Safai Karamcharis (DCSK) on Wednesday informed the High Court that it has taken cognisance of the death of 25 sanitation workers who died in harness during the COVID-19 lockdown period and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has announced suitable compensation for their dependents.

The DCSK said it has recommended compensation and compassionate appointment in the case of death of these persons and in some

cases compensation of ₹1 crore to ₹10 lakh has been paid. The submissions were made in an affidavit filed by DCSK before an HC Bench, which was hearing a PIL seeking payment of pending salaries of sanitation workers and providing them medical facilities as well as personal protective safety gear amid the pandemic.

Advocate Mehmood Pracha, representing petitioner Harnam Singh, sought time to file rejoinder to the affidavit after which the court listed the matter for hearing on September 13.

Frame rules to regulate search on lawyers: plea

HC Bench asks Centre to file reply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A PIL in the Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought formulation of mandatory guidelines to be followed by the investigating agencies while conducting search and seizure operations at the premises of an advocate.

The Centre opposed the plea raising preliminary objection that the petitioner has not made the investigating agencies parties to the petition and has not disclosed the name of the advocate on whom the search was conducted.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Jyoti Singh asked the Centre to file a short reply to the petition and made it clear it was not issuing notice on the plea at this stage. The court listed it for hearing on Sept. 3.

Petitioner Nikhil Borwankar, a lawyer, sought direction for framing of procedures and guidelines for conducting search on advocates with adequate safeguards to ensure that provisions of law pertaining to attorney-client privilege and their fundamental rights are protected.

Atiya Foundation

Requires UPSC-CSE :
Mentor cum Administrator

Skills / Qualification Required

1. Appeared in UPSC- CSE Interview once or Written UPSC-CSE Mains atleast twice.
2. Ability to understand the demand and dynamics of the UPSC-CSE.
3. Technically sound to use computer-based applications.
4. Good inter-personal skills to communicate with the students.
5. Good managerial skills.

Salary: - Negotiable

Candidate from outside Delhi will be provided accommodation and dining facilities too.

Atiya Foundation is a premier institute to facilitate competitive atmosphere for the students preparing for UPSC - Civil Service Examination. The basic motto of the foundation is to help the students, give them a human touch and prepare them to excel in their desired field.

Send Your CV @
contactatiyafoundation@gmail.com,
info@atiyafoundation.com
Phone No: +91-9355475943, +91-9103002788.

Some officers obstructing my departmental work to please Chief Minister: Vij

They will pay a heavy price, he warns

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Wednesday alleged that some officers in the government are obstructing his departmental work to "please" Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar.

Dismissing reports suggesting differences between him and the Chief Minister, Mr. Vij said he and Mr. Khattar are good friends. He said the officers will have pay a heavy price for playing "dirty game".

In a statement issued here on Wednesday, Mr. Vij said, "Some officers are obstructing my departmental works to please the Honourable Chief Minister keeping in mind as if me (I) and CM are against each other. They are very badly mistaken. We are good friends. Officers playing this dirty game will have to suffer heavily for this."

The statement is being seen against the backdrop of a tussle between Mr. Vij and Mr. Khattar surrounding the extension of tenure of Director General of Police Manoj Yadava.



Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij. ■ FILE PHOTO

While Mr. Vij wanted the DGP to be replaced on completion of his two-year term earlier this year, Mr. Lal was keen on retaining him, and eventually Mr. Yadava was granted a one-year extension by the Centre. Mr. Yadava, however, sought premature repatriation to the Intelligence Bureau last month.

Differences between the two leaders had been brewing since Mr. Vij was given the crucial home portfolio after he won his seat for a sixth time in the 2019 State Assembly polls while most of the Ministers of the BJP government lost. The home portfolio was with Mr. Khattar during his first term in 2014-19.

(With PTI inputs)

Rajasthan reshuffle: Maken meets MLAs

The exercise of getting opinion of all MLAs was planned for evolving a consensus on new appointments

MOHAMMED IQBAL JAIPUR

Amid speculations of a Cabinet reshuffle in Rajasthan, All India Congress Committee general secretary Ajay Maken met party MLAs and Independents supporting the Congress here on Wednesday to get their feedback on the functioning of the State government.

Sources said the MLAs gave a mixed response to Mr. Maken's queries.

Mr. Maken interacted with 66 MLAs from the Jaipur, Kota and Bharatpur divisions in the State Assembly building till late in the evening. The one-on-one discussions with legislators will continue on Thursday, covering the remaining four divisions of Jodhpur, Ajmer, Bikaner and



Congress party's Rajasthan in-charge Ajay Maken during a visit to Jaipur last week. ■ FILE PHOTO: PTI

Udaipur.

The AICC general secretary, who is in-charge of Rajasthan, held discussions with the MLAs on political appointments, performance of the Ministers in charge of their respective constituen-

cies, progress of various welfare schemes, and the naming of the district and block presidents of the ruling party.

The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took strong exception to the State government's decision to organise the interaction in the Assembly building. BJP State president Satish Poonia said the ruling party's "plebiscite exercise" had lowered the dignity of the Assembly and it should have been held somewhere else.

Transport Minister Pratap Singh Khachariawas, elected from Jaipur's Civil Lines constituency, said the discussions were aimed at improving the State government's performance, while the MLAs were provided with an opportunity to share their feedback and perspective in a "democratic manner".

Chakus MLA Ved Prakash Solanki, considered a loyalist of former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, reportedly suggested that the Congress leadership should also get

feedback from the party candidates who were defeated in the 2018 Assembly elections.

Power-sharing setup

Mr. Maken, accompanied by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, had visited the State Capital last week to work out a power sharing arrangement between the ruling party's rival factions supporting Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Tonk MLA Mr. Pilot. The exercise of getting the opinion of all MLAs was planned for evolving a consensus on new appointments to the Council of Ministers.

The Cabinet expansion and reshuffle, followed by appointments to various boards and corporations, may take place in the next few days, according to the party sources.

Cancel all one-sided PPAs, Punjab CM tells PSPCL

CM tells PSPCL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has ordered the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) to cancel or revisit all the one-sided Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with private companies that are not contractually obligated to supply sufficient power to meet the State's peak demand during the paddy sowing and summer season.

'Revoke TSPL pact'

Taking note of the fiasco relating to Talwandi Sabo Power Limited (TSPL), Mansa - one of the largest private thermal plants in the State, which failed to perform in the current paddy season, the Chief Minister has directed PSPCL to revoke its PPA.

He has also asked the PSPCL to examine all the Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) signed by the previous Shiromani Akali Dal-Bharatiya Janta Party government with various Independent Power Producers (IPPs), which were established basically to meet the power demands of the State, especially during paddy sowing and summer season. He has directed PSPCL to terminate or revisit all the lopsided PPAs that are not beneficial to the State.

Notably, pressure from within the party had been mounting on Capt. Amarinder-led government to cancel the PPAs, which was a key election promise during the 2017 Assembly polls.

SAD(S) to contest all seats

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) president and Rajya Sabha member Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa on Wednesday announced that his party would contest all the 117 Assembly seats in the upcoming Punjab polls.

He dismissed reports of contesting elections in alliance with any other political party.

"The Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) as a strong regional party would represent Punjab, Punjabi and Punjabi in the State," Mr. Dhindsa said.

Monsoon time



A couple take cover from rain on their boat at the Dal Lake in Srinagar on Wednesday. ■ PTI

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:

www.thehinduads.com

011-43579738 • 43579797

EDUCATIONAL SITUATION VACANT

ANONYMOUS EDUCATORS IAS/IPS- Foundation Batch

Are you Killing ur dream due to lack of fund in this corona time? Join us!

Join Foundation Batch under personal guidance of U. Kumar Sir -

FEATURES

For Undergraduates

Only live class

Monthly Fees

Cheap and best

Judge us before joining

3 demo class free - Registration for new batch starts

MOBILE: 9465192484

Branches: Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

PONDICHERRY INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES will destroy the medical records of patients who have not visited the institution for a consultation during the last five years. The process of destruction will begin from one month after the date of this publication. If any of the above information scheduled for destruction is pertaining to you and you would like the information provided to you, kindly give a written request at the Medical Records Department at Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) with proof of identification (Aadhar, Passport, PAN card or Ration Card).

For any query or further information patients can contact to MRD at PIMS 0413-2651246 & 2651244.

Medical Superintendent P.I.M.S.

TENDERS

EXTENSION NOTICE

The last date of submission of tenders for supply of Portable Cryocans is extended to 7th August 2021 (3 PM). Parties may log on to https://assam.tenders.gov.in for participation. Last date of submission: 21-AUG-2021 (3PM) Sd/-

Chief Executive Officer, Assam Livestock Development Agency, GS Road, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022

GENERAL

WE'RE HIRING

Online Education (Full Time)

1. Faculties for UPSC / Sociology Optional / Public Administration / Essay / PSIR / Internet Security / Science & Technology / Environment / Ecology (English / Hindi)

2. Faculties for State PCS / Railway / SSC / Banking / Patwari / NDA / CDS.

3. Faculties for 6th to 12th Social Studies (Hindi / English)

tanvi.mankatty@eduauraa.com

aarv12906@gmail.com

865 5050 678 / 895 5122 666

P.M.C. COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

(Affiliated to GGSIPU & SCERT, Delhi)

Pratap Vihar, Kirari Extn., Nangloi, Delhi - 110086

Ph: 7290037803, 7290037804

Required Staff:

Lecturers

MA/M.Sc./M.Com with 55% marks and NET.

LIBRARIAN-M.LIB.

Interested candidates may send their complete resume within 7 days to Email: pmc_coll@yahoo.com (Principal)

TENDERS

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Online tenders are invited for supply of HF / HF Cross Heifers for ETT project at Govt Livestock Farm, Khanapara. Parties may log on to http://assam.tenders.gov.in for participation. Last date of submission: 21-AUG-2021 (3PM) Sd/-

Chief Executive Officer, Assam Livestock Development Agency, GS Road, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL

General public is hereby informed that this Girl Name: Khusbu, D/o Sh. Late Raju Chauhan, R/o RZ 46D/197, Gali No. 2, Man Sagarpur, New Delhi, Age: 14 Years 6 Months, Height: 4 feet 9 inch, Built: Medium, Face: Round, Hair: Long, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: White Top and Blue Jeans and Slippers in Feet has been missing since 14.07.2021 at 03:30 PM from her residence in the Area of P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi.

In this regard a FIR No. 325/21 U/s 363 IPC, dated 14.07.2021, has been registered at P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this Girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this Girl kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cbc@cbi.gov.in SHO

Website: http://cbi.nic.in P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi

Fax: 011-24368639 Ph No. 011-28522653, 7065036228

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 DP/736/SW/2021

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

SIGNAL & TELECOMMUNICATION BRANCH OPEN TENDER

Invitation of E-Tender on behalf of the President of India acting through Sr. Divisional Engineer Signal & Telecom (Co-Ordination), West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following work:-

1. Name of work with its location: Tender No. 12-DDU-SRDEN/III-21-22. Provision of cable duct for S & T cable in DDU yard in connection with DFCC work in DDU Division.

2. Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 2,70,24,198.66. 3. Closing date & time for submission of e-tender: 18.08.2021, Up to 12.00 hrs. 4. Website particulars of e-tendering: www.ireps.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager/ ECR/Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya PR/0562/DDU/Engg./T/21-22/32

TO ENJOY LIFE, ENSURE LIFE'S SAFETY! GET VACCINATED TODAY!

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of e-tender on behalf of the President of India acting through Sr. Divisional Engineer Signal & Telecom (Co-Ordination), West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following work:-

1. Name of work with its location: Tender No. 12-DDU-SRDEN/III-21-22. Provision of cable duct for S & T cable in DDU yard in connection with DFCC work in DDU Division.

2. Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 2,70,24,198.66. 3. Closing date & time for submission of e-tender: 18.08.2021, Up to 12.00 hrs. 4. Website particulars of e-tendering: www.ireps.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager/ ECR/Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya PR/0562/DDU/Engg./T/21-22/32

TO ENJOY LIFE, ENSURE LIFE'S SAFETY! GET VACCINATED TODAY!

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Named Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: 35/40 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Strong, Injury Mark: Head injury, Ear bleeding & Body rub marks, Wearing: Grey coloured pant, White coloured shirt with grey lining and Green Jacket, was found unconscious on 26.07.21 at 8:58 AM from KM Pole No.08/3 & 08/5 UP Main Line, Near Shalimar Bagh, Fly Over, Rly Line, Delhi & admitted in Babu Jagjivan Ram Hospital vide MLC No.179124/21, during the treatment Doctors declared him dead. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours at the Mortuary of BJRM Hospital. In this regard a DD No.6A dated 26.07.21 u/s 174 Cr.P.C. has been lodged at P.S. Subzi Mandi Rly. Stn., Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO P.S. Subzi Mandi Rly. Stn., Delhi Ph: 011-23692455 Mob.: 7011994394

DP/196/RLY/2021

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body Name: Akhilesh Akela, S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: Approx. 30 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Shallow, Built: Thin, Face: Oval, Wearing: Black Shirt and Blue Pant was found dead at Red light morge gate towards ISBT Civil Lines, Delhi, on Dt.26.07.2021. In this regard, a DD No. 5-A, dated 26.07.2021 has been lodged at PS Civil Lines, Delhi.

The dead body has been preserved in the mortuary of Sabzi Mandi Mortuary, Delhi for 72 hours. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any, person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO P.S., Civil Lines, Delhi Ph. : 011-23815444, 8750870127

DP/1372/N/2021

Trinamool shifting its focus to Tripura

TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee to visit the State tomorrow

SYED SAJJAD ALI AGARTALA

The Trinamool Congress seems to have shifted its focus to Tripura with the party announcing the itinerary of its senior leaders, including national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee.

The announcement comes after the arrival of a delegation comprising two Ministers of the West Bengal government and a former Member of Parliament here on Wednesday amid allegations of confinement of 23 I-PAC employees at a hotel here.

Mr. Banerjee will visit the

State on Friday while the floor leader of the party in the Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, and MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar are scheduled to reach tomorrow morning.

'Oppressing the Oppn.'

Party sources said West Bengal Ministers Moloy Ghatak and Bratya Basu and former MP Ritabrata Banerjee will continue to stay in Tripura till the departure of Mr. Banerjee. A large number of party supporters assembled at the MBB airport to greet the leaders.

Later, Mr. Basu and his

colleagues addressed a press conference where they lashed out at the Tripura government for "oppressing the Opposition parties and muzzling the voices of dissent". They criticised the 'confinement' of I-PAC team inside a hotel here and slapping Section 188 of the IPC against them.

The Tripura police, however, denied the confinement charge and said they acted as per the provisions of the regulations imposed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. I-PAC team members also underwent RT-PCR test. Despite the reports coming

negative, the team was not allowed to move out by the security officers, the TMC alleged. It said I-PAC employees have been told to report to the east Agartala police station on August 1.

Meanwhile, the ruling BJP has refuted charges that it had a role in the confinement of I-PAC employees. Party spokespersons Subrata Chakraborty and Nabendu Bhattacharjee addressed a press conference at the party office on Wednesday and blamed the TMC of trying to cultivate an administrative issue to extract political mileage.

Can't force employees to donate for relief fund: HC

Visva-Bharati had deducted a day's salary for Cyclone Amphan relief

BISHWANATH GHOSH KOLKATA

The teachers' union constantly at loggerheads with the present administration at Visva-Bharati has claimed moral victory with the Calcutta High Court holding that the university should not have automatically deducted a day's salary of employees for cyclone relief.

After Cyclone Amphan battered parts of West Bengal in May 2020, Visva-Bharati had deducted a day's salary of its employees to make a contribution to the relief fund. The decision was opposed by the Visva-Bharati University Faculty Association (VBFA), which said while it was all for contributions being made for relief work, such donation can only be voluntary and not binding on the staff.

The VBFA, according to the member, now plans to approach a Division Bench of the High Court to seek a refund (of the amount deducted) from the personal account of Vice-Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty and donate it to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

It also intends to file another petition against the forcible deduction of half-day's salary of employees in October 2020 for the upkeep of the historic prayer hall at Santiniketan.

According to the VBFA, the prayer hall is the responsibility of the Santiniketan Trust and the Archaeological Survey of India and that the employees of Visva-Bharati, which has nothing to do with the structure, cannot be forced to pay for its maintenance.

said on Tuesday. The judge, however, observed that since the petition was filed one year after the deduction was made - a group of 23 teachers belonging to the VBFA filed the petition in May 2021 - there was no scope for refund.

When asked what took them so long to appeal in the court, a member of the VBFA said the union was unable to garner sufficient support because of the pandemic and the lockdown.

The VBFA, according to the member, now plans to approach a Division Bench of the High Court to seek a refund (of the amount deducted) from the personal account of Vice-Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty and donate it to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

It also intends to file another petition against the forcible deduction of half-day's salary of employees in October 2020 for the upkeep of the historic prayer hall at Santiniketan.

According to the VBFA, the prayer hall is the responsibility of the Santiniketan Trust and the Archaeological Survey of India and that the employees of Visva-Bharati, which has nothing to do with the structure, cannot be forced to pay for its maintenance.

Bommai sworn in as Karnataka CM

He announces scholarship for farmers' children and hikes pension for senior citizens, widows

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Basavaraj Bommai, who was sworn in on Wednesday as the 30th Chief Minister of Karnataka, sought to project a welfare-orientated vision by kickstarting his tenure by announcing a scholarship scheme for farmers' children and hiking pensions for senior citizens, widows, and the disabled.

Sending simultaneously a signal of administrative control, he also warned the bureaucracy to shun the "chalta hai" attitude and directed them to work on micro-management for the successful implementation of schemes. He also ordered a file-clearance drive within 15 days and said department heads would be held accountable for time-bound implementation of welfare schemes and programmes.

The one-man Cabinet meeting and another with



New role: Basavaraj Bommai taking oath as the Chief Minister of Karnataka in Bengaluru on Wednesday. • MURALI KUMAR

bureaucrats came hours after Mr. Bommai took oath of office and secrecy in the name of God at the Raj Bhavan. He was sworn in by Governor Thawarchand Gehlot and the event was

attended by his family members, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and other party leaders.

Emulating Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mr. Bommai bowed at the portals of the

entrance of the Vidhana Soudha before entering it for the first time as Chief Minister. After the Cabinet meeting, he announced a new scholarship for farmers' children for which ₹1,000 crore will be set aside. He hiked pensions which will incur an additional expenditure of ₹1,367.52 crore and benefit 56.89 lakh people. He called them "investments on human power" in troubled times.

To cut expenditure

Assuming power amidst a lagging economy hit by the pandemic, Mr. Bommai directed all departments to aim for cutting at least 5% of "unwanted expenditure" by March 2022, without affecting the implementation of the government's programmes. The new Chief Minister said handling of floods, management of COVID-19 pandemic, and admi-

nistering vaccines to all were his top priorities.

The new Chief Minister tried to assert himself and answer criticism that he may remain in the "shadow of Mr. Yediyurappa". Answering critics who have dubbed him as a "rubber stamp" Chief Minister, Mr. Bommai said he would work to ensure his government got a "pro-people stamp."

Asked whether there would be a power centre outside the government, Mr. Bommai said he was the first among equals and the power centre would lie with the entire team. Clarifying what he meant when he said he would work with the guidance of Mr. Yediyurappa, Mr. Bommai said he would be guided by the tough decisions taken by the veteran leader, his style of functioning, objectives, and the policies and programmes announced in the Budget.

Two injured in reactor blast in Telangana

STAFF REPORTER
HYDERABAD

At least two persons were injured, one seriously, on Wednesday in a reactor blast at a chemical manufacturing unit in Jeedimetla in Hyderabad.

According to the police, the incident was reported around 8.30 a.m. at Nasense Labs Private Limited. Those who have been injured are employees of the company identified as Hari Prasad Reddy, 42, who was working in the capacity of shift in-charge. The other victim is Arjun, 30. While Mr. Hari Prasad was rushed to the Osmania General Hospital, Mr Arjun suffered a fracture and was admitted to a private hospital.

"Hari Prasad has suffered 90% burns. A case has been booked against Gautham, managing director of Nasense Labs Pvt Limited," the police said.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra and Konkan & Goa. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	12	32.7	26.4	Kozhikode	9	31.2	24.4
Ahmedabad	7	30.8	25.9	Kurnool	3	34.1	24.4
Aizawl	2	28.5	22.5	Lucknow	116	31.0	25.0
Allahabad	29	29.8	25.0	Madurai	4	40.0	27.2
Bengaluru	28	28.3	20.0	Mangaluru	5.1	29.1	24.0
Bhopal	21.8	27.5	22.5	Mumbai	14	31.7	24.4
Bhubaneswar	29	29.9	24.4	Mysuru	1	29.0	20.6
Chandigarh	42.4	32.4	25.7	New Delhi	5	27.6	25.1
Chennai	35	35.6	28.2	Patna	4	36.8	27.2
Coimbatore	0.1	32.8	22.8	Port Blair	4	31.0	24.8
Dehradun	117	27.1	22.7	Puducherry	3	36.5	24.8
Gangtok	5	24.0	17.8	Pune	4.8	28.9	21.9
Goa	0.4	31.6	25.6	Raipur	19.1	25.5	23.0
Guwahati	36	36.0	27.2	Ranchi	12	29.4	23.1
Hubbali	26	26.0	21.0	Shillong	2	26.2	18.6
Hyderabad	31	31.4	23.0	Shimla	75	22.0	18.8
Imphal	6	29.7	22.2	Srinagar	3	24.5	21.5
Jaipur	0.5	29.4	25.0	Thiruvananthapuram	3	30.5	23.0
Kochi	14	29.8	23.8	Tiruchi	3	37.9	26.6
Kohima	28	28.8	18.7	Vijayawada	3	34.9	26.4
Kolkata	17	31.4	26.7	Visakhapatnam	3	36.2	28.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Bengaluru	11	14	26	34	104	■
Chennai	5	28	82	33	59	■
Delhi	12	58	106	49	54	■
Hyderabad	6	10	14	12	31	■
Kolkata	11	27	38	56	52	■
Lucknow	10	13	65	20	41	■
Mumbai	68	10	—	63	104	■
Pune	30	17	56	75	65	■
Visakhapatnam	11	43	34	44	89	■

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

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat and premature death in people with heart disease

SC verdict puts Kerala govt. in a spot

Blame game in ruling LDF for inviting censure

G. ANAND
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Supreme Court judgment denying reprieve without trial for Left Democratic Front (LDF) leaders accused of creating disorder and destroying public property in the Assembly in 2015 appeared to have plunged the Kerala government and the ruling coalition into an awkward situation.

The apex court's damning order is being perceived as a setback for the LDF and a moral win for the United Democratic Front.

(Congress leader Ramesh



V. Sivankutty

kutty. The issue is likely to figure in the House prominently.

Protests today

KPCCC president K. Sudhakaran has announced sit-in demonstrations at district headquarters across the State on Thursday to press for the Minister's resignation.

Congress leader V.M. Sudheeran has demanded a public apology from Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. He asked Mr. Vijayan to reimburse the substantial legal fee drawn from the public exchequer.

Kerala Congress (M) leader, Jose. K. Mani, an LDF ally and K.M. Mani's political heir, was guarded in his response. The government

would follow the law, he said. Mr. Sivankutty said he saw no reason to resign and would face trial.

The verdict has also reportedly set off a blame game in the LDF. Some LDF partners had warned the government against the move to withdraw the case against the advice of the Deputy Director, Prosecutions.

They reportedly felt the government had magnified the issue and unnecessarily drawn national attention to the episode by fighting the case at the Supreme Court level. By one account, the CPI(M) was unlikely to budge from its earlier stance that the further prosecution of the LDF leaders would be tantamount to double jeopardy.

Devineni Uma held, remanded in custody

TDP leader charged with rioting

STAFF REPORTER
G. KONDRU

Former Minister and Telugu Desam Party leader Devineni Umamaheswara Rao and other party leaders, who were booked under different Sections, were produced in the Mylavaram court on Wednesday.

The judge remanded Mr. Rao and others in judicial custody.

The police arrested the former Minister and others for allegedly creating tension and resorting to rioting at the G. Konduru police station, in Krishna district. They were charged with rioting, criminal conspiracy

and disrupting public servants from discharging their duties.

The former Minister, along with TDP activists, went into the Kondapalli reserve forest on Tuesday alleging that illegal mining was on and some ruling YSR Congress Party leaders were involved in it. On knowing that the TDP delegation visited Kondapalli, YSRCP activists rushed to the village. However, police stopped the ruling party leaders.

Alleging that the YSRCP activists attacked him and damaged his vehicle, Mr. Rao staged a protest at G. Konduru police station.

What is 'contingent worker', HC asks Twitter

Court questions status of recently appointed COO, gives site a week's time to file fresh affidavit

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday expressed reservations about Twitter changing the status of its recently appointed chief compliance officer (CCO) from "interim" to "contingent" in its latest affidavit.

Justice Rekha Palli remarked that the rules mandated the appointment of a senior employee as CCO, but Twitter, according to its affidavit, had appointed a "contingent worker" through a third party contractor. "What is this contingent worker? I don't know what it would mean. I have a problem with the word," the court said.

It gave the micro-blogging

site a week's time to submit a fresh affidavit. "File a better affidavit. This is not acceptable. I'm giving you a long rope but don't expect the court to do it on and on. Disclose the name of the third party contractor and explain 'contingent'."

Hearing on Aug. 6

The High Court directed Twitter to also disclose details of the Resident Grievance Officer (RGO) and Nodal Contact Person. It will hear the case again on August 6.

Twitter, in its affidavit, stated that Vinay Prakash had been appointed as COO and RGO as contingent worker through third party contractor.



Senior advocate Sajan Poovayya, representing Twitter, said the CCO had undertaken to perform all functions and responsibilities under the IT Rules, even though he was a contingent worker and appointed through third party contractor.

"I don't know what you want to do," the court re-

marked. "If you want to [comply with the rules], do it whole-heartedly."

Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma, appearing for the Centre, said Twitter was acting in "abject non-compliance of rules" as the CCO could not be a contingent worker.

"It has been months. You can't have it so easy. We hold our hands because we are before your lordship," the ASG said. Earlier, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology had stated that despite all Significant Social Media Intermediaries (SSMIs) having been granted three months' time to comply with the Information Technology Rules, 2021,

Twitter had failed to fully comply.

In India, Section 79 of the IT Act shields social media platforms or intermediaries such as Twitter from liability for any third party information, data, or communication link made available or hosted by it in certain cases. The Ministry said when an intermediary fails to observe the IT Rules, it could be liable for any punishment under any law for the time being in force in respect of the offending content.

The Ministry's affidavit came in response to a petition by advocate Amit Acharya seeking the appointment of a Resident Grievance Officer under Rule 4 of the IT Rules 2021.

Deshmukh: CBI carries out searches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The CBI has conducted searches at 12 locations in eight cities of Maharashtra, including on the premises of ACP Sanjay Patil and DCP Raju Bhujbal, in connection with allegations of corruption against former State

home minister Anil Deshmukh, officials said on Wednesday.

The searches were carried out in Mumbai, Pune, Ahmednagar, Nashik, Thane, Solapur, Sangli and Osmanabad, they added.

The premises of "encounter specialist" Mr. Patil in

Pune and Mumbai, and those of Mr. Bhujbal in Ahmednagar and Mumbai were covered during the operation, which concluded on Tuesday night.

The other premises belonged to alleged middlemen whose names have not been disclosed.

Fireman among six hurt in Mumbai building collapse



A portion on the north side of Mehta Babu Chawl in Andheri crashed around 12.30 a.m. on Wednesday. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Six people, including a fireman, were injured after part of a four-storey building collapsed in Andheri shortly after midnight on Wednesday, a fire brigade official said. A portion on the north side of Mehta Babu Chawl near Salami hotel in Juhu Galli crashed around 12.30 a.m. "Another 10 people were

trapped on the first and second floors of the building and they all were safely rescued," he said.

The six injured were rushed to Cooper Hospital. Out of them, fireman Vishwas Rahate (51) was discharged after treatment. The five others are undergoing treatment at the hospital. Four fire engines are at the site.

State govt. to reduce fees of private schools by 15%

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Cabinet on Wednesday decided to reduce fees of private schools in the State by 15%. Officials from the Education Department said the guidelines for it would be issued in the next two-three days.

"The issue was discussed in the previous Cabinet meeting in which details were sought. Today, while finalising the minutes of the last meeting, the issue was discussed again and the Cabinet approved it," said an official from the Education Department.

Various MLAs from both the ruling and Opposition sides, as well as parents' organisations, have been demanding a reduction in school fees in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent damage to the

economy and the earnings of families.

The official said that the decision would be applicable to all schools running with permission from the State government. "Irrespective of Board, be it State Board, CBSE, IB (International Baccalaureate), ICSE (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education) or any other Board, if the private school is running with permission from the State government, then it will have to reduce its fees by 15% for this academic year," he said.

The Cabinet also cleared the proposal to extend ₹50 lakh insurance cover to all Group C and D employees of municipal corporations, and those with municipal councils and municipal panchayats. This will also include sanitation workers, contract and wage workers.

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

BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

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

Item No.	NIT No., TENDER NO. & SCOPE OF WORK	Estimated job value (in Lakhs INR)	Earnest Money (in INR)	Last Date and time of availability of Tender Documents for download	Last Date and time of Submission of online Tender	Date and Time of Opening of Part I	Period of completion in months
1.	NIT No. AMD/CD/RMRE-SR/CORE/2021-22/T(210), Date: 16.07.2021 TENDER NO. AMD/CD/RMRE-SR/MLR-SB/CORE/2021-22/T210 5,000 m core drilling in Mangalur Schist Belt, Yadgir District, Karnataka with borehole depth varying from 50 to 150 metre.	152.70	NIL *	12-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	17-08-2021 at 17:00 hrs.	18-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	10 (TEN)
2.	NIT No. AMD/CD/ER/CORE/2021-22/T(211), Date: 19.07.2021 TENDER NO. AMD/CD/ER/KRK/CNDI/CORE/2021-22/T211 10,000 m core drilling in Karke and Chundi areas in Garhwa District, Jharkhand with borehole depth varying from 250 to 500 metre.	340.30	NIL *	12-08-2021 at 15:00 hrs.	17-08-2021 at 17:00 hrs.	18-08-2021 at 15:30 hrs.	18 (EIGHT TEEN)

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

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT
Mr. N SELVA KUMAR
PH: 9820350726
selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in
THE HINDU
India's National Newspaper



Virulence and variance

Policymakers have little option but to renew economic activities after rapid vaccination

The IMF's latest update to its World Economic Outlook spotlights the starkly widening variance in the global recovery from the economic strains caused by the pandemic. And the primary fault line precipitating the divergence of the world's economies into two blocs – those that are normalising activities from the COVID-19-induced curbs and those that are still struggling – is vaccine access and the pace of vaccination coverage. Three months since its April forecast, the IMF projects the global economy to expand at an unchanged pace of 6% this year. But it sees the world's advanced economies registering faster growth than forecast earlier, while emerging markets and developing economies are expected to post appreciably slower recoveries. The IMF projects Advanced Economies to grow by 5.6% in 2021, 0.5 percentage point quicker than forecast in April. Undergirding this anticipated acceleration, the U.S. economy is seen expanding by 7% – a 0.6 percentage point upgrade – on the back of an expansive vaccine roll-out that has helped enable substantial normalisation in activity, and expectations of additional fiscal support. Emerging market and developing economies on the other hand are seen expanding by 6.3%, 0.4 percentage point slower than projected in April.

India is seen as the largest drag, with the Fund cutting its growth forecast for South Asia's largest economy by 3 percentage points to 9.5%. Citing the impact of the 'severe second wave' and expected 'slow recovery in confidence' as a reason for its downgrade, the IMF has warned that "countries lagging in vaccination, such as India and Indonesia, would suffer the most among G20 economies" in the event of the emergence of a super-contagious virus variant. With just a little over 7% of the population fully vaccinated, India significantly lags the estimated global average of almost 14%, Brazil's 18% and is way behind the 50% and 55% coverage achieved in the U.S. and the U.K., respectively. The Fund was effusive in its praise for India's 'decisive action' in January, when it forecast 11.5% growth for the fiscal year ending in March 2022, before raising that projection to 12.5% in April, after the economy appeared to rebound well in the January-March quarter. That it has now downgraded its outlook so substantially reflects the extent to which the second wave has severely impaired momentum. With inflation looming as a visceral threat, demand yet to regain traction and political appetite in government for more fiscal support negligible, India's policymakers have little option but to hasten the vaccine roll-out on a war footing. Failure to expedite the coverage could cost the country dearly.

Probing Pegasus

West Bengal government is right in ordering a judicial inquiry into the spyware scandal

The institution of a judicial probe by the West Bengal government into allegations of surveillance using advanced spyware on potential Indian targets marks a significant political and legal pushback against the Union government's attempts to deny the global media revelations and diminish the potent threat such practices pose to democracy. Given Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's penchant for the dramatic and her endless run-ins with the Centre, it may be easy to dismiss the act of a State government ordering an inquiry into what could be a large-scale intelligence-gathering programme of a state actor as mere political chutzpah. However, in the context of the Centre and the ruling BJP's aggressive refusal to cede any ground on the growing demand for a credible probe into the use and misuse of Pegasus spyware, the West Bengal inquiry acquires both legal and political salience. The Union government claims that illegal surveillance is not possible in India and has not specifically admitted or denied the use of Pegasus, the spyware supplied by Israel's NSO Group. Ms. Banerjee has rightly invoked the possible grave implications for democracy, public order, the independence of the judiciary and the autonomy of legislators while ordering an inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act. Media reports suggest that those likely targeted included Prashant Kishor, the Trinamool Congress's strategist during the recent Assembly polls, and Abhishek Banerjee, Ms. Banerjee's nephew. Regardless of which agency or government was behind it, there are grounds to believe that part of the surveillance covered the State government's territory, bringing into play its legitimate right to order an investigation.

It is entirely a different matter that the two-member Commission, comprising Justice Madan B. Lokur, former judge of the Supreme Court, and Justice Jyotirmay Bhattacharya, former Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, may face severe constraints. For one thing, only some of the potential targets may testify and seek the Commission's aid in getting their phones forensically examined for evidence of infection by Pegasus. Central agencies may not readily offer their cooperation. The Intelligence Bureau may not be permitted to join the probe, and even if it did, it may claim privilege over documents and records relating to its legitimate interception orders, citing national security and operational sensitivity. In a country where there is no parliamentary oversight over its intelligence agencies, it is unclear how far these agencies and its personnel would cooperate with a probe ordered by a State government. There have been instances – the Jain and Verma Commissions come to mind – of intelligence files being made available to judicial panels. Therefore, it will be both desirable and appropriate if the Centre itself ordered a wide-ranging judicial inquiry into the Pegasus scandal so that the nation has an opportunity to get at the truth.

A judgment that must be taken in the right spirit

The striking down of the 97th Amendment is a reminder that the power to regulate cooperatives must stay with States



VIKRAM HEGDE

A constitutional amendment is a rare event. There have only been 104 such cases of those in the 71 years since the Constitution came into being. Rarer still is when a court strikes down a constitutional amendment, an event which has occurred only seven times before last week.

But such a moment has come to pass once again as *Union of India vs Rajendra N. Shah*, a judgment delivered by the Supreme Court of India on July 20, 2021. The 97th Constitutional Amendment was struck down, albeit in a limited manner.

The background

The 97th Constitutional Amendment came into effect from February 15, 2012 (<https://bit.ly/3xaOMOH>), and brought about many changes to the legal regime of cooperative societies. The amendment added "cooperative societies" to the protected forms of association under Article 19(1)(c), elevating it to a fundamental right. It also inserted Part IXB in the Constitution which laid down the terms by which cooperative societies would be governed, in more granular detail than was palatable.

The Constitution can be amended only by the procedure provided in Article 368. The amendment

procedure requires a majority of the total strength of each of the Houses of Parliament and two-thirds majority of those present and voting. A proviso to the Article lists out some articles and chapters of the Constitution, which can be amended only by a special procedure. The special procedure requires that the amendment will also have to be ratified by the legislatures of half of the States. It is precisely on the grounds of violation of this additional requirement that the 97th Constitutional Amendment was challenged.

It is important to locate this amendment in context. The idea that the cooperative sector ought to be controlled at the State level and not at the central or Union level goes back all the way to the Government of India Act, 1919 which placed cooperatives in the provincial list. This scheme carried forward into the Constitution with Entry 32 of the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution conferring power on the State legislatures to make laws pertaining to incorporation, regulation and the winding up of cooperative societies.

Central control

But the Union government has been acquiring incrementally greater control of cooperative societies over the years. Cooperative banks have been brought under the purview of the Reserve Bank of India. The political intent of the Union Government for more active involvement in the cooperative sector is also apparent from the recently established Union Ministry for Cooperation.



GETTY IMAGES

The statement of objects and reasons of the amendment Bill, which resulted in the amendment in question, cites the need for greater independence and transparency in the functioning of the cooperatives and inserted a number of provisions which provided for the regulation of cooperative societies.

The Gujarat High Court struck down the amendment in 2013 on the grounds that it had failed to comply with the requirements under Article 368(2) by virtue of not having been ratified by the States and had also given an additional finding that the 97th Amendment violated the basic structure of the Constitution.

The Union Government challenged the Gujarat High Court judgment before the Supreme Court, arguing that the amendment neither directly nor effectively changed the scheme of distribution of powers between the Centre and the States.

The parties which had challenged the amendment in the High Court argued that Part IXB, inserted by the 97th Amendment impinged upon the legislative power of the States by casting mandatory obligations upon the State legislatures to legislate in a particular

way in areas in which they ought to have had freedom. Some clauses of the newly inserted part of the Constitution would also override some existing State legislations.

The court took the example of the 73rd and 74th Amendments which introduced the chapters on panchayats and municipalities, respectively. Those amendments, similar in impact on the legislative power of the States, had been passed by the special procedure involving ratification by State legislatures. The court noted that the procedure had not been followed in this case but clarified that the judgment is confined to the procedural lacuna and does not go into the question of the amendment being violative of the basic structure of the Constitution.

Making a distinction

Having found this lapse in procedure, the judgment makes a distinction between cooperative societies operating in one State and multi-State cooperative societies and holds that while a ratification by half the State legislatures would have been necessary insofar as it applies to cooperative societies in one State, they chose not to go deeper into the question of whether the amendment also required ratification in respect of application to multi-State cooperative societies. The minority opinion considered that the provisions of the newly added part which pertain to multi-State cooperative societies could not exist independently of the parts which pertain to cooperative societies, and hence the whole amendment should be struck down.

This now brings us to the question – can the Government get over this decision? In theory it would seem simple enough. The amendment has only been struck down on account of the right procedure not having been followed and another amendment can be brought, but this time, going through the rigour of ratification by State legislatures. The National Democratic Alliance has a majority in 18 out of 28 State legislatures. The amendment which has now been struck down was an amendment of the United Progressive Alliance era, so it is not clear as to whether there will be any significant political opposition to the amendment if it is brought again.

A sector best left alone

Which brings us to the next question – should they? The cooperative sector has always been in the domain of the States or provinces. The organising principles and mechanism of these cooperatives differ from area to area and depend on the industry or crop which forms the fulcrum of the cooperative. Homogeneity in this area would only result in the creation of round holes in which square pegs no longer fit. They also would not really serve to break the control some political interests have taken over cooperatives. It is best that the Government takes this judgment in the right spirit and stays away from further meddling in the cooperative sector, notwithstanding the creation of the new Ministry.

Vikram Hegde is an Advocate on Record in the Supreme Court of India

Japanese education spells holistic development

It begins from scratch with elementary schools playing a vital role in trying to create mindful and responsible citizens



PRACHI GUPTA & PRAJAKTA KHARE

to shortages of essential supplies and overstretched public resources, and social disruption is inevitable. So, how can we prepare for the future? The answer: through our elementary schools.

Can we learn from another country? Yes. Probably, Japan.

In 2011, pictures from tsunami-hit Japan went viral, with locals patiently queuing up for rations amidst massive devastation. Throughout the novel coronavirus pandemic, schools and public spaces have remained fairly open in Japan due to people's responsible behaviour. As India prepares to re-open its schools along with the newly adopted New Education Policy, we can borrow some insights from the Japanese system.

Non-cognitive elements

Japan ranks among the top in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) which evaluates students on their progress in core academic subjects. However, another important aspect of the Japanese curriculum is its emphasis on non-cognitive elements. Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) explains 'Chi-Toku-Tai' as the defining features of Japanese schooling. Chi, which translates to 'know' lay an emphasis on building strong academic abilities. Toku, translates to 'virtue' and refers to mindfulness, self-discipline, and cooperative abilities. And last, Tai, translates to 'body, and refers to physical and mental well-being.

The Japanese education philosophy transitioned from an extremely examination-focused, rote memorisation-based approach to



GETTY IMAGES

the 'Chi-Toku-Tai' approach in the 1970s. The elementary school curriculum was later supplemented with subjects, namely moral education, integrated studies and special activities. Together, seen as a 'zest for life' approach, this philosophy focuses on holistic ability extending beyond academic progress to include 'kansei' which roughly translates to 'sensitivity'. This approach aims at developing a knowledgeable mind which can appreciate beauty and nature, hold a sense of justice, and respect life and labour.

Shaping social behaviour

Moral education includes norms that define socially responsible and considerate behaviour towards everyone including nature. For example, as a summer project, students venture out in nature observing beetles, cicadas, crickets and sketching or noting their characteristics in their 'insect diary'. Students as young as first graders take turns to clean their classrooms, washrooms, serve school lunches, and water the plants at school. When students cross a pedestrian crossing while making a driver wait, they bow in a 'thank you' to express gratitude. While these are some examples, the es-

sence is that elementary school curriculum can play a tremendous role in building courteous and mindful societies.

Such a system reaps several benefits. As students do various chores, it builds respect for labour and humility at a young age. It trains them to undertake routine jobs in an efficient manner and encourages responsible and mindful behaviour towards the community. Think of how the Japanese fans celebrated their victory in the 2018 football World Cup opening match against Colombia – by cleaning up their rows in the stadium in Russia.

Finding solutions

Integrated studies encompasses experiential learning and independent thinking where students identify problems in their local communities and think of solutions. For example, children may create a disaster preparedness map based on their own research. Seniors from the community are invited to share insights about the community's history. Activities such as these integrate schools with the community. If we can train our children in identifying problems in their local communities such as health ailments, pollution, waste disposal, etc. and coach them in developing solution road maps, the gains to both sides can be immense.

The special activities hour encourages students to consider the school as a "society". These include activities such as organising events, maintaining the library, etc. After task completion, students are made to reflect on the problems they experienced in the

process such as wastage, conflict, etc. and the ways to resolve them. This inculcates the practise of 'kaizen' – the Japanese philosophy of continuous improvement.

Finally, another notable aspect that defines Japanese society and education system is 'collectivism'. Unlike the West, Japan is a collectivist society. Working as a group and group harmony is fundamental to this society. While this has its own limitations, the general belief that one wins only when the group wins, generates equitable and united societies.

It's about unity

For us, volunteering for a treasure hunt activity involving third graders in Tokyo gave us an interesting insight into collectivism. Teams had to find the hidden treasure; however, the primary target was not the treasure but to keep the unit together. Teams could only move forward when all its members were together and agreed on the next strategy. So, if there were students on wheelchairs or slow otherwise, the group respectfully waited for them to arrive. Finally, the teachers had to pick one student per group to go to the stage to display the 'treasure' and receive the audience's applause. Surprisingly, they picked the ones who were usually lagging. Every third grader felt included and valued. The real treasure had been found. Amazing, isn't it?

Prachi Gupta is an Adjunct Professor of Economics and Political Science at Temple University, Japan Campus, Tokyo. Prajakta Khare is an Associate Professor of Economics at Meiji Gakuin University, Tokyo

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.

New Chief Minister

The appointment of Basavaraj Bommai as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka, has at last ended the animated suspense over the appointment of the successor to B.S. Yediyurappa, the tallest leader in Karnataka, who was instrumental in the fall of the Congress-JD(S) government by engineering resignations of Congress MLAs (Page 1, "Basavaraj Bommai will be new Karnataka CM", July 28). With Mr. Bommai's appointment, and as a loyalist of Mr. Yediyurappa, the BJP high command has made sure that the influence of the former leader remains and that the Lingayat community is not antagonised. One hopes that the shadow of corruption does not stalk

Mr. Bommai, and that he certainly does not stoop low in the future to dislodge a government, as his predecessor did.

M.Y. SHARIFF,
Chennai

■ The "prudent" decision in selecting another Lingayat as the Chief Minister is based on two critical aspects – let the Chief Minister be a familiar face in the political circle and as a consensus candidate to prevent any disintegration, and to preserve the Lingayat vote bank. The "non-selection" of a family member of Mr. Yediyurappa is politically correct and will enhance the image of the party in Karnataka. Hopefully, Mr. Yediyurappa, this time, will not launch a new party to the discomfort of the BJP.

V. LAKSHMANAN,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

■ Contrary to speculation that the BJP would spring a surprise, the party seems to have played it safe. Mr. Bommai appears to be a moderate face not known to take a hardline stance and an amenable man across party lines. His experience in handling diverse portfolios should stand him in good stead. It is heartening that the new Chief Minister has vowed to ensure a pro-people administration and improve the State's finances as his priorities.

N.J. RAVI CHANDER,
Bengaluru

Vaccinating children

With several health experts raising the possibility of a third wave of the pandemic, and having the potential to target children, the assurance by the Union Health Minister that vaccination for the 12-18

group may begin by August is welcome (Page 1, "Jabs for children as early as August", July 28). Although the indigenously developed Covaxin and ZyCoV-D are being considered, the Government should add the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, which have been given emergency approval for use in children, to the list. Paediatric clinical trials require more meticulous planning regarding the protocols employed, study of the immune response of the vaccines in children, narrowing down on the appropriate dose, the number of doses, interval between doses, and related safety aspects.

Dr. BIJU C. MATHEW,
Thiruvananthapuram

Follow the Dutch

Heavy rains and floods as events have existed at all

times, but their causing extensive damage of late is disturbing (OpEd page, "Let's make room for the river", July 28).

The mad world racing toward development and encroaching on every inch of space available is certainly one of the main reasons. With trees felled, land occupied and rivers not finding a place to flow, there is bound to be damage. The Dutch mantra, "live with water and build with nature", needs to be examined closely. Extreme weather events are not a sudden occurrence. Global warming is a clear warning that the solutions lie in identifying the root of the issue. There needs to be a balance between development and great respect for nature.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI,
Secunderabad

The RE

The Readers' Editor column in *The Hindu* is a unique feature in the history of the print media in the country. Though many newspapers publish letters from readers, there is hardly any interaction beyond that between readers and editorial staff. *The Hindu* changed it all. Mr. A.S. Pannarselvan has invited me twice for an interaction – an open house at Hyderabad and the second as a virtual meet. His long innings as Readers' Editor has been a fruitful and successful one. He has brought his wide experience to the profession. Whatever may be the comments from the readers, they are all constructive criticism.

J.P. REDDY,
Nalgonda, Telangana

No need for a drastic population policy

Data from Assam and Uttar Pradesh show that fertility rates have been reducing over time



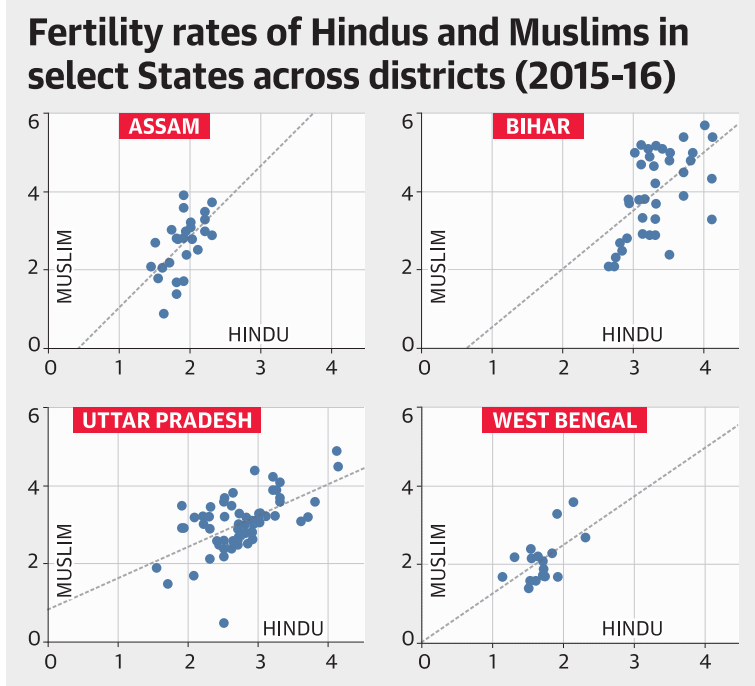
SUBHANIL CHOWDHURY & SASWATA GHOSH

Population policy is suddenly in the news in India with Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled States such as Assam and Uttar Pradesh proposing to bring in or bringing in draft legislation aimed at controlling their populations. The Uttar Pradesh Population (Control, Stabilisation and Welfare) Bill of 2021 promotes a two-child policy, according to which those people having more than two children will be barred from contesting local body elections and become ineligible to apply for State government jobs. A similar law has also been proposed in Assam, where the Chief Minister has even announced a 'population army' to curb the birth rate in Muslim-dominated areas in lower Assam. The U.P. Chief Minister has said that the aim of the policy is to reduce the total fertility rate in his State.

The Chief Ministers of these States don't seem to have read the document on population projection, published by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2019. According to this document, U.P. will reach a replacement rate (the rate at which women give birth to enough babies to sustain population levels) of 2.1 by 2025, and Assam by 2020. If the replacement fertility rate has already been achieved in Assam and will be achieved by 2025 in U.P., what is the need for any drastic population policy?

Decreasing fertility rates

The need arises because population policy is an important weapon in the arsenal of the Hindutva brigade to attack the Muslim population in the country. The Assam Chief Minister's 'population army' in Muslim areas and the U.P. Chief Minister's many utterances prove this. However, even on this score, their policy framework is wrong. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-2 data, the total fertility rate (TFR), which is the average number of children that women of reproductive age group have had in their lifetime, in 1998-99 in U.P. was 3.87 for Hindus and 4.76



Source: Fourth round of NFHS, 2015-16; calculated by the authors

for Muslims. In 2015-16, it decreased to 2.67 for Hindus and 3.1 for Muslims. This means that the TFR declined by 1.2 for Hindus and by 1.66 for Muslims, which is higher. The NFHS-5 data for 2019-20 for U.P. have not been published. When it is published, data will show that the fertility rate for both Hindus and Muslims has declined even further.

The fertility trend for Assam is even starker. According to NFHS data, Assam had a TFR of 3.5 in 1992-93, which decreased to 1.9 in 2019-20. For Muslims, it declined from 3.05 to 2.38 in the same period. While the fertility rate of Hindus is less than the replacement level, the fertility rate of Muslims is near that level and will reach there in the near future without any policy intervention.

The point is that fertility rate does not depend on religion. It depends on socio-economic characteristics like education, income, maternal and child health conditions, and other associated factors. The graphs above show this in a concise manner. We have taken the district-wise ferti-

lity rates for Hindus and Muslims in four States: U.P., Assam, West Bengal and Bihar (calculated from NFHS-4 2015-16 data). The horizontal axis shows the fertility rate for Hindus and the vertical axis shows the fertility rate for Muslims. It is clear from the graphs that there is a positive relationship between the fertility rates of Hindus and Muslims. In other words, in districts where Hindus have a high fertility rate, the fertility rate of Muslims is also high. This cannot be explained by religion but by socio-economic factors in these districts. It is also clear that there are districts in these four States where the fertility rate for Hindus is actually higher than that of Muslims. The fertility rate of Hindus is greater than Muslims in four districts of Assam, 11 districts of Bihar, 22 of U.P. and three of West Bengal. Therefore, to stigmatise Muslims in terms of population growth and breeding more children is a figment of the right-wing imagination and not supported by facts.

Preference for a male child

The preceding discussion pointed out that the population control policy of imposing a two-child norm is not supported by data. However, it can have other unintended consequences. Generally, any discussion on fertility focuses on policy recommendations regarding increasing fe-

male education, which is no doubt important. However, a single-minded focus on this policy instrument ignores the issue of a preference for male children, which is dominant in the country. An earlier study of women's fertility in Hindi heartland States showed that the proportion of graduate women who had two living daughters but still wanted another child was 23.7% in Bihar, 27.3% in U.P. and 28.3% in Rajasthan. This is nothing but an indicator of a preference for sons in a patriarchal and caste-dominated society. Given such a preference for male children, the two-child norm will only increase sex-selective abortions of girl children, and female infanticide, since couples will want to maintain both the two-child norm as proposed to be enacted by the government as well as their preference for sons.

Problem of ageing

The experience of China also shows that if the state imposes its decision on families' fertility choices, such a decision is bound to fail. With the one-child policy, the proportion of the aged population is increasing in China. Fewer younger workers are available, which might result in a slowdown of economic growth. As a result, the government has been forced to relax the one-child policy and adopt a three-child policy. In India too, as per the population projection report, the proportion of people aged 60 years and above will increase from 13.8% in 2011 to 23.1% in 2036. The two-child norm will only further aggravate the problem of ageing.

The lesson to be drawn is that the decision on children is best made by the family, which can be nudged towards making choices that ensure a stable population growth. As a famous demographer argued, the fertility behaviour of a couple is a "calculus of conscious choice". India's decades-old population policy has achieved replacement level fertility in the country without taking any coercive measures. Governments should have faith in these time-tested policies and respect the choices of people rather than impose warped and motivated ideas regarding demography on the people.

Subhanil Chowdhury and Saswata Ghosh are Faculty at the Institute of Development Studies, Kolkata

Spotlight on the triangle

With the pandemic fuelling nationalism in politics in the U.S., China and India, relations are in a difficult phase

VARGHESE K. GEORGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has sharpened divisions within and among countries. Nationalism continues to stir India, with the re-election of Narendra Modi in 2019, and the U.S., despite the defeat of Donald Trump in 2020. The pandemic and the expansionism of China have led India and the U.S. to put their relationship in the spotlight, writes the author in a revised edition of Open Embrace: India-US Ties in a Divided World. An excerpt:

While the pandemic turned out to be yet another occasion for China to claim superiority of its economic and political model, it also exposed the weaknesses of the American political and economic system. COVID-19 triggered a fresh round of debate on liberalism. As for India, 2020 was a year of reckoning in its relations with China. In a first in 45 years, both sides lost soldiers in a border clash. At least 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese died in Ladakh in June 2020 leading to massive mobilisation of forces by both sides.

The Chinese factor

The aftermath of the pandemic fuelled more nationalism in politics in many parts of the world, certainly in China, India and the U.S. Even in his defeat, Donald Trump so sharply put the spotlight on China as the key challenger of the U.S. in the 21st century that Joe Biden and the Democrats have agreed to broadly follow that line. The Chinese action of occupying disputed territories so damaged the bilateral relationship that it is now at its 'most difficult phase' in the last 34 years, according to S. Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister.

The Chinese action remained inexplicable. China gave India 'five differing explanations' and 'literally brought tens of thousands of soldiers in full military preparation mode right to the LAC in Ladakh'. Ashley Telis has linked the Chinese action to India's decision in August 2019 to carve out Ladakh as a federally administered territory, along with the ending of the special constitutional status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

In the last seven decades of America's strategy in South Asia, there has been one constant, and that is Pakistan and its military — as a partner in propping up jihadis, then fighting them and now being found out as playing both sides. Also noteworthy is the fact that the U.S.'s entanglement with Pakistan and China is inseparable from one another. Pakistan had aided U.S.-China ties in the 1970s; and today, Pakistan does not fight shy of its loyalty and admiration for China. In January 2021, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran

Khan said the Chinese model of development was something that his country would want to emulate. 'I think Pakistan is going to help us out to extricate ourselves (from Afghanistan)', Trump said in July 2019. In January 2018, he had said, 'They have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools.' Trump's contradictory, strident remarks are unusual for a president, but these are instructive. General Lloyd Austin, appointed Defense Secretary by Biden, said during his confirmation hearing that Pakistan had taken 'constructive steps' in the Afghanistan peace process. For all the strategic clarity that the U.S. is supposed to possess, it cannot decide for sure whether Pakistan is an ally or an enemy. Much in the same manner as ties with China, the U.S. relationship with Pakistan remains an unsettled question.

Pakistan's constant refrain has been that the route to 'peace in Afghanistan is through Kashmir', the argument being that unless America forces India to make concessions in Kashmir, no progress was possible in Afghanistan — making both Kashmir and Afghanistan part of the same continuum of transnational Islamist politics. American presidents until Barack Obama were sympathetic to this position, though nobody stated it in obvious terms. India's resistance to the American view of seeing Kashmir and Afghanistan as components of the same puzzle predates Modi's Hindutva doctrine. While opposing any link between Kashmir and Afghanistan, the Prime Ministers before Modi were willing to separately engage with Kashmiri separatists and Pakistan on the issue. Since 2014, the country's position has become more strident and combative.

The BJP and the PDP had a common minimum programme that left negotiations with the separatists solely with the PDP and in Srinagar, and the Central government showed little interest in addressing insurgency in the State other than by military force. In late 2017, the Modi government appointed Dineshwar Sharma as interlocutor for Kashmir, whose failure was foretold. In June 2018, the BJP ended its alliance with the PDP, and in August 2019, the special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir was rescinded.

While Pakistan has been pleading with America to be more interventionist in Kashmir, India has resisted all such moves.

Excerpted with permission from Penguin Random House India



Open Embrace: India-US Ties in a Divided World
Varghese K. George
Penguin Random House
₹399

Oxygen for fiscal federalism

A special rate could be levied to the States to enable them to raise more resources during the pandemic

RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN

James Madison, who created the basic framework for the U.S. Constitution, once said, "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite."

But Indian federalism is very different. The British lawyer and academic, Sir Ivor Jennings, was of the view that India has a federation with a strong centralising policy. Nonetheless, India maintained its limited federal characteristics for a fairly long time. Those characteristics are now disappearing in the Modi era.

Disregarding an obligation

At the time of introducing the new indirect tax regime, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) law assured States a 14% increase in their annual revenue for five years (up to July 1, 2020). But the Union government has deviated from the statutory promise and has been insisting that States avail themselves of loans. Kerala is entitled to a GST compensation of ₹4,041 crore for the financial year 2020-21. But the Union government has been disregarding this obligation. The future interest liability of these loans should not be placed on the shoulders of the States. Moreover, the borrowing limit of States, as per the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, should not be built into these loans. This policy needs clarity.

Last year, the Union government increased the borrowing ceiling of the States from 3% to 5% for FY 2020-21. But conditions are attached to 1.5% of the 2% of increased ceiling. It is the States which have to bear the burden of welfare and relief measures during the pandemic. Attaching conditions for expenditure out of the borrowed amount would clip the wings of the States and goes against the principle of cooperative federalism.

The Fifteenth Finance Commission had recommended ₹2,412 crore as a sector-specific grant and ₹1,100 crore as a State-specific grant for Kerala. But the Union government has not taken any steps to release these

amounts. The expenditure rules attached to the Disaster Management Fund are unviable. The rules could be amended to ease expenditure. The Corporate Social Responsibility Fund could be remitted to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

As per the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, compensation on account of the implementation of GST will be available for a period of five years. Compensation beyond five years requires a constitutional amendment. The GST Act says it is a law to provide for compensation to the States for the loss of revenue arising on account of the implementation of the GST for a period of five years or for such period as may be prescribed on the recommendation of the GST Council.

Urgent measures

The present compensation period will end in 2021-22. Beyond this period, it is going to be very difficult to convince the Union government to provide compensation as there is no constitutional obligation to do so to the States. This will create serious financial stress to the States, especially to those which require higher compensation.

As per Section 4(f) of Article 279A, the Union government can consider introducing any special rate to raise additional resources during any natural calamity or disaster". Section 4(f) says: "The Goods and Services Tax Council shall make recommendations to the Union and the States on — Any special rate or rates for a specified period, to raise additional resources during any natural calamity or disaster". Article 279A was inserted through the Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act.

Hence, a special rate could be levied for a specified period in order to raise additional resources to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 with the approval of the GST Council. These are some urgent necessary measures that are to be taken for pumping oxygen to fiscal federalism in India.

Rajmohan Unnithan is Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Kasaragod

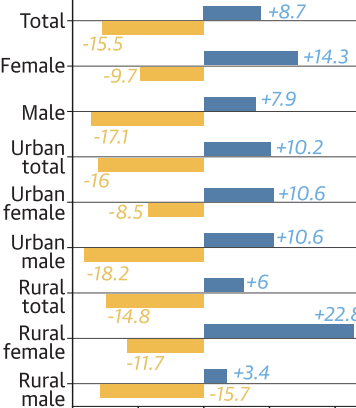
DATA POINT

First wave swallows jobs

An analysis of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data shows that in the period coinciding with the national lockdown during the first wave, the number of workers reduced drastically across all types of jobs — salaried, casual labour and self-employed. The reduction in jobs was felt the most in the urban centres, which bore the brunt of the virus and the related movement restrictions. Even in nominal terms, without considering inflation, the earnings of self-employed individuals drastically reduced while the wages of casual labour increased marginally. Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh recorded wage reductions across all types of jobs during the national lockdown. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Jasmin Nihalani and Sumant Sen

SALARIED

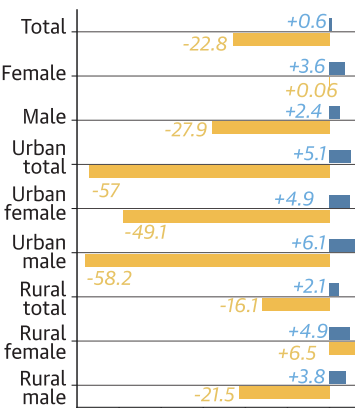
The chart shows the change in the number of salaried/regular wage workers and their salaries in April-June 2020 compared to the same period a year before. For instance, the estimated number of workers in the salaried class decreased by 15.5%, while their salary in nominal terms increased by 8.7% in the same period. Map 1 shows the change in the salaries of such workers, in nominal terms, in April-June 2020 compared to the same period a year before



Map 1: Among major States, nominal wages of salaried workers decreased in A.P., Gujarat, Punjab and W.B.

CASUAL LABOUR

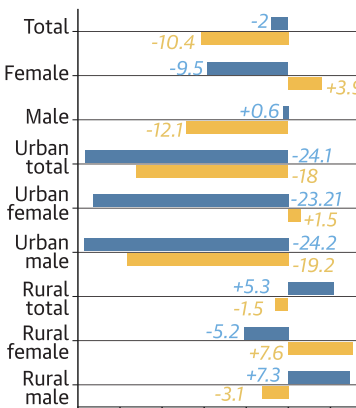
The chart shows the change in the number of days that casual labourers collectively worked and their daily wages in April-June 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. For instance, the number of days they worked decreased by 22.8%, while their salary in nominal terms increased by a meagre 0.6% in the same period. Map 2 shows the change in the daily wages of casual labourers, in nominal terms, in April-June 2020 compared to the same period in 2019



Map 2: The wages of casual labourers in Gujarat, W.B., Bihar and many southern States decreased

SELF-EMPLOYED

The chart shows the change in the estimated number of self-employed workers and their earnings in April-June 2020 compared to the same period a year before. For instance, the estimated number of such workers decreased by 10.4%, while their salary in nominal terms decreased by 2% in the same period. The map shows the change in self-employed workers' earnings, in nominal terms, in April-June 2020 compared to the same period a year before



Map 3: The earnings of self-employed workers decreased in many States

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 29, 1971

We won't fall into trap: Swaran Singh

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, to-day warned that any attempt by any party or country "to twist the Bangla Desh problem into an Indo-Pakistani issue will be strongly resisted by India." "We will not fall into this trap," he said, while replying to questions in the Rajya Sabha to-day [New Delhi, July 28]. India had made its position very clear to the U.N. Secretary-General, U Thant, as well as to the Ambassadors representing the member countries of the Security Council and several other important members. "I feel that our position is understood by these countries," he said. Mr. Swaran Singh told the House that the U.N. Secretary-General had not suggested the convening of a meeting of the Secretary Council formally or informally to consider the Bangla Desh situation. He also denied that the Secretary-General had tried to equate India and Pakistan on the issue. "Any such equation is opposed to facts and we have rejected it totally," he added. What was needed now, he said, was that attention should be diverted and concentrated in creating conditions in Bangla Desh which should stop the refugees from coming to India and enable those who were in India to go back in safety and security. He said the Government of India had also made its position very clear that any suggestion to post additional U.N. observers in India and Pakistan was "an entirely wrong approach to the problem."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 29, 1921

German missionaries

The Secretary of the World Alliance for promoting international friendship through the Churches recently wrote to the Colonial, Indian and Foreign Offices suggesting that German missionaries should be allowed to resume their work in certain British territories. Mr. Churchill replied that the war had shown that certain foreign societies and individuals had been unable to prevent their national instincts influencing their conduct to a degree incompatible with their proper functions and prejudicial to the security of their territories in which they were working. Nevertheless applications from individual German missionaries of unimpeachable antecedents for permission to enter the colonies would be considered provided they were under the control of a local British, Allied or associated subjects and vouched for by a responsible ecclesiastical British authority.

FROM PAGE ONE

Democratic values bind U.S. and India: Blinken

In response to international criticism of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the government's moves on Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, the External Affairs Minister has in the past referred to the burden of "accumulated problems" of history, and has defended Internet restrictions as required for maintaining law and order.

On Afghanistan, Mr. Blinken and Mr. Jaishankar agreed that there was no "military solution" to the conflict, and that taking over the country by force would not help the Taliban gain the "international recognition" or "legitimacy" it desires, including the lifting of sanctions and travel bans against the Taliban leadership. In a reference to Pakistan, Mr. Jaishankar said one neighbour of Afghanistan was an "exception" to the consensus for a peaceful political settlement. Ahead

of the talks, MEA sources had said India would raise the need for "sustained pressure" on Pakistan on terror financing and safe havens. An Afghanistan that did not respect the rights of its people, and an Afghanistan that committed atrocities against its own people would not be part of the global community, Mr. Blinken said.

Both the dignitaries also highlighted cooperation in the Indo-Pacific as part of the 'Quad' with Japan and Australia, which Mr. Blinken said was "not a military alliance" at all.

The two sides also spoke about the Quad's initiative to provide Indian-made vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region. Mr. Blinken announced a \$25-million grant for India's vaccine programme, and promised to strengthen vaccine supply chains to enhance production.

No immunity for acts of vandalism in House: SC

Boundaries of lawful behaviour apply to all, including MLAs who hold responsible elected office in the Legislative Assembly.

No member of an elected legislature can claim either a privilege or an immunity to stand above the sanctions of the criminal law, which applies equally to all citizens.

The State government and the accused LDF leaders, including the present Kerala Education Minister V. Sivankutty, who were in the Opposition in 2015, had claimed parliamentary privilege, arguing that the incident occurred inside the Assembly hall. They claimed immunity from criminal prosecution.

The accused MLAs are facing charges of criminal trespass, mischief and destruction of public property. Televised images from the

day of the incident show legislators come to blows on the House floor and hurl chairs, computers and other public property soon after Finance Minister K.M. Mani began his budget speech during the UDF government's tenure.

The court explained that the purpose of bestowing privileges and immunities to elected members of the legislature was to enable them to perform their "essential functions" without hindrance, fear or favour. The 'essential' function of the House is collective deliberation and decision-making, it said.

"These privileges bear a functional relationship to the discharge of the functions of a legislator. They are not a mark of status which makes legislators stand on an unequal pedestal," the court observed.

United Oppn. can make a difference: Mamata

Ms. Banerjee evaded questions on the contours of such a unified Opposition and who would lead it. "I am not a political astrologer. It depends on the situation. I have no problem if someone else leads," she said.

She asserted that talks should begin after the monsoon session of Parliament. She refused to answer questions on the role the Congress would play in a unified Opposition. "Congress president Sonia Gandhi too wants to have a united Opposition," Ms. Banerjee said.

So far, Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal and Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSR Congress have maintained a distance from the Opposition bloc in Parliament. On whether talks were on to bring them on board, Ms. Banerjee said, "I maintain good relations with both Mr. Patnaik and Mr. Reddy. Today, they may not be with us but who can say that this will not change tomorrow?"

Ms. Banerjee dodged questions on Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who returned to the National Democratic Alliance in 2017, and Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati, saying it was a question for them to answer. "If the Opposition parties in U.P. want to stop the BJP, then they will have to work together," she said.

"I want to help all regional and national parties bell the cat," Ms. Banerjee added, in an apparent reference to the BJP. "If the leaders come together, workers too shall unite."

Ms. Banerjee said it was wrong to term the Pegasus malware issue as esoteric "since everyone has a mobile phone today". West Bengal is the first State to institute an inquiry into the Pegasus snooping controversy. "Why is the government not taking *suo motu* action? They can send CBI and ED for raids everywhere, then why not for this?"

Mizoram and Assam to solve row amicably

Six policemen and another person were killed in border clashes between the two States on Monday. The Chief Secretaries and the Directors-General of Police of both States attended the meeting that went on for more than two hours.

Earlier, the Mizoram government requested the Ministry for directions to Assam to remove the road and rail blockades for resumption of flow of essential commodities and movement of

people of the State. In a letter to Mr. Bhalla, the State government said National Highway-306 and other roads connecting Mizoram with other parts of the country from Assam had been blocked from Monday. "The blockade is affecting the livelihood of the people of Mizoram adversely. Movement of vehicles along other routes connecting Mizoram and Assam have also been blocked inside Assam," it said.

Nine feared dead in H.P. floods

Seven reported missing, two injured as incessant rain results in flash floods

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

At least nine people are feared dead, seven are reported missing, and two have been injured in separate incidents on Tuesday and Wednesday as incessant rain lashed Himachal Pradesh, resulting in flash floods in several rivers and rivulets.

Cloud burst in Lahaul
"Twelve people were washed away due to a flash flood after a cloudburst in Tozing nallah in Lahaul. Of the 12, seven bodies have been recovered while three persons are still missing from the incident site. Two people have been rescued," State Disaster Management Authority Director Sudesh Kumar Mokhta on Wednesday told *The Hindu*.

Two people died in Chamba district. They were washed away into river waters due to floods.



In pieces: A part of Manikaran Valley that was damaged by the floods in Kullu district. •PTI

"In Kullu, a 25-year-old woman, Poonam, and her four-year-old son Nikunj, along with one tourist, Ms. Dineeta from Delhi, and Vijender, an official of the Hari Sons hydro project, drowned in the Brahmanga

river near Manikaran around 6.15 a.m. today (Wednesday) owing to a sudden surge in the volume of water. The victims are still untraceable and rescue operations are under way," Mr. Mokhta said.

Several incidents of landslides have been reported across the State, especially the tribal districts, including Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur, in the past couple of days as incessant rain lashed the hill State.

Second Rafale squadron operationalised

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force on Wednesday operationalised its second Rafale fighter squadron by formally inducting jets into the No. 101 Squadron at Air Force Station Hasimara in West Bengal. The IAF has so far inducted 26 Rafale jets in eight batches; the previous batch was inducted on July 21.

An IAF statement said, "Addressing the personnel during the induction ceremony, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, Chief of Air Staff said the induction of Rafale had been carefully planned at Hasimara, keeping in mind the importance of strengthening IAF's capability in the Eastern Sector."

The ceremony also included a fly past heralding the arrival of Rafale aircraft to the Hasimara base.

Chandrayaan-3 mission likely late next year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Chandrayaan-3 mission is likely to be launched late next year, Minister of State for Space Jitendra Singh said in a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. "Chandrayaan-3 is likely to be launched during the third quarter of 2022, assuming normal work flow henceforth," the Minister said.

The Chandrayaan-2 mission, launched in July 2019, was scheduled to be an effort aimed at landing a rover on the Lunar South Pole. It was sent aboard the country's most powerful geosynchronous launch vehicle, the GSLV-Mk 3.

However, the lander Vikram, instead of a controlled landing, ended up crash-landing on September 7, 2019, and stymied the effort.

CJI switches to Telugu to ensure peace between couple

Bench noticed that woman litigant from A.P. was finding it difficult to express herself in English

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Wednesday switched to his mother tongue Telugu to pave the way for peace between a couple locked in a 20-year-old case.

Supreme Court judges usually resort to Hindi when they learn that litigants, mostly petitioners-in-person, are unable to speak or understand English. An interaction in a regional language between the Bench and a litigant has rarely been witnessed in the apex court.

Wednesday saw the Bench of Chief Justice Ramana and Justice Surya Kant make an effort to ensure that language barriers do not come in the way of access to justice in a country known for its linguistic diversity. Recent times have seen the Supreme Court translate its judgments from English to various regional languages. The objective is to help litigants and the public read the verdicts themselves and fully understand the law.



Chief Justice N.V. Ramana

when the Bench noticed that the woman litigant, hailing from Andhra Pradesh, was finding it difficult to express herself freely in English.

On enquiring about it, the woman told the Bench that she was neither fluent in English nor Hindi. The Chief Justice consulted Justice Kant about interacting with the litigant in Telugu. The CJ said he would translate for Justice Kant, who readily agreed. The case concerned a harassment complaint filed by the woman against her husband under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code in 2001. The trial court had convicted the man and sentenced him to undergo one

7 killed, 5 injured as flash floods hit J&K, Ladakh

Govt. infrastructure damaged by rain

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Seven people were killed and five critically injured after a cloudburst hit Kishtwar's Honzar village in the upper reaches of the Jammu region on Wednesday.

And flash floods triggered by incessant rain in the past 24 hours damaged civilian property and government infrastructure in parts of J&K and Ladakh.

"Seven bodies have been recovered from Honzar village in Dacchan tehsil so far. A total of 17 people were rescued. Of which, five were critically injured. A rescue operation is on," Inspector General of Police Mukesh Singh told *The Hindu*.

Initial reports suggested that 19 residential houses and 21 cowsheds were damaged by flash floods triggered by the cloudburst that took place in the intervening night of July 27-28.



A rescue operation underway at Honzar village in Kishtwar district. •PTI

For many hours, rescue teams could not reach the village due to the weather. The district administration, accompanied by the members of the State Disaster Relief Force (SDRF), and the police rushed multiple teams to the area to rescue around 35 missing locals, including members of the Bakermal community.

Officials skip House panel meet

Questions on Pegasus attack would have come up during discussions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Standing Committee on Information Technology, headed by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, could not deliberate on "Citizens' Data Security and Privacy" on Wednesday, as none of the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Department of Telecom attended the meeting, citing various reasons for their absence.

A discussion on data security and privacy would have entailed questions on the alleged Pegasus cyberattack.

The BJP members, for the second consecutive day, staged a walkout refusing to sign the attendance register, forcing the meeting to be cancelled in the absence of quorum.

"@BJP4India members come to the IT Committee & refuse to sign the attendance register to deny a quorum. Further all the witnesses called from MEITY & MHA wrote in excuses & didn't appear as called to testify. It's very clear that #Pegasus is a no go area for this government," Congress MP Karti Chidambaram, who is a member, tweeted.

The BJP, he said, wanted

Tharoor has taken a contract to end the parliamentary tradition of standing committees

NISHIKANT DUBEY
BJP MP

to expunge Pegasus from any debate, scrutiny or enquiry. "What are they so afraid of?"

Sources said that right at the very beginning, the BJP members started protesting. They accused Mr. Tharoor of running the "Congress agenda" and not discussing the subject of meetings with the members before finalising it. This led to a sharp exchange

of words between the Opposition and BJP members.

BJP's Nishikant Dubey complained that TMC's Mahua Moitra called him "Bihari goonda", or hoodlum.

Addressing Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Mr. Dubey, in a tweet in Hindi, said that in his 13 years as a parliamentarian for the first time he was abused in a meeting of a standing committee. "TMC MP Mahua Moitra thrice called me a 'Bihari goonda'," he said. He also accused Mr. Tharoor of having taken a "contract to end the parliamentary tradition of standing committees."

IN BRIEF



Sircar files nomination papers for RS poll

KOLKATA
Jawhar Sircar, former CEO of Prasar Bharati, filed his nomination papers on Wednesday for the Rajya Sabha election in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly. The Trinamool Congress had announced its support for Mr. Sircar, a retired bureaucrat, for the nomination to the Upper House.

No individual can capture AIADMK: OPS

CHENNAI
AIADMK coordinator O. Panneerselvam said on Wednesday that no individual belonging to "one family" would be allowed to take over the party, referring to the AIADMK's former interim general secretary V.K. Sasikala's claim that she would soon retrieve control of the party.

₹701 cr. relief package is belated aid for last year

PUNE
The ₹701 crore relief package for farmers in flood-hit Maharashtra announced by Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar in Parliament was part of last year's relief arrears, claimed Maharashtra Agriculture Minister Dada Bhuse. Mr. Bhuse, along with State Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Vijay Wadettiwar, said they hoped for early assistance from the Centre for those who have suffered from floods this year.

SGNP authorities appeal for adoption of animals

MUMBAI
Authorities at the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) in Mumbai are seeking individuals across the country to come forward and adopt the animals at the park as the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reduced the number of those who usually come forward to help. "We started this scheme in 2013 where an individual can adopt a particular animal in captivity for one year by paying a certain amount to the park. We stick the certificate with the donor's name in front of the cage and allow the individual to visit the animal once in 15 days," said Vijay Barabde, Range Forest Officer (RFO), Lion Safari Park, SGNP.

CBI searches ECL officials' premises in coal theft case

NEW DELHI
The CBI on Wednesday conducted searches on the premises of some Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) officials in connection with the illegal coal mining and theft allegedly by Anup Majhi and others in West Bengal. "The searches were carried out at 15 locations in West Bengal, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh," said a CBI official. The agency found about ₹20 lakh in cash, jewellery and property documents from the premises of the general manager.

'Great challenges for all democracies'

U.S. Secretary of State discusses inter-religious relations, media freedom at 'civil society round-table'

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Inter-religious relations, media freedom, farmers' protests, love 'jihad' violence and minority rights were part of the discussion that visiting U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken had with a group of people, including a representative of the Dalai Lama, here on Wednesday. The "civil society round-table" discussion, which is expected to raise some concerns from the Union government and a possible protest from China, was Mr. Blinken's first engagement during his day-long visit to India.

Sources said Tibet was not directly raised during the meeting, but the lack of progress in China's dialogue on the issue was discussed at the round-table talks, which included Geshe Dorji Damdul, the Delhi-based Director of Tibet House.



Listening to all: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the civil society meet in New Delhi on Wednesday. • REUTERS

Mr. Blinken also met Ngodup Dongchung, Director of the Bureau of the Dalai Lama, in Delhi separately on Wednesday morning.

While representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Authority, or "government in exile", have met with U.S. diplomats in the past, the presence of Mr. Damdul in the meeting with Indian civil society and with the U.S. Secretary of State in

Delhi is a first.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Blinken spoke of the "great challenges" for all democracies in the world, particularly India and the U.S., where Congress has been holding committee hearings on the January 6 attack on the Capitol House by pro-Trump protesters. Mr. Blinken said the India-U.S. relationship was one of the "most important" in the

world, whose people were "connected by shared values".

"The Indian people and the American people believe in human dignity and equality of opportunity, the rule of law, fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion and belief," Mr. Blinken said in remarks released to the media. "We believe that all people deserve to have a voice in their government and be treated with respect no matter who they are," he added. The Union government's response to recent protests was part of the discussion that followed.

A photograph of the meeting tweeted shortly after showed constitutional lawyer Menaka Guruswamy, Inter-Faith Foundation founder Khwaja Ifkhar Ahmed and representatives of the Ramakrishna Mission as well as Baha'i, Sikh and Christian NGOs present at the meeting

with Mr. Blinken and U.S. Charge d'Affaires Atul Keshap.

During the 45-minute discussion, Mr. Blinken received perspectives from the representatives on the status of religious freedom, including the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the anti-conversion (derogatorily referred to as love 'jihad') laws passed by some States, which have drawn international criticism. In addition, the problems of farmers protesting at Delhi's borders over the agriculture laws passed last year were part of the conversation, sources told *The Hindu*.

"India is passing through an ideologically transitional phase, and it is time for a closer engagement between those who hold secularism and those who hold Hinduva close to their hearts," said Dr. Ahmed, when asked about the meeting.

Blinken's comments on 'shared values' rile China

Democracy must not be used to belittle other nations: Beijing

ANANTH KRISHNAN

American Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasising the "shared values" of India and the United States as two democracies, during his visit to India on Wednesday, brought a sharp response from Beijing.

Mr. Blinken, at his meeting with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, said: "There is greater imperative than ever on cooperation, coordination, collaboration among countries, especially among countries who share basic perspectives, basic values, and basic interests."

"And that is certainly the case with the United States and India," he said.

A question from an American media outlet during a daily press briefing in Beijing on Wednesday, about Mr.

Blinken speaking of two of the world's democracies standing in support of shared ideals at the time of a rising global threat to democracy even if he did not directly name China, brought a long and sharp response from Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian.

"I want to stress that democracy is a common value shared by all, not a patent owned by any country," said Mr. Zhao. "To achieve democracy, there are various ways rather than a fixed formula or a standard answer. 'One-man, one-vote' and a multi-party system is not the sole form of democracy. Democracy should not be used as a label or tool to belittle or smear other countries or stoke confrontations. Which country is a democracy and

which an autocracy should not be determined by a very small number of countries. Debasing others while elevating oneself in itself is not democratic at all."

"Some self-proclaimed democracies are deeply troubled at home by wealth disparity, social division, racial divide and political polarisation," he said, referring to themes often mentioned in the Chinese official media's critical coverage of the U.S.

"In some countries, it is 'no money, no vote' and partisan interests above public interests. Is that democratic politics or money politics? Some countries blatantly meddle in other countries' domestic affairs, shift blames and suppress and contain other countries' development."

IN BRIEF



BJP MP moves privilege motion against Tharoor

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on Wednesday moved a privilege motion against Shashi Tharoor (Congress), who heads the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology (IT), and demanded his removal as the Chairman of the panel. Mr. Dubey said members from the BJP would not be attending Wednesday's meeting, in which the panel was supposed to discuss the Pegasus project. The meeting was eventually cancelled for want of quorum.

Congress legislator resigns in Manipur

Manipur Assembly secretary M. Ramani issued a bulletin on Wednesday saying that as the resignation of Congress MLA Govindas Konthoujam has been accepted, the Bishnupur constituency is vacant. Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee interim president N. Loken said, "I have been trying to talk with Mr. Konthoujam over the phone since his whereabouts are not known. But all the three phones are switched off. He had stated that he was resigning for personal reasons." Referring to social media reports that about seven Congress MLAs may follow Mr. Konthoujam, he stated that they had no basis.

EC holds review meet on coming Assembly polls

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday held a review meeting on the "advance planning" for the upcoming elections in Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, an EC statement said. The EC met the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) and discussed various issues, including facilities at polling stations, the electoral roll, postal ballots for electors over 80 years and arrangement of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs), the EC said.

Not going anywhere until Pegasus is discussed: Rahul

14 party leaders meet to discuss joint strategy against govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Asserting that the allegations of snooping using the Pegasus spyware were not about privacy but an "anti-national act and treason", former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said "a united Opposition was not going anywhere" until the government agreed to discuss the issue in Parliament.

The Opposition hardened its stance after leaders of 14 parties met at the office of the Rajya Sabha's Leader of the Opposition, Mallikarjun Kharge, in the morning to discuss a joint strategy against the Narendra Modi government.

Mr. Gandhi was among those who attended the meeting. Several of them, in

a calibrated manner, had demanded an adjournment motion to discuss the snooping issue after suspending regular business.

"The Opposition is united for a discussion on the Pegasus issue... We are not going anywhere till it is discussed in Parliament," Mr. Gandhi said in a joint Opposition press conference.

The Opposition's aggressive stance also came after what Mr. Gandhi claimed was "the government's refusal to have any discussion on the issue in Parliament".

"Has the Government of India bought Pegasus?... Did the government use the Pegasus weapon on its own people?" he asked.

Rejecting the government's allegations that the Opposition was disrupting

Parliament, Mr. Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of "attacking the soul of India's democracy".

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) MP T.R. Baalu said the government had given an impression that the Opposition parties were against holding discussions in Parliament. "It's not so. We wanted a discussion from day one. We are giving notices every day, but the government is not coming forward for a discussion... Democracy is in peril," he said.

Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut said the Opposition was united over the farm laws and Pegasus spyware, and accused the government of "backstabbing and attacking with this weapon".

Parliament passes Bills amid din

Both Houses clear important Bills without debate, amid continuing protests

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Both Houses of Parliament on Wednesday cleared important Bills without debate amid continuing protests by Opposition members on the Pegasus snooping issue and the three contentious farm laws, against which farmers' groups have been protesting for months.

The Lok Sabha, which witnessed unruly behaviour in the form of tearing of papers and throwing them towards the Speaker's Chair and the Treasury benches, saw the passage of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021, as well as the first batch of the Supplementary Demand for Grants and the Appropriations Bill, numbers 3 and 4, without debate and by a voice vote.

Though Speaker Om Birla managed to hold Question



House in session: Members protesting in the well of the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi on Wednesday. • PTI

Hour amid the din, the first time in the current session, as soon as BJP MP Rajendra Agarwal replaced him in the Chair, the protests got louder and Opposition members such as Gurjeet Aujla, T.N. Prathapan and Hibi Eden from the Congress as well as some others tore up papers and threw them in the air.

The Treasury benches demanded action against the MPs, including Mr. Aujla, Mr.

Prathapan, Manickam Tagore, Jothimani Sennimalai and others of the Congress, for disrespecting the Chair.

Sources told *The Hindu* that Mr. Birla spoke to the Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, on the issue. Mr. Chowdhury is learnt to have replied that the Opposition had specific issues and demands, and the protests were for those demands.

Mr. Birla is learnt to have individually met the MPs concerned, but no action has been decided upon.

The House was adjourned several times before legislative business was conducted amid the din and then adjourned for the day.

In the Rajya Sabha, too, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021, was passed without debate and the House adjourned for the day before 3 p.m.

Protests in the House, again on the Pegasus issue and the farm laws, continued even as Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani explained the proposed amendments.

While the Bill was passed, the House was adjourned multiple times. Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu urged members to stop waving placards, but to no avail.

TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Sl.No	Tender Inviting Authority	Specification No	Total
1.	SE / C / PCC	05, 06	2
TAMIL NADU TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD			
2.	SE / Transmission - II	T-2201	1
3.	SE / Transmission - III	T-2202	1

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit website, www.tantransco.gov.in, www.tangedco.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app, www.tenders.tn.gov.in DIPR / 2225 / Tender / 2021

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
O/o THE PRINCIPAL CONTROLLER OF COMMUNICATION ACCOUNTS,
Tamil Nadu Circle, Chennai - 600 008.

ONLINE PENSION ADALAT
An online Pension Adalat is proposed to be held on 7th September 2021 at 1430 Hrs. Pensioners/Family pensioners of Department of Telecommunications, Tamil Nadu Circle & BSNL units viz., Tamil Nadu Circle, Chennai Telephones, STR and STP may submit their grievance(s) for redressal. The grievance(s) may be submitted in the prescribed proforma along with the requisite document(s) to the under mentioned officer either by post or by email "jtcapen.ccatn@nic.in". It can be dropped in the Pension Grievance drop box in the address given below. The grievance(s) should reach the under mentioned officer on or before 11.08.2021/1800 Hrs. Legal cases pending before the Court of Law and cases related to policy matters are not within the ambit of this Pension Adalat. Cases with insufficient details will not be considered for redressal. This notification is also uploaded in "www.cgca.gov.in/ccatn" from where the proforma for submitting the grievances can be downloaded. The link to join this online Pension Adalat will be shared with pensioners one day before.
Dr. V. Balasubramanian
Joint Controller of Communication Accounts
O/o PCCA, Tamil Nadu Circle, 60, Ethiraj Salai, TNT Complex, 1st Floor, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008. Tel. No.: 044-28255378/28253222

KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - E-TENDER NOTICE
Office of the Chief Engineer, Civil (I&CC),
Pattom, Trivandrum. (Tender extension notice)
E-Tender ID_2020_KSEB_397358_1. Execution of Anakayam Small Hydro Electric Project 7.5MW (3x2.5MW), 22.83 MU) on TURKEY basis, PAC- Rs.117.33 crores, Last date - 26.08.2021 - 5 pm.
Office of the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Palakkad.
E-Tender ID_2021_KSEB_430569_1. Laying testing and commissioning of 17.2 KMS of 11 KV XLPE Aluminium UG Cable By HDD & Conventional Methods (16.0 KMS HDD) at various locations under Electrical Circle, Palakkad, PAC- Rs.39462919/-, Last date - 02.08.2021 - 11 am.
Office of the Deputy Chief Engineer, Generation Circle, Moolamattom.
E-Tender ID_2021_KSEB_431225_1. Design, Engineering, Supplying, Erection, Testing and Commissioning one number of digital controller based static excitation for second stage machines at IHEP, Moolamattom, PAC- Rs.12500000/-, Last date - 10.09.2021 - 5 pm.
Visit www.etenders.kerala.gov.in and www.kseb.in
Ref: PR /MC1 /E296/ E- Tender /2021

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED REGION I JODHPUR
E-Mail: ri_acejo@nic.in
Tele- 0291-2651750
No. ACE-4/PH/JD/UST Cr/2021-22/3106-14 Date: 19/7/2021
Notice Inviting Bid (NIT No. 17-20/2021-22)
Bids for work of "Work of Augmentation of various RWSS to provide FHTC in 4 villages under Sub Div. Mandore including one year Defect Liability period with O & M for 5 years up to VTC under JUM in the jurisdiction of District Division-III, Jodhpur." Work of Augmentation of various RWSS to provide FHTC in 6 villages of Block Tinwari including one year Defect Liability period under JUM in the jurisdiction of District Division-III, Jodhpur. Work of Augmentation of 5 villages (RWSS Nathrau, Sekhala, Gada, Raisar, Khirja Tibna) of Block Sekhala and Chamu to provide FHTC including one year Defect Liability period and hand over the system to VVHSC of village under JUM in the jurisdiction of District Division-II, Jodhpur and Work of Augmentation of 10 villages (RWSS Siyanda, Bhandujati, Bhanduchaman, Solankiyan tala, Suwalija, Kishore nagar, Ramdevnagar, Ramthangarh, Shambhughar Chaba) of Block Shergarh and Balesar to provide FHTC including one year Defect Liability period and hand over the system to VVHSC of village under JUM in the jurisdiction of District Division-II, Jodhpur are invited from interested bidders upto 6.00 pm (time) 23.08.2021 (date). Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajassthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state; and PHED department website.
UBN No- PHE2122WLOB05150
UBN No- PHE2122WLOB05151
UBN No- PHE2122WLOB05154
UBN No- PHE2122WLOB05158
(Neeraj Mathur)
ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED REGION (I) JODHPUR
DIPRC/7168

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
Office of the Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division,
Bashyam Park, South Central Street, Bengaluru-560 020.
No.EE/GNR/E-Proc/002/2021-22 Date: 28-07-2021
INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Short Term Tender Notification) (KW-4)
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK e-Procurement Portal Only)
The Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division, BBMP, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Tenderers for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	EMD (Rs. in Lakhs)
1.	Comprehensive Development of Roads Drains, Footpath, Culverts and other Development works in Wards 94 and 95.	15.90

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the Govt. of Karnataka from 10-08-2021. (2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on 16-08-2021 before 4:00 p.m. (3) Pre Bid Meeting will be held on 12-08-2021 at 4:00 p.m. in the Office of the Chief Engineer Office (West). (4) Technical Bids will be opened on 18-08-2021 at 12:30 p.m. Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days or from website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>.
Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division, BBMP.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410
Wear Mask
6 Feet
Follow Physical Distancing
Maintain Hand Hygiene

Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited
(A group company of IndianOil)
Regd. Office : 536, Anna Salai, Teynampet, Chennai 600 018
Tel: 044-24346807 / 24349959 E-Mail : shankarp@cpcl.co.in
Website: www.cpcl.co.in; CIN: L40101TN1965GOI005389

NOTICE OF 55th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Annual General Meeting:
NOTICE is hereby given that the 55th Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the members of Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited ("Company") will be held on Friday, the 20th August, 2021 at 03:00 PM (IST) through Video Conference / Other Audio Visual Means ("VC/OAVM") to transact the business as set out in the notice of the AGM.
Notice of AGM and Annual Report:
In compliance with the MCA & SEBI Circular(s), the Notice setting out the business to be transacted at the AGM together with the Annual Report of the Company for the year 2020-21 has been sent on July 28th, 2021 through electronic mode to the members whose email address is registered with the Company / Depository Participant(s). The Notice and the Annual Report are also available on the Company's website at www.cpcl.co.in and on the website of the Stock Exchanges, i.e. BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com respectively, and on the website of KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd. at www.kfintech.com.
Remote e-voting and e-voting during AGM:
The Company is providing to the members through KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd. the facility to cast their vote(s) on the business as set out in the Notice of the AGM through remote e-voting facility ("remote e-voting") as well as during the AGM to those members who could not cast their vote(s) through remote e-voting. Members are requested to note the following:
i. the company has fixed Friday, the 13th August, 2021 as the 'Cut Off date' to ascertain the eligibility of members to vote through remote e-voting or by e-voting at the AGM.
ii. a person, whose name is recorded in the register of members or in the register of beneficial owners maintained by the depositories as on the cut-off date i.e. August 13, 2021 only, shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting and for participation and voting at the AGM.
iii. the remote e-voting period shall be available as under:
Commencement of remote e-voting : from 09:00 am (IST) on Monday, August 16, 2021
End of remote e-voting : till 05:00 pm (IST) on Thursday, August 19, 2021
iv. any person, who acquires shares of the Company and becomes a member of the Company after dispatch of the Notice and holds shares as on the cut-off date, may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request at evoting.cpcl@kfintech.com. However, if the member is already registered with KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd. for remote e-voting then he/she can use their existing User ID and password for casting the vote.
v. the members who have cast their vote through remote e-voting prior to the AGM can only attend / participate in the AGM through VC / OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again at the AGM.
vi. the remote e-voting module shall be disabled by KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd. after 5.00 PM (IST) on August 19, 2021. The votes once cast by the member, cannot be changed subsequently.
vii. those members, who intend to participate in the AGM through VC / OAVM facility and could not cast their vote on the resolutions through remote e-voting and are otherwise not barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote through e-voting during the AGM.
viii. the manner of voting for members holding shares in dematerialized mode, physical mode and for members who have not registered their email address has been provided in the Notice of the AGM.
Members are requested to carefully read all the Notes set out in the Notice of the AGM with respect to instructions for joining the AGM, manner of casting vote etc.
Contact details:
In case of any queries related to e-voting, the members may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for members and e-voting user manual for members available at the download section of <https://evoting.kfintech.com> or call on toll free no.: 1800-309-4001 or contact Mr. Mohd. Mohsin, Senior Manager, KFin Technologies Pvt. Ltd., at the designated email IDs: evoting.cpcl@kfintech.com or Phone No.: +91 40 6716 1700/09177401094 to get your queries on e-voting addressed.
For Chennai Petroleum Corporation Limited
Sd/-
P. Shankar
Company Secretary
M.No. A7624
Place : Chennai
Dated : July 29, 2021

Seroprevalence in Kerala only 44%, says ICMR

Study shows that Madhya Pradesh has the highest seroprevalence of 79%

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Madhya Pradesh has the highest seroprevalence, or the presence of antibodies to the novel coronavirus, and Kerala the lowest among 21 States studied, according to the fourth national serology survey of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Though headline results of the survey were published last week, the State-wise approximate prevalence was issued on Wednesday.

Kerala, which is recording the sharpest rise in cases in the country fuelled by the Delta variant, had a seroprevalence of only 44% implying 56% lacked antibodies and consequently remained vul-

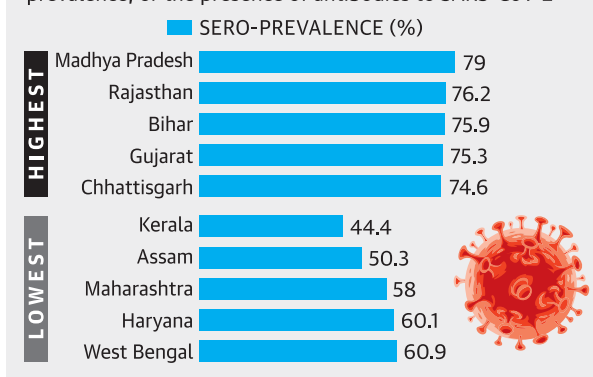
nerable to the infection. The antibody levels reported State-wise as part of the ICMR survey did not distinguish between those in response to a natural infection or through vaccination.

Madhya Pradesh has a seroprevalence of 79%, followed by Rajasthan (76%) and Bihar (75%). After Kerala, the least antibody prevalence was in Assam (50%) and Maharashtra (58%).

'Partial picture'

An ICMR official said State seroprevalence gives a "partial" picture of how they are affected. "The extrapolation was based on 70 districts in 21 States, which were part of three previous rounds of the

Antibody presence | The table lists the five States each with the highest and the lowest seroprevalence, or the presence of antibodies to SARS-CoV-2



serosurvey. The districts were chosen based on population and so some States have more places represented," said Samiran Panda, who was involved with the survey and who heads the epidemiology division at the

ICMR. "The ELISA test used to check antibodies also has a role in marking antibody prevalence. This also suggests that States that may have managed the infection better in the first and second wave, and protecting a large

fraction from infection, must also target rapid vaccination to protect the remaining vulnerable," he said.

The Centre on Wednesday advised all States and Union Territories to conduct the surveys in consultation with the ICMR to generate district-level data which was critical to formulating localised public health response measures, according to a letter by Rajesh Bhushan, Health Secretary, on Wednesday.

The fourth National Seroprevalence Survey done by the ICMR said such studies should follow a standardised protocol.

The same survey also showed that antibodies could be detected in over 88% of those vaccinated with at least one dose, though State-wise reports are not yet

available as the survey is yet to be formally published in a scientific journal.

Antibodies in children

The survey also noted that more than half of the children (six to 17 years) were seropositive and seroprevalence was similar in rural and urban areas.

It was also found that 85% of healthcare workers (HCWs) had antibodies and nearly one-tenth was unvaccinated.

"The national sero-survey by ICMR was designed to capture the extent of the spread of COVID infection at the national level. Therefore, the results do not reflect the heterogeneity of seroprevalence between districts and even between States," the Health Ministry said in an accompanying statement.

COVID-19 guidelines extended to August 31

States, UTs to strictly enforce norms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday extended the implementation of guidelines for the management of COVID-19 up to August 31, in accordance with the Health Ministry's order dated June 28. The States and the Union Territories have been asked to strictly enforce the norms in view of the upcoming festivals.

Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, in a letter to the States and the Union Territories, said there should be continuous focus on the five-fold strategy of test-track-treat-vaccinate and adherence to COVID-appropriate behaviour.

Strict directions should be issued to the districts and all other local authorities concerned to take necessary measures. The officers concerned should be made personally responsible for any laxity in strict enforcement, Mr. Bhalla said.

Stating that there was no room for complacency, the Home Secretary said the process of relaxing restrictions should be carefully calibrated.

The reproduction number of the virus was hovering "just below one", but was high in some States. Strictest possible measures should be taken in the districts showing high positivity rates, he said.

IN BRIEF



Mehbooba pushes for special status restoration

SRINAGAR Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday hardened her position on restoration of special status of Jammu and Kashmir, saying the pre-August 5 (2019) position of J&K would have to be restored along with interest one day. "When India can achieve freedom from the British after 70 years, when the BJP can snatch J&K's special status after 70 years, why can't we keep fighting for our rights," she said.

SP, BSP, Cong. have lost ground: U.P. Deputy CM

LUCKNOW Even if the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Congress come together in Uttar Pradesh, they have no scope in the "near future" as they have lost ground, the State's Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said on Tuesday. Mr. Maurya dismissed the BSP and the SP's efforts to reach out to Brahmin voters and said all communities were behind the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Amarinder for reopening of Kartarpur Corridor

CHANDIGARH Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday to reopen the Kartarpur Corridor, in view of the improvement in the COVID-19 situation, to enable devotees to visit the historic shrine in Pakistan. In a letter to the Prime Minister, Captain (retd.) Amarinder said his government would be happy to work in conjunction with the Centre to ensure adherence to COVID-19 protocols, including testing and vaccination of pilgrims using the corridor.

Govt. job fairs see drop in offers

While 86,822 offers were made in 2019-20, the figure fell to 31,727 in 2020-21

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The number of employment offers given through job fairs organised by the Labour and Employment Ministry decreased from 86,822 in 2019-20 to 31,727 in 2020-21, according to the Ministry's data provided to the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

To a question by Biju Janata Dal MP Amar Patnaik, Minister of State for Labour and Employment Rameswar Teli's written reply said the number of active job-seekers registered with the National Career Service portal had increased from 1.03 crore in 2019-20 to 1.04 crore in 2020-21.

"Notifying final hiring figures is not a mandatory re-

quirement on the NCS portal. However, till July 18, 2021, 86.13 lakh vacancies have been mobilised on NCS since the launch of the portal on July 20, 2015, including the vacancies in public and private sector," the reply said.

U.P. in the lead

The data showed that of the 31,727 candidates given final offer letters in 2020-21, 28,227 were from Uttar Pradesh.

Similarly, about half the offers given in 2019-20 came from U.P. (41,603). In 2018-19, 72,539 job offers were handed out through the fairs, of which 31,077 were in Gujarat.

To a question by BJP MP



More aspirants have registered on the national career services portal.

Vikas Mahatme on bonded labour issues during the pandemic, the Ministry said there had been no real change.

"From the reports availa-

ble from the State governments, no discernible change in the prevalence of bonded labour due to the pandemic is observed. However, keeping in view the challenges posed by the successive waves of the pandemic, all State/UT governments have been directed to prepare a State Action Plan for preventing and rehabilitating victims of bonded labour and trafficking."

Victims rescued

However, to a question by BJP MP Neeraj Shekhar, Mr. Teli provided data on the number of bonded labourers released and rehabilitated, which showed an increase from 320 in 2020-21 to 1,174 in 2021-22 so far.

Asthana's ascent to Delhi Police chief

He got the job after he was knocked out of the race for the CBI Director's post

MAHESH LANGA
AHMEDABAD

Just four days before his superannuation (July 31), the Union government on Tuesday gave a plum assignment to the Gujarat-cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana as Police Commissioner of New Delhi, with a year's extension in service.

On July 27, the 1984-batch officer was also granted deputation from the Gujarat cadre to the Union Territory cadre to enable him to head the Delhi police force that reports to the Union Home Ministry.

Mr. Asthana was knocked out of the race to be CBI Director when the Chief Justice of India (CJI), in a high-power committee meeting with the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, cited six months'



Rakesh Asthana

residual service for those to be considered for the post.

The CJI's insistence on the Supreme Court-laid rule of six months' remainder service rendered Mr. Asthana and another top contender, Y.C. Modi, ineligible to head the country's most high-profile agency that investigates graft and political cases.

Mr. Asthana has had fairly

long stints with the CBI at different levels, including as its officiating Director for a few months and then as Special Director in 2018, when he was unceremoniously removed after a major fight with then CBI Director Alok Verma when the agency hit the headlines for its internal war that divided the top agency into two camps.

Obstacle course

Both Mr. Verma and Mr. Asthana were shunted out overnight as the government acted on the order of the Chief Vigilance Commissioner after Mr. Verma booked Mr. Asthana in an alleged bribery case, in which he was cleared later.

Subsequently, Mr. Asthana was made Director-General of the Bureau of Civil

Aviation Security. In August 2020, he was appointed Director-General of the Border Security Force (BSF).

As BSF chief, he had additional charge as Director General of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), which cracked down on Bollywood personalities for alleged use of drugs after the suicide of Sushant Singh Rajput.

Prior to his Central deputation, Mr. Asthana held prime posts in Gujarat, including as Police Commissioner of Vadodara and Surat, and headed a Special Investigation Team that probed the Godhra train burning case. It was his investigation in the case that earned him proximity to the then Gujarat CM Narendra Modi, whose trust Mr. Asthana enjoys even today.

Govt. studying evidence on vaccine booster doses

No recommendations from WHO, NTAGI or NEGVAC yet

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar has stated that the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) and National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID (NEGVAC) are deliberating and considering scientific evidence related to booster doses.

"So far, no specific recommendation regarding COVID-19 vaccine booster dose has been made by NTAGI or NEGVAC. There are at present no recommendations on booster dose from the World Health Organization," she said in the Rajya Sabha earlier this week. The vaccines have been developed very recently and, therefore, scientific evidence was still evolving globally on the duration of protection.

Dr. Pawar said that the current isolation, quarantine, treatment, and other



Precious doses: Since May 1, 2020, all those above 18 years in India have been eligible for vaccination. *A.M. FARUQUI

public health measures remained valid in case of reinfection too.

The currently available information on COVID-19 was not adequate enough to tell the difference between persistent virus shedding and reinfection, and testing positive more than once does not necessarily indicate reinfection, the Health Ministry said in response to a question.

Dr. Pawar noted that there were cases of reinfection.

She pointed out that studies on SARS-CoV-2 reinfection had been published in the journal of *Epidemiology and Infection*. "The study has concluded that while COVID-19 reinfection is still rarely reported, nonetheless, immunity should not be assumed and public health measures such as physical distancing, hand hygiene and use of masks should be followed after recovery from the first event of infection," she asserted.

Terrorism is the most serious threat to global peace: Rajnath

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Stating that the geo-strategic location of India makes it both a Eurasian land power as well as a stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday termed terrorism the most serious threat to international peace and security, while also cautioning against non-traditional security threats against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Any act of terror and

support to such acts, including cross-border terrorism, committed by whomsoever, wherever and for whatever motives, is a crime against humanity," Mr. Singh said addressing the Defence Ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The pandemic had affected nations, civil societies and citizens in multiple ways, Mr. Singh said. This was a warning sign of how

non-traditional security challenges like pandemics, climate change, food security, water security and associated societal disruptions could impact national and international landscape.

"Non-traditional threats and a new technology have combined to form a whole new spectrum of sub-conventional security issues," the Minister said. These issues could not be addressed without co-operation among nations, Mr. Singh said.

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

THE CROSSWORD + 13312 (set by Karaoke)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9				10			
11				12			
13				14		15	
				16			17
18							
19							
20							
21		22		23			
24				25		26	
27							
28							

- 13 He raises his hand but not to hit someone. It's all in the game! (6)
 - 15 They are inclined to read morning post regularly (5)
 - 19 Financial backer's temper is lessened with a drop of liquor (5)
 - 20 Canines killed in terrible accident causing delay (6)
 - 24 Originally, Lama has accepted seat at the capital city (5)
 - 25 What would one do to protest loudly? Set up a gambling house? (5,4)
 - 27 Long-standing and will be deathless in other words (4-11)
 - 28 Maybe Saudi kings' monies lost interest for peak oil (6)
 - 29 Concluded an issue in rush (8)
- DOWN
- 1 Dismissed regulation, bishop acquitted in ambiguity (5,3)
 - 2 Appreciably, cocktail bar disallowed smokers' accessory (4,4)
 - 3 It is cheap puff in Bangladesh, I hear (5)
 - 4 Plants to treat caries (6)
 - 6 Explosive long fruit (9)
 - 7 Cold ducks spend energy for drinks (6)
 - 8 Saw secret service recruiting top agents for president (6)
 - 10 Animals with long laughs outside (6)
 - 14 What a caller at the door will do to sound familiar? (4,1,4)
 - 16 Undercover scribe with A-line skirts (6)
 - 17 North American native hare went haywire (8)
 - 18 Comprehended hint essentially was unclear with nothing missing (8)
 - 21 Frown at farmer shifting sides (6)
 - 22 It goes into liquors and spirits at local shelter reportedly (6)
 - 23 Quick-moving river swallows doctor (6)
 - 26 Legends create one less than hundred in records (5)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13311

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

In praise of Hanuman

Valmiki Ramayana has six kandas, but not one of them is named after the hero or heroine. In fact, no kanda is named after any character in the epic, except Sundara Kanda. Sundara was the name of Hanuman. Thus Hanuman is the only one after whom a kanda takes its name in the Ramayana, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. It was Hanuman who found and consoled Sita, and brought back to Rama the glad tidings that he had found Sita. Thus he brought joy to both the hero and the heroine of the epic. When the time came for Rama to end His avatara, Hanuman refused to go to Sri Vaikuntha, but chose to stay back on Earth. He had a reason for this. In Sri Vaikuntha, the Lord is not worshipped as Rama, but Hanuman's heart was full of love for Rama.

Although Rama was none other than the Supreme One, Hanuman still wanted to see Him as Rama, and he wanted to hear Rama's name being chanted. That is why wherever the Ramayana is narrated, a special seat is provided, for it is believed that Hanuman will be present there to listen to Rama's story being told.

There is a sloka about Hanuman which says: *Goshpadi krita vaareesam masaki krita rakshasam Ramayana mahaa maala ratnam vande anilattmajam*. Here the Ramayana is spoken of as a garland, and the ratnam (gem) that adds to the splendour of this garland is anilattmajam – the son of anila, that is Vayu. He crossed the ocean easily, as if it were nothing more than the water contained in an animal's hoof. He crushed demons as if they were mosquitoes. Salutations are offered to Hanuman, as the one whose face is red and who is seated under the Parijata tree. Another sloka says Hanuman narrated the Ramayana to Rama, Sita, and Rama's brothers, and that Rama explained Ramayana tattva.

Udipi-born chef Hari Nayak creates a modern Indian menu at Sona, a post-pandemic restaurant launched in New York, with inputs from the actor



Priyanka Chopra

inspires

Tequila golgappas

SHONALI MUTHALALI

Priyanka Chopra added gol gappas. Nick Jonas championed *gajar halwa*. Chef Hari Nayak pulled it all together, in an edgy, New York-inspired modern Indian menu.

Recently launched Sona in Manhattan is already packed with enthusiastic diners, despite the lingering shadow of the pandemic. Or perhaps because of it, as people embrace the exuberance of dining out again after a year of takeaway.

In keeping with the celebratory mood, the restaurant offers bright, imaginative interpretations of Indian food, with Udipi-born and New York-trained Nayak at the helm. The butter chicken, however, is all Priyanka Chopra.

When David Rabin and Maneesh Goyal decided to create a uniquely New York restaurant with an In-

dian soul, they joined hands with the actor, who came on board as a creative collaborator.

"My cooking style is more innovative and global in approach. During tasting sessions, it was Priyanka who kept the menu grounded. She kept reminding me: 'Don't forget the classics,'" says Nayak, over a call from New York.

"We have been working on this restaurant for three years, and she has been a part of Sona right from the beginning," he says, adding that the actor's husband, singer-songwriter Nick Jonas also participated in tasting sessions when he was in town. "He loves Indian food. He loves paneer, and *gajar halwa* is one of his favourite things to eat."

Chef Nayak adds with a laugh, "If it wasn't for Priyanka, I would never have added gol gappas to the menu. We have a clientele that is almost 90% non-desi, and seat about 300 every night. We need to



Golden team (Far left) Priyanka Chopra Jonas and (below) Chef Hari Nayak have been working on the restaurant for three years ■ MELANIE DUNEA AND ANDREW WERNER

York, and the world. "It was more luxurious, finer and refined before. We made it a little more approachable, a little more homey, a little more comfortable... we made it into the kind of restaurant where you would want to come again and again." Despite a rush of openings – chef Nayak estimates there were about 80 New York restaurant launches last month – Sona has been packed, and received a flurry of rave reviews.

Unconventionally Indian

The Indians do not always approve, though. "Some of the worst reviews I get are from Indians – I sometimes get scared when I see them," says chef Nayak, adding, "I would not dare to open a Sona in India."

He explains that the restaurant veers away from tradition. For instance, butter garlic crab is served with caviar here; their Gruyere cheese dosa has an edamame *arbi* mash; and the tandoor roasted beets are paired with chaat masala hazelnuts.

"The stereotypical notion is that Indian food is all curry and spice, so I am purposely trying to change that perception," he says. "For example, right now plums are in season: perfect, juicy plums from local farms. We reduce them with a little sugar, into a sticky, sweet syrup with a little tartness, then dip jalebis in them, staining them with that red, berry colour. Is it Indian? That depends on what you expect from a jalebi."

While the food is sophisticated, chef Nayak veers away from showy techniques, preferring instead to highlight great ingredients. "I've realised that as I mature as a chef, my cooking becomes simpler," he says, adding, "I believe in the basics: more so after that crazy last year we've had!"

teach them how to eat it..." Sona's version of the popular Indian street food features avocado and spiced tequila. "Everybody orders it before the meal now. That's how they get the party started!"

Deliberately defying categorisations, the food is inspired by Indian flavours but hinges on locally sourced ingredients. "I use cooking techniques that are modern, and food that is in season," says chef Nayak.

After graduating from the Culinary Institute of America in 1998, he worked with influential chef Daniel Boulud at his 3 Michelin starred restaurant, Daniel.

In 2007, he collaborated with chef Vikas Khanna to write *Modern Indian*



Woo dates in Tamil now

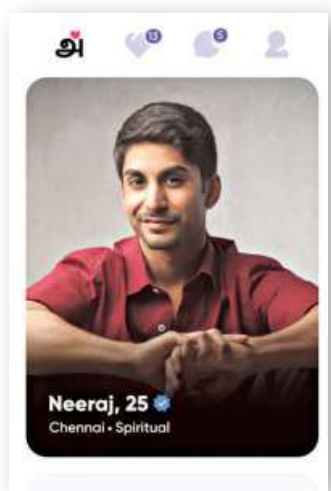
If you are my *thayir sadam*, I'd like to be your *oorga*. How is that for an introduction? On Anbe, the new vernacular dating app from Aisle, expect bios, topics and conversations related to all things Tamil. From Thala to Thalopathy, Thalapakatti biryani to Chettinad chicken.

Anbe (meaning dear in Tamil), launched last week, focusses on the global Tamil community. It comes four months after Arike, the Malayalam dating app from the same brand.

Though fairly new, "Anbe gets 800 users on a daily basis," says Able Joseph, founder and CEO, Aisle. The majority of these users are from Chennai and Coimbatore for now, with a few in Singapore and Malaysia. There are those who log on because they are currently living in a different state, or country, and miss the local lingo of Tamil Nadu.

Zhulfia A, a retail professional, who lived in Chennai for nine years and is currently based in Bengaluru, says one of the reasons she signed up was, "I want to keep in touch with Chennai." She says Anbe has got the essence right, with Tamil tags, slang and references. She is glad she gets to discuss such city-specific things with people who are either in Chennai or were part of the city. "Just the other day I was discussing Nungambakkam, Khader Nawaz Khan Road, Old Madras Baking Company and Junior Kuppappa biryani," she laughs.

—Priyadarshini Paitandy



Good Chance Theatre's latest production features a Syrian puppet that will walk from Gaziantep in Turkey to Manchester in the UK, to raise awareness on the refugee crisis



PRIYADARSHINI PAITANDY

Little Amal is looking for her mother. The nine-year-old is a Syrian refugee from Aleppo, who will walk from the Syrian-Turkey border to the UK, in search of her displaced family. Along the way, each village, town and city she visits, will welcome her with a slew of events ranging from performances to art installations.

Amal might be a three-and-a-half metre tall puppet, carefully created by the Handspring Puppet Company in Cape Town, South Africa, but her journey encompasses the real tales of numerous young refugees and countless children who get torn away from their homes and separated from their families, not just in Turkey and Europe, but all over the world.

The Walk, as this production is called, is a travelling festival of art and hope by UK-based Good Chance Theatre – presented by its producers, Stephen Daldry, David

Lan and Tracey Seaward – in association with Handspring Puppet Company. Little Amal is based on a character from Good Chance's first production *The Jungle*, a play about the Calais migrant camp. Theatre writer and director Amir Nizar Zuabi joined the project as artistic director in 2020, developing hundreds of international collaborations across the route.

At three-and-a-half metres, Amal appears taller than your average nine-year-old. The Handspring Puppet Company developed and crafted the physical form of the protagonist over a two-year period of workshops and testing. "She is made from robust, lightweight material like moulded cane and carbon fibre, to achieve a puppet that can be operated for long periods of time in varying conditions, to withstand rain and heat," says the team at Good Chance, sharing information over email and a video call from the UK. Interestingly, there are three puppet Amals, in case a spare is required.



Lanterns up:

Little Amal is crossing the sea

She will also have a team of puppeteers and technicians who will look after her as she walks.

Amal's epic journey began on July 27 at Gaziantep, where an outdoor light installation featuring *qandeel* lanterns lit up one after the other to highlight a path that she can follow.

Pieces of a story

The 8,000-kilometre route will end in Manchester, in November, with around 250 partners and artists. "The route is the culmination of migration routes which have been used during the refugee crises of recent years," says David Lan.

The West Asian and African routes have been connected by passing through Italy. Specific cities of welcome have been chosen either because there was a willing partner located there, or because of

cultural institutions of historical significance in those cities.

Manchester International Festival invited Little Amal to Manchester, where she will start the next chapter of her life. "The city is one of many towns and cities in the UK that is doing a lot to welcome refugees, with Greater Manchester having the highest concentration of dispersed asylum seekers in the UK outside of London," adds the team at Good Chance.

The planning stages of this magnum opus production involved a huge number of conversations with potential collaborators across the route; artists and arts organisations, grassroots humanitarian organisations and major NGOs, representatives from civil society, and early funders who believed in the idea from the start.

"Most importantly, there were

You will never walk alone Amal with kids; (right) on a test run in London ■ BEVAN ROOS AND NICK HALL

conversations with people young and old living all along the route – people who had been there all their lives as well as more recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers – to explore whether the idea of Little Amal's journey was one that would be welcomed. The response was overwhelmingly positive in all locations across Europe and in Turkey and Lebanon," say the organisers.

"Stopover destinations have been offered a simple idea: A nine-year-old girl who is coming through your community. How will you welcome her?," explains Amir Nizar Zuabi. For example, in the Turkish coastal town of Cesme, Amal will follow a path of empty shoes that leads her to the beach. Created by K2 Contemporary Art Centre, this art setup represents the thousands of people who have lost their lives while crossing the treacherous sea.

In the Italian city of Bari, she will be welcomed by a comforting large puppet of an Italian *nonna* (grandmother) who shares wisdom on how to overcome the obstacles she may face on her way; in Paris, an installation of a refugee camp will be created outside the Institut du Monde Arabe, where Amal will explore the rows of tents, hoping to find her mother.

Meanwhile, Amal's birthday celebrations are being planned in London, where she will turn 10 on October 24. The day begins with a dawn chorus performance at the Royal Opera House followed by a party at the Victoria and Albert Museum. In the finale, Amal will reunite with her mother in Manchester.

For details, visit walkwithamal.org/events

Daily dose of flamenco

This family of guitarists documents its practice sessions as daily mini online concerts



Jam at home (From left) Joseph, Jason, Elysa and Noah Hochman ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GWORS

It is Day 489. 'Brasilierinho' by Waldir Azevedo fills the room as dulcet guitar tunes make way for more elements, in a mini concert.

Eleven-year-old Joseph holds his guitar vertically over his head, in a pose he calls 'the peekaboo', as his fingers dextrously pick the strings. His brother, 10-year-old Noah, wears a sombre expression as he blends into the melody. Their parents, guitarist duo Jason and Elysa Hochman are in the backdrop, expertly guiding them along with their own sets. Quarantined Quartet is in action.

Born out of the pandemic, the daily jam sessions by this talented New York-based family have been shared widely on social media. Fans include actor Pierce Brosnan.

It all started on March 22, 2020 when the first video of them playing together went up on Instagram, with the label '#QuarantinedQuartet practice day 1'.

Says Jason over a Zoom call from Manhattan, "On March 13, 2020, we had to close down our Manhattan studio from where Elysa and I run our academy (New York Guitar Academy). Joseph and Noah also had to shift to remote learning around the time."

Elysa adds, "We realised that we are all going to be together and wanted to do something we otherwise wouldn't have, owing to our busy schedules."

Joseph says, "I have gotten better at playing with

my family. We used to have only two songs we could play together, and those weren't that good," he chuckles, adding, "Now, we are tighter together as a quartet." The 11-year-old has, over the days, developed signature moves, like the 'peekaboo'.

The focus is not on learning new songs everyday, but on sharing their journey and progression as a team, through these sessions. And for that, they have a roster of 35 to 40 songs they choose from.

Their go-to song is 'Las Olas', says Noah. "It is a song that we created during quarantine. It is also one of our most popular ones," adds Joseph. The fast-paced flamenco number reminds one of waves, as the title suggests.

Who picks the song for each day? Jason pans the camera to a white board with a list of songs. Noah picks up a dart, aims at the board and shoots it across. This is how they choose.

For this interview, the dart has landed on 'When in Rome', a piece composed by Jason – and a crowd favourite too. The family picks up their guitars, adjusts their Zoom camera, and plays the flamenco-inspired foot-tapping tune that invites one to groove along.

At the time of going to press, they are on day 493. And far from done. "We are going to keep doing this as long as we are together," says Jason.

Visit @quarantined_quartet on Instagram

The Kanjeevaram legacy

Award winning artisan weaver, B Krishnamoorthy, is creating a repository with samples of all the designs, patterns and motifs traditional to Kanjeevaram silk sari weaving, preserving fine pieces for posterity

CHITRADEEPA ANANTHARAM

B Krishnamoorthy was 15 years old, and had just passed Class X, when he became an apprentice to his father, master Kanjeevaram silk sari weaver K Balaraman, in 1975.

After learning the basics of the loom, he was sent to another senior weaver to learn the nuances of unique techniques such as *ada katradhu* (or *jala*). A solid grounding in drawing helped him with graph drawing, important in the process of creating designs.

"As a third generation weaver, my intention was to learn and understand every aspect involved in the Kanjeevaram weaving tradition. I enjoy each and every process of silk sari weaving because of this knowledge I gained along the way," says Krishnamoorthy.

He adds that the greatest moment in his life was when his work was selected for a National Award in 2010. "I had woven a Kanjeevaram silk inspired by the odyanam (ornamental hip belt), and designed it thematically. When I received ₹1 lakh cash along with the award, that set me thinking about my responsibility as a weaver."

Even while working as a pattern maker and graph designer, Krishnamoorthy continued to weave silk saris and catalogue the designs that his father and grandfath-

er had created. Between conducting seminars for textile and design students, he decided to document the samples he had created or safely preserved and put them together into a reference library for anyone interested in handloom.

"My initial investment towards this goal was the National Award money. With that, I purchased the yarn and other things required and began to weave. I ended up with 5,015 basic designs, woven in 25-metre silk fabric with 60 inches height. I have identified the names of just about 150 designs so far," he says.

His efforts led him to weave another catalogue of 114 supporting designs (used in the *pallav* and borders). These include forgotten traditional designs in 5.5-metre width, 48-inch height silk fabric.

"Some of us weavers ourselves do not know the names of the designs we weave. In ancient times, handloom weavers went by the instructions given by the loom owners or buyers," he says.

Krishnamoorthy explains how 'MS Subbulakshmi saris' were

common reference points a generation ago. He adds that Kanjeevaram silks had just 15 basic colour combinations then. Designs were mostly inspired by the temples in and around Kanchipuram. "Now, due to the increasing market, we have introduced newer colours as well as geometrical and floral designs," he says.

He is supported in this endeavour by his wife K Jayanthi, also a National awardee (for her silk sari inspired by Kanchi Ekambareswarar Temple in 2014. His team of artisans also includes his wife, father, cousins and staff. Together, they have created masterpieces in the Kanjeevaram silk weaving tradition for the repository. A fine example is his six-metre high Indian animal wall hanging, with a *thilagam* (tear drop) motif made in the mirror image technique, using Ahimsa silk with natural dye and pure gold zari.

Over a period of 40 years, this master weaver has carefully collected many such samples and graph designs along the way. Students from the National Institute of Fashion Technology, the College of Fine Arts in Egmore, Indian Institute of Handloom Technology in Salem,

Stella Maris College in Chennai and Anna University regularly visit his loom in Kanchipuram.

One-stop guide

Having created most of the repository, his next challenge is preserving and managing it. He says, "I have begun to upload some of my work onto my computer. I used the lockdown to streamline my documentation processes. I hope to create a one-stop reference guide, a kind of library, which I would like to publish in a book format."

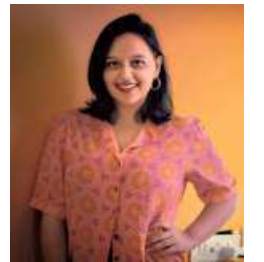
He says that apart from designs and patterns, he has also created 200 different motifs, and the collection is growing by the day. "Whatever I have created and documented can be replicated by weavers across the country in silk and in cotton, not just the Kanjeevaram."

Ready reference

The various aspects of Kanjeevaram silk weaving has been meticulously documented by B Krishnamoorthy
• R RAVINDRAN



A contemporary tale
Maya Bajaj (below)
and the puppeteers
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Rajasthani puppets learn Mozart

Traditional Indian puppets perform Western classical pieces in *A Timeless Tale of the Turbulent Twosome*, a show by vocalist Maya Bajaj of KM Music Conservatory

NAHLA NAINAR

Young vocalist Maya Bajaj wants to show that *kathuputhis* (traditional Indian puppets) can be brought out of the boundaries of their art form and do justice to Western opera.

Currently pursuing diploma studies in Chennai's KM Music Conservatory, she is preparing for the online release of *A Timeless Tale of the Turbulent Twosome*, as part of her final year portfolio project. "Rajasthani puppets will act in a contemporary story, set to compositions by Mozart and Puccini. It brings ancient art forms from across the world on a shared stage," says Maya.

Besides being the voice artist for its lead characters Meena and Suman, Maya is the soprano for the 30-minute show, while Shashwat Vishwakarma is the baritone. Based in Delhi since the lockdowns began, she started Project Kalpana to support traditional puppeteers of city's Kathuputhli Colony via the Kayakalp Trust.

Adds Ria Golecha, director of Kayakalp, "We wanted Indian puppetry to become more relevant and also help the artists of Kathuputhli Colony (now relocated to a transit camp in Anand Parbat) to earn money. We got over 40 artists trained by veteran puppeteers such as Dadi Padamjee, Anupama Roy, Puran Bhaat and others from Sangeet Natak Akademi and National School of Drama."

"Since it is the first time we are working with the folk traditions of Europe and Rajasthan, we also faced several new challenges, such as making a making a full-fledged set for the puppets to act in," says

puppeteer Vinay Bhaat.

The multilingual playlist was another hurdle. "The songs are in German, Italian and English, languages which we don't really know. But Maya explained them to me in Hindi, which I further translated into our Rajasthani dialects, to understand the lyrics," says Vinay.

The biggest lesson was discovering the nuances of opera. "To me, opera was like yelling," says Vinay, with a laugh, "Only after meeting Maya did we realise that this is an art form that has songs with meaningful lyrics that convey emotions."

The six compositions in the show include Irving Berlin's show tune 'Anything You Do I Can Do Better', and the arias 'O Mio Babbino Caro' by Giacomo Puccini, 'Deh Vieni Non Tardar' by Mozart and 'Chanson D'amour' by Gabriel Faure.

Says Pranav Nigam, the music producer, "We had to think of all the atmospheric sounds for the soundtrack to feel real. We had to find out the audio clips of ambient sounds like that of a shopping market and crowds on the Internet, or record them specifically for the play."

Maya says *A Timeless Tale...* is about the relationship between two spirited sisters. "We had to redo the story several times to ensure that it was universally appealing. Costumes and setting have been intentionally kept Indian, while the music is Western. It's not an 'East meets West' kind of show; both cultures are represented equally."

Visit @project.kalpana on Instagram for more details

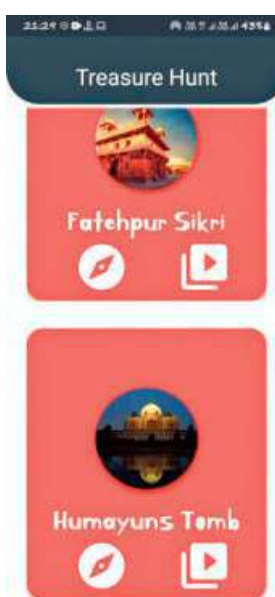
Treasure beneath the fortress

A digital treasure hunt game developed by city students wins at Toycathon

K JESHI

How did the British hide the gleaming white dome of the majestic Taj Mahal during the Second World War? What makes the towering *gopurams* of the Madurai Meenakshi temple so iconic? And, why does the Golconda Fort remain one of the most magnificent fortress complexes in India? A digital game developed by Team Yukthi of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in Chennai turns the spotlight on Indian monuments, as it showcases history and traditions.

The game has earned the team of first year engineering students - R Amrita Laasya, A Bhavika Taneja, A R Giris Teja and Kadambari Sree Rama Aditya - along with a third year student S Palaniappan a slot among winners at the recently or-



History, gamified A screenshot of the game that features information on 30 monuments
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ganised Toycathon 2021, an inter-ministerial initiative of the Government of India.

The event, held virtually on Toy Cloud digital platform, saw the participation of over one lakh students in 17,000 teams. From the shortlisted 1,500 teams, 117 teams emerged winners.

"It was exciting to develop a game," says Palaniappan. "Though we learn about developing software, this game was a great learning experience. It was challenging to design the board."

The digital board game, designed on the react.js Java platform, is a treasure hunt set in India where players criss-cross monuments along a path that promises to lead them to treasure. As players roll the dice and plan moves, a *yaksha* appears, posing a question about each monument. Every right answer is a key that

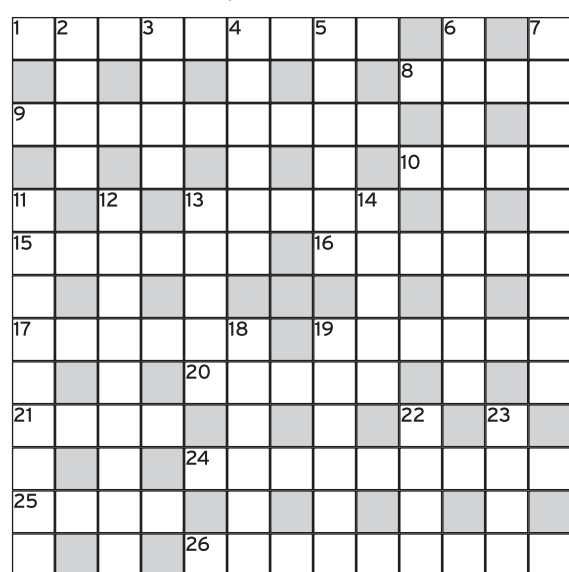
takes them closer to the treasure.

Once the player takes the 30-second quiz on the monument, he/she is redirected to blogs on the topic. Players can also take in a 3D view of the monument complete with a virtual tour guide.

Says Bhavika, "We could improve upon the game based on inputs from the faculty. The judges liked our board design. The 3D views of the monuments are my favourite."

"Why should history be restricted to textbooks?" asks Amrita, adding, "A game is a great way to highlight unknown facts about monuments, be it architecture, designs or heritage." While they dug up the history of 100 monuments, from the Ajanta-Ellora caves to Jantar Mantar, the game currently features information on 30.

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13423



© GUARDIAN NEWS AND MEDIA LTD., 2016

- Across
1 Owned up (9)
8 Husks of cereal seeds sifted from flour (4)
9 Continued (7,2)
10 On this spot (4)

- 13 Hold forth at length (5)
15 Eerie (6)
16 Wedge-shaped bone forming the back part of the pelvis (6)
17 Rebellion (6)

- 19 Fame (6)
20 Cabs (5)
21 Scruff of the neck (4)
24 Pleasant (9)
25 Coarsely ground grain (4)
26 Artificial international language devised in 1887 (9)
■ Down
2 Sultanate on the south-east coast of the Arabian Peninsula (4)
3 Divide into two or more branches (4)
4 Somnolent (6)
5 Mass departure (6)
6 Place for actors to relax with their friends (5,4)
7 Burial (9)
11 Study of heavenly bodies (9)

The solution will appear on August 05, 2021.
Solution No. 13422



To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

- 12 Shop early (anag) - tomfoolery (9)
13 Strapped for cash (5)
14 Stories (5)
18 River flowing into the Bay of Bengal (6)
19 Choice cut of beefsteak (6)
22 Buddhist monk (4)
23 Silly billy (4)

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



Together in isolation Strangers around the world are looking for some laughs, some company, and even some shared silences • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Clubbed together for COMFORT

Audio drop-in apps like Clubhouse are seeing spontaneous rooms of COVID-positive people, helping each other through quarantine virtually

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

A cough. A sniffle. A bit of Prateek K had can be heard in the background, amid an ongoing conversation about the new season of *Rick and Morty*. This is the scene in an unlabelled Clubhouse Room for people currently fighting COVID-19 and seeking virtual comfort.

A week after Priyanka Gantala* tested positive for Coronavirus in the third week of July, she felt her spirits dampen with umpteen incoming texts and calls enquiring about her symptoms, medication, her pain and other depressing topics.

"While I understood my friends were worried, I wanted to interact for a bit with people who could bring in some lighthearted banter but also know what it is like to be emotionally isolated," she says over the phone from her home in Mumbai.

So Priyanka and a friend of hers in Bengaluru, who also tested positive, got on a call. They enjoyed it so much,

it lasted for four hours. "We had a bet (*laughs*), if we mention the words 'COVID' or 'Corona' or something along those lines, we had to do a dare assigned by the other person. But it never came to that; we were just happy to talk about anything else," says Priyanka. A couple of days later, she was browsing the app Clubhouse, and saw how sessions of meditation and ambient noises offered a lot of comfort to many unconnected strangers around the world. She wanted to do the same, at least at a smaller scale.

So on Sunday, July 25, Priyanka kicked off a random room with no Club assigned to it and invited a few people she knew had tested positive recently.

"It started with just four people," she recalls, "I had a few former college-mates living in Italy, Canada and Australia join. We talked about pop culture, travel plans and our childhoods. One person, a budding musician in Cape Town, played us their mixtape. Another then suggested a sing-along

and realised it was a bad idea, given all our voices were terrible (*laughs*) from being ill."

In two hours, the group had gained 50-odd more people who were also ill. "Some had colds, not even COVID. But the concept still applied," she says.

Remarkably, the group had a more powerful impact when nothing was said at all. Maybe there was a cough or two, in the Room of then-70 people, but the silence was a special, comforting balm. "Some silences lasted for two to three hours," she says, "and we welcomed that."

Did Priyanka consider making this an active Club with permanent members? She responds, "I wanted this to be a random set of Rooms because people are wary of their Clubhouse data showing that they're a member of a Room for COVID-positive people. Plus, when people see a COVID type of Club on the app, it is assumed medical advice will be given and we do not do that. You don't need a calendar invite, just a link which would have been shared through WhatsApp or other private message means."

"I am definitely not the first to do this," she insists, adding she has since seen - thanks to her evolved Clubhouse algorithm - a few other unlabelled Rooms. And when she dropped in, she realised they were similar to the one she created.

This was hardly a surprise. She says, "The loneliness during this time wreaks havoc on mental health. Sometimes, a stranger on the Internet can actually solve your problem!"

*name changed to protect identity

U.S. man jailed for leaking documents

Rights advocates slam sentencing

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

A U.S. federal court in Virginia sentenced a former intelligence contractor and member of the U.S. Air Force, Daniel Hale, to almost four years in prison for leaking documents on the U.S.'s drone programme to a news outlet in 2014. The move was sharply criticised by freedom of press and civil liberties advocates as damaging to press freedoms and human rights.

Mr. Hale, 33, who helped organise drone attacks from Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan, was sentenced by a federal court in Virginia to 45 months in prison for leaking the documents to *The Intercept* in 2014 (by which time he had left the Air Force).

Mr. Hale was charged in 2019 under the Espionage Act and pleaded guilty earlier this year. Prosecutors argued that Mr. Hale rather than contribute to a debate on drone warfare, aided terror groups, the Associated Press reported.

Non-government estimates of drone strikes during the Obama administration have exceeded official counts for this period. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism reported at least 325 drone strikes while the official tally was just 64, according to the *Washington Post*.

"At the press of a button from thousands of miles

away, two hellfire missiles screeched out of the sky, followed by no signs of remorse, I, and those around me, clapped and cheered triumphantly," Mr. Hale wrote to the judge, parts of which were published by *The Intercept*. "I believe that it is wrong to kill, but it is especially wrong to kill the defenseless," Mr. Hale said.

The Judge, Liam O'Grady, said he was not sentencing Mr. Hale for his "courageous and principled" position on drone warfare but on his leaking of documents. He said Mr. Hale could have resigned from the military or refused to participate in drone attacks.

"You could have been a whistleblower... without taking any of these documents," he said, as per a report in the *Washington Post*. The *Post* also reported that the leaked documents had revealed that 90% of those killed were not the intended targets in an Afghanistan operation.

"The court did reject the prosecution's extreme demands, but Hale's prison sentence is nonetheless another tragic example of how the government misuses the Espionage Act to punish alleged journalistic sources as spies..." editor of *The Intercept*, Betsy Reed, said. The *Intercept* has not confirmed that Mr. Hale was its source.

China Foreign Minister hosts Taliban, calls it a 'pivotal force'

Taliban 'won't allow any group to use Afghan soil to do anything harmful to China'

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China on Wednesday hosted a rare nine-member Taliban delegation amid its recent ascendancy in Afghanistan, with Foreign Minister Wang Yi describing the group as "a pivotal military and political force" in the country.

The delegation, led by Abdul Ghani Baradar who heads the Taliban's political office in Doha, met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and other officials in Tianjin, a port city around 100 km southeast of Beijing.

The visit to China is the first from the group in the wake of its gaining key ground in Afghanistan, including in Badkhan province which borders China's western Xinjiang region.

It isn't, however, the first such Taliban visit to China and caps years of careful outreach from Beijing to the group, on occasion mediated by Pakistan, China's "all-weather" ally. A delegation was hosted in Beijing in 2019, while in 2015, China had hosted negotiations between the Taliban and Afghan officials in the city of Urumqi, Xinjiang's provincial capital, in a meeting facilitated by Pakistan.

The Taliban delegation's visit also comes days after Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi met with Mr. Wang in the Chi-



New engagements: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, right, with the Taliban's political chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in Tianjin. AFP

nese city of Chengdu. Both sides on Saturday said they had agreed on "joint actions" to more closely work together in Afghanistan amid the changing situation in the country.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, in a statement on Wednesday, said Mr. Wang had called on the Taliban "to draw a line" between the group and terror organisations, specifically the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which has carried out attacks in Xinjiang.

He described the Taliban as "a pivotal military and political force in Afghanistan" and said it was "expected to play an important role in the process of peace, reconciliation and reconstruction". He said China hoped the group would "resolutely and effectively combat" the ETIM.

Mr. Wang also hit out at the U.S., telling the delegation that "the hasty withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan marks the failure of the U.S. policy to-

ward Afghanistan".

The head of the Taliban delegation, the Chinese Foreign Ministry statement said, committed that the group "will not allow any force to use Afghan territory to do anything harmful to China". He was also quoted as saying the Taliban "hoped China will participate more in the peace and reconstruction process and play a greater role in the future reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan".

In Sri Lanka, teachers resist Bill 'militarising' education

University teachers hold silent protest across campuses on the island

MEERA SRINIVASAN

Academics from Sri Lanka's state universities on Wednesday withdrew from online teaching and administrative duties in resistance to a government Bill that, they say, threatens to "militarise" education.

University teachers also held a silent protest across campuses on the island, according to Harshana Rambukwella, a spokesman for the Federation of University Teachers Associations' (FUTA) campaign against the General Sir John Kotelawala National Defence University (or KDU) Bill.

"The FUTA's main demand is that the government keep military and civilian education separate," Prof. Rambukwella said. "This Bill is not just about one university, it is essentially a model of private education, subsidised by the government and run by the military. It is an assault on the country's public education system," he said.

The KDU Bill, scheduled for parliamentary debate on August 6, seeks to change the governance structure of the University that was set up in 1980 as an Academy exclusively for the tri-forces, and named after Sri Lanka's former Prime Minister. The proposed changes could pave way for a greater military role in education policy and administration, academics warn.

With their symbolic action, the university teachers joined other teacher and student groups calling for withdrawal of the controversial Bill. The Ceylon Teach-



Gotabaya Rajapaksa

ers' Union (CTU), a body of school teachers across the country, and the Inter University Students' Federation (IUSF), one of the largest student bodies in Sri Lanka, are also opposing the Bill. Earlier this month, dozens, including CTU general secretary Joseph Stalin, were arrested during a protest against the Bill, on charges of violating "health regulations". They were forcibly quarantined for a week.

Following wide condemnation of the arrest, including by the Bar Association of Sri Lanka, they were released. "Discussions with the government have been very disappointing so far, we will continue our strike action," Mr. Stalin told *The Hindu*, of the CTU's ongoing protests against both, the KDU Bill and for a "long-pending" salary hike.

'Growing militarisation' Concerns over militarisation in Sri Lanka grew following the election of ex-military officer Gotabaya Rajapaksa as President in November 2019. In her report in January this year, UN Human Rights Chief Michelle Bachelet re-

ferred to "the accelerating militarisation of civilian governmental functions", citing the appointment of at least 28 serving or former military and intelligence personnel to key administrative posts.

For a decade now, the Tamil people living in the north and east, who have faced the brunt of post-war militarisation, have repeatedly objected to the visible presence and participation of the army in civilian activities, including agriculture. The growing momentum and media coverage of the ongoing protests against the KDU Bill lately have put militarisation in the spotlight in the country's Sinhala-majority south.

Those slamming the Bill are flagging the possibility of a military-run, parallel structure of higher education, with provisions to quell students' right to free expression and dissent. In a recent *Oped* article, Opposition legislator and former professor Harini Amasuriya wrote: "The proposed KDU Bill offers a privatised, military model of higher education, which will take Sri Lanka on a trajectory towards militarisation of society as a whole."

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa told the politically influential Maha Sangha [Buddhist clergy] recently that the "obstacles" in the "University Grants Commission Act" would be removed, and the KDU would be brought under its purview. "It is a mistaken reference to Sri Lanka's Universities Act, as there is no UGC Act," Prof. Rambukwella said.

ELSEWHERE



Pedro Castillo sworn in as Peru's President

LIMA Pedro Castillo was sworn in as Peru's fifth President in three years on Wednesday on the 200th anniversary of the country's independence, promising a new Constitution. The 51-year-old rural schoolteacher enters the job with a lengthy to-do list: tame the pandemic, reactivate a flagging economy, and end years of political turmoil. AFP

Tunisia opens graft probes into leading Islamist party

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tunisian prosecutors have opened investigations into alleged foreign campaign funding and anonymous donations to Islamist movement Ennahdha and two other political parties, according to local media.

Ennahdha is the dominant party in Parliament, whose activities were suspended this week by President Kais Saied. Tunisia's leader also fired the Prime Minister and key Cabinet members, saying it was necessary to stabilise a country in economic and health crisis. But Ennahdha and other critics accused him of overstepping his power and

threatening Tunisia's democracy.

The spokesperson for the financial prosecutor's office, Mohsen Daly, said that the investigations were opened in mid-July. He also announced investigations were opened earlier this month into the country's national anti-corruption agency - suspected itself of corruption - and into Tunisia's Truth and Dignity Commission created to confront abuses during Tunisia's decades of autocratic rule.

Ennahdha's leader Rachid Ghannouchi said that his party is a perfect target to blame for Tunisia's crescendo of economic, health and other problems.

PARADIP PORT TRUST
e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
TDTMIGEN-225/Vol-III/20/1394 dtd.26.07.2021
Name of the work "Allotment of 08 (Eight) nos. of Manual Iron Ore / Iron Ore Pellet plots". License Fees : ₹2,35,85,958/-, Wharfage Fees : ₹6,17,041/- Last Date & time of submission of Bid : Dt.16.08.2021 up to 15:00 Hrs. Date and time of opening (technical bid) : Dt.16.08.2021 up to 18:00 Hrs. Refer our website for details : <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Sr. Asst. Traffic Manager PPT/PR/71/2021-22, Dt.28.07.2021

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
WARANGAL- 506 004 (TS)
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER Date: 26-07-2021
Director NIT Warangal invites e-bids for the following Items / Services through open tendering process:
S.No Name of the Service / Item (s) Last date to submit online bids
1. Tender for Facility Management Services for the Guest Houses of NIT Warangal. 26th August, 2021 upto 02:00 PM
2. Tender for providing manpower on 31st August, 2021 upto 02:00 PM
3. Tender for engagement of security agency for providing round the clock security services. 17th August, 2021 upto 02:00 PM
4. Tender for supply of Field Emission Scanning Electron Microscope (FESEM) 16th August, 2021 upto 11:00 AM
5. Tender for supply of Glove Box 16th August, 2021 upto 11:00 AM
6. Tender for supply of RFID Tags upto 11:00 AM
For details to visit <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>
Tenders by Organisation National Project Implementation Unit(NPIU) World Bank Tenders NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WARANGAL and <https://nitw.ac.in/main/update/Job/Tenders> DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION UNIT, HEAD OFFICE, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM, DEHRADUN
National Competitive Bidding (e-Tender Notice) Dated: 27.07.2021
On behalf of the Chairman, Uttarakhand Peyjal Sansadhan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam (Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam), Dehradun sealed tenders in Single Bid Two Cover Bid System, on item rate contract Design, Build and Operate basis (inclusive of all materials), are invited for the construction, operation and maintenance of works of following water supply scheme from technically and financially capable bidders up to prescribed time & date and on the portal as mentioned in terms and conditions given below:-
Tender/ Name of S. Bid Cost of Bid Period of Comp-
No./ Division No. Name of Work Security document(Rs)letion of works
13 2 Construction of following water supply scheme including review of design, Supplying, Laying, Joining & testing of Rising Main, Distribution System, Construction of CHTs, Drilling & development of Tube wells and all appurtenant Civil & E&M works etc. including Five-year Operation, Maintenance, bill generation, bill distribution to consumer, revenue collection & Management on pre-defined Performance standards of following schemes: 18 Months Construction + 3 Months Trial & Run + 60 Months Operation and Maintenance
14 2.1 Gaajalal Uttar water supply scheme Block Khatima Distt. Nainital To be submitted in the form of Rs. 100/- stamp p.p.e/r duly indorsed 10000.00 GST
15 2.2 Umrukhand water supply scheme Block Khatima Distt. Udham Singh Nagar 18000.00 GST
2.3 Maholiya water supply scheme Block Khatima Distt. Udham Singh Nagar 18000.00 GST
Bid Document of these works shall be uploaded on e-government procurement system (e-GPS) portal i.e. www.uktenders.gov.in on or before 30-07-2021 at 15:00 hrs.- General Manager (PIU)

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA NIRMAN SOUDHA, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR
INVTATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
File No. B-IV-H(H&D)-44/2019 Lr. No.-27801 / Bhubaneswar Dtd. 27th July 2021
Invitation For Bids - Bid Identification No. CE (B) - 08 / 2021-22
1. The Chief Engineer (Buildings), Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE only for Construction of Building works as detailed below:
2. Nature of work : Building works
3. No. of work : 01 no.
4. Bid Cost : ₹.10,000/-
5. Class of Contractor : Super
6. Availability of Bid Documents in the website : From dt.04.08.2021 to 17:00 Hours of dt.18.08.2021.
7. Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.19.08.2021 at 11.30 AM
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.
Sd/- Chief Engineer (Buildings), Odisha, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-341171/0026/212

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
DEPARTMENT OF HANDLOOMS AND TEXTILES
TENDER NOTICE FOR PURCHASE OF POLYESTER TEXTURISED YARN
Sealed tenders with two cover system in the prescribed format are invited only from the interested eligible parties for the Purchase of Polyester Texturised Yarn for Distribution of Sarees and Dhotes scheme Pongal 2022.
Sl. No. Variety of yarn Required Quantity in MT Required Earnest money deposit in (Rs.) Sale period Last date and time for receipt of tender Date and time of opening of Tender Supply Period
1. 80/34D Grey PTY 2195.00 5,00,000/- 29.07.2021 upto 11.45 a.m 31.08.2021 at 12.45 p.m. 75 days
2. 80/34D Dyed PTY 2630.00 31.08.2021 upto 10.30 a.m 31.08.2021 at 12.45 p.m. 75 days
3. 155/34 D 250 TPM Dyed PTY 222.00 11.45 a.m 60 days
4. 150D Cotlook Air Texturised Yarn 482.00 60 days
Eligibility of the Tenderer and Other conditions are stipulated in the Tender Schedule. 1. The Tender Schedule can be downloaded at free of cost from Government tender website www.tenders.tn.gov.in and used for bidding. 2. If requested to send through Post: By Demand Draft - Rs.5,700/- in favour of "Yarn Committee for FDS 2014" payable at Chennai City (inclusive of 12% GST). Interested tenderers are requested to submit the tender schedule duly filled, in separate covers and it should be sent in a sealed envelope superscribing "Tender for Purchase of Polyester Texturised Yarn" addressed to "The Joint Director(Uniforms) Tender Inviting Authority, O/o Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles, Kuralagam, II Floor, Chennai - 600 108". Pre Bid Meeting: There will be a pre bid meeting on 17.08.2021 at 11.00 am to 12.00 noon in the Conference Hall of the Office of the Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles, Chennai-108. Contact: Joint Director (Uniforms) Telephone: 044-25358715, Fax: 044-25351177, Mobile: 9360318278, Email ID: tendering2020@gmail.com
Joint Director (Uniforms)/Tender Inviting Authority
DIPR/2239/Tender/2021

Russia to boost Tajik Army with weapons

Joint military exercise next week

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

DUSHANBE Russia will bolster Central Asian ally Tajikistan's military with weapons, equipment and training amid a "deteriorating" situation in neighbouring Afghanistan, Moscow's defence minister said Wednesday on a visit to the country.

Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will hold joint military drills next week near Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan, where the Taliban has made huge military gains and claims to control 90% of the country's borders.

Speaking in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe where he met his counterpart Sherali Mirzo, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said Moscow had organised additional supplies of weaponry and equipment to bolster Tajikistan's Army.

"We continue to train qualified Tajik military personnel. We prepare them both at our military universities and at the 201st Russian military base" Mr. Shoigu said, referring to Moscow's base in the country.

Mr. Shoigu, who blamed

the worsening security situation on the "hasty" withdrawal of U.S. forces, said Moscow was ready to offer "any necessary help to (our) Tajikistan friends".

Afghanistan's government in Kabul has dismissed as a lie the Taliban's claim of near total border control.

But the militants last month seized control of Afghanistan's main Shir Khan Bandar border crossing with Tajikistan.

Last week, Tajikistan checked the combat readiness of its armed forces in the biggest such exercise in the country's history.

Some 2,30,000 members of the Central Asian's security forces took part in the exercise and Dushanbe also relocated 20,000 troops to strengthen its force on the border with Afghanistan.

A Tajik official said Tajikistan was ready to accept 1,00,000 refugees from Afghanistan.

However, Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhriddin said Tajikistan was "not yet ready to name the exact number of refugees we can accept", citing the need for anti-coronavirus measures as a potential complication.

ANDHRA PRADESH DAIRY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATIVE FEDERATION LTD.
APIC Towers, IT Park, Mangalagiri, Guntur. E-mail: mdap-ddcf@ap.gov.in
TENDER NOTICE ON e-PROCUREMENT PLATFORM
Tender No:11/LMS/HYD/MKTG/ADDDCF/2021 Dt:29-07-2021
The Andhra Pradesh Dairy Development Co-op Federation Ltd., Mangalagiri, Guntur invites tenders for Milk processing, Packing and Marketing of Pouch milk & curd on Vijaya brand in Hyderabad market. Interested parties may submit their bids on e-procurement platform @ <https://konugolu.ap.gov.in/> on or before 16-08-2021 by 02.00 PM. The site will remain accessible to download the tender document w.f. 29-07-2021 @ 01:00 P.M onwards. For further details the interested parties may contact during Office hours to Cell No: 9885826228, e-mail: mdap-ddcf@ap.gov.in Sd/- Managing Director

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (THIRD CALL)
Advertisement No.935/2021 Date: 29.07.2021
Leading vendors/ Suppliers/agencies/ companies are called for Expression of Interest (Eoi) to respond to the supply of fully modified (1) Fish Vending cum Food Cart (Modified 4-Wheeler Vehicle) (2) 3 Wheeler Fish Vending Cart (Modified Electric Vehicle) across the state of Andhra Pradesh. The detailed Eoi document can be downloaded from the website of <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in> and www.fisheries.ap.gov.in from 29.07.2021 and the last date for submission of bid is 06.08.2021. For more details contact: Office of the Commissioner of Fisheries, A.P., Vijayawada. Website: www.fisheries.ap.gov.in, email: apfisheriestender@gmail.com. Sd/- Commissioner of Fisheries (FAC)

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY (PMC) REQUIRED
PMC Required for Construction of PG Block adjacent to the main block at Army College of Dental Sciences, Secunderabad. PMC will be responsible for preparing drawings (Architectural, structural, and internal services), Identification of vendor, preparation of contract documents including BOQ. PMC should have adequate experience in giving consultancy services to government/ semi Govt or PSUs for construction of hospital/ clinics experience Certificates should be attached with the application. PMC can visit the site before giving the best offer. The DPR must be vetted by any Govt. Engg College with regard to the structural drawing. The last date for submission of offer is 10 Aug 2021. Offer to be submitted at following address. Further details available on website : acds.co.in
Registrar
Army College of Dental Sciences,
Chennai - CRPF Road, Jawhar Nagar Post, Secunderabad-500087.
email id: acds.pgblock@gmail.com Mobile No.9848902460

भारतीय अंतरिक्ष विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान
Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology
(वि. अ. आयोग अधिनियम 1956 के धारा 3 के अधीन मानित विश्वविद्यालय घोषित)
(Declared as Deemed to be University under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956)
भारत सरकार, अंतरिक्ष विभाग के तहत स्वायत्त संस्थान
(An Autonomous Institute under Department of Space, Govt. of India)
बलिसयमला, तिरुवनन्तपुरम 695 547, केरल
Valliamala, Thiruvananthapuram 695 547, Kerala
ADMISSION TO Ph.D. PROGRAMME
Online applications are invited for admission to Ph.D. programme for Any time mode.
Application process will be done ONLINE
• Starting of filling up of online application form : 29.07.2021
• Last date for filling up of online application form : 17.08.2021
• Date of Online Written Screening Test : 25.08.2021 *
• Interview Date : 31.08.2021 *
* These dates are tentative and could change depending on the situation of the pandemic Covid-19 in the country.
For online application form and other details, please visit <http://admission.iist.ac.in>
Contact 0471- 2568477/618/418, Fax No: 0471- 2568556
Email: admissions@iist.ac.in Dean (Academics)

COASTAL AQUACULTURE AUTHORITY
Ministry Of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
Government of India
5th Floor, Integrated Office Complex for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department, Fanepet, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035.
Phone No. 044-24353784, 24353502. Email: aquauth@gmail.com
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR CONSULTANTS
Coastal Aquaculture Authority (CAA), Chennai requires the services of Seven Consultants (Monitoring Assistants) and one Consultant (Admn) on Full Time basis for a period of one year to assist the authority in executing certain specific works as given below:
CONSULTANT (MONITORING ASSISTANTS)(7 Nos): To assist in works relating to Monitoring of coastal aquaculture establishments/ analysis of samples from farms and hatcheries/ collection of input samples from stakeholders/ conducting awareness programmes, etc.
CONSULTANT (ADMN) (1 No): To assist in works relating to Administration / Establishment / Accounts / Budget / Audit / Legal / Policy and any other matters given from time to time.
Information on the job details such as educational qualifications, age limit, experience, terms of reference, remuneration, job location etc., is available in the CAA website - www.caa.gov.in
Candidates who meet the criteria with respect to qualifications and experience may attend the walk in interview at the Coastal Aquaculture Authority, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India, 5th Floor, Integrated Office Complex for Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department, Fanepet, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035 on 17.08.2021 at 10:30 a.m.
Date :28.07.2021 MEMBER SECRETARY

MARKET WATCH

	28-07-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,444	-0.26
US Dollar	74.38	0.12
Gold	46607	0.21
Brent oil	74.8	0.47

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	665.40	2.20
Asian Paints	3004.10	-24.55
Axis Bank	722.90	-8.90
Bajaj Auto	3818.50	-2.90
Bajaj Finserv	13970.55	162.70
Bajaj Finance	6262.00	30.55
Bharti Airtel	567.90	27.35
BPLCL	453.45	0.15
Britannia Ind	3424.10	-26.65
Cipla	889.90	-23.20
Coal India	144.05	1.60
Divis Lab	4890.60	99.20
Dr Reddys Lab	4731.75	-111.60
Eicher Motors	2550.40	-20.95
Grasim Ind	1533.55	14.85
HCL Tech	983.10	-8.90
HDFC	2425.80	-8.15
HDFC Bank	1417.30	-22.45
HDFC Life	664.85	-3.90
Hero MotoCorp	2777.70	-16.15
Hindalco	416.30	-1.05
Hind Unilever	2361.30	19.00
ICICI Bank	685.05	7.60
IndusInd Bank	992.75	16.95
Infosys	1605.60	3.05
Indian Oil Corp	104.00	0.05
ITC	209.10	0.45
JSW Steel	721.70	-11.05
Kotak Bank	1652.85	-45.10
L&T	1594.20	-14.05
M&M	728.70	-16.85
Maruti Suzuki	7165.05	-75.20
Nestle India Ltd.	18022.55	-203.55
NTPC	116.80	-2.05
ONGC	114.35	-0.30
PowerGrid Corp	228.10	-3.75
Reliance Ind	2037.35	-17.65
SBI Life	1133.40	28.25
State Bank	425.50	-4.45
Shree Cement	27491.45	-373.70
Sun Pharma	687.80	-0.50
Tata Consumer	754.90	-14.85
Products Ltd.	284.45	-6.95
Tata Motors	284.45	-6.95
Tata Steel	1365.00	34.35
TCS	3197.80	14.85
Tech Mahindra	1119.55	-1.30
Titan	1723.55	-5.50
UltraTech Cement	7654.65	58.40
UPL	814.65	1.90
Wipro	591.95	0.50

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 28

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.18	74.50
Euro	87.54	87.92
British Pound	102.95	103.40
Japanese Yen (100)	67.44	67.76
Chinese Yuan	11.41	11.47
Swiss Franc	81.09	81.44
Singapore Dollar	54.54	54.79
Canadian Dollar	58.98	59.26
Malaysian Ringgit	17.51	17.60

Source: Indian Bank

Paytm Payments Bank issues one crore FASTags

NEW DELHI
Paytm Payments Bank Ltd. (PBBL) on Wednesday said it had achieved a milestone of issuing one crore FASTags, or almost 30% of the total FASTags issued by 32 banks in the country.

'Deposits up to ₹5 lakh in ailing banks to be repaid in 90 days'

Cabinet approves deposit insurance law amendments on lenders in moratorium

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Depositors in ailing banks such as PMC Bank may get some relief soon, with the Cabinet on Wednesday clearing amendments to the deposit insurance law to return up to ₹5 lakh of savings within 90 days of the RBI's imposition of a moratorium on a bank's operations.

"The Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation Bill 2021 has been cleared by the Cabinet today," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a briefing on Wednesday, adding that the Bill would be tabled in Parliament in the ongoing session.

"Accessing depositors money has been an issue of



Quicker relief: Even if there's a moratorium, this (90-day) measure will set in, says Finance Minister. ■ REUTERS

when it will be allowed and under what conditionalities. Normally, it takes about 8-10 years, after complete liquidation of the bank. Now, what we are saying is even if there's a moratorium, this (90-day) measure will set in," Ms. Sitharaman said.

As per the proposed process, a bank under moratorium would have to collect all the account details and balances and share it with the Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) within 45 days. The DICGC would get another 45

days to check the details and process the claims.

'Larger safety net'

"Each depositor's balance of ₹5 lakh is guaranteed for both principal and interest," the minister said, adding this would provide a significantly larger safety net for India's bank customers.

"With the deposit insurance increased from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh, it will cover 98.3% of all deposit accounts and 50.9% of all deposits' value. Just compare this with what prevails outside — only 80% of deposits are insured, with 20%-30% of deposit value globally," she asserted.

The premium paid by banks to the DICGC would also be raised, she added.

'Data breaches cost Indian firms ₹165 mn'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Data breaches cost companies in India about ₹165 million on an average, according to a new report by IBM Security and Ponemon Institute. This is an increase of 17.9% from the ₹140 million mentioned in the last report in 2020.

The global 'Cost of a Data Breach Report', which surveyed more than 500 companies worldwide between May 2020 and March 2021, found that data breaches cost the surveyed companies \$4.24 million per incident on average — the highest cost in the 17-year history of the report.

According to the 2021 report data shared by the company, the cost in India per lost or stolen record stood at ₹5,900, an increase of 6.85% from 2020.

Tyagi laments lack of disclosures by listed firms

'IPOs more an exit option for investors'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Ajay Tyagi stressed that companies must ensure disclosure of material events as per regulations 'not just in letter but also in spirit.'

"Listed companies must have two sets of disclosures: firstly, periodic disclosures where formats have been prescribed and secondly, disclosures of material events," he said, speaking at a FICCI event.

"On both these aspects disclosures by many companies are lacking. On periodic disclosures such as annual reports, while all the fields are being filled in, in many cases, they appear more like a check-box exercise. This is not acceptable," he added. He also said many new-



Ajay Tyagi

age firms were posting rapid growth, leading them to opt for an IPO at an early stage.

"While many of the IPOs years back used to be for project financing, we rarely now see IPOs being used specifically to finance projects. In terms of value, the proportion of IPOs being used to give exit to existing investors is higher than the proportion being used for raising funds," he added.

Cabinet clears amendments to LLP Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Cabinet on Wednesday cleared amendments to the Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Act of 2008, to whittle down several provisions, Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

The amendments also include a new definition for small LLPs and would benefit the 2.3 lakh LLP firms currently operational in the country, the Minister said. Law-abiding corporates were to get Ease of Doing Business benefits and part of the criminality related sections would be replaced with penalties.

Of the 24 penal provisions in the Act, one would be omitted and a total of 12 cognisable offences were being decriminalised, the Minister said.

Infosys, ICAI, FinMin fixing I-T portal: FM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman expressed regret about the new income tax portal's dysfunctional systems and hoped it would be easy to use soon.

"It was tried out before being launched in early June. But after the problems" were glaring, the ministry asked Infosys to come, the minister said.

"Infosys is quite closely working with the ICAI and the ministry, and rapidly; there is, at least from what I hear from CAs and I-T professionals, definitely a lot of improvement," the Finance Minister said.

"I wish it didn't have to happen this way, but we are correcting course, and soon the portal will be, as was planned, easy to use," Ms. Sitharaman added.

Maruti Suzuki posts Q1 net profit of ₹440.8 crore

Lower sales volume impacts carmaker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki on Wednesday said it registered a net profit of ₹440.8 crore for the first quarter ended June, impacted by lower sales volumes.

The firm said while all parameters during the quarter under review were substantially better than April-June 2020, a comparison was not meaningful because there was a much higher degree of disruption on account of the pandemic during the first quarter of the last fiscal.

Maruti had posted a loss of ₹249.4 crore in Q1 FY21, the firms' first quarterly loss since its listing in July 2003.

First-quarter net sales stood at ₹16,798.7 crore (₹3,677.5 crore).

"The second wave of the pandemic adversely impact-



ed Q1 production and sales," the company said.

"The profit for Q1 FY2021-22 was primarily impacted by lower sales volumes. Commodity prices increased steeply but the company continued to make efforts to reduce costs," it added.

The carmaker noted that sales during the first quarter of FY22 remained 'far below' the previous high in April-June 2019.

Sundaram Home Fin plans to raise ₹2,500 cr.

Firm's Q1 net rises 18% to ₹40 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Sundaram Home Finance Ltd. plans to raise ₹2,500 crore via debt and from banks this year for funding its growth plans.

The home finance subsidiary of Sundaram Finance Ltd. reported an 18% increase in net profit for Q1 FY22 at ₹40 crore. It disbursed ₹249.27 crore against ₹99.98 crore in the year-earlier period, it said.

"The second wave of COVID led to uncertainty during the quarter, but relaxation of lockdown in most States in June led to a partial bounce back in demand in the real estate space towards the end of Q1," said managing director Lakshminarayanan Duraiswamy.

"The disbursements in Q1 were driven by mid-market



Lakshminarayanan Duraiswamy

segments, especially the salaried class, in tier 2 and 3 towns," he added.

"While the longer term outlook remains strong with the demand for housing expected to grow in the coming years, we are cautiously optimistic on the growth prospects for the rest of the year and believe that the worst is behind us," remarked Mr. Duraiswamy.

UPASI chafes at mandatory tea auctions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE

The United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) has termed as 'retrograde' the recent circular issued by Tea Board India,

directing manufacturers to comply with the order of mandatory sale of 50% of the total output via public auctions. There is a wide variation between auction and retail prices, said Prashant Bhanjali, president, UPASI.

The Tea Board says its order will make the auction system robust and bring stability to prices. But, tea auctions in India have a finite load-handling capacity as is evident from the recent steep fall in prices, Mr. Bhanjali added. UPASI said the mode of sale should be left to the choice of the producers.

SPORT

Badminton great Natekar passes away

First Indian shuttler to win an international crown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

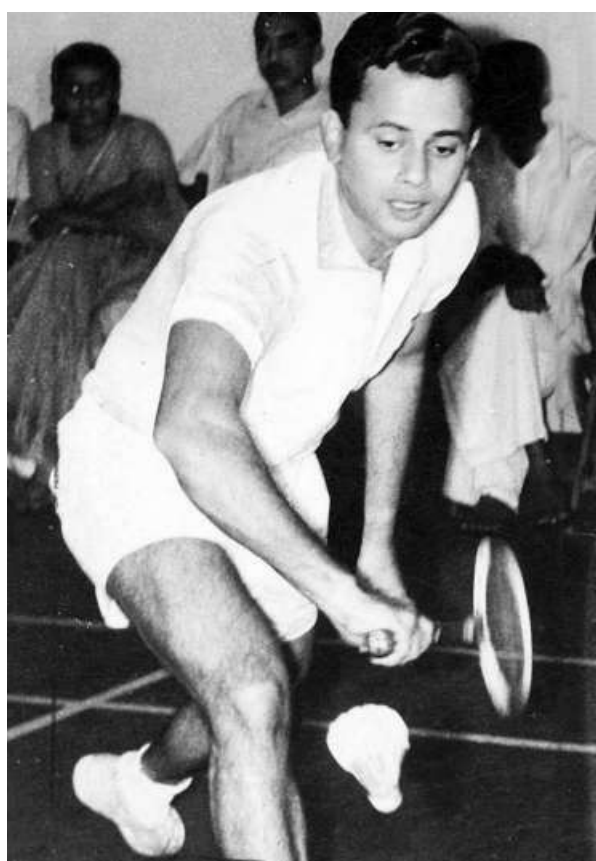
Nandu Natekar, one of the superstars in Indian badminton history, passed away in Pune due to prolonged illness. He was 88.

"With deepest sorrow, we would like to inform you that our beloved father Nandu Natekar passed away on July 28," said a joint statement by his family. "Keeping in mind the COVID-19 guidelines, we will not be having a condolence meeting. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers."

Natekar is survived by son Gaurav, a former international tennis player, and daughters Sangeeta Welinkar and Nishigandha Mathur.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Natekar was a household name all over India, thanks to his exploits on the court across the globe.

The first Indian shuttler to win a tournament overseas — the Selangor International crown in Kuala Lumpur in 1956, Natekar was among the first batch of the Arjuna Award recipients in 1961 when the awards were introduced. His international achievements included mak-



Crowd-puller: Natekar was a treat to watch. ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

ing it to the All England Championship quarterfinals in 1954 and representing India in the Commonwealth Games in Jamaica in 1966.

Spellbinding

Moreover, in an era when domestic sports circuit would see spectator galleries overflowing, Natekar was a crowd-puller. He bagged six singles, six doubles and five mixed doubles National titles during his glorious career. His footwork was often compared to that of a ballet dan-

cer while his deceptive wrist-work left his opponents and connoisseurs spellbound.

Interestingly, it was another racquet sport — tennis — that was his first love. He excelled in tennis as much as badminton, losing to the legendary Ramanathan Krishnan in the 1951 National junior championship final.

After dominating the indoor courts for a decade and half, he resumed his love affair with tennis, being a regular on the veterans' tennis circuit for many years.

'Style and grace came naturally to Nandu'

Padukone pays tributes to Natekar

PRAKASH PADUKONE

Nandu came one generation before me. I've seen him play during the later stages of his career.

He was one of the most stylish badminton players in the world, alongside Suresh Goel and Trilok Nath Seth.

Pioneer

In his era — 50s and 60s — the focus was on style and grace, not power. Style and grace came naturally to Nandu. Players of my generation viewed Nandu as a pioneer.

He had the best results for an Indian badminton player before I came in. His career was constrained by the fact that he did not get many opportunities to play international tournaments.

In those days, badminton was not a popular sport. Nandu competed in only one or two All-England Championships.

Nandu made a big mark, despite having limited opportunities. In those days, players looked forward to

taking on the world's best in invitational tournaments held in Bombay and Jabalpur. Nandu defeated some world-class players in those tournaments.

Off the court, he was a thorough gentleman. After his retirement, he held a senior position in a Public Sector Unit (PSU). He was one of the few badminton players who did really well in post-retirement life.

Nandu was equally good at tennis. He played against Ramanathan Krishnan and other top Indian players of the time. He also spent a lot of time playing golf after settling in Pune.

I met Nandu around 10-15 years ago at a friend's house.

He was in his 70s, and had just started learning how to sing classical music. He even joined a singing class, and would travel everywhere with his 'Shruti box'. He was always happy to sing; he never turned down a song request from us.

(As told to Ashwin Achal)



Stalwarts: Natekar, right, with Padukone after the latter won the All England title in 1980. ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

The way forward for Kerala sport

Athletes and administrators offer solutions at Sportstar's Conclave; Sports Minister feels SKL will be a game-changer

GENERAL

STAN RAYAN
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With not a single Kerala woman in the Indian team at the Tokyo Olympics, the Kerala Sports Conclave, organised by Sportstar here on Wednesday, offered a wonderful opportunity to discuss the issue.

"This is a time when we need to reflect on what happened to Kerala sports," said V. Abdurahiman, Kerala Sports Minister. "We need to bring back the time when we had stars like P.T. Usha, Shiny Abraham and M.D. Valsamma."



Kerala is working on a new sports policy and a unique sports Kerala Limited (SKL), a PSU exclusively for sport, which the Sports Minister hopes will be a game-changer.

"We believe that Sports Kerala Ltd. will bring about massive changes on how stadiums are utilised. The government also plans to conduct tournaments jointly with sports associations," said Abdurahiman.

This answered football greats I.M. Vijayan and Jo Paul Ancheri's worry that the lack of tournaments was stopping talent from coming to the fore and the institu-



Remedial measure: Abdurahiman said the government plans to conduct tournaments with sports associations. ■ S. MAHINSHA

tional football teams had virtually nothing to play for despite year-round training.

"This is only the beginning," said Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in a statement, about the changes coming in. "With proper training and facilities, outstanding athletes will emerge from here."

Usha spoke about the need to find out why athletes achieve qualification standards but were unable to repeat it at major events like the Olympics and Worlds. "We also need guidance from sports science experts on how to handle injury rehab, and how to strengthen the athletes after injury," she said.

International shooter Elizabeth Susan Koshy was keen that the shooting range in Thiruvananthapuram be converted into a full-fledged academy with the right people managing things.

"We have a world-class range but there are a lot of formalities when one wants to use it. We should also make the academy affordable since shooting is already

an expensive sport. We need to have more centres too," said Elizabeth, a multiple National champion.

Sports stars Ambika Radhika, Mayoorkha Johnny, P. Ramachandran, Jincy Philip, K.C. Lekha, C.K. Vineeth, Mercy Kuttan (also the Kerala Sports Council president) and sports administrators Geromic George (Director-Sports, Kerala), Jayesh George (BCCI joint secretary), Sreejith Nair (KCA secretary), G. Kishore (Director SAI-Kerala) and MLA M. Mukesh also spoke on the occasion.

Ayon Sengupta, Editor, Sportstar, explained the theme of the Conclave and K.C. Vijaya Kumar, The Hindu's Sports Editor, assured that a white paper would be presented to the Sports Minister on the way forward for Kerala sport. The event was anchored by A. Vinod, The Hindu's Kerala sports bureau chief.

Jain University was the presenting sponsor, while the event, powered by SUT Pattom, had NECC and LIC as associate sponsors.



Nandu Natekar. ■ FILE PHOTO

Sindhu storms into elimination round

Has the measure of Cheung Ngan Yi, to meet Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt next



RAKESH RAO

World champion P.V. Sindhu produced another fine performance to beat Hong Kong's Cheung Ngan Yi 21-9, 21-16 and enter the elimination round of the Olympic Games on Wednesday.

The 39-minute victory saw Sindhu top Group 'J' and set up a meeting with World No. 12 Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt, winner of Group 'I', on Thursday.

The seventh-ranked Sindhu enjoys a 4-1 advantage over Mia, but it is 1-1 this year, with the Indian winning the last encounter.

Taking control

Sindhu took on Cheung, ranked 34th, for the first time since posting a fifth con-



Well planned: Sindhu played a strategic game to ease into the knockouts. ■ GETTY IMAGES

secutive win over her in 2017. Realising that the challenges are going to get progressively tougher, the Indian settled down quickly and took control of the first game. With deft cross-court placements and the occasional smashes, Sindhu kept the 28-year-old

Hong Kong player guessing.

That Sindhu led 10-3 and 15-8 aptly reflected her domination. She dropped just one more point before racing away with the next six to close out the game.

In the second, Sindhu, quite surprisingly, opted not

to toss the shuttle deep into the court. Instead, she was happy to make Cheung move on both flanks, close to the net. Any loose response was met with a firm smash.

It was to Cheung's credit that she caught Sindhu on the forehand court with well-

placed smashes. This also helped her stay in step with Sindhu during the first half of the game and she even led 11-10 at the mid-game break.

From 14-14, Sindhu raised the bar, reeling off six straight points and move within a point of victory. Cheung saved two match-points before Sindhu sealed the contest with a powerful smash from close to the net.

Sai Praneeth loses

Later in the day, B. Sai Praneeth lost 14-21, 14-21 to Dutchman Mark Caljouw in an inconsequential Group D contest.

The result helped Caljouw, a semifinalist at this year's All England championship, make it to the knockout phase at the expense of Israel's Misha Zilberman, the Russia-born shuttler who had handed out a stunning 2-0 defeat to the Indian.

In a major upset, men's World No. 1 Kento Momota crashed out, losing to South Korea's Heo Kwang-hee 15-21, 19-21.

Pooja too hot for Ichrak

Meets China's Qian in the quarterfinals

BOXING

Y.B. SARANGI

Asian champion Pooja Rani's clinical performance helped her defeat promising Algerian boxer Ichrak Chaib 5-0 in the women's 75kg pre-quarterfinals at the Tokyo Olympics on Wednesday.

Pooja will take on Olympic bronze medalist and former World champion Li Qian of China in the last eight. Pooja is the second Indian boxer after Lovlina Borgohain to make the quarterfinals of the Games.

The experienced boxer

from Bhiwani (Haryana) used her right jabs and follow up left punches well to stay ahead of the Algerian, who delivered some well-directed shots on her opponent.

The 30-year-old Pooja bobbed and weaved smartly to avoid Ichrak's blows. She employed her right-left combinations, interspersed with double right-lefts, to get 5-0 verdicts in the first two rounds.

The Algerian, 10 years younger than the Indian, went all out in the final round, but Pooja relied on her footwork and surprise left hooks to seal the issue.



And the winner is... Pooja, left, was the unanimous choice of the judges in her bout against Ichrak. ■ AFP

Clinical Deepika remains in contention; Tarundeep and Pravin crash out

World No. 1 registers two wins, including a thriller against Mucino-Fernandez

ARCHERY

Y.B. SARANGI

Even as the windy conditions affected several archers, World No. 1 Deepika Kumari kept her focus to win two matches and reach the third round of the women's individual event at the Tokyo Olympics on Wednesday.

Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav, the two Indians in action in the men's individual event, got past the first hurdle before bowing out in the second round.

Deepika recorded a comprehensive 6-0 (26-23, 26-23, 27-24) victory over Bhutan's Karma in the first round. The Indian mostly scored 8s and 9s, apart from a 10 in the final set, to cruise into the second round.

The 27-year-old Deepika, competing in her third Olympics, used all her experience and skill to overcome the challenge of 18-year-old



Precision shooting: Deepika Kumari used all her experience and skill to overcome Jennifer Mucino-Fernandez's challenge in the second round. ■ PTI

American Jennifer Mucino-Fernandez 6-4 (25-26, 28-25, 27-25, 24-25, 26-25).

Nailing 10s

Deepika shot with precision to nail 10s on her last two shots of the second set and drew parity.

The American, who had two 8s, needed a 10 to force a shoot-off, but managed only 9 to lose the contest.

Finding his rhythm

Tarundeep, figuring in his third Olympics, found his rhythm late in the contest to pip Ukrainian Oleksii Hunbin 6-4 in the first round. He, however, lost the shoot-off to Israel's Itay Shanny 6-5 in the next.

With the scores tied at 5, the Indian shot a 9 while Shanny produced a 10.

Pravin shocked World No. 2 Galsan Bazarzhapov of Russia 6-0 before losing 0-6 to World No. 1 Brady Ellison of the USA. He dealt only with 9s and 10s despite the tough weather conditions to tame the Russian in straight sets.

Against Ellison, the World champion and Olympic medalist, the Indian lost the first two sets by a point before slipping in the third and bowing out of contention.

Indian women suffer third loss

Martin nets a brace as Great Britain posts a facile 4-1 win

HOCKEY

SHYAM VASUDEVAN

TOKYO

The Indian women's hockey team slumped to its third successive defeat, losing 1-4 to defending champion Great Britain in their Pool A game, on Wednesday.

India needed at least a point to boost its chances of progressing to the quarterfinals, but the reverse means that it is now all or nothing for Sjoerd Marijne's team. It has to win the remaining matches against Ireland and South Africa and can finish fourth if Ireland doesn't beat Great Britain in the final group game. The top four from each group advance to the last-eight stage.

Great Britain got off to a dream start as Hannah Martin scored just 73 seconds into the game. The early setback served as a rude jolt for the Indians. With a water-tight defence, Great Britain offered the Indians no room. Playing an aggressive high press, they choked Rani



Downcast: Members of the Indian team, with disappointment writ on their faces, after the loss to Great Britain. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Rampal's side for space and shut out chances in the penalty circle.

Martin struck again in the 19th minute, warding off a challenge from a defender before twisting and squeezing her shot home. The Indians responded sharply four minutes later when Gurjit Kaur's drag-flick off a penalty corner was turned in by Sharmila Devi.

Marijne's pep-talk during the break seemed to have made an impression as the

Indians seized control in the opening minutes of the third quarter. They won three successive penalty corners but couldn't find a way through to goal.

Instead, it was Lily Owsley who restored Great Britain's two-goal cushion in the 41st minute, scooping the ball past Savita Punia. Grace Balsdon converted a penalty stroke, three minutes from time, to complete the rout.

The Indians face Ireland on Friday.

INDIAN ODYSSEY



Shining bright: Rowers Arvind and Arjun, seen with coach Ismail Baig, qualified for final B in double sculls.

Archery: Men's individual: 1/16 eliminations: Tarundeep Rai lost to Itay Shanny (Isr) 5-6; Pravin Jadhav lost to Brady Ellison (USA) 0-6; **1/32 eliminations:** Tarundeep bt Oleksii Hunbin (Ukr) 6-4; Pravin bt Galsan Bazarzhapov (ROC) 6-0.

Women's individual: 1/16 eliminations: Deepika Kumari bt Jennifer Mucino-Fernandez (USA) 6-4; **1/32 eliminations:** bt Karma (Bhu) 6-0.

Badminton (group stage): Women's singles: P.V. Sindhu bt Cheung Ngan Yi (Hkg) 21-9, 21-16. Advanced to elimination round.

Men's singles: B. Sai Praneeth lost to Mark Caljouw (Ned) 14-21, 14-21. Did Not Qualify (DNQ) for next round.

Boxing: Women's middleweight (round of 16): Pooja Rani bt Ichrak Chaib (Alg).

Hockey: Women (Pool A): Lost to Great Britain 1-4.

Rowing: Men's lightweight double sculls (semifinal A/B 2): 6. Arjun Jat and Arvind Singh. Qualified for final B.

Sailing: Men: 49er: K.C. Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar (18th overall after four races).

GOLD MEDALLISTS ON WEDNESDAY

USA: 3x3 Basketball: Women

Latvia: 3x3 Basketball: Men

Daiki Hashimoto (Jpn): Artistic Gymnastics: Men's All-around

Primoz Roglic (Slo): Cycling Road: Men's individual time trial

Annemiek van Vleuten (Ned): Cycling Road: Women's individual time trial

China: Diving: Men's synchronised 3m springboard

Jessica von Bredow-Werndl (Ger): Equestrian: Dressage individual

South Korea: Fencing: Men's sabre team

Lasha Bekauri (Geo): Judo: Men's 90kg

Chizuru Arai (Jpn): Judo: Women's 70kg

Hugo Boucheron & Matthieu



Making a splash: Ohashi, winner of the 200m IM. ■ REUTERS

Androdias (Fra): Rowing: Men's double sculls

Ancuta Bodnar & Simona Radis

(Rou): Rowing: Women's double sculls

Australia: Rowing: Men's Fours

Australia: Rowing: Women's Fours

Netherlands: Rowing: Men's quadruple sculls

China: Rowing: Women's quadruple sculls

Fiji: Rugby Sevens: Men

Ariane Titmus (Aus): Swimming: Women's 200m freestyle

Katy Ledecky (USA): Swimming: Women's 1500m freestyle

Yui Ohashi (Jpn): Swimming: Women's 200m ind. medley

Kristof Milak (Hun): Swimming: Men's 200m butterfly

Great Britain: Swimming: Men's 4x200m freestyle relay

Shi Zhiyong (Chn): Weightlifting: Men's 73kg

Bowlers, Dhananjaya help Sri Lanka take series to the decider

After the host attack restricts a depleted India to 132, the No. 5 batsman anchors the chase; final T20I to be played today

INDIA IN LANKA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

COLOMBO

A depleted Indian team, playing with only five batsmen, could not defend a modest target of 133 despite a valiant effort from its players as Sri Lanka kept the three-match series alive with a four-wicket victory in the second T20I on Wednesday.

With nine players unavailable after Krunal Pandya tested positive, India had no option but to play with six specialist bowlers, including pacer Navdeep Saini, who wasn't given a single over.

Dhananjaya de Silva (40 not out) anchored a tricky chase as the hosts won with two balls to spare after India

scored 132 for five. Opener Minod Bhanuka (36, 31b, 4x4) was the other major contributor.

Chinaman Kuldeep Yadav (two for 30) bowled well, but was let down by poor fielding as two catches were put down. Varun Chakravarthy (4-0-18-1) was economical.

Cautious innings

Earlier, skipper Shikhar Dhawan (40, 42b, 5x4) batted cautiously on a track where the ball did not come on to the bat. With heavy rain slowing down the outfield, run-making was an ordeal. However, the young Devdutt Padikkal (29, 23b, 1x4, 1x6) was elegant as usual.

The other highly anticipated debut of Rituraj Gaikwad

(21, 18b, 1x4) ended in a whimper when Sri Lankan captain Dasun Shanaka's short ball climbed on to Rituraj and he got himself in a tangle while playing a pull shot.

Dhawan had to cut down on risky shots even though a cover drive, an on-drive and a slog-pull behind square embellished his innings before off-spinner Akila Dananjaya de Silva (two for 29) nailed him when he went for a slog-sweep.

But the batsman who impressed the most was debutant Padikkal, who slog-swept Dhananjaya for a six and ran well between the wickets during his 32-run stand with Dhawan. Sanju Samson fell for just seven.



Guiding hand: Dhananjaya took Sri Lanka home in the final over. ■ AFP

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Rituraj Gaikwad c Minod b Shanaka 21 (18b, 1x4), Shikhar Dhawan b Akila 40 (42b, 5x4), Devdutt Padikkal b Hasaranga 29 (23b, 1x4, 1x6), Sanju Samson b Akila 7 (13b), Nitish Rana c de Silva b Chameera 9 (12b), Bhuvneshwar Kumar (not out) 13 (17b), Navdeep Saini (not out) 1 (17b); Extras (b-1, w-11): 20; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 132.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-49 (Rituraj, 6.6 overs), 2-81 (Dhawan, 12.1), 3-99 (Padikkal, 15.3), 4-104 (Samson, 16.4), 5-130 (Rana, 19.4).

SRI LANKA BOWLING
Chameera 4-0-23-1, Karunaratne 1-0-6-0, Akila 4-0-29-2, Udana 1-0-7-0, Hasaranga 4-0-30-1, Shanaka 2-0-14-1, Mendis 2-0-9-0, de Silva 2-0-13-0.

SRI LANKA
Avishka Fernando c Rahul Chahar b Bhuvneshwar 11 (13b, 2x4), Minod Bhanuka c Rahul Chahar b Kuldeep 36 (37b, 4x4), Sadeera Samarawickrama b

Varun 8 (12b, 1x4), Dasun Shanaka st. Samson b Kuldeep 3 (6b), Dhananjaya de Silva (not out) 40 (34b, 1x4, 1x6), Wanindu Hasaranga c Bhuvneshwar b Rahul Chahar 15 (17b, 2x4), Ramesh Mendis c Raturaj b Sakariya 2 (5b), Chamika Karunaratne (not out) 12 (6b, 1x6); Extras (lb-3, w-3): 6; Total (for six wkts. in 19.4 overs): 133.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-12 (Avishka, 2.4), 2-39 (Samarawickrama, 6.6), 3-55 (Shanaka, 9.1), 4-66 (Minod, 11.4), 5-94 (Hasaranga, 14.6), 6-105 (Mendis, 17.2).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 4-0-21-1, Sakariya 3-4-0-34-1, Varun 4-0-18-1, Rahul Chahar 4-0-27-1, Kuldeep 4-0-30-2.

Toss: Sri Lanka.

Man-of-the-Match: Dhananjaya.

Sri Lanka won by four wickets with two balls to spare and levelled the series 1-1.

Third and final T20I: July 29, Colombo, 8 p.m.

Milak underlines his class in 200m butterfly

Titmus claims women's 200m crown; Ledecy picks up her first gold; Ohashi completes medley double

TOKYO OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Hungarian Kristof Milak powered to the men's 200m butterfly gold medal, despite sporting torn trunks which he claimed cost him a world record, at the Olympic Games here on Thursday.

Milak, who crushed Michael Phelps' world record in 2019, hit the wall in a new Olympic record of 1:51.25.

"They split 10 minutes before I entered the pool and in that moment I knew the world record was gone," he told reporters after the race, angrily throwing the torn togs at a table. "I lost my focus and knew I couldn't do it."

Dressel pulls out

The chances of US superstar Caeleb Dressel winning a much-touted seven gold medals in Tokyo vanished when



Dominant: Hungary's Kristof Milak brooked no challenge in the men's 200m butterfly, while Katie Ledecy produced a commanding swim to annihilate the field in the inaugural 1500m freestyle. ■AFP

he opted out of the 4x200m relay squad that finished fourth behind winner Great Britain.

Led off by Tom Dean and brought home by Duncan Scott, Great Britain touched in 6:58.58sec, just outside the 6:58.55 world record held by

the United States.

In the women's events, an electric Ariarne Titmus dethroned Katie Ledecy to become the 200m freestyle champion, only for the gutsy American great to bounce back and clinch the first-ever women's Olympic 1500m



freestyle title. Australian Titmus now has two golds, both at Ledecy's expense after upsetting her arch-rival to win the 400m free on Monday.

Titmus powered through the field from third at 150m to touch in a new Olympic re-

cord time of 1:53.50sec, with a sluggish Ledecy fifth.

"Bloody exhausted, that was tough one," said Titmus.

"Honestly, it's not the time that I thought I could do this morning but it's the Olympics and there's a lot of other things going on. So it's just

SWIMMING

about winning here and I'm very happy." Despite the crushing loss of two titles, Ledecy was back in the pool barely 75 minutes later for a brutal 1500m, one of three new swim events on the programme this year.

The world record-holder is dominant in the event and didn't disappoint, producing a commanding swim to claim gold in 15:37.34. "It means a lot. I think people maybe feel bad for me because I'm not winning everything and whatever but I want people to be more concerned about other things in the world, people who are truly suffering."

Japan's Yui Ohashi, produced a strong freestyle leg to touch in 2:08.52 and take the 200m individual medley title, making it a Tokyo double after her earlier triumph in the 400m medley.

Biles withdraws from all-around competition

GYMNASTICS

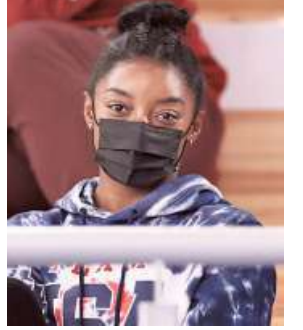
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Defending champion Simone Biles has withdrawn from the final of the Olympic individual all-around gymnastics competition due to ongoing concerns over her mental health, USA Gymnastics confirmed on Wednesday. Jade Carey will replace Biles in the all-around final.

The US federation said a decision on whether Biles would compete in individual event finals would be taken following daily evaluation.

"Simone will continue to be evaluated daily to determine whether or not to participate in next week's individual event finals," USAG added.

"We wholeheartedly support Simone's decision and applaud her bravery in



Simone Biles. ■GETTY IMAGES

prioritising her well-being," the statement said. "Her courage shows, yet again, why she is a role model for so many."

Biles' decision to pull out of the all-around comes after her stunning withdrawal early in Tuesday's team final in Tokyo.

The 24-year-old superstar — one of the faces of the Olympics — abruptly scratched from the competition after one rotation citing mental health concerns.

TOKYO TITBITS

No tears as teenager

Daiki Hashimoto emulates King Kohei
Japanese teenager Daiki Hashimoto had no time for tears after winning the coveted men's all-around gymnastics title with a superb final horizontal bars routine on Wednesday.

The 19-year-old, who edged out China's Xiao Ruoteng and Russian World champion Nikita Nagornyy, said "had I cried, I thought it would have been as if I were feeling satisfied with where I am now. I thought the champion must not cry but only look forward."



Jessica von Bredow-Werndl. ■AFP

Hashimoto succeeds compatriot Kohei Uchimura, the 2012 and 2016 champion, who chose not to go for a hat-trick after persistent shoulder injuries.

Shi Zhiyong triumphs with a world record

China's Shi Zhiyong broke his own world record to win the men's 73kg weightlifting

event and claim a gold medal for the second Games in a row. The 27-year-old lifted a combined 364 kg to better his own mark of 363 kg set at the 2019 World championships.

Bredow-Werndl ends Dujardin's reign
Equestrian Jessica von Bredow-Werndl of Germany was crowned Olympic dressage individual champion on Wednesday, pushing British star Charlotte Dujardin, the 2012 and 2016 champion, to bronze. Fellow German Isabell Werth took silver to extend her record haul of equestrian medals to 12.

Roglic pedals to glory
Slovenia's Primoz Roglic put his Tour de France nightmares behind him, powering to Olympic gold in

the men's time trial on Wednesday.

The 31-year-old, who suffered a collapse in the penultimate-stage time trial in last year's Tour and crashed out early this year, completed the 44.2-kilometre course near Mount Fuji in style.



Primoz Roglic. ■AFP

Djokovic rolls, Medvedev battles the heat

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Novak Djokovic set up a quarterfinal with Japan's Kei Nishikori at the Tokyo Olympics on Wednesday as gold medal rival Daniil Medvedev struggled with the heat, even asking the chair umpire who would be responsible if he died.

World No. 1 Djokovic continued his bid for a calendar Golden Slam by defeating 34th-ranked Alejandro Davidovich Fokina of Spain 6-3, 6-1 to extend his winning run to 21 matches.

Medvedev stayed on course to meet Djokovic in the men's final as the Russian second seed overcame Italy's Fabio Fognini 6-2, 3-6, 6-2.



Killer heat: Daniil Medvedev took a medical timeout as the extreme weather policy was implemented. ■AFP

But he again found the temperatures testing as the extreme weather policy was implemented, with the heat index topping out at 37 degrees Celsius.

Asked by the umpire if he was OK during the second

set, the Russian replied: "I can finish the match, but I can die. If I die, are you going to be responsible?"

"I think it was the most humid day we had so far, maybe the hottest," added Medvedev.

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7:30 p.m.
Sri Lanka vs India: 3rd T20I, Sony Ten 1, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 8 p.m.
Tokyo 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 4 a.m. onwards (Friday)

IN BRIEF



Obama is NBA Africa's strategic partner

WASHINGTON
Former US President Barack Obama has joined NBA Africa as a strategic partner, advancing social responsibility efforts across the continent, the NBA announced on Tuesday. Obama will support programs and partnerships that provide greater gender equality and economic inclusion. Obama will have a small equity stake in the new venture. ■AFP

NBA to continue with play-in event format

NEW YORK
NBA team owners approved a proposal on Tuesday to continue the play-in tournament for the 2021-22 season, keeping the expanded competition for the last playoff spots in each conference. The plan, agreed upon by the league and the NBA Players Association, follows the same format as the play-in event used in the 2020-21 campaign. ■AFP

Vidit Gujrathi holds Duda in first game

NEW DELHI
Vidit Gujrathi proved equal to Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda in the first game of the World Cup chess quarterfinals in Sochi on Thursday. Playing with white pieces, Vidit could not get any initiative. After 33 moves, when the players had a queen, two minor pieces and seven pawns each, peace-treaty was signed. On Friday, Vidit plays with black pieces in the second game under classical time control.

Football's big names take a tumble

Brazil advances along with Ivory Coast, Spain and Japan

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TOKYO

No third gold for Argentina. No return to the final for Germany. No defensive ability for France.

Argentina ousted

Spain was held 1-1 by Argentina in the final group game, but it was still enough to top Group C and set up a quarterfinal meeting with Ivory Coast on Saturday.

Argentina lacked the time to conjure the required win to avoid early elimination.

Instead, Egypt took second place in Group C after it clinched a 2-0 win over Australia, which had beaten Argentina in the opening



On a roll: Takefusa Kubo keeps his run of scoring Japan's opener in all games with this strike against France. ■AFP

game. Egypt's quarterfinal is against defending champion Brazil, which sealed first place in Group D with a 3-1

victory over Saudi Arabia. Richarlison scored twice to add to his hat trick from the opening win over Germany.

Mitrabha and Prachiti win titles

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Bengal's Mitrabha Guha tallied 10 points from 11 rounds to emerge as the worthy champion in the open section of the inaugural National online chess championship on Wednesday.

The 14th-seeded youngster remained unbeaten and posted nine victories before clinching the title following a draw with second seed and

runner-up Delhi's Vaibhav Suri (9) in the final round.

The next four finishers with 8.5 points — Sidhant Mohapatra (Odisha), A.R. Harikrishnan (Tamil Nadu), Abhijeet Gupta (Petroleum) and Sayantan Das (Bengal) — will be involved in playoff games on Friday to decide third to sixth places.

In the junior girls section, Maharashtra's Prachiti Chandratreya took the title

with 9.5 points after Vantika Agarwal blundered a rook following an apparent 'mouse-slip' in their final-round clash.

On Thursday, Vantika, Arpita Agarwal, Savitha Shri, K. Priyanka (all on 8.5 points) will be part of the playoffs to decide second to fifth places.

Top seed Divya Deshmukh occupies the sixth spot.

Divij and Qureshi bow out

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
ATLANTA (USA)

Divij Sharan and Aisam-Ul-Haq Qureshi of Pakistan lost 6-1, 6-3 to Nick Kyrgios and Jack Sock in the doubles first round of the \$638,365 ATP tennis tournament here.

In the Challenger in Lexington, Ramkumar Ramanathan and Sasikumar Mukund won their first round matches, while Prajnesh Gunneswaran was beaten 6-3, 6-4 by Peter Polansky of Canada.
The results: First round:

\$638,365 ATP, Atlanta, USA: Nick Kyrgios (Aus) & Jack Sock (USA) bt Aisam-Ul-Haq Qureshi (Pak) & Divij Sharan 6-1, 6-3.

\$52,080 Challenger, Lexington, USA: Peter Polansky (Can) bt Prajnesh Gunneswaran 6-3, 6-4; Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Tung-Lin Wu (Tpe) 6-4, 6-0; Sasikumar Mukund bt Brayden Schnur (Can) 6-3, 6-4.

Doubles: Alex Rybakov & Reese Stalder (USA) bt Luca Margaroli (Sui) & Sriram Balaji 7-6(4), 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: Rishab Agarwal bt Antonio Massara (Ita) 4-6, 6-2, 6-4; Sascha Gueymard Wayenburg (Fra) bt Adil Kalyanpur 6-1, 4-6, 7-6(6). **Doubles:** Sas-

cha Gueymard Wayenburg & Mehdi Sadaoui (Fra) bt Drew Baird (USA) & Rishab Agarwal 7-6(1), 6-3; Austin Ansari (USA) & Joshua Paris (GBr) bt Kody Pearson (Aus) & Adil Kalyanpur 7-5, 6-3.

\$60,000 ITF women, Versmold, Germany: Arianne Hartono (Ned) & Rutuja Bhosale bt Freya Christie (GBr) & Olivia Tjandramulia (Aus) 3-6, 6-4, [10-6].

\$15,000 ITF women, Cairo, Egypt: Lamis Alhoussein Abdel Aziz bt Sathwika Sama 6-0, 4-6, 6-1.

Doubles: Demi Tran (Ned) & Ashmitha Easwaramurthi bt Rania Azziz (Mar) & Sathwika Sama 1-6, 7-6(5), [10-6].

HOW BASKETBALL AND HOCKEY COMBINED TO WIN INDIA ITS FIRST MEDAL IN TENNIS.

Vece was part of the Indian hockey team at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Jennifer captained the Indian basketball team at the Asian Basketball Championship in 1980. They had a son. He won India's first medal in tennis at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. His name, as some of you might have guessed by now, is Leander Paes.



For more such stories and a comprehensive coverage of the Tokyo Olympics 2020, get your 5 Collector's Edition issues dedicated to the Games from Sportstar.

SPORTSTAR

Grab your copy at the nearest store or visit www.sportstar.thehindu.com/subscription To catch all the live updates, visit www.sportstar.thehindu.com

