

99.84% Class XII students clear CBSE exam in Delhi

Region secures second spot in pass percentage nationwide

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In the CBSE Class XII results released on Friday, Delhi East and Delhi West saw a pass percentage of 99.84% – the second-highest in the country after Trivandrum (99.89%).

Last year, the pass percentage for Delhi was 94.39%. In 2019, Delhi had a pass percentage of 91.87% and in 2018 result, it was 89%.

Region-wise, in 2020, Delhi West and Delhi East were placed in fourth and fifth positions respectively in the national list with Trivandrum, Bengaluru and Chennai regions scoring better.

The CBSE Class XII examination was scheduled to be conducted on May 4 but was cancelled due to the sharp rise in COVID cases.

The board came out with an alternative policy for assessment that was cleared by the Supreme Court on June 17. The policy gave 40% contribution to marks obtained by students in Class XII based on unit test/mid-term and pre-board examination, 30%



Students celebrate after the announcement of CBSE Class XII results in New Delhi on Friday. •PTI

contribution to Class XI marks based on the theory component and 30% on the average theory component of the best three performing subjects out of main five subjects in Class X.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took to Twitter to announce the results of the performance of Delhi govt. schools: "Congratulations to Delhi govt. schools students, teachers and parents Congrats Team Delhi Education Overall pass : 99.96% (97.92% last yr) 875 Schools have 100% result (396 last year) 885 students score above 95% (442 students last yr) Its historic! [sic]"

Congratulating the students, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia tweeted: "Congratulations to all our class 12th students on your board exam results. I am extremely proud of you as you have survived extraordinary circumstances and adapted to the new form of learning. My best wishes for your journey ahead [sic]."

This year, the CBSE had not released a merit list of a breakup of results between private and government schools in the Capital. The result for over 65,000 candidates is still being prepared and will be declared by August 5, the CBSE said.

'Cut-offs for many UG courses likely to go up in Delhi University'

Principals cite more CBSE students scoring over 95% as reason

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Principals of several colleges under Delhi University on Friday said the cut-offs for various merit-based undergraduate courses are likely to go up this year due to a higher number of students scoring above 95%.

According to data provided by the CBSE, over 5.3% of candidates – a total of 70,004 students – have scored above 95%.

70,000 seats in DU

According to DU officials, there are around 70,000 UG seats on offer this year. In 2020, over 38,000 students – 3.24% of candidates – had scored above 95%.

Last year, the highest cut-offs announced in DU was by Lady Shri Ram College, with an asking score of 100% for three honours courses. Following the declaration of

CBSE XII results, LSR principal Suman Sharma said while students have scored well this year, deliberations and analysis of data provided by DU will be required to project this year's cut-off marks.

Gargi College principal Promila Kumar said: "The cut-offs will definitely increase substantially. The university is in the process of framing policies. We can only analyse the data after that and see. But there is no doubt that the cut-offs will increase."

Several principals also added that the cut-off marks will also depend on the number of students applying to particular courses and colleges. Gyantosh Jha, principal of Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, said: "The high board exam scores will have an effect on the cut-off marks, but it will also depend on how many students apply..." Manoj Sinha, principal of Aryabhata College, said: "The cut-offs will go higher but how much higher is something that will differ from college to college..."

Delhi Police officers divided on Asthana's appointment as chief

Some bank on 'more clarity', others say it is a political move

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police officers are divided on their opinion about the appointment of Rakesh Asthana as the Police Commissioner.

Mr. Asthana, a 1984-batch Gujarat cadre IPS officer, assumed office on Wednesday – a day after the Ministry of Home Affairs issued an order and just four days before his retirement.

A senior IPS officer termed it a good move, saying Mr. Asthana will have "clarity" on actions. "S.N. Shrivastava was the acting Commissioner in his entire tenure, but for one month. Balaji Srivastava was the interim chief till the new Commissioner was found. In Mr. Asthana, we have an officer who has been made the chief for the next one year – in a clearly written order. Unlike his predecessors, he will feel more confident in taking decisions because he doesn't need to ensure that his position is safe."

The officer added that there is "nothing unconstitutional" in the appointment of Mr. Asthana as due proce-

and known for his integrity. However, another senior IPS officer had a different opinion on the appointment and believed that it reflects badly on the AGMUT cadre. "Everyone knows he is a political appointee. A question arises on whether officers in the AGMUT cadre weren't good enough that a Gujarat cadre officer had to be brought in. Has the leadership in AGMUT cadre failed," he asked, adding that the appointment of Mr. Asthana may be challenged in court by someone wondering if the due course was followed.

"The reason of his appointment has been given to be in public interest citing pandemic and farmer's agitation. However, a pandemic is not a law and order issue and farmers have been sitting for eight months now," he added.

An Inspector-rank officer said he only hopes that Mr. Asthana's arrival would lead to transparency and merit-based appointment of Station House Officers unlike "others" who used "different means" of selection.

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The survey conducted by CPI(M) shows 27% of households got less than 5 kg ration per person in May. •FILE PHOTO

Out of nearly 2,000 people, 65% had no job in April and May, shows CPI(M) survey

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi unit of CPI(M) on Friday released a report on the impact of the second COVID wave in Delhi-NCR.

The survey showed that despite the additional ration entitlement announced by the government, 27% of the households got less than 5 kg ration per person in May this year. The survey also said out of 1,917 respondents across the Capital and Ghaziabad, 65% had no employment in April and May.

"Even the rest faced a considerable loss of employment. Around 14% of them did not find any work for more than 30 days in two months, 6% for 15-30 days in two months and 4% for 15 days in two months. Only 3% of the respondents reported that they did not face any loss of employment," the report read.

The report also reflected that 72% of those, who worked as casual workers before the second wave, had no jobs during April and May.

"While most casual workers became unemployed, those who were self-employed were also unable to work for many days. Hence,

they saw their incomes falling drastically," the report said.

The survey also showed that a large section was also unable to access subsidised foodgrains through the public distribution system during the second wave.

Letter to CM

In a letter to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the party said around 78% of the workers had not received their first dose of COVID vaccine.

"This tardy pace has to be reversed and the government must ensure at least one dose vaccination for all workers in the unorganised sector by August 15. This should form part of the preparedness of the Delhi government for an imminent third wave. The health infrastructure must be ramped up in tune with the peak load of the second wave with oxygen plants at hospitals, more ICU beds and fresh recruitment of health workers," the memorandum read.

CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Brinda Karat said the survey underlined the urgent need for cash transfer of ₹7,500 to the working-class households.

Man held for killing uncle over 'construction work'

Two of his accomplices also arrested

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man has been arrested for killing his uncle in Dwarka, the police said on Friday. Two others have also been held in connection with the case.

DCP (Dwarka) S.K. Meena said the accused have been identified as Rajbeer (27) and his friends Abhishek (19) and Lalit (24). The trio shot 63-year-old Ajeet Singh while he was sleeping. After this, the trio robbed a food delivery boy of his motorcycle at gunpoint.

On July 26, the victim had a fight with his nephew over

construction work that was under way at the former's house. The victim's son and the accused's father were also involved in the fight. Rajbeer had also allegedly threatened to kill Singh.

The same day, he booked a room with his friends, got drunk and hatched a plan to kill Singh.

Mr. Meena said with the help of technical surveillance, they traced Rajbeer's location near Galaxy Royal hotel Ramphal chowk. A pistol with two live cartridges, the robbed motorcycle and mobile phones were recovered, they added.

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Cash, gold seized from Odisha govt. employee

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

The vigilance department has unearthed assets worth ₹3.79 crore from a private secretary to a member of the Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC).

The assets are hugely disproportionate to the known source of income of Biranchi

Narayan Sahoo, whose houses and that of his relatives were searched at six different locations in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack on Friday.

Three teams, comprising 4 Deputy Superintendents of Police, 13 inspectors and other staff, were involved in the operation after the vigilance directorate was tipped off.

They recovered cash amounting to ₹12 lakh from Mr. Sahoo's house and ₹13 lakh from his brother-in-law's residence. Gold ornaments worth over ₹60 lakh were also recovered.

Two double-storey buildings at Niladri Vihar, a posh locality of Bhubaneswar, two buildings at Bhakti Vihar in Bhubaneswar and Godibandha in Cuttack districts were found to be in Mr. Sahoo's possession. Besides, 14 prime plots were purchased by him in Bhubaneswar, Khordha and Puri. The vigilance department also came across insurance deposits worth over ₹56 lakh.

MGNREGS registration needs improvement in Bihar: CAG

Report tabled in State Assembly

AMARNATH TEWARY PATNA

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report for the year ending March 31, 2019, has observed that registration of all potential job seekers, especially landless casual labourers, under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) needs to be substantially improved in

Bihar. The report also says that the Bihar Mahadalit Vikas Mission (BMVM) had ineffective financial management.

"Though Bihar has the highest number of landless casual labourers in the country at 88.61 lakh and 60.88 lakh (69%) were surveyed, only 3.34% (3,007 out of 90,161 of willing landless households) were issued job cards. In the test-checked districts, less than one per cent job-seekers (146 out of 22,678 willing landless households)

were issued job cards and survey work was discontinued. Specific plans, as required, for providing employment opportunity to the vulnerable group of households were not prepared," said the CAG report, which was tabled in the Bihar State Assembly on July 29.

The report further observed that only 9%-14% of the registered disabled persons and 5%-9% of senior citizens were provided employment under the scheme during the 2014-19 period.

Three trekkers missing in H.P.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SHIMLA

Three trekkers have gone missing in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti district. State Disaster Management Director Sudesh Kumar Mokhta said a trekker from Rajasthan, Nikunj Jaiswal, and his two companions went missing at Ghepan Peak.

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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.

COVID-appropriate travel guidelines were recently revised in the national capital to allow metro trains and buses to operate at '100% seating capacity'. Though standing travel is explicitly barred, initial lack of enforcement and public confusion over the new rules led to packed coaches during peak hours



CUMBERSOME COMMUTES



Long lines outside metro stations and at bus stops are a common sight across the city as authorities are attempting to implement COVID-19 safety guidelines by regulating entry of commuters.

PHOTOS BY R.V. MOORTHY, SANDEEP SAXENA, V.V. KRISHNAN

Juvenile nabbed for stabbing two friends

'He had demanded ₹50 to buy alcohol'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
A 17-year-old juvenile was apprehended for allegedly stabbing his two friends when they refused to give him ₹50 to buy alcohol, the police said on Friday.

Two absconding
The victims, both residents of Bindapur here – were stabbed by their juvenile friend with the help of two others, who are absconding, they said.

The police said one victim sustained seven stab injuries, mostly on his hands and hips. He is stable but still admitted while the other victim has been discharged from the hospital.

According to the police, the incident took place on July 24, when the two victims were going on a scooter

and met the juvenile near Harijan Basti in Bindapur. The juvenile demanded ₹50 from the duo to purchase alcohol, but when they refused to give him any money, he along with his two accomplices started beating them.

The juvenile then took out a knife and stabbed the duo and fled from the spot along with his associates later, the police said.

'Wanted in 5 cases'
"The juvenile is wanted in five other cases, including that of theft and snatching. He was apprehended on Wednesday and sent to an observation home. Efforts are being made to nab his two other accomplices," said Santosh Kumar Meena, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka).

HC notice to Delhi govt. on delay in registering Muslim marriages

Registration stipulations under the SMA delay process for 30 days, says plea

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Friday issued notice to the Delhi government on a petition alleging that Muslim marriages were being registered under the Special Marriage Act (SMA) and not under the Compulsory Marriage Order where marriages are registered immediately.

Justice Rekha Palli gave three weeks' time to the Delhi government to respond to the petition collectively moved by an NGO, Dhanak for Humanity, and a man from Uttar Pradesh.

Parents' opposition
The man said both he and his girl friend practice Islam, but had left their home town

to solemnise their marriage in Delhi as their parents were opposed to their relationship.

He said despite their marriage under the Muslim marriage rites and ceremonies, they were not given the option by the Delhi government to register the same under the Compulsory Marriage Order.

The man submitted that the practice of registering Muslim marriage under the Special Marriage Act requires 30 days' notice period which is a very cumbersome process for the applicant who came from another State.

The plea said the couple were in hiding and had sought refuge in the NGO's

office in Delhi. It said several of their family members are residing in Delhi and hence they feared getting caught during the process of registering their marriage.

All marriages done under the Special Marriage Act require publication of the names of the couple for inviting objections from the public for 30 days. Within this period, anyone can object to the marriage on the ground that it would contravene one or more of the conditions specified under the Act.

"Under the Compulsory Registration Marriage Order, the marriages are registered immediately and without any delay or notice. It is submitted that for the registra-

tion of marriages solemnised under the Muslim marriage rites and ceremonies, the respondent no.1 (Delhi Govt.) has not given the option to register the marriage under the Compulsory Marriage Order," the petition said.

The plea also argued that the exclusion violated the fundamental rights of the parties.

'Right to live'
"Petitioner 2 has right to live which has been threatened and curtailed and respondents should protect the same by registering the marriage immediately," the petition said.

The High Court will hear the case next on October 4.

Two more held in vegetable vendor's murder case

The accused constable has been dismissed from service

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Two more persons have been arrested in connection with murder of a vegetable vendor, Ajeet Kumar, who was beaten to death allegedly by a constable, Monu Sirohi, and his friends in East Delhi's New Ashok Nagar, the police said.

Accused identified
Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Priyanka Kashyap said the accused have been identified as Vikas Sirohi, a manager at a salon in Noida, and Vineet, who works with a property dealer in Mumbai.

Both were arrested from Jaipur.

"Both the accused were known to accused Monu Sirohi. On the fateful night, they came to see Monu Sirohi regarding a marriage proposal for Vineet. It was learnt that to evade their arrest, both the accused persons had fled to Mumbai. Immediately a team was rushed to Mumbai where it came to our notice that the accused persons had shifted their hideout to Jaipur," Ms. Kashyap.

She added that a team was rushed to Jaipur.

Searching for body
The police said efforts are underway to find the body of the deceased. Divers are searching the Gang Nahar Canal in Murad Nagar.

Constable Monu Sirohi, who was posted in Pandav Nagar police station, has been dismissed from service.

Five people arrested for running fake call centre

They had duped foreigners by offering tech support: police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
Five people, including a woman, were arrested for allegedly running an illegal call centre and duping citizens of foreign countries by impersonating themselves as representatives of a tech support company in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, the police said on Friday.

The owner of the call centre, Pritpal Singh (35), and his associates Mayank (26), Chandan Gupta (24), Subham Kumar (22), and HR head Kinkini Das (35) were operating from the third floor of a building in Panchsheel Vihar, they said.

Based on a tip off, the police conducted a raid at the illegal call centre on Thursday and arrested the accused.

They were allegedly targeting foreign citizens, mainly from the USA, on the pretext of giving them tech support saying their systems were under a cyber threat, the police said.

High-end software
Subham and Chandan were junior callers while Mayank was a senior caller. They had been working here for the last seven months and had been calling up customers using high-end technical software "X-lite/ Eye Beam" through cloud servers.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said, "The accused approached USA-based customers using "X-lite/ Eye Beam" and duped them on the pretext of providing

them tech support if they paid a fee of US \$100 to US \$400. They asked the customer to provide the amount through various payments methods or payment wallets."

"They were taking wrongful gain as they would first send a pop-up message or bug to the customer after obtaining their data from cloud servers, then say that their system has been attacked by a cyber threat and later ask them to obtain support from them to technically eradicate the pop-up bug or cyber threat from their systems," he said.

The police claimed to have recovered 13 computer systems with two pen drives and two note books from the call centre.

Reply to plea challenging JMI V-C appointment: HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Friday sought response from the Centre, Central Vigilance Commission and Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) on a plea challenging the appointment of the varsity's current Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar

The court was hearing an appeal challenging a single-judge's March 5 order that dismissed the plea challenging the JMI VC's appointment saying there was no merit in the petition.

A Bench of Justices Rajiv Shakdher and Talwant Singh also issued notices to University Grants Commission (UGC) and Akhtar on the petition and asked the authorities to file their replies while listing the matter for further hearing on September 22.

The appeal has been filed



JMI V-C Najma Akhtar

by M. Ethesham-Ul-Haque, an alumnus of Faculty of Law at JMI, challenging the appointment claiming that there was violation of regulations issued by the UGC and JMI Act.

Advocates Mobashshir Sarwar and M J Shaikh, representing the appellant, claimed that the entire process culminating into the appointment of Akhtar is a colourable exercise of power and in flagrant violation and total non-compliance of the statutory provisions of the JMI Act.

Kalra free to assail order cancelling registration to run restaurants: court

He has been accused of black-marketing oxygen concentrators

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Friday said businessman Navneet Kalra, accused in the case of alleged black marketing of oxygen concentrators, was free to assail in accordance with law the cancellation of the registration certificate to run his restaurants – Khan Chacha and Town Hall – in Khan Market.

Justice Rekha Palli, who was hearing Mr. Kalra's petition challenging a show-cause notice and order suspending the registration certificate, clarified that she was not expressing any opinion on the claims made in his plea.

"It will be open to the petitioner [Kalra] to assail the order in accordance with law. This court has not ex-



Navneet Kalra

pressed any opinion on the claims," the judge said.

Mr. Kalra's counsel Gurinder Pal Singh submitted that the registration certificate was cancelled by the authorities by an order dated July 23 and nothing survived in the petition.

Mr. Kalra had challenged the May 11 order-cum-show cause notice issued by the

Joint Commissioner of Police (Licensing) and the subsequent suspension of the registration certificate to run the two eateries in Khan Market here.

In its status report, the Licencing Unit of Delhi Police informed that it cancelled the registration certificate for 'Khan Chacha' and 'Town Hall' following the recovery of several illegally kept oxygen concentrators from there.

The Licencing Unit said, "96 boxes of oxygen concentrators were recovered from subject entity i.e. M/s Khan Chacha restaurant, Khan Market which were kept illegally in the subject restaurant" and that "DCP, Crime Branch, Delhi Police intimated that Navneet Kalra was arrested on May 17, 2021".

Pak, U.S. NSAs discuss Afghan settlement

Talks on urgent need for reduction in violence, negotiated political solution to the conflict: Sullivan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's National Security Adviser Moed Yusuf met with his American counterpart Jake Sullivan in Washington...

The talks also covered other issues of mutual interest, the Dawn News reported on Friday.

This was the second meeting between the two leaders who first met in Geneva in March.

"Had a positive follow-up meeting with NSA Jake Sullivan today in Washington," Mr. Yusuf tweeted in an early morning tweet.

"Took stock of progress made since our Geneva meeting and discussed bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest," he said, adding that the two



On vigil: Afghan security personnel and militia fighting against Taliban in Enjil district, Herat province, on Friday. ■AFP

sides "agreed to sustain the momentum in Pak-U.S. bilateral cooperation".

Though Mr. Yusuf did not mention Afghanistan among the issues discussed in the meeting, Mr. Sullivan devoted half of his tweet to the Afghan issue.

"I met with Pakistan's NSA today to consult on regional connectivity and security, and other areas of mutual

cooperation. We discussed the urgent need for a reduction in violence in Afghanistan and a negotiated political settlement to the conflict," Mr. Sullivan said.

Since the announcement of the withdrawal of U.S. forces by August 31, violence has been rising in Afghanistan and efforts to broker a peace settlement between the Afghan government and

insurgent Taliban have slowed. Mr. Blinken, who returned to Washington on Thursday evening after a visit to India and Kuwait...

Diplomatic influence

Committed to withdrawing all U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) troops from Afghanistan...

While Pakistan also wants to prevent a military takeover in Kabul, Prime Minister Imran Khan in an interview to an American channel this

week said that the U.S. decision to set a timetable for withdrawing troops had narrowed Islamabad's options.

Mr. Khan, on PBS NewsHour, indicated that the Taliban see the withdrawal as their victory and are less receptive to reconciliation efforts...

Mr. Khan also criticised the U.S. for trying to "look for a military solution in Afghanistan, when there never was one".

The Pakistani delegation, which arrived in Washington three days ago, is also busy explaining its position in meetings with senior U.S. officials, lawmakers, experts and media representatives.

ELSEWHERE



HK protester gets 9-year term in 1st security case

HONG KONG

A pro-democracy protester was sentenced on Friday to nine years in prison in the first prosecution under Hong Kong's national security law...

Navy carrier on course in South China Sea: U.K.

It rebuffs Chinese media reports

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON

The U.K. government on Friday denied it was provoking Beijing with the deployment of its most powerful Navy task force in a generation...

The flotilla has entered the disputed South China Sea after exercises with Asian allies. It is led by the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth...

In an editorial, the nationalist state-run newspaper Global Times warned U.S. allies China might feel compelled to send a message to defend "its sovereignty and territorial integrity".

200 Afghan interpreters arrive in U.S.

Fearing possible Taliban retaliation, U.S. begins operation to evacuate local allies

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

The first flight carrying Afghans who worked as interpreters for American troops and diplomats has arrived in the U.S....

Around 20,000 Afghans worked for the U.S. following the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and have applied for evacuation under the State Department's Special Immigrant Visas program.

Some estimates suggest the total number of prospective evacuees under what has been dubbed "Operation Allies Refuge" could be as high as 1,00,000 once relatives are included.



New home: U.S. soldiers speaking to an Afghan man with the help of a translator in Helmand province. ■AP/FILE

Many of them fear retaliation from the Taliban, which has secured a vast swath of the country since foreign troops began the last stage of a withdrawal due to be complete by late August.

"Today is an important milestone as we continue to fulfill our promise to the

Afghans "out of harm's way."

Mr. Biden said these first arrivals had already completed extensive background checks and security screenings and would undergo medical checks and other processing in Fort Lee, Virginia before being resettled across the country.

This first flight of around 200 Afghans is part of a broader group of about 2,500 who are furthest along in the visa process and who are being prioritised for relocation to the U.S. in the coming weeks...

thousands of Afghan nationals who served shoulder-to-shoulder with American troops and diplomats over the last 20 years in Afghanistan," Mr. Biden said in a statement.

He added that the administration was working to quickly relocate visa-eligible

China seizes consignment of world maps

It rebuffs Chinese media reports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BEIJING

Customs officials in China have seized a large consignment of world maps, meant for export, for showing Arunachal Pradesh as a part of India...

China claims the north-eastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh as part of South Tibet, which is firmly rejected by India. India says the State of Arunachal Pradesh is its integral and inalienable part.

The maps wrapped in about 300 export consignments marked as "bed clothes" were seized by the customs at Shanghai Pudong airport, Chinese digital newspaper thepaper.cn reported.

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION e-Tender Notice. Includes details on tender number, date, and contact information for registration and submission.

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED REGION I JODHPUR. Notice Inviting Bid (NIT NO.21-23/2021-22) for execution of various works.

Government of India Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. Invitation for Expression of Interest for managing 9th Session of Governing Body of International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources.

Israel launches booster dose for those above 60

U.S., EU are yet to approve third shot

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE RAMAT GAN

Israel launched a campaign on Friday to give people aged over 60 coronavirus booster shots, at a time when the rest of the world is still struggling to complete the standard course.

Kicking off the campaign, President Isaac Herzog, 60, received a third dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at a hospital in Ramat Gan, near Tel Aviv.

"We are beginning the booster vaccination" so that life in Israel can return to "normal" as soon as possible, Mr. Herzog said after getting the injection.

"With this new step of the Israeli government... I believe that it's also a lesson to the entire humankind that we have to protect each other and take the necessary steps."

An Israeli epidemiologist of Jerusalem's Hebrew Un-

iversity, Hagai Levine, acknowledged his country was going it alone with third shots, which have yet to be approved in the U.S. or EU.

"This decision is based on experts' opinion, on logic but not on solid scientific evidence, but that is okay," Dr. Levine said.

"In public health and in medicine, you sometimes make a decision based on your experience and reason."

Israel was quick to roll out its vaccination campaign and had dropped many restrictions on public gatherings in June, as new COVID-19 cases shrank from 10,000 a day to less than 100.

About 55% of its nine million population has been vaccinated, most with the Pfizer-BioNTech jab. About one million Israelis eligible for the shot, however, still refuse to be vaccinated.

China battles fresh outbreak after months

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BEIJING

Hundreds of thousands of people in China were placed under lockdown on Friday as the country battled its worst outbreak in months, while the U.S. intensified vaccination efforts in the face of a Delta variant-fueled surge.

The World Health Organization has warned that the new strain could unleash the COVID-19 outbreaks from Morocco to Pakistan where vaccination rates are low.

In China, a cluster of infections in Nanjing city linked to airport workers, who cleaned a plane from Russia earlier this month, had reached Beijing and five provinces by Friday. Hundreds of thousands of people have been locked down in Jiangsu province.

At least 206 infections across China have been linked to the cluster.

Delta variant as contagious as chicken pox: CDC document

'Breakthrough infections in vaccinated people highly contagious'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

The Delta variant of the coronavirus is as contagious as chickenpox, probably causes more severe disease than past strains, and breakthrough cases in vaccinated individuals may be as transmissible as unvaccinated cases, according to a leaked U.S. government document.

The slide presentation produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stresses that "the war has changed" as a result of Delta. It was first reported by The Washington Post.

CDC director Rochelle Walensky cited data from the presentation this week to justify a return to masks



Rochelle Walensky

for vaccinated people in high-risk areas.

One of the biggest takeaways is the finding that breakthrough infections in vaccinated people are highly contagious, with the data coming from previous studies and a new analysis of an outbreak in Provincetown.

Experts rely on a number called the cycle threshold (Ct) value to indicate how much virus an infected per-

son harbours, with lower numbers indicating higher viral load. In Provincetown, there was "no difference in mean Ct values in vaccinated and unvaccinated cases," the slides said.

A review of findings from other countries shows that each person with Delta infects on average eight others, making it as transmissible as chickenpox but still less than measles.

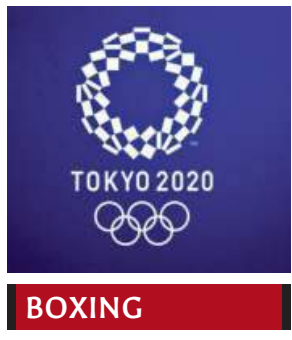
Vaccine efficacy estimates vary across countries, but in its concluding slide, the CDC estimates the risk of severe disease or death is reduced 10-fold or greater in the vaccinated, while risk of infection is reduced three-fold or greater.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA Department of Labour Karnataka State Building and Other Construction Worker's Welfare Board. Includes details on recruitment and welfare services.

भारत सरकार, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / Government of India, Department of Space. Includes details on tender notice for infrastructure works and other projects.

Lovlina punches her way into the medal zone

The 23-year-old gets it right for the first time against Taipei's Chen, books a semifinal date with Surmeneli



SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

Lovlina Borgohain walked into the ring with a smile on her face and left with an even bigger one — she had just assured India of its second medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

The Indian boxer let out a roar after the bout at the Korugikan Arena even as her camp jumped for joy. A medal was definitely coming home.

The 23-year-old out-punched Chinese Taipei's Chen Nien-chin to storm into the semifinals of the 69kg category, where she will face Turkish world champion Busenaz Surmeneli.

She is the third Indian pugilist after Vijender Singh (bronze, 2008 Beijing Olympics) and M.C. Mary Kom (bronze, 2012 London



Quick off the blocks: Lovlina came out all guns blazing in the quarterfinal bout against Chen. •PTI

Games) to win a medal at the Olympics.

Lovlina — a good three-inches taller than her opponent — was in cruise control as she stamped her authority from the bell and pushed Chen onto the backfoot with

an all-out attacking approach. The judges awarded the opening round to the Indian. She was dominant as all five judges awarded her the second round and she was comfortably ahead in the third too as she punched

her way into history.

Though she's assured of a medal, Lovlina was confident of leaving Tokyo with the coveted yellow metal. "It's a very big day for me, but I want to win gold. I needed a medal and I have

achieved that now. I can fight freely now and go for gold," said Lovlina.

All the more sweet

The victory was all the more sweet as she got the better of Chen for the first time in five

attempts. "I had lost to her four times. I used to plan a lot before getting into a bout with her... I know her game, so I was attacking from the get-go. My game is to counter, but today I changed my tactics and was on the attack," she said.

"The plan was to play according to the merit of the opponent. I backed myself to handle any situation. I have been working hard for the last eight years and wanted to channel all that effort into the bout today."

Simranjit loses

Earlier, Simranjit Kaur, another medallist on the world stage, lost to two-time World championship medalist Sudaporn Seesondee of Thailand 0-5 in a women's 60kg pre-quarterfinal.

The experienced Thai boxer landed her punches on target even as Simranjit put up a good fight by using her combinations.

Simranjit stepped up her attack in the second round but also provided room for Sudaporn to deliver some fine left shots. The Indian kept battling it out till the end but could not stop the Thai boxer from advancing.

'Watched a Muhammad Ali video before the bout'

Y.B. SARANGI

Lovlina Borgohain said her superb performance against former World champion Chen Nien-chin of Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals was a result of her "fearless approach."

Lovlina, who has ensured India's second medal at the Tokyo Olympics by reaching the women's 69kg semifinals on Friday, said she developed the attitude with the passage of time.

"When I began, I was not fearless. But when I gained confidence in my abilities, I did not care about what people were saying and started performing better," said Lovlina at a virtual press conference.

"I started thinking that no

matter the situation, I would give my best. I want to win even if I am fighting with a broken hand," said the 23-year-old. Lovlina, a Muhammad Ali fan, said she tried to pick up some aspects of the legend's game.

"I regularly see his videos and saw one before this bout too. Though no two boxers can be the same, I follow his footwork and long (distance) punches.

"Mary Kom is an inspiration too. I have seen her train hard. I have learnt a lot from her. It's great to have her with us," said Lovlina.

Boxing Federation of India president Ajay Singh had a word of advice for the boxer for the semifinal bout. "Don't be weighed down by expectations," said Ajay.



Fearless: Lovlina has stung opponents like a bee. •AFP

An San stops Deepika, goes on to win gold



An San... triple delight. •GETTY IMAGES

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

Deepika Kumari's run at the Tokyo Olympics came to a crashing halt as she lost 6-0 to the top seed and eventual champion An San of South Korea in the quarterfinals of the women's individual recurve on Friday.

An, winner of the mixed and women's team events, won her third gold, beating ROC's Elena Osipova 6-5 via a shoot-off in the final. The Korean shot a 10, while the Russian managed only 8.

Atanu Das will be in action on Saturday when he takes on Japan's Takaharu Furukawa in the quarterfinals of the men's recurve.

INDIAN ODYSSEY

Archery: Women's individual: Quarterfinals: Deepika Kumari lost to An San (Kor) 0-6; **1/8 eliminations:** bt Ksenia Perova (ROC) 6-5.

Athletics: Men: 3000m steeplechase (round 1, heat 2): 7. Avinash Sable, Did Not Qualify (DNQ) for final; **400m hurdles (round 1, heat 5):** 7. M.P. Jabir, DNQ for semifinals.

Women: 100m (round 1, heat 5): 7. Dutee Chand, DNQ for semifinals.

4x400m mixed relay (round 1, heat 2): 8. Muhammed Anas, V. Revathi, V. Subha, and Arokia Rajiv. DNQ for final.

Badminton: Women's singles (quarterfinals): P.V. Sindhu bt Akane Yamaguchi (Jpn) 21-13, 22-20.

Boxing: Women: Welterweight (quarterfinals): Lovlina Borgohain bt Chen Nien-chin (Tpe); **Lightweight (round of 16):** Simranjit Kaur lost to Sudaporn Seesondee (Tha).

Equestrian: Eventing Dressage Day 1: 7. Fouaad Mirza.

Golf: Men (round 2): Anirban Lahiri - tied 20th (16 holes); Udayan Mane - tied 57th (18 holes).

Hockey: Men (Pool A): bt Japan 5-3; **Women (Pool A):** bt Ireland 1-0.

Sailing: Women: Laser Radial: Nethra Kumanan (35th overall after 10 races), DNQ for medal race; **Men: Laser:** Vishnu Saravanan (20th overall after 10 races), DNQ for medal race; **49er:** K.C. Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar (17th overall after nine races).

Shooting: Women's 25m Pistol: 15. Manu Bhaker, 32. Rahi Sarnobat. DNQ for final.

TOKYO TITBITS

Fouaad Mirza seventh

Fouaad Mirza, astride Seigneur Medicott, was seventh with 28 penalty points in dressage on day one of the equestrian competition on Friday. Louise Romeike of Sweden was tied with the Indian. Great Britain's Oliver Townend topped the table with 23.60 penalty points.



Fouaad Mirza on Seigneur Medicott. •REUTERS

Manu and Rahi disappoint

Perfection under pressure proved elusive for the Indian shooters as Manu Bhaker shot a 582 and missed the women's 25-metre sports pistol final by two points on Friday. Manu finished 15th.

Rahi Sarnobat could not recover from a below-par first half when she shot 287 and finished with 573. She was 32nd in a field of 44.

Lahiri T-20 and Mane T-57 on rain-hit day

Anirban Lahiri stayed at four-under after 16 holes of the rain-interrupted second round of the golf competition to be tied-20th on Friday.

Udayan Mane, who shot a first round 69, lifted himself from last spot to be tied-57th in the 60-player field.

Sindhu passes the Yamaguchi test, enters semifinals



Mixing it up: Sindhu's game was laced with delicate drops and telling smashes, including one measured at 308kmph. •AP

BADMINTON

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

P.V. Sindhu, with searing smashes and delicate drop shots, overcame a gritty Akane Yamaguchi of Japan 21-13, 22-20 in the quarterfinals here on Friday. The Indian will meet long-time rival and second seed Tai Tzu Ying in the semifinals.

The Japanese, backed by the volunteers at the stadium, led 6-5 in the opening game. After a phenomenal rally that lasted 26 strokes and 33 seconds, helped the Indian pull level at 6, it was one-way traffic from there as Sindhu raced to a 16-11 lead.

Sindhu kept Yamaguchi guessing most of the time, craftily mixing smashes with drops. The Japanese targeted

Sindhu's backhand, her not-so-strong side, the Indian was unperturbed and went on to clinch the first game in 23 minutes. She began the second with a 308kmph smash. To make a comparison, the fastest bullet train in Japan runs at an estimated speed of 320kmph!

Chasing a second successive Olympic medal, after her silver in Rio 2016, the Indian surged ahead 14-8. However, Yamaguchi made a comeback, cutting down the lead to two points (13-15).

Then came the moment of the game. The shuttle went back and forth for 63 seconds before Yamaguchi finished the point with a down-the-line smash. Both players sank to their knees in exhaustion after the exchange.

Winning that point seemed to have boosted Ya-

maguchi's confidence as she led 20-18. But Sindhu dug deep to save game points and won the next two to wrap up the contest.

"This was my best match here," Sindhu said after the 56-minute quarterfinal. "The second game was very crucial. Even though she was leading, I never lost hope. I was ahead 14-8 and all of a sudden she was leading 20-18. My coach was constantly saying, 'it is okay, it is not over yet... be focused and you can do it' and I did it."

Sindhu she was up for the Yamaguchi challenge. "I was prepared for the rallies. I always knew she would come back, and I was prepared for it. I needed to maintain my attack because that's my strong point. I am happy I closed out the match in two games," she said.

Navneet helps India beat Ireland, stay alive

Gurjant's brace powers India men past Japan in their final group game

HOCKEY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TOKYO

Navneet Kaur scored a late winner as the Indian women kept their quarterfinal hopes alive with a 1-0 win over Ireland in a must-win match here on Friday.

After three goalless quarters, which India completely dominated but failed to breach the Irish defence led by goalkeeper Ayeisha McFerran, Navneet finally found the back of the net in the 57th minute.

A moment of brilliance from skipper Rani Rampal, who created an opportunity for Navneet, rescued India from an early exit. Navneet was at the right place at the right time to tap the ball in.

India will have to win its final match against South Africa on Saturday and hope that Ireland loses to Great



Stepping up: Navneet saved India from early elimination with a timely strike. •REUTERS

Britain. In the men's section, striker Gurjant Singh was on target twice as India out-

classed hosts Japan 5-3 to complete the group stage with four wins. Apart from

Gurjant (17th, 56th), Harmanpreet Singh (13th), Shamsher Singh (34th) and Nilakanta Sharma (51st) were the scorers for India.

Kenta Tanaka (19th), Kota Watanabe (33rd) and Kazuma Murata (59th) scored for Japan, which was already out of contention.

Finishes second

India finished second in Pool-A behind Australia with four victories in five matches.

Harmanpreet made no mistake off India's first penalty corner before

Gurjant made it 2-0, tapping home from close range.

Though Japan made it 2-2 at the beginning of the second period, India scored three more goals to run away with it.

The hosts reduced the margin with just a minute remaining, but it was too little too late.

'Dictator' Ma's reign continues



Ma Long... paddler supreme. •GETTY IMAGES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

China's Ma Long on Friday became the first player in Olympic table tennis history to retain the men's singles title when he defeated compatriot Fan Zhendong 4-2 in the final.

Nicknamed "The Dictator" because of the way he dominates his opponents, Ma has won four Games golds overall, having also claimed team titles in London 2012 and Rio 2016, making him one of the best the game has seen.

INDIANS IN ACTION

Archery: Men's individual: Atanu Das vs Takaharu Furukawa (Jpn), 1/8 eliminations, 7.15 a.m.; Quarterfinals, 11.15 a.m.; semifinals, 12.15 p.m.; bronze medal match, 1 p.m.; gold medal match, 1.15 p.m.

Athletics: Women: Discus: Seema Punia (Qualification, Group A), 6 a.m.; Kamalpreet Kaur (Qualification, Group B), 7.25 a.m.

Men: Long jump: M. Sreesankar (Qualification, Group B), 3.40 p.m.

Badminton: Women's singles (semifinals): P.V. Sindhu vs Tai Tzu-ying (Tpe), 3.20 p.m.

Boxing: Men's flyweight (round of 16): Amit Panghal vs Yuberjen Martinez (Col), 7.30 a.m.

Women's middleweight (quarterfinals): Pooja Rani vs Li Qian (Chn), 3.35 p.m.

Golf: Men's individual: Round 2 (4.15 a.m.): Anirban Lahiri; **Round 3 (6 a.m.):** Lahiri, Udayan Mane.

Hockey: Women (Pool A): vs South Africa, 8.45 a.m.

Sailing: Men: 49er (from 8.35 a.m.): K.C. Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar.

Shooting: Women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions: Tejaswini Sawant, Anjum Moudgil. Qualification, 8.30 a.m.; Final, 12.30 p.m.

Sable betters his steeplechase National mark

Jabir, Dutee and 4x400 mixed relay team disappoint; Barga strikes gold

ATHLETICS

STAN RAYAN

Avinash Sable bettered his own National record and finished seventh in his heat but that was not enough to carry him to the steeplechase final on Friday.

Sable improved his personal best by more than two seconds, clocking 8:18.12s. That time, which also saw him make the entry standard for next year's Worlds in the USA, was 13th best overall but three athletes with slow-



Silver lining: Steeplechaser Sable ensured a spot at next year's Worlds despite not making the final in Tokyo. •REUTERS

er times made it to the final from the slowest heat. Meanwhile, 400m hurdler M.P. Ja-

bir and Dutee Chand were far away from their best and crashed out in the first

round. India finished last in the 4x400m mixed relay, in its heat and overall, with the quartet of Muhammed Anas, V. Revathi, V. Subha and Arokia Rajiv clocking 3:19.93s.

In the biggest shock of the day, World champion and World record holder USA was disqualified for a faulty baton exchange in the heats in the mixed relay.

In a thrilling men's 10,000m final, Ethiopian Selemone Barga worked his way from the back of the pack to win athletics' first gold in Tokyo.

SPECIAL ONE: Barga won athletics' first gold in Tokyo.

MEDAL EVENTS

21 Gold medals are on offer at the Tokyo Games on Saturday

Archery: Men's individual. **Athletics:** Men's discus, Women's 100m, 4x400m Relay Mixed. **Badminton:** Men's doubles. **Fencing:** Women's sabre team. **Judo:** Mixed Team. **Rugby Sevens:** Women. **Sailing:** Men's & Women's Windsurfer RS:X. **Shooting:** Women 50m Rifle 3 positions, Trap Mixed Team. **Swimming:** Women's 800m freestyle, Women's 200m backstroke, Men's 100m butterfly, Mixed 4x100m Medley relay. **Tennis:** Women's singles. **Trampoline gymnastics:** Men. **Triathlon:** Mixed team relay. **Weightlifting:** Men's 81kg, Men's 96kg.

Zverev shatters Djokovic's hopes

Mektic and Pavic take gold in all-Croatian men's doubles affair



Dream dasher: Zverev ended Djokovic's attempt to add the Olympic gold to his trophy cabinet. • GETTY IMAGES

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Novak Djokovic's bid for a calendar Golden Grand Slam was dramatically ended by Alexander Zverev in the Olympics men's singles semifinals on Friday.

Later, top seeds Nikola Mektic and Mate Pavic beat fellow Croatians Marin Cilic and Ivan Dodig in a deciding tie-break to win the men's doubles title.

Mektic and Pavic took the honours with a 6-4, 3-6, [10-6] victory.

Collapse

The World No. 1 collapsed from a set and a break ahead as German fourth seed Zverev won 1-6, 6-3, 6-1 to set up a final against Russian Karen Khachanov on Sunday.

The 34-year-old Djokovic has never won the Olympic singles title.

Zverev is looking to be-

come the first German to win singles gold since Graf in Seoul after winning 10 of the last 11 games against Djokovic.

Djokovic can still win multiple medals, with the bronze-medal match against Pablo Carreno Busta to come on Saturday after his mixed doubles semifinal with Nina Stojanovic against Elena Vesnina and Aslan Karatsev later Friday.

Khachanov, meanwhile, produced an impressive display to dispatch Carreno Busta 6-3, 6-3. Khachanov is bidding to become the first Russian champion in the men's singles since Yevgeny Kafelnikov struck gold in Sydney 21 years ago.

Women's World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty's third and final attempt to win a gold was ended after defeat alongside John Peers in the mixed doubles semifinals against Russians Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova and Andrey Rublev.

Australian McKeon anointed sprint queen

SWIMMING

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

An electric Emma McKeon blazed to the women's Olympic 100m freestyle gold on Friday as flying South African Tatjana Schoenmaker smashed the long-standing

women's 200m breaststroke world record. Australia's McKeon claimed her fourth Tokyo medal when she hit the wall in a new Olympic record of 51.96 seconds, the second fastest ever.

Hong Kong's Siobhan Haughey (52.27s) earned another silver after the

200m freestyle, when she came second behind Australia's Ariarne Titmus.

Australian veteran Cate Campbell was third in 52.52s.

Schoenmaker touched in 2:18.95s to better the 2:19.11s world record set by Denmark's Rikke Moller Pedersen in 2013.

Lilly King was second to the South African, with her USA teammate and training partner Annie Lazor third.

China's Wang Shun upset the field to win the 200m medley in 1:55.00s ahead of Britain's Duncan Scott and Switzerland's Jeremy Desplanches.



The crown sits well? Emma McKeon celebrates winning the women's 100m freestyle gold. • AFP

Oshae Jones eyes gold



Motivated: Oshae Jones, left, did not let her travails bog her down against Maria Moronta. • GETTY IMAGES

BOXING

REUTERS
TOKYO

After losing most of her home and thousands of dollars worth of boxing equipment in a fire in May, U.S. welterweight Oshae Jones said her eyes were on the gold prize now she was assured of a medal at the Tokyo Games.

"I had a vision of me standing on the podium and I practise my gold medal speech every day, so I plan on it," Jones said after beating Dominican Maria Moronta in the quarterfinals on Friday, securing at least a bronze.

Jones narrowly escaped a fire that destroyed more than half of the home that she and her boyfriend had bought.

"I feel like with the Olympic Games postponed a whole year and me losing 60, 80 percent of my things, I feel like it was just adding fuel to the fire, literally, to me keep pushing," the 23-year-old said. "I keep pushing every day."

Jones affectionately credited her "nosy neighbours" for alerting her and her partner to the late-night blaze. "If I was in any other neighbourhood where people mind their business, I would be dead," she said.

TOKYO TITBITS

Injured Aussie NBA star Baynes out of Olympics

Australia suffered a blow to its men's basketball gold medal hopes on Friday with Toronto Raptors star Aron Baynes ruled out of the rest of the Olympics with a neck injury exacerbated by a bathroom fall. Baynes is expected to recover, but not in time to return to the court in Tokyo.



Aron Baynes. • AP

Shriever dethrones Pajon to win BMX racing gold

Britain's Bethany Shriever ended Mariana Pajon's Olympic reign to win the women's BMX racing competition on Friday as Dutch rider Niek Kimmann



Bethany Shriever. • AP

took gold in the men's competition. Dutch rider Merel Smulders took bronze. Kimmann finishing ahead of Britain's Kye Whyte and Colombia's Carlos Ramirez.

Japan extends virus emergency

Japan Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Friday announced the expansion of the virus state of emergency to Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama, which neighbour Tokyo, as well as Osaka in western Japan. Emergency measures in Tokyo and southern Okinawa that had been due to end August 22 will now run until the end of the month.



Punjab Chief Minister
Capt. Amarinder Singh

will pay glowing tributes to the legendary martyr

Shaheed Udham Singh Sunam

who laid down his life to avenge the
Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

on his

82nd Martyrdom Day

during a

STATE LEVEL FUNCTION

PROGRAMME

Date: July 31, 2021 (Saturday)

Time: 10.00 AM

Venue: Shaheed Udham Singh Memorial,
Sunam Udham Singh Wala

Let us pay homage to the great son of soil

Watch **LIVE**
STREAMING

📌 <https://www.facebook.com/PunjabGovtIndia>

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DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS, PUNJAB

