



Supreme Court to hear multiple pleas on Pegasus row today

Page 9



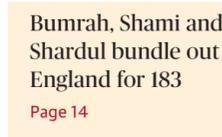
Modi calls Mamata on flood situation in south Bengal

Page 10



Biden calls Cuomo to resign following sexual abuse investigation

Page 13



Bumrah, Shami and Shardul bundle out England for 183

Page 14



NEARBY



**Nangal case: CM meets family, assures support**

NEW DELHI  
 Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday met the family of the nine-year-old girl who was allegedly sexually assaulted and murdered before her body was forcibly cremated in Nangal village. He announced an ex gratia of ₹10 lakh for the family.

CITY PAGE 2

**Jathedi's arrest: 2 women officers played vital role**

NEW DELHI  
 In a team of 40-odd officers working on arguably the biggest arrest of the year for Delhi Police so far - gangster Kala Jathedi - two were female officers, Sub Inspectors Preeti Sangwan, 27, and Neetu Sindhu, 30. Ms. Sangwan tailed the gangster for days before he was nabbed while Ms. Sindhu spent 72 hours in office assisting the ground team.

CITY PAGE 2

**'Assam CM's expansionist tendencies led to clashes'**

NEW DELHI  
 Assam is illegally occupying more than 509 sq. miles of Mizo territory, Mizo National Front Rajya Sabha member K. Vanlalvena said. He blamed Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's "expansionist" tendencies for the flare-up between Mizoram and Assam.

NEWS PAGE 9

## Oppn. rejects Venkaiah's truce offer to discuss farmer protests

Parties stand firm on demand to debate Pegasus snooping issue first

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties on Wednesday sent out their message in one voice - a debate in Parliament on the alleged Pegasus cyberattack first, rejecting a peace deal offered by Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu. Five Bills - three in the Rajya Sabha and two in the Lok Sabha - were passed amidst shrill protests from Opposition members holding placards and shouting slogans against the government.

"The opposition parties stand firm and united on their demand for a discussion on Pegasus issue in both the Houses, replied to by the Home Minister, as this has national security dimensions," said a joint statement issued by the Congress, Trinamool Congress, DMK, Samajwadi Party, RJD, NCP, Shiv Sena, National Conference, IUML, CPI(M), CPI, Aam Aadmi Party, Revolutionary Socialist Party and Loktantrik Janata Dal.

It stated, "The opposition has also unequivocally conveyed that the discussion on the farmers' issues and agitations arising from the three anti-farmer and black agrilaws should follow the discussion on Pegasus."

Mr. Naidu offered truce by admitting the motion under

The responsibility for the deadlock lies squarely at the doorsteps of the government, which remains arrogant and refuses to accept the Opposition's demand for an informed debate in both the Houses

The opposition parties stand firm and united on their demand for a discussion on Pegasus issue in both the Houses, replied to by the Home Minister

The Opposition has also unequivocally conveyed that the discussion on the farmers' issues and agitations arising from the three anti-farmers and black agrilaws should follow the discussion on Pegasus

JOINT STATEMENT BY OPPOSITION PARTIES

I have gone through it [notice to debate farmers' agitation]. It is an ongoing issue but important. So it is admitted for discussion

VENKAIAH NAIDU, RAJYA SABHA CHAIRMAN



Rule 267 to suspend the business of the day to discuss the ongoing farmers' agitation, following a meeting with the Opposition leaders and the government. But the Opposition snubbed the offer.

Mr. Naidu, reading out the names of those who had moved notices to debate various issues, said that he was admitting the notices given under rule 267 (to set aside the business of the day to debate a certain issue) by Ramgopal Yadav and Vishambhar Prasad Nishad of the Samajwadi Party and V. Sivadasan

of the CPI(M) over the farmers' agitation on the three farm laws.

"I have gone through it. It is an ongoing issue but important. So it is admitted for discussion," he said.

The notices submitted by Trinamool's Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Mallikarjun Kharge and K.C. Venugopal of the Congress, CPI(M)'s Elamaram Kareem and Mr. Sivadasan, and Binoy Viswam of the CPI over the Pegasus issue were rejected.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Rajya Sabha passes 3 Bills in an hour

The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday passed three Bills in about one hour, while the Opposition continued its protest against the government on the Pegasus spyware issue and demanded the repeal of the three farm laws. The Bills were introduced, discussed and passed amid the din. The House was also adjourned for 15 minutes at that time.

## Officer hurt as suspended MPs try to enter RS

A Parliament security officer suffered minor injuries on Wednesday in a scuffle with suspended Trinamool Congress members, who tried to enter the Rajya Sabha chamber after the House was adjourned at 3.15 p.m. The six MPs, who were suspended, continued to raise anti-government slogans standing outside the chamber.

## Efforts to track emerging COVID-19 variants shrink

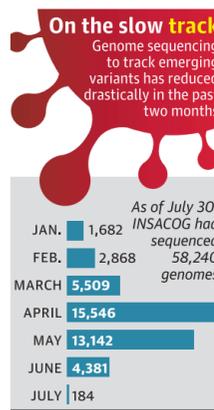
Only 184 genomes sequenced in July

JACOB KOSHY  
 NEW DELHI

While the second wave is yet to trough and there are signs that a third wave may be around the corner, India's efforts to sequence genomes to track for emerging variants plummeted after April.

Data from the National SARS-CoV-2 Genome Consortium (INSACOG), a network of 28 labs across the country equipped to sequence genomes of the coronavirus for emerging variants, shows that in July, only 184 genomes were sequenced. In June, 4,381 samples were sequenced, which is itself a stark decline from May (13,142 samples) and April (15,546 samples). The latter two months were when India bore the brunt of the second wave that saw daily cases grow to as many as 4,00,000.

As of July 30, INSACOG had sequenced 58,240 genomes, of which 46,124



samples had been analysed and their lineages (variant history) ascertained and submitted to the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), according to the response to a question in the Lok Sabha.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## CJI recuses himself from Andhra-Telangana case

Denied its share of water, claims A.P.

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana on Wednesday recused himself from hearing a petition filed by Andhra Pradesh accusing Telangana of depriving its people of their legitimate share of water for drinking and irrigation.

The Chief Justice, who said he hailed from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, withdrew after A.P. rejected the court's suggestion to send the case for mediation. "The matter requires adjudication," advocate G. Umaphathy, for Andhra Pradesh, informed the Bench, also comprising Justice Surya Kant. "In that case, if you do not want mediation, I cannot hear this case. Let it be listed before another Bench," the CJI said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for the Centre, said that he personally and the government had "full faith"



CJI N.V. Ramana

in the Chief Justice in the case and urged him to not recuse. "Thank you, but I cannot hear this case," Chief Justice Ramana said.

In the previous hearing, he asked the Andhra Pradesh counsel to get instructions on whether they wanted the case to be sent for mediation or continue with the adjudication. Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, who represented the State, had asked for some time to get instructions.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## The journey begins



India's maiden Indigenous Aircraft Carrier sets off for sea trials from the naval dockyard in Kochi. It is expected to join the Navy as INS Vikrant late next year. INDIAN NAVY (REPORT ON PAGE 5)

## Rajbhar denies alliance prospects with BJP but keeps option open

He lays down 5 demands, including OBC Chief Minister in U.P.

OMAR RASHID  
 LUCKNOW

Two years after Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party president Om Prakash Rajbhar was sacked from the Uttar Pradesh government led by the BJP following his rebellion before the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the OBC leader seems to be inching towards his old ally again.

The speculation was triggered after Mr. Rajbhar called upon BJP's Uttar Pradesh president Swatantra Dev Singh on Tuesday. The SBSP chief described the one-hour meeting as a courtesy visit but admitted that politics was on the table.



Om Prakash Rajbhar

"I come from the 'pichdi jati' (backward caste). He also comes from the 'pichdi jati'. So we often have these courtesy meetings," he said.

Though Mr. Rajbhar dismissed that he would join hands with the BJP for the 2022 Assembly poll, he laced it with a caveat. He told a news channel that he would

consider an alliance with the BJP if it fulfilled his five demands, including having an OBC Chief Minister. "Let the BJP implement these. After that I will think about it. But not before it because I have tasted betrayal," he said.

SBSP general secretary and Mr. Rajbhar's son, Arvind Rajbhar, issued a statement on Wednesday ruling out an alliance with the BJP. "The SBSP will not have any alliance with the Bharatiya Jhooth Party [BJP]. The meeting was personal. Yes, political discussion was held. BJP [U.P.] president said 2022 will be difficult without you," Mr. Arvind Rajbhar said.

## Let's respect democracy, Kejriwal tells L-G

CM accuses Bajjal of holding 'parallel meeting behind the back of elected govt.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

The Delhi government and Raj Niwas found themselves at loggerheads yet again on Wednesday after Lieutenant-Governor Anil Bajjal chaired a meeting to review the COVID-19 situation in the national capital.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal accused Mr. Bajjal of holding a "parallel meeting behind the back" of the elected government and asked the L-G to "respect democracy". "Reviewed the COVID-19 situation in Delhi and future preparedness with Chief Secretary, ACS (Home&Health), Divisional Commissioner, Secretary (Health), MD-DMRC & other officials concerned," the L-G tweeted.



CM Arvind Kejriwal and L-G Anil Bajjal at Raj Niwas. FILE PHOTO

In response, Mr. Kejriwal posted, "It is against Constitution n SC CB judgement to hold such parallel meetings behind the back of elected govt. We r a democracy. People hv elected a Council of Ministers. If u have any Qs, pl ask ur ministers. Avoid holding direct meetings wid officers Lets respect democracy, Sir (sic)."

According to a senior government official present at the meeting, Mr. Bajjal advised the Health Department to ensure commissioning of all PSA plants, LMO storage tanks and cryogenic bottling plants latest by August 31.

The L-G also asked the officials to make provisions for adequate buffer of medicines for treatment of COVID-19

and black fungus. According to the official, the L-G expressed concern over reported violation of COVID-appropriate behaviour in metro and other means of public transport and advised the Divisional Commissioner, Delhi Police and MD, DMRC, to ensure that protocols are strictly enforced.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, in a letter to the L-G on July 17, had alleged that Mr. Bajjal was chairing meetings on matters in the domain of the elected government without informing the Minister concerned.

In response, the L-G had termed these "insinuations and statements" devoid of "any merit and without any evidence".

## LS clears Air Quality Commission Bill for NCR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Bill to formalise the Commission for Air Quality Management For National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas.

The body has a full-time chairperson and a range of members, including representatives from several Ministries and independent experts, and will have the final say on evolving policy and issuing directions to address air pollution in Delhi and the adjoining regions.

DETAILS ON PAGE 8





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under

## PRADHAN MANTRI GARIB KALYAN ANNA YOJANA



### INTERACTION WITH BENEFICIARIES

(via video conferencing)

by

## Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

in august presence of

## Yogi Adityanath

Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Date : 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 | Time : 1:00 PM

Watch the live telecast at  
<https://pmevents.ncog.gov.in>  
 DD National/Uttar Pradesh  
[Youtube.com/dduttarpradesh](https://www.youtube.com/dduttarpradesh)

- UPGovtOfficial
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Free ration to around 15 crore beneficiaries in the state



# Thank you Modi Ji



**WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**  
**OPEN TENDER, Date: 02.08.2021**  
 E-tender on behalf of the president of India acting through Sr. Divisional Engineer (Co-ordination), Divisional Railway Manager (Works), West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following works:- NIT No. - DRMWV-JBP-76-2021. Name of work with location - New Katni-Augmentation of facilities for homing of 03 phase loco at Electric Loco Shed, Part-A: Enhancement of Light repair and Heavy repair bay at Katni end. Part B: Fire Hydrant System. Approx cost of the work (Rs.) - 7.94,12,371/-, Earnest Money (In Rs.) - 0.00 Completion period - 24 months, Last date & Time for submission of tender (Up to 15.00 Hrs. On) - 31.08.2021. Tender to be opened at 15:15 Hrs on - 31.08.2021. The complete information of the above e-tender is available on website "https://tenders.gov.in" and also placed on notice board of the Divisional Railway Manager (Works) Office, West Central Railway, Jabalpur. Tenders other than in the form of e-bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. Divisional Railway Manager(Works) West Central Railway, Jabalpur  
 इकतीन लखाएँ, जीन को सफ़र को सुखित बनाई।

**Delhi Weather** max min  
 Delhi City 35 25  
 Safdarjang 35 25  
 Palam 34 27

**Delhi Palam Today**  
**35°C** Warm and humid day with partly cloudy sky and light to moderate winds. Short spells of rain may occur.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
**34°C** Few spells of light rain and thunderstorm at some places with cloudy sky. Day would remain warm and humid.

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**Timings DELHI**

**THURSDAY, AUG. 05**  
 RISE 05:46 SET 19:10  
 RISE 02:27 SET 16:56

**FRIDAY, AUG. 06**  
 RISE 05:46 SET 19:09  
 RISE 03:18 SET 17:48

**SATURDAY, AUG. 07**  
 RISE 05:47 SET 19:08  
 RISE 04:13 SET 18:35

**Tabligh case: HC seeks status report**

**STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI**  
 The Delhi High Court has sought a detailed status report from Delhi Police on petitions by several Indian nationals seeking quashing of FIRs and criminal proceedings initiated against them for housing foreigners who attended the religious congregation at Tablighi Jamaat centre in Nizamuddin last year allegedly in violation of COVID-19 norms. Justice Mukta Gupta said the status report has to indicate the role of each accused as well as the duration of the stay of the foreigners.

**Govt. caps RT-PCR price at pvt. labs**

Maximum rate slashed to ₹500; for home collection of samples, it is ₹700

**STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI**  
 The Delhi government on Wednesday reduced the maximum rates private labs can charge for RT-PCR tests for COVID-19. The rates have been reduced to ₹500, when a person gives the sample at a centre and to ₹700 for home collection of samples, compared to earlier rates of ₹800 and ₹1,200 respectively. "All labs/hospitals will display the revised rates at a prominent place later within 24 hours of this order. This order comes into effect immediately and is for strict compliance by all concerned," read the order issued by Bhupinder S. Bhalra, Additional Chief Secretary (Health & Family Welfare). The maximum rate the government pays to private labs, when samples collected by government centres are sent to private labs for testing, has



COVID-19 testing in progress at a centre in Majlis Park. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

"Subsidised rates will ensure more people can afford RT-PCR tests but the price cap may affect the labs' ability to manage costs that entails kits and consumables, as well as manpower, logistics etc. The older price was fair and affordable with a decent incentive for smaller labs to continue investing further in enhancing their capacity. Hence, in hindsight this price reduction may hurt the overall need to enhance capacity," he said.

Tuesday. But it is still less than the end of June when 1.5 to 2 lakh people were vaccinated daily on several days.

The vaccine stock of the city on Wednesday morning would last for four days and there were 3,50,930 doses of Covishield and 3,75,110 doses of Covaxin, as per the data. Till now, 1,02,95,389 doses of vaccines have been administered in the city, as per the bulletin.

**67 new cases**  
 The city reported 67 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,36,518. There was no death reported and the total number of deaths stood at 25,058. A total of 72,965 tests were done in a day and the TPR was 0.09%. Of the total cases, 14,10,947 people have recovered and there are only 513 active cases.

**More vaccinations**  
 The number of daily COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the city has increased for the second consecutive day, as per government data. A total of 95,063 doses of vaccine were administered in the city on Tuesday, compared to 91,100 doses on Monday, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**



General public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Ananya Adhikari W/o Kiran Shaha R/o S-217, Pandav Nagar, Delhi** has been missing since 14.07.2021 from her house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 76A dated 14.07.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Mandawali, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-  
**Age: 20 Years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round,**

**ANANYA ADHIKARI**

**Built: Medium, Wearing: Brown colour suit and green colour salwar & blue colour shoes in feet.**

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, Mandawali, Delhi at E-mail Id - [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 SHO P.S. Mandawali, Delhi  
 Fax No. 011-24368639 East Distt., Delhi  
 DP/603/ED/2021 Ph. No. 011-22720808, 22720809

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**



General public is hereby informed that a female namely **Priyanka Kumari, D/o: Mani Bhushan, R/o: H.No. 9/2775, Gali No. 03, Chanderpuri, Kailash Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi** has been missing since 27.07.2021 from the area of P.S. Gandhi Nagar, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 5A dated 27.07.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Gandhi Nagar, Delhi. The description of missing girl is

as under:  
**Name: Priyanka Kumari, Age: 20 Years, Height: 5', Built: Thin, Face: Oval, Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Violet Colour Suit, Sky Blue Colour Pant and Black Colour Sandals.**

If anyone has any information about this missing girl please inform P.S. Gandhi Nagar, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
 Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO Police Station, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi  
 DP/518/SHD/2021 Ph: 011-22072761, 7065036024

**THE HINDU**  
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**SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
 Outsourcing of preventive maintenance activities of PSI assets  
**E-Tender Notice** Date: 02.08.2021  
**Tender Notice No. TRD\_NGP\_Tender\_21-22\_17**, dated 22.07.2021.  
**Name of the Work: Outsourcing of preventive maintenance activities of PSI assets in G-JBP section for a period of 24 months in SEC Railway.**  
**Tender Cost: ₹ 1,38,64,462/-**. Last date of submission of electronic offer (online): 23.08.2021 at 15:00 Hrs. For the above tender, please visit website [www.treps.gov.in](http://www.treps.gov.in) for further details.  
**Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (T-D), IP/36/73, S.E.C. Rly., Nagpur.**  
**Clean India Drive एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर**

**Office of the Chief Engineer, Shimla Zone Public Works Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla [On the Letterhead of the employer]**

Date: 3rd August, 2021  
 Invitation for Bids No.: NO.PWD/07/R2/2021-22-  
 Loan No. and Title: Loan No. 3573 IND/Himachal Pradesh Skill Development Project.

Contract Package No. and Title: PWD/07/R2/; Construction of Model Career Centre (MCC) building at Solan H.P. (SH- C/o Main Building including Water Supply and Sanitary Installation, Septic Tank, Site Development, Rain Harvesting Tank, Ground water recharging pit, Retaining wall and Boundary wall, Environment Component, Site Barricading etc.)  
 Deadline for Submission of Bids is 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 at 11:00 hrs (IST)

- The India has received the financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of "Himachal Pradesh Skill Development Project". Part of this financing will be used for payments under the Contract Package named above. Bidding is open to Bidders from eligible source countries of the ADB.
- The "Public Works Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh, represented by Chief Engineer, Shimla Zone, Shimla" ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the Construction of Model Career Centre (MCC) building at Solan, H.P. (SH- C/o Main Building including Water Supply and Sanitary Installation, Septic Tank, Site Development, Rain Harvesting Tank, Ground water recharging pit, Retaining wall and Boundary wall, Environment Component, Site Barricading etc.) in all respect ("the Works")
- National competitive bidding will be conducted in accordance with ADB's Single-stage, Two-Envelope procedure and is open to a 11 Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Document.
- Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications should participate in this bidding:
  - Participation in at least one contract that has been successfully or substantially completed within the last five financial years and that is similar to the proposed works, where the value of the Bidder's participation exceeds INR 18 million (INR 1.8 Crore);
  - Minimum average annual construction turnover of INR 48 million (INR 4.8 Crore), calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, within the last three (3) years; financial.
  - Has financial resources to meet its current contract commitments, plus INR 3million (INR 30 Lakh) requirements for the Subject Contract;
  - Meets other Personnel and Equipment requirements as stipulated in the Bidding Document. However for complete eligibility and qualification requirements, bid document should be referred.
- To obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents, Bidders should contact: Attention: Er. Arvind Sharma Executive Engineer, Solan Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department (HPPWD) Phone number - 94184-57075 Himachal Pradesh India Fax - 01792-223811 email ID - [ee-sol-hp@nic.in](mailto:ee-sol-hp@nic.in)

A pre-bid meeting shall take place on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 at 03:00 PM hrs (IST), at the address stated above.  
 6. To purchase the bidding documents in English language, eligible Bidders should write or visit at the office of the Employer at address stated above and pay a non-refundable fee of INR 5,000 towards the cost of bidding document in the form of Bank Demand Draft.  
 In case of written request, the document will be sent by post/courier and no liability will be accepted for loss or late delivery. The Bidders who wish to receive the bidding document by post/courier shall have to pay an additional amount of INR 3,000 for delivery within India, or USD 250 for delivery outside India. The method of payment will be through bank demand draft payable at Solan, Himachal Pradesh, India.  
 The eligible bidders may otherwise download the bidding document in English language from the website <http://hppwd.hp.gov.in/tenders>; such bidders shall be required to submit INR 5,000 with their bid in the form of Bank demand draft towards cost of bidding document.  
 7. Delivery your bid
 

- to the address above
- on or before the deadline: 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 at 11:00 hrs (IST)
- Together with a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Document.

Bids will be opened on 10th September, 2021 at 11:30 hrs (IST) in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.  
 Executive Engineer, Solan, HPPWD  
 For and on behalf of:  
 Chief Engineer, Shimla Zone  
 Public Works Department, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla  
 Himachal Pradesh, India  
**HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK HP / 3044/21-22**

**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**  
**E-Tendering Notice**  
 Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical), North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India, invites Online (E-Tendering) "open tender" for the following work:  
 Sl. No. - (1) Tender reference No. : E-Tender-L-08-21-22, Name of Work: (i) Mandauli-Depot - Provision of 11 KV HT VCB at T1, Depot and MUV (1st Entry) Sub Stations. (ii) At Mandauli: Improvement to circulating area, Civil work related to installation of lift, platform fencing apron and other improvement works. Approx. Cost (in Rs.): ₹ 5881192.18, Completion period: 120 Days. Date & Time of closing Tender : 26.08.21, 15:00 Hrs., Date & Time of Opening of Tender : 26.08.21, 15:30 Hrs.,  
 Full details of E-Tendering shall be seen in Website [www.treps.gov.in](http://www.treps.gov.in). Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/General, CPRO/EL-29 N.E. Railway, Varanasi  
 About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955  
 "Never travel on roof and foot boards"

**Lack of clarity on buffer stock of oxygen: HC**

'Centre's status report does not indicate that buffer stock is actually for Delhi's use'

**STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI**  
 The Delhi High Court on Wednesday remarked there was lack of clarity on the steps taken by the Centre for setting up buffer stock of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) in the Capital to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic even as a third wave is anticipated.

"Today the situation may look fine but then everyone saw what happened in April-May. There is no escape from this [buffer stock of LMO]. This is like insurance," the Bench of Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Jasmeet Singh said.  
 The Bench said the status report filed by the Centre does not indicate that buffer

stock of LMO is actually created for the use of Delhi and it only talks of enhancement of oxygen storage capacity here.  
 In April, the Supreme Court had directed the Centre and the Delhi government to create appropriate buffer stock of LMO in the Capital.  
 Reminding the govern-

ment of the top court's order, the Bench said, "Creation of buffer stock cannot happen in a week or two. You will need to first install necessary infrastructure for that."  
 The court was hearing various issues related to the COVID-19 crisis. It will hear the petition again on August 23.

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 Notice is hereby given on behalf of Axis Bank Ltd that Mrs. Veena Jethani intend to purchase & mortgage the Property bearing No. 32, area measuring 126 sq. mtrs., situated at Block ND, Pitampura, Delhi with our client Axis Bank Ltd. against the financial assistance. Whereas, Mr. Sudarshan Kumar Nayyar S/o Bhim Singh Nayyar had acquired the said property by way of Conveyance Deed dt. 23.07.1993 and after his death, his son Mr. Rajeev Nayyar got the rights of the said property by way of Relinquishment Deed dt. 08.07.2021/12.07.2021 executed by other Legal heirs of Late Sudarshan Kumar Nayyar, without obtaining SMC from the authority. Now, Mr. Rajeev Nayyar intends to sell the said floor to Mrs. Veena Jethani. If any person(s) having objection regarding ownership or regarding mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 10 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 10 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. Axis Bank Ltd. will proceed with the mortgage process.  
**DEEPIYOT SINGH, ADVOCATE**  
 A-13, LGF, South Extn-II, New Delhi-49 # 011-26262610, 11, 12

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 Notice is hereby given on behalf of Axis Bank Ltd that Mr. Mohit Shukla intends to purchase & mortgage the Plot No. 10 A/183, admeasuring 235.80 Sq. mtrs., situated at Sector-10 A, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, U.P., with our client Axis Bank Ltd against the financial assistance. Whereas, Mr. Anup Singh S/o Late Shyodayal Singh had acquired the same by way of Sale Deed dt. 20.04.2005-23.04.2005 and after his death, his legal heirs Mr. Omvir Singh, Mr. Dharamvir Singh, Mr. Sukbir Singh, Mr. Ashok Kumar, Mr. Subhash Chandra (All sons), Mrs. Anvoo, Mrs. Dharamvati, Mrs. Kavita and Mrs. Geeta (all daughters) (as per Surviving Member Certificate) claims ownership of above said property as per Hindu Succession Act as well as on the basis of Mutation Letter dt. 02.01.2015 issued by UP/AVP. Now Mr. Omvir Singh & others intend to sell the said property to Mr. Mohit Shukla. If any person(s) having objection regarding ownership or regarding mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 15 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 15 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. Axis Bank Ltd. will proceed with the mortgage process.  
**DEEPIYOT SINGH, ADVOCATE**  
 A-13, LGF, South Extn-II, New Delhi-49 # 011-26262610, 11, 12

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 • Performing Arts (Music/Dance)  
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 Qualification & salary as per NCTE/ State Govt. MDU Norms. Send one copy of resume to College and one copy to the D.C.C., MDU Rohtak within 21 days from date of advt.  
**Chairman 9812212402, 8684074535**

**TENDERS**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
 Tenders are invited for the Website Development of Army Public School Agartala. We invite online submission from credible website development firms to design, develop and maintain our School Website. Strict compliance with VAPT done at code level and development should be done in APS.net/PHP/MySQL. The firm should get registered and in website development business from last 5 years or more. A proposal can be sent on our official mail address, [apsagartala@wensindia.edu.in](mailto:apsagartala@wensindia.edu.in), latest by 14th Aug 2021, along with the cover letter. Sd/- Principal Army Public School Agartala

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**I, UROOBA Siddiqui D/O Amir Khuroo, R/O N-8 Sailing Club Road, Bala House, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025 hereby declares that I have changed my name from Uroba Siddiqui to Urooba Siddiqui.**  
**PERSONAL CHANGE OF NAME**  
**I, Anmol Bhatia D/o Harvinder Singh Bhatia R/o 176 Sukhdev vihar New Delhi 25 have changed my name to Anmol Kaur Bhatia**

**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**  
**DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**  
**Mr. K.M. Chandrasekhara Panicker**  
 Sr. Asst. Secretary (Rtd.) TN Govt. (14th ANNIVERSARY)  
**Mrs. Kalyanikutty Amma**  
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**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
 No. PW-DP-CB-Tender/2021:11387-89 Dated:-02/08/2021  
 The Executive Engineer Dharampur Division, HPPWD Dharampur Distt. Mandi (H.P) on behalf of Governor of HP invite the item rate bids in electronics tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the work as detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Starting date of download-ing bid	Deadline of submission of bid.	Time Period
1.	R/R Damage on Dharampur to Gorat via Banwar Km 0/0 to 5/0 (SH: C/O Cause way at RD 2300)	5,98,692/-	12,000/-	12/08/2021	19/08/2021	Two Months
2.	C/O 17.00 Mr span bridge at RD 1/880 over Padhar Kathal darkhu Road km 0/0 to 3/00 (SH: C/O PCC Abutment & Bed Block)	5,98,146/-	12,000/-	12/08/2021	19/08/2021	Two Months
3.	R/R Damage on Sarkaghat Tilra Sandhol Road km 59/00 to 101/00 (SH: C/O R/wall at RD 69/510 to 69/542)	5,42,992/-	11,000/-	12/08/2021	19/08/2021	Two Months
4.	A/R & M/Rest House at Dharampur (SH: Additional Accommodations)	21,67,660/-	40,500/-	12/08/2021	19/08/2021	Two Months

The bidder are advised to note other details of tender from the department website [www.hptender.gov.in](http://www.hptender.gov.in)  
 Executive Engineer, Dharampur Division, HPPWD, Dharampur, Distt: Mandi (H.P.)  
 HP / 3049/21-22

**HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**  
 The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division, Baggi invites tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractor for the following works(s) through e-tending process :-

Sr. No	Name of Work	E/Cost	Earnest Money	Time limit
1.	Improvement of Balh Valley (Right Bank) Medium Irrigation Project Zone No. 4 to 8 in Tehsil Balh District Mandi (HP). (SH- Zone 4 : C/O Desilting Tank, Repair of pump House / S/E of Pumping Machinery for R/Main-I, for R/Main-II, LJ & testing of R/Main GMS of 100,125, 150mm dia., Anchor Block, C/O 2 Nos RCC Main delivery Tanks of 20000 ltrs cap., P/L of HDPE pipes of various dia, C/O 39 Nos out let chambers and Automation system. Zone 5 : C/O Desilting Tank, Repair of pump House, / C/O New pump house, S/E of Pumping Machinery for R/Main-I, for R/Main-II for R/Main-IV LJ & testing of R/Main GMS of 125mm dia & P/L/J MSERW pipe of 300,250mm dia., Anchor Block, C/O 2 Nos RCC Main delivery Tanks of 30000 ltrs cap., P/L of HDPE pipes of various dia, C/O 140 Nos out let chambers and Automation system. Zone 6 : C/O Desilting Tank, Repair of pump House, S/E of Pumping Machinery for R/Main-I, R/Main-II, LJ & testing of R/Main of GMS 125, 150mm dia & P/L/J MSERW pipe of 350mm dia., Anchor Block, C/O 3Nos RCC Main delivery Tanks of 10000,30000, 70000 ltrs cap., P/L of HDPE pipes of various dia, C/O 252 Nos out let chambers and Automation system. Zone 7 : C/O Sump well 200000 ltrs Cap., Desilting Tank, Repair of pump House, S/E of Pumping Machinery, LJ & testing of R/Main of GMS 125 dia, P/L of HDPE pipes of various dia, C/O 76 Nos out let chambers and Automation system. Zone No. 8 C/O Desilting Tank, Repair of pump House, S/E of Pumping Machinery for R/Main-I, R/Main-II & R/Main-III, LJ & testing of R/Main GMS of 125mm dia & P/L/J MSERW pipe of 300, 200mm dia., Anchor Block, C/O 2 Nos RCC Main delivery Tanks of 20000 ltrs cap., P/L of HDPE pipes of various dia, C/O 197 Nos out let chambers and Automation system.	Rs. 16,51,00,540/-	Rs. 16,51,100/-	Three Years

Last date of filing/uploading the tender through e-tendering: 17/08/2021 upto 05.00PM.  
 The tender form and other detail and condition can be obtained from the website <https://hptenders.gov.in> or from office of Jal Shakti Division Baggi upto the date specified above.  
 Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Baggi.  
 HP / 3030/21-22

# Maiden indigenous aircraft carrier begins trials

It is expected to join Navy as *INS Vikrant* next year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI

The much-awaited sea trials of the country's maiden indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-1), built by the public sector Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL), began here on Wednesday.

The 40,000-tonne behemoth, whose keel-laying was done in 2009, is expected to join the Navy as *INS Vikrant* late next year.

Its induction will give a fillip to the 'sea control' capabilities of the Navy in the Indian Ocean Region, a theatre of growing geostrategic competition. The Navy at present operates one aircraft carrier, *INS Vikramaditya*.



Time for drill: Aircraft carrier IAC-1 leaving for trials off Kochi on Wednesday. \*INDIAN NAVY

At sea, the IAC-1 will have its propulsion plants put to rigorous testing in addition to the trials of various navigation, communication and hull equipment. Once the

equipment calibration is done, the successive stages in the year-long trials will witness flight trials followed by weapon trials.

"It is a red-letter day for

Indian shipbuilding industry. Significant capabilities have been developed by the CSL in areas of ship design, construction and network integration," said Madhu S. Nair,

CSL chairman and managing director, on the commencement of the sea trials.

The carrier construction project was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security in 2002 and the contract for the first phase of construction was signed with the CSL in 2007. While the basic design of the IAC-1 was done by the Directorate of Naval Design, the detailed engineering, construction and system integration were done by the CSL. The project cost nearly ₹20,000 crore.

Italian firm Fincantieri helped in designing and system integration and Russia in developing the aviation complex. But the project gave a boost to indigenisation, starting from the development of warship-grade steel for the ship's hull construction to the development of a

large ancillary industry ecosystem.

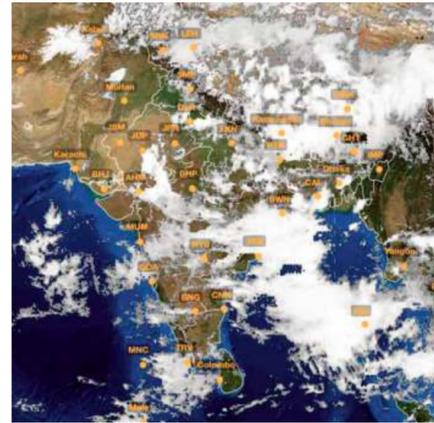
## Room for 30 aircraft

The IAC is equipped with numerous high-end technologies, including network-centric distributed data processing and control systems, and state-of-the-art weapons such as the Barak LR-SAM (long-range surface to air missile) and sensors. It can carry about 30 assorted aircraft, including fighter jets and helicopters, is capable of a top speed of 28 knots and a cruising speed of 18 knots with an endurance of 7,500 nautical miles.

The ship, which is 262 m long, has over 2,300 compartments and is designed to have a complement of about 1,700 people with specialised cabins to accommodate women officers.

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17:00 HRS)  
**Forecast for Thursday:** Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa and coastal Karnataka. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar and Odisha

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.3	34.8	26.7	Kozhikode	20.0	30.8	23.4
Ahmedabad	—	32.1	26.1	Kurnool	—	34.1	25.7
Aizawl	—	—	—	Lucknow	—	33.5	25.4
Allahabad	—	32.3	26.4	Madurai	—	39.5	26.1
Bangalore	1.1	27.6	21.0	Mangaluru	30.8	28.0	23.0
Bhopal	7.4	—	23.0	Mumbai	19.0	30.4	25.8
Bhubaneswar	—	31.6	26.2	Mysuru	—	28.8	21.4
Chandigarh	0.6	34.7	27.3	New Delhi	—	35.2	25.4
Chennai	—	36.1	28.5	Patna	—	29.6	27.2
Coimbatore	—	31.6	22.4	Port Blair	—	30.5	25.7
Dehradun	17.0	32.7	25.2	Puducherry	—	37.2	26.3
Gangtok	—	22.2	17.7	Pune	—	29.6	21.9
Goa	42.0	30.5	24.2	Raipur	—	32.5	24.4
Guwahati	—	36.9	27.2	Ranchi	—	26.6	23.6
Hubbali	—	26.0	22.0	Shillong	—	27.0	17.7
Hyderabad	—	31.5	23.6	Shimla	—	23.6	17.1
Imphal	—	31.5	21.6	Srinagar	0.2	29.3	19.2
Jaipur	—	31.5	25.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.4	24.6
Kochi	—	29.2	24.0	Tiruchi	—	37.2	27.4
Kohima	—	28.2	18.5	Vijayawada	—	36.7	27.2
Kolkata	1.1	31.9	27.6	Visakhapatnam	—	39.0	27.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	Pollutants in the air you are breathing				Yesterday
	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>10</sub>	
Ahmedabad	7	15	21	102	112
Bangalore	2	44	145	39	45
Chennai	5	—	75	27	63
Delhi	27	108	22	44	94
Hyderabad	2	89	17	14	31
Kolkata	11	42	57	120	95
Lucknow	14	12	65	150	77
Mumbai	28	10	—	63	103
Pune	33	14	110	81	72
Visakhapatnam	11	48	48	46	97

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

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.  
**NO<sub>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze as formed 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.  
**PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

## 'Friend' held for teenager's murder

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

A 'friend' has allegedly emerged as the killer of an 18-year-old girl in the Alwal police station area of Cyberabad here on Wednesday.

The police picked up Deepak Nayakar, 19, from the Secunderabad railway station area. During interrogation, Nayakar admitted to have strangled the teenager to death with her *chunni* at an isolated place off a railway track. "Deepak claimed that the girl, with whom he had been moving closely for 18 months, had been pressuring him to marry her," Pet-basheerabad Assistant Commissioner of Police V.V.S. Ramalinga Raju said.

The accused told the police that he had no plans of marrying her and had rejected her proposal.

## 29 Ministers inducted into Karnataka Cabinet

Yediyurappa's son B.Y. Vijayendra fails to find a place

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BENGALURU

A week after taking over as Chief Minister of Karnataka, Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday expanded his new Cabinet by inducting 29 Ministers.

They were administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot at the Raj Bhavan here.

The Chief Minister said allocation of portfolios to the new Ministers would be done in a couple of days.

### No Deputy CMs

In the Cabinet expansion, which was seen as the first challenge before the new Chief Minister, Mr. Bommai has by and large retained the old faces, as 23 of them were



Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot greeting Prabhu Chavan, one of the new Ministers. \*K. MURALI KUMAR

Ministers in the previous B.S. Yediyurappa Cabinet. Six are new.

However, there are no Deputy Chief Ministers in this Cabinet, unlike in the previous Yediyurappa Ministry,

which had three.

Meanwhile, the BJP high command seems to have not agreed to the induction of Mr. Yediyurappa's younger son and State BJP vice-president B.Y. Vijayendra into the Cabinet, amid reports of pressure from the party strongman. "The national president has spoken to Yediyurappa and the national general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Arun Singh spoke to Vijayendra personally... I can only say, Vijayendra's name is not in the list today," Mr. Bommai said to a question.

Mr. Bommai, who was elected leader of the BJP legislature party last week following Mr. Yediyurappa's resignation, took oath as the Chief Minister on July 28.

## Kerala HC expands rape definition

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday held that the definition of rape contained in Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code will take in sexual assaults, including the sexual acts committed between thighs of the victim.

The Bench led by Justice K. Vinod Chandran, while dealing with an appeal in a Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) case, observed that "Section 375 takes in sexual assaults beyond penile penetration into vagina, urethra, anus, and mouth, the known orifices in the human body to which such penetration was unimaginably possible".

The court further observed that "any part of the body of such woman, as mentioned in Section 375(c)



The Kerala HC observation came in a POCSO case.

of the Indian Penal Code, brings within its ambit a penile sexual act committed between the thighs held together, which do not qualify to be called an orifice".

The court said the definition of rape covered "any manipulation of the body of a woman in such a manner as to simulate an effect, providing sexual gratification, akin to penile penetration". When penetration was thus made in between the thighs held together, it would certainly amount to "rape" as defined under Section 375 of the IPC, the court said.

## 'No farmers' rally in Delhi on I-Day'

Samyukt Kisan Morcha asks them to carry out 'tiranga yatras'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

There will be no programme by protesting farm unions within the national capital on Independence Day, Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) leaders said at a press conference on the Singhu border protest site on Wednesday. They will carry out rallies carrying the National Flag in block and district headquarters, they said.

### R-Day tractor rally

They were briefing journalists on decisions taken at an SKM general body meeting on Tuesday. The announce-



Farmers during their protest at Singhu border. \*FILE PHOTO

ment comes in the wake of last week's comments from Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait that a tractor rally "is not a bad thing", indicating that such a parade would be held on Delhi's roads on August 15. This had given rise to concerns of a repeat of Republic Day, when a

tractor rally by farmers in Delhi had spiralled out of control and led to chaos and violence.

"Let me be very clear. Samyukt Kisan Morcha will not enter Delhi on August 15, there will be no programme in the capital on Independence Day," said Rashtriya

Kisan Mahasangh leader Abhimanyu Kohar at the press conference.

SKM urged farmers to carry out "tiranga yatras" at the tehsil, block and district levels between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on August 15, tying the National Flag to tractors, cycles and other vehicles.

With regard to the BJP's own 'tiranga yatra' in Haryana, SKM reiterated its decision not to oppose it, although the protesting farmers had been boycotting all other events of the ruling party for several months. "We have all respect for the National Flag and we do not want to give the BJP any fodder for propaganda that the farmers have disrespected the flag. So we will not oppose their yatra," said Ravi Azad, a BKU leader from Haryana.

## Assam exempts Gurkhas from cases in FTs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Himanta Biswas Sarma government decided that there will be no new cases registered against the Gurkha community in the State at the Foreigners' Tribunals. All cases registered so far would also be withdrawn, the State Cabinet decided on Wednesday.

Cases at the Foreigners' Tribunals are pending against scores of Gurkha people, many of whom have been excluded from the National Register of Citizens.

Among other decisions taken by the Cabinet, land deed provided to the indigenous landless people will be myadai pattas from the day of allotment.

## TMC wants me to head Assam unit: Akhil Gogoi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Rajior Dal president and Sibsagar MLA Akhil Gogoi said the Trinamool Congress has offered him the leadership of the party in Assam.

He said West Bengal CM

Mamata Banerjee had invited him to Kolkata after he was released from jail on July 1. "I have visited Kolkata twice since and met her. The TMC wants me to become the president of its Assam unit. We have not given any commitment," he said.

## 'U.P. govt. sabotaging BSP rallies'

COVID curbs are being misused, says Mayawati

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW/BAREILLY

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) leader Mayawati on Wednesday accused the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh of misusing the COVID-19 restrictions to scuttle its Brahmin outreach meetings, claiming that the ruling party is rattled by their success.

Last month, the BSP — which counts on Dalit votes — began a series of "prabuddha varg sammelans" (intellectuals' meetings) to woo the Brahmins ahead of the next year's Assembly polls.

The Samajwadi Party also appears set to launch a similar exercise.

After a "prabuddha sammelan" in Bareilly on Wednesday, BSP national general secretary Satish Misra



BSP chief Mayawati

claimed that both the Dalits and the Brahmins are living in fear in the State.

Meeting reporters, he also said the party will not enter into any alliance for the Assembly elections.

In Lucknow, Ms. Mayawati charged that the BJP is misusing official machinery to sabotage the BSP meetings. She said her party has been organising the meetings after obtaining necessary clearances but the authorities

are now trying to impose "new conditions". Ms. Mayawati said at some places the district administrations have been imposing restrictions on the number of participants. "Not only the Brahmins but everyone can see that for BJP leaders there is no ban relating to the coronavirus protocol at any programme," she said.

Ms. Mayawati said cases were registered against some members of the Brahmin community after a meeting on Tuesday. Ms. Mayawati said alarm bells are ringing in the BJP after the "success" of these meetings. "It is clear since they have now started the open misuse of official machinery to check these programmes." She said such tactics would not deter her party.

## Tea planters in Assam flag dipping prices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A ₹38 hike in the daily cash wage of labourers has been a major factor in price realisation of tea declining markedly below the cost of production, a tea planters' body has said.

The North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) on Wednesday said the tea industry was struggling for survival due to an 18% dip in the price realisation of tea compared to that in 2020.

"The price realisation of tea has gone down by ₹44.19 per kg in a year while the cost of production has gone up due to the hike in wages and increase in the cost of inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, diesel, natural gas, coal and transporta-

tion," NETA adviser Bidyananda Borkakoty said.

The cost of production of processed tea had gone up by ₹25 a kg. The daily cash wage hike from ₹167 to ₹205 and a ₹7 increase in input costs led to a "negative impact" on the industry to the tune of ₹76 per kg of processed tea, he said. According to the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre, the average price realisation of CTC tea from April to July this year was ₹208.02 per kg, down by ₹44.19 from ₹252.21 per kg during the same period in 2020.

"Only about 9% teas have fetched above ₹300 a kg and about 51% of teas have got sold below ₹200 per kg," NETA chairman Sunil Jallan said.

## NORTH & EAST

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**ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, देवघर**

पत्रांक 640/ देवघर, शुद्धि-पत्र दिनांक 03/08/2021

एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि PR 250323 Rural Development (21-22):D को प्रकाशित अति अल्पकालीन ई- निविदा आमंत्रण संख्या- RDD/SD/DEOGHAR/31/2021-22 (देवघर जिला के पालोजोरी प्रखंड अन्तर्गत प्रखंड विकास पदाधिकारी -सह-अंचलाधिकारी/पर्यवेक्षीय/तृतीय/चतुर्थ वर्ग कर्मचारी आवास निर्माण तथा प्रखंड परिसर का विकास एवं विविध) कार्य के निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना में अपरिहार्य कारण से निम्न आंशिक संशोधन किया जाता है:-

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :- दिनांक 13.08.2021
- परिमाण विपत्र अपलोड करने की तिथि एवं समय :- दि 13.08.2021 (पूर्वो 11:00 बजे) से 20.08.2021 (अप 05:00 बजे) तक
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि :- दि 23.08.2021, (अप 05:00 बजे) तक
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :- दि 24.08.2021, (अप 02:00 बजे)

निविदा की शेष नियम एवं शर्तें यथावत् रहेंगे।

कार्यपालक अभियंता  
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In reference to this office e-tender invited previously by this office are hereby extended due to unavoidable reasons with following amendments:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (₹)	MAAT for best three years out of last five financial years (In ₹.)	Earnest Money	Cost of tender document including GST (In ₹.)
1.	Construction of 33/11 kV, 2x5 MVA Substation and its associated 33 kV L.I.L.O line (2x0.6 km.) at Vill-Satyon, Block-Lamgara, Distt. Almora including civil work on turnkey basis	4.115 Crore	6.172 Crore	8.229 Lakh	17700

Last date & time of online request for tender and submission of tender in online & offline mode: 23.08.2021 upto 17:00 hrs

Date of opening of Part-I of tender in online & offline mode: 24.08.2021 at 15:30 hrs

Other terms and conditions will remain same as per original e-tender notice. For further details, please visit our website www.uktenders.gov.in  
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## Over the borderline

A people-oriented approach facilitated by the Centre can help resolve Assam-Mizoram row

The drawing down of tensions between Assam and Mizoram, at least at the leadership level, with the respective governments announcing the withdrawal of FIRs against the Chief Minister of Assam and a Rajya Sabha MP from Mizoram, among other steps, comes as a great relief. These actions followed the deaths of six policemen and a civilian from Assam in a violent gunfight in the border town of Vairengte in Mizoram on July 26, which exacerbated an already fraught situation between the States. The retaliatory actions such as filing FIRs against prominent representatives, at a time when locals in the Barak Valley in Assam had already imposed a blockade, disallowing trucks with essential goods from entering Mizoram, seemed to indicate that the States' leaderships were throwing away their scabbards, militating against their own moves to restore calm. After all, the governments had taken the right decision to withdraw their police forces from a four-kilometre "disputed stretch" and let it be manned by central paramilitary forces till a permanent solution is found on the border question. But the "blockade" and the damage caused to the only rail line connected to Mizoram made matters tough, culminating in the Mizo Bar Association filing a PIL before the Aizawl Bench of the Gauhati High Court against the "economic blockade". The Chief Ministers now seem committed to talks, with Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma even suggesting that his government will approach the Supreme Court to find an amicable solution. Continuing talks without recriminations is the only way out to tamp down tensions between the two States.

The situation should never have come to this. What began as a conflict between residents of the States in the border area that is disputed between them, morphed into a violent battle between police, with paramilitary forces doing little to control or halt this. Their role in stopping the violence and securing the peace in the border areas between the States will now be paramount, even as the Assam government must compel residents to avoid continuing the blockade. An impartial inquiry into the sequence of events that led to the firing incident and the deaths must also be held so that such a situation does not recur. On the question of settling the borders to the satisfaction of both States, a concerted, people-oriented approach by the respective authorities with the facilitation of the Centre can strive to achieve that instead of a purely juridical approach that seeks to address this via the States' respective historical claims, a method that is used to settle sovereign claims. After all, both Assam and Mizoram are part of the Indian Union, and inter-State cooperation and cohesion are central to the sanctity of the federal system.

## Tigray's woes

Ethiopia should end the blockade

of the north and engage in talks with the TPLF

When Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent troops to Tigray, the country's northernmost region, in November 2020, he promised it would be a short campaign against the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). Seven months later, when Ethiopia declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew, Mr. Abiy was indirectly accepting defeat. Government troops are now facing serious allegations of war crimes as bodies wash up in a river in Sudan that borders Ethiopia. The federal troops had initially ousted the TPLF from Mekele, the Tigrayan capital, and established a parallel government. But the TPLF retreated to the mountains, and then struck back. In June, it recaptured Mekele, forcing the federal troops to pull back. At least in defeat, Mr. Abiy could have accepted his mistakes and sought a settlement. But instead, he announced a blockade on Tigray, with even international aid deliveries stopped. The UN says at least 3,50,000 people are facing a "severe food crisis" in the region. The TPLF says it will not stop fighting unless the government lifts the blockade and pulls back all opposing troops. The conflict has already spilled over into the Amhara and Afar regions, threatening the very regional make-up of ethnically divided Ethiopia. An influx of refugees has raised tensions with neighbouring Sudan.

Mr. Abiy, a Nobel Prize winner, went to war in Tigray as part of an ambitious plan to rewrite the country's power balance. Since Ethiopia embraced democracy in 1995, the TPLF, which led the resistance against the military dictatorship, the 'Derg', had played a key role in the ruling coalition, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Mr. Abiy, an Oromo, rose to power in 2018 amid growing ethnic tensions and protests as the EPRDF's nominee. He ended the war with Eritrea, released political prisoners and promised more freedoms. But he also moved to end the TPLF's clout in Addis Ababa, which led to a split in the EPRDF. He formed a different coalition, the Prosperity Party, and retained power, by cutting the TPLF off federal government networks. When a defiant TPLF challenged the government, he declared war on Tigray. He may have hoped that the federal troops could oust the TPLF from power and establish order quickly. But he seemed to have overlooked Ethiopia's complex history of ethnic relations and the TPLF's guerrilla warfare. The war may have helped him politically — his coalition won a huge majority in the delayed June Parliamentary elections which were held in all regions except in Tigray — but it has pushed Tigray into an endless rebellion and shaken up the country's ethnic balance. It is time for Mr. Abiy to act like a statesman. He should stop the collective punishment of the Tigrayan people, end the blockade and be ready for talks with the TPLF for a mutually agreeable cessation of all hostilities.

# A language ladder for an education roadblock

The dreams of many Indian students seeking to pursue professional courses in their mother tongue can be realised



M. VENKAIAH NAIDU

Every great change starts with a revolutionary step. The recent decision of 14 engineering colleges across eight States to offer courses in regional languages in select branches from the new academic year (<https://bit.ly/3lsPuma>) marks a historic moment in the academic landscape of the country on which rests the future of succeeding generations.

### Showing the way

On a parallel note, the decision of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), to permit B. Tech programmes in 11 native languages in tune with the New Education Policy (NEP), is a momentous one. This monumental move opens the door to a whole world of opportunities — to students of B.Tech courses, in Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Gujarati, Malayalam, Bengali, Assamese, Punjabi and Odia.

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, in his address marking the first anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP), hailed the move and pointed out that the NEP's emphasis on the mother tongue as the medium of instruction will instil confidence in students from poor, rural and tribal backgrounds. Importantly, he added that even in elementary education, the mother tongue is being promoted and referred to one of the key drivers in this regard — the Vidya Pravesh programme launched on the occasion.

These remarkable steps should be welcomed and scaled up over the next few years to ensure that the dreams of millions of students seeking to pursue professional courses in their mother tongue are realised.

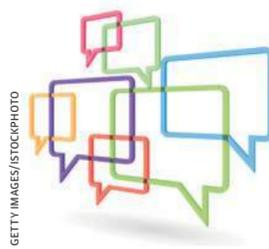
Interestingly, in a survey conducted by the AICTE in February this year, of over 83,000 students, nearly 44% students voted in favour of studying engineering in their mother tongue, underscoring a critical need in technical education.

The progressive and visionary NEP 2020 champions education in one's mother tongue right from the primary school level — improving the learning outcomes of the child and the development of his/her cognitive faculties hinge upon this.

Multiple studies have proved that children who learn in their mother tongue in their early, formative years perform better than those taught in an alien language. UNESCO and other organisations have been laying emphasis on the fact that learning in the mother tongue is germane to building self-esteem and self-identity, as also the overall development of the child. Unfortunately, some educators and parents still accord unquestioned primacy to English, and resultantly, the child's mother tongue ends up as their 'second/third language' in schools.

### There are bubbles now

It would be pertinent to recall the words of the great Indian physicist and Nobel Laureate, Sir C.V. Raman, who, demonstrating exemplary vision, observed, "We must teach science in our mother tongue. Otherwise science will become a highbrow activity. It will not be an activity in which all people can participate..." (<https://bit.ly/2VvakX6>). While our educational system has seen phenomenal growth to the extent that it offers courses of international repute in engineering, medicine, law and the humanities, we have, paradoxically, excluded our own people from accessing it. Over the years, we have ended up building academic roadblocks, impeding the progress of the vast majority of our students and remained content with creating a small bubble of English-medium universities



and colleges, while our own languages languish when it comes to technical and professional courses.

### Global practices

A cursory look at the global best practices in the medium of instruction at the level of higher education should inform us more on where we stand. Among the G20, most countries have state-of-the-art universities, with teaching being imparted in the dominant language of their people.

Take the Asian nations among them, for instance. In South Korea, nearly 70% of the universities teach in Korean, even as they aspire to play a role on the international stage. In a unique move, with the increasing craze for learning English among parents, the South Korean government, in 2018, banned the teaching of English prior to third grade in schools, since it appeared to slow pupils' proficiency in Korean.

Similarly, in Japan, a majority of university programmes are taught in Japanese; in China too, universities use Mandarin as the medium of instruction. In Europe, France and Germany offer us great insights into how nations protect their languages. France went to the extent of having a strict 'French-only' policy as the medium of instruction in schools. In Germany, while the language of instruction in schools is predominantly German, even in tertiary education, more than 80% of all masters' programmes are taught in German.

Canada showcases a sound approach to education, revealing a picture of a country with linguistic diversity. While English is the dominant medium of instruction in most provinces, in Quebec, a province with a majority French-speaking population, French is the medium of instruction in primary and secondary education in many schools, as also a number of universities.

In this global context, it is ironic that India has an overwhelming majority of professional courses being taught in English. In science, engineering, medicine and law, the situation is even bleaker, with native language courses being practically non-existent. Fortunately, we are now beginning to find our voice in our own languages.

How do we improve this grim situation? The NEP outlines the road map, demonstrating to us the means to protect our languages while improving the access and quality of our education. We must begin with imparting primary education (at least until Class 5) in the student's mother tongue, gradually scaling it up. For professional courses, while the initiative of the 14 engineering colleges is commendable, we need more such efforts all across the country. Private universities must join hands and offer a few bilingual courses to begin with.

One of the biggest bottlenecks for more students to take up higher education in the native languages is the lack of high-quality textbooks, especially in technical courses, and this needs to be addressed urgently.

### Build on these initiatives

In the digital age, technology can be suitably leveraged to increase accessibility of these Indian language courses to students in remote areas. Content in the digital learning ecosystem, still a nascent domain in our country, is greatly skewed towards English which excludes the vast majority of our children, and this has to be

corrected.

A welcome development in this regard is the collaboration between the AICTE and IIT Madras to translate SWAYAM's courses in eight regional languages such as Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam and Gujarati. This will be a major boost for engineering students and help them transition more smoothly to an English-dominated curriculum in later years. We need more such tech-led initiatives to really democratise higher education.

### Not exclusivist

Laying the stress on instruction in the mother tongue is not exclusivist in nature — as I often say, one should learn as many languages as possible, but what is required is a strong foundation in the mother tongue. In other words, what I am advocating is not a 'Mother tongue versus English', but a 'Mother tongue plus English' approach. In today's increasingly interconnected world, proficiency in different languages opens new vistas to a wider world.

Together, we must work to remove the sense of inferiority some of us display when it comes to speaking in our own languages. In the end, we must remember that if we neglect a language, not only do we lose a priceless body of knowledge but also risk depriving future generations of their cultural roots and precious social and linguistic heritage.

I hope more institutions will be encouraged and inspired in the coming years to offer courses in regional languages. India is a land of immeasurable talent. We must unlock the full potential of our youth, without letting their seeming inability to speak a foreign language impede their progress. It is against this backdrop that the decision of the 14 engineering colleges across eight States to offer courses in regional languages needs to be seen and appreciated.

M. Venkaiah Naidu is the Vice President of India

# A grand tax bargain in danger of coming apart

A Goods and Services Tax version 2.0 may have to be designed soon given the flaws in the existing structure,



SATYA MOHANTY

After four years, the promise of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) remains substantially unrealised. It is a far cry from the attempted avoidance of cascading and continues to be a not very transparent multi-rate system with associated difficulties in computing and assessing tax liability, tax burden and tax incidence. States have less headroom in handling GST collection shortfall after surrendering their fiscal autonomy. When the period of five years of compensation ends in 2022, will we see a continued flawed system or a freshly minted GST 2.0, given the asymmetry of the power equations between the States and the Centre?

The tax base of GST does not appear to be expanding as the recent uptick has reversed last month. The GST is strongly co-related to overall GDP. Revenue collection of the GST is dependent on the nominal growth rate of Gross Value Added (GVA) in the economy. Since inception, GVA per quarter has been between ₹40-lakh crore to ₹47-lakh crore and GST revenue has not been higher than ₹2.7-lakh crore to ₹3.1-lakh crore. The Tax to Gross value addition is only about 5% to 6.5% though GVA

growth was much higher. Obviously, a very large segment is covered by exemption, composition schemes, evasion and lower tax rate.

### Centre holds the cards

The fundamental weakness of the GST is its political architecture which is asymmetrically loaded in favour of the Centre. Disputes between States and between the Centre and the States are inevitable in a mosaic arrangement. But in the current structure, no particular body is tasked to adjudicate this through the original Constitution (115th Amendment) Bill 2011 (GST Bill) had a provision for such an institution. In the voting, the central government has one-third vote and States have two-thirds of total votes (with equal voting rights regardless of size and stake). With the support of a dozen small States whose total GST collection is not more than 5% of the total — and their Budget is mostly underwritten by the central government — the game is hugely in the Centre's favour. With equal value for each States' voting, larger and mid-sized States feel short-changed.

Severe fiscal strain is expected when the 14% compensation comes to an end as the median growth rate of subsumed taxes is only 11%, and in many States between 5% to 10%. The median subsumed tax buoyancy is below unity. This means with 1% growth, there will be a 0.75% growth of tax. The contraction of GST revenue



across the country means that the compensation amount will be higher and the clamour for a continuance of compensation scheme is inevitable.

### Issues with tax structure

The second problem is the design flaws in the tax structure. Nearly 45% to 50% of commodity value is outside the purview of the GST, such as petrol and petroleum products. In addition, States which export or have inter-State transfers or mineral and fossil fuel extractions are not getting revenue as the origin States and need a compensation mechanism. The pre-existing threshold level of VAT has been tweaked too often which has led to an evaporation of tax base incentivising, enabling evasion and misreporting. Most trading and retail establishments, (however small) are out of the fold of the GST. At the retail level, irrespective of whether Input Tax Credit (ITC) is required or not, the burden can be passed off to the consumer. As a result, the loss could be as high as one third.

Third, exemptions from registration and taxation of the GST

have further eroded the GST tax base compared to the tax base of the pre-existing VAT. Exemptions are purely distortionary and also provide a good chance to remain under the radar, thereby directly increasing evasion or misclassification. Theoretically, exemptions at the final stages reduce tax realisation. As multiple rates are charged at different stages, it goes against the lessons of GST history. This tax works well with a single uniform tax rate for all commodities and services at all stages, inputs and outputs alike. While most countries have a single rate, India stands out and is among the five countries to have four rates/slabs.

### Exclusion as another issue

The fourth is that of exclusion. Petroleum products remaining outside the purview of GST has helped the Centre to increase cesses and decrease central excise, in what would otherwise have been shareable with the States. Now, States will be keen on including petrol and diesel under the GST as their share of tax goes up in the process, even if there is a special rate fixed for it.

In April 2017, cess and surcharge formed 56% and 35% of the excise duty on petrol and diesel, respectively. Now, their share has increased to 91% and 85%, respectively, and the shareable central excise has reduced by ₹6.5 a litre, making it ₹2.98 for petrol and ₹4.83 for diesel. Equity requires that petrol and diesel be brought under the GST. Apart from the

complexity it creates in record keeping and 'granting ITC', in the present form it also leads to a cascading which the GST avowedly tried to avoid (<https://bit.ly/3xihYp>).

Fifth, compliance with GST return (GSTR-1) filing stipulation and the resultant tax information is not up to date. The gap in filing GSTR-1 was 33% in 2019-20 and has been increasing. As per GSTR-3B, the effective tax rate is as low as 6.5% when GSTR-1 shows an average 15% tax rate. Fraudulent claims of Input Tax Credit (ITC) because of a lack of timely reconciliation are quite high though it has come down by two thirds. Tax evasion, estimated by a National Institute of Public Finance and Policy's paper, is at least 5% in minor States and plus 3% in the major States.

These policy gaps with regard to a higher threshold (when in sales tax, it was lower) exemption level and multiple tax rates have led to a base erosion. Policy gaps along with compliance gaps do need to be addressed. Without proper tax information, infrastructure and base, the States would go in for selective tax enforcement. In the long run, voluntary compliance will suffer and equity in taxation will be violated. Finally, the grand bargain will come apart. Given all these problems, a version 2.0 of GST may have to be designed sooner rather than later.

Satya Mohanty is a former Secretary to the Government of India

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### CM's interview

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has taken an unapologetic stand on almost every issue, which is quite evident in the interview, "Not asked to move to Delhi: Yogi" and "If anyone has broken the law, my govt. has come down heavily on them" (Page 1 and Inside pages, August 4). His answers when asked about the mind-numbing spectre of bodies floating in the Ganga and the implementation of laws only make those of us who follow U.P. politics feel bad about the State's situation

under his rule. His self-righteous indignation is palpably evident across the interview.

AYYASERI RAVEENDRANATH, Aranmula, Kerala

### Answers needed

On Pegasus, one is at a loss to understand why the Opposition insists that only the Prime Minister or the Home Minister should speak for the Government while the Prime Minister and Home Minister, for reasons known to them, are silent on the issue. The Government has equal responsibility in the developments, if not more

than equal to that of the Opposition. If snooping took place, what was the Government's role? And what are the next steps to prevent such incidents? These are the questions everyone is anxious to get answers for, from the Government.

P.R.V. RAJA, Pandilam, Kerala

### Opposition unity

The recent visit of Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, to Delhi appears to have worked as a catalyst for the Congress to convene a meeting of the Opposition parties to forge

joint and coordinated action on issues plaguing the nation (Page 1, "Let's unite voice of people, Rahul tells Oppn. leaders", August 4). For the Opposition parties to respond with seriousness to invitations for such meetings, the Congress should first put its house in order and elect a new President who leads the party effectively from the front and exude confidence to mount an energetic fight for the people on the pressing issues. The Congress should realise that it has the unique distinction of being the only Opposition party

that has an all India presence. The fact is that 2024 is so near, but Delhi is far, far away.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULLI, Hyderabad

### Board results

The CBSE Class 12 and 10 results are out, with most students passing with decent grades on account of their internal assessment marks. They indeed have had a rub of the green. But

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In a report headlined "SC offers mediation in Krishna dispute" (Aug. 3, 2021) there was an incorrect reference to the Assam-Manipur violence. It was actually between Assam and Mizoram.

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at the same time, students should understand that the job market is tough and they do need to hone their skills. This would mean that they would need to attend bridge courses to ensure they are solid in the basics. Academic institutions should extend help to them in this connection.

S. RAMAKRISHNASAYEE, Chennai

# The doubted scientist and her vaccine revolution

Katalin Kariko's once-derided idea led to the genesis of two vaccines to fight COVID-19 and more



SUPARNA BANERJEE

As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is becoming increasingly apparent to every country that rapid mass vaccination is the only sure way to stop the virus in its tracks. Yet, as we debate issues like vaccine inequality and vaccine nationalism, we tend somewhat to neglect the science bit, the creation of the vaccines, which happens to be the only positive element in the discourse about the pandemic. Indeed, the speed with which the vaccines to fight COVID-19 have been invented and tested is unparalleled in the history of medical science. And one interesting fact about this stunning feat of science is that several women have led it from the front.

These women of science have emerged as role models in a field of human endeavour that is still perceived as 'masculine' and is dominated by men in leading positions. Sarah Gilbert at the University of Oxford led the creation of AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria (known in India as Covishield). In the same league we have K. Sumathy, who steered the team behind Bharat Biotech's Covaxin. Hanneke Schuitemaker, a Dutch virologist, guided the development of Janssen by Johnson & Johnson. Elena Smolyarchuk at Sechenov University led the study for Sputnik V.

## A bold idea

However, the scientist who should be feted the most for her work on developing vaccines to fight COVID-19 is Katalin Kariko, a Hungarian-origin biochemist working in the U.S. Dr. Kariko has not only led the creation of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which is one of the most effective, but in doing so, she has also invented and perfected a new technique involving a molecule called the mRNA. This has revolutionised biotechnology, paving the way for unheard-of miracles in drug development.

The mRNA (messenger-Ribonucleic Acid) is a molecule naturally manufactured by animal cells that gives signals to cells about which pro-



Katalin Kariko. ■ GETTY IMAGES

teins to make. That is, it carries to the cells vital genetic information upon which protein synthesis, one of the most critical physiological functions, thoroughly depends. Yet, no one before Dr. Kariko thought mRNA could be modified in labs to harness their code-carrying ability for triggering the manufacture of specific proteins by cells – proteins that would generate precise antibodies needed to fight particular antigens or disease-causing micro-organisms.

This idea, of tweaking the 'message' in the mRNA for customised signalling to cells, was simple and logical, like many breakthrough ideas in science. But it was also stunningly bold. In effect, Dr. Kariko was aiming to play God with a cellular function so foundational that it has always been taken for granted. Expectedly, her idea was treated by the whole scientific community in the U.S. as odd and improbable. It was repeatedly rejected by funding bodies, and Dr. Kariko struggled to get a grant or even a lab to work consistently on the mRNA.

## Two chance encounters

Yet, she held on to her idea, working on it sporadically in shared labs, while surviving on a low-end, insecure job at the University of Pennsylvania. And this – the lack of grants or

a solid professional position – meant more rejections and more isolation. Dr. Kariko was at the point of giving up when a chance encounter at a photocopy centre one morning in 1998 changed her decision. Dr. Drew Weissman, an influential biotechnologist working at UPenn, was moderately impressed by Dr. Kariko's idea and agreed to share his lab and other resources with her.

It was here that Dr. Kariko honed the technology to modify the mRNA and tested it on mice. After an initial hiccup, she was successful. The modified mRNA was able to trigger targeted protein synthesis in mice with no negative side effects. Yet – such is the hold of convention and status on the scientific establishment – there was hardly any excitement around the invention. Dr. Kariko remained where she was and what she was until another chance meeting at a conference with Uğur Şahin, the CEO of BioNTech. Dr. Kariko, an academic, became the vice-president of BioNTech RNA Pharmaceuticals, using her technology to manufacture an influenza vaccine.

And then COVID-19 hit the world. In February 2020, when the virus was still mostly confined to China, her employer seemed to sense it was going to be much worse. He and Dr. Kariko decided to start working on a

vaccine against the novel pathogen using the mRNA technology. By then BioNTech had partnered with Pfizer, and Dr. Kariko's work led to the development of their vaccine against COVID-19. Moderna later used the same technology to develop their vaccine. Thus, Dr. Kariko's once-derided idea led to the genesis of two of the most effective anti-COVID-19 vaccines, in the process establishing an epoch-making new technology in biomedicine.

## Lessons from the invention

Dr. Kariko's brilliance as an innovator underscores the point that women can be as good as men in science – a point that should have been well-established by now, but which is hardly the accepted view among people even in the Western world. Her revolutionary invention, one hopes, would go some way in negating sexist assumptions about women in science, not many of whom achieve such spectacular success but all of whom contribute to the collective endeavour of human science. Dr. Kariko's career, moreover, should have a lesson for all systems of power everywhere – that when some idea challenges the norms or conventions of a system, it is the system that needs to stretch itself in order to give it a chance. Entrenched conventionality is the bane of all human endeavours, and especially of science, which is synonymous with progress.

When Dr. Kariko was invited to a vaccination site for health workers at UPenn, in December 2020, the otherwise emotionally stable woman was moved by the sight of the big crowd waiting to get a shot of her vaccine. And when the doctors broke into spontaneous clapping as she and Dr. Weissman walked past them in a hall, she gave in and "cried a bit" in joy, she told Gina Kolata of *The New York Times*. Her life's dream, which she had been chasing since she was 22, was finally realised, and a long saga of doubt, implied insult, and unrewarded toil had come to an end. I believe Dr. Kariko deserves the Nobel Prize in Medicine for her revolutionary idea and her incredible hard work. Hers is an idea that has opened up the scope for endless possibilities in drug development.

Suparna Banerjee is an academic and commentator based in Bengal

# Clash of cultures in a federation

The homogenising tendency of the union in India and EU clashes with the particularism unique to individual states



KRISHNAN SRINIVASAN

Though probably the most equitable form of governance for multiracial, multicultural countries, there are only a few confederations in the world, such as Canada and Switzerland. India and the European Union (EU) are unions. However, India is a federation because powers are divided between the Union and the States, and the EU a supranational organisation that defies definition, with both confederal and federal aspects. It is this division of powers in India and the EU that brings the unions into conflict with their constituent parts.

## Latest controversy in the EU

The EU is variously criticised as a "political dwarf", "a hobbled giant" distracted by internal bickering and competing national agendas, and an aggregate of secondary powers in search of primary status through collective agency. Despite the EU being one of the largest economies of the world, the 27 leaders squabble over issues from fisheries to budget allocations. The union finds it easier to promote universal standards in areas like climate change and food and bio-safety than domestic values. The latest controversy with Hungary and Poland on gay and lesbian rights is a case in point. Gay marriage is not recognised by Budapest and only heterosexual couples can legally adopt children. The LGBTQ law that took effect in July outlaws information perceived as promoting homosexuality or gender change to children under 18. This led to strong criticism from 17 liberal EU nations who believe the Hungarian law undermines the principle that discrimination on the basis of sexuality, ethnicity and gender is not permissible within the union.

Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orbán has countered by proposing a national referendum on the law. He has been re-elected thrice, commands two-thirds of the legislature, and has diminished institutions designed to limit the powers of the state, such as free media, universities and an independent judiciary. Mr. Orbán also regularly frustrates EU's unity on foreign policy, such as on refugees in 2016, opposing criticism of China's actions in Hong Kong, and the call for a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. Hungary was the first EU member to accept Russian and Chinese COVID-19 vaccines before approval by the EU medicines regulator. The European Parliament voted over-

whelmingly to haul Hungary before the European Court of Justice over its LGBTQ law, and while there is an EU provision to remove voting rights from an offending country, penalties require unanimous agreement from EU states. This will never be forthcoming since Hungary and Poland support each other and the union cannot expel a member state without the unanimity requirement.

Poland's Catholic-conservative governing party takes a similar stance on LGBTQ with by-laws that have designated one-third of the nation as 'LGBT-free zones'. Budapest and Warsaw are supported by Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša, who condemns Brussels for imposing "imaginary European values" without paying heed to local tradition. All three countries' leaderships have expressed doubts, and placed restrictions, on the functioning of judicial independence.

Although none of these leaders believe they can convince their EU colleagues to follow their social policies, they do not wish to separate from the union, since EU membership is supported by a huge majority. Hungary is the second-largest net beneficiary of the EU budget, receiving €5 billion more than it contributes each year. The measures introduced by the three nations are for domestic popularity in a combined population of nearly 50 million with cultural traditions different from more liberal EU member states. The crisis represents a clash of cultures, which underlines why integration towards a closer union is unlikely to materialise.

## A fractious relationship

In India, the Centre and Opposition-controlled States have a historically fractious relationship. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1959 dislodged the Communist government in Kerala on specious grounds. Ever since, the pattern of the Union government attempting to subvert Opposition States by stimulating defections, ordering selective raids by investigative agencies, electronic surveillance, and delaying or refusing financial entitlements has become the unsavoury norm, now taken to extremes by Hindutva ideologues in control of the Centre. The tensions between New Delhi and the Opposition-led periphery are magnified by differences in values, perceived arrogance on the part of the Centre and the victimhood card played by Opposition parties. The homogenising bias of the union clashes with the particularism unique to individual States, resulting in the clash of cultures. The term 'cooperative federalism', coined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been reduced to an oxymoron.

Krishnan Srinivasan is a former Foreign Secretary

# No fundamental right to strike

Essential workers should not resort to strike

R.K. VIJ

Recently, the Minister of Defence introduced the Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021, in the Lok Sabha to provide for the maintenance of essential defence services so as "to secure the security of nation and the life and property of the public at large" and prevent staff of the government-owned ordnance factories from going on strike. The Bill seeks to empower the government to declare services mentioned in it as "essential defence services" and prohibit strikes and lockouts in any industrial establishment or unit engaged in such services. The Minister, however, assured the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) employees that their service conditions will not be affected.

## Rules and rights

This is not for the first time that strikes by government employees are being made explicitly illegal by the government. The Madhya Pradesh (and Chhattisgarh) Civil Services Rules, 1965, prohibit demonstrations and strikes by government servants and direct the competent authorities to treat the durations as unauthorised absence. A strike under this rule includes "total or partial cessation of work", a pen-down strike, a traffic jam, or any such activity resulting in cessation or retardation of work. Other States too have similar provisions.

Under Article 33 of the Constitution, Parliament, by law, can restrict or abrogate the rights of the members of the armed forces or the forces charged with the maintenance of public order so as to ensure the proper discharge of their duties and maintenance of discipline among them. Thus, for the armed forces and the police, where discipline is the most important prerequisite, even the fundamental right to form an association can be restricted under Article 19(4) in the interest of public order and other considerations.

The Supreme Court in *Delhi Police v. Union of India* (1986) upheld the restrictions to form association by the members of the non-gazetted police force after the Police Forces (Restriction of Rights) Act, 1966, and the Rules as amended by Amendment Rules, 1970, came into effect. While the right to freedom of associa-

tion is fundamental, recognition of such association is not a fundamental right. Parliament can by law regulate the working of such associations by imposing conditions and restrictions on their functions, the court held.

In *T.K. Rangarajan v. Government of Tamil Nadu* (2003), the Supreme Court held that the employees have no fundamental right to resort to strike. Further, there is prohibition to go on strike under the Tamil Nadu Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1973. Also, there is no moral or equitable justification to go on strike. The court said that government employees cannot hold the society to ransom by going on strike. In this case, about two lakh employees, who had gone on strike, were dismissed by the State government.

## Grievance redressal

A police havildar was convicted of contempt of court by the sub-divisional officer, Gaya. The Gaya police, thereupon, gave notice of strike unless redress was given to the havildar and the sub-divisional officer punished. Though an inquiry was ordered immediately, the strike commenced on March 24, 1947. When some representatives of policemen met Gandhi at Jehanabad on the March 28, he told them that their strike was ill-advised. They were not mere wage-earners but the members of an essential service. They should immediately and unconditionally call off the strike. In his speech on March 27, Gandhi said that "the police... should never go on strike. There is an essential service and they should render that service, irrespective of their pay. There were several other effective and honourable means of getting grievances redressed..."

There is no fundamental right to strike under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution. Strikes cannot be justified on any equitable ground. Strike as a weapon is mostly misused which results in chaos. Though the employees of OFB have threatened to go on strike, Parliament, which has the right to restrict even the fundamental rights of the armed forces, is well within its right to expressly prohibit resorting to strike.

R.K. Vij is a senior IPS officer in Chhattisgarh; Views are his own

## DATA POINT



# Swimming in records

In 19 instances, the Olympic records (OR) in various individual swimming events were broken at the Tokyo Olympics. In three competitions – the women's 100m backstroke, the women's 100m freestyle, and the men's 200m breaststroke – all the medalists this year broke the earlier ORs. Two new world records (WR) – one in the women's 200m breaststroke and the other in the men's 100m butterfly – were also created. Most records were broken in the shorter distance races while they remained intact in the longer distance events. By **Sumant Sen, Jasmin Nihalani and Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

■ South Africa's **Tatjana Schoenmaker** broke the WR in the women's 200m breaststroke which was previously set by Denmark's Rikke Pedersen in 2013

■ Caeleb Dressel of the U.S. improved his world record from 2019 in the men's 100m butterfly by crossing the distance in 49.45 seconds at Tokyo

■ Swimmers from Australia and the U.S. shattered four ORs each

**HOW TO READ THE CHARTS** | Each chart depicts the timing (in seconds) achieved by the Gold (X), Silver (X) and Bronze (X) medalists at the Tokyo Olympics in an individual event. The OR (X) and WR (X) timings are also depicted for comparison. One circle ● above the mark represents a new OR and two circles ●● represent a new WR

Event	Gold (X)	Silver (X)	Bronze (X)	OR (X)	WR (X)
MEN 50M FREESTYLE	21.55	21.30	21.07	20.91	
MEN 100M BACKSTROKE	52.19	52	51.98	51.85	
MEN 100M BREASTSTROKE	58.33	58.00	57.37	57.13	56.88
MEN 100M BUTTERFLY	50.74	50.39	49.68	49.45	49.5
MEN 100M FREESTYLE	47.44	47.05	47.02	46.91	
MEN 200M BACKSTROKE	114.72	114.15	113.41	113.27	111.92
MEN 200M BREASTSTROKE	127.22	127.01	126.38	126.12	
MEN 200M BUTTERFLY	114.45	113.73	112.03	111.25	110.73
MEN 200M FREESTYLE	104.66	104.22	102.96	102.00	
MEN 200M MEDLEY	116.17	115.28	115.00	114.23	114
MEN 400M FREESTYLE	223.94	223.36	220.14	220.07	
MEN 400M MEDLEY	250.28	249.42	243.84		
MEN 800M FREESTYLE	461.87	461.28	452.12		
MEN 1500M FREESTYLE	880.66	879.65	871.02		
WOMEN 50M FREESTYLE	24.21	24.07	24.05	23.81	23.67
WOMEN 100M BACKSTROKE	58.23	58.05	57.72	57.47	57.45
WOMEN 100M BREASTSTROKE	65.54	65.22	64.95	64.93	64.13
WOMEN 100M BUTTERFLY	55.72	55.64	55.59	55.48	
WOMEN 100M FREESTYLE	52.70	52.52	52.27	51.96	51.71
WOMEN 200M BACKSTROKE	126.17	125.42	124.68	124.06	123.35
WOMEN 200M BREASTSTROKE	140.84	139.92	139.59	139.11	138.95
WOMEN 200M BUTTERFLY	125.30	124.06	123.86	121.81	
WOMEN 200M FREESTYLE	114.70	113.92	113.50	112.98	
WOMEN 200M MEDLEY	129.09	128.52	126.58	126.12	
WOMEN 400M FREESTYLE	241.08	237.36	236.69	236.46	
WOMEN 400M MEDLEY	274.90	272.08	266.36		
WOMEN 800M FREESTYLE	498.35	493.83	492.57	484.79	
WOMEN 1500M FREESTYLE	941.41	937.34	935.35	920.48	

## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 5, 1971

### 77 kg. of rocks, soil from moon

Houston, August 4: Astronauts David Scott and James Irwin collected moon rocks and soil samples totalling 77 kilos – more than Irwin's own weight – according to latest calculations by the Space Agency last night. They gathered 13 kilos on the first excursion, 35 on the second and 29 on the third. These are net weights excluding the collection bags and storage boxes. Irwin weighs 72 kg., according to NASA, Scott 79, and Alfred Worden, the third crewman, 69. Other calculations by NASA showed that the lunar Rover covered a total distance of just under 24 km. on a "straight line map" basis – not counting hills and valleys. Its mileage counting odometer on the wheels recorded a distance of about 28 km. The Apollo 15 command ship to-day ejected a satellite into moon orbit for long-term study of the lunar environment. Mission Control to-day woke up the astronauts with a rousing blast from the theme music of the science-fiction film "2001", about a space odyssey of the future. "Apollo-15, good morning... this is Houston with a message from (composer) Richard Strauss, (British science fiction writer) Arthur C. Clarke and (movie producer) Stanley Kubrick", Capsule Communicator Karl Henize said at 14:30 I.S.T.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 5, 1921

### School at Palamcottah

The establishment of the Sethupathy's Deaf and Dumb School at Madura adds one more to the list of similar useful educational institutions in the Presidency. We are informed that admission in the school is open to all classes of pupils, including Panchamas, and the deserving poor are given boarding free. The management appears to be handicapped by the dearth of specially trained teachers to do work in the institution. A similar institution is doing good work at Palamcottah under the management of the Church Missionary Society. The total subvention to this school was about Rs. 8,000 before 1918 and subsequently it was increased to Rs. 21,000. It was also reported that a special class was opened in the school, with the aid of the additional subvention, for the training of teachers. The first batch began their training course in 1918 and completed it in 1920. A special Board of Specialists was appointed to examine them and in the first examination 9 out of 10 candidates passed. It is really creditable that the school at Palamcottah has produced such excellent results.

FROM PAGE ONE

## Oppn. rejects offer to discuss farmer protests

The Opposition, though it has asked for a debate on three key issues – Pegasus, farmers' agitation and frequent fuel hikes, asserted that the snooping issue took precedence over the other two topics.

TMC MPs immediately rushed into the well, holding placards. The members have been holding placards since the beginning of the session. The placards are in all major Indian languages – Hindi, Bangla, Marathi, Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Urdu and English.

### 6 TMC MPs suspended

On Wednesday, Mr. Naidu took exception to the placards and suspended six of the 12 TMC members - Dola Sen, Arpita Ghosh, Nadimul Haque, Mausam Noor, Shanta Chhetri and Abir Ranjan Biswas for the day. The House was adjourned till 2 p.m.

After this adjournment, Mr. Naidu met Opposition leaders and Leader of the House Piyush Goyal along with other BJP MPs, both individually and in groups. Sources said he urged the leaders to ensure the return

of normalcy in the House after 12 days of continued disruptions. He also voiced concern expressed by the BJD, YSR Congress and other parties who have not been participating in the Opposition protest.

The Opposition leaders too held a meeting at Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge's office in Parliament. It was attended by NCP leader Sharad Pawar, Congress floor leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Rajya Sabha Chief Whip Jairam Ramesh, DMK Lok Sabha leaders T.R. Baalu and Tiruchi Siva, TMC leaders Derek O'Brien and Kalyan Banerjee.

Sources said Mr. Pawar forcefully argued that there would be no change in the Opposition's stance. Mr. Baalu went on to say that there was no reason to hold the meeting since everyone agreed to this. The sources said that Mr. Ramgopal Yadav, Mr. Kareem and Mr. Gupta, whose notices on a discussion of the farmers issue was admitted in the Rajya Sabha, also extended their support to the Opposition's stand on Pegasus.

## Efforts to track emerging COVID-19 variants shrink

However, INSACOG data visible on a website maintained by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, one of the key INSACOG labs, shows 49,770 genomes as having been analysed and assigned to 232 lineages. These numbers include genomes sequenced by Kerala and Maharashtra, which have their own genome surveillance programmes. In absolute numbers, Maharashtra accounts for a fifth of the national genomes surveyed and Kerala about a tenth.

Renu Swarup, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, which coordinates INSACOG, said that the numbers available on the public website weren't the latest for June and July. "This is not the complete data for June or July. So this gives you data only of sequences analysed and this is not real-time. We now have a real-time portal and soon its link will be available," she told *The Hindu*.

A scientist from one of the INSACOG labs said that there was always a lag in when the samples from a region, from any month, were analysed, and that there would be an increase in July samples in the coming weeks. However, there are challenges in the programme. The INSACOG initiative was originally planned for three months, and because the project has only recently been extended, the funds available to labs for carrying out sequencing were delayed. The

other reason, this source said, was that many States were not sending samples: "The National Centre for Disease Control has specified that at least 300 samples should be sent from each State per month. Very few States are actually complying with this directive."

The Health Ministry said in the Lok Sabha last week that the existing guidelines were to sequence 15 samples from every sentinel site in every 15 days from each State so that districts are represented from an epidemiological point of view. Every State is expected to have 10 such sentinel sites, which are notified laboratories and tertiary care hospitals. "This is a more diverse sampling strategy as against a random 5% sample sequencing," the Ministry noted. The INSACOG database has the contribution of 28 States and Union Territories. Thus, ideally, there ought to be 8,400 samples a month, which as the numbers for June and July suggest, are far below the requirement.

The dominant variant across India continues to be the Delta variant but limited sequencing means that it will be impossible to track if new variants may be driving surges. Currently, Kerala reports about half the daily caseload, and rising trajectories are seen in several northeastern States.

Though July has the least number of samples, the proportion of Delta variant samples has fallen to 73% from being over 85% of the samples in May and June.

## CJI recuses himself from Andhra-Telangana case

A.P., in the petition filed through counsel Mahfooz A. Nazki, accused Telangana of refusing to follow the decisions taken on river water management in the Apex Council constituted under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act of 2014. It said its neighbour also ignored the directions of the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), constituted under the 2014 Act and directions of the Centre.

"Fundamental rights, including right to life of its citizens, are being seriously impaired and infringed on account of unconstitutional, illegal and unjust acts on the part of the State of Telangana and its officials, resulting in the citizens of the State of Andhra Pradesh being de-

prived of their legitimate share of water for drinking and irrigation purposes," the plea said.

The focus of the petition is a Telangana Government Order (G.O.) of June 28 that said, "To tap more hydel generation in the State, the government has taken a decision to generate hydel power up to 100% installed capacity". A.P. said the G.O. was issued only days after the Ministry of Jal Shakti, in a communication on June 17 to Director (Hydel), TSGENCO, urged the latter "to stop further release of water immediately through Srisailem Left Power House and follow the water release orders issued by KRMB, except in case of extreme grid urgency".

# Air Quality Commission Bill for National Capital Region cleared

It has a full time chairperson, will have the final say on policy to address problem

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Bill to formalise the Commission for Air Quality Management For National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas. The body has a full time chairperson and a range of members consisting of both representatives from several Ministries as well as independent experts and will have the final say on evolving policy and issuing directions to address air pollution in Delhi and the adjoining regions.

The Centre, facing flak earlier this year from farmers protesting the farm laws, had committed to removing a clause in the Air Commission Bill that would penalise farmers for burning stubble, an important contributor to noxious air quality. The text of the Bill does away with this clause.

The body first came into



**Cause for concern:** A file photo of motorists moving through smog due to increased pollution in parts of Delhi.

being in October, 2020 on the back of an ordinance – a temporary measure – and the law requires that a formal Bill be presented to Parliament within six weeks of it reconvening – in this case – January 29 when the Budget Session began. Before a Bill is tabled in Parliament, it needs to be approved by the Union Cabinet. However, in spite of several Cabinet meetings since January, it wasn't taken up for discussion due to which, the te-

nure of the body expired, without ever making it to Parliament.

As *The Hindu* had reported in March, members who were part of the Commission said they were taken aback by the sudden dissolution of the body. The dissolution happened despite the nodal Union Environment Ministry submitting the paper work to the Union Cabinet Secretariat, required to give legal backing to the Commission. The Commission was re-

vived on April 13 after another ordinance was promulgated by the President.

The Centre had said the new organisation would be a 'permanent' body to address pollution in the National Capital Region Delhi and address sources of pollution in Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The all-powerful body assumed several powers to coordinate action among States, levy fines – ranging up to ₹1 crore or five years of prison – to address air pollution.

While the Central Pollution Control Board and its State Branches have the powers to implement provisions of the Environment Protection Act for air, water and land pollution, in case of dispute or a clash of jurisdictions, the Commission's writ would prevail specific to matters concerning air pollution.

## Govt. establishing a new normal: Chowdhury

Objects to passing Bills amid din

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Wednesday accused the government of establishing a "new normal" with regard to passage of Bills. The Bills that were passed with a voice vote include the Commission for the Management of Air Quality in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas, 2021 and the Coconut Development Board Amendment Bill, 2021.

When Mr. Chowdhury objected to the passing of Bills in the din and called it a "new normal", Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Meghwal hit

back and accused the Opposition of stalling Parliament. Mr. Meghwal said the government was ready to debate important issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., the House was adjourned thrice before the Bill on air quality was passed, and then got adjourned again until 3.30 p.m. When the House reassembled, BJP MP Rajendra Agrawal, who was presiding, asked Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar to move the Coconut Development Board Amendment Bill and it was passed.

## 'Twitter violated principle of natural justice'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The government on Wednesday said that the labelling of tweets as "manipulated media" by Twitter does not come under the purview of the new IT Rules. However, the U.S.-headquartered microblogging platform has been told that by doing so it violates "the principle of natural justice".

In May this year, the government had asked Twitter to remove the "manipulated media" tag from certain tweets by some Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders, including the party's national spokesperson Sambit Patra, related to a "Congress toolkit" allegedly used to defame the government's efforts related to COVID-19.

### Fairness and equity

The government had reasoned that "the tags affixed prejudicially" should be removed in the interests of fairness and equity, and that investigation by law enforcement agencies would determine the veracity of the content.

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha: "The issue of labelling of user tweets as manipulated media does not come under the purview of the above said Rules. Further, on the issue of manipulated media, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has pointed out to Twitter that they are violating the principle of natural justice and urged Twitter to be transparent and equitable in applying the criteria."

## Nod for continuation of Fast Track Special Courts

It involves an outlay of ₹1,572.86 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Cabinet on Wednesday approved the continuation of 1,023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for another two years, at an outlay of ₹1,572.86 crore.

The Centre's share of ₹971.70 crore will come from the Nirbhaya Fund.

Since October 2019, the Department of Justice of the Ministry of Law and Justice has been implementing the Centrally sponsored scheme for expeditious trial and disposal of pending cases of rape and offences against children under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012.

The scheme includes 389 FTSCs exclusively for POCSO cases.

Each FTSC is expected to dispose of 41-42 cases in each quarter and at least 165 cases in a year.

At the time the scheme was launched, the government had set a target of disposing of 1,66,882 cases of rape and POCSO Act cases pending trial in various courts.

Earlier this year, a Parliamentary panel on Home Affairs had noted that only 597 fast track courts out of the total 1,023 had been set up in the country and expressed its concern at the delay in implementing the scheme.

## NGOs, trusts, memorials owe ₹1.4 crore for office space: Puri

'Since allotments, the nine organisations have paid ₹3.79 cr'

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

Nine NGOs, trusts, memorials and social organisations had been allotted office space in Lutyens' Delhi and they had ₹1.40 crore in dues as on June 30, Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Mr. Puri's written reply to a question from the BJP's Vinay Sahasrabudhe said space had been allotted to the nine organisations within the limits of the New Delhi Municipal Council. "The payment of rent is regularly monitored through the website of Directorate of Estates," the reply read. As of June 30, ₹3.79 crore had

been received from the organisations from the time of their allotments. "Notices have been issued to the organisations whose rents are due."

The Ministry's data showed that ₹64.76 lakhs was pending from the Mahila Dakshta Samiti for its premises in Kidwai Nagar, ₹32.80 lakh from the Fakhruddin Ali Memorial Committee for the allotment at the hutments on Dalhousie Road, ₹30.30 lakh from the Indian Womens Press Corp (IWPC) at Windsor Place and ₹11.06 lakh from the Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation. The Babu Jagjivan Ram National Foundation and the Lal Ba-

hadur Shastri Memorial owed ₹1.50 lakh and ₹18,440 respectively.

The Bahajun Prerna Trust, the Foreign Correspondents Club and the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust had been allotted space and had no dues, the reply said.

The allotments for the IWPC and the FCC ended on January 6, 2021, and for the Mahila Dakshta Samiti on December 31, 2018, according to the reply.

IWPC president Vineeta Pandey said a notice was received on Wednesday and it was the first time such a notice was sent to it.

FCC president Munish Gupta said it had applied for renewal.

## In about one hour, RS passes 3 Bills

Row over Pegasus, farm laws continues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday passed three Bills in about one hour, while the Opposition continued its protest against the government on the Pegasus spyware issue and demanded the repeal of the three farm laws.

The Bills were introduced, discussed and passed amid din. The House was also adjourned for 15 minutes in that time. Asked to speak on the Bills, many of the Opposition MPs chose to raise the issues they have been protesting over, leading to the chair cutting them short.

The Limited Liability Partnership (Amendment) Bill 2021, which seeks to encourage the start-up ecosystem and further boost ease of doing business, was cleared. The Bill was passed in 20 minutes with neither the speeches of the members nor the reply by Fi-

nance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman clearly audible. Demands for a division were ignored as Deputy Chairman Harivansh said the House was not in order.

Sujeet Kumar (BJD), Kanakamela Ravindra Kumar (TDP) and M. Thambidurai (AIADMK) spoke briefly in support of the Bill.

The Rajya Sabha also passed the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 after a brief discussion, amid disruptions from the Opposition. Ms. Sitharaman said it was in the interest of small depositors.

The House also passed the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which would change the definition of "major airport" and allow the government to club together smaller airports. Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said the Bill would include airports in smaller cities.

On the draw



## 'EC proposal to link electoral roll with Aadhaar under study'

To avoid multiple enrolment of same person: Kiren Rijju

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The proposal of the Election Commission of India to link the electoral roll with the Aadhaar ecosystem in order to check multiple enrolment of the same person is under consideration of the government, Law Minister Kiren Rijju informed the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Responding to a question on electoral reforms, the Law Minister, in a written reply, said the Law Commission in its 244th and 255th reports had extensively dealt with the subject.

"The Election Commission of India has proposed to



Kiren Rijju

link the electoral roll with the Aadhaar ecosystem with a view to curbing the menace of multiple enrolment of the same person at different places. The matter is under consideration of the

government," he said to a specific question.

The Minister also answered separate questions on the pendency of cases and the advice given to government departments that are engaged in a number of litigations.

Talking about pendency of cases, the Minister said according to the information available on National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), over 3.93 crore cases were pending in the lower and subordinate courts as of July 30 this year.

"No time frame has been prescribed for disposal of various kinds of cases by the respective courts," he said.

## Suspended TMC MPs try to enter RS

Security officer hurt in scuffle

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary security officer suffered minor injuries on Wednesday in a scuffle with suspended Trinamool Congress members who tried to enter the Rajya Sabha chamber after the House was adjourned at 3.15 p.m.

The six MPs, who were suspended on Wednesday, continued to raise anti-government slogans standing outside the Rajya Sabha chamber surrounded by the security personnel who were preventing them from entering the House.

Things came to a head after the House was adjourned at 3.15 p.m. Four of the six members tried to enter the chamber. MP Arpita

Ghosh, sources said, in the melee ended up breaking the glass door of the chamber. The glass splinters hit a security officer in her neck causing minor abrasions.

"After the House was adjourned for the day, 4 of us 6 Trinamool MPs who were suspended for the day, tried to enter Rajya Sabha. We were prevented from doing so. Our suspension was over once the House was adjourned for the day. Why were we stopped? Democracy hits new low #Parliament," TMC MP Dola Sen tweeted.

Sources said the security officers were asked to submit a report to Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu for further action.

# 2 years on as U.T., Kashmir militancy yet to wane

Fears grow that a Taliban comeback in Afghanistan may raise ability to strike

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

As Jammu and Kashmir completes two years as a Union Territory, militancy remains a major challenge to the security apparatus amid growing fears that the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan is likely to increase the striking capabilities of militant outfits, especially the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM).

Official data accessed by *The Hindu* suggested that J&K saw 82 militant recruitments in the first seven

months, with the JeM's focus growing on capital Srinagar, where it managed local recruits around three or four. Earlier, the JeM would focus on the Pulwama-Awantipora-Tral belt in south Kashmir. In 2020, 163 locals were recruited into the militant ranks.

"JeM's strength in J&K is 44, including 10 locals and 34 foreigners. We managed to kill seven JeM terrorists so far, including two foreigners and five locals. JeM No.1 and No. 2 were killed recently," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar told *The Hindu*.



**Violence continues:** A house that was damaged during a gunfight between security forces and militants in Pulwama.

Though more than 60% recruits hail from districts in south Kashmir, there is growing recruitment in Srinagar, where the frequency of militant attacks saw a major spur this year, and in north Kashmir as well.

In a sustained pressure

maintained by the security agencies by launching multiple anti-militancy operations every day, at least 89 militants were killed so far, including the top brass of most of the militant outfits operating in the Valley.

In July, 31 militants were

killed in 15 encounters.

However, a fresh list of 10 local militants released by the police again highlighted that local militants continue to command and control outfits such as the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the The Resistance Front (TRF) in the Valley.

The wanted list included Hizb chief Ferooz Nali, LeT chief Riyaz Ahmad Dar and TRF chief Abbas Sheikh.

According to the police record, Sheikh, a resident of Rampora Qaimoh in Kulgam, is the 'operational chief commander' of the TRF and is involved in more than 30 FIRs. "Sheikh is a recycled terrorist," a police report said. A

recycled militant is one who is arrested for his activities and jailed, but rejoins the militant ranks after his release.

Meanwhile, multiple security agencies are working on an on-ground assessment of the likely fallout of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. A police officer suggested fears were growing within the security apparatus over the JeM and the HuM augmenting their striking capabilities.

"Both the outfits are known for attacks in Kashmir. They have their cadres fighting along with Taliban. If the Taliban takes over Kabul, the fallout is likely to grow starker," he added.

## 'Past two years saw people silenced, losing their jobs'

Tarigami says BJP's 'Naya Kashmir' slogan 'is a joke now'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR



M.Y. Tarigami

The People's Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration, an amalgam of five Jammu and Kashmir parties, including the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party, on Wednesday said the past two years saw "people divided into smaller units, silenced, ripped off their jobs and rights over the natural resources".

In a statement issued on the eve of the second anniversary of the reading down

of Article 370 that gave special status to J&K, Gupkar alliance spokesman M.Y. Tarigami said, "Unconscionable suppression of civil and democratic rights continues

unabated, indiscriminate arrests and harassment of all sections of our people, including employees on different pretexts continues. An 'adverse police report' cannot be a substitute for being found guilty in a court of law. This amounts to violation of the most sacred principles of the justice system".

Mr. Tarigami said the BJP's 'Naya Kashmir' slogan "is a joke now". "By demolishing the Constitution of J&K, it had crossed all the limits of constitutionality.

## J&K rights abuse will go on till elected government is in place

Report comes a day ahead of J&K completing 2 years as U.T.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

In their latest report, former Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B. Lokur and former Kashmir interlocutor Radha Kumar, who head the Forum for Human Rights in J&K, have warned that "human rights abuses will continue unchecked till J&K remains under a Lieutenant-Governor administration and without an elected government".

The report said, "Most of the rights violations, includ-

ing arbitrary detentions, prohibition on Assembly, remain valid still. Close to 1,000 people are still in prison, including minors and elected legislators. The J&K administration added a new vigilantism against government employees, whose social media content is now subject to police scrutiny for 'anti-national activities', potentially leading to dismissal. Eighteen government employees have already been dismissed".

The report was released a

day ahead of J&K completing two years as a Union Territory. The report suggested that the June 24 meeting between J&K leaders and Prime Minister Narendra Modi "raised hopes".

"The PM's offer, however, fell far short of expectations," it said. It pointed out that the ceasefire agreement between Indian and Pakistani Directors-General of Military Operations "restricted the infiltration by armed groups and raised hopes of a peace process".

## Assam CM's 'expansionist' tendencies cause of clashes: MP

The State is illegally occupying more than 509 sq miles of Mizo territory, says K. Vanlalvena

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

Assam is illegally occupying more than 509 sq. miles of the Mizo territory, Mizo National Front (MNF) Rajya Sabha member K. Vanlalvena said in an interview with *The Hindu*. He blamed Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's "expansionist" tendencies for the recent flare-up between Mizoram

and Assam. On July 26, an exchange of fire between the police forces of both the States left six Assam policemen and a civilian dead, and 60 injured. Assam claimed that the firing was one-sided and unprovoked, while Mizoram said they had retaliated to the aggression by the Assam police.

Mr. Vanlalvena was booked by the Assam police

for his public comments on the clashes, where he said the Mizoram police should have "killed them all". The case has been withdrawn now as the two sides are trying to work out a peace deal.

The MNF government in Mizoram is backed by the BJP. When asked if the BJP was responsible for this recent flare-up, Mr. Vanlalvena said, "I cannot pin the blame

on any one party. I think we have reached this situation because of the uncontrolled influx of the Bangladeshis. The population of 'infiltrators' is now 60% in Assam".

The July 26 clashes, Mr. Vanlalvena said, had been in the making for the last several months. He said the Assam police made several "incursions" into the Mizo Territory. In total, he said, 509 sq.

miles of Mizo area had been captured by Assam. "This is part of the expansion policy of the newly elected Assam CM. During the recent campaign for Assembly election, he had promised to provide land to rehabilitate the Bangladeshi immigrants. And since he cannot accommodate them in his State, he wants to expand further into our territory," he said.

## Assam, Mizoram Ministers to discuss boundary conflict

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Ministers of Assam and Mizoram are scheduled to meet in Mizoram capital Aizawl on Thursday for resolving the inter-State boundary conflict that claimed seven lives on July 26 and led to an "economic blockade" by locals in Assam.

While Assam has nomi-

nated Ministers Atul Bora and Ashok Singhal for the meeting, Mizoram has not named its representatives.

"Two of my senior colleagues... will visit Aizawl tomorrow (August 5) with message of peace from people of Assam," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma tweeted on Thursday.

His Mizoram counterpart

Zoramthanga responded by tweeting, "I am sure important steps will be achieved for the solution of the border problem."

The messages from the two Chief Ministers coincided with a heated exchange between the ruling and Opposition members of the Assam Assembly over the boundary clash.

## HC order to PIL litigant to deposit ₹3.9 cr. harsh: SC

It asks Bombay HC to take up petition

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has said it was "rather harsh" of the Bombay High Court to direct a PIL litigant to deposit ₹3.9 crore to prove his *bona fide*.

A Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah agreed with the petitioner that it would be an "unbearable burden" to pay such a huge amount as costs for instituting a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition.

The petitioner in question here is Arvind Tukaram Shinde, a corporator with the Pune Municipal Corporation. He had filed a PIL plea in the Bombay High Court against a ₹390-crore sewage treatment plant project. On June 30, the High Court ordered him to deposit one per cent of the pro-

ject cost by July 5. Mr. Shinde, represented by advocates Vipin Nair, P.B. Suresh and Karthik Jayashankar, moved the top court saying that the High Court order "effectively prevents him from pursuing the PIL in court".

On July 19, the top court reduced the amount of the court deposit to ₹10 lakh to prove his *bona fide*. Taking up the case again on Tuesday, the court recorded that Mr. Shinde had paid the amount.

"We are of the view that the order for deposit of 1% of the project cost would be rather harsh," the apex court said in its order on Tuesday.

Setting aside the June 30 order, the Bench asked the High Court to take up Mr. Shinde's PIL petition.

## CBI takes over probe into Dhanbad judge's death

Uttam Anand was hit by an auto

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday took over the probe into the death of additional district and sessions judge Uttam Anand in Jharkhand's Dhanbad last week.

The agency has re-registered the First Information Report on a reference from the Jharkhand government and a further notification by the Central government. The case was earlier institut-

ed by the Dhanbad police on a complaint lodged by the judge's wife.

The judge died of a head injury after he was hit by an autorickshaw while he was on a morning jog on July 28. The incident was captured on a closed-circuit television camera. The CCTV footage raised suspicion of foul play.

The local police soon arrested two persons, Lakhan Kumar Verma and Rahul Verma, and seized the vehicle.

**Infrastructure Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Ltd.**  
# RC.No.254/2, 4th Floor, AVSR Bhavan, Kanuru, Vijayawada-520007, A.P. India.  
Under the Control of Infrastructure & Investment Dept., GoAP

**SELECTION OF RETAINER CONSULTANT FOR PROVIDING SERVICES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS IDENTIFIED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH**

**Notice No. INCAP/P/Retainer Consultant/02/2021, Dt.05.08.2021**  
Infrastructure Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Ltd. (INCAP) invites Proposals from reputed Consultancy firms for the captioned assignment. Interested consultancy firms may download the Request for Proposal (RFP) document from the website of INCAP at [www.incap.co.in](http://www.incap.co.in) on 05.08.2021, 11:00 AM onwards. The last date for submission of the proposals is on or before 15:00 hours IST on 25.08.2021.

All other details including any date extensions, clarifications, amendments, corrigenda, etc., will be uploaded only to the website of INCAP and will not be published in newspapers. Hence, Applicants may regularly visit the website of INCAP to keep themselves updated.

**Sd/- Vice Chairman & Managing Director**

Note: Expression of Interest is also invited for establishing Flight Training Organization (FTO) in the state of Andhra Pradesh from the interested Consultants. For details please visit INCAP website [www.incap.co.in](http://www.incap.co.in) For any clarifications please send e-mail to: [incapap@incap.co.in](mailto:incapap@incap.co.in)

DIPR 311FP/CL, Dt: 04-08-2021

**AJMER VIDYUT VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
(Turn-Key Works Circle)  
Corporate Identification Number (CIN) - U40109RJ2005SG0016482  
Regd. Off.: Vidyut Bhawan, Panchsheel Nagar, Makarwall Road, Ajmer-305004  
Phone & Fax: 0145-2644507, Email: [setsayvnl@gmail.com](mailto:setsayvnl@gmail.com)  
Website - [www.avvnl.com](http://www.avvnl.com)

**No. AVVNLSE(TW)/XEN (TW-4)/NIT/TN-404-D, 646 Dt. 30-07-2021**  
E Bids in two parts (Techno Commercial bid and Price Bid) are invited from eligible contractors for tenders enquiry under TN-404 for Ajmer Discom.

**NIT No. AJD/SE/TW/TN- 404** For supply and erection work of new lighting fixtures, LED, Spare, wire etc. including replacement of all defective spares, wire, fixtures & Lamps for 1500 Nos. 33/11 KV GSS with 5 year warranty period under domain of AVVNL. All the details regarding tender is available at our website [www.avvnl.com](http://www.avvnl.com) and [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in). In future corrigendum/extension, if any shall be published only at website [www.avvnl.com](http://www.avvnl.com) and [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in).

**UBN NO. AVV2122SLOB00008**  
Raj.Samwad/C/21/4290 Superintending Engineer (TW) AVVNL, Ajmer

**Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma and Orthopaedics**  
(Government of Karnataka Autonomous Institute)  
Byrasandra, Jayanagar East, Bengaluru - 560 011 Ph: 080-26564516, 26562500 Grams: SITO Fax: 26565222 E-mail: [sitodirector@gmail.com](mailto:sitodirector@gmail.com)  
No. SGITO/e-Tender/Software/34/2021-22 Date: 04.08.2021

**SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement)**

Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma & Orthopaedics, Byrasandra, Jayanagar East, Bangalore - 11 invites tender from eligible tenderers through the e-procurement portal of GOK for-  
**Design, Development and Implementation of Hospital information through Software System.**

(1) The Tenderers can download the documents from: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> on or after 05.08.2021 and the last date for submission of completed tenders through e-portal is 21.08.2021 upto 4.00 PM.

(2) The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to accept / reject or cancel tender without assigning any reason thereof.

**Sd/-**  
**Chief Administrative Officer,**  
**Tender Inviting Authority**

DIPR/1046/2021-22

**Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Byatarayanapura Division, No.2152/20, Defence Colony, BWSSB Tank Road, Sahakarnagara, BBMP Office, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru-92.  
No.: EE/BTP/BBMP/E-PMT/05/2021-22 Date: 04-08-2021

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) (TWO COVER SYSTEM)**  
(Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only)

Tender for the following works on item rate basis are invited as Standard Bid Documents KW-1/2/3 & 4 by the Executive Engineer, Byatarayanapura Division, invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike / KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES / any State or Organization for the following work:

Sl. No.	Name of the Work & Category	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs)
1)	Improvements to Balance Roads and Drains at Bhuvaneshwari Nagar and Maruthi Layout of Dasarahalli Village surrounding area in ward No.06 Thanisandra. (Others)	200.00

**Calendar of events: 1) Pre-Bid meeting will be held on 11-08-2021 upto 3:00 p.m. 2) Last date for uploading the filled tender documents: 16-08-2021 upto 4:00 p.m. 3) Technical Bids will be Opened: 17-08-2021 at 4.05 p.m. if possible. 4) Date of Opening of Financial bid is on: 19-08-2021 at 11.00 a.m. if possible (For Two cover system). Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days and Website: <http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>**

**Sd/-, Executive Engineer, Byatarayanapura Division, BBMP.**

**HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APATHMITRA ON 14410**

Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene

**राज्य स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण, उत्तराखण्ड**  
कोटि नं 0 ए 1, आर्द्र-पीपलक, सार्वजनिक रोड, देहरादून  
ई-मेल: [ceo-shauk@uk.gov.in](mailto:ceo-shauk@uk.gov.in)

Letter No SHAUK/2021-22/ Quality Improvement and Accreditation/1005 Dated : 04 August, 21

**ई- प्रोक्योरमेंट निविदा सूचना, उत्तराखण्ड सरकार**

1. कार्य का नाम:- राज्य स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण के अन्तर्गत Set-up integrated PMU for carrying out Gap analysis for Quality Improvement and Accreditation of Government Hospitals, in the State of Uttarakhand के सम्बन्ध में।

2. निविदा प्रपत्र पोर्टल में उपलब्ध होने की तिथि एवं समय- दिनांक 04.08.2021 सांघ 6:00 बजे।

3. पोर्टल से निविदा प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय- दिनांक 27.08.2021 सांघ 5:00 बजे।

4. निविदा आमंत्रित किये जाने वाले अधिकारी का नाम एवं पता- मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी, राज्य स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकरण, उत्तराखण्ड, देहरादून।

5. इस सम्बन्ध में किसी भी प्रकार के परिशिष्ट/संशोधन/ निरस्तीकरण आदि की सूचना वेबसाइट <http://uktenders.gov.in> से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

6. पोर्टल रजिस्ट्रेशन - समस्त इच्छुक निविदादाताओं को निविदा में प्रतिभाग करना चाहते हैं वे पोर्टल में रजिस्ट्रेशन करने हेतु अपने पास वैध व्यक्तिगत/कार्यालय के ई-मेल को अपना login id बनाकर अपने वैध Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) का उपयोग कर उसे unique login id बना सकते हैं।

7. किसी अन्य जानकारी के लिए निविदादाताओं से आग्रह है कि वे E-mail ID - [ceo-shauk@uk.gov.in](mailto:ceo-shauk@uk.gov.in) द्वारा जानकारी/समर्क कर सकते हैं।

**मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी**

**भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान मोहाली**  
(विज्ञान नवाचार्य आरंभ सरकार द्वारा स्थापित)  
सेक्टर 81, नॉबेज सिटी, पी.ओ.मनोली, एच.ए.ए. नगर, मोहाली (पंजाब) - 140306.  
**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH MOHALI**  
(Estd. by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)  
Sector-81, Knowledge City, PO-Manauli, S.A.S. Nagar, Mohali (Punjab)-140306.  
website वेबसाइट : [www.iiser Mohali.ac.in](http://www.iiser Mohali.ac.in)

**Cancellation Notice** Date : 04.08.2021  
(In respect of Advt. No. NF(1)/2021 dated 10.04.2021)  
Due to some administrative reasons, the institute has decided not to fill the following positions:-  
1) Scientific Officer 2) Library Information Assistant 3) Attendant  
The applicants who had applied for these posts and deposited application fee are required to fill details in the following link for refund of fee : <https://forms.gle/deEKyPMG8sChSha9> Registrar, IISER Mohali

**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	08	1

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit website, [www.tangedco.gov.in](http://www.tangedco.gov.in), [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in), [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in) / [www.nicgeppapp](http://www.nicgeppapp)

DIPR / 2299 / Tender / 2021

**NMDC Limited**  
(A Government of India Enterprise)  
"Khanji Bhavan", 10-3-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028  
email - [bnkumar@nmdc.co.in](mailto:bnkumar@nmdc.co.in), [nvyadagiri@nmdc.co.in](mailto:nvyadagiri@nmdc.co.in) CIN:L13100TG1958G0016474

**Open Tender Notice** Dt.05.08.2021  
Tenders are invited from reputed manufacturers directly or through their accredited agents in India for supply of following Spares to NMDC Limited, Pellet Plant, Ranjapur, Donimalai, Bellary District, Karnataka as per the details furnished in the tender document.

Description	Qty	Display & Sale of Tender Documents	Last date & Time for submission of offer	Tender fee in Rs.
Supply of Spares for Whims & Spires	06 Items	05.08.2021 TO 02.09.2021	02.09.2021 By 02.30 PM (IST)	Rs.5,900 ind GST

The detailed information of the tenders can be obtained from our websites under e-procurement section [www.nmdc.co.in](http://www.nmdc.co.in) ; [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in) and [www.mstccommerce.com/leprochome/nmdc](http://www.mstccommerce.com/leprochome/nmdc) of MSTC Ltd. Any Corrigendum to the above Tender Notice will be uploaded only on our website [www.nmdc.co.in](http://www.nmdc.co.in) & [www.mstccommerce.com/leprochome/nmdc](http://www.mstccommerce.com/leprochome/nmdc) and will not be published. Prospective bidders should visit the above websites from time to time to note the corrigendum, if any.  
**Chief General Manager (Materials)**

**KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-TENDER**

**ABRIDGED NIT**

**C-CMP (Supply), KMC invites tender online in two bid system for the following work :**

**E-NIT No. : KMC/C-ICMP(S)/19/A372/2021-2022**

**Name of the work : Procurement of raw materials for fabrications of 20 numbers of sprayer machines mounted on tri-cycle van; Estimated Cost : ₹ 9,02,000.00; Earnest Money : ₹ 18,040.00; Last date and time of submission of bid: 18.08.2021 up to 02.00 p.m.; The tender will be opened on: 20.08.2021 at 02.00 p.m.; The bid forms and other details are available on and from 06.08.2021 after 01.00 p.m. from the website [wbtenders.gov.in](http://wbtenders.gov.in) (298/21-22)**

# 50% funds allotted for ongoing MPLADS projects lapse

Parliamentary panel calls it a 'serious lapse with negative consequences'

**VIKAS DHOOT**  
NEW DELHI

Virtually half of the belated ₹2,200 crore allotted for completing the ongoing MPLADS projects in 2020-21 simply lapsed, as the Finance Ministry granted "barely a week" to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) to release the funds — inviting the ire of the Standing Committee on Finance.

The resultant funding crunch would have hit several local area development projects under implementation across the country, especially in the five States that went to polls this year as no funds were released for these States and constituencies citing the model code of

conduct (MCC).

Spending under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) had already halved before the government suspended the scheme for two years in April last year and diverted the funds for managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

From ₹5,012 crore spent during 2018-19, an expenditure of just ₹2,491.45 crore was taken up under the scheme in 2019-20.

**Unfinished projects**

Each MP is granted ₹5 crore under the scheme, adding up to ₹3,950 crore a year for 790 MPs, to undertake development projects in their respective constituencies. After

**Dire straits**

Spending under MPLADS had already halved before the government suspended the scheme for two years on April 6, 2020 and diverted the funds to manage COVID-19

- On March 16, 2021, the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) seeks funds to finish ongoing MPLADS projects. Department of Expenditure allots ₹2,200 crore on the same day
- On March 22, the amount was transferred to Statistics Ministry with a caveat that it be exhausted by March 31
- ₹1,107.5 crore utilised till March 31; balance of ₹1,092.5 crore lapses

**Unable to comprehend why ₹2,200 crore was allotted barely one week before the end of FY 2020-21**

SCF REPORT

the scheme's suspension, several MPs and parliamentary committees, including the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF), had asked the government to release MPLADS funds due from previous years for projects already sanctioned.

On March 16 this year, an SCF report on the Statistics Ministry's demands for grants pointed out that many MPLADS projects that began earlier were "left unfinished midway despite the sanction letters being issued and funds for the same were withheld", citing the suspension of the scheme. The pa-

nel had sought the release of funds for these projects so that MPs could fulfil their promises to the public.

**Condition attached**

The very same day, the Department of Expenditure (DoE) conveyed its intent to allot ₹2,200 crore for such projects to the Statistics Ministry. However, the actual allotment of funds by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) took place on March 22, with the condition that the funds must be spent or allotted further for eligible projects "within financial year 2020-21 itself, so that the amount is not lapsed".

The Statistics Ministry said it cleared eligible proposals received till March 31 noon, amounting to ₹1,107.5 crore, leading to a balance ₹1,092.5 crore lapsing.

In a fresh report tabled in Parliament on Tuesday, the SCF headed by BJP MP Jayant Sinha sharply criticised this "ad-hocism" and noted: "The Committee are unable to comprehend the reason as to why ₹2,200 crore were allotted to MoSPI barely one week before the end of FY 2020-21... This constitutes a serious lapse in fiscal management with negative consequences for communities across India."

"Only those proposals which were not found eligible due to lack of documents and non-fulfilment of eligibility criteria as per MPLADS guidelines, and in those districts where the model code of conduct was under implementation due to Assembly elections in five States/UT and by-elections in some constituencies, the Ministry was not able to release pending instalments," MoSPI in-

formed the committee.

The Statistics Ministry said it wrote to the Finance Ministry on April 7 to allot the remaining funds towards MPLADS this year so that the pending instalments as on March 31, 2020 may be released.

**'Tighten norms'**

The Finance Ministry also asked the Statistics Ministry to further tighten the scheme's guidelines by September this year, so that "if a work sanctioned by an MP is not used for five years, it will automatically lapse even if there is a committed liability for the work to be completed".

Currently, funds released to district authorities under MPLADS is not lapsable, while funds not released by the government in a particular year are carried forward.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday arrested four persons allegedly associated with an Islamic State-inspired module, following searches in Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir in coordination with Central intelligence agencies and local police.

The accused have been identified as Obaid Hamid, a resident of Srinagar; Muzammil Hassan Bhat, a resident of Bandipora; Ammar Abdul Rahman from Mangaluru; and Shankar Venkatesh Perumal alias Ali Muaviya, a resident Bengaluru. They were involved in raising funds, radicalising and motivating others to join the Islamic State, the agency said.

During the searches earlier, the four accused were detained along with a woman from Mangaluru. It was alleged that she had attempted to travel to Afghanistan.

The module was unearthed about a year ago when the intelligence agencies came across an Instagram channel named "Chronicle Foundation", comprising more than 5,000 persons from different parts of the world, which had allegedly been indulging in Islamic State-related propaganda. The agencies gradually established the identities of several members of the module. As it turned out, some associated members were planning to visit Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, while some had even made unsuccessful attempts to travel to Afghanistan via Iran in April 2019.

The alleged leader of the module, identified as Mohammed Ameen, intended to travel to Pakistan and J&K to join terror groups. Some suspects were also involved in raising funds and even transferring a portion to entities operating in J&K.

**IN BRIEF**



**HC reserves order on Sudha Bharadwaj's plea**

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday reserved its order on a petition filed by activist Sudha Bharadwaj seeking default bail on the grounds that the judge who took cognisance of the chargesheet in the Bhima Koregaon case was not entitled to do so.

**ED arrests Gautam Thapar on graft charge**

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested Gautam Thapar, promoter of the Avantha Group (AG) of companies, in connection with one of the cases involving loans from Yes Bank. In June, the CBI registered a case against Avantha Realty Limited, Mr. Thapar and others for allegedly cheating the bank of ₹466.51 crore in 2017-19.

**Cadets disabled during training may get pension**

NEW DELHI

The three Armed Forces Service Headquarters have forwarded a proposal for grant of disability pension to cadets medically boarded out during training from military academies on account of disability attributable to or aggravated by military training, the government informed Parliament on Wednesday.

**'Declare Kishore Kumar's house national heritage'**

KHANDWA (M.P.)

Fans and officials paid tributes to Kishore Kumar on the occasion of his 92nd birth anniversary on Wednesday at his samadhi near his birthplace Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh. The fans also demanded that his ancestral house be declared national heritage.

## PM calls Mamata on flood situation

CM says heavy release from DVC dams lead to 'man-made' floods year after year

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
KOLKATA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday spoke to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the flood situation in south Bengal.

"PM @narendramodi spoke to WB CM @MamataOfficial on the flood situation caused by water discharge from dams in parts of the state. PM assured all possible support from the Centre to help mitigate the situation. PM Modi prays for the safety and wellbeing of those in affected areas," the Prime Minister's Office tweeted.

Hours after the conversation, Ms. Banerjee wrote to Mr. Modi urging "for a holistic and long-term solution" to ensure that West Bengal was "spared the regular devastation and suffering from man-made floods perpetrated by huge release from the DVC [Damodar Valley Corpo-



**To safer ground:** Villagers shifting out after severe flooding in Hooghly district, West Bengal, on Wednesday. ■ AP

ration) dams".

"Moreover, despite the State being regularly ravaged by natural disasters in the form of cyclones and 'man-made' floods, which we are presently witnessing, no financial help has been forthcoming from the Centre. The State has to cope with compensating the loss of lives and property from our current resources," she said.

Ms. Banerjee referred to the low pressure resulting in high rainfall in West Bengal and Jharkhand, but emphasised that nearly 2 lakh cusecs of water was discharged from the Panchet, Maithon and Tenughat dams of the DVC, leading to severe flooding of huge areas in Hooghly, Howrah, Purba Bardhaman, Paschim Bardhaman, Birbhum and Paschim Medinipur districts. She alleged that heavy release from the DVC dams had led to "man-made" floods year after year

**Flood situation grim in north M.P., says Chouhan**

BHOPAL

The flood situation is "grim" in north Madhya Pradesh where over 1,200 villages were affected following heavy rainfall and 5,950 persons were shifted to safer places, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Wednesday. He said 1,950 persons were still stranded in flood-hit areas and efforts were on to rescue them. ■ PTI

in 2015, 2017, 2019 and now in 2021. In the letter, Ms. Banerjee referred to the loss of 16 lives, unprecedented displacement, suffering and loss of livelihoods.

During the day, she was supposed to conduct an aerial survey of the flood-affected regions, but the helicopter could not take off due to adverse weather. She visited Amta block in Howrah district by road and spoke to the locals.

## 'No active surveillance to detect cases in Kerala'

Stringent norms needed, says Minister

**BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN**  
NEW DELHI

Coming down heavily on Kerala, which has seen a spike in COVID-19 cases recently, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has written to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday, stating that the COVID-19 case detection in several parts of the State was mainly through testing of those reporting to health facilities with COVID-19-like illness coupled with no active surveillance to detect cases.

Kerala is presently reporting more than 20,000 cases per day.

In his letter, the Minister said in view of the continued upsurge of COVID-19 cases in Kerala, a Central multi-disciplinary team was deputed to the State on July 30, and the team in its report submitted to the Ministry noted lapses in the manner in which the virus was

being tackled in the State.

The Minister's communication said the team found a continued high number of COVID-19 cases being reported from almost all districts of the State, and highlighted that stringent containment measures were needed.

"The ongoing ABCD classification made in the State has not yielded desired results, and technical guidance from the Central government on defining containment zones and active case search within such zones is crucial for controlling high case positivity," he said.

He added that any restrictions once imposed may be for a period of epidemiological significance, that is, at least 14 days, and may be effectively monitored.

"The number of contacts traced per positive case is also quite low," the Health Ministry said.

## RTE entitlements to be paid through cash transfers

Cabinet approves Samagra Shiksha scheme extension till March 2026

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Centre plans to pay students their Right to Education (RTE) entitlements in the form of cash transfers as part of a revamp and extension of its flagship school education scheme that was approved by the Cabinet on Wednesday.

The Samagra Shiksha scheme, which has been extended till March 2026, will have a financial outlay of ₹2.94 lakh crore, including a

Central share of ₹1.85 lakh crore, and several new initiatives on early childhood education, foundational literacy, and numeracy and language education.

**Higher Central share**

Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme for 11.6 lakh government and aided schools with over 15 crore students and 57 lakh teachers. It involves a 60:40 split in funding between the Centre and most States.

The Centre's share now works out to about ₹37,080 crore per year, higher than the amounts allocated over the last three years.

"In order to enhance the



**Hand of support:** The entitlements include textbooks, uniforms and transport allowance. ■ PTI

based platform over a period of time," said an official statement issued after the Cabinet meeting.

This DBT would include RTE entitlements such as textbooks, uniforms and transport allowance, Education Ministry officials told *The Hindu*, although it is not clear whether the tuition fees for students in the economically weaker section quota in private schools would also be paid directly to students as a cash transfer. The stipend for children with special needs will be paid in this mode, officials said.

## Blacktopping of road near LAC completed

It will allow quick movement of troops

**DINAKAR PERI**  
NEW DELHI

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed and completed blacktopping the world's highest motorable road at Umling La in Eastern Ladakh, located at an altitude of 19,300 ft, the Defence Ministry said on Wednesday.

The BRO has created a record in high-altitude road construction, the Ministry said. "It has constructed a 52-km long tarmac road through Umling La..."

The strategic road built under 'Project Himank' passes through the Umling La Top and connects Chisumle and Demchok villages. The road is close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and will allow quick movement of troops and equipment.

A Defence official said the road construction had a number of phases and the project had been under way since 2017. The top blacktopping had been done four days ago, the official said.

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(set by Incognito)

**ACROSS**

- Abundant among ostriches (4)
- Walk in ship's uniform, having sex appeal, displaying astronaut's dress (9)
- Sleep with person after son goes away to get processed fish (6)
- Deficiency during boxing match leads to loss of consciousness (8)
- Counting stone, perhaps, for differentiation and integration (8)
- In capital, king is with girl having right tool (6,6)

- He believed that earth was at the centre of the universe! Let my Petty Officer work it out! (7)
  - Even numbers do not display this peculiarity (7)
  - See 14
  - I love mixed grease used in Mediterranean cooking (5,3)
  - Sneeze and you will get this benediction (5,3)
  - Pretty young thing, honey, is a snake (6)
  - I can grind powder for eatery on wheels (6,3)
  - Cut the devil (4)
- DOWN**
- Alert six girls in Los Angeles netball team at first (8)
  - Microprocessor usually carried on one's shoulder (4)
  - Last to circumambulate around god is ghostly (6)
  - Castigate in a Malayalam bastion (7)
  - Horrible debacle includes leading motor-boat stilled by absence of wind (8)
  - Avoid a bird, drop head suddenly and plunge into water (4)
  - Curate losing ace negotiated ceasefire (5)
  - Part of alimentary canal: found near Panama canal! (5)
  - No one has hundred for the time being (5)
  - Aha! Mayan propagated a form of Buddhism (8)
  - Mediterranean wind that blew in when doctor left Morocco for southern Cote d'Ivoire (8)
  - Leave Netherlander to bear one's own costs (2,5)
  - Lured after and governed (5)
  - Goods brought in hidden in shrimp or turtle (6)
  - Go underwater for a washing place (4)
  - There is no alternative, initially, to her (4)

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

**Solution to puzzle 13317**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

## FAITH

### Vibhava experiences

In the Gita, the Lord explains the purposes of His incarnations, namely, to protect the good, to destroy the evil doers, and to establish dharma. Apart from the ten main avatars of the Lord, acharyas have pointed out that there are many more when God intervenes for these purposes. Vedanta Desika shows that His avatars give the jivatmas the chance to experience His auspicious qualities and His greatness, pointed out Asuri Sri Madhavachariar in a discourse. For it is true that He can accomplish all these purposes and whatsoever He wishes by His mere Sankalpa and from His abode, the Parama Pada, without choosing to be born in this world.

Paratva is His swaroopa in Parama Pada which is the experience of the Nityasuris and Mukatmas. But the Vibhava experiences available to the jivatma are unique and precious. It is not only enjoyed by those who had the great fortune to live contemporaneously but to the entire posterity. For even today, as is seen in the hymns of azhwars, we continue to be overwhelmed and moved emotionally when contemplating, for instance, the extent to which Krishna goes to help the Pandavas; or when we wonder at the ease with which He mingles with the simple folk in Ayarpadi.

What Saulabhyha in stealing butter and trying to escape being caught and then allowing Yasodha to catch Him, and bind Him to the grinding stone with a rope? There is no end to such experiences of His auspicious qualities that draw us to Him and enable us to seek Him. He seems to indicate, "I am your permanent friend and relation and you should always be with Me. I may be the Paramatma, but I am available to all of you without any exception." As the antaryami in all beings, He can be bound by true bhakti; but He remains aloof to those who are not his bhaktas.



Livestreaming games continue a meteoric rise across India, so much so that people are ready to give up their careers to do it full-time

# Come, watch me play

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN AND SRIVATSAN S

Total Gaming's YouTube channel puts a 33-second countdown for Garena Free Fire (a Battle Royale multiplayer shooter game) live session. On the live chatbox, more than a hundred messages cascade within this half a minute.

Channel owner Ajay (known as Ajjubhai in the gaming world), welcomes his fast-increasing audience, reads out the sponsor's name and gets down to business. In the four-hour-25-minute livestream, he makes silly jokes, replies to a few messages, gives shout-outs for Super Chat (a feature wherein viewers pay to highlight their message in the chatbox) and sings, as his characters roam, shoot, jump and dive. The stream, within two days, gets two million views on YouTube.

Ajjubhai is a superstar streamer. He started in October 2018, with just four people watching his videos.

Today, the Total Gaming channel has over 26 million subscribers and its videos have been watched over four billion times. Ajjubhai, who featured in YouTube's list of top live streamers

for 2020, also owns an eSports team. But this isn't just about Ajjubhai. This is the story of Indian streamers like him who thrive in the global gaming industry, which generates US\$159 billion a year in revenue (according to Newzoo, a gaming analytics company). To put this in perspective, Qatar's annual GDP in 2020 was US\$146 billion.

Going by YouTube's numbers, there has never been a better time for a streamer than last year. As the COVID-19 pandemic forced people to stay indoors, crowds for game-streaming surged. Last year saw 100 billion watch time hours, over 40 million active gaming

channels, and more than 80,000 YouTube Gaming creators hitting 1,00,000 subscribers.

## Show me the money

The bulk of streamers' revenue comes from three main sources: ads on YouTube, features such as Super Chats and Super Stickers, and sponsorship or brand deals.

It is significantly more than what Hari Raman, a young doctor from Purushanur, a hamlet in Tamil Nadu's Villupuram district, earns through his job at Villupuram Medical College.

Hari's YouTube channel, PVS Gaming, has close to two million subscribers. He started the channel in 2018 while pursuing an MBBS course at a college in North India. "Because I couldn't speak Hindi very well, I didn't have a lot of friends at college. Streaming games in Tamil got me a lot of people to interact with online," he says. His subscribers grew exponentially and the channel helped him meet his educational expenses, which had been a challenge.

Hari had to overcome odds to be a doctor. He recalls how his village would treat his humble roots with derision – "Why does a coolie's son want to be a doctor?", some would ask. He fulfilled his dream early this year, finishing MBBS. But gaming, he says, has



## Numbers say it

### 400 million

The number of gamers grew from 250 million in 2018 to 400 million by 2020, according to a KPMG report. But the biggest vertical that emerged in the last one year is game-streaming. Piyush Kumar, CEO, Rooter, explains the increased watchtime: "It is probably the only way for users to engage on an Indian platform, as most of these games are made by international companies."



### 728.8 million

The global game live-streaming audience will hit 728.8 million in 2021, predicts Newzoo. By 2024, it is expected to reach over 920 million. The ad revenue is usually based on views and subscribers, so sponsorship deals pay the most. Super Chats are a bit random: you can get anything from ₹20 to ₹20,000.

Kaashvi Hiranandani says someone sent her ₹1,00,000 once.

## Star power

You can find celebrities like rapper T-Pain, former National Football League running back CJ Anderson, and US Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on Twitch, Amazon's live-streaming platform. A live stream of Ocasio-Cortez playing the popular game Among Us became one of the most-watched videos on Twitch during the US Presidential elections.



Ready, player one? (Clockwise from below) Gameshots, Hari Raman and Kaashvi Hiranandani ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



given him a bigger identity.

Hari can afford to give up his profession. But he won't, because it is also his passion. Now, he dispenses medical advice during his streaming sessions. "There was a lot of hesitancy about taking the vaccine this year. I used to dispel the myths and misinformation," he says.

While YouTube still continues to be the most successful platform for game streaming in India, independent platforms such as Twitch, Rooter and Loco have seen ballooning audiences. These platforms serve as alternative sources of revenue for gamers, some of whom enter a contract with them for streaming. Imagine a pyramid with top, middle and bottom sections, each representing the three categories of gamers: star players with their own clout, up-and-coming gamers with significant following, and novices.

Platforms such as Rooter, which has over 7.5 million active users of which 3.8 million come from their app, primarily target the bottom and middle parts that

consist of a sizeable proportion of gamers. "YouTube is not going to support middle players because their algorithm throws them out of the system. These are gamers with potential to go big; we are giving equal opportunity irrespective of size," says Piyush Kumar, CEO, Rooter.

## Selling their personality

Live streaming sessions can go up to four or five hours. There are no time restrictions for streaming on Rooter, says Kumar. In fact, when Kumar got on a call with us, a streaming had been on-going on for seven hours and still had over 1,200 followers.

Rooter, especially, has been actively building its brand by signing contracts with star gamers like Gyan Gaming, who has 11 million subscribers on YouTube, and PVS Gaming, with the biggest subscriber base in South India.

How do they hold their audience's attention for so long?

"It is, in a sense, a performance," says Kaashvi Hiranandani, who owns YouTube channel Kaash Plays. She has the energy of

a radio jockey in her streams. "In real life, I am a bit reserved. If a person I am close to offline watches my stream, they will be shocked," she says, but reckons this change in personality is necessary: "People are investing two or three hours of their time in what I am doing. It is like a TV show for them. So, I try to be as entertaining as possible."

In a way, these streamers sell a personality – and, it needn't always be theirs.

Ajjubhai, for instance, does it without even revealing his face. "When a fellow YouTuber gamer revealed his face after a while, people turned up at his house, and college. Fans even called his parents. I get very uncomfortable with such attention," he says.

## The regional connect

Language seems to be an important determinant in gaining followers. Hari reckons audiences prefer regional languages over English. All the Indian streamers featured in YouTube's list of top live streamers for 2020 speak Hindi in their videos. Kaashvi, who grew up in Singapore, used to stream in English initially. But, upon her audience's request, she polished her Hindi, which significantly increased her subscribers.

There are also streamers who use abusive language to draw followers, most of whom are adolescents. Scrutiny on such streamers increased in Tamil Nadu after the recent arrest of Madan Kumar Manikkam (known as Madan OP), after complaints about him hosting obscene conversations with minors and women.

This incident, Hari says, got a bad rap for streamers in Tamil Nadu. "Even my parents asked me to reconsider gaming," he adds, "But streamers like this are in the minority."

However, abuse cannot be prevented, especially when it comes from the audience. Kaashvi, as a female streamer, understands this better, explaining, "If I get 100 good comments, there will be 10 bad ones. And, some of them get really nasty. People know how to pick on one's insecurities. I am fairly new to streaming, so it does bring me down."

Despite the challenges, she continues to stream because it is as lucrative as it is fun.

Kaashvi works in finance, drawing "a mid-seven-figure salary" a year. But, she once made as much money in a month through streaming. She concludes, "It's probably a dream job."



## Women of the uprising

Rudrangshu Mukherjee's *A Begum & A Rani* digs out lesser-known accounts of two prominent women in India's colonial history – Rani Lakshmbai and Begum Hazrat Mahal

GOWRI S

A few years after her heroic death, folk memory – in the form of songs and poems – waxed eloquent of Rani Lakshmbai's valour in the battlefield. At the same time, stories of her alleged "intemperance" spread far and wide, with the British calling her sexually promiscuous, a liquor addict with a violent temper. In sharp contrast to this stands Begum Hazrat Mahal's absence in public memory or recollection.

These are two women who never met each other, but led similar lives, with a common goal: to overthrow British rule in India. While one has been hailed a nationalist icon, the other remains shadowed in forgotten accounts. Right from their eventual rise during a pivotal moment of India's colonial history – the Revolt of 1857 – to their heroic yet poignant deaths, author Rudrangshu Mukherjee's latest non-fiction work, *A Begum & A Rani – Hazrat Mahal and Lakshmbai in 1857*, (published by Penguin), captures what makes them feminist icons.

Mukherjee has been researching the 1857 uprising for nearly 45 years and this is his sixth book on the subject. His area of research was largely on Awadh and Kanpur, but this time, he decided to shift his focus to Jhansi.

"I noticed the contrast – Lakshmbai was treated as a nationalist icon, whereas Hazrat Mahal, also a woman leader of the rebellion in Awadh, was relatively a forgotten fi-

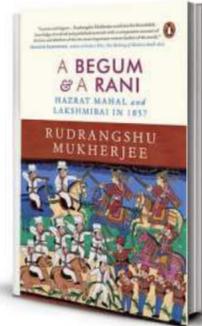


Resilience in the battlefield Book cover (top); Rudrangshu Mukherjee (above) ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

gure," says Mukherjee of the inception of the book.

The seed had been in his mind for at least five to six years. "It was when I became housebound, with all this archival work here with me, that I decided to give it a structure," he recalls, adding that he started writing in February 2020. Through the narrative, he examines this anomaly and at the same time highlights the achievements of these two remarkable women, who fought tooth-and-nail not only against the British, but also the oppressive, patriarchal norms that plagued mid-19th century India.

Chronologically, their stories run parallel but the trajectories are different, says Mukherjee. The first



contrast that struck him was that Lakshmbai was a late entrant in the uprising of 1857.

"She didn't turn a rebel till January or February of 1858. But Hazrat Mahal was a rebel since the uprising was taking place in Lucknow, end of May/early June 1857. The second contrast that is equally intriguing is that Lakshmbai died on the battlefield, fighting. Meanwhile, there is no sighting of Hazrat Mahal even though we know that she was sending directions as a general. Unlike Lakshmbai, she fled to Nepal where she died in penury and obscurity," says Mukherjee.

He asks questions on whether the manner in which both died has anything to do with their differing popularity. "The other suggestion I make is that one was an upper-caste queen, from a royal family whereas Hazrat Mahal was a slave's daughter who caught the fancy of the king of Awadh. She becomes somebody only when her 12-year-old son is put on the throne by the rebels." The different social standing, Mukherjee believes, had an impact on the way people saw these women.

Largely pinned on years of archival research, the narrative of *A Begum & A Rani* takes on a different hue towards the end, as Mukherjee meditates on their afterlives by analysing public memory.

"I see history as an exercise in retrieval of the aspects of the past. The more aspects we retrieve, the richer our understanding of history becomes," he concludes.



## The frog who saved a forest

Naturalist Hadlee Renjith's project to conserve the endangered Anaimalai flying frog at a plantation in Munnar triggers an organic movement to revive its habitat

ANASUYA MENON

In a corner of a sprawling cardamom plantation at Pothamedu in Munnar, a small but inspiring story unfolds. A critically endangered frog species, the *Racophorus pseudomalabaricus* or Anaimalai flying frog, is getting a new home.

Naturalist, frog enthusiast and Kerala Tourism guide Hadlee Renjith, who leads herping tours in Munnar, constructed two ponds at Windermere Estate to restore the habitat for the Anaimalai flying frog. He struck upon the idea on one of his photography tours at the 60-acre property, when he caught a glimpse of the frog in a cement tank previously used for irrigation.

Hadlee sought support from the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), which took it up as its first rapid action pro-



A new home The Anaimalai flying frog (top); the pond Hadlee Renjith created (left) ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ject for amphibian conservation and offered to fund it. Fortunately, the plantation owners readily agreed, demarcating an area, which they pledged to leave undisturbed.

"Trees and the under-

growth in a cardamom plantation offer the perfect environment for these frogs to hibernate," says Hadlee. "Everything they need for survival – trees, rain and a water pool – are right here, so we can re-create a favoura-

ble ecosystem."

Endemic to the southern part of the Western Ghats, the numbers of these frogs have declined rapidly due to the loss of habitat. When the grasslands of Munnar were converted to tea plantations, some of the Shola forests became cardamom plantations. Munnar has an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 hectares under cardamom cultivation, and while trees are protected, undergrowth is usually cleared leading to the habitat loss of several frog and reptile species.

Hadlee set to work with two friends, his wife and daughter, digging the earth for ponds. The bigger pond is about 10-feet-long, three-feet wide and 2.5-feet deep. They lined these with jute sacks and tarpaulin to hold water through the dry period. They then added pebbles and planted vegetation to create natural hiding spots for the frogs.

"We created awareness among the plantation supervisors to refrain from clearing undergrowth just before harvesting cardamom," adds Hadlee, who is working on a field guide on frogs in Munnar, for which 30 species have been identified.

The project has helped dispel myths surrounding the frog. "There is a popular misconception that these frogs feed on the cardamom pods. They don't feed on the pods; they feed on insects and other pests instead," says Simon John, owner of the Windermere Estate, where naturalists take guests on herping tours.

Hadlee is pleased that his first attempt at conservation has yielded results. "I spotted seven tadpoles in one of the ponds. And this means there could be more."



Actors Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani discuss playing real-life characters in *Shershaah*, the biopic on Kargil War legend, Captain Vikram Batra

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

Kiara Advani on signing her pan-Indian project with director Shankar: "It is my first pan-Indian film, and I'm honoured to be directed by him [Shankar]. His vision is extraordinary, and this project is sure to be like none other. It is also my second film with Ram Charan, and I just can't wait to get on set and have a fantastic shoot!"

**biopic after the M.S. Dhoni film. Is there a sense of apprehension when you play a living character?**

When you are playing a real-life character, their feedback is the most important. I saw *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story* with Sakshi Dhoni and was lucky to get her feedback. I hope the same happens with Dimple with *Shershaah*.

Portraying someone real comes with its own set of challenges, and a certain responsibility. But as an actor, we are given the source material and we try to be as honest as possible to the emotion and personality we are playing.

**Vishnuvardhan is known for commercial blockbusters such as *Billa* and *Arrambam* in Tamil. Now he makes his Bollywood debut with *Shershaah*...**

**Sidharth:** I had earlier seen one of Vishnu's commercial films, *Billa*. After we connected, I saw some of his other films too. *Shershaah* has been through an odd journey, from when I first heard it years ago, with a completely different team attached.

But after all the changes, once Vishnu came on board, his energy was so enthusiastic and he was eager to be part of this film. Full marks to Vishnu and our cameraman Kamaljeet Negi for giving it a very real and raw feel, and shooting with a minimal setup on top of that mountain, be it wind, rain or any kind of difficulty.

**Kiara:** He is such an amazing person to be around, and knows exactly how to get you into the zone. The fun scenes between Sidharth and I, and the banter between us comes across as so real because he just let us be. Even though he is Tamil, he really nailed the Punjabi accent and dialect in the film. He still calls me 'Dimple' and I love it (laughs).

*Shershaah* premieres on Amazon Prime Video on August 12.

Kargil War terrain, promises an emotional, patriotic look at the Indian Army officer's life, flamboyant personality, and his ultimately doomed love story. Excerpts from an interview:

**Captain Vikram Batra is a legend, but he also seems to have been a larger-than-life character in real life. How do you represent someone like him?**

**Sidharth:** You are absolutely right. Going through Captain Vikram's book or the stuff written about him, you find that he was an extremely 'filmy' person, for lack of a better word.

I was fortunate that the first person I met was his twin brother. Who better than him to tell me about Capt Vikram? Of course, I met his parents, his family, and chatted with his comrades who were in the battlefield. That is where the idea of what he would be like started from because there is so much already written about him in the public domain.

We had Army personnel training me and the rest of the cast, and helping us shoot in the Kargil terrain. I think our action pieces look slightly fresh, because we are the first Hindi film to shoot in Kargil.

**Kiara, this is your second**

*Shershaah*, along with a hitherto unseen look into Batra's relationship with his girlfriend and fiancée, Dimple Cheema.

Tamil director Vishnuvardhan (of *Billa* fame) makes his Hindi debut with the film, set to premiere next week. Starring Bollywood hotshots Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani, the biopic, which is being touted as the first Indian film to have been shot in the

**A story of triumph**  
Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani in a scene from the film  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



GAUTAM SUNDER

It has been 22 years since Kargil War hero Captain Vikram Batra was killed in action while fighting for the nation. His actions on the battlefield inspired the Indian Army to victory and he went on to become a household name across the country.

After the war against Pakistan, Batra, who was just 24 when he succumbed to enemy fire, was posthumously honoured with the Param Vir Chakra, India's highest military award for distinguished acts of valour during wartime.

Now, an ode to his indomitable spirit and courage comes to life with the film

# An ode to a war hero

# All about romance

Filmmaker John Carney says the modern in *Modern Love* refers not to the type of love but to a lifestyle in a big metropolis

MINI ANTHIKAD CHHIBBER

*Modern Love*, based on the eponymous *The New York Times* column explored different shades of love in New York.

The first season written and directed by John Carney featured a bunch of A-listers including Anne Hathaway, Tina Fey, Andy Garcia, Dev Patel and John Slattery. Season 2, which streams from August 13, has its share of stars from Tom Burke and Minnie Driver to Kit Harington and Tobias Menzies.

**The right choice**

"It feels like you will find the right actor for the right job in this show," Carney, who reprises his writer-director duties for Season 2, says over a video call. "It is half an hour of their time. If the actress is free, she comes and plays for a week and a half. While it is not a huge amount of money or prestige, they feel like 'I connected with that script and got to make these cool episodes'. There is no more commitment and that is attractive to some actors in certain phases of their careers."

Carney enjoys the show's half-hour format. "I find that challenging. I am getting a little tired of TV going on and on with long shows that require you to watch everything in order. You can dip in to *Modern Love* at any stage in the series."

*Modern Love* is a weekly column, which started in 2004. It is also a book, a podcast and a show. Picking articles that

would work as television from 17 years of content is a mammoth task. "There are two kinds of criteria that I look for. The first is a personal connection with the piece. That can be a dimension of a character, a relationship or a friendship that hits me," says Carney.

He adds, "The second is when I am struck by something about a particular essay as a filmmaker. I could imagine things in a scene playing well. Or I could imagine, directing five things that would be fun, challenging and interesting. I don't usually go 'Oh I love that essay so therefore I love that piece of TV'. That is not the way it works. We have actually found that often the best essays should remain written. I have struggled often to shoehorn an essay that I love into a half-an-hour screenplay that has not worked."

**About time**

Though the show is called *Modern Love*, Carney says, love is timeless. "Obviously the circumstances in which we find ourselves, with cell phones, iPads and computers affect our expectations of love. At the end of the day, what we looked for in these stories is less about being super-current and more about being romantically truthful, regardless of geography." *Modern Love* Season 2 streams on Amazon Prime Video from August 13.



**New-age love** Director John Carney  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# Conquering waves

The Covelong Classic at Surf Turf in Tamil Nadu is taking place between August 9 and 11. It will see the best surfers from around the country participating. "It is a Surfing Federation of India event. We are trying to do it differently this time by following the World Surfing League format," says Arun Vasu, president of Surfing Federation of India, partner Surf Turf, and one of the sponsors for the event. The idea is to get more serious now that surfing is part of the Olympics as well, he says.

The older events had about 200 surfers and various categories like U-17 and Masters because the idea was to encour-

age people to come out and surf. For the upcoming competition, there are 60 participants so far, registered from Covelong, Puducherry, Rameshwaram, Mamallapuram, Mangaluru, Goa and parts of Kerala.

Categories include Boys Under 15, Girls Under 15, and Open categories for ages 16 and above. For stand up paddling, the distance is 6 kilometres for men and 2 to 3 km for women. "We are going to have a talent watch and identify two to three new surfers. The SFI will take them on and train them," says Vasu. They will then get to participate in the Asian Surfing Circuit in Bali. The best from there will qualify for the World Surfing League.



# The India Seashell Museum in Mamallapuram expands to include a dinosaur and a mineral museum



**All things ancient**  
(Clockwise from far left) Entry to the mineral museum; the dinosaur museum and pearl of malleus  
MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

SWETA AKUNDI

About 110 million years ago, the Irritator moved through the coastal lagoons of Brazil. We do not know exactly how it annoyed palaeontologists to earn that name, but what we do know is that it has earned itself a place in a coastal town again – that of Mamallapuram.

The Irritator, with the short-handed T Rex, the toothy Velociraptor and other giant reptiles are the denizens of Dinosaur Museum, the latest addition to India Seashell Museum on ECR. The park, opened last month, features 14 mechanical models fitted with sensors that prompt them to swish their tails, raise their necks, and roar every time a visitor moves past them.

"Families want entertainment. We added the Dinosaur Museum for children so that they don't get bored as their parents stroll through the seashell museum," says Mohamed Riswan, proprietor of the India Seashell Museum.

The Dinosaur Museum isn't the only addition – over the years, the seashell museum has expanded to accommodate a pearl museum, set up in 2018, and a mineral museum, which was set up last year but owing to the pandemic, could only open this year, after the lockdowns were relaxed.

The collection belongs to Riswan's

# T-Rex on a pearl hunt



father, Raja Mohamed, a fish merchant from Rameswaram who set up the museum in 2012. "For 38 years, my father has been collecting seashells, pearls and minerals," says Ris-

wan. But the idea of a mineral museum struck Raja only after a visit to Singapore. "When my father saw the Merlion, he wanted to recreate it with seashells," says Riswan.

And so, a giant Merlion, made of 25,000 seashells stands outside the mineral museum, flanked by a shell chandelier, shell tree and shell bouquet. The space is decorated in blues and greens to simulate the underwater world. A tunnel-like room leads us to the mineral collection – behind glass panels are onyx, amethyst, quartz, moonstones, topaz, jasper and jade, all polished and shaped into orbs.

From here, our guide, Syed Salim, takes us to the pearl museum, rattling off at full speed the names of oysters that hold pearls inside them. "The colour of the pearl depends on the co-

lour of the lips of the oyster," he says, before explaining how pearls are formed. "When a foreign body enters a mollusc's mantle, it forms a sac around it. Layers and layers of secretion around it creates a pearl." Which is why pearls are not always in the circular shape we know them to be, but appear as coins, claws, nuggets, peanuts, crescents – including one particularly unfortunate fish that has been encrusted into a pearl.

Riswan shares how his father collected these pearls and shells. "My father grew up in Rameshwaram, in a coastal hamlet. He started as a fish merchant at the age of 19. He would walk across the seashore, collect shells and sell them in markets. Once he started earning money as a fish merchant through exports, he used that money to invest in his hobby of collecting shells."

Seashell museums are popular world over, however environmentalists have concerns over their mass collection. "Seashells feed the beaches – they have a function in the ecosystem, so their hardcore collection from one strip would be invasive," points out naturalist M Yuvan.

"Collection shouldn't be for collection's sake, but to facilitate a deeper understanding about what lives on the beach."

**THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13424**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
			8			
9						
			10			
11	12					
		13				
15	16		17			
				18	19	20
21						
23						
			24			

- Across**  
1 Sound made by a bird (7)  
8 Mouth-like opening (7)  
9 Unexpected difficulty or danger (7)  
10 Receive from a predecessor (7)  
11 Great pain (5)  
13 Preparation for a show (9)  
15 Moved (9)  
18 Simple song (5)  
21 Root vegetables (7)
- Down**  
1 Drink of tea (informal) (5)  
2 Opening passage (abbr) (5)  
3 Tables of standard numerical calculations (5,8)  
4 A West Slavic language (6)  
5 Kilt, sporran etc (8,5)  
6 Thread-like structures (6)  
7 Virgin charged with keeping alight the fire on the altar to a Roman goddess (6)  
12 Donated (4)  
14 Female relative (4)  
15 Prejudiced behaviour – Sir Mac (anag) (6)  
16 Human voice box (6)  
17 Thrown (6)  
19 Skin-cleansing lotion (5)  
20 Scrumptious (5)



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

The solution will appear on August 12, 2021.

Solution No. 13423

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

# Taliban claim attack on Afghan Minister

The group calls it the beginning of 'retaliatory attacks' against govt. personnel for the recent air strikes

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL

The Taliban on Wednesday claimed responsibility for a huge bomb attack in Kabul targeting the Defence Minister, as the insurgents fought for control of a string of besieged cities across the country.

The bomb-and-gun attack on Defence Minister Bismillah Mohammadi on Tuesday was one of the biggest in Kabul for months, bringing violence to the capital after intense fighting in the south and west of the country.

The Afghan and U.S. militaries have carried out air strikes against the insurgents to push them back, and the Taliban said the Kabul attack was a response to that.

"The attack is the beginning of the retaliatory operations against the circles and leaders of the Kabul administration who are ordering attacks and the bombing of different parts of the country," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a state-



**Blown to pieces:** Afghan security personnel inspecting the site of the car bomb explosion in Kabul on Wednesday. • AFP

ment on social media. It represents a major escalation by the Taliban, who have largely refrained from large-scale attacks in the capital in recent years after starting talks with the United States on troop withdrawal.

The first bomb exploded in the centre of Kabul, sending a thick plume of smoke into the sky. Less than two hours later, there was another

loud blast followed by smaller explosions and rapid gunfire, also near the high-security Green Zone that houses several embassies, including the U.S. mission.

The Minister was safe and Afghan forces repelled the attackers, but at least eight people were killed, Interior Ministry spokesman Mirwais Stanikzai said.

Mr. Mohammadi later said

## UNSC against 'Islamic Emirate'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council, currently being presided over by India, declared that it does "not support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate" in Afghanistan, as it expressed concern over the violence in the country.

In a press statement issued by Council President T.S. Tirumurti, members of the 15-nation Council reaffirmed that there is no

military solution to the conflict and "declared that they do not support the restoration of the Islamic Emirate". "The members called on both the Islamic Republic and the Taliban to engage meaningfully in an inclusive, Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process in order to make urgent progress towards a political settlement and a ceasefire," the statement said.

it was a suicide car bomb attack targeting his house.

The Taliban threat came after the Afghan military launched a counterattack against the insurgents in the southern city of Lashkar Gah.

### War crimes

Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch accused the Taliban of war crimes for "summarily"

executing detained soldiers, police and civilians with alleged ties to the Afghan government in areas they had recently seized.

The rights group said it had also obtained a list of 44 people who were killed by the Taliban in the town of Spin Boldak, which the insurgents captured last month along the border with Pakistan.

## Ethiopia suspends two aid groups in Tigray

'They were spreading misinformation'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ADDIS ABABA

Ethiopia on Wednesday suspended its decision to suspend two humanitarian groups active in its war-hit Tigray region, accusing them of "disseminating misinformation" online.

The three-month suspension of the Dutch section of Doctors Without Borders, known by its French acronym MSF, and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) represents the latest blow to the troubled humanitarian response in Tigray, where

the UN says hundreds of thousands are suffering from famine.

In a statement on Wednesday, Ethiopia said both MSF and NRC "have been disseminating misinformation in social media and other platforms outside of the mandate and purpose for which the organisations were permitted to operate".

Jan Egeland, NRC's secretary general, has frequently used his Twitter account to issue stark warnings about the humanitarian situation in Tigray.

## Biden calls on Cuomo to resign

New York Governor sexually abused 11 women, finds probe

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden said on Tuesday that New York Governor Andrew Cuomo should resign in light of a report by the State Attorney General that found the Democratic Governor had sexually harassed 11 women.

"I think he should resign," Mr. Biden told reporters at the White House.

New York's Attorney General, Letitia James, unveiled the results of an investigation earlier on Tuesday that showed the Governor had engaged in unwanted groping, kissing and hugging and



Andrew Cuomo

made inappropriate comments to multiple women.

Mr. Biden previously said that if the investigation determined Mr. Cuomo acted inappropriately, he would call for his resignation. On Tuesday, Mr. Biden said he

stuck by those comments in calling for the Democratic Governor to step down.

The investigation found that the Governor groped, kissed or made suggestive comments to 11 women and created a "toxic" workplace in violation of the law.

In a recorded statement after the Attorney General unveiled the findings of the five-month independent inquiry, Mr. Cuomo denied he had acted inappropriately and made clear he had no plans to resign. The civil investigation will not directly lead to criminal charges against him.

## Fully vaccinated one-third as likely to get COVID-19: study

They may also be less likely to pass on the virus to others

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Fully vaccinated people in England were one-third as likely to test positive for COVID-19, according to an ongoing survey of the population released on Wednesday.

The latest findings, from a long-running study by scientists at Imperial College London and market research company Ipsos MORI, were based on 98,233 swabs taken between June 24 and July 12.

They showed one in 160 people infected with coronavirus, with a prevalence rate of 1.21% for unvaccinated respondents and 0.40% for those fully jabbed.

The study also found that double vaccinated people

may be less likely to pass on the virus to others than those who have not received a vaccine.

However, officials and scientists in Britain have urged caution after the government eased all virus curbs in England on July 19, including the legal requirement to wear masks in certain indoor settings.

A U.S. government document leaked last week warned that infections among fully vaccinated people are not as rare as previously thought and that such cases are highly contagious.

Paul Elliott, a Professor at Imperial's School of Public Health and director of the survey programme, said the

findings "confirm our previous data showing that both doses of a vaccine offer good protection against getting infected". "However, we can also see that there is still a risk of infection, as no vaccine is 100% effective."

COVID-19 cases registered daily by Britain's Health Ministry have declined since the relaxation of rules, while population surveys have suggested they may still be rising, albeit at a slower rate. The trend has surprised experts and officials, who predicted a surge in new infections. The Imperial-Ipsos study - covering the period up to July 12 - showed even then cases were climbing more gradually than during the previous month.

## China restricts overseas travel to curb cases

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

China on Wednesday tightened overseas travel restrictions for its citizens as part of efforts to contain rising coronavirus cases, after reporting its highest number of infections in months fuelled by the Delta variant.

Local governments have tested entire cities and locked down millions, with the official figures on Wednesday revealing 71 new infections - the most since January, but still a low case-load despite the outbreak spreading to dozens of cities. The immigration authority said it would stop issuing ordinary passports and other documents needed for exiting the country in "non-essential and non-emergency" cases.

## Abdul Qayyum Niazi elected PoK premier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD

Abdul Qayyum Niazi of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party was on Wednesday elected the new premier of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, hours after Prime Minister Imran Khan nominated him for the top post.

Mr. Niazi received 33 votes in the 53-member newly formed Legislative Assembly of PoK, whereas joint Opposition candidate Chaudhry Latif Akbar secured just 15 votes, according to the official result. He succeeds Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's Raja Farooq Haider, whose tenure ended on July 30.

Mr. Niazi had won the Legislative Assembly election from the Abbaspur-Poonch area. Mr. Khan's party secured 32 seats in the House.

## China coaxing wayward herd of elephants home

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
DAQIAO

First the entire village is shooed indoors, its power supply is cut, and finally bananas and other elephant treats are dumped on the opposite side of town to coax the uninvited guests to pass through.

So goes the routine welcome ceremony for China's wayward herd of 14 wild elephants, whose wandering ways have sparked an unusual operation aimed at steering them home across steep, winding, and often populated terrain.

The group left its home range far south near the Laos border 16 months ago for a grand food tour across rich farmland in southeastern Yunnan province.

Now it's a jumbo task for the three dozen forestry firefighters who have been charged with herding the



A drone image of the herd in Yunnan province. • AFP

the elephants safely home. This includes tracking the night-moving animals that can disappear into thick forest and trek up to 30 kilometres a day using drones.

It's the furthest north that China's wild Asian elephants have travelled in recorded times, said Yang Xiangyu, a task force leader. They've travelled more than 700 km, Mr. Yang said, and though now pointed homeward, still have several hundred more to go.

# U.S. ships 110 mn doses of COVID-19 vaccine abroad

India is keen to resolve the indemnity issue, says official

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
SUHASINI HAIDAR

The U.S. has shipped more than 110 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to middle- and low-income countries, President Joe Biden announced on Tuesday. This exceeds a commitment to donate at least 80 million doses of mostly AstraZeneca vaccine globally.

India did not appear on an official list of countries that had received U.S. vaccines, a consequence of unresolved liability issues between the government of India and vaccine manufacturers.

An Indian official involved in the vaccine negotiations told *The Hindu* that the government is keen to resolve the indemnity issue for both donations as well as commercial orders for the three U.S. vaccine manufacturers (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson), and all vaccine shipments from the U.S. are held up for now.

In an interview to NDTV, the government's vaccine panel chief, N.K. Arora, suggested that India could reconsider its position on sovereign indemnity for U.S. vaccines if a larger number of doses, between "100 and 200 million doses" were offered, but that India is going ahead with its vaccine plans to inoculate all eligible adults with COVID-19 vaccines without factoring in vaccines imported from the U.S.

### Liability waiver

Thus far, India has only given approval to pharma company Cipla on Tuesday to import the Moderna mRNA vaccine. In early July, a shipment of 7.5 million doses of Moderna vaccines



The U.S. had committed to donating at least 80 million doses of vaccine.

be produced in India by the Hyderabad-based Biological E.

### Far from clear

But the road ahead is far from clear. After the press reported earlier this week that J&J had withdrawn an application for accelerated approval of its Janssen COVID-19 vaccine in India, the company said it remained in talks with the Indian government on "how best to accelerate our ability to deliver our COVID-19 vaccine to India". In Parliament last week, Minister of State for Health Bharti Pravin Pawar said the government-instituted vaccine panel was in "continuous dialogue with Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson to discuss and address various issues including the issue of indemnity".

Most of the 111,701,000 doses donated by the U.S. so far have been distributed via COVAX. Indonesia has received the largest share (8 million doses) according to a 'factsheet' released by the White House on Tuesday. Several South Asian countries were on the list: Afghanistan (3.3 million doses), Bhutan (500,000 doses), Nepal (1.5 million doses), Sri Lanka (1.5 million doses), Pakistan and Bangladesh (5.5 million doses each).

Mr. Biden said that countries which had vaccinated their populations should provide vaccines or financial support to the 100 or so nations in need of vaccines.

"We had that discussion at the G7 [Group of Seven]. A number of those countries said they were going to do that. Some have followed through," he said.

**HE WON 4 GOLD MEDALS FOR HIS COUNTRY. AND A BATTLE FOR HIS RACE.**



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MARKET WATCH

	04-08-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	54,370	1.02
US Dollar	74.19	0.12
Gold	46,992	0.22
Brent oil	71.34	-1.04

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	694.70	-10.35
Asian Paints	3018.60	-8.40
Axis Bank	753.80	15.20
Bajaj Auto	3832.00	3.80
Bajaj Finserv	14187.20	-107.80
Bajaj Finance	6359.15	27.25
Bharti Airtel	574.40	-5.80
BPCCL	457.15	-6.25
Britannia Ind	3578.30	5.10
Cipla	939.65	11.50
Coal India	144.70	0.45
Divis Lab	4964.25	-42.60
Dr Reddys Lab	4768.80	47.10
Eicher Motors	2641.80	-7.50
Grasim Ind	1554.85	-37.55
HCL Tech	1039.95	0.50
HDFC	2676.05	121.40
HDFC Bank	1465.30	30.60
HDFC Life	675.30	1.50
Hero MotoCorp	2805.50	-13.60
Hindalco	442.70	-6.10
Hind Unilever	2377.10	-9.75
ICICI Bank	714.65	24.25
IndusInd Bank	1020.55	-1.50
Infosys	1649.25	-5.95
Indian Oil Corp	105.30	-0.85
ITC	208.60	-1.30
JSW Steel	747.25	6.95
Kotak Bank	1749.95	64.30
L&T	1623.20	-11.15
M&M	766.25	-4.60
Maruti Suzuki	7102.90	-96.50
Nestle India Ltd.	18057.35	-226.75
NTPC	117.85	0.20
ONGC	117.35	-0.55
PowerGrid Corp	175.25	0.80
Reliance Ind	2103.75	16.00
SBI Life	1136.85	5.15
State Bank	456.95	10.45
Shree Cement	29133.15	-70.35
Sun Pharma	785.75	-9.05
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	758.75	-8.90
Tata Motors	298.15	-5.55
Tata Steel	1416.20	9.00
TCS	3273.95	-10.95
Tech Mahindra	1216.50	-9.75
Titan	1799.60	-40.60
UltraTech Cement	7750.00	-93.25
UPL	785.00	-5.55
Wipro	596.80	-2.60

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 04

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.99	74.31
Euro	87.72	88.13
British Pound	103.08	103.53
Japanese Yen (100)	67.76	68.06
Chinese Yuan	11.45	11.50
Swiss Franc	81.78	82.14
Singapore Dollar	54.82	55.07
Canadian Dollar	59.02	59.31
Malaysian Ringgit	17.52	17.61

Source: Indian Bank

RBI extends deadline on current account norms

MUMBAI The RBI has allowed banks time till October 31 to implement its guidelines on opening and operating of current accounts. The time should be utilised to arrive at mutually satisfactory resolutions, the RBI said.

# SBI Q1 net jumps 55% to record ₹6,504 cr. on lower provisions

Stress seen in home, gold and SME loan segments, observes chairman Khara

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI**  
State Bank of India (SBI) on Wednesday said first-quarter standalone net profit rose 55.3% to ₹6,504 crore due to lower loan loss provisioning and sizeable recovery from a bad loan account. This was its highest quarterly net profit, the lender said in a filing.

Profit was lifted by the recovery of ₹1,692 crore from the Kingfisher Airlines loan account during the quarter. Loan loss provisions slid 46.6% to ₹5,030 crore.

Net interest income rose 3.74% to ₹27,638 crore while domestic net interest margin fell 9 basis points to 3.15%. Provision Coverage Ratio declined 39 bps to 85.9%.

Slippages rose multifold



**Payback time:** The highest-ever quarterly profit included recovery of ₹1,692 crore from Kingfisher Airlines. \*A.M. FARUQUI

to ₹15,666 crore from ₹3,637 crore. But a significant part of this amount had been pulled back in July, chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara said at a video press conference.

"The most impact was felt in May. The localised lock-

downs had significant impact on our business and collections.... We expect recovery to improve in the coming quarters," he added. He declined to give any guidance for FY22 citing the uncertain economic environ-

ment. He said stress was seen in the housing, gold and SME loan segments.

During the quarter, the bank received loan 'restructuring 2.0' proposals worth ₹7,302 crore, of which ₹5,246 crore were approved.

Gross NPAs rose 3.55% to ₹1,34,259 crore, while net NPAs increased 1.05% to ₹43,153 crore. COVID-19 related contingency provisioning was at ₹9,065 crore.

The loan book grew 6.27%. Despite stress in home loans, the chairman said SBI would continue to expand the size of the bank's housing loan book.

"There is no reason to worry... We have no plans to slow down the home loan book," Mr. Khara said.

## KVB Q1 profit rises a tad to ₹109 crore

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI**

Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) on Wednesday reported first-quarter net profit rose marginally by ₹3 crore to ₹109 crore.

Total income from operations contracted to ₹1,596 crore from ₹1,693 crore, while net interest income rose 14% to ₹638 crore.

Net interest margin stood at 3.55%, the lender said in a statement.

Non-interest income (including treasury profit) declined to ₹220 crore from ₹317 crore. Cost of deposits improved by 84 basis points to 4.53%, while yield on advances contracted to 8.55% from 9.32%.

Gross NPAs declined to 7.97% from 8.34%, while net NPAs rose to 3.69% from 3.44%.

## CERT-In tracks 6.07 lakh cybersecurity incidents

MoS says 12,000 related to govt. bodies

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) observed more than 6.07 lakh cybersecurity incidents in the first six months of 2021, of which about 12,000 were related to government organisations, the government informed Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

A total of 6,07,220 cybersecurity incidents were observed during 2021 up to June, according to CERT-In.

The data was shared by Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar in a written reply to Lok Sabha.

Mr. Chandrasekhar added that according to the logs analysed and made available to CERT-In, the IP



addresses of the computers from where the attacks appeared to originate belonged to various countries including Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, the Netherlands, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, U.S.A. and Vietnam.

## Chola Financial Q1 profit slides 39% to ₹357 cr.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI**

Cholamandalam Financial Holdings' (CFHL) consolidated net profit for Q1 FY22 contracted by 39% to ₹357 crore. The Murugappa Group firm's revenue from operations, however, grew 11% to ₹3,591 crore.

Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co. Ltd., in which CFHL holds about 45.46% stake, was adversely impacted by the second wave, leading to shift of focus from business to well-being of the affected persons.

This resulted in a setback in Q1 performance in the disbursements and collections, the company said in a filing. Disbursements rose by a marginal 1% as vehicle purchases were predominantly deferred.

# Service sector contracts for a third straight month: PMI

'Offsets manufacturing rally; overall, jobs dip for 17th month'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

India's service sector contracted for the third straight month in July, with job losses extending to an eighth successive month, as per IHS Markit's Purchasing Managers' Index. The PMI stood at 45.4, marginally better than the 41.2 recorded in June.

A score above 50 indicates an expansion. For the first time in a year, services firms were pessimistic about the outlook for the 12-month period on worries about the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation and profit margins.

Consumer services was the worst-affected during July, indicating that the unlocking across States had failed to lift confidence in the resumption of contact-

**The performance further impacted private sector sales, output, employment**

**POLLYANNA DE LIMA**  
Economics Associate Director, IHS Markit

sensitive activity, while transport and storage was the only subsector to see higher sales in the past month.

"In line with sustained falls in new work, there was a further reduction in service sector jobs during July," IHS Markit said in its Services PMI statement for India. "Employment contracted for the eighth consecutive month, albeit at a moderate pace that was slower than that seen in June," it added.

The service sector's performance in July is in contrast to the manufacturing

sector which logged its highest PMI in three months and saw a pause in job losses for the first time since the pandemic's onset last March.

"The subdued performance of services more than offset a rebound across manufacturing, causing further contractions in private sector sales, output and employment," said Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit.

India's overall output, manufacturing and services combined, thus contracted for the third month in a row as the Composite PMI Output Index was 49.2 in July. June's reading was 43.1.

"Private sector employment decreased for the seventeenth month in a row in July," IHS Markit added.

## 'CV segment may recover in second half of FY22'

'Agri tractor market to sustain growth'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI**

Wheels India said it expected the commercial vehicle (CV) segment to recover during the second half of the year, albeit on a low base.

Addressing the company's 62nd AGM, chairman S. Ram said the CV segment remained muted currently and was expected to post some recovery during the second half.

Similarly, the passenger vehicle market is expected to show reasonable growth this year, he added. Mr. Ram also said he expected the agri-tractor market to sustain the growth momentum this year along with the construction equipment market. "The increasing adoption of aluminium wheels



S. Ram \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

on passenger vehicles will limit the growth of steel passenger car wheels," he said.

"We have started production of cast aluminium wheels at our new plant in Thervoy Kandigai near Chennai and started exporting these to the U.S. Also, we see a strong demand for forged aluminium wheels in export markets," he added.

## 'U.S. services sector grows at record rate'

**REUTERS WASHINGTON**

A measure of U.S. services industry activity jumped to a record high in July, boosted by the shift in spending to services from goods, but businesses continued to face rising prices because of supply-chain constraints.

The Institute for Supply Management said its non-manufacturing activity index raced to 64.1 in July, the highest in the series' history, from 60.1 in June.

Demand is rotating back to services as nearly half of the population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, allowing people to travel and attend sporting events among services-related activities that were curbed early in the pandemic in favour of goods.

# SPORT

## Bumrah strikes form, England shot out for 183

Scalps four while Shami takes three; Root hits half-century but receives no support; Ashwin omitted

INDIA IN ENG

**REUTERS NOTTINGHAM**

India's Jasprit Bumrah took four wickets as England suffered a batting collapse and slumped to 183 all out on the opening day of the first Test at Trent Bridge on Wednesday.

Kohli's men denied England a breakthrough and were 21 for no loss at stumps, with both Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul - only drafted in after Mayank Agwaral suffered a suspected concussion while batting in the nets on Monday - unbeaten on nine.

Bumrah, who struck with the fifth ball of the match to remove Rory Burns for one of four ducks in the innings, took four for 46 in 20.4 overs. Fellow paceman Mohammed Shami also impressed, finishing with three for 28 in 17 overs.

England captain Joe Root, who opted to bat, top-scored with 64 and was the only batsman to pass 30, with Jonny Bairstow making 29 on his Test return.

**The slump**  
Bairstow's exit at the stroke of tea sparked a slump that saw England, which had been 138 for three, lose six wickets for 22 runs against an attack without Ishant Sharma and off-spinner R. Ashwin, both dropped.

Shardul Thakur, who took the prize wicket of Root, in a return of two of 41, said: "Bairstow was going well. He was poised to score a fifty, so getting him and Root was crucial.



**What a start!** A Bumrah special traps Burns in front in the opening over of the match. \*AFP

ways a good wicket to have," added Shardul.

Remarkably, this was the first red-ball innings this season for Bairstow and Jos Buttler, who was out for nought.

"There's a lot of white-ball cricket in the middle of summer, that's always a challenge," said England batting coach Marcus Trescothick. "We'd like a bit more red-ball cricket."

In June, England suffered a humiliating eight-wicket loss to New Zealand at Edgbaston that condemned it to a first home series loss in seven years, prompting former captain Alastair Cook to say the current top order "can't handle" the pressure of Test cricket. Most of the England

batsmen struggled again on Wednesday.

Root's decision to bat first after winning the toss on a green-tinged pitch that promised to aid India's four-man pace attack was a bold decision given England's well-known batting frailties.

It took India just five balls to reduce England to zero for one, with left-hander Burns lbw on review to a Bumrah delivery that cut back.

No. 3 batsman Zak Crawley came to the crease having made just 123 runs in 12 Test innings after a brilliant 267 against Pakistan at Southampton last year.

Crawley scored 27 before he was caught behind after what seemed a speculative

review by the tourists revealed a faint nick off Mohammed Siraj - much to the relief of the Indian skipper.

Opening batsman Dom Sibley, whose 18 took 70 balls, then chipped Shami straight to Rahul at short mid-wicket.

Root and Bairstow, however, kept India at bay. However, their fourth-wicket stand of 72 ended off the final delivery before tea when the latter was struck in front.

**Falling cheaply**

England's 138 for four at the interval soon became 138 for five when Dan Lawrence was caught behind down the leg-side off Shami for nought before Buttler, who looked desperately out of touch, nicked

Bumrah to Pant for a 17-ball duck.

When he reached 23, Root surpassed Cook's England record of 15,737 runs in all formats.

**Shardul gets Root**

His fifty took 89 balls before he was trapped in front by Shardul for 64. The England skipper did not bother to review the decision.

England's tail, apart from Sam Curran's unbeaten 27, struggled and it was all over when Bumrah castled James Anderson.

**SCOREBOARD**

**ENGLAND - 1ST INNINGS**  
Rory Burns lbw b Bumrah 0 (5b), Dom Sibley c Rahul b Shami 18 (70b, 2x4), Zak Crawley c Pant b Siraj 27 (68b, 4x4), Joe Root lbw b Shardul 64 (108b, 11x4), Jonny Bairstow lbw b Shami 29 (71b, 4x4), Dan Lawrence c Pant b Shami 0 (4b), Jos Buttler c Pant b Bumrah 0 (18b), Sam Curran (not out) 27 (37b, 4x4, 1x6), Ollie Robinson c Shami b Shardul 0 (3b), Stuart Broad lbw b Bumrah 4 (3b, 1x4), James Anderson b Bumrah 1 (11b); Extras (b-1, lb-8, nb-4): 13; Total (in 65.4 overs): 183.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-0 (Burns, 0.5 ov), 2-42 (Crawley, 20.6), 3-66 (Sibley, 27.3), 4-138 (Bairstow, 50.2), 5-138 (Lawrence, 50.6), 6-145 (Buttler, 55.5), 7-155 (Root, 58.1), 8-155 (Robinson, 58.4), 9-160 (Broad, 59.6).

**INDIA BOWLING**  
Bumrah 20.4-4-46-4, Shami 17-2-28-3, Siraj 12-2-48-1, Shardul 13-3-41-2, Jadeja 3-0-11-0.

**INDIA - 1ST INNINGS**  
Rohit Sharma (batting) 9 (40b, 2x4), K.L. Rahul (batting) 9 (39b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-1): 3; Total (for no loss in 13 overs): 21.

**ENGLAND BOWLING**  
Anderson 3-1-9-0, Broad 5-1-9-0, Robinson 4-3-1-0, Curran 1-1-0-0.  
**Toss:** England.

## Sindhu credits her team for Tokyo bronze, sets sights on Paris 2024

Thanks coach Park for the sacrifices he has made



**Winning combo:** P.V. Sindhu, accompanied by coach Park Tae-sang, left, and fitness trainer Srikanth Varma, addresses the media on Wednesday. \*NAGARA GOPAL

**BADMINTON**

**V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM HYDERABAD**

P.V. Sindhu said her bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics was the culmination of a team effort, with everyone involved in her journey making several sacrifices to help her step onto the podium.

**Special feeling**

"I am grateful to each and every team member who made me realise the dream of another Olympic medal. No doubt, the target was gold.

"But, getting a bronze is also a special feeling for me given the backdrop of how the pandemic disrupted the whole world, especially our tournaments schedule," Sindhu told the media at her residence on Wednesday.

"I must thank my coach [Park Tae-Sang, who was with her at the briefing] for the kind of sacrifices he has made by missing his family for almost a year since he

joined me," she said.

"It is a dream come true for all of us, including the sparring partners from Suchitra Academy, the two gentlemen Praveen Raju and Pradeep Raju from that Academy, fitness trainer Srikanth Verma and physio Evangeline," Sindhu said.

"Well, when my fitness trainer says that I could withstand the training load without any complaints, I must remind myself that unless we put in that kind of effort we cannot be in this position [with a second medal in as many Games].

"This is just the beginning and there are many more laurels to come in the run-up to the Paris Olympics," she said.

**Planning and effort**

"It has been a really tough year in the run-up to the Olympics. And, this bronze medal would not have been possible but for so much planning and effort," she said.

well and winning tournaments, then the World No.1 can also be a certainty. The preparations for the 2024 Paris Olympics will begin after a short break as the ultimate goal is to win gold there," a smiling Sindhu said.

"I will continue to train at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium," she added.

Korean coach Park said Sindhu's bronze was the most unforgettable moment of his life.

"This being my first Olympic medal as a coach, I cherish every bit of it. Come on, Sindhu let us start training from tomorrow to get the gold in Paris," he said with a big smile.

"The pandemic proved to be very tough for athletes too. We were patient right through and really worked hard," Park said.

Sindhu's fitness trainer at Suchitra Academy, Srikanth said the training programme for the shuttler was torturous and any other athlete would have given up.

# Dahiya roars back to enter gold medal round

Trailing 2-9 in the second period, he pins down his Kazakh opponent; Deepak and Anshu stay in the hunt for bronze



Y.B. SARANGI

Ravi Kumar Dahiya's clinical performance earned him a place in the final of the men's freestyle 57kg weight class and ensured another medal for the country in the Tokyo Olympics on Wednesday.

After Sushil Kumar, Worlds bronze medalist and two-time Asian champion Ravi became the second Indian wrestler to book a berth in the final.

## Meets Uguev in final

Dahiya will take on two-time World champion Zaur Uguev of Russia in the title clash.

The Indian made a sensa-

tion comeback to beat double Worlds medallist Kazakh Nurislam Sanayev 'by fall' in the semifinals.

Leading 2-1 in the first period, he trailed 2-9 in the second as the Kazakh defied his head injury to roll the Indian over with a double-leg hold.

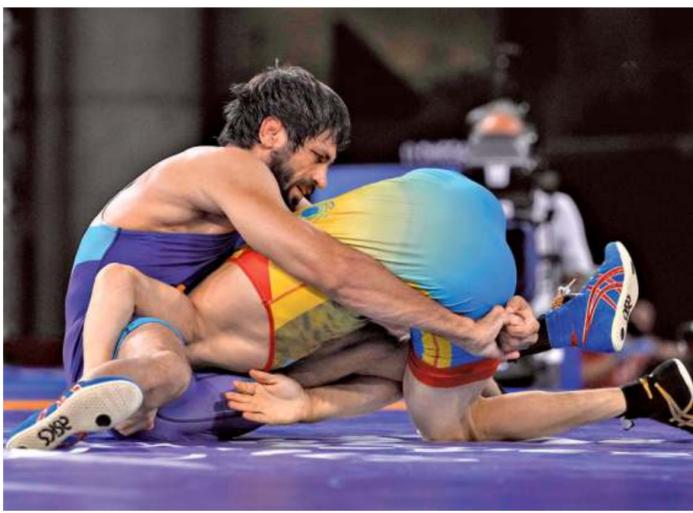
However, Dahiya closed the gap to 5-9 and showed his class to pin down the Kazakh spectacularly to reach the final.

Earlier, the Indian beat Pan American silver medalist Colombian Oscar Tigreiros 13-2 and Bulgarian Georgi Vangelov 14-4 on technical superiority to make the last four.

## Double leg attack

In his opening bout, which was 2-2 after the first period, Dahiya relied on a double leg attack on Tigreiros for a crucial take-down.

The Indian accumulated points at a faster pace to outclass the Colombian.



**Calm and composed:** Dahiya regained his grip on the contest in the nick of time. • AP

In the quarterfinal against Vangelov, Dahiya was 6-0 up in the first period.

He outwitted Vangelov in an action-packed second pe-

riod to wrap up the contest with 16 seconds left on the clock.

Worlds silver medalist Deepak Punia won two bouts

before losing to former World champion David Taylor of the USA 10-0 in the 86kg semifinals.

He will face either Ali Sha-

banau or Myles Amine in the bronze medal contest.

Anshu Malik (women's 57kg), who went down fighting to double Worlds medalist Iryna Kurachkina 8-2 in the first round, had a reason to celebrate her birthday on Thursday as she made it to the repechage round following the Belarusian's progress to the final.

Anshu will meet Rio Olympics silver medalist Russian Valeria Koblova in her first repechage match.

Deepak claimed his opening bout on technical superiority, beating African champion Nigerian Ekereke Agiomor 12-1.

## Digging deep

He staved off a strong challenge from Chinese Lin Zhushen to post a 6-3 win and reach the semifinals.

At 3-3, Lin had the upper hand. A desperate Deepak dug deep to exhibit a spectacular takedown on the Chinese and win the bout.

# Lovlina's remarkable journey ends with a bronze medal

Surmeneli outclasses and outpunches Indian in semifinals

## BOXING

Y.B. SARANGI

Lovlina Borgohain finished with a bronze after being outpunched by World champion and top seed Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey in a women's 69kg semifinal bout on Wednesday.

Lovlina, a double Worlds bronze medallist, gave it her best shot before losing 0-5 in the bout thoroughly dominated by Surmeneli.

## Third Indian

After Vijender Singh (2008) and M.C. Mary Kom (2012), the 23-year-old Assam woman has become the third Indian boxer to claim an Olympics bronze.

Boxing with confidence, Surmeneli landed clean, powerful and accurate combinations on Lovlina's head to take the early advantage.



**Hitting away:** Busenaz Surmeneli, right, relentlessly pounded Lovlina Borgohain and cruised into the final. • PTI

The taller Indian, who received a standing count, replied with some well-directed counters but lost the first round 0-5.

The Turkish boxer continued to attack with the same intensity even as Lovlina delivered some body shots and right hooks in the second. The Indian, who was served

a warning, felt the fury of Surmeneli's punches.

Though the Turkish boxer continued to land solid blows on target, Lovlina fought on bravely and lasted the course despite receiving another standing count. Surmeneli won the last two rounds, like she did the first, to book a spot in the final.

# 'I couldn't achieve what I set out to'

It has been my dream to win an Olympic gold medal, says Lovlina

SHYAM VASUDEVAN  
TOKYO

Lovlina Borgohain was bitterly disappointed that she couldn't make it to the gold-medal bout.

"I've just lost, and I am not really happy about it. I've had to be content with the bronze medal throughout my career. A medal is a medal, whether it is an Olympic medal or an inter-district one," she said right after the bout.

When asked if she realised the gravity of her achievement, which puts her among the elite in India's sporting history, she said: "Ever since I began boxing it has been my dream to win an Olympic gold medal."

"I trained and spent every moment towards this goal. It feels good that I have a medal, but I could not achieve what I set out to. I came here with the target of winning the gold medal, I was sure that I would win the gold."

Lovlina admitted her strategy was ineffective against



**Pleased:** Lovlina with coach Bergamasco. • TWITTER/@BFI OFFICIAL

her Turkish opponent.

"She was strong, and I knew she would fight aggressively. I felt that if I played defensively then I would have to take more punches. I wanted to punch back as good as I got hit," she said.

Surmeneli, one bout away from fulfilling her promise to Turkey president Tayyip Er-

dogan of winning Olympic gold, said she gets her aggressive approach from coach Cahit Sume, a former Olympian.

## Be aggressive

"My coach is the man who taught me to play aggressively. I feel I can prove myself by being aggressive and danc-

## The Lovlina file

- Age: 23
- Birthplace: Assam
- Family: Parents (Tiken and Mamoni) and twin sisters (Lima and Licha)
- Sports: Did Muay thai before taking up boxing in 2012
- Weight category: Welterweight
- Achievements: Bronze in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics
- Bronze in the 2018 and 2019 editions of the World Championships in Delhi and Ulan-Ude
- Bronze in the 2017 and 2021 Asian championships in Ho Chi Minh City and Dubai
- Awards: Arjuna Award in 2020

ing in the ring is my signature," she said.

She added that she got some messages from Indian fans on Twitter, who told her not to defeat Lovlina.

# de Grasse finally nails gold

Hurdler McLaughlin sets world record; Kenyan 1-2 in 800m



**Long time coming:** Canada's Andre de Grasse, centre, powered past Americans Kenneth Bednarek and Noah Lyles to take the 200m, his first global title. • REUTERS

## ATHLETICS

STAN RAYAN

Andre de Grasse has been the 'nearly-man' for long, winning silver and bronze frequently at the Olympics and Worlds, watching others go past him to embrace glory. All that changed on Wednesday as the 26-year-old won the 200m, his first global title and Canada's first gold in 93 years in the event, shocking World champion and season-leader Noah Lyles.

de Grasse had won the 200m silver, behind Usain Bolt, in Rio and had taken the 100m bronze in Tokyo and it looked like he would have to wait longer, for Lyles was in the front at 150m. But the Canadian produced a superb finish to triumph in a world-leading 19.62s. Americans Kenneth Bednarek (19.68) and Lyles (19.74) took silver and bronze.

For the second successive day, there was a world record in 400m hurdles. This time it was 21-year-old American Sydney McLaughlin who overtook defending champion Dalilah Muhammad in the final straight to better her record with 51.46s for gold with Dalilah (51.58) also coming under the previous record.

Emmanuel Korir and Ferguson Rotich made it a Kenyan 1-2 in men's 800m, while Poland's Patryk Dobek, a 400m hurdler who began running 800m this year, took bronze.

**Chemutai's distinction** Peruth Chemutai became the first Ugandan woman to win an Olympic gold when she pulled off a surprise win in the 3000m steeplechase in 9:01.45s. Poland's Wojciech Nowicki won the men's hammer throw with a personal best 82.52m.

There were disappoint-

ments in multi-eventers with World champions Niklas Kaul (decathlon) and Katarina Johnson-Thompson (heptathlon) pulling up with injuries.

## MEDALS RACE

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
China	32	22	16	70
USA	25	31	23	79
Japan	21	7	12	40
Great Britain	15	18	15	48
Australia	15	4	17	36
ROC	14	21	18	53
Germany	8	8	16	32
France	6	10	9	25
Italy	6	9	15	30
Netherlands	6	8	9	23
<b>65. India</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

ROC: Russian Olympic Committee

# Neeraj qualifies for final in style

STAN RAYAN

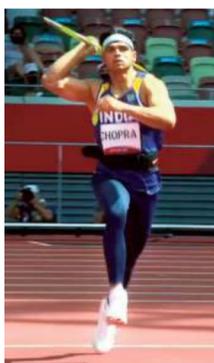
Neeraj Chopra surprisingly topped the qualification round with his opening effort and entered the final even as some of the world's top javelin throwers struggled for answers. The 23-year-old Asian Games champion's 86.65 was way better than the automatic qualification standard (83.50m).

Germany's world leader Johannes Vetter, who had been consistent over 90m this year, was in danger of being eliminated at one stage after two 82m throws

before making the cut with an 85.64m for the second spot. Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem (85.16m) was third, making him the first from his country to enter an Olympic final in athletics.

Neeraj is the first Indian javelin thrower to enter an Olympic final and the first to top the qualification round.

Meanwhile, Asian silver medalist Shivpal Singh, the other Indian in the fray (PB 86.23m), was nearly 10m behind that as he finished 12th in his group and 27th overall with 76.40m. Only the top 12 made it to Saturday's final.



Neeraj. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

# India goes down to Argentina in a bruising contest

Failure to utilise the opportunities costs the team dear

## HOCKEY

SHYAM VASUDEVAN  
TOKYO

The Indian women's inspiring run ended in the semifinals as the team slipped to a 1-2 loss to former world champion Argentina. Rani Rampal's side will face Great Britain in the bronze medal match on Friday. At the end of a bruising contest, the Argentines revelled while the Indians were left dejected.

## Brilliant start

The Sjoerd Marijne-coached team made a brilliant start as Gurjit Kaur scored off a penalty corner - her second in as many games - in the 90th second.

Argentina women's team, which has won medals at four consecutive Olympics (2000 to 2012), slowly started making inroads, winning

a penalty corner in the eighth minute but nothing came of it. The world's second-ranked team mounted pressure on India, effectively combining aerial passes and scorching runs on the flanks but the Indian defence stood resolute. Argentina came out in the second quarter like Gaucho cowgirls running wild in the Pampas and found the equaliser in the 18th minute. Their 37-year-old captain Maria Noel Barriouev scored a bullet drag-flick to restore parity.

India's inability to close out opportunities cost it dear as two penalty-corner chances went begging in the 26th minute. Neha Goyal had a great chance four minutes later when she stormed into the penalty circle, but she shied away from taking a shot, looked for a pass instead, and was robbed of the

ball. Argentina's Agustina Albertario was a menace on the left and made a marauding run in the 33rd minute that served as a warning. Barriouev scored her second goal of the evening in the 36th minute from another penalty corner. The goal, which took a heavy deflection off an Indian defender, was her 197th international goal in 344 appearances.

It was the beginning of the end for India as Argentina dug deep and fortified its defence. India had a few stray chances, but the goal remained elusive. The side had a sliver of hope in the last minute, but Argentina goalkeeper Belen Succi showed great reflexes to keep out Navneet Kaur's deflection from close range.

Argentina takes on the Netherlands, which defeated Great Britain 5-1, in the final.

## WEDNESDAY'S GOLD WINNERS

- ROC: Artistic swimming: Duet
- Andre de Grasse (Can): Athletics: Men's 200m
- Emmanuel Korir (Ken): Athletics: Men's 800m
- Wojciech Nowicki (Pol): Athletics: Men's Hammer Throw
- Peruth Chemutai (Uga): Athletics: Women's 3000m Steeplechase
- Sydney McLaughlin (USA): Athletics: Women's 400m Hurdles
- Arlen Lopez (Cub): Boxing: Men's Light Heavy
- Italy: Cycling Track: Men's Team Pursuit
- Ben Maher (GBR): Equestrian: Jumping Individual
- Ana Marcela Cunha (Bra): Marathon Swimming: Women's 10km
- Australia: Sailing: Men's Two Person Dinghy - 470
- Great Britain: Sailing: Women's Two Person Dinghy - 470
- Sakura Yozozumi (Jpn): Skateboarding: Women's Park
- Lasha Talakhadze (Geo): Weightlifting: Men's +109kg
- Mohammadreza Gerai (Iri): Wrestling: Men's Greco-Roman 67kg
- Zhan Beleniuk (Ukr): Wrestling: Men's Greco-Roman 87kg
- Yukako Kawai (Jpn): Wrestling: Women's Freestyle 62kg



**Painful loss:** The Indian players are distraught after losing to Argentina in the semifinals. • PTI

# Aditi tied second after round 1

Has five birdies and a bogey; Diksha places 56th; Sagstrom leads

## TOKYO OLYMPICS

RAKESH RAO

Last-hole bogey cost Aditi Ashok a share of the lead following a round of four-under 67 on the first day of the Olympic Games golf competition on Wednesday.

Making a second successive Olympic appearance, Aditi ended the day in the tied second spot with American Nelly Korda. Sweden's Madelene Sagstrom led the field with a 66. Diksha Dagar, a late Indian entry in the 60-player field, was tied 56th after a 76.

**Two good rounds in Rio**  
In Rio, Aditi had two good rounds and was among the top-10 before fading away to the tied 41st place.

"Last time I think it was more just enjoying the experience and staying at the (Olympic) Village, seeing all the other athletes, but this time I think definitely here to have a good finish, hopefully give my best, try and win a medal," said Aditi, who shot two birdies on the front nine and another three after the



Consistent: Aditi Ashok was steady for most part of the first round. • REUTERS

turn. "I think having played the Olympics once definitely gets you more prepared, you're not as overawed by it. I mean it's still the Olympics, it's still really exciting, but, yeah, definitely more prepared for this one."

## GOLF

"My mom is caddying for me. Last time, I had my dad 'on the bag', so the experience was just so incredible. I was like I want to have my mom next time and I made good on that promise," she said.

"This time, I think I have a lot more experience. Just playing on the LPGA Tour

the last five years, kind of, has made me way better as a player than I was at Rio.

"And I think the Olympic experience was, I didn't finish as well as I wanted to, but just seeing the effect that it had on golf in India was inspiring and that's kind of what motivated me for this one as well," said Aditi.

# Belarus' Tsimanouskaya leaves for Poland

AGENCIES  
TOKYO

Belarus' Krystsina Tsimanouskaya, who had taken refuge in the Polish embassy, left Tokyo, escorted by officials and wearing a mask and sunglasses with "I RUN CLEAN" written on them. Her husband has also been granted a humanitarian visa by Poland.

The IOC said it was investigating the case, which began after the sprinter publicly criticised her coaches during the Games.

In a separate development, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said it has suspended its investigation into a gesture on the podium by American silver medalist shot-putter Raven Saunders, following the death of the



Tsimanouskaya. • REUTERS

athlete's mother.

**Yosozumi brings cheer**  
Sakura Yosozumi of Japan has won the inaugural women's park event in skateboarding, solidifying Japan's dominance of the sport making its debut.

The Italian quartet stopped the clock in 3:42.032 to break its own world record to win the gold, ahead of world champion Denmark, in the men's team pursuit cycling final.

# CSK's Indian players to leave for UAE next week

## IPL

SPORTS REPORTER  
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings' Indian players who are in the country will leave for UAE on August 13 or August 14 for the second leg of the Indian Premier League to be held

from September 19.

The franchise will be based out of Dubai like last year.

CSK will play in the first match of the second leg against Mumbai Indians, against whom it played its last game as well in New Delhi before the suspension of the league.

# Bangladesh wins again

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
DHAKA

Afif Hossain (37 n.o.) and Nurul Hasan (22 n.o.) and their 56-run sixth-wicket partnership helped Bangladesh beat Australia by five wickets in the second Twenty-20 International, and take a 2-0 lead in the five-match series, here on Wednesday.

Earlier pace bowler Mustafizur Rahman took three wickets to restrict Australia to 121 for seven.

**The scores:**  
Australia 121/7 in 20 overs (Marsh 45, Henriques 30, Mustafizur 3/23, Shoriful 2/27) lost to Bangladesh 123/5 in 18.4 overs (Afif Hossain 37 n.o., Nurul Hasan 22 n.o., Shakib 26). **Toss:** Australia. **MOM:** Afif

# Pakistan clinches series

PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pakistan clinched the rain-hit four-match T20 series against West Indies 1-0 after the fourth match ended in no result on Tuesday.

Three matches in the se-

ries ended in no result due to rain. West Indies was 30 for no loss in the three overs possible on Tuesday before rain arrived. The match was reduced to nine-overs-a-side, but that too was to no avail.

# Vaishali becomes IM

P.K. AJITH KUMAR  
KOZHIKODE

R. Vaishali scored her third and final International Master norm from the MTO Biel international chess festival in Switzerland on Wednesday. She finished the tournament with 4.5 points from nine rounds.

She had scored her first two norms from the Isle of Man Open in 2018 and the Xtracon Open in Denmark in 2019. "I already have one GM norm, and narrowly missed the second here in this tournament," Vaishali told *The Hindu* over phone from Biel.

## TOKYO TITBITS

**Talakhadze retains title with World record lifts**

Georgian weightlifter Lasha Talakhadze broke his own world record to retain the title in the men's heaviest weight (+109kg) class with a combined lift of 488 kg. Talakhadze lifted 223 kg for snatch and 265 kg for clean and jerk to also break his own world records in the two categories.

**Romashina picks up her sixth gold**

Russian Svetlana Romashina claimed her record sixth Olympic gold medal in artistic swimming, teaming with Svetlana Kolesnichenko to win the duet. Going into Tokyo,

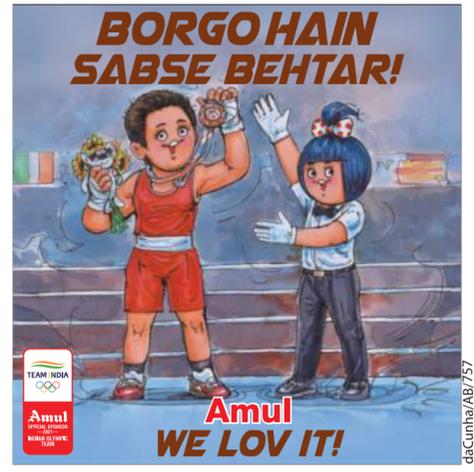
Romashina, veteran of three previous Olympics and holder of 21 World titles, had been tied for the record with compatriots Anastasia Davydova and Natalia Ishchenko.

**Gasol and three other athletes voted to IOC**

NBA veteran Pau Gasol has been voted by fellow Games athletes to represent them as a member of the IOC. He got the most votes among 30 candidates for four vacant seats on the Olympic body. The other new members are cyclist Maja Martyna Wloszczowska of Poland, Italian swimmer Federica Pellegrini and Japanese fencer Yuki Ota.



Lasha Talakhadze...strongman par excellence. • REUTERS



**Maher gives Britain yet another equestrian title**

Ben Maher earned Britain its second straight gold in equestrian individual jumping by besting five riders in a jump off. He follows Nick Skelton, who retired after winning gold at Rio, to give the country its second gold overall in the event.

**Lopez punches his way to a second Olympic gold**

Arlen Lopez won his second Olympic title to put boxing powerhouse Cuba on top of the medals



Arlen Lopez. • AFP

table in the sport, after beating Britain's Ben Whittaker in an entertaining light-heavyweight contest. Whittaker initially declined to wear his medal.

# TTFI to issue show cause notice to Manika Batra

Rejecting the services of national coach is no way to express displeasure, says secretary

RAKESH RAO  
NEW DELHI

Taking a serious view of Manika Batra's refusal to be guided by National coach Soumyadeep Roy during her singles matches in Tokyo Olympics, the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) has decided to issue a show-cause notice to her.

The unanimous decision was taken by the TTFI's Executive Board meeting on Wednesday.

The virtual meeting, chaired by the TTFI's senior vice-president Rajeev Bodas, was also briefly attended by Haryana's Deputy Chief Minister and the TTFI president, Dushyant Chautala.

According to the TTFI secretary Arun Banerjee, "What happened in Tokyo

was a serious act of indiscipline. When Manika left for Tokyo her personal coach (Sanjay Paranjpe) carried an accreditation card which limited his access to the practice area. Soon after her arrival in Tokyo, Manika demanded that Paranjpe's accreditation be upgraded to enable him to access the Field of Play.

"In spite of the best efforts of the Indian Olympic Association officials, the Organising Committee went by the International Olympic Committee norms and declined to upgrade any accreditation.

"The Board members felt that if at all Manika wanted to show her displeasure, rejecting the services of the national coach for her singles

matches was no way to do it," he said.

It may be recalled that Manika justified her demand by saying Soumyadeep Roy was the personal coach of the other Indian entry in the women's singles, Sutirtha Mukherjee and hence her personal coach be allowed access to the Field of Play for her singles matches.

"Soumyadeep was in Tokyo as the coach of the Indian team, and not as Sutirtha's coach," clarified Banerjee.

The show cause is likely to be issued on Thursday and Manika will have 10 days to respond.

Cracking the whip, the TTFI also decided to make it mandatory for all selected players, coaches and officials

to attend all National camps.

Ahead of the Tokyo Games, the TTFI organised a National camp (from June 17 to July 10) which was attended by Sharath Kamal and Surtitha at Sonepat.

G. Sathiyam stayed away, preferring to train with his personal coach S. Raman in Chennai. Manika attended the first three days before returning to Pune.

"No personal coach, sparing partners, support staff, etc. will be allowed in the camp. Medical certificates, if any, issued by only TTFI certified doctors will be valid.

"If a player chooses to stay away, he or she will not be considered for selection to participate in the event for which the camp is being held," explained Banerjee.

# Ayonika Paul clinches top spot with narrow win

Srinjoy and Vijayveer also impress with their performance

## SHOOTING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Olympian and World Championship finalist Ayonika Paul shot 249.8 to pip Ayushi Podder by a half point to the top spot in women's air rifle in the second National shooting selection trials at the Dr. Karni Singh Range.

In the 24-shot final, Ayonika had a good foundation in the first 10 shots and retained the favourable flow to stay on top. She had qualified with a modest score of 627.4, which incidentally was the best score in the women's field.

The topper in the men's air rifle event in the first

trial, Paarth Makhija was in irrepressible form, shooting 632.1 in qualification, but was pushed to the third spot in the final by Kiran Jadhav and Akhil Sheoran.

Srinjoy Datta was impressive in both qualification (630.7) and final (251.3) as he finished ahead of Rudranksh Patil and Yash Vardhan.

In junior men's rapid fire pistol, Vijayveer Sidhu, who had won the silver in the Delhi World Cup this season, finished on top ahead of Adarsh Singh and Anish Bhanwala.

**The results: 10m air rifle: Men:** 1. Kiran Jadhav 252.6 (628.6); 2. Akhil Sheoran 252.5 (627.8); 3. Paarth Makhija 230.3 (632.1).

**Juniors:** 1. Rajpreet Singh 252.8 (628.7); 2. Dhanush Srikanth 251.9 (630.2); 3. Paarth Makhija 231.0 (632.1). **Youth:** 1. Srinjoy Datta 251.3 (630.7); 2. Rudranksh Patil 250.0 (630.7); 3. Yash Vardhan 228.8 (626.9).

**Women:** 1. Ayonika Paul 249.8 (627.4); 2. Ayushi Podder 249.3 (625.2); 3. Shriyanka Sadangi 227.6 (625.4). **Juniors:** 1. Nisha Kanwar 252.2 (626.7); 2. Zeena Khitta 251.2 (627.4); 3. Arnisha Chowdhury 229.0 (627.4). **Youth:** 1. Dona Vennela Kudum 250.9 (622.7); 2. Khyati Chaudhary 249.8 (622.4); 3. Yana Rathore 227.9 (626.4).

**25m rapid fire pistol: Junior men:** 1. Vijayveer Sidhu 32 (582); 2. Adarsh Singh 31 (576); 3. Anish Bhanwala 27 (580). **Junior women:** 1. Tejaswani 556; 2. Tanu Rawal 547; 3. Rhythm Sangwan 546.

# van Gaal set to coach the Netherlands

Returns for third time after the resignation of Frank de Boer

## FOOTBALL

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
THE HAGUE

Dutchman Louis van Gaal will return for a third time as the national football coach, leading the team to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, the Dutch football federation (KNVB) said on Wednesday.

The appointment of the 69-year-old, dubbed the "Iron Tulip", comes after the resignation of Frank de Boer in June after the Netherlands' dismal last-16 exit from Euro 2020.

van Gaal, whose last major job was at Manchester United, previously managed the Oranje between 2000-2002 and 2012-2014, when they finished third at the World Cup in Brazil.



Louis van Gaal. • FILE PHOTO

"Dutch football has always been close to my heart and national coaching is in my view a key position for the further advancement of our football.

"Moreover, I consider it an honour to coach the Dutch national team," van Gaal said in a statement released by the KNVB.

His technical staff will consist of assistants Danny

Blind and Henk Fraser, and goalkeeping coach Frans Hoek, the KNVB said.

## Exceptional qualities

The Dutch federation said it had been looking for a coach with "exceptional qualities" to turn the ship around with a "minimal preparation period" for the World Cup.

During van Gaal's first spell as manager the Dutch failed to qualify for the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea, but the Netherlands finished third in Brazil in 2014 during his second stint.

He then went on to take up a coaching job with Manchester United, but was unceremoniously axed by the club two days after winning the FA Cup in 2016.

# Ondra — yelling his way to the top

The Czech rock climber shares his secret of success

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
TOKYO

Weightlifters are among the most vocal athletes at the Tokyo Olympics, letting out screams as they lock out at the top of a lift: "ahhhhhh!" Tennis players have long been known to be grunters, usually with some form of "ha-uh!" or "ha-ooah!"

The loudest vocalisations of the Tokyo Games may come from the grounds in one of the Olympic programme's newest sports.

Adam Ondra is widely considered the best climber in the world and a gold medal favourite in sport climbing's Olympic debut. He's also a bit of a yeller.

"It might sound bad, but it helps me," Ondra said.

"The shrieking comes when I'm at my absolute li-

mit," Ondra said.

Some scientific studies say he may be right. Whatever it is, it's hard to argue with the results. Ondra has become the rock star of rock climbing, a long-limbed, long-necked Czech who moves up sheer faces like a spider across a web.

The 28-year-old has tackled more of the world's most difficult climbs than anyone, scaling routes with names like Silence, Change and Pure Imagination — ascensions that leave even above-average climbers standing on the ground shaking their heads no.

Ondra also is arguably the world's best indoor climber, winning four World championships and finishing in the top three seven other times. He may be the loud-

est, too. As Ondra's celebrity has risen with his climbs up rock walls, his audible exaltations have become part of popular culture, turned into ringtones, GIFs and mashups with songs. A compilation of his screams has been mixed with metal music and another person inserted his shrieks into Taylor Swift's "I Knew You Were Trouble."

"If I'm focused on a certain move and I scream, I know I'm 100% breathing out," he said.

Ondra is onto something in that aspect. Tennis players have been grunting for years to add power and rhythm to their strokes. Screaming, shrieking and grunting has infiltrated other sports as athletes try to find any extra edge.

# Prajnesh, Ramkumar lose in first round

## INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU  
WASHINGTON

Emil Ruusuvuori of Finland defeated qualifier Prajnesh Gunneswaran 2-6, 6-1, 6-1 in the first round of the \$2,046,340 ATP tennis tournament here. Ramkumar Ramanathan was beaten 6-3, 7-6(0) by Steve Johnson of the USA.

Even though the two Indians did not add to the 10 ATP points they had gained from qualification, they were rewarded with a first-round purse of \$7,520 each.

**The results:**  
**\$2,046,340 ATP, Washington (first round):** Emil Ruusuvuori (Fin) bt Prajnesh Gunneswaran 2-6, 6-1, 6-1; Steve Johnson (USA) bt Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-3, 7-6(0).  
**€44,820 Challenger, Liberec, Czech Republic: Doubles (pre-**

**quarterfinals):** Sriram Balaji & Arjun Kadhe bt Dmitry Popko (Kaz) & Vitaliy Sachko (Ukr) 6-4, 6-2.

**\$115,000 WTA, Concord (first round):** Su-Wei Hsieh (Tpe) bt Ankit Raina 6-2, 6-2.

**\$25,000 ITF men, Decatur, USA: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Petros Chrysochos (Cyp) & Michail Pavlou (Gre) bt Shuichi Sekiguchi (Jpn) & Sasikumar Mukund 6-2, 6-3.

**\$15,000 ITF, Monastir, Tunisia: Men (first round):** Erik Crepaldi (Ita) bt Rishab Agarwal 6-4, 7-5; Siddhant Bhanthia bt Davide Innocenti (Ita) 6-1, 7-5; **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Austin Ansari (USA) & Joshua Paris (GBR) bt Rimpei Kawakami (Jpn) & Adil Kalyanpur 6-4, 5-7, [14-12]; Alec Deckers (Ned) & Kody Pearson (Aus) bt Naoki Tajima (Jpn) & Siddhant Bhanthia 7-5, 6-2; Blake Ellis (Aus) & Ajeet Rai (Nz) bt Drew Baird (USA) & Rishab Agarwal 7-6(4), 5-7, [10-3].

**Women (first round):** Raveena Kingsley (USA) bt Humera Baharmus 6-2, 6-0; **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Katarina Kozarov (Srb) & Lauren Proctor (USA) bt Alba Rey Garcia (Esp) & Vasanti Shinde 6-0, 6-1; Federica Prati (Ita) & Lina Gostal (Mar) bt Beatrice Laura Pirtac (Iri) & Vineetha Mummadi 6-2, 6-1; Mariana Drazic (Cro) & Sara Lanca (Por) bt Nicole Poj (Arg) & Humera Baharmus 6-2, 6-2; Shria Atturu (USA) & Smriti Bhasin bt Daria Zelinskaya (Rus) & Renne Singla 6-4, 6-1.

**\$25,000 ITF women, Parnu, Estonia: Doubles:** Oleksandra Oliynykova (Cro) & Sowjanya Bavisetti bt Valeria Krokhotina (Rus) & Desire Parr (Est) 6-3, 6-2; Magali Kempen (Bel) & Rutuja Bhosale bt Valeria Gorlats & Polina Ramenskaja (Est) 6-2, 6-1.

**\$15,000 ITF women, Cairo (first round):** Sathwika Sama bt Hla El-Sakka (Egy) 6-3, 6-3; Mell Elizabeth Reasco Gonzalez (Ecu) bt Ashmitha Easwar-murthi 6-2, 7-5.