



on Sunday



Keep dignity of service even outside office, PM tells IPS probationers
page 6



India, China begin 12th round of Corps Commander-level talks
page 6



Taliban & Afghan forces clash outside Herat; hundreds flee homes
page 9

Kamalpreet in discus final; Sindhu to play for bronze after losing in semifinal
page 14



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NEARBY



Assam CM wants neutral probe into border clash

Himanta questions Mizoram FIR against him, State officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GUWAHATI

'Over 1 cr. vaccine doses administered in city'

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday announced that over 1 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered in the Capital. He said 74 lakh people, almost 50% of the 18+ population, had been vaccinated with at least one dose. Similarly, 26 lakh people had received both their doses since the start of the vaccination drive, the Chief Minister said.

CITY PAGE 3

CLASSIFIEDS PAGE 4
MAGAZINE 8 PAGES

Mr. Sarma said he would be "very happy" to join the probe but wondered why it was not being handed over to a "neutral agency".

The Mizoram police lodged an FIR against Mr. Sarma and the others under various charges, including those related to attempt to



Widening divide: Members of an Assam outfit protesting outside Mizoram House in Guwahati. • RITURAJ KONWAR

murder and criminal conspiracy, at the Vairengte station on Monday after a gunfight between the Mizoram and Assam police. The FIR, however, became public only on Friday. The clashes,

which also involved civilians from the two States, left six Assam police personnel and a civilian dead.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
ASSAM-NAGALAND DEAL PAGE 7

Centre suggests curbs in 46 districts with high positivity

Daily COVID-19 cases cross 40,000 mark

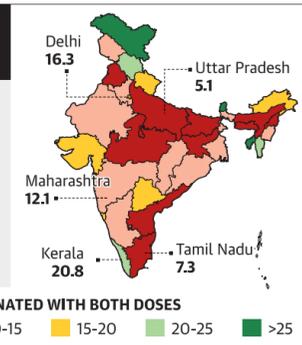
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With the daily tally of new coronavirus cases touching a 24-day high at 41,649 cases on Saturday, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has written to several States that all districts reporting a positivity rate of more than 10% in the last few weeks ought to consider strict restrictions.

According to a statement from the Health Ministry the curbs must aim to "prevent/curtail movement of people, formation of crowds and in-

Slow progress

Only 10.8% of India's adult population has received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine until July 30. The map shows the State-wise split



% ADULTS VACCINATED WITH BOTH DOSES
5-10 10-15 15-20 20-25 >25

termingling of people to prevent spread of infection".

Earlier, Mr. Bhushan held a meeting with health authorities from Kerala, Maha-

rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Manipur. Over 80% of the active cases in

these States were under home isolation.

Pockets of concern
Director-General of Indian Council of Medical Research Balram Bhargava, who was present at the meeting, said that over the past few weeks, 40,000 fresh cases were being reported every day. A total of 46 districts were showing more than 10% positivity; 53 districts were showing positivity between 5%-10%. The States were advised to conduct their State-level sero-surveys for district-wise disease prevalence data.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
WHO SOUNDS ALARM OVER DELTA VARIANT SURGE PAGE 9

Pulwama mastermind killed

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Two Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militants, including one of the masterminds of the 2019 Pulwama attack and an expert in making improvised explosive devices (IEDs), were killed during an encounter on the upper reaches of the Dachigam National Park in the Kashmir Valley on Saturday.

"The two slain JeM terrorists are Mohammad Ismal



Mohammad Ismal Alvi. • ANI

Alvi, alias Lamboo, from JeM chief Azhar Masood's family, and Sameer Dar, a local from Pulwama. Lamboo was high-

ly trained, especially in the making of IEDs. He was also instrumental in planning and executing the February 2019 Pulwama suicide attack," Inspector General of Police Vijay Kumar told *The Hindu*. Forty CRPF jawans died in the attack.

Both militants were encircled and engaged in a gunfight after a specific input was generated by the police.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Supriyo says he will quit politics

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Former Union Minister and BJP MP from Asansol Babul Supriyo on Saturday announced on social media his decision to quit politics and also resign as Lok Sabha MP.

The surprising announcement was made by the singer-turned-politician in a Facebook post in Bengali, titled "Alvida" (goodbye).

The MP had initially posted he was a "team player"



Babul Supriyo

and was not joining any other party - the Trinamool Congress, the CPI(M) or the Congress, he mentioned - but later, this portion was

edited out from the post.

The two-time MP was a part of the Union Council of Ministers for the past seven years and was upset at being dropped in the recent Cabinet reshuffle. "Questions will definitely arise, [on] why I have decided to quit politics. Does it have anything to do with being dropped as a Minister? Yes, it does, some of it certainly does," he posted.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

JD(U) team to meet PM to seek a caste-based Census

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Janata Dal (United) saw a change in leadership with Munger MP Rajiv Ranjan Singh, popularly known as Lalan Singh, taking over as the national president, replacing R.C.P. Singh, who recently was inducted in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet.

At a meeting of the par-

ty's national executive in Delhi on Saturday, the JD(U) took key decisions that could put it on a collision course with its ally, the BJP. The party's national executive decided that a delegation of MPs will meet the PM to press for a caste-based census, a long-standing demand in Bihar.

DETAILS ON PAGE 8

Gaping hole



An excavator removing debris after a portion of a road caved in under the IIT Delhi flyover on Saturday. • SANDEEP SAXENA (REPORT ON PAGE 3)

NFAI acquires over 450 glass slides of Telugu cinema

They feature trend-setting films from the golden age of Tollywood

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE

In a major acquisition, the Pune-based National Film Archive of India (NFAI), the country's premier film repository, has added more than 450 glass slides of films from the golden heyday of Telugu cinema to its ever-burgeoning vaults.

These glass slides constitute a veritable pictorial history of the

'Golden Age' of Telugu cinema from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s and feature a number of artistically important, trend-setting films and classic social dramas, which made Telugu cinema a force to reckon with in the regional cinematic sphere.

The acquisition includes glass slides from 70 films like Y.V. Rao's pathbreaking social drama about widow



The slides of movies made between 1939 and 1955 form an integral part of Telugu cinema.

remarriage *Malli Pelli* (1939); B.N. Reddi's classic *Vande Mataram* (1939); the popular swashbuckler hit *Keelu Gurram* (1949), featuring Akkineni Nageswara Rao and

Anjali Devi, and the famous N.T. Rama Rao starrer *Daasi* (1952) - a critically acclaimed adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's classic 'Devdas' among others.

"We are indeed thrilled to have acquired these glass slides. All of them are in black and white and are of 70 Telugu films from 1939 to 1955. Together, they form an integral part of the early Indian cinema viewing experience while bringing to fore the vitality, innovation and originality of Telugu cinema," said NFAI Director

Prakash Magdum.

The slides, made by pressing a film positive between two thin glass squares, were used for announcing new attractions before the commencement of a film or during intervals in theatres, said Mr. Magdum. "The film positives used to prepare the glass slide were miniatures of the poster or publicity material for newspapers and magazines. NFAI has over 2,000 glass slides of Hindi, Gujarati and Telugu films in its collection," he said.

HC disapproves of use of term 'South Terror'

Uttar Pradesh ATS used it in PFI case

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Allahabad High Court has disapproved of the use of the term "South Terror" by the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorism Squad for the Popular Front of India.

Two members of the outfit were arrested in February on allegations that they were planning to target leaders of "Hindu" outfits and carry out terror strikes at "sensitive" spots in the State.

The court made the observation while dismissing a petition filed by one of the accused, Anshad Badaruddeen, through his brother, seeking transfer of the investigation in the case from the ATS to the CBI.

Prejudice charge

The counsels for the petitioner argued that the probe was not being carried out in a free and fair manner, and alleged that the State authority and the investigating agency were prejudiced against the petitioner as he was a member of the PFI. They said the PFI had been labelled as "South Terror" on the portal of the ATS.

The Division Bench of Justices Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Ajai Kumar Srivastava on July 27 said the use of the term did not import bias but expressed concern over its use. "So far as the allegation of use of term 'South Terror' on the portal of respondent no.5 is concerned, it is pertinent to mention here that use of such term would not *per se* import element of malice or bias towards the petitioner. However, we view this fact with profound concern and disapprove use of such term," Justice Srivastava noted.

The court also said it did not view the case as a rare or exceptional one where the investigation needed to be transferred to the CBI.

The U.P. Special Task Force claimed that they had recovered heavy explosives from the duo and foiled attacks planned by them. The PFI dismissed the police claims and alleged that the two Kerala men were picked up and illegally detained days before their formal arrest while they were on their way to a Mumbai-bound train from Bihar.

Starving for development?
Beyond human's knowledge

A note,
<https://youtu.be/uzAngTFLMJk>
(case sensitive)

2020 TRANSFORMATION esp. for LEADERS

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WCD Minister inaugurates de-addiction centre in city

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Women and Child Development Minister Rajendra Pal Gautam on Saturday inaugurated a drug de-addiction centre – Suryoday Kendra. “Suryoday Kendra will look into the overall wellbeing of people who have a problem of drugs and substance abuse and it will also provide skill-based learning,” the Minister said.

Digital library
The ‘Suryoday Kendra’ is equipped with a digital library, which will help children access free online coaching and intellectual stimulation. The centre will also provide skill-based learning to the beneficiaries, which includes both adults and children, it said. “We need such one-stop centres in every district of Delhi,” Mr. Gautam added.

Women beat officers bring in sense of security, comfort

All 11 police stations in North West district have deployed four policewomen each to patrol areas; initiative undertaken by DCP Usha Rangnani

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

In 26 years of her service in Delhi Police, this is the first time that Head Constable Sunita has been made a beat officer. She is three months pregnant, but she chose to be a beat officer when asked a month ago.

In a first, all 11 police stations in North West district of the Capital has four women beat officers each – including a Sub-Inspector, Assistant Sub-Inspector, Head Constable and Constable – as part of an initiative undertaken by DCP (North-West) Usha Rangnani.

The officers share their experience of being beat officers.

“There are so many times that male officers ask us to come along because they believe we will be able to handle the situation better. Things have really improved

for us,” said Constable Monika Yadav (29).

Ms. Yadav is posted in Ashok Vihar police station while her sister is a Constable in the East district. “It was our mother’s dream that we join police.”

Talking about a typical day, Constable Kiran (38) who is posted in the Bharat Nagar police station – very calm yet firm in her command – said she reports to the police station as per her shift for the day and then proceeds to her beat where she and Constable Rinku take a few rounds of the area – mostly residential with a hospital, temples and a market. They then stay at their booth and move around the area every few hours.

“Seeing women officers, people would initially ask us if we are there only for show-off. We told them it will be a regular affair now and so far,



Women constables interact with students in North West district's Bharat Nagar. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

the response has been good from both men and women,” Ms. Kiran said.

‘A matter of assurance’

Seeing a woman officer in public is a matter of assurance for other women that they are not alone, Constable Preeti (25) posted in Ashok Vihar police station. “They feel safer and comfort-

able. For them, approaching us is a lot easier than approaching a male officer. Women have felt so proud that they have come forward to take selfies. I remember a mother of a little girl told me that the child wanted to be a police officer when she grew up,” she smiled.

Sharing another experience, Constable Monika

said they received a PCR call in her beat area and the caller – a woman – refused to open the door to male staff. But when Ms. Monika reached and spoke to her from outside the gate, she opened it.

Using fear tactics

Constable Rinku remembered ending a fight between a rickshaw puller and his neighbours. “I intervened and used fear tactics,” she said.

With women beat officers, senior citizens in their areas feel a lot more at ease, they said. Constable Rinku receives a call from an 83-year-old woman almost every day “just to talk” because she doesn’t have people to talk to. “We give our personal numbers to senior citizens in our areas. A few days ago, an aunt called me and asked me to come home. When I went,

she wanted to feed me *gol gappas* she had made. I was touched,” the officer said.

Constable Uma Mehra is posted in Mukherjee Nagar police station. The area has girls’ hostels and paying guest accommodations for students studying in the North Campus and many preparing for Civil Services examinations. In presence of Ms. Mehra and Constable Poonam Singh Bora, women in the area reportedly feel safe.

“We have met many girls in the last four weeks and they feel a lot better. They don’t have to come to the police station physically for every little complaint. Often, we meet them and resolve their issues,” she said.

The beat officers also receive calls from house helps who share their problems, including harassment by unknown men and domestic is-

ssues. Residents’ Welfare Association members also call the officers and appreciate them, they said.

Families of all of the officials are extremely supportive of their work, they all claimed. “Our families also realise that times are changing. They support us no matter irrespective of our job timings,” said Head Constable Sunita.

At the police station, the officials have a scooter at their disposal whenever they are at work.

A senior officer said crime prevention and detection have increased significantly because of this initiative of deploying dedicated women beat officers. “We can see the crime numbers falling – thefts, snatching, molestation – and people feeling secure. Women officers are practically more sincere than male officers,” she said.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गिरिडीह

शुद्धि पत्र

ई-अल्पकालीन निविदा संख्या RDD/SD/GIRIDIH/04/2021-22 जिसका पी0आर0 संख्या 249807 Rural Development (21-22):D में अपरिहार्य कारणों से तिथि को संशोधित किया जाता है, जो निम्नवत है :-

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :- 11.08.2021।
- ई निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :-20.08.2021 को 5:00 बजे अपराहन तक।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि जमा करने की तिथि एवं समय :- 23.08.2021 को 5:00 बजे अपराहन तक।
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :-24.08.2021 को 2.00 बजे अपराहन तक।
- परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है, तदनुसार परिमाण विपत्र की राशि का 02 प्रतिशत राशि अग्रधन की राशि के रूप में जमा करना होगा।
- विशेष परिस्थिति के बिना कारण बताए निविदा रद्द करने अथवा स्थगित करने का अधिकार अद्योहस्ताक्षरी को सुरक्षित है।
- निविदा की अन्य शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, गिरिडीह।

PR.NO.250576 Rural Development(21-22):D

BHARAT NIRMAN
Through
RURAL ROADS

Chief Engineer (Kangra Zone) HPPWD Dharamshala H.P, 176215
UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)
e-Procurement Notice

The Government of India has received a loan/credit number “P124639” under PMGSY (Rural Road Project) Rural Roads Financing towards the cost of Rural Roads Project (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) and intends to apply a part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the contracts for construction of works and PMGSY(Regular)/RRP-II. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the bidding document.

The Chief Engineer (Kangra Zone) HPPWD Dharamshala-176215 on behalf of Governor Himachal Pradesh invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of road under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the District of Chamba as detailed in the Table below from the eligible contractors registered with HPPWD/CPWD/P&T, Railways/other state govts./Central Govt agencies.

Non-registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

Division	Package No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs Lacs)		Total Cost (Rs Lacs)	Period of completion (Months)	Bid security (Rs lacs)
			Construction	Maintenance			
Bharmour	HP-02-332	Construction of Road from L031 CH 2/400 to Bhatra Km 0/0 to 2/0	172.75	12.04	184.79	12	3.70

Other details can be seen in the bidding document. The Employer shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders’ responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

Last Date/Time and place for receipt of bids through e-procurement:-
Bids can be submitted online from Date 03 Month 08 Year 2021 to Date 16 Month 08 Year 2021 upto 1700 Hours and will be opened on Date 17 Month 08 Year 2021 at 1130 Hours in the office of Superintending Engineer, 7th Circle, HPPWD, Dalhousie.

For further details please log on to <https://pmgsytendershp.gov.in>
The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of.

Chief Engineer,
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Dharamshala-176215.
Fax:011892-223100.
Tel: 011892-224948.

HP / 2878/21-22

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Sapru House, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi

REQUIRES
RESEARCH FELLOWS

Applications are invited for the appointment of Research Fellows with requisite experience & qualifications for undertaking research, on a contract of two years at fixed gross monthly lumpsum remuneration. Vacancies are available for the following specializations : Europe & EU, South Asia, North East Asia, ASEAN & South East Asia, West Asia, Africa, Indo-Pacific & Maritime Affairs, Russia, and China. Applications in sealed covers addressed to Deputy Director General, ICWA must be received at ICWA, Sapru House by 14th August, 2021. Intimation of application may be emailed to ddgoffice@icwa.in with copy to us@icwa.in. Application forms, terms & conditions, qualifications etc. are available at: www.icwa.in.

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Sapru House, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi

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Applications are invited for the appointment of Senior Research Fellows with requisite experience & qualifications for undertaking research, on a contract of two years at fixed gross monthly lumpsum remuneration. Applications in sealed covers addressed to Deputy Director General, ICWA must be received at ICWA, Sapru House, New Delhi by 14th August, 2021. Intimation of application may be emailed to ddgoffice@icwa.in with copy to us@icwa.in. Application forms, terms & conditions, qualifications etc. are available at: www.icwa.in.

Gangster wanted in more than 25 cases finally in police net

Accomplice Anuradha Chaudhary also arrested

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Special Cell nabbed a wanted gangster on Friday in an operation they called D-24.

The Haryana-based criminal, Kala Jathedi, who had a bounty reward of ₹6 lakh on his head was arrested along with his accomplice Anuradha Chaudhary, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Manishi Chandra said that Jathedi was wanted in more than 25 cases across States – was arrested with Chaudhary near Sarasawa toll at Saharanpur-Yamuna Nagar highway in Uttar Pradesh.

Describing the operation, Mr. Chandra said that in the last year and a half, the team has already apprehended 20 important members of the gang in different operations. Interrogations of previously arrested criminals led to drawing up of an operation for nabbing the kingpin Sandeep alias Kala Jathedi.

Team trail work

The team worked for over four months before it came across some leads in Goa. The team started trailing the identifiers from Goa and the search led them to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Uttarakhand.

“They were finally able to grab a footage which showed Kala Jathedi in a Sikh attire along with Anuradha. Thereafter, the operation was



code-named ‘Op D-24’ to signify that the criminal was running ahead of us by only 24 hours and it was a race against time to reduce this to D-20/16/12 and so on,” Mr. Chandra said.

The police said that after the escape of Jathedi from Haryana Police custody in 2020, he and Anuradha alias Revolver Rani were jointly heading a major international criminal alliance.

Under disguise

Talking about Anuradha, the police said that she has a long criminal history of abduction, extortion, Arms and Excise Act violations, cheating and is known to have fired from AK-47 to intimidate victims.

After spreading rumours that he had fled the country, Jathedi had disguised himself as a Sikh and started growing a beard and wearing a turban, the police said, adding that after Anuradha Chaudhary joined him. They got fake identities as husband and wife and were constantly shifting bases across different States to avoid any trail.

DPCC told to act against violators in poultry market

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following a plea against the Delhi Agricultural Marketing Board, alleging damage to the environment by activities in the Ghazipur poultry market, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to identify the violators and initiate prosecution.

It directed the DPCC to recover compensation and stop polluting activities in the area. A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel also constituted a panel comprising officials from the DPCC and District Magistrate (East) to furnish an action-taken report within three months.

TENDER NOTICE

In pursuance of the orders contained in Circle Office letter No. Bldg/3-139/82/Col.I Dated 30.06.2021 the sealed tenders are invited for suitable accommodation measuring about 400 Square feet of carpet area preferably on ground floor in the surrounding area of Hauz Qazi, Delhi-110006 for housing a Post Office. The accommodation offered should be one hall centrally located near Hauz Qazi, Delhi-110006 and easily accessible to public as well as Mail Lories.

- Tender should be addressed to the undersigned by name super scribed “TENDER OF BUILDING FOR Hauz Qazi PO” and should reach to this office before 13.00 Hrs. on 20th August 2021. The tenders will be opened on the same date i.e. 20th August 2021 at 15.00 Hrs. in the presence of such tenderers who may wish to be present.
- Applicant will be required to provide proof of ownership along with application. The Offer must have clear title of the property.
- As per Post Office requirement antenna /Tower will also be installed in the rented premises and it will not harm the interest of landlord / landlady.
- The building offered should have independent water and electricity supply and lavatory arrangements. A Sketch map of accommodation offered should be attached stating acceptable rent and others.
- A lease deed shall have to be executed by the owner in the prescribed form (Genl-8) for a minimum period of 5 years subject to renewal according to terms and conditions of the deed.
- The department does not have own responsibility of taxes except the consumption charges of electricity and water supply for which separate meters will have to be provided by the landlord at his own cost before opening the post office in the accommodation offered and minor change /repairs to suit the post office has to be arranged by the landlord at his own cost.
- Additions/alterations in the building desired by the department will have to be carried out by the landlord before the building is occupied.
- The tenders received after prescribed date and time will not be entertained and rejected straight away. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

(Suresh Kumar Bhardwaj)
Supt. of Post Offices
New Delhi Central Division
New Delhi-110001.

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Mob. : 9560183152, 9205955249, E-mail : khsdelhi16@gmail.com
Adv. No. : 9-11/Adv./2021-2022 Date : 22-07-2021

TENDER FOR RELATED AGENCIES

Tenders are invited for 4 Security Guard, 3 Cleaning Staff and an Electrician. The last date for submission of the Tender is 14:00 hrs. dated August 16, 2021. For the form format, terms & conditions refer to the institute website www.khsindia.org and submit the proposal accordingly. The decision of the committee constituted by the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan for selection will be considered as accepted and final.

Regional Director
Delhi Centre

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Dr. Muthugapatti S. Seshadri, (89)
... of Round Rock, Texas,
Passed away peacefully surrounded by Family on July 10, 2021.

At India Pistons Ltd. Chennai,
Dr. Seshadri steadily rose through the ranks to General Manager, and retired after 25+ years before emigrating to the US, where he continued his illustrious career as Principal Technologist at Lennox Industries Inc. in Dallas, Texas. His Engineering and Management careers spanned 5 decades, across 2 continents.

Dr. Seshadri is survived by his, supportive wife of 64 years Lalitha, Daughter Anjana & Husband Dr. Mohan Narayanan, Son Anand & Wife Sandhya Seshadri Grandchildren Dr. Ajay & Wife Dr. Ahana, Vijay, Myna & Krish Sisters Savithri Murthy & Neela Balasubramanian.

In memory of your loved ones
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DEATH

Ashoka Kurien
WHO PASSED AWAY ON 28 JULY 2021
AT THE AGE OF 71 IN NEW DELHI

He is survived by his wife Annu Kurien, son Uday Kurien, and daughter Shreya Kurien.

An online memorial service will be held in the coming week. For details please write to sskurien@gmail.com

DEATH

OBITUARY

Shri G. C. KRISHNAMURTHY
Retd SRM F.C.I (A.P.)
27-12-1929 to 24-07-2021

“A fountainhead of knowledge and always a source of inspiration, you have left behind a rich harvest of memories to cherish, honour and emulate.”

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(01 AUG 2020)

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CO and all ranks 14 PUNJAB (NABHA AKAL)

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

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Timings DELHI

SUNDAY, AUG. 01
RISE 05:43 SET 19:13
RISE 00:00 SET 13:18

MONDAY, AUG. 02
RISE 05:44 SET 19:12
RISE 00:25 SET 14:12

TUESDAY, AUG. 03
RISE 05:44 SET 19:11
RISE 01:02 SET 15:07

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	35	24
Safdarjang	35	24
Palam	34	26

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

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

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Daily number of vaccinations falls yet again

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The number of daily COVID vaccine doses administered in the city fell again, as per government data.

A total of 55,732 doses of vaccine were administered in the city on Friday, compared to 72,478 doses on Thursday, as per a bulletin released by the government on Saturday. It is also less than half of the vaccinations done many days earlier this month.

For about two weeks this month, the city faced a vaccine shortage, and the number of daily vaccinations was also low.

The vaccine stock of the city on Saturday morning would last for five days and there were 5,22,890 doses of Covishield and 2,58,360 doses of Covaxin, as per the data.

Till now, 99,65,532 doses of vaccines have been administered in the city. The city reported 58 new COVID cases in 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,36,265. There was only one death reported and the total number of deaths stood at 25,053.

A total of 70,355 tests were done in a day and that TPR was 0.88%. Of the total cases, 141,0631 people have recovered and there are only 581 active cases.

Man confesses to killing wife in front of children

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 45-year-old man allegedly killed his wife in front of their children in Outer Delhi's Mangolpuri on Saturday, the police said, adding that the accused has been arrested.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Parminder Singh said that the accused has been identified as Sameer who allegedly stabbed his wife Shabana to death.

The police said that a PCR call was received at 7.47 a.m. stating that a man had stabbed his wife with a knife. Shabana had been taken to the hospital where she was declared brought dead.

Sameer went to the police station along with a bloodstained knife and informed that he had killed his wife.

Based on the statement of the couple's 21-year-old daughter who was witness to the crime, the police registered a case.

The accused allegedly told the police that his wife quarrelled with him over his drinking habit and for not doing any work. "She had also not allowed him to enter the house since the last one month. Therefore, he considered her responsible for his miserable life. To take revenge, he killed her," Mr. Singh said.

Over 1 crore doses of vaccine administered in city: Kejriwal

'Delhi has capacity to give three lakh doses daily but is facing shortage issues'

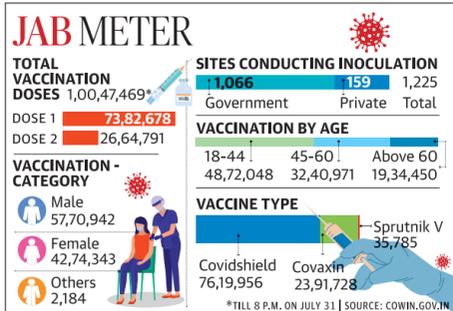
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday announced that over 1 crore doses of COVID vaccines had been administered in the Capital. He said 74 lakh people, almost 50% of the 18+ population of the city, had been vaccinated with at least one dose.

Similarly, 26 lakh people had received both their doses since the start of the vaccination drive, he added.

Mr. Kejriwal also stressed the fact that Delhi had the capacity to administer three lakh doses a day but was unable to do so because of a lack of vaccine stock.

"Delhi's vaccination programme has achieved an important milestone. Today, we have reached the 1 crore mark. Among this, a total of about 74 lakh people have



been vaccinated, of which 26 lakh people have received both doses. Roughly, 2 crore people live in Delhi, of which 1.5 crores are 18+ and thus eligible for getting the vaccine. So, about 50% of the population has received at least one dose of the vaccine," he told at a digital briefing.

He thanked the doctors, nurses, healthcare workers and all officials involved in Delhi's vaccination drive for their putting in their best throughout day and night. On the other hand, the people of Delhi were "very enthusiastic" about getting vaccinated, he added. "I am extremely

thankful towards them for the dedication they have shown for this cause," he said.

"We are unable to scale up the programme due to a lack of vaccines. At present, we administer 50,000 to 70,000 each day. If we can get sufficient stocks, we possess the infrastructure to administer 3 lakh doses daily. We are in touch with the Central government and hope to soon start receiving adequate stocks," he added.

Challenges ahead

While the government was vaccinating as many people as it could depending on the availability of doses there were two challenges ahead: to vaccinate those who have not received a single dose and secondly, to vaccinate those who have received only one shot, he stated.



The Public Works Department said the cause of the cave in was leakage in a Delhi Jal Board pipe. *SANDEEP SAXENA

Section of road caves in under IIT-Delhi flyover

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A significant portion of a road under the IIT-Delhi flyover in south Delhi caved in, following heavy rain in the Capital over the last few days, affecting traffic and forcing diversions here on Saturday.

The Delhi Traffic Police took to Twitter forewarning commuters and asking them to take alternative routes.

"Traffic going from Adhchini to IIT-Delhi has been diverted from Adhchini to Katwaria Sarai after a por-

tion of a road near IIT traffic signal caved in," the Traffic Police tweeted in Hindi.

The Public Works Department said the cause of the cave in was leakage in an underground Delhi Jal Board line. "Our engineers are fixing the road. It is being attended to on priority," a senior PWD official said.

The Capital received an average of 43.6 mm rain till 8.30 a.m. on Saturday. The India Meteorological Department has forecast moderate rainfall on Sunday and has issued a yellow alert.

Water level in Yamuna falls below danger mark

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The water level of the Yamuna fell below the 'danger mark' in the small hours of Saturday after breaching the level on Friday morning.

The level fell through the day and is expected to decrease further as Haryana is releasing less water from Hathnikund Barrage.

Water released from the barrage directly affects the flow of the river in Delhi.

The water level measured at the Old Railway Bridge was 204.97 metres at 10 a.m. on Saturday. It dropped to

204.93 metres by 7 p.m.

The 'warning level' is 204.5 metres and the 'danger mark' is 205.33 metres — both measured at the Old Railway Bridge.

"At 6 p.m., 19,258 cusecs of water was being released from Hathnikund barrage and it is expected to decrease through the night," an official said. About 37,109 cusecs of water was being released from the barrage at 6 p.m. on Friday — almost double.

On Friday, the Delhi government had started evacuation of people living close to the river.



Residents of Yamuna banks shifted to temporary shelters in Delhi on Saturday. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



'Will approach President on indifferent attitude of govt.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Saturday accused the Delhi government of "trampling upon all Constitutional and democratic norms" during the recent concluded monsoon session of the Assembly.

'Opposition muzzled'

He alleged the Delhi government had done so by not allowing any discussion on the problems being faced by the people and trying to muzzle to voice of the Opposition.

"I along with other BJP MLAs will approach the President and the Lok Sabha Speaker to file a complaint against the indifferent attitude of the Delhi government and the functioning of the State Assembly," Mr. Bidhuri said.

Before the commencement of any Assembly session, the LoP said, the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee is held where the Opposition is also represented.

Then, he said, it is decided in the BAC what issues will come up for discussion or debate in the House during the session. However, Mr. Bidhuri alleged, the Kejriwal government had bid goodbye to such traditions.

DTC running into losses of over ₹1K cr. annually

Transport Department tells Assembly

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has been running into losses of over ₹1,000 crore annually since 2015 and has not been able to add even one bus to its existing fleet, the Transport Department informed the Delhi Assembly during the monsoon session, which concluded on July 30.

The city government also denied reports that an extra amount of ₹1,000 crore was to be paid to manufacturers of 1,000 low-floor buses being procured by the DTC for the comprehensive annual maintenance contract.

These statements were made by the Transport Department in the Delhi Assembly in a written reply to a question by BJP MLA Vijender Gupta on Thursday.

In a reply to another question by BJP MLA Ajay Mahawar, the department said the DTC has not bought any buses after 2015.

However, it also stated, that under the Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS) operated cluster scheme, 1,387 buses were procured after 2015.

In the past six years, the DTC suffered losses of ₹1,019.36 crore in 2014-15, ₹1,250.15 crore in 2015-16, ₹1,381.78 crore in 2016-17,



The House was also told that the DTC has not added one bus to its fleet after 2015.

*FILE PHOTO

₹1,730.02 crore in 2017-18, and ₹1,664.56 crore in 2018-19. According to the interim estimates for 2019-20, the losses stood at ₹1,834.67 crore, it said.

Pusa bio-decomposer

In a related development, the government informed the Assembly it spent over ₹15.8 crore on advertisements related to the Pusa bio-decomposer and ₹40,000 on the chemical that converts paddy straw or stubble into manure.

It has also spent ₹4,69,000 on training and awareness programmes against stubble burning among farmers, the Directorate of Information and Publicity of the Delhi government said in a written reply to BJP MLA O.P. Sharma's question during the session.

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Common Admission Test CAT 2021

The Indian Institutes of Management will conduct a computer-based Common Admission Test 2021 (CAT 2021) on **November 28, 2021** in three sessions. Detailed information on CAT 2021 may be obtained from the CAT website.

CAT website: www.iimcat.ac.in

CAT 2021 is a prerequisite for admission to various Post Graduate and Fellow/Doctorate programmes of IIMs. CAT 2021 scores are allowed to be used by listed non-IIM member institutions. A list of such institutions is provided on the CAT website. IIMs have no role in the selection process of non-IIM institutions.

CAT 2021 ELIGIBILITY
Please refer to the detailed notification on the CAT website. Applicants should note that mere fulfillment of the minimum eligibility criteria will not ensure consideration for shortlisting by IIMs.

RESERVATIONS
Refer to the CAT website for information regarding reservation of seats for various categories of applicants. No change in the category will be entertained after CAT registration. The applicants are advised to pay attention while registering.

REGISTRATION FEES
₹ 1100 for SC, ST and PwD category candidates.
₹ 2200 for all other categories of candidates.

Please note that a candidate needs to pay the registration fees only once, irrespective of the number of institutes he/she is applying for. Fees once paid cannot be refunded under any circumstances.

IMPORTANT DATES
Registration opens : **August 04, 2021 (10:00 am)**
Registration closes : **September 15, 2021 (5:00 pm)**
Admit card download : **October 27 – November 28, 2021**
Test Date : **November 28, 2021**
Result declaration : **Second week of January, 2022 (Tentative)**

TEST CENTRES
CAT will be conducted in test centres spread across around 158 test cities. Candidates will be given the option to select any six test cities in order of their preference.

DISCLAIMER
This advertisement is only intended to be an announcement for CAT 2021. For COVID-19 related updates, detailed information, rules and procedures regarding CAT and the admission process of various IIMs, candidates should visit the CAT website.

Any dispute concerning CAT 2021 would be subject to the jurisdiction of the competent Courts within the territorial jurisdiction of the City of Ahmedabad only.

IMPORTANT
Candidates must declare and maintain a valid and unique email account and a mobile phone number throughout the selection process.

LALIT

Sedition case against SFJ member

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SHIMLA

The police here on Saturday booked Sikhs for Justice member Gurpatwant Singh Pannun for sedition and other charges, a day after he allegedly issued a threat that Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur won't be allowed to hoist the National Flag, an official spokesperson said.

'Govt. busy in event management'

Nothing concrete is being done to improve standard of education, says Hooda

VIKAS VASUDEVA CHANDIGARH

The Leader of the Opposition in the Haryana Assembly, Bhupinder Singh Hooda, on Saturday said in the name of the new education policy, the Bharatiya Janata Party-Jannayak Janta Party (BJP-JJP) government was only doing 'event management' and nothing concrete was being done to improve the standard of education.

About 50,000 posts are lying vacant in the education department. The fact is that 50% of the schools do not even have a head teacher. In such a situation, it is only unfortunate that the BJP-JJP government is celebrating the new education policy," he said here.

'Education hub'

Mr. Hooda said Haryana was emerging as a global education hub during the Congress government. "We established one central university, seven State universities, 23 deemed universities, 35 government colleges, 481 technical institutes,

six medical colleges, 132 ITIs, 2,623 schools in the State. We established Rajiv Gandhi Education City project and students started coming to Haryana for education," he said.

"Education is critical to creating new opportunities and our government had laid the foundation for the bright future of Haryana. It is painful that not a single such project or institution came to Haryana in seven years of the BJP government. On the contrary, works on institutions sanctioned during the Congress government were suspended and cancelled during the present govern-

ment," he said.

Rural schools closed

Mr. Hooda said 'Kisan Model Schools' were also started to improve the level of education in rural areas during the Congress government, but these were closed by the BJP government. "The Aarohi schools started during the Congress government have also been brought on the verge of closure. The standard of education cannot be raised without strengthening the basic infrastructure of education. The NITI Aayog report shows that Haryana has lagged behind the neighbouring States."

Odisha seeks immediate supply of fertilizers

Shortage will hit kharif crop, writes Naveen Patnaik to Union Minister

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has sought immediate restoration in supply of fertilizers as shortage is likely to badly affect kharif crop season.

In a letter addressed to Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya on Saturday, Mr. Patnaik said the State witnessed a severe shortage in the supply of different fertil-

izers during May, June and July.

"The State has received only 1,45,145 mt of urea against the allocation of 2,31,530 mt and agreed supply plan of 2,10,000 mt. Similarly, the State has received 97,763 mt of DAP against the allocation of 1,52,000 mt and agreed supply plan of 1,45,000 mt," he noted.

The letter issued by the CM's office points out that the overall supply of urea had been 62% against the allocation and 69% against the agreed supply plan while for other fertilizers it was also 60% to 74%.

Graded unlocking in Odisha

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Saturday announced rolling out of graded unlocking process throughout the State beginning from August 1.

Following improvement in COVID-19 situation in the State, the government lifted weekend shutdown restrictions, except at three urban centres - Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri, and allowed all shops to resume daily business. The duration of night curfew has also been reduced. It will remain from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.

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IN BRIEF
Cargo plane makes emergency landing

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
A technical snag prompted a cargo plane of Air India Express to make an emergency landing at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Saturday shortly after take-off. While there were no passengers, the flight had eight crew members on board. According to the airport authorities, the flight that was headed for Dammam in Saudi Arabia took off around 6.50 a.m. Following a "minor technical issue", the plane was brought back to Thiruvananthapuram.

Prakasam Barrage may receive flood inflow

VIJAYAWADA
The Prakasam Barrage across Krishna river is most likely to receive over 5 lakh cusecs of flood inflow by Sunday. District Collector J. Nivas said about 5.5 lakh cusecs flood water was being discharged at Srisailem and in Nagarjuna Sagar downstream, there was 256 tmcft of water. Surplus from Nagarjuna Sagar would reach the Prakasam Barrage by Sunday. As the water level would rise during night, officials were asked to shift people, if necessary.

SIT formed to probe Kerala shooting incident

KOCHI
A special investigation team has been formed to probe the incident in which a man allegedly shot a 24-year-old woman doing Bachelor of Dental Surgery dead and then killed himself at Nellikuzhi in Kerala on Friday. "We have sent a four-member team to Kannur to do a background check," the police said. Though a lot of speculation was making the rounds about the make of the weapon and how it was procured, the police said it was yet to be examined by ballistic experts.

TDP leaders put under house arrest over Kondapalli visit

Cases booked against Oppn. leaders, who alleged illegal mining in reserve forest

STAFF REPORTER
G. KONDUR

The Andhra Pradesh police on Saturday foiled an attempt by TDP leaders to visit the Kondapalli reserve forest area in Krishna district and booked cases against 50 leaders of both the opposition party and the ruling YSRC.

Alleging illegal mining in the forest area, the TDP had constituted a fact-finding committee, which planned to visit the area.

However, the police placed the members of the committee under house arrest and stepped up surveillance.

A few YSRC leaders, who had also planned to visit the area, were taken into preventive custody under Section 151 of the CrPC, said Krishna district Superintendent of Police Siddharth Kaushal.



On alert: Police personnel checking vehicles at Ibrahimpattanam, near Vijayawada, on Saturday. ■ V. RAJU

The police deployed forces at Kondapalli, Ibrahimpattanam, Mylavaram and Gollapudi in Krishna district and in the Vijayawada Police Commissionerate limits to prevent the TDP team from entering the forest area. A few days ago, the G.

Kondur police arrested former Minister and senior TDP leader Devineni Umamaheswara Rao when he visited the forest area. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Eluru range Deputy Inspector General K.V. Mohan Rao said the TDP leaders had ap-

proached District Collector J. Nivas, seeking permission to visit the Kondapalli reserve forest area.

"The Collector refused to give permission to the TDP's delegation in the wake of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic. But the opposition party planned to visit the place illegally," Mr. Mohan Rao said.

Mr. Kaushal said a few protesters had been taken into custody and placed under house surveillance at Machilipatnam, Nuzvid, Mylavaram, G. Kondur, Reddygudem, and Nandigama.

Former Ministers Nettekumthi and Kollu Ravindra, former MP Konakalla Narayana Rao, former MLAs Sriram Rajagopal and Tangirala Sowmya were kept under house arrest. About 20 others were kept under house surveillance, he added.

Kottiyoor case: survivor files plea to marry her assailant

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The survivor in the infamous Kottiyoor minor rape case in Kerala has appealed to the Supreme Court for permission to marry her assailant, a defrocked priest sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment under a penal law protecting child victims of sexual abuse.

She has also pleaded for his release on bail.

She was raped as a minor. She later gave birth. The accused had initially tried to frame her biological father.

The former priest, Robin Vadakkumcherry, was tried and found guilty under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act in 2019 despite the victim turning hostile.

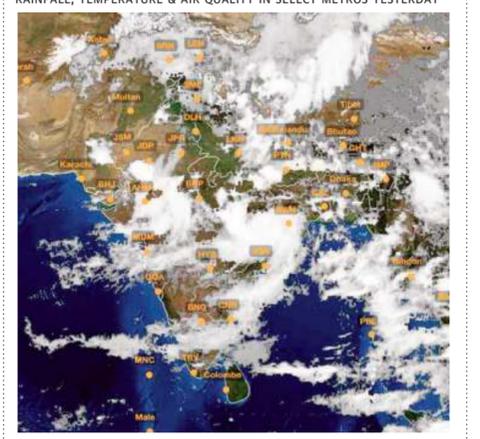
A Bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari is scheduled to hear her plea seeking bail for him on Monday.

In 2018, the Supreme Court had expressed shock at the alleged involvement of priests in sex crimes in Kerala.

A Bench of Justices A.K. Sikri and Ashok Bhushan (both have retired) had voiced the court's alarm while hearing the Kottiyoor case.

The Kerala government, which was represented by senior advocate K.N. Balagopal in 2018, had argued that the accused in the case were influential people. The prosecution had highlighted the fact that the father of the victim was asked to take responsibility for committing the crime. He had later confessed to the police about the alleged involvement of Vadakkumcherry in the rape of the 16-year-old girl.

WEATHER WATCH
RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Sunday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya and Bihar

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	5	29.6	25.8	Kozhikode	2	32.0	25.3
Ahmedabad	1.2	31.3	25.4	Kurnool		30.1	25.7
Aizawl		26.0	23.6	Lucknow		33.7	26.8
Allahabad		32.8	26.0	Madurai		39.4	24.3
Bangaluru		28.0	19.9	Mangaluru	7.7	29.3	23.4
Bhopal	0.6	26.8	23.8	Mumbai		31.0	26.4
Bhubaneswar		33.0	25.1	Mysuru		29.8	20.6
Chandigarh		35.8	26.6	New Delhi		35.0	24.3
Chennai		36.1	28.7	Patna	0.6	28.6	27.4
Coimbatore		33.8	22.5	Port Blair		31.2	25.9
Dehradun	20	33.4	23.4	Puducherry		36.5	25.1
Gangtok	13.8	19.8	18.4	Pune		28.1	21.7
Goa		29.0	24.5	Raipur		28.2	23.8
Guwahati	5	31.3	26.4	Ranchi		18.2	24.0
Hubballi		26.0	22.0	Shillong		24	23.6
Hyderabad	3	29.9	23.4	Shimla		24	23.5
Imphal	10	29.2	22.2	Srinagar		29.9	20.1
Jaipur	77	26.2	24.4	Thiruvananthapuram		32	24.3
Kochi	2	30.6	25.6	Tiruchi		38.1	26.5
Kohima	14	28.0	18.0	Vijayawada		32.0	26.6
Kolkata	0.8	31.9	26.5	Visakhapatnam		34.8	27.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	21	42	21	59	85	Good	
Bangaluru	1	45	172	39	51	Good	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Fatehabad,
Chennai	6	28	78	28	76	Good	Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 121 indicating a moderate level of pollution.
Delhi	4	26	35	77	99	Good	In contrast, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 12
Hyderabad	6	17	14	15	30	Good	
Kolkata	11	25	20	45	58	Good	
Lucknow	13	14	54	49	60	Good	
Mumbai	8	22	13	103	75	Good	
Pune	21	72	59	55	55	Good	
Visakhapatnam	13	48	32	45	92	Good	

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

Naval ship rescues fishing boat crew

7 crew members were in distress off Car Nicobar amid gusting winds, heavy swell

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
VISAKHAPATNAM

The Eastern Naval Command's *INS Airawat*, a Shadul-class amphibious warfare vessel, rescued seven crew members from a fishing boat in distress off the Car Nicobar island in the Andaman area of the Bay of Bengal late on Friday.

Based on a distress call received from the fishing boat, Salet Matha II, the vessel that was on deployment under Operation Samudra Setu-II, immediately proceeded towards the fishing boat at maximum speed to ren-

der assistance. The naval ship, after rescuing the crew members, towed the fishing boat to the nearest harbour for shelter.

Challenging task
The Port Blair-based fishing boat with seven crew members had been drifting since July 29 due to a major defect in its gearbox.

Gusting winds beyond 25 knots, heavy swell and intermittent rain due to the active southwest monsoon in the region made the search and rescue operation a challenging task for naval personnel.



Rendering assistance: Naval personnel rescuing the crew members from a fishing boat off the Car Nicobar Island.

Maharashtra sees 225 deaths, 6,959 cases, 7,467 recoveries

Mumbai records 345 new infections and nine deaths

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Maharashtra on Saturday reported 225 fresh COVID-19 deaths and 6,959 cases, while 7,467 patients recovered, a health official said.

The total case tally has reached 63,03,715 and the cumulative death toll has touched 1,32,791. The tally of recoveries now stands at 60,90,786, leaving the State with 76,755 active cases.

Sixty-one deaths were reported from Kolhapur and Aurangabad regions, followed by 35 fatalities from the Nashik region. Pune region reported 27 fatalities, Mumbai region 22, Latur and Akola six each, while Nagpur region reported seven. The case recovery rate now stands at 96.62%, while the fatality rate is 2.01%.

Mumbai witnessed 345 new cases and nine deaths, while Pune city added 297 infections and four fatalities. With 2,06,747 new tests, the



Frontline warriors: Nurses receive COVID-19 vaccine at a nursing training college in Thane. ■ PTI

total number of samples tested so far in Maharashtra climbed to 4,79,67,609.

Parbhani municipal corporation did not report a single case during the day. The Pune region reported the highest new cases in the day at 2,386, followed by 1,863 in the Kolhapur region.

Of other divisions, the Nashik region reported 1,130

fresh cases, Mumbai region 982, Latur region 412, Aurangabad region 102, Nagpur region 52, and Akola region 32. Among 76,755 active patients in Maharashtra, Pune district has the highest such cases at 15,674.

Of the 60,90,786 recovered patients in the State, the highest - 10,54,961 - are from the Pune district.

Vyapam scam: two jailed for rigging exam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOVAL

A special CBI court on Saturday sentenced two people to seven years' imprisonment for rigging a 2013 police recruitment test conducted by the Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board, better known as Vyapam.

Judge Nitiraj Singh Sisodia also fined Omprakash Tyagi and Satish Jatav ₹10,000 each, CBI special prosecutor Satish Dinkar said.

As per the prosecution, candidate Tyagi paid Jatav ₹1.25 lakh to clear the test and the latter hired one Prakar Trivedi to write the test using forged admission card and other documents. Trivedi, incidentally, died in a car crash during the course of the trial, Mr. Dinkar said.

Tyagi and Jatav were convicted under various sections of the IPC and provisions of the Madhya Pradesh Examination Recognition Act, he said.

Ex-minister passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PUNE/MUMBAI

Ganpatrao Deshmukh, the longest-serving MLA of Maharashtra and a senior leader of the Peasants and Workers Party, died in a private hospital in Solapur on Friday, evening, said family sources.

Deshmukh was in hospital and died due to old age-related ailments. He represented Sangola in the Assembly for 11 terms since 1962 and served as an MLA for 54 years said his grandson Aniket Deshmukh.

Deshmukh also served as a minister in the Sharad Pawar government in 1978 and again in 1999.

WESTERN RAILWAY E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE No.S/29/2021 Date 28.07.2021

S.N.	Short Description of item	Quantity	T.O.D.
792	Capacitor 0.47 MFD	1500 Nos	03.08.2021
793	High Power 3W LED based Tri Color Torch	3000 Nos	12.08.2021
794	Non Flammable Solvent Based Adhesive Con	35206 Ltr	13.08.2021
795	Secondary Vertical Damper	154 Nos	16.08.2021
796	Secondary Lateral Damper	250 Nos	16.08.2021
797	IOH Maintenance Kit	45 Set	17.08.2021
798	Pressure Sensor	18 Nos	18.08.2021
799	Pressure Sensor Converter Oil	9 Nos	18.08.2021
800	Hydraulically Regulated Door Closer	4128 Nos	20.08.2021
801	Polymer Water Hose	10159 Mir	20.08.2021
802	Amalgamated Transformer Rectifier Unit	20 Nos	20.08.2021
803	Foot Step complete	896 Nos	20.08.2021
804	Channel Formed	700 Nos	20.08.2021
805	Set of Prevaling Torque	1869 Set	20.08.2021
806	Set of Wiper Arm Complete	207 Set	20.08.2021
807	Lateral Damper 100 Kg	222 Nos	21.08.2021
808	Hermetically Sealed Compressor	20 Nos	23.08.2021
809	Led Signal Lighting Unit Route (2888), Shunt (706), Calling On (460)	4054 Nos	23.08.2021
810	Maintenance Kit - 01 for Earthing Equipment	1032 Set	23.08.2021
811	Door Chainless Cotter Rivet	1000 Nos.	23.08.2021
812	Filling Pipe Jointing	4235 Nos.	24.08.2021
813	Empty Tie Rod	100 Nos	25.08.2021
814	Aluminum Sheet	11196 Kg	26.08.2021
815	Maintenance Kit - 03 for Earthing Equipment	1178 Set	26.08.2021
816	Valve Regulated (Sealed) Lead Acid Battery, 2V/200AH	1978 Nos	30.08.2021
817	Roof Sealing Rubber	563 Nos	03.09.2021
818	SET OF Labyrinth Ring Bearing Cap	37 Set	03.09.2021
819	Overhauling Kit for Pantograph	66 Set	06.09.2021

Please visit www.ireps.gov.in. Please read Qty as 2467 Nos instead of 3028 Nos. at Sr.No.783 (LMLA, Low Maintenance Lead Acid Secondary cells, 2V, 300AH.) of Tender Notice No.S/28/2021 Dt. 21.07.2021. **Corrigendums:** Corrigendums issued to following Tenders: Sr.No.702 (3 phase 440 V 10 KVA Silent Diesel generating set) of Tender Notice No. S/26/2021 Dt. 07/07/21 on 23.07.2021 postponed to 10.08.2021. Regarding detailed notice EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.westernrailways.gov.in

0315 For Principal Chief Materials Manager

Police hold flag march in Jaipur

Tension over removal of saffron flag atop Ambargarh Fort

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR

The police here on Saturday held a flag march amid tensions over the removal of a saffron flag atop the Ambargarh Fort, which has a temple visited by the members of the Meena community.

The community members had removed the flag a few days ago, accusing right-wing Hindu groups of tampering with their culture.

The flag march comes a day after the police booked Sudarshan TV editor-in-chief Suresh Chavhanke for

allegedly hurting the sentiments of the community and saying that he will visit the fort on August 1 to unfurl a saffron flag. Police sources said Mr. Chavhanke had said this on social media. The FIR against him was lodged by Girraj Meena, the head of the Surajpali unit of the Rajasthan Adivasi Meena Seva Sangh.

Mr. Meena alleged that Mr. Chavhanke abused the community on his channel. "No one will be allowed to disturb harmony, and law and order in the area,"

Adarsh Nagar ACP Neel Kamal, adding that the security has been tightened and a flag march was held in the area where the fort is located besides parts of Galta and Transport Nagar.

The tension had escalated between the Meenas and Hindu outfits after a saffron flag atop it was removed and torn by the members of the community in the presence of MLA Ramkesh Meena.

Cross FIRs were lodged at the Transport Nagar police station on July 22 in this regard.

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY Open E-Tender Notice No. EL/TRD/50/NIT, Dated 29.07.2021

The Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution) West Central Railway, Kota for and on behalf of President of India invites E-tender for following work: (1) Name of Work: Tender No. EL/TRD/50/04 (2021-22). Provision of additional wire arrangement for preventing damage to Live OHE at 24 LC gates of Kota Division. (2) Approximate cost: ₹ 57,80,306/- (3) Date & Time of closing: 25.08.2021-15:30 hrs (4) Official Website & Address: <http://www.ireps.gov.in> Address:- Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/ Traction Distribution, 1st Floor, DRM Office, West Central Railway, Kota-324002. The offer will be accepted only through E-tendering on website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. The bidder should have class III Digital signature certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. No tender is accepted manually. Please read tender terms and condition before tendering.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution) West Central Railway, Kota

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 CIN- U40102RJ2000SGC016484 (A Govt. of Rajasthan Undertaking)
CHHABRA SUPERCRITICAL THERMAL POWER PROJECT, CHHABRA
E-TENDER NOTICE : TN-56(RVU2122WLOB00672)

Online e-tenders are invited for "Annual contract for the Work of complete operation, maintenance and housekeeping of Coal Handling Plant, including wagon unloading, operation & maintenance of heavy machineries and other equipment's, Electrical & C&I works, of CHP area and other related works as specified in the scope of work for 2x660 MW Units, Unit-5&6 of CSCTPP, Chhabra". Tender details are available on websites <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> (for e-tender), www.energy.rajjasthan.gov.in/rvun1 & www.sppp.rajjasthan.gov.in

0092/04/21/4130 RVUN/PR-3548 Addl. Chief Engineer (CSCTPP)

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unidentified dead body of male **Namely: Unknown, S/O: Unknown, R/O: Unknown, Age: 30 years, Height: 5'5", Wearing: Black Trouser who was found dead in front of H.No. F-229 Main Mangal Bazar Road, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi on 24.07.2021. In this regard a case DD No. 10A dated 24.07.2021 has been registered at P.S. Laxmi Nagar, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about the above deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

Sd/- SHO
P. S: Laxmi Nagar, Delhi
Tel. No.: 011-2254 2992

DP/619/ED/2019

Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency
 First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatraj, opp. IT-Park, Sahasradhara Road, Dehradun

Ref. No. 1028/11-02 (xix)/ITCO/URRDA/21 Dated: 29.07.2021

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice - 01/2021-22

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of Roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Tehri & Uttarkashi for 08 number of Packages with estimated cost totaling to Rs. 38.66 Crore including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent*.

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 02-08-2021.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with concern CIRCLE OFFICES, mentioned in SBD/MBD on a date

FROM PAGE ONE

Centre urges curbs in 46 high positivity districts

The fourth national level sero-prevalence survey — whose headline results were announced last week revealed that nearly 40 crore Indians lacked antibodies to the virus and were particularly vulnerable.

Dr. Bhargava advised the States to ramp up vaccination in the 60+ and 45-60 age categories as nearly 80% of the mortality was from these vulnerable age-groups.

India's active case load stood at 4,08,920, which constituted about 1.29% of the country's total positive cases.

On Saturday evening, India reported that it had administered 46.1 crore doses since the beginning of the vaccination drive in January.

This is nearly five crore doses short of what the Centre, in June, told the Supreme Court it would have covered the end of July.

Assam CM wants neutral probe into border clash

Responding to the development, Mr. Sarma, in a series of tweets, said: "Will be very happy to join in any investigation... But why is the case not being handed over to a neutral agency, especially when the place of occurrence is well within the constitutional territory of Assam."

The four police officials named in the FIR are IGP Anurag Agarwal, Cachar DIG Debojyoti Mukherjee, Cachar SP Vaibhav Chandrakant Nimbalkar and Officer in Charge of the Dholai police station Sahabuddin.

Cachar Deputy Commissioner Keerthi Jalli and DFO Sunnydeo Choudhury have also been booked under the same charges. The officials have been asked to appear

at the police station on August 1. The Mizoram police have also registered cases against 200 unidentified Assam police personnel.

Assam Police has also issued summons to six officials from Mizoram, including Deputy Commissioner of Kolasib district H. Lalithlangliana and Superintendent of Police Vanlalafaka Ralte, and ordered them to appear at the Dholai police station on August 2. Other officials posted in Kolasib district who have been summoned are Additional SP David J.B., Vairengte Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) C. Lalrempuia, 1st India Reserve Battalion Additional SP Bruce Kibby and Vairengte Sub-divisional Police Officer Thartea Hrangchal.

BJP MP Babul Supriyo says he will quit politics

Mr. Supriyo had unsuccessfully contested the West Bengal Assembly election earlier this year from Tollygunj in south Kolkata. He lost to Trinamool Congress leader and Minister Aroop Biswas by a margin of about 50,000 votes.

The MP went on to compare the situation in 2014 with 2019, and said that he had been the only BJP MP from West Bengal in 2014, and that the MP from Darjeeling, S.S. Ahluwalia, had won the Lok Sabha polls because of support from the Gorkha Janamukti Morcha.

2 Lok Sabha MPs

The BJP had two Lok Sabha MPs from the State in 2014 and the number rose to 18 in 2019.

Mr. Supriyo also spoke of his differences and "disagreements with the State leadership on some issues" though he did not name anyone. The differences between him and State BJP president Dilip Ghosh have been publicly known on several occasions. Mr. Ghosh had objected when Mr. Supriyo took to social media to

announce that he has been asked to step down as a Minister. Asked about the development, the State BJP president said that he had not received any written resignation from Mr. Supriyo and would not react to "posts on social media".

The development comes as a major embarrassment to the BJP, which is battling dissent and defection after the party suffered a humiliating defeat in the Assembly polls. Mukul Roy, who was national vice-president of the BJP, joined the TMC in June 2021, a month after the Assembly polls. A few weeks ago, another BJP MP, Saumitra Khan, announced his decision to step down as president of the BJP Yuva Morcha but later withdrew his resignation.

While certain TMC leaders like MP Saugata Roy said that Mr. Supriyo was upset on being dropped as a Minister, party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh described the developments concerning Mr. Supriyo as "drama by resigning on fakebook" and a "desperate attempt to attract attention".

Pulwama mastermind killed in encounter

A joint search operation was launched in the forest area of Namibian and Marsar, part of the Dachigam National Park, a forest range straddling Srinagar and Pulwama.

"Lamboo also stayed with JeM's Adil Dar, who carried out the Pulwama attack in 2019," IGP Kumar said.

"He figured in the last video of Dar that went viral," he added.

The police said Lamboo visited several training camps of the JeM in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"Out of 19 accused terrorists and supporters involved in the Pulwama attack, seven, including Adil Dar, Mudasar Khan, Umar Farooq, Kamran, Qari Yasir, Sajjad Bhat and Lamboo were killed in encounters. Around seven terrorists and over ground workers have been arrested and five are still absconding," IGP Kumar said.

Lamboo, according to the police, was closely associated with JeM chief Azhar Masood and had infiltrated into this side of Kashmir in the year 2017 through Sargadh Sector. He was a 'A++' categorized terrorist.

"Lamboo was behind the killing of policeman Fayaz Ahmed, his wife and daughter in Tral, this year," IGP Kumar said.

Awantipora as base
The police added that Lamboo was trying to re-establish and strengthen the JeM terror outfit and utilise Awantipora, Kakapora and Pampore areas of Pulwama, as a hotbed for receiving new terrorist groups and transporting them to the other parts for carrying out terrorist attacks.

The security forces recovered one AK rifle, one M-4 carbine, a Glock pistol and a Chinese Pistol at the encounter site.

Pegasus row: CJ Bench to hear plea on Aug. 5

Separate petitions filed by journalists, MP and lawyer

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

A Supreme Court Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana will on August 5 hear a petition filed by senior journalists N. Ram and Sashi Kumar for an independent probe headed by a former or sitting court judge into the mass surveillance of over 142 potential "targets", including journalists, lawyers, ministers, Opposition politicians, constitutional functionaries and civil society activists, using military-grade Israeli spyware Pegasus.

The Chief Justice will have Justice Surya Kant accompanying him on the Bench.

The Supreme Court caucused for August 5, released on Saturday, showed the petition filed by Mr. Ram and Mr. Kumar listed along with separate petitions on the same issue filed by Rajya Sabha MP John Brittas and Supreme Court advocate M.L. Sharma.



The senior journalists' petition was mentioned by senior advocate Kapil Sibal before a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Friday. The CJ had agreed to list the case next week.

Mr. Sibal had pleaded urgency in hearing as the petition concerned issues affecting the fundamental rights, civil liberties of citizens and even national security. He said the issue was making waves not only in India but globally.

"Such mass surveillance using a military-grade spyware abridges several fundamental rights and appears to

represent an attempt to infiltrate, attack and destabilise independent institutions that act as critical pillars of our democratic set-up," the petition has said.

It has sought a full disclosure from the government on whether it had authorised the snooping, which seems to be an attempt to muzzle free speech and to chill dissent. The government, the petition said, had still not given a straight answer to whether the illegal hack was done with its blessings.

The journalists have contended that spying has caused serious dents on the rights to free speech and privacy. It has no legal basis. In fact, the legal regime for surveillance under Section 5(2) of the Telegraph Act seems to have been completely bypassed. Civilians have become targets.

The Pegasus software is manufactured by Israeli cyber-arms firm NSO Group Technologies Limited.

Always keep nation's interest in mind: PM

Modi addresses IPS probationers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the Indian Police Service (IPS) probationers were flag-bearers of "Ek Bharat-Shreshth Bharat" and therefore should always keep the mantra of "Nation First, Always First" foremost in their minds.

Mr. Modi addressed the IPS probationers at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy via video conferencing. He also interacted with the probationers during the event. Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Minister of State (Home) Nityanand Rai were present on the occasion.

The Prime Minister told the probationers that they should keep the national interest and perspective in mind while taking decisions at the field level. He said they were entering the service when the country was undergoing transformation at every level. The police needed to be ready with

Efforts are being made to increase the participation of women officers in the force

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

more innovative methods to prevent new types of crime in the times of technological disruptions, said the Prime Minister.

Stating that people expected a certain degree of conduct from them, Mr. Modi asked the probationers to be always mindful of the dignity of their service, even outside office.

He said efforts were being made to increase the participation of women officers in the force, expressing hope that they would infuse highest standards of efficiency, accountability and would also bring in elements of politeness, ease and sensitivity. Mr. Modi also paid homage to the members of the police force who lost their life while serving during the pandemic.



S.N. Ghormade takes charge as Navy vice-chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Vice-Admiral S.N. Ghormade on Saturday assumed charge as the Vice-Chief of Naval Staff from Vice-Admiral G. Ashok Kumar, who retired after 39 years of service.

Vice-Admiral Ghormade was commissioned on January 1, 1984, and is a navigation and direction specialist, according to a Navy statement. He was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in 2017 and the Nausena Medal in 2007.

During Vice-Admiral Kumar's tenure, the Navy saw an increase in budget allocation with 100% utilisation of allocated budget with impetus on capital acquisition, the release said.

INTERVIEW | JAIRAM RAMESH

'Only PM or HM can clarify on Pegasus scandal'

Seeking a reply from the new IT Minister is a macabre joke since he was himself a target of surveillance, says Congress MP

SOBHANA K. NAIR

The Parliament has failed to function effectively for nine consecutive days as the Opposition wants a debate on the Pegasus spyware controversy, with a reply from Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Home Minister Amit Shah. Underlining the lack of intent from the Centre to address many key issues such as price rise and the farmers' agitation apart from the snooping scandal, Congress' Chief Whip in the Rajya Sabha **Jairam Ramesh** says passing Bills in the din is a complete mockery and an insult to the people.

The Parliament has not functioned properly for nine consecutive days. Barring a debate on the COVID pandemic, the Rajya Sabha has not seen any other significant deliberation. Will this continue next week too?

The demand of all Opposition parties is first and foremost a discussion on Pegasus with a reply from Home Minister Amit Shah. This is because snooping and surveillance have grave implications not only for the

constitutional rights of citizens but also for national security. The government says we can seek clarifications from the new IT Minister. This is a macabre joke since the new IT Minister was himself the target of Pegasus snooping and surveillance.

Opposition parties have said that Pegasus is the key priority. Aren't other issues like high fuel prices, the nine-month-long farmers' protests equally important?

■ Of course they are! I myself

have given notices on both the current economic situation and the ongoing farmers' protests on July 23 before the Pegasus episode unfolded. A number of my colleagues and also friends in the Opposition have submitted similar notices. We haven't heard anything from the Chairman on them.



We haven't heard anything from the Chairman on notices given over the farmers' protests and price rise

floor leaders in both Houses for a discussion.

When IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw rose to give a statement in the Rajya Sabha on Pegasus, Trinamool Congress MP Shantanu Sen snatched and

the government may curtail the session. So far four Bills have been passed in the Rajya Sabha in the din without any substantial debate. In the Lok Sabha, too, we see a similar situation. Your comments?

■ The House has to be in order to be able to seek clarifications. In fact after the IT Minister read out his meaningless statement, the Chairman [Venkaiah Naidu] was moving on to the next item of business when I got up and asked what about clarifications, which is our legitimate right. But I raised it only as a matter of procedure. The truth of the matter is that neither the old nor the new IT Minister is the right person to answer the questions that the nation is asking. Only the PM or HM are in a position to respond to these questions. There is no room for a third person in this one-man show, two-man army government.

It is abundantly clear that a combined and forceful Opposition has cornered the government on the Pegasus issue. The government wants no discussion whatsoever on this subject. Hence its threats to adjourn Parliament. Passing Bills in the din is a complete mockery and an insult to the people of our country. Pegasus is an issue that affects each and every Indian and undermines our democracy. Farmers issues, issues relating to the economy, prices of essential commodities are also of paramount importance and we have been agitating in Parliament on them as well.

Man held for sexual abuse of children

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A coordinated effort by investigative agencies worldwide recently resulted in the arrest of a person in Goa by the Central Bureau of Investigation for the alleged sexual abuse of children. The CBI has so far identified 27 victims.

The images and videos, through which the offender and the victims were identified, were originally uncovered in Belgium and uploaded to Interpol's International Child Sexual Exploitation database by Europol. It also enabled the Australian officials to provide additional intelligence.

The accused, an Indian national, was involved in the sexual abuse of children in Goa and Maharashtra. He would record the acts on his mobile phones, digital camera and other electronic devices.

The photographs and video clips were shared with others through the Internet and sold via the dark web.

The agency alleged that the person was in touch with other paedophiles overseas via social networking websites. The Interpol victim identification task force spent two weeks in July analysing material selected by the Interpol's crimes against children unit and its efforts resulted in the identification of 130 abuse locations.



Sensitive zone: India and China retreated from the banks of the Pangong Tso in February but friction points remain. *AP

India and China hold 12th round of dialogue

Focus is on a disengagement pact

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

India and China on Saturday held the 12th round of Corps Commander talks at Moldo on the Chinese side. Details of its outcome are not known yet.

The talks began around 10.30 a.m. and concluded around 7.30 p.m., a defence official said.

The focus of the talks has been on concluding an agreement for disengagement at Gogra and Hot Springs as part of the overall disengagement and de-escalation in eastern Ladakh to end the stand-off which began last year. This has been one of the shortest rounds of Corps Commander talks, which have sometimes extended for more than 16 hours. A lot of time during the talks is spent in translation, an official explained.

China had earlier suggested July 26 as a possible date

for the talks but the Indian side had conveyed that the day being Kargil Vijay Diwas it would not be convenient.

While disengagement had been completed on both banks of Pangong Tso in February, other friction points that remain to be resolved are Gogra and Hot Springs, Demchok and Depsang. Buffer zones were established in some places as part of the earlier talks which remain in place and the situation on the ground remains stable, one official said.

Another round of Major General-level talks is also scheduled to be held soon.

In eastern Ladakh, India and China have two mutually agreed disputed areas — Trig Heights and Demchok — and 10 areas of differing perception.

Since the stand-off last year, five additional friction points have emerged.

Cong. accuses Centre of hypocrisy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Congress charged on Saturday that the Central government had failed in handling the interstate border dispute between Assam and Mizoram that led to fatal clashes earlier this week.

At a press conference, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi said this was not a new issue and past governments have also faced it, but there had never been a situation where Central forces needed to be deployed on the interstate border.

"How could it reach a stage where people are shooting bullets?" he asked. Had such a situation arisen in non-BJP-ruled states, the saffron party would have demanded the deployment of Army and the imposition of President's Rule, he claimed, accusing the ruling party of "double-standards".

"Lives are being lost and homilies and preaching is happening, just because, there are at least one of them is a full BJP government," he said. "I think, these are hypocritical double standards, which need to be exposed and it also reflects the complete failure of the Central government," he added.

There have been clashes between the police forces of Assam and Mizoram and six policepersons from Assam have died.



Akali Dal MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal with the delegation that met the President on Saturday. *SANDEEP SAXENA

Oppn. meets President on behalf of farmers

It also seeks debate on Pegasus scandal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A delegation of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), the Nationalist Congress Party and the National Conference met President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday and urged him to direct the Narendra Modi government to set up a Joint Parliamentary Committee on the death of hundreds of farmers in the nine-month long agitation against the three controversial farm laws. The delegation also demanded a debate on the Pegasus cyberattack.

The delegation handed over the memorandum which was also signed by the BSP, the Shiv Sena, the CPI, the CPI(M) and the Rashtriya Loktantrik Party. The Congress is not a signatory to it.

After meeting the President, SAD leader Harsimrat Kaur Badal said the entire

Opposition has been demanding the government for the last two weeks to allow them to speak in Parliament on issues concerning people. Ms. Badal was accompanied by Ritesh Pandey of the BSP, Mohammed Faizal of the NCP and Hasnain Masoodi of the N.C.

"We have come here to tell the President that democracy and democratic traditions are under threat and the voice of parliamentarians is being crushed inside Parliament too. This is a big loss for democracy. As the custodian and conscience keeper of the country, he should put pressure on the government to listen to the people's issues and allow Parliament to function," the former Union Minister told reporters.

Ms. Badal said more than 500 farmers have so far died in the agitation while the government is living in denial.

Sri Lanka seeks to reset relations with India

Colombo to send High Commissioner to New Delhi; to pitch for investment, trade and connectivity, and religious exchanges

SUHASINI HAIDAR
MEERA SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI/COLMBO

After months of strain over a number of issues, including the cancelled port project in Colombo, Sri Lanka is preparing to send its High Commissioner-designate to New Delhi, along with a "road map" to restore ties that includes resolving fishermen's issues, building connectivity, trade and investment, as well as promoting religious links, Buddhist exchanges and handing over a sacred "Sita temple stone" from Sri Lanka for the proposed Ram temple in Ayodhya.

According to a formal proposal presented to Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, which *The Hindu* has seen, the road map will help bridge the "growing trust deficit".

In February, the Narendra Modi government expressed its unhappiness over Sri Lanka's decision to scrap the East Container Terminal project signed in 2019, amid other signs that China was gaining the upper hand in infrastructure deals in the country. The Rajapaksa government has been disap-

pointed over the lack of movement on the requests it made to India for assistance, including a debt repayment waiver for three years and a separate currency swap for \$1 billion to help with economic crisis, which were made by President Gotabaya and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to Mr. Modi.

"In recent years, the Indo-Sri Lanka bilateral relationship has been increasingly dominated by a transactional approach. This is a consequence of the changes in the geo-political equilibrium in the region, that have resulted in a growing trust deficit," says the document prepared by a team led by new High Commissioner-to-be Milinda Moragoda, Deputy High Commissioner Niluka Kadurugamuwa and top diplomats at missions in Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai.

The reset in ties is expected to be marked by the arrival of Mr. Moragoda, a former Cabinet Minister, in mid-August.

His predecessor, High Commissioner Austin Fernando, completed his term and returned to Colombo on January 11, 2020, which



Bridging the gap: A file photo of Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. President Ram Nath Kovind is also seen. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

makes this the longest period the position has remained vacant, even though Mr. Moragoda's appointment was announced in August 2020. While officials say the COVID-19 situation and the lack of connectivity between India and Sri Lanka during the second wave contributed to the delay, no official reason was given to the Indian side who had processed the diplomatic agreement speedily at the time.

An official of the Ministry of External Affairs welcomed the news of the High Commissioner's arrival, but said New Delhi had not yet re-

ceived details of the "Integrated Country Strategy" for India.

'Speed up projects'

In its recommendations, the paper says it is "imperative" that Colombo speeds up the West Container Terminal project that Sri Lanka offered after cancelling the ECT project, as well as the Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm and other pending projects.

It also advocates an inter-agency committee on trade, investment and tourism to reach foreign direct investment goals of \$256 billion from India in 2022. While it

sets a goal for Sri Lankan exports to India of about \$675 million in 2022, it points out that export prospects presently suffer due to "increasing protectionism [in India], limited market access, a challenging and unpredictable regulatory environment as well as the Make in India Initiative, which prioritises local business and sourcing of local raw materials and products over imports".

The strategy is silent on the Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement, negotiations for which appear deadlocked.

In his letter to President Gotabaya introducing the paper, Mr. Moragoda outlines plans for the next two years of his tenure in New Delhi, including high-level visits between both capitals. Putting a special emphasis on the role of Buddhism, which he calls the "most precious gift that India has bestowed upon [Sri Lanka]" from the time of Emperor Ashoka, he says the two countries are bound by geography, economics, culture, history and democratic values. "Against this backdrop, any setbacks to our relation-

ship however intractable they may appear to be at any given point in time, can only be temporary," Mr. Moragoda adds.

The strategy paper advises promoting exchanges of Buddhist and Hindu scholars as well as Sri Lankan Catholic pilgrims to the "Velankanni trail" in Tamil Nadu. In particular, it speaks of handing over a sacred stone from the Sita Amman temple in Sri Lanka for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Among the problems the paper seeks to address is the conflict in the Palk Bay, where Sri Lankan fishermen object to Indians using bottom trawlers and fishing illegally along their coast, which often leads to arrests of the Indians. Indian fishermen accuse the Sri Lankan Navy of attacking and killing them.

The paper suggests that, top Sri Lankan diplomats engage directly with the government and fisheries associations in Tamil Nadu. It also advises engaging with the MEA, the Tamil Nadu government and the UNHCR to encourage and facilitate the return of about 1 lakh Sri Lankan refugees from India.

One arrested as NIA raids 15 places in J&K

Searches were related to IED seizure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday carried out searches at 15 locations in Jammu and Kashmir and arrested one person in connection with cases related to the Lashkar-e-Mustafa (LeM) outfit and the recovery of an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in Jammu in June.

An NIA spokesman said its officials, along with the J&K police and the CRPF, conducted searches at nine locations in Shopian, Anantnag and Jammu in the case relating to the conspiracy by the LeM, working at the behest of the Jaish-e-Mohammed.

"Many digital devices, including mobile phones, hard disks, memory cards, pen drives, laptops and many booklets containing incriminating materials have been recovered from the premises of the arrested accused and the suspects in the case," the agency said.

The agency identified the accused as Irfan Ahmed Dar, son of Muhammad Ya-

koob Dar, from Batingoo in Anantnag. "Preliminary investigation has revealed that he was involved in the conspiracy of carrying out terrorist activities in collusion with other arrested accused persons. Further investigation continues," the spokesman said.

LeT conspiracy

The NIA teams also conducted searches at six locations in the Shopian and Ramban districts in the case related to the recovery of five kg of IED from a Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist in Bathindi, Jammu, on June 27 this year.

"It was a conspiracy by the LeT to cause explosion in Jammu using the IED. During the searches conducted today, many digital devices, including mobile phones, pen drives, shells of used bullets, CDs, plastic face masks used during stone pelting, memory cards, handwritten 'jehadi' material, ID card of Al-Aqsa media and other incriminating materials, have been recovered," the NIA said.

Karnataka puts RT-PCR clause on Kerala travellers

Passengers arriving from Maharashtra too must show proof

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

With Kerala and Maharashtra seeing a surge in COVID-19 cases, Karnataka has made a negative RT-PCR certificate mandatory for all arrivals from the two States. The certificate should not be older than 72 hours, irrespective of vaccination status.

Additional Chief Secretary (Health and Family Welfare) Jawaid Akhtar issued a circular in this regard on July 31.

"The negative certificate is mandatory for all the passengers coming to Karnataka by flight, bus, train and personal transport. This is applicable for all flights originating in Kerala and Maharashtra. Airlines should issue boarding passes only to

passengers carrying RT-PCR negative certificates not older than 72 hours," an official circular said.

The government directed all Deputy Commissioners of Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu and Mysuru and Belagavi, Vijayapura, Kalaburagi and Bidar, to establish border check posts and deploy staff to ensure that all vehicles (driver, passengers, helper, cleaner) entering Karnataka are checked for compliance.

Karnataka on Saturday reported 1,987 new cases of COVID-19. Of these, 450 cases were from Bengaluru Urban, while numbers rose slightly in districts bordering Kerala and Maharashtra.

There were 37 more deaths and the test positivity rate (TPR) for the day was 1.43%. A central team of the Health Ministry despatched to help Kerala in COVID-19 management visited Alappuzha and reviewed the pandemic situation on Saturday.

3 days on, 19 still missing in cloudburst-hit Kishtwar

Difficult terrain affecting rescue work

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Nineteen people remained missing for the third consecutive day on Saturday in the remote Honzar village in the Kishtwar area of Chenab Valley, where a cloudburst wreaked havoc on the intervening night of July 28 and 29, relief organisations said. The cloudburst left seven people dead and 17 injured.

"We reached Honzar on Thursday morning. Eight houses were completely buried and 19 locals are still missing," Syed Imran, a volunteer with the Ababeel, an NGO arranging relief material for the survivors, told *The Hindu*.

According to the volunteers of several relief organisations, the rescue operations launched by the administration with the help of the Army and the State Disaster Relief Force were not able to recover any person alive or dead.



Rescue workers searching for survivors at Honzar in Kishtwar district. ■ PTI

"The topography and inaccessibility of the area is also making it hard to carry relief and other material to the village. It's five to six km trek on foot, which takes four to five hours to reach the village. At many places, the access road is close to the stream that swelled due to the cloudburst," Mr. Imran said.

"We wish the government could help the NGOs and volunteers to ferry the relief material to the location by chopper," he said.

Assam and Nagaland sign deal to reduce tension along border

Security forces from both States to withdraw simultaneously

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DIMAPUR/GUWAHATI

The Chief Secretaries of Assam and Nagaland on Saturday signed an agreement to de-escalate the tense situation prevailing at two locations in the Dessoi Valley forest/ Tsurangkong Valley by simultaneously withdrawing security forces within the next 24 hours.

The agreement was signed following a meeting at Dimapur between Assam Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua and his Nagaland counterpart, J. Alam, in the presence of Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister Y. Patton and

Assam Education Minister Ranaj Pegu.

Both sides agreed that in order to maintain peace and tranquillity in the areas around Ao Senden village and Vikito village as they are known in Nagaland and called as Jankhona Nala / Nagajankha and Compartment No. 12 respectively in Assam, urgent and effective steps are required for defusing the stand-off between the security forces of both States.

"In this regard, it is decided that the security personnel of both States shall simultaneously move back from their present locations

to their respective base camps. The simultaneous withdrawal of the security personnel shall begin immediately and shall be completed in the next 24 hours as far as possible," according to the agreement.

Nagaland and Assam shall monitor the area using drones and satellite imagery with a view to maintaining the status quo. It was decided that the Superintendents of Police of the districts of Mokokchung (Nagaland) and Jorhat (Assam) shall ensure orderly withdrawal of their respective forces and shall be responsible for it.

Two Pakistani intruders shot dead in Punjab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead two Pakistani intruders along the International Border in Ferozepur district of Punjab.

The BSF, in a statement on Saturday, said the troops detected suspicious movement of intruders sneaking inside Indian territory on the night of July 30.

"The BSF troops challenged them to stop, but the intruders did not pay any heed to repeated warnings. Subsequently, they were fired upon by the BSF troops during which 2 intruders were shot down," the statement said.

SC raps CBI for delay in filing appeal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has directed the CBI to take necessary administrative steps to ensure no delay in filing of appeals, and said an IT-based monitoring mechanism should be adopted to facilitate proper supervision.

Noting that there was a delay of 647 days in filing a petition by the probe agency against a Chhattisgarh High Court order in June 2019, the top court observed that the explanation given by the CBI was "clearly insufficient". The court dismissed on the grounds of delay the CBI plea against the acquittal of accused in a corruption case.

"The CBI is directed to take all necessary administrative steps to ensure that these kinds of delays do not occur in future. Delays in the part of the concerned officials in moving the appeals within the stipulated period of limitation is liable to cause grave misgivings on the reasons of delay," a Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah said in its order last week.

It said the proposition that the delay was caused by the onset of COVID-19 did not explain the entire period of delay as the High Court had delivered the verdict in June 2019.

ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY
KARAIKUDI
(A State University Established by the Government of Tamil Nadu and Recognized by UGC)
[Accredited with A+ Grade by NAAC (GPA: 3.64)]

Alagappa University invites applications for **Pre-Ph.D. Entrance Exam (Physical Mode)** to be held on **19.09.2021** in the University Campus, Karaikudi

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

- Submission of application through **ONLINE** only
- For further details, visit University Website www.alagappauniversity.ac.in or **Contact: 04565 - 224230**. University reserves the right to change anything mentioned above.
- Date of Examination **19.09.2021 - 90 minutes**
- Application Fee **Rs. 500/-**

Karaikudi **27.07.2021** DIPR / 641/ DISPLAY / 2021 Prof. C. Sekar Registrar i/c

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
THANJAVUR CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
THANJAVUR SMART CITY LIMITED
RE-TENDER NOTICE
Bid Notice No. 12181 / 2020 / MCE4
Sealed Tenders are invited by The Managing Director & Commissioner, Thanjavur City Municipal Corporation from the Registered Contractors. E-submission is also permitted. For the following works upto 3:00 P.M. on 24.08.2021. The tenders will be opened by the Corporation Commissioner (or) his authorised official in the Corporation Office on the same day at 3:30 P.M. If the office happens to be closed on the date of receipt of the Tender specified, the Tender will be opened on next working day. The Contractor who wish to participate in the Tender may download the Tender documents through <https://tenders.gov.in> by using E-Token / Digital Signature Cards on or before 23.08.2021 up to 3:00 P.M. Any other information may be obtained from the Corporation. Executive Engineer, Thanjavur at the above office during office hours. The Managing Director & Corporation Commissioner has every right to cancel/ postpone the Tender in view of Administrative reasons.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Estimate Cost (Rs. In Crore)	Earnest Money (Rs. In Lakhs)	Contractor Class
1.	Redevelopment of Moat Phase II - Pacakage II in Thanjavur City Municipal Corporation	14.20	14.20	I Class
2.	Redevelopment of Moat Phase II - Pacakage III in Thanjavur City Municipal Corporation	14.85	14.85	I Class

DIPR/2273/Tender/2021 Commissioner and Special Officer, Thanjavur City Municipal Corporation

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NIT Campus PO, Calicut, Kerala 673601
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For details contact: M.Tech Coordinator e-mail: mtech@calicut.nielit.in

Ph: 0495 2287266 Mob: 9446013866, 9447423306, 9447217649 WhatsApp: 9446711666

PURABI DAIRY
The West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Limited (WAMUL) World Bank Financed Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART)

Ref No. MD/PC/APART/E-Tender/2021-22/04 Date: 1st August, 2021

E-procurement Tender Notice

The West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Limited (WAMUL) is an implementing agency of World Bank Financed (APART) Project and now intends to purchase the following items from the eligible bidder as mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Category	Date of Publishing Tender	Last date of Submission of Quotations
1	Liquid Nitrogen	03.08.2021	03.09.2021
2	50 Ltr LN2 Container	06.08.2021	06.09.2021

The details of the E-tender will be published and available at www.assamenders.gov.in as mentioned above. If any corrigendum is issued, it will be published in www.assamenders.gov.in on or before last date and timing for submission of bid. No separate notification for corrigendum or extension of last date of submission of bid will be made through Newspaper advertisement. Notification of any corrigendum will be intimated to respective bidder through the cited government portal.

Sd/- Managing Director, WAMUL

OFFICE OF ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED, JAIPUR REGION-I, JAIPUR
Jyoti Nagar, Sahakar Marg, Jaipur-302005
Phone:0141-2740170(e-mail:acej1pr.phed@rajasthan.gov.in Date: 21/07/2021

No./F./ACE/PHED/Ar.Neemkathana/2021-22/5849-66

(e-NIT No.62.63-64/2021-22)

On behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan online tenders are hereby invited from eligible bidders for the work of (i) RWSS of block Khandela under JJM PHED Sub-Division Khandela Division Neemkathana, Distt. Sikar costing Rs. 1217.36 Lacs-NIT No 62/2021-22. (ii) RWSS of block Ajeetgarh & Shrimadhopur under JJM Sub-Division Ajeetgarh Division Neemkathana, Distt. Sikar costing Rs.850.04 Lacs-NIT No.63/2021-22 and (iii) RWSS of block Neemkathana & Patan under JJM Sub-Division Neemkathana Division Neemkathana, Distt. Sikar costing Rs. 3880.58 Lacs-NIT No.64/2021-22 as per criteria mentioned in the detailed NIT/tender document available on websites: <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> & <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>. Tenders are to be submitted online in electronic format on website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> as per prescribed schedule.

NIT No.	NIB No.	UBN No.
62/2021-22	PHE2122A2385	PHE 2122WLOB05295
63/2021-22	PHE2122A2385	PHE 2122WLOB05296
64/2021-22	PHE2122A2385	PHE 2122WLOB05297

SAVE WATER-SAVE LIFE (Arun Srivastava) Addl. Chief Engineer PHED, Jaipur Region-I, Jaipur

DIPRC/7329

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS
TIRUPATI, CHITTOOR DIST. A.P.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, TTD, TIRUPATI

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
ADV No.23/D3/CE/TTD/2021-22 29/07/2021
e-tenders invited on e-procurement for Three (03) works of TTD Engineering Dept.

Sl. No.	NIT No.	Name of the work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs & Time for completion	Schedule Download start date	Download end date & last date for bid submission
1	3	Superintending Engineer-I			
		Balance improvement works to the Alipiri footpath from Alipiri to GNC, Tirumala. Civil & Renovation Works - Plastering, Paintings, Impervious coat to the newly constructed shelters, improvement to the tolls along the Alipiri footpath and ornamental works to RCC columns	905.00	06.08.2021	21.08.2021
1	109/SE-II/TTD/2021-22	Superintending Engineer-II			
		Supply, erection and commissioning of safety Equipments (Sprinklers & Fire Detection, Alarm System etc.) to SVMS Hospital Buildings, Tirupati	546.50	13.08.2021	31.08.2021
2	12/SE-II/TTD/2021-22		6 Months	5.00 PM	1.00 PM & 3.00 PM
3	14/SE-II/TTD/2021-22	Construction of Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple (Temple portion) at Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir, Union Territory.	1740.00	10.08.2021	27.08.2021
3	14/SE-II/TTD/2021-22		18 Months	5.00 PM	1.00 PM & 3.00 PM

Note: For full details log on to the website <https://tender.approcurement.gov.in> or <http://www.approcurement.gov.in>

Roc.No.PRI/13932/Ad.No.109/PRO/2021, Dated-31.07.2021 Sd/- Executive Officer

SRI VENKATESWARA VETERINARY UNIVERSITY
Administrative Office, Dr.Y.S.R.Bhavan, TIRUPATI, A.P.

TENTH (10th) CONVOCATION OF SVU, TIRUPATI

NOTIFICATION

REFERENCE NO.SVU/CONV/6/2021-EXAM-SVU. DATED : 30.07.2021

The Tenth (10th) Convocation of Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University, Tirupati for conferring degrees under Veterinary Science, Dairy Science & Fishery Science faculties is scheduled to be held on Saturday 28th August, 2021 at TTD's Mahathi Auditorium, Near Town club circle, Tirupati at 09:00 A.M. The candidates in the faculties of Veterinary, Fishery and Dairy Science who got qualified for the award of degrees during the period from 01.01.2020 to 30.04.2021 and applied to receive Certificates / Medals IN-PERSON are only eligible for admission into this Convocation. The Chancellor of the University and the Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh will grace the occasion. Other Details and instructions can be seen in the University website www.svu.edu.in Sd/- A.RAVI, REGISTRAR

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES (Divyangjan)
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Phone: 044 - 2747246, 2747213, 2747243 Mobile: 944341716 Kiran Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline No: 18005990019 - Accredited by NAAC - ISO 9001:2015-

Employment Notice No. 01/2021- For Regular posts

NIEPMD invites applications from eligible candidates for the following regular post.

Sl. No	Name of the Post	No.of.Post	Group/Scale of pay	Mode of Recruitment
1	Associate Professor in Pediatrics	01 (one) (Reserved for EWS)	Group-A/Faculty Rs.78,800 - 209200/- Level -12 (7th CPC)	By Direct Recruitment
2	Associate Professor in Speech Pathology & Audiology	01 (one)	Group-A/Faculty Rs.78,800 - 209200/- Level -12 (7th CPC)	By Deputation

Employment Notice No. 05/2021- For Contractual Posts

Sl. No	Name of the Post	No.of.Post	Remuneration (Consolidated pay with no other allowances)
1	Associate Professor in Special Education	01 (one)	46,000/- Per month
2	Associate Professor in Therapeutics	01 (one)	46,000/- Per month

(*) - In case of Non availability of a suitable candidate belonging to EWS, such post could be filled up with UR.
For detailed advertisement, essential/ desirable qualifications, age limit, format of application and the recruitment fee details etc., please visit our website: www.niepmd.tn.nic.in. The last date of receipt of applications with fee and necessary documents is 30 days from the date of publication in employment news. Sd/- Director

SAINIK SCHOOL BIJAPUR (KARNATAKA)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

1. Tender notification on prescribed form is invited from reputed firms for Annual Contract for Services and Bulk Supply of Items. Last date for submission of offline form is 25 Aug 2021. For downloading Tender Form and more details the interested bidders may visit our website www.ssbj.in.

2. Principal reserves the right to accept or reject tenders without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/- Principal
Sainik School Bijapur

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e-NIT No. : CMRL/RS/117/2021

e-procurement tender

CMRL invites open e-tender through e-procurement portal from reputed, experienced, financially sound, eligible applicants, who fulfil the qualification criteria as mentioned in the tender through National Competitive Bidding (NCB) under Single Stage Two Envelope (Technical & Financial) system, as detailed below:

"**ENGAGING OF CONSULTANT FOR DOCUMENTATION, TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF ISO 9001 AND ISO 14001 MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR OPERATION & MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENTS OF CHENNAI METRO RAIL LIMITED**".

Please refer websites www.chennai-metro-rail.org or <https://procure.gov.in/procure/app> for further information.

DIPR/2278/Tender/2021 DIRECTOR (SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONS)

India all set for UNSC presidency term

Meetings to focus on maritime security, counterterrorism and peacekeeping

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

As it begins its month-long presidency of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), India is set to hold high-level meetings and briefings to bring focus to its three priorities: maritime security, counterterrorism and peacekeeping, said India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations T.S. Tirumurti in a video message released on Twitter on Saturday.

On August 9, India will organise a virtual Open Debate for heads of state and government titled, "Maintenance of international peace and security: Enhancing maritime security – A case for international cooperation" according to a government press statement. Countries will discuss coordinations to tackle maritime crime and security issues.

Increasing coordination
India will also organise a minister-level meeting titled,

"Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts" at the end of August. It is seeking to enhance coordination between the U.N. and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the money-laundering and terror-financing watchdog as well as address the linkages between terror and transnational crime.

Another ministerial open debate on "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Technology and Peacekeeping" will be held on August 18. India is one of the top troop contributors to the U.N. missions and is looking for ways to use technology to better protect the forces. It is also looking at ways to address crimes against them. It expects to deploy a mobile app – UNITE AWARE – that will provide terrain information and "improve situational awareness" for peacekeepers, Deputy Permanent Representative K Nagaraj Naidu told the UNSC in May, as per a PTI report.

India had taken a "princi-

India had taken a principled and forward-looking position on various issues since its tenure at the UNSC began in January

We have been proactive. We have focused on issues of our priority. We have made efforts to bridge the different voices within the Council to ensure that it comes together and speaks in one voice on a variety of important issues of the day

T.S. TIRUMURTI
India's Permanent Representative to the UN



pled and forward-looking position" on various issues since its tenure at the UNSC began in January, Mr. Tirumurti said in his message.

"We have been proactive. We have focused on issues of our priority. We have made efforts to bridge the different voices within the Council to ensure that it comes together and speaks in one voice on a variety of important issues of the day," he said.

Navigating this path has meant that India has sometimes abstained from voting at the Council and the larger U.N. system, for which it has been criticised for. For in-

stance, in June, India was one of 36 countries that abstained from a General Assembly vote on an arms embargo on Myanmar, despite condemning the violence and saying there can be "no turning back" on Myanmar's democratic transition. India, which shares a border with Myanmar and exports arms to the country, said its concerns were not reflected in the draft resolution.

Escalation in conflict
Other meetings related to international peace and security could be convened as needs arise – for example if

there is an escalation in conflict. Afghanistan, along with Israel-Palestine, Syria, Lybia and Iraq will come up for discussion: these conflicts are regularly discussed at the Council. India already chairs the Taliban Sanctions Committee and Libya Sanctions Committee for 2021. The future of Afghanistan and the fallout for the region is a priority for India, as the U.S. and allied troops complete their withdrawal process.

The government is keen to showcase the fact that the presidency coincides with its 75th Independence Day. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla are expected to chair Security Council meetings. Mr. Modi will do this virtually, while Mr. Jaishankar could possibly travel to New York City for some of the meetings, depending on the schedule, which will be known on August 1, following the adoption of the work programme, according to government sources that spoke with *The Hindu*.

(With inputs from Suhani Haidar in New Delhi)

JD(U) delegation to meet PM to seek a caste-based Census

Lalan Singh takes over as the party's national president

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Janata Dal (United) saw a change in leadership with Munger MP Rajiv Ranjan Singh, popularly known as Lalan Singh, taking over as the national president, replacing R.C.P. Singh, who recently was inducted in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet. At a meeting of the party's national executive in Delhi on Saturday, the JD(U) took key decisions that could put it on a collision course with its ally, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The party's national executive decided that a delegation of MPs will meet the PM to press for a caste-based census, a long-standing demand in Bihar.

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in 2011 undertook a Socio-Economic Caste Census to get data on the caste and economic status of every household in the country. The socio-economic data from the census was made



Drum roll: JD(U) supporters celebrating in Patna after Lalan Singh took over. •PTI

public in 2015, but the caste data was withheld, citing discrepancies. Despite repeated demands, the Centre has refused to divulge the data on caste.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar tweeted on July 24, "We believe there should be a caste-based census. The Bihar legislature had unanimously passed a resolution to this effect in February 2019 and again in February 2020 and it was sent to the Central Government. The Centre should reconsider this issue." His stand was also backed by the Rashtriya

Janata Dal (RJD). This could become a bone of contention between the JD(U) and its ally, the BJP, with the RJD too jumping into the debate.

Mr. Kumar has been arguing that a detailed caste enumeration will help the State identify the really needy people from among the broad categories. The Centre provides 27% reservation to OBCs (Other Backward Class), whereas in Bihar, OBCs get 12% reservation; EBCs (Economically Backward Class) 18%; and women of Backward Classes get 3%.

The JD(U)'s resolution also urges the Centre to make public the findings of the Justice Rohini Commission constituted on the sub-categorisation of OBCs.

The JD(U) has decided to contest in the upcoming U.P. Assembly elections. "Our first priority will be to try and negotiate a seat sharing arrangement with the BJP, but if that is not possible, we will go in alone," a senior JD(U) leader said.

IN BRIEF



Kundra involved in producing porn: police
MUMBAI
Businessman Raj Kundra was involved in producing and streaming of pornographic content, Mumbai Police told the Bombay High Court on Saturday. Mr. Kundra is the husband of Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty.

SBI home loan processing fee waived till August 31
HYDERABAD
State Bank of India (SBI) will not levy processing fees on home loans, under a limited period offer, till August 31. Customers seeking home loans stood to gain from waiver of the 0.40% processing fees, it said.

Bhubaneswar achieves vaccination target
BHUBANESWAR
Odisha's capital Bhubaneswar may have become the first city in the country to achieve its vaccination target. On basis of the 2011 Census, the municipal corporation had set a target to administer 18 lakh doses, which was reached on July 30.

CPWD again defers bids' opening for buildings
NEW DELHI
Citing "administrative reasons" again, the CPWD has postponed the opening of bids for the construction and maintenance of the first three buildings of the proposed Common Central Secretariat for the fourth time. The bids were to be opened on Friday.

₹90 lakh indemnity for woman bedridden due to negligence

She was 14 years old when she fell ill on a school tour

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has confirmed nearly ₹90 lakh in compensation for a woman bedridden for 15 years after her teachers neglected to get her timely medical aid for a fever she developed during a school tour.

Akshatha was a 14-year-old when she left for the educational tour in December 2006.

The case records show the group visited several places in north India before she was taken ill. Her viral fever was later diagnosed as Meningo Encephalitis. "The

doctors opined that had she been given timely medical aid and attention, she could easily have been cured. Ultimately she had to be airlifted in an air ambulance to Bangalore," a Bench led by Justice Navin Sinha said.

The court noted that she was confined to her bed and the illness has affected her memory and speech with no prospects for recovery.

Commission order
The State Consumer Redressal Commission ordered the school management to pay her a compensation of ₹88,73,798. However, the

National Commission reduced the amount to 50 lakh without giving any reason whatsoever.

"Judicial discretion is not arbitrary to be exercised sans reason to the prejudice of another. There is no discussion by the National Commission or any reasons spelt out for the formation of this opinion by it to reduce the compensation," the apex court said.

The Bench re-affirmed the State Commission's order and held that the decision of the National Commission was "arbitrary and unsustainable".

Railways to deploy satellite-backed clocks to ensure uniform time

Move to sync operations comes after investigation of 2019 accident

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

In a significant shift in policy, the Indian Railways will provide Global Positioning System (GPS) clocks for control offices to enable section controllers coordinate with station masters, loco pilots and other staff directly involved in train operations to ensure uniformity in time.

The enhanced safety measure will replace analog clocks and train operations will soon be guided by satel-

lite supported timers known for precision and reliability. Section controllers will set the time for station masters, loco pilots and others to correct their clocks/watches to uniformity. The Ministry of Railways amended relevant provisions in the rule book to make way for the technology upgrade.

Cause of accident
The move follows an investigation into the head-on collision of Train No. 18005 How-

rah-Jagdalpur Salmeswari Express in East Coast Railway on June 25, 2019, which left three railway employees dead and several passengers injured.

The Commissioner of Railway Safety who probed the circumstances that led to the accident concluded that there was a "mismatch in timings maintained in control office, at railway stations, loco pilot, signal power monitoring, data logger and the like".

It was found that the instructions prescribed under Rule 4.01 of General Rules on "Timing and Running of

No further sentence after life term: SC

Order directing convict to spend 10 years in jail after life term is irrational, it says

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court found a Karnataka trial court's order directing a convict to spend another 10 years in jail after he completes his life sentence rather "irrational".

The top court pondered on what the trial judge meant. A Bench, led by Justice U.U. Lalit, said life imprisonment normally means prison till death. A human being, like all other living beings, has but one life. How is it possible for a person to serve 10 years of jail after life?

Justices Lalit, accompanied by Justice Ajay Rastogi, said it would have made



sense had the trial court ordered the prisoner to serve the 10 years in jail before the commencement of his life sentence.

Once a convict is sentenced to life, the prison sentence for his other crimes should be served concur-

rently. That is the law, the top court said.

The case was an appeal filed by convict Imran Jalal, through senior advocate Siddharth Dave.

Jalal was sentenced for life in three counts and 10 years of prison in another five counts.

But what bothered Mr. Dave, which led to the appeal, was the trial court's decision to have Jalal serve a decade in prison under the Explosives Substances Act after he completes his life term.

"The legal position is fairly well-settled that imprisonment for life is a sentence for the remainder of the life of

the offender unless of course the remaining sentence is commuted or remitted by the competent authority...

Any direction that requires the offender to undergo imprisonment for life twice over would be anomalous and irrational for it will disregard the fact that humans like all other living beings have but one life to live," Mr. Dave argued, quoting from the top court's own judgments from the past.

The Bench agreed with the senior lawyer's argument on the finiteness of life, saying, "Once the prisoner spends his life in jail, there is no question of his undergoing any further sentence."

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

Punjab schools to reopen tomorrow

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

With COVID-19 cases dropping in Punjab, the State government on Saturday allowed the reopening of schools for all classes from August 2.

"All schools are allowed to open for all classes from August 2, 2021. They shall follow proper protocols to ensure COVID-19 appropriate behaviour. The department of School Education shall issue notification in this regard," said a directive from the Home Department.

Earlier, the Punjab government had allowed schools to reopen for students of Classes 10 to 12 from July 26.

The guidelines added that the district authorities shall also continue to ensure strict implementation of all directives on COVID-appropriate behaviour, including social distancing and wearing of masks.

ASI breathes life into 17th century Dutch cemetery

Among the oldest colonial cemeteries in the country, it holds over 200 graves dating back to 1656

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
CHINSURAH

As early as 1656 after the decline of the Portuguese, the western bank of the river Hooghly was occupied by the Dutch. For nearly two centuries, a Dutch settlement flourished at Chinsurah and started intra-Asian trade in spices, cotton and indigo. However, in 1825 when Dutch Commissioner B.C.D. Bouman surrendered Chinsurah to the British government, most of the monumental architecture of the Dutch was destroyed.

Of the few remnants of the Dutch architecture, the cemetery, a protected monument remains as the most important proof of strong Dutch presence in the town more than 40 km upstream from Kolkata on the river Hooghly.

The Archeological Survey of India, Kolkata Circle had started the restoration of the Dutch cemetery soon after completing the restoration of Danish cemetery at Se-



New lease of life: Restoration work is under way at the Dutch Cemetery in Chinsurah, West Bengal. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

rampore. But unlike the Danish cemetery which had not more than 50 graves, the Dutch cemetery has around 250 graves that need attention.

"The Dutch Cemetery still stands and is a reminder of

all the stations under his control by using a common ring. The station master on duty will adjust the station clock and record any variation in the time variation register..."

Rule amended

Accepting the recommendations of the Commissioner of Railway Safety that the rule be suitably amended to adopt GPS timings to ensure uniformity of timings maintained at different places and by different set of staff, the Railway Board has directed General Managers of all Zonal Railways to provide GPS clocks in control offices

across Indian Railways.

"The accuracy in the synchronisation of time in the clocks maintained by the control office, station masters, loco pilots, guards and others is crucial in ensuring safety of train operations. In the accident involving Salmeswari Express, there was a block in the section for maintenance work that was lifted without actually ascertaining the clearance of the line for passing the train. Besides other lapses, the enquiry has found mismatch in time maintained by the staff concerned caused the collision," a senior railway official head-

ing a Signal & Telecommunication Wing of the Railways told *The Hindu*.

Heritage with modernity
The huge clocks at major railway stations would also be modified to GPS technology by replacing the analog mechanism. However, the outer box clock design would be retained to keep the heritage look.

In Southern Railway, the process of providing GPS clocks at control offices would be completed in a month's time, Chief Public Relations Officer B. Guganesan said.

of Dutch nationals and the other, still in use by the British and native Christians," Subha Majumder, Superintending Archeologist, ASI Kolkata Circle said. Dr. Majumder said the restoration process might take a few months and is likely to be completed by the end of this year.

The oldest tomb that could have been identified at the cemetery belongs to Sir Cornelius Jonge who died in Chinsurah in 1743. The other important graves at the cemetery includes that of Daniel Anthony Overbeck, Dutch Governor of Chinsurah, who stayed at the town even after the British took over the town in 1825. He died in 1840 and was interned in a sarcophagus tomb.

Enclosed by a high brick wall, the cemetery has mausoleums which are typical of architectural style of the period and are similar to those found in south India. The southern part of the cemetery compound is home to 24

extant Dutch tombs, which are of three types – pyramids, tomb boxes and plain grave stones.

"The Chinsurah Dutch cemetery is probably the biggest non-British European cemetery in West Bengal. The challenge is to restore these structures in their original form. There are many structures inside the 4,000 sq m plot which are ornate and have distinct architectural design which illustrates the uniqueness of Dutch architecture in this part of country," Dr. Majumder said.

In 1993 a devastating tornado damaged some of the brick structures in the cemetery which were subsequently repaired by the ASI. Experts also pointed out that the restoration of the structure is necessary because of the frequent tropical cyclones like Amphan (May 2020) and Yaas (May 2021) over the past few years having an impact and weakening these the centuries old structures.

Taliban clash with Afghan forces in Herat

This comes a day after a police guard was killed when UN compound came under grenade attack

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HERAT

Afghan and Taliban forces clashed again on the outskirts of Herat on Saturday, a day after a police guard was killed when a United Nations compound in the western city came under attack.

Violence has surged across the country since early May, when the militants launched a sweeping offensive as U.S.-led foreign forces began a final withdrawal that is now almost complete.

The Taliban have seized scores of districts across Afghanistan, including in Herat province, where the group has also captured two border crossings adjoining Iran and Turkmenistan.

Hundreds flee fighting

Officials and residents reported renewed fighting on the outskirts of Herat on Saturday, with hundreds fleeing their homes to seek shelter.



High alert: Security personnel outside the office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). • AFP

ter closer to the heart of the city.

Herat Governor Abdul Saboor Qani said most of the fighting was in Injil and Guzara district — where the airport is located.

“At the moment the fighting is ongoing in the south and southeast. We are moving cautiously and to avoid civilian casualties,” he said.

Government forces also called an air strike near a 10-bed hospital in Lashkar Gah, capital of Helmand province, that officials said had been seized earlier by the Taliban to treat its wounded fighters.

Residents said that Taliban fighters took over the Ariana Afghan Speciality Hospital to treat those hurt.

“This morning, the Tali-

ban fighters came and forced the hospital staff to leave,” said Agha Mohammad.

“Planes were hovering in the air at that time, and they were following the Taliban, and the air strike happened.”

Sher Ali Shakir, provincial public health director of Helmand, said the hospital was destroyed, one person killed, and two wounded.

During fighting on Friday, the main Herat compound of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan came under attack from rocket-propelled grenades and gunfire that the UN blamed on anti-government elements.

The militants say they will not target foreign diplomats, but have blatantly violated international protocol before.

Afghan forces and militia-men of veteran warlord and anti-Taliban commander Ismail Khan have been de-

ployed around the city of 6,00,000 in recent days.

Mr. Khan, who previously fought the Soviet occupation forces in the 1980s and then the Taliban during their hardline regime in the 1990s, has vowed to fight the insurgents again to counter their staggering advances in recent months.

Flood rescue hit

Fighting was also hampering rescue efforts after severe flooding in Nuristan this week killed at least 113 people, with over 100 more missing.

“Unfortunately the area is under the control of the Taliban, we were unable to send our provincial teams to the area,” said Tamim Azimi, spokesman for Afghanistan’s state Ministry for Disaster Management. “But we have sent the (local) rescue teams along with the Afghan Red Crescent,” he said

Two killed in drone strike on oil tanker off Oman: U.S. Navy

Israeli officials allege that Tehran launched the attack

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DUBAI

U.S. Navy explosive experts believe a “drone strike” targeted an oil tanker that came under attack off the coast of Oman in the Arabian Sea, killing two on board, the American military said Saturday.

The strike on Thursday night on the oil tanker *Mercer Street* marks the first-known fatal attack after years of assaults on commercial shipping in the region linked to tensions with Iran over its tattered nuclear deal. While no one has claimed responsibility for the attack, Israeli officials alleged that Tehran launched the drone strike.

While Iran did not directly acknowledge the attack, the strike comes as Tehran now appears poised to take



A helicopter taking off from USS Ronald Reagan’s deck in response to a call for assistance from Mercer Street. • REUTERS

an even tougher approach with the West as the country prepares to inaugurate Ebrahim Raisi, a hard-line protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, as President.

The American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS *Ronald Reagan* and the guided missile destroyer USS *Mitscher* were escorting *Mercer Street* as it headed to

a safe port, the U.S. Navy’s Middle East-based 5th Fleet said in a statement on Saturday.

“U.S. Navy explosives experts are aboard to ensure there is no additional danger to the crew, and are prepared to support an investigation into the attack,” the 5th Fleet said.

“Initial indications clearly point to a (drone)-style attack,” it said.

U.S. seizes tanker used to deliver oil to North Korea

It engaged in ship-to-ship transfer of \$1.5 mn worth oil

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

The United States on Friday seized a Singapore-owned oil tanker that was used to make illegal oil deliveries to North Korea, the Justice Department said.

A New York federal judge issued a judgment of forfeiture authorising the United States to take ownership of the *M/T Courageous*, which is currently in Cambodia.

The ship, which has a capacity of 2,734 tons, was purchased by Singaporean national Kwek Kee Seng,

who remains at large, according to a Justice Department statement.

“Kwek and his co-conspirators engaged in an extensive scheme to evade... U.S. and UN sanctions by using vessels under their control to covertly transport fuel to North Korea,” the statement said.

From August to December 2019, the *Courageous* stopped transmission of its location. Satellite imagery showed that during that time, the tanker engaged in ship-to-ship transfers of

more than \$1.5 million worth of oil to a North Korean ship.

The Department has accused Mr. Kwek of trying to hide the scheme by using shell companies, lying to international shipping authorities and falsely identifying the *Courageous* to avoid detection.

Mr. Kwek has been charged with conspiracy to evade economic sanctions on North Korea and money laundering conspiracy.

Cambodian authorities seized the tanker in March 2020 on a U.S. warrant.

WHO sounds alarm over Delta variant surge

China races to contain its worst COVID-19 outbreak in months that has now spread to 14 provinces

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

Mushrooming outbreaks of the Delta variant prompted China and Australia to impose stricter COVID-19 curbs on Saturday, as the WHO urged the world to contain the mutation before it turns into something deadlier and draws out the pandemic.

China’s most serious surge of coronavirus infections in months spread to two more areas on Saturday — Fujian province and the megacity of Chongqing — in an outbreak that now spans 14 provinces.

More than 200 cases have been linked to an original

Delta cluster in Nanjing city where nine cleaners at an international airport tested positive.

“The main strain circulating at present is the Delta variant... which poses an even greater challenge to virus prevention and control work,” said Mi Feng, spokesman for China’s National Health Commission.

The nation where the disease first emerged has rushed to prevent the highly transmissible strain from taking root by putting more than one million people under lockdown and reinstating mass testing campaigns.

Worldwide, coronavirus



Residents queuing up for COVID-19 testing in Zhengzhou. • AFP

infections are once again on the upswing, with the World Health Organization announcing an 80% average increase over the past four weeks in five of the health agency’s six regions, a jump

largely fuelled by the Delta variant.

First detected in India, the strain has now reached 132 countries and territories.

“Delta is a warning: it’s a warning that the virus is evolving but it is also a call to action that we need to move now before more dangerous variants emerge,” the WHO’s emergencies director Michael Ryan told a press conference.

Australia lockdown

Both high- and low-income countries are struggling to gain the upper hand against Delta, with the vastly unequal sprint for vaccines

leaving room for variants to wreak havoc and further evolve.

In Australia, where only about 14% of the population is jabbed, the third-largest city of Brisbane and other parts of Queensland State entered a snap lockdown on Saturday as a cluster of the Delta variant produced six new cases.

“The only way to beat the Delta strain is to move quickly, to be fast and to be strong,” Queensland’s Deputy Premier Steven Miles said while informing millions that they would be under three days of strict stay-at-home orders.

Indian-American picked for key position in U.S.

He had served as special envoy to OIC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden has nominated Indian-American attorney Rashad Hussain as the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, the first Muslim to be nominated to the key position, according to the White House.

Mr. Hussain, 41, is currently Director for Partnerships and Global Engagement at the National Security Council.

“Today’s announcement underscores the President’s commitment to build an Administration that looks like America and reflects people of all faiths. Hussain is the first Muslim to be nominated to serve as the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom,” the White House said in a statement on Friday.

He previously served as Senior Counsel at the Department of Justice’s Nation-



Rashad Hussain

Security Division. During the Obama administration, he served as U.S. Special Envoy to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), U.S. Special Envoy for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications and Deputy Associate White House Counsel.

In his roles as envoy, Mr. Hussain worked with multilateral organisations such as the OIC and the UN, to expand partnerships in education, entrepreneurship, health, international security, science and technology and other areas.

Hong Kong police arrest man for booing anthem

He also waved colonial-era HK flag

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG

Hong Kong police have arrested a man accused of booing the Chinese national anthem while watching an Olympic event at a mall.

The 40-year-old man was allegedly waving colonial-era Hong Kong flags and booing, while urging others to join him in insulting the national anthem, according to a police statement posted on Facebook.

Hong Kong passed a law in June last year that criminalised any actions that insult the national anthem. Violating the law can mean a fine of up to \$6,400, and up to nine years in prison.

China’s central government criminalised actions that insult the national flag and emblem in amendments to the law last October, which is also applicable to Hong Kong.

The suspect was standing in a crowd with others on

Friday to watch Hong Kong fencer Edgar Cheung in a match that would win him gold, local media reported.

The booing started at the medal ceremony, when the national anthem began playing.

Police said there may be additional arrests and that an active investigation is underway.

Hong Kong was rocked by months of sometimes violent anti-government protests in 2019, which led Beijing to crack down on dissent, including arresting leading pro-democracy activists in the city.

Hong Kong is a former British colony that was handed back to China in 1997.

The city was a bastion of free speech inside authoritarian China and democracy protests bubbled for years until they exploded in a huge popular street movement two years ago.

ELSEWHERE



Over 2,800 prisoners get clemency in Iran

TEHRAN
Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has granted clemency to more than 2,800 jailed convicts to mark two Muslim religious holidays, his website said on Saturday. The statement did not elaborate on the identity of the 2,825 prisoners who were either pardoned or had their sentences commuted. Clemency was granted to mark Id-al-Adha celebrated in Iran on July 21 and Eid al-Ghadir commemorated on Thursday. In June, Mr. Khamenei granted clemency to 5,000 prisoners to make the birth of Imam Reza, a revered figure in Islam. • AFP

UN warns hunger is expected to rise in 23 global hotspots

Ethiopia tops the list, with over 4 lakh facing starvation

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK

Hunger is expected to rise in 23 global hotspots in the next three months with the highest alerts for “catastrophic” situations in Ethiopia’s embattled Tigray region, southern Madagascar, Yemen, South Sudan and northern Nigeria, two U.N. agencies warned on Friday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization and World Food Program said in a new report on “Hunger Hotspots” between August and November that “acute food insecurity is likely to further deteriorate.”

They put Ethiopia at the

top of the list, saying the number of people facing starvation and death is expected to rise to 4,01,000 — the highest number since the 2011 famine in Somalia — if humanitarian aid isn’t provided quickly.

In southern Madagascar, which has been hit by the worst drought in the past 40 years, pests affecting staple crops, and rising food prices — 14,000 people are expected to be pushed into “catastrophic” acute food insecurity marked by starvation and death by September. And that number is expected to double by the end of the year with 28,000 people

needing urgent help, the two agencies said.

“Acute hunger is increasing not only in scale but also severity,” FAO and WFP said in Friday’s report. “Overall, over 41 million people worldwide are now at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions, unless they receive immediate life and livelihood-saving assistance.”

The two Rome-based agencies called for urgent humanitarian action to save lives in the 23 hotspots, saying help is especially critical in the five highest alert places to prevent famine and death.

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SNAPSHOTS



Advantage bird brain

New research finds that a uniquely shaped brain may be the reason why the ancestors of modern birds escaped the massive extinction 66 million years ago that killed dinosaurs. A 70-million-year-old Ichthyornis fossil with its skull intact sheds a clue to this. By creating 3D replicas of brains, scientists found Ichthyornis brain unlike the birds' had smaller cerebral areas for one. This may have dictated the functions that helped it survive the extinction.



Vanishing permafrost

Areas with ground temperatures that remain below zero degrees Celsius for more than two years are called permafrost. These are found in mountains as well as high latitude Tundra and Taiga regions. About 13% of such an area on Daisetsu Mountains in Japan, estimated to be approximately 150 square kilometres in 2010, is likely to disappear by 2100, under business as usual scenario.

'Erroneous to conclude we have attained herd immunity'

R. PRASAD

The fourth sero survey conducted across India found that on an average 67.6% of the population has been infected. Also, over 25% of people have been vaccinated with one dose. In an email, Dr. Sri-nath Reddy, President of the Public Health Foundation of India and member of the National COVID-19 Technical Taskforce dispels the wrong notion that India is close to reaching herd immunity and explains the uncertainty of protection even among those already infected.

Nearly 29,000 people from the general population and over 7,200 healthcare workers were randomly tested from 70 districts across 21 States. How representative is the sampling for the whole country?

Scientists from ICMR have clarified that this survey is not representative of the whole country. They have called for State-level, preferably district-level, surveys across the country using standardised methodology. If we wish to have a truly nationally representative survey, we must sample from every postal code area in the country, which is resource-intensive.

The national surveys of ICMR are valuable, even if they are not fully representative of the whole country. By conducting repetitive surveys in the same districts, these studies provide information on how proportions of infected people in the population have increased over time. That helps us to

understand how effective our efforts to contain viral transmission have been during the periods between surveys.

The seroprevalence is 67.6%, which is far higher than the last survey figure of over 24%. But this is only an average and a couple of States such as Kerala and Maharashtra have far lower seroprevalence. So is it correct to assume that a vast percentage of the population is uniformly protected?

There is a great deal of variation across the country, between States. If we do district-level surveys, we will find even greater variation. We must bear in mind that, while the sample size may be adequate at the national level, to provide estimates with a narrow uncertainty band (confidence interval), individual State sample numbers would be small and have wider uncertainty bands.

If we accept the figures provided for each State, ignoring such concerns about wider uncertainty bands around the estimates, it is clear that there is no uniformity across the country.

It would, however, be erroneous to conclude that all persons who tested positive are immune to infection by the virus. We do not know for sure how long the antibodies last either after infection or vaccination. More important, the tests employed in the surveys only identify antibodies to two viral proteins (nucleocapsid and the spike) but do not measure the ability of those antibodies to neutralise the virus. Estimating the neutralisation power is important in the context of the variants which are displaying capacity for evading the immune response. Will the antibodies produced against the wild ancestral virus infection in January or the Alpha variant in February be effective against the Delta virus in July? There is a possibility that some of those who tested positive for antibodies, especially children, may have cross-reactive antibodies generated by other corona viruses which produce common cold. Counter-posed against such 'false positives', we may also have 'false negatives' of persons in whom antibody levels may have fallen some months after infection but still may have immunity from memory T cells and other forms of cellular immunity. So, definitive conclusions about individual or population immunity should not

The numbers infected in the third wave will depend on the number of people still susceptible and the nature of variants in circulation. By adopting strong containment measures everywhere, we can protect susceptible persons against current and new variants



DELTA+

be drawn from antibody surveys. Are there chances that people who were infected early last year might not have the antibodies and hence might have been missed by the latest survey?

People who were infected early during the pandemic would have a greater chance of testing negative during surveys due to the waning of antibodies over time. The time taken for such disappearance has been variably reported to be between three and six months. There would be a great deal of individual variation, based on the dose of viral exposure, severity of the infection, nature of the variant, age of the infected person, associated health conditions and use of steroids or other immunosuppressive drugs for treatment during the illness. So, there are likely to be sev-

eral persons who may have been infected some months ago but were missed by the recent survey. Will infection with the old strain provide sufficient protection particularly against the Delta variant?

The answer has been provided by laboratory studies which have shown a diminished neutralisation efficacy of antibodies produced by previous infections against the Delta variant. The study by the Pasteur Institute in France is particularly informative in this regard. However, some protection is still likely. But we do not know how strong and long lasting that immunity would be in any individual, as there would be considerable variation among those infected.

There is no guarantee that seropositivity in a survey is a proof of permanent protection against fresh infection, especially when the virus is frequently changing form. Vaccines provide a greater assurance of protection than a previous infection with a variable viral dose and a different form of the virus than the one that is currently circulating. The numbers infected in the third wave will depend on the numbers of people still susceptible and the nature of variants in circulation. By adopting strong containment measures

everywhere, we can protect the susceptible persons even against current and new variants. Is it at all correct to assume that large parts of the country are quite close to reaching herd immunity due to the high seropositivity rate?

It is erroneous to conclude that we have attained herd immunity as a population, when there are many variations across the country even according to the antibody survey. This is for several reasons. We do not know if all who tested positive for antibodies have neutralising capacity against the currently circulating variants. We do not also know how long those antibodies will last. Even if the antibodies are protective today, that protection could fade in a month or two. The herd immunity threshold (HIT) for the more infectious Delta variant may be 85% or higher. We are below that level in all States that were surveyed.

Considering that two-thirds of India is already infected and over 25% of adults have received one dose of the vaccine, will the third wave be as severe as the second wave?

The third wave should be milder for those reasons, if no new variant sweeps through with higher infectivity and undiminished virulence. Even if there are many infections, the immunity provided by vaccines and prior viral exposure should reduce the risk of severe illness or death.

Benefits beyond the pandemic

By preventing viral infections and TB, masks can sharply reduce respiratory diseases, loss of lives, livelihoods

M. S. SESHADRI
T. JACOB JOHN

The human respiratory tract is a highly efficient oxygenation system with a large surface area and surplus capacity (if all 600 million alveoli are stretched out, they can cover a tennis court). The alveoli, lined by thin flat cells, are exposed to inhaled air on one side and de-oxygenated blood in capillaries on the other.

This delicate system is exposed to inhaled noxious insults also - biological (bacterial, fungal, viral), chemical (smoke and particles) and allergy-inducing material (dust, pollen, animal fur), throughout life. As a consequence, many develop progressive lung damage and chronic lung disease - a very common non-communicable disease (NCD) with high morbidity and mortality (approximately 30% of all NCD deaths).

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us the vital importance of the face mask in preventing coronavirus infection. The *Hindu* was a pioneer to promote universal mask use, and, after initial reluctance, many organisations world-wide adopted this measure. We describe the multiple benefits of face mask beyond the pandemic.

Effective intervention

Some inhaled viral respiratory infections such as influenza have high mortality at extremes of age; others, like the 'common cold' are an important cause for loss of person-hours and productivity. Universal mask-use is an effective preventive intervention against such diseases - it does not completely prevent viral entry, but drastically reduces the viral dose - low doses serve to stimulate immunity with lowered risk of overt disease.

With 7,00,00,000 tuberculosis (TB) cases annually, India is the TB capital of the world. TB is the commonest chronic respiratory infection, the most important infectious disease in India, with WHO-estimated annual 26,40,000 new cases, 4,36,000 deaths, 2.8% and 14% multi-drug-resistance in new and old cases, respectively (2019 data: <https://tbfacts.org/tb-statistics-india/>). TB bacilli, expelled by those with pulmonary TB while coughing or spitting are inhaled by others. Unlike viruses with short life-span



Avoid trouble: The pandemic has underscored the vital role of the face mask in preventing infection. *GETTY IMAGES

in atmosphere, TB bacilli in sputum survive even in dried state, for days to weeks and get air-borne. If everyone wears a mask while outside home, spitting in public places and inhalation of TB bacilli will drastically come down.

These two benefits - prevented viral infections and TB - can translate into considerably reduced acute and chronic respiratory diseases, loss of lives and livelihoods.

India is also the diabetes capital of the world, with urban diabetes prevalence of over 10% in adults above age 40. Diabetes and TB are a deadly combination - each making the other worse - a vicious cycle that afflicts hundreds of thousands in India. Universal masking, continued beyond the pandemic, can minimise the risk of TB in diabetics.

Our metros suffer high levels of air pollution with toxic particulate matter, causing progressive irreversible impairment of lung function. In Delhi, air pollution became so bad that Supreme Court had to intervene to improve matters on a war footing. While non-polluting motor vehicles, avoiding crop burning etc. are public health measures to curtail air pollution, face mask offers considerable protection from inhaling toxic particles and to a lesser extent even noxious fumes.

Occupational hazard

Some occupations expose individuals to inhalation of particulate asbestos, carbon, silica etc. which also progressively impair lung function - appropriate face masks are an important health imperative for them.

Smoking in public, although banned, continues to be a problem in India - passive smoking puts even non-smokers at risk. Insistence on wearing a mask in public will be a deterrent to smoking and will protect smokers

and non-smokers alike.

Respiratory allergies

As every physician knows, respiratory allergy - 'allergic rhinitis' and 'extrinsic allergic asthma', mostly due to inhaled 'allergens', are very common problems in children and adults, accounting for approximately 20% to 30% of all outpatient visits. Many with respiratory allergy, who consistently wore masks during the COVID-19 pandemic, have found considerable relief from chronic upper and lower respiratory symptoms and intend to continue using masks beyond the pandemic.

Hospitals, with their concentration of patients with acute and chronic respiratory infections, pose an important health risk to people working there - a hazard highlighted by loss of lives of many health-care workers during the current COVID-19 pandemic. However, the risk of other hospital-acquired respiratory diseases cannot be under-rated. Routine use of face masks will certainly reduce the risk to health-care professionals, and should be practised beyond the pandemic. Even those who visit hospitals for healthcare - patients and their bystanders, at increased risk of contracting respiratory infections - will be well-advised to routinely use face masks during hospital visits.

Indeed, the simple face mask, which ancient Jain Munis used and promoted, has multiple benefits well beyond the pandemic.

(Dr M. S. Seshadri, Former Professor of Medicine and Clinical Endocrinology, Christian Medical College, Vellore is currently Medical Director, Thirumalai Mission Hospital, Ranipet. Dr T. Jacob John is former Professor of Clinical Virology, Christian Medical College, Vellore, and former President of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics.)

Stellar mid-life crisis: What ails the middle-aged Sun?

Around mid-life, stars' magnetic field generation mechanism becomes sub-critical or less efficient

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

Stars like our Sun can go through a mid-life crisis, according to new research carried out by scientists from IISER Kolkata. This can lead to dramatic changes in their activity and rotation rates. The study also provides an explanation for the breakdown of the long-established relation between rotation rate and age in middle-aged sunlike stars. The work has been published in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society: Letters*.

Stellar middle age

At about 4.6 billion years of age, the sun is middle aged, that is, it will continue to live for roughly the same period. There are accurate methods for estimating the age of the Sun, such as by using radioactive dating of very old meteorites that have fallen on the Earth. However, for more distant stars which are similar in

mass and age to the Sun, such methods are not possible. One of the methods used is called gyrochronology. There is a relationship between rotation rate and age, that is the rotation rate of a star slows down with age.

When the stellar wind escapes from the star, it carries away with it a part of the angular momentum of the star, which results in its slowing down. The stellar wind has two drivers: one is the high temperature of the outer atmosphere of stars - the corona - which results in an outward expansion and hence plasma winds that emanate out. The other is the magnetic field. "The magnetic field actually heats the corona and so when magnetic activity is strong the winds are strong and since wind carries away the internal (rotational) angular momentum of the star, it slows down its rotation," explains Dibyendu Nandi, one of the authors of



Inactive Sun: There have been periods stretching to years when extremely few sunspots were observed. *AP

the paper. This is called magnetic braking. As the star ages, due to this mechanism, its rotation slows down and this relationship is used in gyrochronology to estimate the age of the star.

Age and spin

However, there is a breakdown of the gyrochronology relationship, because after midlife, a star's rate of spin does not slow down with age as fast as it was slowing

Middle aged stars can exist in two distinct activity states - a low activity mode and an active mode. The star may thus fall into a low-activity mode and suffer reduced angular momentum loss

down earlier. Another intriguing fact is that the Sun's activity level has been observed to be much lower than other stars of similar age. A third observation that is part of the puzzle is that there have also been periods in the past when extremely few sunspots were observed on the Sun for several years at a stretch. For instance, during the Maunder minimum which lasted from 1645 to 1715.

The researchers use the dynamo models of field generation designed to explore long-term activity variations and come up with a theory that can possibly explain

the above puzzles. According to a press release by the Royal Astronomical Society, they show that at about the age of the Sun, the magnetic field generation mechanism of stars becomes sub-critical or less efficient. This allows stars to exist in two distinct activity states - a low activity mode and an active mode. The star may thus fall into a low-activity mode and suffer drastically reduced angular momentum loss due to magnetized stellar wind.

"We have a hypothesis, a theory backed by simulation results which seems to self-consistently explain the diverse puzzling behaviour witnessed in middle-aged stars. We have provided a clear demonstration that the theory can explain certain observations, and, therefore, is a leading contender [to throw light on] their origin. In the future, independent observations may reconfirm or deny our theory," says Prof. Nandi.

Scientists decipher how some bacteria can operate a "reverse gear"

Some microorganisms exhibit a unique kind of reversing motion that can be mimicked for drug delivery, bio-imaging

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indian scientists have found a theoretical model explaining a unique kind of motion, called direction reversing active motion, exhibited by some bacteria that feed on other microorganisms, according to a statement released by the Department of Science and Technology on Friday.

This analysis can help in building more efficient artificial micro- and nano-motors used in drug delivery and bio-imaging using the concept to incorporate a reverse gear. Bacteria move by propelling themselves with a velocity that changes direction randomly, which is called active motion. Besides bacteria, this kind of motion is found in living systems ranging from cells at the microscopic scale to the flocking of birds and fish schools at the macroscopic scale. It is also seen in artificial systems, including granular matter self-catalytic swimmers, and nano-motors.

This model explains the advantage of directional reversals, namely, faster spread leading to faster searches

Some microorganisms, such as predator bacteria *Myxococcus Xanthus* and saprotrophic bacteria *Pseudomonas putida*, exhibit a unique kind of reversing active motion, whereby, in addition to a diffusive change of direction, the motion also completely reverses its direction intermittently, it said. However, very little has been understood theoretically about the statistical properties of such motion.

Novel dynamic phase

In a recent study published as a letter in the *Physical Review E*, a team of scientists from Raman Research Institute and S N Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences has uncovered novel dynamical phases arising from the interplay of diffusion and velocity reversal in the direction-reversing active motion

exhibited by such bacteria. The study provided a theoretical understanding of such motion through exact analytical results for the position distribution and target search-time distribution by using a model, the statement said.

"This model explains the advantage of directional reversals, namely, faster spread leading to faster searches," the authors pointed out.

The authors explained how their research found that *M Xanthus* relies on the directional reversal to increase its spread, thus making search for a target efficient, in spite of a much slower speed (about a micron per minute) compared to faster bacteria like *E. coli* (which moves about 30 microns in a second).

Further, the most important finding of this work is the prediction of a novel phase where the dynamical laws governing the dispersion along two orthogonal directions are fundamentally different.



Question Corner

Clues from Mars

How does the interior of Mars look like?

Since early 2019, researchers from ETH Zurich have been recording and analysing marsquakes as part of the InSight mission. Using this data, they have now measured the red planet's crust, mantle and core. The data will help understand the formation and evolution of Mars and, by extension, the entire solar system.

The researchers have discovered that the Martian crust under the probe's landing site near the Martian equator is between 15 and 47 kilometres thick. Such a thin crust must contain a relatively high proportion of radioactive elements, which calls into question previous models of the chemical composition of the entire

crust. The mantle is 400-600 kilometres down, twice as thick as that of Earth. This could be because there is now only one continental plate on Mars, in contrast to Earth with its seven large mobile plates.

The measurements also show that the Martian mantle has a mineralogy similar to Earth's upper mantle. The seismology reveals differences in chemical composition. The Martian mantle, for example, contains more iron than the Earth's.

The Martian core has a radius of about 1,840 kilometres, making it a good 200 kilometres larger than had been assumed 15 years ago, when the InSight mission was planned.

The researchers were now able to recalculate the size of the core using seismic waves.

"Having determined the radius of the core, we can now calculate its density," Simon Stähler of ETH Zurich says in a release.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

DHOLAVIRA

Ruins of an Indus Valley civilisation site

The Harappan city is the first Indus Civilisation site in India that received the World Heritage tag

DAMINI NATH

With its planned streets, intricate water management system and architectural features, the ancient Harappan city located at Dholavira in Gujarat's Rann of Kutch has a lot to offer on the ancient civilisation. With its inscription on UNESCO's World Heritage list on July 27, experts hope the lessons from Dholavira will reach a larger audience and that the site will get greater care.

Discovered in 1968 by former Archaeological Survey of India Director General Jagat Pati Joshi, the site dates back to 3,000 BCE to 1,500 BCE, covering nearly 1,500 years of continued habitation. Excavations that were carried out from 1989 to 2005 unearthed a city that showed the "unique and masterpiece ingenuity of the Harappans during the third millennium BCE", according to India's nomination submitted to UNESCO. The city is believed to have had trade ties with Mesopotamia and the Oman peninsula. Spread over 70 hectares, the remains are encompassed within an outer fortification and make for the fifth largest Harappan site after Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Rakhigarhi and Ganweriwala.

The site's entry onto the World Heritage list has been welcomed by India with delight. "Absolutely delighted by this news," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted on July 27. "Dholavira was an important urban centre and is one of our most important linkages with our past. It is a must visit, especially for those interested in history, culture and archaeology."

For retired Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Joint Di-

rector General Ravindra Singh Bisht, under whose watch the excavations were carried out, Dholavira getting the World Heritage tag means it will get the attention it deserves. "Certainly, the ASI will take better care of the site. The eyes of the world tourist will be on it." Along with becoming the 40th Indian site on the list, Dholavira is also the first Indus Valley Civilisation site in India to receive the tag.

Considered one of the best preserved urban settlements from the period, the site has a walled city, a castle, a ceremonial ground, two seasonal streams and houses of different categories, indicating a social hierarchy. The water management system shows the ingenuity of the inhabitants to survive in an otherwise arid region. Excavations have unearthed objects of shell, copper, stone, semi-precious stones, terracotta and gold.

Excellent example

Dholavira was the first such "excellent example of town planning with mathematical precision, both arithmetic and geometry", Dr. Bisht said. Stone quarries that manufactured beautiful objects were found and objects like beads found in Mohenjo-daro and Harappa seem to have been transported from Dholavira, he said.

The site also has several gates, including the North Gate that had a signboard above it, a first of its kind found at Harappan sites. While the board itself could have been made of wood and decomposed completely, the gypsum letters of the inscription were found, according to Dr. Bisht.

Divided into a citadel, the middle town and lower town, Dholavira was designed for different categories of residents and purposes.

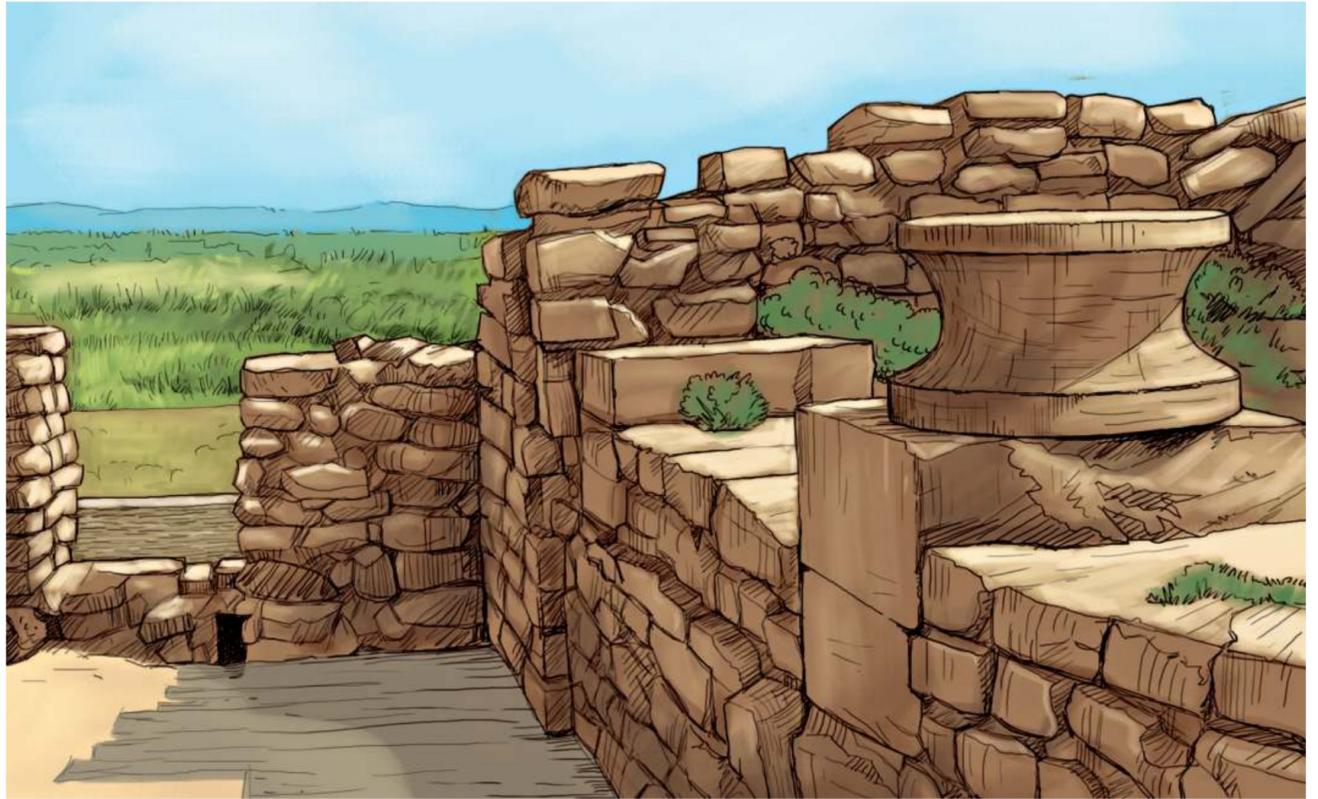


ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

There was a castle for an important person, while the middle town housed rich merchants and generals and the lower town was for the common people.

An annexe used as a warehouse, two grounds, bead-making workshop and graves were also found.

According to Dr. Bisht, the larger of the two grounds, with seating for spectators all around, much like stands at a stadium today, was used for cart-racing, animal races and races by humans too. But, that wasn't all it was used for. A large number of beads that would have fallen down from the wearers' bodies while dancing were also found at the ground, pointing towards festivities, he said. Evidence of the ground being used for trading purposes was also

found. Temporary structures of grass and wood would have been put up for bazaars.

The water management system included drains constructed through two mon-



soon channels and a cascading system of reservoirs, according to Dr. Bisht. In houses in the lower and middle town, septic tanks were found. The castle had a network of drains connected to an arterial drain that was underground.

"All these drains are usually found containing fresh water deposits, and not sewage nor household waste, nor are these connected to house drains. It was only during Stage VI [1,950 BCE - 1,800 BCE] that a house drain seems to be discharging into one of the storm water drains, when those had already become defunct. The purpose of these drains was surely to let out the monsoon run-off, which is why these are found furnished with air ducts at short intervals," the nomination dossier said.

Memorials at the city

One of the finds that stands out are Dholavira's memorials. Dr. Bisht said they seem to be constructed a year after the death of the person as there were no skeletons

found, though there was evidence of offerings being made. This, he said, was like the *shraddh* ceremony to mark one year of a loved one's passing. The memorials also had design that was found in Buddhist stupas.

Now with the site getting the World Heritage tag, ASI officials said it would get greater care. However, the ASI's own nomination dossier raised concerns over the increase in footfall at the site.

"...approximate 20,000 visitors are reported to visit Dholavira annually. The site witnesses minor pressure and vandalism in terms of visitors walking over the excavated remains due to lack of a defined movement plan. This, in future due to increase in tourist footfall, may pose threat to the integrity of the excavated remains," the

nomination dossier that was submitted in 2020 read.

While it remains to be seen what impact a potential increase in visitors will have in the future, the archaeological remains at the site show how important maintenance, or the lack thereof, was in the past. From 2,100 BCE-2,000 BCE, there was a general decline "particularly in the maintenance of the city", seen more in the citadel, the dossier said. There was evidence of poor quality ceramic wares that became brittle as well as signs of desertion for a few decades. Finally, the area of the city began decreasing and the last phase of habitation had no resemblance with the urban features of Harappan settlements. "The site was never occupied thereafter," the dossier noted.

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI

An 'outsider' but not quite

The new Karnataka CM says his mandate is to offer a 'clean and efficient' govt.

BAGESHREE S.

The biggest surprise in the Bharatiya Janata Party's choice for the 30th Chief Minister of Karnataka was the absence of any surprise. Following the removal of his predecessor B.S. Yediyurappa, after protracted subtle and not-so-subtle manoeuvres, the saffron party played it safe in picking Basavaraj Bommai, or so it appears for now.

He is a Lingayat like the BJP's old war horse Mr. Yediyurappa and has made his loyalty to the 78-year-old evident as he took over. So the Lingayat seers, who had landed on the streets of Bengaluru and warned the BJP that with Mr. Yediyurappa their trusted voter base too would walk away, seem mollified, as does the community's strongman who has cultivated this vote bank.

Less than two years to the next Assembly polls, the party belied the fear or anticipation (depending on one's ideological leanings) in not choosing a man for the post in the template of Yogi Adityanath. Mr. Bommai, son of former Chief Minister and Janata Party leader S.R. Bommai, was groomed in the Janata Parivar politics and joined the BJP as late as 2008 and has since won thrice from Shiggaon Assembly constituency in north Karnataka. While the man, with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, has earned the reputation of an able administrator — handling

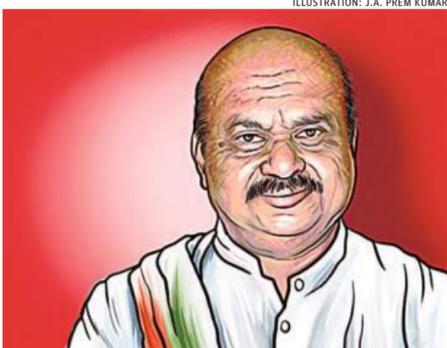


ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREM KUMAR

key portfolios such as water resources, home and law and parliamentary affairs — Mr. Bommai is not known for hardline Hindutwa stances. Even his age, 61, seems to be a safe middle ground.

The circumstances of Mr. Bommai's choice, amidst several factional pulls within the party, beg a series of questions on what the BJP's plans and expectations are and how the man in the hot seat will lend himself to them. Will he, and if so how soon, emerge out of the shadows of Mr. Yediyurappa and how will the veteran respond to it? Will he learn the language of hardline Hindutva and how will people of Karnataka respond to it? Or is he, for the party, an interim arrangement until the State is more adequately ripe for a head-on Hindutva agenda?

While there are too many imponderables at this moment, there are signs of Mr. Bommai being a political

player in his own right, though not quite in the style of his predecessor, who is credited with building the party in Karnataka through "risky operations" such as engineering defections with all the attendant costs.

Image makeover

For one, while calling Mr. Yediyurappa his mentor, Mr. Bommai has bristled at the suggestion that he will be a "rubber stamp CM" controlled by not just Mr. Yediyurappa but also his son B.Y. Vijayendra. Soon after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, he went so far as to say that the mandate given to him was an image makeover by delivering "a clean and efficient administration."

Mr. Bommai is also shrewd enough to know that Mr. Yediyurappa, while being a master at playing the caste card, is not quite the man who could ensure the ouster of Sadanada Gowda from the CM's seat (who oc-

cupied it under comparable circumstances) when he began to assert himself back in 2012. It cannot be forgotten that Mr. Bommai was not so loyal as to follow Mr. Yediyurappa when he briefly broke away from the BJP in 2012, even though he never burnt bridges with him. Many have also pointed out that Mr. Bommai's views on issues like the CAA and the NRC or anti-cow slaughter law have never been out of line with the party's agenda.

If symbolism is anything to go by, Mr. Bommai, unlike his predecessor who took oath four times wearing a green shawl that represents the farmers, wore a saffron silk shawl to the swearing in ceremony and entered the State Secretariat bowing at the door in the style of Mr. Modi. By all accounts, Mr. Bommai is a man of measured steps and words and has bided his time to become the Chief Minister of Karnataka in a party where he is still seen with suspicion as an "outsider" without Sangh roots. Is that good enough to keep him in the saddle in the long run, possibly beyond 2023, is the big question.

In the short term, the Cabinet expansion exercise he has to undertake soon — when defectors from other parties, hardliners and pro-and anti-Yediyurappa camp followers are sure to pull in different directions — will be a tough test. Which way Mr. Bommai leans in doing so will say something of what the future holds for him.

NEW ORIENTAL

Class dismissed

Xi's govt. dealt a 'death blow' to private education industry with new regulations

ANANTH KRISHNAN

The 2013 film *American Dreams in China* tells the extraordinary rags-to-riches story of Yu Minhong and the New Oriental Education and Technology Group. The film, released in China in May that year, two months into Xi Jinping's tenure as China's President, is closely based on Mr. Yu's life, telling the story of three friends in Beijing and their attempt to secure an American visa in search of prosperity. Two are rejected, and instead turn their efforts into starting a language school to help millions of others secure their American dream.

The film's resounding commercial success underlined how Mr. Yu and his company are seen by many in China — as a poster-child of the reform era. For a whole generation of Chinese, New Oriental became synonymous with learning English, and for many, with moving abroad and seeking their fortunes.

According to the company, it has trained 65 million students, including 10 million last year, a reflection of the recent boom in China's private education industry. It currently has a network of 118 schools, 1,625 learning stores and 48,300 teachers on its rolls spread across 104 cities in China. It is by some distance the biggest provider of private education services in the country.

A 2006 profile in the official *China Daily* hailed Mr.



Yu as "the 'godfather' for overseas study". Indeed, Mr. Yu's was a success story emblematic of China in its age of opening up — an age of unabashed ambition, aspiration and achievement — a success story, it appeared, that the government was happy to celebrate as well.

Crackdown

No longer, it appears. On July 25, Mr. Xi's government dealt what the Chinese media described as "a death blow" to New Oriental and the wider private education industry, introducing sweeping regulations that are likely to bring a booming industry to a screeching halt. The new regulations, industry experts say, may go as far as turning all private education companies into non-profits, as well as barring them from going to the stock market (Mr. Yu's was the first Chinese educational company to list on the New York Stock Exchange in 2006.) Foreign capital will

largely not be allowed to participate in the private education sector, said the document issued by China's State Council, or Cabinet. The cited reasons were understandable, aimed at "easing the burden on Chinese students and their families" amid the hugely escalating costs of private tuition.

With the new regulations, shares of New Oriental and TAL Education, the other major player, crashed last week. Both are now down by a whopping 70% in the past month, reeling from the new regulations as well as earlier anti-trust moves that rattled the entire tech sector in China. Completing its fall from glory, New Oriental last week suffered a ratings downgrade, down to the lowest investment-grade rating from Moody's and a step away from junk.

The moves didn't come out of the blue. Mr. Xi has on several occasions highlighted high education costs as a bane. Chinese authorities

are also aware that it is the reason most often cited in surveys of families explaining why China's population growth rate is falling despite relaxing family planning measures.

Following the anti-trust investigations into tech giants, including Alibaba and Tencent last year, and the more recent moves against the ride-sharing giant Didi Chuxing, the latest regulations have now dealt a hammer blow to a third thriving industry and left investors shell-shocked.

On July 28, China's securities regulators convened a meeting with major investment banks to address their concerns, attempting to convey a message that the measures were industry specific and not a broader tech crackdown. They will take convincing after the latest bloodbath. Regulators' moves have wiped out a combined \$800 billion in value for China's tech companies since February, according to Bloomberg data.

If it is true the education regulations were to some extent a long-time coming and had their own sector-specific logic, they will inevitably be seen outside China as part of a broader effort by the Communist Party to tame companies and industries that its regulators see as having grown too big to control. "Unregulated", is how authorities have described them — or in other words, more under the control of the market than the state.

SEBI urges peers to rethink bond market curbs

Markets watchdog calls on RBI, IRDAI, PFRDA to relax investment restrictions to help ease financing for infrastructure

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

Calling for freer flow of funds from provident and pension funds, insurance firms and banks into corporate and infrastructure debt, capital markets regulator SEBI has urged the RBI, IRDAI and PFRDA to ease investment curbs to make the bond market a more functional source of finance for industry and infrastructure projects.

With banks struggling to provide long-term capital, two members of the Securities Exchange Board of India have over the past week, sought an urgent rethink on the investment norms specified by its financial sector regulator peers for participation in the corporate bond market. This would facilitate a quicker economic recovery, they stressed.

Observing that while there

were multiple players in the debt market, the number of participants in each investor class remained limited due to the current norms thereby constraining the pool of liquidity available, SEBI whole time member Ananta Barua said at a FICCI capital markets conference.

Listing out instances of restrictions that limit insurers' exposure to private debt and infrastructure financing, he indicated that the recent permission for pension funds to invest up to 5% of their corpus in infrastructure investment trusts (INVTs) was unlikely to work.

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)'s nod, Mr. Barua said, was linked to the INVT having a minimum 'AA' or equivalent credit rating for the sponsor as well as requiring a rating from two



In lockstep: There are areas where other regulators also have to take a more proactive role, says a SEBI member. ■ REUTERS

rating agencies.

"It has to be understood that INVTs' ratings and the ability to service debt is based on cash flows of the project, and has nothing to do with the sponsor," he said, adding that infrastructure projects were usually rated 'BB' or lower in the in-

initial stages.

The RBI's partial credit guarantee enhancement norms to help such projects get a better rating faces practical challenges, while the Centre's plan to set up a Credit Enhancement Guarantee Corporation, announced in the Union Budget 2019, is yet

to take off. The central bank's partial credit guarantee norms cap the extent to which a bank can provide credit enhancement to 20% of the issue size.

"This means it would need at least three banks to get 50% credit enhancement (needed to move from, say, a 'BBB' rating to 'AA+' needed by insurers and PFs) and it has been difficult to get three banks to provide for a single project," said Mr. Barua. "Hence, there may be a need to revisit this cap," he added.

'Overreliance on banks'

Speaking at another meet on financing, SEBI's G. Mahalingam warned that relying on banks as an exclusive funding source would not be positive for the economy and more steps were needed from other regulators to develop the bond market.

"I would still say that pension funds and insurance companies have to be a bit more forthcoming. There are areas where other regulators will also have to take a more proactive role," he said, calling for 'a huge change in mindset that limits' corporate bond exposures for regulated entities.

"In the RBI's Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF), corporate bonds are never accepted as collateral. It's not legally enabled, but that is not a big problem; you have to take it to the government, come up with a good rationale and it could be done. Today, it is not accepted as part of the LAF and not even enshrined in the statutory liquidity ratio (SLR)," he said.

"At least you can start off in the top-rated bonds as far as the SLR facility is concerned," he suggested.

IT offshoring rises as large, multi-year deals spur trend

'Higher offshoring helps raise margins'

MINI TEJASWI
BENGALURU

The proportion of work done offshore has risen for Indian software companies over the past year, spurred by large transformation contracts and multi-year deals that allow more of software services to be executed at locations far removed from client premises.

Domestic technology services providers of all sizes — large firms such as Infosys, and Wipro, and mid-tier ones including Mindtree and L&T Infotech — have witnessed the trend.

In the quarter ended June 2021, Infosys reported an offshore ratio of 75.9% as against 72% a year earlier.

Wipro said its offshore contribution was 54% in the June quarter as against 50% in the corresponding, year-earlier period. Consequently, the quarter saw its onsite ratio declining to 46% from 50% a year earlier. The quarter ended March saw the offshore figure at 54.5%.

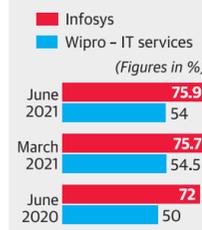
Analysts said most domestic technology services firms now have a higher offshore ratio and have benefited from the pandemic-triggered rise in offshoring in the last four quarters.

'Clear shift'

"Higher offshoring has been clearly helping tech firms in expanding profitability," said an analyst at Emkay Global Financial Services. "The offshore business operates at higher gross margins and as the mix shifts towards offshoring, it supports [higher] margins," the analyst added.

Confirming a clear shift towards offshoring, Dayapatra Nevatia, executive direc-

Rising offshore contribution



tor and chief operating officer, Mindtree, said work done offshore by the firm had increased by more than 300 basis points in the last one year. "This is because of our growing focus on large transformational programmes as well as multi-year deals, which allow more work to be done offshore," he said. "The trend has been further aided by greater openness to strategic IT partnerships, specifically in Europe, along with remote and distributed work models," he added.

Sanjay Jalona, CEO & MD, L&T Infotech (LTI), said the pandemic had expanded the perimeter of what could be done remotely.

"At 17%, LTI has one of the lowest onsite ratios, and even as we create jobs globally, we expect this trend to continue," he said. "The resilient tech industry has proved that it is possible to strategise, execute and deliver efficiently through this model," Mr. Jalona added.

However, other industry sources preferred to wait before terming this a trend. How the momentum for remote working pans out as the pandemic ebbs and people return to offices is a key factor, they said.

'Home sales plunged 58% q-o-q in Q2'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Real estate sales plunged 58% quarter-on-quarter in the April-June period (Q2) as India faced the major brunt of the second wave of COVID-19 in April and May, realty data and analytics platform provider PropEquity said.

While Q1 witnessed total sales of 1,08,420 units in the top seven cities, Q2 saw sales of 45,208 units.

"Stringent lockdowns across major cities impacted housing sales as home registrations were also suspended," PropEquity said.

However, on a year-on-year basis, sales rose 51% across the top seven cities in the second quarter of 2021 to 45,208 units.

Govt. framing standards for services sector: Goyal

'India seeing rapid rise in use of digital'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India is formulating standards for the services sector so that the country can have 'high quality' of services to offer to the rest of the world, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday. He said India was progressing rapidly in sectors such as healthcare, home delivery, telecom and technology.

"In India, we are formulating standards for the services ecosystem so that we can have very high quality of services which we offer to the rest of the world," the Minister said at IACC-NIC's second Indo-U.S. Services Summit. "India is also rapidly progressing to become



one of the world's largest digital markets, be it fintech, edutech or telemedicine," he added.

On legal services, he said Indian lawyers were 'top class' and have 'huge opportunities' opening up for them across the globe.

Services exports from India, which were \$17 billion in 2001-02, jumped to \$205 billion in 2020-21.

China's factory activity grows at slowest pace in 17 months

July's official PMI shows raw material costs hurt businesses

REUTERS
BEIJING

China's factory activity expanded in July at the slowest pace in 17 months as higher raw material costs, plant maintenance and extreme weather weighed on businesses, adding to concerns about a slowdown in the second-biggest economy.

The official manufacturing Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI) eased to 50.4 in July from 50.9 in June, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed, but stayed above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction.

Analysts had expected it to slip to 50.8. It was the low-



est figure since the index slumped to 35.7 in February 2020, after China began lockdowns to control the coronavirus pandemic.

An NBS official said in a statement the PMI's sub-index for production slipped to 51.0 from 51.9 in June, pointing to equipment main-

tenance and extreme weather. The new order sub-index fell to 50.9, from 51.5, reflecting a slowdown in demand.

A sub-index for raw material costs stood at 62.9 in July, compared with June's 61.2, pointing to an increase in costs. High raw material prices have eaten into the profitability of industrial firms and deterred some Chinese exporters from taking on orders.

Authorities are eager to prevent high factory-gate prices being passed on to consumers, which would only add to current economic headaches as underlying demand remains weak.

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.
F1: Hungarian GP: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.
Tokyo 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 5 a.m. onwards (Monday).

Sangakkara sympathises with Stokes

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
LONDON

Sri Lanka great Kumar Sangakkara said players could "only deal with so much" after it was announced that England all-rounder Ben Stokes was taking an indefinite break from all forms of cricket to "prioritise his mental well-being".

Sangakkara told Sky Sports: "It must be a very, very tough time for Ben and his family. It won't be a decision made easily but (it) brings into focus the level elite players play at — your coping mechanism can only deal with so much."

"A lot of time away from home, in bubbles, restrictions in terms of freedom of movement, then the added pressures of performing at such a high level in the public eye."

Ramkumar loses in quarterfinals

LEXINGTON (USA): Ramkumar Ramanathan was beaten 7-6(4), 6-4 by Alejandro Tabilo of Chile in the quarterfinals of the \$52,080 Challenger tennis tournament here.

Other results: \$60,000 ITF women. **Versmold, Germany: Doubles (semifinals):** Anna Danilina (Kaz) & Valeriya Strakhova (Ukr) bt Arienne Hartono (Ned) & Rutuja Bhosale 6-3, 0-6, [10-5].

BCCI hits back at Gibbs and PCB

South African alleged that he was stopped from playing in KPL

CRICKET

ANI
NEW DELHI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has slammed former South Africa batsman Herschelle Gibbs and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), saying it is well within its rights to take decisions with respect to the cricketing ecosystem in the country.

The BCCI was responding to Gibbs, who said that the Indian board had stopped him from playing in the Kashmir Premier League (KPL).



Kicking up a storm: Gibbs' tweet about the BCCI evoked a strong reaction from the Indian board. ■ AFP

Reacting to the PCB statement that it would approach the ICC about the interference, a BCCI official said the

Pakistan board was welcome to raise the issue with the international body. Earlier on Saturday, Gibbs

took to Twitter to say: "Completely unnecessary of the BCCI to bring their political agenda with Pakistan into the equation and try to prevent me from playing in the KPL and threatening me saying they won't allow entry into India for any cricket-related work. Ludicrous."

Gibbs was planning to play for Overseas Warriors in the six-team Kashmir Premier League, which will be held from August 6 to 17.

Incidentally, several former England players — Monty Panesar, Matt Prior, Phil Mustard, and Owais Shah — have withdrawn from the KPL.

Anand to lead India

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Five-time World champion Viswanathan Anand will lead joint champion India in the second FIDE online rapid chess championship to be held from September 8 to 15.

The team comprises Anand, Vidit Gujrathi, P. Harikrishna, Nihal Sarin, R. Praggnanandhaa, K. Humpy, D. Harika, Bhakti Kulkarni, R. Vaishali and B. Savitha Shri. Grandmaster Abhijit Kunte will be the non-playing vice-captain.

The team, sponsored by IT major Microsense, will be staying in a five-star hotel in Chennai during the course of the championship.

The All-India Chess Federation president (AICF) Sanjay Kapoor explained the move to get the team under one roof for an online event as, "a step to provide a healthy atmosphere where the team members get along well."

AICF secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan said, "we are working on different levels to bring more benefits to the game to make India the No. 1 chess-playing nation in the world."

SPORT

Udana quits Lankan team after pay row

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
COLOMBO

Sri Lankan white-ball player Isuru Udana, who had resisted recent pay restructuring, quit the national team on Saturday in an apparent move to join foreign leagues.

SLC said Udana was retiring from national duties with immediate effect. "I believe the time has come for me to make way for the next generation," the Board quoted Udana as saying in his letter of resignation.

Corfe Castle for Sultan Pheroze Plate

HYDERABAD: Trainer L. D'Silva's ward Corfe Castle, who won well in his last start at Mumbai over 1,200m, is in good shape and should win the Sultan Pheroze Plate, the main event of Sunday's (Aug. 1) races here. Rails will be announced one hour before the first race.

1 ROYSTON ROCK PLATE (1,200m) (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1.30 p.m.: 1. Ashwa Sultan (8) Ashad Asbar 56, 2. Dream Jewel (4) Kiran Naidu 56, 3. Flying Rudolf (10) G. Nareesh 56, 4. Gurbaz (15) Kuldeep Singh 56, 5. Jean Lafette (12) R. Ajinkya 56, 6. November Rain (6) Ajit Singh 56, 7. Special Effort (16) Surya Prakash 56, 8. Zeus (5) Trevor 56, 9. Deccan Valour (1) B.R. Kumar 54.5, 10. Flower (II) Md. Ismail 54.5, 11. Galwan (14) Nikhil Naidu 54.5, 12. Golden Amaris (2) Afroz Khan 54.5, 13. Inside Story (7) Nakhath Singh 54.5, 14. Keystone (9) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 15. Miss Little Angel (13) A.A. Vikrant 54.5 and 16. Wild Card (3) Koushik 54.5.

1. KEYSTONE, 2. ZEUS, 3. MISS LITTLE ANGEL
2 FAIR TRIAL PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m) rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.05: 1. Big Brave (5) Ajit Singh 60, 2. Different (I) Surya Prakash 58.5, 3. All Time Legend (4) Akshay Kumar 57.5, 4. Castlebrook (9) Ajeth Kumar 57.5, 5. Blue Valentine (10) Trevor 57, 6. Catalina (7) Ashad Asbar 56.5, 7. Rhine (3) B.R. Kumar 54, 8. Red River (2) R.S. Jodha 53, 9. Silver Set (8) Md. Ismail 53, 10. Cracker-Shun (11) G. Nareesh 52.5 and 11. Sun Dancer (6) B. Nikhil 52.5.

1. XFINITY, 2. MANDALA BAY, 3. THE PROSPECT
4 ANAB E SHAHI PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 3.15: 1. Altur's Pride (Ex: Shivalik Meadow) (2) Nikhil Naidu 62, 2. Misty River (9) Gaurav Singh 62, 3. Astronaut (4) P. Gaddam 61.5, 4. Air Salute (10) N.B. Kuldeep 61, 5. Mt. Davdell (7) Mukesh Kumar 61, 6. Battle Ready (12) Akshay Kumar 60.5, 7. Elegant Stroke (1) B.R. Kumar 60.5, 8. Exponent (8) Nakhath Singh 59.5, 9. Secret Command (14) Kiran Naidu 59, 10. Proud Legacy (15) Ajeeth Kumar 58.5, 11. Turf Monarch (6) Md. Ismail 58.5, 12. Felix Flame (11) Kuldeep Singh 58, 13. Acadian Angel (16) G. Nareesh 57.5, 14. N.R.I Flame (5) B. Nikhil 57.5, 15. Moka (3) A.A. Vikrant 54.5 and 16. Moment Of Silence (13) Afroz Khan 50.

1. AIR SALUTE, 2. ACADIAN ANGEL
5 SULTAN PHEROZE PLATE (1,200m) rated 80 and above (Cat. I), 3.50: 1. Corfe Castle (3) Gaurav Singh 63, 2. Victory Parade (5) Deepak Singh 60, 3. Moonancer (4) Mukesh Kumar 57, 4. Lightning Bolt (8) Trevor 56.5, 5. Galloping Gangster (6) R. Ajinkya 56, 6. Premier Action (I) Kuldeep Singh 54.5, 7. Trump King (10) Abhay Singh 50, 8. Smashing

Blue (7) Akshay Kumar 50, 9. Prince Valiant (2) Surya Prakash 50 and 10. The Great Gatsby (9) S.S. Tanwar 50.

1. CORFE CASTLE, 2. LIGHTNING BOLT, 3. SMASHING BLUE
6 FAIRWAY PLATE (1,600m) rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 4.25: 1. Best Buddy (6) Nakhath Singh 61, 2. Call Of The Blue (7) A.A. Vikrant 61, 3. Advance Guard (8) Nikhil Naidu 59.5, 4. Horse O' War (9) Mukesh Kumar 59.5, 5. Campania (2) Trevor 59, 6. Solo Winner (5) R.S. Jodha 57.5, 7. Lamha (4) Akshay Kumar 57, 8. Grand Finale (1) B.R. Kumar 53.5 and 9. Lorena (3) Md. Ismail 53.

1. CAMPANIA, 2. LAMHA, 3. BEST BUDDY
7 ANAB E SHAHI PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m) rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 5.00: 1. Elmira (4) N.B. Kuldeep 62, 2. N.R.I Touch (2) Akshay Kumar 62, 3. Winning Player (13) Gaurav Singh 61.5, 4. Due Diligence (II) Trevor 61, 5. Fantastic Show (12) Ajeeth Kumar 60.5, 6. Golden Forza (8) Nikhil Naidu 60.5, 7. Jo Malone (9) Mukesh Kumar 60.5, 8. New Role (7) R.S. Jodha 59.5, 9. Sacred Lamp (14) B. Nikhil 59, 10. Charcoal (3) Ajit Singh 58.5, 11. Let It Be Me (15) B.R. Kumar 58.5, 12. Hip Hop (10) C.P. Bopanna (10) 58, 13. India Gate (5) A.A. Vikrant 57, 14. That's My Speed (I) Kuldeep Singh 57.5, 15. Ice Berry (6) Nakhath Singh 53.5 and 16. Sheldon (16) G. Nareesh 53.5.

Thompson-Herah defends 100m crown in style

Jamaicans sweep the podium; discus thrower Kamalpreet enters final, long jumper Sreeshankar crashes out



In the limelight: Thompson-Herah led a Jamaican 1-2-3 in the 100m, Kamalpreet finished second in the qualification round and Poland won Olympics' first mixed relay gold. • GETTY IMAGES & AP

STAN RAYAN

Defending champion Elaine Thompson-Herah stole the thunder from Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and emerged as the fastest woman at the Tokyo Olympics as Jamaica swept the 100m medals on Saturday.

A gold would have made the 34-year-old Fraser-Pryce the first woman in history to win three Olympic 100m titles but Thompson-Herah broke away from the World

champion at the halfway mark and won comfortably in 10.61s, the second fastest time in history which broke Florence Griffith Joyner's 33-year-old Olympic record (10.62). Fraser-Pryce (10.74) and Shericka Jackson (10.76) took silver and bronze.

Meanwhile World champion USA, disqualified for a faulty exchange in the 4x400m mixed relay heats, was reinstated in the final by a jury decision on Saturday but it could only take bronze

with Poland pulling off a shocking victory in 3:09.87s.

Later, Sweden celebrated a wonderful day in men's discus throw with World champion Daniel Stahl (68.90m) and Simon Pettersson (67.39) taking gold and silver.

Earlier, discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur became the first Indian in athletics to enter a final in Tokyo after finishing an impressive second in the qualification round with 64m. But former Asian



Games champion Seema Antil-Punia, who was competing in her fourth Olympics, failed to make the cut with just 60.57m. Seema had qualified for



Tokyo with 63.72m at last month's inter-Nationals. Only two achieved the automatic qualification standard of 64m.

Kamalpreet is now only the 11th Indian ever and the second woman discus thrower to qualify for an Olympic final.

The 25-year-old from Punjab, who has a personal best of 66.59m, opened her qualification series with 60.29m and then produced 63.97 and 64m, to finish behind

American Valarie Allman (66.42).

Long jumper M. Sreeshankar, who appeared to have lost much of his spring in the last few weeks, came up with a weak 7.69m in the qualification round and missed the final.

The 22-year-old, who bettered his national record with 8.26m in March, had a disappointing series (7.69, 7.51 and 7.43) and finished 13th in his group and 25th overall.

Tzu-ying exacts revenge on Sindhu

BADMINTON

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

P.V. Sindhu had beaten Tai Tzu-ying in straight games on way to the silver at the 2016 Rio Olympics. Tzu-ying, who has beaten the Indian nine times since, got her ultimate revenge five years later as she stormed to a 21-18, 21-12 victory in their Tokyo Olympics semifinal clash here on Saturday.

Sindhu will have a shot at a second successive Olympic medal when she takes on China's He Bingjiao for the bronze on Sunday. Tzu-ying will face another Chinese Chen Yufei in the final.

Deceitful drops

All the shuttlers who've played Tzu-ying are aware of her weapon — deceitful drops. Sindhu managed to counter it well in the opening game and raced to a 7-3 lead. But Tzu-ying fought back in style.

From 11-11, the Chinese Taipei shuttler dominated the exchanges. Time and again, she made Sindhu dart across the court. However, the Indian used her phenomenal reach and athleticism to keep the rallies alive.

There was little to separate the two as they were locked 17-17. At this stage, Tzu-ying profited from a net cord and wrapped up the game with a down-the-line



P.V. Sindhu. • PTI

smash. Sindhu began the second game well, but was unable to settle in as Tzu-ying took a four-point lead (10-6). The latter pulled away to 16-8 and sealed the contest 21-12 to reach her maiden Olympic final.

"It's a bit sad that I am not on the winning side, but I have one more match to go. I need to keep my tempo going, recover soon and come back on Sunday," said Sindhu, adding that her opponent hardly committed any unforced error.

Tzu-ying echoed Sindhu's view. "I reduced my errors and produced my best performance," she said.

MEDAL EVENTS

27 Gold medals are on offer at the Games on Sunday

Artistic gymnastics: Men's Floor Exercise, Men's Pommel Horse, Women's Vault, Women's Uneven Bars

Athletics: Men's 100m, Men's High Jump, Women's Triple Jump, Women's Shot Put

Badminton: Women's Singles

Boxing: Men's Welterweight, Men's Light Heavyweight

Cycling BMX Freestyle: Men's & Women's Park

Diving: Women's 3m Springboard; **Fencing:** Men's Foil Team; **Golf:** Men

Sailing: Men's One Person Dinghy-Laser, Women's One Person Dinghy-Laser Radial

Swimming: Women's 50m Freestyle, Women's 4x100m Medley Relay, Men's 50m Freestyle, Men's 1500m Freestyle, Men's 4x100m Medley Relay

Tennis: Men's Singles, Women's Doubles, Mixed Doubles

Weightlifting: Women's 76kg

GOLDIES



Caeleb Dressel. • AFP

Mete Gazoz (Tur): Archery: Men's individual

Daniel Stahl (Swe): Athletics: Men's discus

Elaine Thompson-Herah (Jam): Athletics: Women's 100m

Poland: Athletics: 4x400m Mixed Relay

Lee Yang & Wang Chi-Lin (Tpe): Badminton: Men's doubles

ROC: Fencing: Women's sabre team

France: Judo: Mixed Team

New Zealand: Rugby Sevens: Women

Yunxun Lu (China): Sailing: Women's Windsurfer RS:X

Kiran Badloe (Ned): Sailing: Men's Windsurfer RS:X

Nina Christen (Sui): Shooting: Women 50m Rifle 3 positions

Fatima Galvez & Alberto Fernandez (Esp): Shooting: Trap Mixed Team

Katie Ledecky (USA): Swimming: Women's 800m freestyle

Kaylee McKeown (Aus): Swimming: Women's 200m backstroke

Caeleb Dressel (USA): Swimming: Men's 100m butterfly

Great Britain: Swimming: Mixed 4x100m medley relay

Belinda Bencic (Sui): Tennis: Women's singles

Ivan Litvinovich (Blr): Trampoline gymnastics: Men

Great Britain: Triathlon: Mixed team relay

Lyu Xiaojun (Chn): Weightlifting: Men's 81kg

Fares Ibrahim Elbakh (Qat): Weightlifting: Men's 96kg

Vandana 'tricks' as Indian women qualify

Beat South Africa, book a quarterfinal berth for the first time in the Olympics

HOCKEY

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

Vandana Kataria's hat-trick inspired the India women to a 4-3 win over South Africa in their final group game.

Rani's side made it to the quarterfinals after Ireland lost to Great Britain later in the day and will face Pool B winner Australia in the last eight.

This is the first time the Indian women have qualified for the quarterfinals at the Olympics.

It may be recalled that India had finished fourth in Moscow 1980, when women's hockey was introduced at the Games, in a six-team league format where the top three won medals.

In the fourth minute, Vandana put India in front. However, the Proteas equalised in the 14th minute as Tarryn Glasby converted Taryn Mallett's long pass.



Joy unbound: Vandana, centre, is gung-ho after scoring a goal in the 4-3 win. • PTI

Three minutes later, India went ahead again when Vandana diverted Deep Grace Ekka's drag-kick into the net.

However, South Africa struck back with less than 30 seconds left in the second quarter, as captain Erin Hunter got on the scoresheet.

India made it 3-2 within two minutes of the third quarter as Neha got into the scoring act.

South Africa scored in the last minute of the quarter through Marizen Marais. The final 15 minutes proved crucial as Sjoerd Ma-

rijne's side took the lead for the fourth, and final time, as Vandana tapped home Gurjit Kaur's drag-kick off a penalty corner.

Vandana, 29, became the first Indian woman to score a hat-trick at the Olympic Games.

Bencic digs in, takes gold

Djokovic's Tokyo nightmare ends

TENNIS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Belinda Bencic became the first Swiss woman to win the Olympic tennis singles title with a battling three-set victory over Czech Marketa Vondrousova on Saturday.

The 24-year-old Bencic edged out Vondrousova 7-5, 2-6, 6-3 on her second match-point after two and half hours on court.

In line for double

Bencic will be in line for a double when she plays Sunday's doubles final alongside Viktorija Golubic against Czechs Barbora Krejickova and Katerina Siniakova.

Earlier, men's World No. 1

Novak Djokovic pulled out of his mixed doubles bronze medal match with a shoulder injury. The 34-year-old Serb, who could become the first man to complete a calendar Grand Slam since Rod Laver in 1969, is doubtful for the US Open, which gets underway on August 30.

The withdrawal in Tokyo came after the 20-time Major champion lost his cool and smashed racquets on way to a surprise 6-4, 6-7(6), 6-3 defeat against Pablo Carreno Busta in the bronze-medal match.

Elena Svitolina became Ukraine's first Olympic medalist in tennis, securing the bronze.

She beat Kazakh Elena Rybakina 1-6, 7-6(5), 6-4.



Golden moment: Bencic celebrates her best ever win. • AFP



Mete Gazoz... Turkish delight. • GETTY IMAGES

Atanu loses as Gazoz prevents Korean sweep

Atanu Das lost to London Olympics silver medalist Takaharu Furukawa of Japan 4-6 (25-27, 28-28, 28-27, 28-28, 26-27) in a third round match of the men's individual archery event on Saturday.

Mete Gazoz of Turkey claimed the title to deny South Korea a sweep. Korea won the team events, the women individual and mixed team golds.

Anjum finishes 15th; Tejaswini 33rd

Former world record holder Anjum Moudgil shot 1167 (390-kneeling, 395-prone, 382-standing) to miss the final by four points, and finish 15th, in women's 50-metre rifle 3-position shooting event on Saturday. Tejaswini Sawant, former World champion in rifle prone, shot 1154 for the 33rd spot.

TOKYO TITBITS

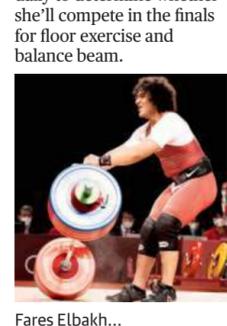
Lahiri slips to joint 28th; Schaufele ahead

Anirban Lahiri tumbled to the tied 28th place after shooting a three-under 68 in the third round of the Olympics golf competition on Saturday. He has a three-round tally of six-under 207. Compatriot Udayan Mane with 215 (76, 69, 70) was tied 55th in the 60-player field. USA's Xander Schauffele (68, 63, 68) retained his top spot at 199, one stroke ahead of home favourite Hideki Matsuyama (69, 64, 67).

Biles withdraws from two individual events

USA Gymnastics says Simone Biles has decided to withdraw from the vault and uneven bars finals. She continues to be evaluated daily to determine whether she'll compete in the finals for floor exercise and balance beam.

Fares Elbakh... power-packed display. • AP



Fares Elbakh... power-packed display. • AP

Shock exit for Amit; Pooja, too, bows out

BOXING

Y.B. SARANGI

India had a lacklustre day in the boxing ring as Asian champion Pooja Rani and World championships silver medalist Amit Panghal exited from the Tokyo Olympics on Saturday.

The 30-year-old Pooja could not make an impact on the superior Chinese boxer Li Qian who won their women's 75kg quarterfinal bout 5-0.

Earlier, top seed and medal contender Amit Panghal crashed out after losing his 52kg pre-quarterfinal bout 1-4 to Colombian Yuberjen Martinez, a Rio Olympics silver medalist in light flyweight.

The 25-year-old Panghal dominated the first round with his excellent footwork backed by solid shots. The Indian established an early advantage as he won the



Amit Panghal. • PTI

opener 4-1. However, the experienced 29-year-old Colombian surprised Amit with a change in gameplan. Martinez chased Amit around the ring, spraying punches and making the Indian's moves ineffective.

He took the second round 4-1.

The Colombian went on to win the final round 5-0. Satish Kumar (+91kg) is the only Indian male boxer left in the Tokyo Games.

The Dressel, Ledecky caravans roll on

Two World records go under

SWIMMING

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Caeleb Dressel set a new 100m butterfly World record to grab his third gold here on Saturday, as Katie Ledecky underlined her dominance of distance swimming with a third Olympic 800m freestyle title.

Explosive

Two-time World champion Dressel was always going to be tough to beat, and he exploded from the blocks and turned first, roaring home in 49.45 seconds, ahead of 200m winner Kristof Milak (49.68s) to shatter his own

previous world best 49.50s set in 2019.

Ledecky led all the way to touch in 8:12.57s and outpaced Australia's Ariarne Titmus, while Australian backstroke star Kaylee McKeown added the 200m title to her 100m crown in an eye-popping 2:04.68s

Britain's heroics

In the mixed relay's Olympic bow, the British team of Kathleen Dawson, Peaty, James Guy and Anna Hopkin came out on top.

It lowered the previous world record of 3:38.41s set by China last year, with the Chinese second and Australia third.



Fantastic four: The Great Britain quartet of Adam Peaty, James Guy, Anna Hopkin and Kathleen Dawson that set a new World mark in mixed 4x100m medley relay. • AFP