



PMO adviser Amarjeet Sinha resigns, doesn't specify any reasons

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Former Australian PM Tony Abbott in India to push trade talks

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President Ghani blames worsening Afghan crisis on sudden U.S. pullout

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Gurjit's strike helps India stun Australia, enter semifinals

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NEARBY



Rahul invites 17 Oppn. leaders for discussion

NEW DELHI
Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi has invited floor leaders of 17 Opposition parties for a breakfast meeting on Tuesday to chart out a joint parliamentary strategy for the ongoing monsoon session.

NEWS PAGE 8

'Khela Hobe will soon reverberate everywhere'

KOLKATA
West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee said on Monday that the slogan 'Khela Hobe' (Game is on) will soon reverberate in every State across the country. "Khela Hobe slogan has become very popular. We have to make it a permanent slogan," she said after inaugurating 'Khela Hobe' event at Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata.

NEWS PAGE 8

Selja's Jaipur visit sets off Cabinet rejig speculation

JAIPUR
An unannounced visit of senior Congress leader Kumari Selja to Jaipur, where she met Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, has triggered fresh speculation about a Cabinet reshuffle in the State. Ms. Selja arrived here on Sunday night and left for New Delhi on Monday after meeting Mr. Gehlot.

NORTH & EAST PAGE 4

SC questions States on cases under 66A

Citizens are still being booked under it, says plea

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the States to respond to a petition that stated citizens continued to get booked and prosecuted under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act for expressing themselves freely on social media.

Section 66A was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in a judgment in 2015.

A Bench, led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman, said the State governments, which controlled the police force, had to answer for the viola-

Several violations | Section 66A of the IT Act penalised the sending of "offensive messages" via online communication but failed to define the term "offensive". In 2015, it was deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court due to its vagueness. However, the provision continues to be invoked in cases across the country even today

TIMELINE:

• **Dec. 2008:** Information Technology (Amendment) Bill passed in Parliament

• **Oct. 2009:** IT (Amendment) Act, 2008, comes into force

• **Nov. 2012:** PIL filed by Shreya Singhal challenging the constitutionality of Section 66A of the Act

• **March 2015:** The Supreme Court, in Shreya Singhal vs Union of India (2015), declared Section 66A unconstitutional

• **Feb. 2019:** Supreme Court directs the judgment in Shreya Singhal vs Union of India (2015) to be sent to all courts in the country, senior administrative officers and Director Generals of Police

CASE COUNT*:

• As on August 2, 2021, a total of 1,988 cases have been registered under the Act, of which 681 were registered prior to the judgment, and 1,307 after it

*The data considers cases registered between October 27, 2009, and February 15, 2020, in 11 States – Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal

Source - <https://zombitracker.in>

• Currently, 799 of the cases are still pending and active

• Judgments have been passed in 236 cases filed, of which 132 were before 2005 and 104 after

"shocking" and "terrible" that people were still booked and tried under Section 66A even six years after the court struck down the provision as unconstitutional and a violation of free speech.

NGO People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUC), represented by senior advocate Sanjay Parikh and advocate Aparna Bhat, had drawn the court's attention to the violations. Justice Nariman had authored the judgment, trashing Section 66A in a petition filed by law student Shreya Singhal, who highlighted cases of young people being arrested and charged under the ambiguous provision for their social media posts.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

President hails Madras legislature's contribution

Karunanidhi's portrait unveiled in Assembly



Momentous occasion: President Ram Nath Kovind unveiling the portrait of M. Karunanidhi in the Assembly. Governor Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin are seen.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Hailing the rich contributions made by the Tamil Nadu legislature over the past century, President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday observed that the [erstwhile] Madras legislature had sown the seeds of a fully representative democratic form of governance, which were realised after Independence.

Welfare State

"The concept of the welfare State has taken deep roots in this legislature irrespective of who rules here," he said addressing the centenary celebrations of the State legislature at Fort St. George, Chennai.

He unveiled a portrait of five-time former Chief Minister and DMK patriarch M. Karunanidhi in the Assembly on the occasion.

"This legislature became

the fountainhead of many progressive legislation, which were subsequently replicated across the country to empower the weaker sections of society and strengthen democracy," the President said.

Roots of democracy

According to Mr. Kovind, the Madras legislature can rightly be credited with nurturing the roots of democracy by focusing on governance to uplift the poor and purge social evils. "Politics and governance in the region evolved around positive and rational content that targeted the welfare of those living on the margins," he noted. The abolition of the Devadasi system, widow remarriage, mid-day meals in schools and distribution of agricultural land to the landless were some of the revolutionary ideas that transformed society.

Assam takes back case filed against Mizoram MP

Mizoram CM orders withdrawal of FIR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Assam police on Monday withdrew an FIR against Mizoram MP K. Vanlalvena (in photo) in connection with the July 26 border conflict, hours after instructions from Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Dr. Sarma had taken to Twitter early in the day asking the police to take back the

case against the Rajya Sabha member for "ensuring peace along our borders".

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga reciprocated by instructing the State police to withdraw the FIR against all the "accused persons" from Assam held responsible for the border flare-up.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

At \$35 bn, July exports 34% higher than pre-COVID level

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports in July were 34% higher than the pre-COVID levels of July 2019, at \$35.17 billion, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday, but the trade deficit hit a three-month high as gold imports jumped 145.4% from the 2019 levels.

Imports rose from \$41.8 billion in June to \$46.4 billion, 14.75% higher than pre-

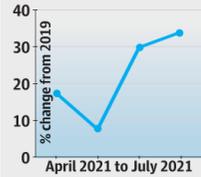
pandemic activity. But without factoring in oil and gems and jewellery brought in, imports actually shrank 0.17% over the same period.

Total merchandise exports during the first four months of 2021-22 now stand at \$130.6 billion, about 22% higher than 2019. The government is confident of meeting the \$400 billion target for the full year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Steady rise

India's merchandise exports in all months of FY22 were higher than the pre-COVID-19 levels



Waterway



No exit: A bus stuck in floodwaters after heavy rain in the Birma area of Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir, on Monday. ANI

No agreement yet on Gogra, Hot Springs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 12th round of Corps Commanders meeting between India and China, held on Saturday, was "constructive", a joint statement issued on Monday said, though the two sides have not yet reached an agreement with the alleged murder of a former junior national wrestling champion at the Chhatrasal Stadium here.

"The two sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on resolution of remaining areas related to disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector of India-China border areas," the joint statement said.

DETAILS ON PAGE 9

Chargesheet filed against Sushil Kumar, 12 others in murder case

Double Olympic medallist named as main accused by police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Monday filed a chargesheet against double Olympic medallist wrestler Sushil Kumar as the main accused and 12 others in connection with the alleged murder of a former junior national wrestling champion at the Chhatrasal Stadium here.

The final report has been filed before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Satvir Singh

Lamba. The judge will announce the date for hearing after taking cognisance of the 1,000-page chargesheet on Tuesday. The chargesheet names 13 accused, including Kumar. A total of 15 accused have been arrested and five are on the run.

Kumar and his associates had allegedly assaulted wrestler Sagar Dhankar, 23, and two of his friends, Sonu and Amit Kumar, on the intervening night of May 4 and

5. Sagar succumbed to the injuries later.

The police had earlier called Kumar the main culprit and the mastermind of the murder and said there was electronic evidence wherein he and his associates could be seen beating Dhankar with sticks.

Kumar, facing charges of murder, culpable homicide, criminal conspiracy among other offences, is lodged in the Tihar Jail.

No cross-gender massages in spas: Delhi govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In an attempt to curb sexual abuse at spas and massage centres in the city, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday approved new guidelines that prohibit cross-gender massages and require larger facilities employing over 10 people to set up an internal complaint committee.

The new rules will govern the issuance of health trade licences at these centres. The issue of abuse and harassment at these facilities was flagged in a report by the Delhi Commission for Women. Following this, a task force was constituted to investigate, take appropriate legal action, and review the functioning of such establishments.

DETAILS ON PAGE 3

Probe Pegasus issue, make it public: Nitish

Bihar CM says he neither has any intention nor aspiration to become the PM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday said there should be an investigation into the Pegasus issue and everything should be made public. He also said that he neither had any intention nor aspiration to become the Prime Minister of the country.

"Such things should not be done to disturb and harass people. There should be an investigation into it and the whole thing should be made public," Mr. Kumar told presspersons after his weekly programme of 'Janata ke Durbar Mein Mukhyamantri (Chief Minister in People's Court)'.

'Thorough examination' There has been talk of telephone tapping for many days and he has been reading about it in newspapers



Chief Minister Nitish Kumar speaking to media during the 'Janata Durbar' programme in Patna on Monday. PTI

as well, said the Chief Minister. "The whole thing should be examined thoroughly from each and every aspect and action taken into it," he said. When asked if the matter should be investigated, he replied, "Of course, it

should happen." Mr. Kumar's party, the Janata Dal (United), is ruling in alliance with the BJP in the State.

To a question what he had to say on the comment of his party leader Upendra Kush-

waha that he (Mr. Kumar) "is PM material", the Chief Minister said neither he had any intention nor aspiration for it.

On State BJP leader and Minister in his Cabinet Samrat Chaudhary's comment that "running a coalition government is a challenging job and the government we run in Bihar is not our independent government. We face several challenges", he remarked that he had not seen or read his (Mr. Chaudhary's) comment.

At a recent function in Aurangabad district, Mr. Chaudhary, who is Panchayat Raj Minister, also said, "We accepted Nitish Kumar as Chief Minister even when he won 43 seats and we got 74 (in the 2020 Assembly polls)." Mr. Kumar said, "I'm not aware about his comment. Have neither seen nor read it."

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IN BRIEF

Chair to support research in AI field at IIT-Delhi

NEW DELHI
IIT Delhi alumni — Rupam Shrivastava and Ajay Singh — from the BTech class of 2003 have endowed the “Indu Shrivastava & Serla Singh Chair Professor” in Artificial Intelligence. The Chair will support research in the field of Artificial Intelligence at IIT Delhi. The duo said they have dedicated the Chair to their mothers who represent Indian mothers who have sacrificed their own education and career ambitions to support the careers of their siblings, husbands, and children.

NSUI holds protests over Pegasus snooping row

NEW DELHI
Activists of the National Students' Union of India on Monday protested against the Centre over the Pegasus snooping row. An international media consortium had reported that over 300 mobile phone numbers, including two of serving Ministers, over 40 journalists, among others targeted for hacking through the spyware.

Kejriwal may launch revamped Chandni Chowk by August 15

Officials told to expedite work on last-mile connectivity, installation of CCTV cameras

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is likely to inaugurate the Chandni Chowk redevelopment project by August 15. As a result, the authorities concerned have been asked to speed up pending work over the coming days.

The aspects that will be taken up on a war footing include the appointment of an agency to provide last-mile connectivity via ‘vintage golf carts’ on the 1.3-km stretch, finalisation of a design for cycle rickshaws designed by IIT-Delhi, and installation of CCTV cameras.

New design by Aug. 7

At a meeting of the Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation last month, directions were issued to ensure that as many as 107 cycle rickshaws, which will be allowed to ply on the pedes-



Redevelopment work under way in Chandni Chowk.

* FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

trianised stretch soon, be on the road by September 30.

“The rickshaws are being refurbished with a more user friendly design in addition to being RFID-enabled, according to one of the two models presented by IIT-Delhi. The final design will be approved by August 7,” said a government source.

The stretch between Red Fort and Fatehpuri Masjid is now a vehicle-free zone (bet-

ween 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.), but non-motorised vehicles are allowed. The width of the road carriageway is 5.5 metres, there is 5-10 metre wide pavement on either side of the road. Also, there is a 2.5-metre wide footpath on either side of the road.

Only manual rickshaws are to be allowed on the redeveloped stretch.

They will be marked, regularised, and colour-coded.

Their operators will also be given badges.

Meanwhile, the Transport Department was directed to set the ball rolling to ensure that vintage-style golf carts are operational on the stretch by September 30. “The department will float a tender for the procurement of such vehicles and select a service provider,” the government source said, adding that a police booth, a toilet, as well as a fire tank will need to be completed by August 31, September 15 and September 30, respectively.

Sanjay Bhargava, president of Chandni Chowk Sarv Vayapar Mandal, flagged the issue of encroachment on roads. “The authorities are yet to take any action against illegal hawkers and vagabonds in the area. Both issues continue to cause problems for shopkeepers and visitors,” he alleged.

DU portal gets over 8,000 registrations in two hours

Launch delayed by a few hours: official

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The launch of Delhi University admission portal scheduled for Monday evening was delayed by a few hours.

Over 8,000 registrations took place within the first two hours, officials said.

Registrations to the various merit-based undergraduate programmes are scheduled to continue till August 31. The university is offering around 70,000 seats for the various undergraduate courses this year.

The process will be completely online and applicants are not required to visit colleges or departments for any admission-related purposes, officials said.

No trials

Due to the pandemic, trials will not be held for admissions under the extracurricular and sports categories.

Aspirants applying under these categories will be permitted to submit the

best three certificates from the past four years, instead of the usual three years.

Senior officials said this modification has been brought in to ensure that students who could not participate in events last year, due to the pandemic, can submit certificates from previous years.

University guide

The university this year has also assured aspirants of holding webinars and providing tutorial videos to guide them through the registration process.

Senior officials said AI-based ChatBots and 24/7 help desks will also be made available to candidates to assist them in clearing doubts and queries.

PG courses

Registrations to the various postgraduate courses in the university began on July 26 and is set to continue till August 21.

Illegal pesticide firm busted, two in custody

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police have busted a spurious pesticide manufacturing plant in Mundka and arrested two men, said officials on Monday.

The accused — Mohan Lal and Aman — had rented two godowns at Hiran Kund village two months ago for manufacturing the fake pesticides, an officer said. The duo had made an initial investment of ₹9 lakh.

A complaint was received from a representative of a pesticide manufacturing company, alleging that someone was infringing the firm's trademark by producing spurious products. A raid was conducted on July 30 and a large quantity of spurious material bearing the names of several companies was found stacked at the plant in Mundka, the police said.

Fake branding

DCP (Outer) Parvinder Singh said the accused — Lal, Aman, Vijay and Rajender — were engaged in manufacturing and selling spurious pesticides and fungicides with the branding of different companies. They also used to sell seeds of different crops treated with these fake pesticides. Fake raw material and machinery found at the plant were seized, he said.

During questioning, it was revealed that Lal's son-in-law Naveen runs a pesticide shop in Indra Market, Tis Hazari road. Aman also ran a pesticide shop in the same market, Mr. Singh said. Vijay is also a supplier of spurious pesticides and his accomplice is Rajender. The two are major stakeholders in this business, he said. “Vijay came in contact with Lal in Indra Market. Aman was also roped in by him,” the DCP said. Vijay was responsible for supply, Rajender was tasked with packaging and arranging infrastructure while Lal and Aman looked after production.

A manhunt is on for the rest, the police added.

Bollywood movie producer held for duping businessman of ₹32L

Accused suffered losses, was involved in 11 other criminal cases

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Bollywood movie producer has been arrested for allegedly duping a businessman of ₹32 lakh on the pretext of getting him a loan at a cheaper rate, the police said on Monday.

DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said the accused has been identified as Ajay Yadav, who was arrested from Uttar Pradesh's Mathura. He was previously arrested by the Special Cell of Delhi Police and the Kandivali unit of Mumbai Crime Branch.

The accused is the director of Serene Pvt. Ltd. and producer of six Bollywood movies — Overtime, Bha-dash, Love Fir Kabhi, Ran-Banka, Suspense and Shakshi. He invested all the

cheated amount in producing movies but most of them flopped due to which he suffered huge losses, they said.

A businessman from Okhla Industrial Area, Rahul Nath, approached the accused, saying he wanted to expand his business and was in need of a loan of ₹65 crore.

“The accused presented himself as the director of Serene Films, a reliable Mumbai-based financial consultant. Yadav assured Mr. Nath that the loan would be approved against his property in Delhi's Satbari for 10 years on 10% interest per annum,” Mr. Thakur said.

Yadav sought registration fee of documents from Mr. Nath. He visited Delhi multiple times on Mr. Nath's ex-

penditure.

Fake address

After taking the amount, the accused switched off his mobile phone. The address given by him was also found to be fake. The accused had duped multiple people using different names in a similar way, the officer said. During investigation, it was found that a film named Sakshi, produced by the accused, had released recently. A police team was sent to Mumbai. It then came to light that the accused was in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. He was subsequently found to be in Mathura after which a raid was conducted and he was nabbed. Accused is found to be involved in 11 criminal cases, said an officer.

Minor dies under mysterious circumstances

Parents allege 9-year-old was cremated without their consent; villagers stage protest

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A nine-year-old girl died under mysterious circumstances in south-west Delhi's Cantonment on Sunday night and was cremated before police were informed of the incident. Four persons — Radhey Shyam, Kuldeep, Laxmi Narain and Saleem — have been arrested in connection with the case, they said on Monday.

DCP (South West) Ingit Pratap Singh said they received a PCR call at 10.30 p.m. regarding the rape and death of a minor girl. The police were also told that she was being cremated.

On reaching the spot, the police found that around 200 villagers had gathered in the area and the cremation was almost over.

They were told that around 5.30 p.m., the girl

and her organs would be stolen. The girl's body was then cremated.

“The parents of the girl then alleged that the minor was cremated without their consent,” the DCP said.

Mr. Singh said the crime team was called to the spot for inspection. The mortal remains were sent for post-mortem.

A case under Sections 304 (causing death by negligence), 342 (punishment for wrongful confinement), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code was registered at Delhi Cantonment police station. Later, IPC Sections 302 (punishment for murder) and 376 (punishment for rape), and relevant sections of SC/ST Act and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO)

Act were added. A neighbour of the victim's family claimed: “By the time the mother reached the crematorium, the girl had already been cremated. They poured water to douse the fire,” she said.

CCTV footage The neighbour also claimed to have seen CCTV footage in which the girl can be seen walking naked. The neighbour claimed that the minor's mother was being forced to say “it is not a case of rape and murder”.

Mr. Singh said technical evidence will be obtained and examined. He also said the minor's mother has given her statement before the magistrate.

On Monday, locals gathered and staged a protest at Pankha Road.

Green tribunal pulls up authorities over ‘failure of constitutional obligation’

Plea seeks action against discharge of untreated sewage in canal

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Following a plea seeking remedial action against discharge of untreated sewage into an irrigation canal in Noida, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) pulled up authorities over “failure of constitutional obligation”. It observed that the officers responsible should be held accountable.

Taking note of a report earlier submitted by authorities, an NGT Bench headed by Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel said: “Unfortunately, not a single person is shown to have been prosecuted in spite of categorical observations in the reports of statutory regulators. There is no dearth of statutory powers of Noida Authority, District Magistrates, SEIAA, Uttar Pradesh and State Pollution Control Boards as well as Uttar Pradesh Police.”

The Bench said: “The said authorities have failed to realise that they are occupying the position of high trust and are meant to protect the public health and environment and not to just enjoy position and perks at the cost of miseries of innocent citizens...Sufferers are helpless citizens...”

The green panel has also directed officials of the district administration and Noida Authority to take coercive action against violators.

“Action should include

The authorities have failed to realise that they are occupying the position of high trust and are meant to protect the public health and not to just enjoy position

NGT BENCH

accountability of the erring officers, preventing discharge of pollution in the drain, coercive measures against violators — housing societies or others by registering criminal cases, initiating prosecution, assessment and recovery of compensation for the past violations, black listing of the concerned entities such as construction companies, in exercise of their statutory powers following due process of law,” the Bench said.

CPCB told to file report

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) was also directed to file a separate report on standards applicable to discharge drains or canals and whether standards of freshwater or flood water applied to such situation in the light of relevant environmental norms.

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a plea moved by petitioner Abhisht Kusum Gupta who alleged that untreated sewage was being discharged into the canal by deficient sewage treatment plants in 95 high rise buildings in Noida, industries as well as wastewater from upstream from Delhi and Ghaziabad.

Wasteland



A municipal worker sprays anti-mosquito repellent to prevent dengue and malaria in the ongoing monsoon season near Ring Road in Burari on Monday. According to a municipal report, 52 cases of dengue, 21 cases of malaria and 18 cases of chikungunya have been reported in the city till July 31 this year. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday did not hear the bail application moved by former AAP councillor Tahir Hussain in a case arising out of the north-east Delhi riots of 2020 on account of similar cases pending before another bench.

Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar ordered that the bail application be listed before Justice Yogesh Khanna on August 6.

“List before said bench on August 6 subject to obtaining order of the Chief Justice,” the judge said.

Senior advocate Mohit Mathur, appearing for Mr. Hussain, informed the court that as many as 11 FIRs have been registered against his client in connection with the riots and bail applications in three such FIRs from police station Dayapur were already coming up for hearing later this month before another

bench. He informed that all FIRs have a common allegation of conspiracy and Tahir Hussain purportedly being the mastermind behind the violence.

Apprehending “dilatory tactics” by the prosecution if one matter is kept isolated from the other pending pleas, Mathur submitted that the present bail application be also sent to Justice Khanna. “The charge is the same [that] I am the mastermind and people gathered at my house. All others have been released,” said the senior ad-

vocate who appeared along with advocate Rizwan Nizami.

Advocate D.K. Bhatia, appearing for the prosecution, opposed sending the present bail to the other bench on the ground that the FIR, as well as the role ascribed to Hussain, was also different from other cases.

The present FIR pertains to the alleged commission of rioting and other offences under the Indian Penal Code

HC allows woman to terminate pregnancy

‘Foetus was suffering from abnormalities’

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday permitted a woman to undergo medical termination of her 22-week pregnancy as the foetus was suffering from serious abnormalities.

Justice Rekha Palli gave the direction after considering the report of medical board of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

“Considering the report of experts ..., I am of the view that the petition deserves to be allowed. The petitioner [woman] is allowed to terminate the pregnancy,” the High Court said.

In India, the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act stipulates a ceiling of 20 weeks, for termination of pregnancy, beyond which abortion of a foetus is statutorily impermissible.

The 32-year-old woman,



who completed 22-week gestation period, had sought permission to undergo medical termination of her pregnancy as her foetus was suffering from various defects and abnormalities.

Advocate Sneha Mukherjee, representing the woman, said continuation of the pregnancy to its full term not only carried a substantial risk of serious physical handicap to the offspring but also a high chance of morbidity in the foetus.

HC refuses to hear Hussain's bail plea as similar cases pending before another Bench

Judge orders application to be listed before another Justice on August 6 in connection with the north-east riots case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
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The present FIR pertains to the alleged commission of rioting and other offences under the Indian Penal Code

in Dayapur area.

The other two cases pertain to the injuries suffered by two people on account of a riotous mob pelting stones, throwing petrol bombs and firing gunshots from the terrace of Hussain's house and allege commission of offences of attempt to murder and rioting, and violation of Arms Act.

Notice in one of two bail applications was issued by Justice Khanna on July 13.

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Timings DELHI

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

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 04
RISE 05:45 SET 19:10
RISE 01:42 SET 16:02

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

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	33	26
Safdarjung	33	26
Palam	33	27

Delhi Palam Today
32°C Moderate winds and mainly comfortable day. Light rain and thundershower may occur with cloudy sky.

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

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THE HINDU
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Covishield first dose back after a break

Some people still finding it difficult to book slots to get jab; first shot only through online booking

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI
Covishield vaccine was available on Monday for people who wanted to take the first dose after a break, but only in a limited number of slots. On July 22, due to a shortage of vaccines, the Delhi government had ordered that Covishield would be available only for people who need the second dose of the vaccine till July 31.

More slots
On August 1, the government issued a new order that 20% of Covishield slots will now be available for the first dose and 80% will be reserved for the second dose. On Monday, some people complained that they cannot find a slot online for their first dose of Covishield. Walk-in facility is not available for the first dose in the city in most centres and only people who have registered online can get the first shot. Around 3 p.m. at Navyug School in Pandara Road, which has been turned into a government vaccination centre, 34-year-old Prakash



A healthcare worker administers a shot of Covishield at a vaccination centre in Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya in west Delhi's Subhash Nagar on Monday. •SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Chandra was seen pleading with an official to allow his wife to get the first dose of the vaccine without an on-line booking. "We cannot do anything as it is all online. Her name has to be on the list to get the first dose of the vaccine," the official told him as she walked away. "I have taken the first shot, but my wife is yet to take the vaccine. I have been

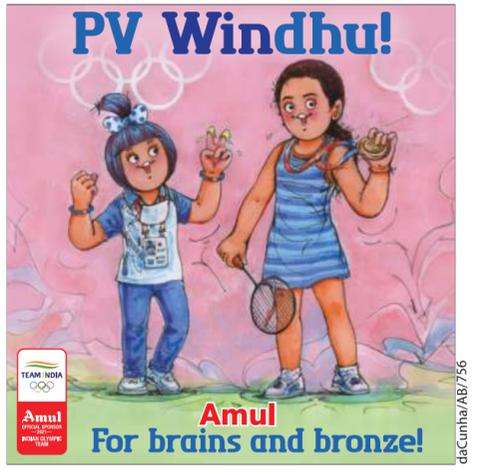
trying to book a slot for her for a month now, but there are no slots available," said Mr. Chanda, who works at a private company. Only 20% of the 200 slots at the centre are available online for the first dose and people are coming to the centre after booking online, officials at the centre said. At a CGHS Ayurvedic Hospital in Aliganj, which has a vaccination centre adminis-

tering Covaxin, Dharam Singh, 40, who irons clothes for a living, was waiting with his wife to get their first dose of the vaccine. "We don't know how to book it online. A woman, for whom we iron clothes, works here and she booked it for us. We are waiting for her," Mr. Singh said. Officials at the centre also confirmed that people have to register online before

The vaccine stock will last for five days, there are 4.76.610 doses of Covishield and 3,96,990 doses of Covaxin

DELHI GOVERNMENT'S VACCINATION BULLETIN

coming to the centre to get the first dose of the vaccine. Sunday's order also increased the number of slots for the first dose of Covaxin to 40% of the total slots, up from 20%. "Earlier only 45-50 people used to get slots for first dose of the vaccine. From Monday, it has been increased to 90. People are coming even for the first dose. But we are doing first dose only through appointment and second dose even without appointment," an official at the centre said. The vaccine stock of the city will last for five days and there are 4,76,610 doses of Covishield vaccine and 3,96,990 doses of Covaxin, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government. Till now, 1,00,58,538 doses of vaccines have been administered in the city.



HC notice to Delhi govt. on implementation of Mental Healthcare Act

Plea seeks counsellors in all schools

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice to the Delhi government on a plea seeking to implement the Mental Healthcare Act 2017 at schools and colleges for the benefit of the student. A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh also sought response from the Institute Of Human Behaviour & Allied Sciences on a petition by a 17-year-old student seeking to mandate the presence of clinical psychiatrists, counsellors, social workers and mental health professionals in all schools and colleges. The petition relied on the National Mental Health Survey of India 2015-16 to argue that children and adolescents are vulnerable to mental disorders and the health systems do not prioritise mental health.

Psychological impact
The petition also said the pandemic has had a huge psychological impact on the students in schools. "Mental health in children manifests in many ways, from insomnia to eating disorders to emotional swings to self-harming, all of which can be treated given the right interventions," it said. "But in many homes, disturbing behaviour patterns in young person are rarely seen as warning signs; rather they are dismissed as just acting up or, in young children, being extra difficult," the plea said. "Stress, anxiety, fear, panic, depression, insomnia, isolation, disconnectedness, loneliness, trauma, lack of self-confidence, positivity and resi-

lience etc. are issues widely prevalent in students. However, the same go unnoticed and unattended." The plea said studies have revealed that most mental disorders emerge by early adulthood and are associated with a substantial delay in treatment. "Untreated or inadequately treated mental illness is associated with progression to more complex disorders, school dropout, addiction, and self-harm etc.," it said. "Thus, schools and universities need to take a lead role in the development of an integrated system of student mental health care." The plea said persons with mental disorders are not only known to be associated with a wide range of social and societal problems but are also associated with a considerable amount of stigma in Indian society, leading to neglect and marginalisation. It said though the National Mental Health programme was initiated in the early 1980s in India, mental health has been often accorded a lower priority amidst competing health and social priorities. The High Court will hear the petition again on September 16.

Delhi govt. prohibits cross-gender massages in spas

'New rules will stop trafficking, sexual abuse, harassment'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

In an attempt to curb sexual abuse at spas and massage centres in the city, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday approved new guidelines that prohibit cross-gender massage, and require larger facilities employing over 10 people to set up an internal complaint

committee to deal with sexual harassment issues. The new rules will govern the issuance of health trade licences at these centres. The guidelines seek to check sexual abuse and trafficking in addition to putting safeguards in place to ensure the security of customers as well as employees, the government said. The issue of abuse and harassment at these facilities was flagged in a report by the Delhi Commission for Women. Following this, a task force was constituted to investigate, take appro-

priate legal action, and review the functioning of such establishments. Other provisions include self-closing doors, prohibition on latches and bolts inside massage centre chambers, and keeping external doors open during working hours - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. **Separate sections** The centres will also need to have separate bathrooms and changing rooms for men and women. They will also have to employ only people aged above 18 who possess a degree, di-

ploma or certificate in physiotherapy, acupressure or occupational therapy. In addition to police clearance certificates for all employees and police verification of the premises, mandatory conditions for obtaining a licence to operate such a facility include prohibition on engaging in any form of sexual activity on the premises. Cross-gender massages are prohibited and facilities must have separate sections for men and women. Customers will have to provide ID cards and facili-

ties must keep a register containing their contact details, including phone numbers. CCTV cameras with recording facility will need to be installed at the entrance, reception and common areas of the centre and recordings will need to be retained for at least three months. An internal complaint committee under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act will also need to be established in centres where more than 10 employees are working.

Street vendors must get job, says Delhi HC

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday remarked that street vendors should take proactive steps to get vaccinated so that the third wave of COVID-19 could be avoided in the Capital. Justice Rekha Palli also asked the Delhi government to consider allowing more weekly markets to operate as "there is a strata of society that only purchases things from these markets since they cannot afford other shops".

Weekly markets

Currently, the Delhi government has allowed weekly markets to open but only with 50% of vendors, and one market in each municipal zone. "It is also expected that street vendors will take proactive steps to get vaccinated so that we can avoid the third wave and Delhi is not faced with a surge," Justice Palli said. The court was hearing a petition by Saptahik Patri Bazar Association, which has challenged the authorities' decision to open malls and markets but not weekly markets.

IMD predicts rain, cloudy skies till August 8

The Capital had 16 rainy days in July, Yamuna still flowing above 'warning mark'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Several parts of the city received scattered showers on Monday with the maximum temperature settling at 32.7 degrees Celsius, which is two degrees below normal. The minimum temperature was 26.1 degrees Celsius, one degree below normal. While Safdarjung, the official weather station of the Capital, received only traces of rain between 8.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m., the weather station at Palam recorded 18.1 mm of rainfall in the same period. Other stations like Ridge and Ayanagar recorded 4.4 mm of rainfall, while Pusa reported no rainfall. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast generally cloudy sky with light rain/thundershowers on August 3. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to hover around 33 and 25 degrees Celsius respectively. Cloudy skies are likely to remain till August 8 with light to moderate rain forecast. The IMD has predicted that rainfall during the second half (August to Septem-



Motorist caught in a spell of rain in Delhi on Monday. •SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ber) of the southwest monsoon is likely to be normal (95% to 105% of Long Period Average). It added that monthly rainfall for August is most likely to be normal (94% to 106% of Long Period Average) also. The forecast is for the country as a whole, added the IMD. In July, the Capital had 16 rainy days despite the monsoon arriving over two weeks late - making it the most-delayed in 19 years. Of these 16 rainy days, the Capital received heavy rainfall on July 18-19 (69.6 mm), July

26-27 (100 mm) and July 29-30 (72 mm). IMD data show Delhi has received 582.8 mm of rainfall so far since June 1, when the monsoon season starts - nearly double the normal of 295.6 mm. **Seven critical points** Earlier in the day, the Delhi Public Works Department said it has identified seven critical waterlogging points in the city, including the Minto Road underpass, and is taking up several projects such as construction of drains and installation of

pumps to avoid water accumulation during rain. To prevent any untoward incident, boats and divers will be also be deployed in areas which face flooding, senior officials of the department said. Meanwhile, the water level in the Yamuna, which was just below the danger mark at 205.30 metres on Sunday, receded slightly on Monday but was still above the warning mark of 204.5 metres. A flood alert is declared when the Yamuna crosses the 'warning mark'.

Indian Rock Python rescued from sports club

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GURUGRAM

The Backyard Sports Club in Sector 59 here had an unexpected visitor on Sunday - a six-foot-long Indian Rock Python. The reptile, entangled in a cricket net, was rescued by Wildlife SOS. Club employees spotted the snake and contacted Wildlife SOS on their 24-hour helpline number. A response unit reached the

spot and rescued the reptile in about 20 minutes. Kartick Satyanarayan, co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS, said the reptile would be released into the wild after it was certified fit for release by the veterinarian. Wasim Akram, deputy director (Special Projects) Wildlife SOS, said there had been a rise in reptile sightings in Gurugram and Delhi due to heavy rainfall.

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'MHA restricts salary hike for Delhi MLAs'

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal likely to discuss matter in Cabinet meeting today



The Delhi Vidhan Sabha. According to government sources, the salary of city legislators has been capped at ₹30,000. •FILE PHOTO

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Delhi Cabinet on Tuesday is likely to discuss a decision by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to allegedly restrict a proposed salary hike for the Capital's legislators, sources aware of the development said. **Lowest paid legislators** According to government sources, the salary of Delhi MLAs has been capped at ₹30,000, making them "the lowest paid legislators in the

country." Due to the move, the salary plus allowances of the city's MLAs has been restricted to ₹90,000 by the MHA, sources claimed. **'No hike since 2011'** The salaries of MLAs, the Delhi government claimed, had not been increased since 2011 and the Delhi government had requested the MHA to raise Delhi MLAs' salaries to be at par with MLAs of other States. "A proposal to this effect had been pending with the

MHA for the last five years. The Capital, unlike other States, does not give added incentives to its legislators such as house rent allowance, for instance, so it was sought to increase salaries given the high cost of living in Delhi," a source said. "But the ministry has decided not to do so. The issue will be taken up for discussion by the Delhi Cabinet on Tuesday in a meeting which will be chaired by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal," the source added.

Government of Jharkhand Urban Development and Housing Department Nagar Panchayat Bundu

e-Procurement Notice (Tenders Notice call) short Notice

S.I	Tender id	Name of work	Amount	Earnest Money	Tender Fee	Completion Of Work
1	UDD/NIT/BNP/W PL/03/2021-22	Laying of the distribution main pipe line in remaining ward/tola/road/gali and populated area under Nagar Panchayat Bundu	3,40,32,217.00	6,90,000.00	10,000.00	6 Months
2	Date Of Publication Of Tender On Website			04/08/2021 AT 10:00 AM		
3	Mode Of Submission Of Bids			E-Tenderinghttp://Jharkhandtenders.gov.in		
4	Date Start Of Submission Of Bids			04/08/2021 AT 10:00 AM		
5	Last Date/Time Of Submission Of Bids			25/08/2021 AT 03:00 PM		
6	Date Of Bid Opening			27/08/2021 AT 04:00 AM		
7	Last Date/Time Of Submission At Office Cost of BOQ, Earnest Money And Tender Document			25/08/2021 AT 02:00 PM		
8	Name & Address Of Office Inviting Tender			NAGAR PANCHAYAT BUNDU		

NOTE :- Only E-Tender will be accepted. Further details can be seen on website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in& Notice Board office of the Nagar Panchayat Bundu.

Executive Officer Nagar Panchayat Bundu

PR 250647 Urban Development(21-22)-D

'TMC will defeat BJP in Tripura'

Party gen. secy. Abhishek Banerjee promises frequent visits

SYED SAJJAD ALI
AGARTALA

Trinamool Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee announced on Monday that he will be visiting Tripura frequently henceforth to ensure the defeat of the BJP in the Assembly election due in early 2023.

He claimed that people of the State were eager to replace the BJP-led coalition government with that of *Ma, Mati and Manush* (Mother, Motherland and People) – the official plank of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee's party.

"I am coming to Tripura again after two weeks. I may visit the State four times a month to prepare the ground to unseat BJP from power," Mr. Banerjee said at a news conference here.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Banerjee tweeted a video to claim that his car was hit by



TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee during his visit to Tripureshwari temple at Udaipur in Tripura on Monday. *PTI

the BJP workers on his way to Tripureshwari temple. The State BJP, however, dismissed the charge.

Mr. Banerjee later posted another message on his twitter handle: "Despite using all his might, @BjpBiplal SHALL NOT be able to stop me from reaching out to the people of #Tripura who deserve to see the light of Democracy!"

The slogan 'Ebar Tripura' [This Time Tripura] was dis-

played at the press conference venue. Mr. Banerjee said party chief Ms. Banerjee had given him the responsibility to make certain that TMC won in the 2023 Assembly election. "We are certain to do that," he said.

He made two major political announcements: one, the TMC would not ally with the CPI(M), and two, the party would not engineer defections in the BJP for a backdoor entry.

Cong. leader's Jaipur visit triggers speculation on Cabinet reshuffle

Kumari Selja left for New Delhi after holding a meeting with CM Ashok Gehlot

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

An unannounced visit of senior Congress leader Kumari Selja to Jaipur, where she met Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, has triggered fresh speculations about a Cabinet reshuffle in the State. Ms. Selja arrived here on Sunday night and left for New Delhi on Monday morning after holding a meeting with Mr. Gehlot.

Though the Pradesh Congress Committee did not issue any official statement on Ms. Selja's visit, the political observers here postulated that she had travelled to Jaipur to convey a message from the Congress' central leadership. Ms. Selja, who headed a screening commit-



Cong. leader Kumari Selja

tee to select candidates for the 2018 State Assembly election, is considered close to Mr. Gehlot.

The Congress has been trying to evolve a consensus on the impending expansion and reshuffle of the State Cabinet amid the demands raised by rival factions in the

ruling party. All India Congress Committee general secretary Ajay Maken, who was in the State Capital for three days last week, had hinted that some Ministers might be dropped to make way for fresh faces.

Ms Selja, Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee chief, is also considered a confidante of party president Sonia Gandhi. In a bid to keep her Jaipur visit a secret, the ruling party arranged the vehicles registered in Haryana to take her from the Sangarer airport to the Chief Minister's official residence.

Mr. Maken – the AICC in-charge of Rajasthan – visited Jaipur last week to interact with the Congress MLAs and Independents supporting

the Congress in order to get their feedback on the State government's performance. Several legislators reportedly expressed dissatisfaction with some Ministers and accused them of being inaccessible.

'Exercise in futility' Sikar-based political analyst Ashfaq Kayamkhani described the repeated visits of senior Congress leaders as an "exercise in futility". Mr. Kayamkhani said no party leader could gather courage to challenge Mr. Gehlot, who was unwilling to yield space to former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot and his supporters, and the Cabinet reshuffle was not likely to take place anytime soon.

Live-streaming of HC hearings in Odisha

CORRESPONDENT
CUTTACK

History was created in Orissa High Court on Monday when for the first-time live streaming of court proceedings was done for the benefit of litigants and advocates.

Chief Justice S. Muralidhar inaugurated the facility on a trial basis.

Along with the live streaming facility, the Chief Justice also launched several e-services.

Mobile app launched He inaugurated the High Court's mobile app, facility for online payment of fines in sessions and district courts and the system of virtual courts for dealing with traffic e-challan cases in Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Commissionerate areas.

Meghalaya priest accused of molesting minor absconding

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

A priest in Meghalaya's East Garo Hills district accused of molesting a 14-year-old girl has reportedly been absconding.

Members of the minor's family had lodged an FIR against Father James Paranthu after he allegedly groped her while her parents had gone to work in their

paddy fields nearby.

The parents found the girl crying when they returned home. They said they filed the police complaint four days after the incident as they did not know how to go about it initially. According to the girl's statement, the priest had hugged her before starting to grope her. He had also allegedly given her money to keep her mouth shut.

Council to promote Rajasthan tourism

It will formulate strategy to resolve issues concerning sector

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

A Tourism Promotion Council will be formed shortly in Rajasthan to make the State a preferred tourist destination and formulate a cohesive strategy to resolve the issues concerning the sector.

The council will have representatives from the State government as well as the tourism and hospitality

sectors.

The initiative is being taken by the Federation of Hospitality and Tourism in Rajasthan (FHTR), which has decided to focus on the activities such as offline promotion, digital marketing and cooperation through a hub-and-spoke model, offering a full array of services through an anchor and several secondary establishments.

Newly elected FHTR president Apurv Kumar said here on Monday that the council would represent the problems concerning the tourism trade to the appropriate authorities in the government and other agencies and redress grievances.

"We will also react to the policies and practices of the government and civic authorities," Mr. Kumar said.

243 suspects detained, 17 arrested in Jharkhand judge death case

Two State police officers also put under suspension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHANBAD/RANCHI

Police detained 243 suspects and arrested 17 persons in connection with the death of judge Uttam Anand in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district, besides seizing 250 auto-rickshaws, a senior officer said on Monday.

Two police officers were also suspended, including one for making the CCTV footage of the incident public, he said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sanjiv Kumar said that 243 persons were taken into custody after raids in different police station areas of the district on Sunday evening.

They are being interrogated, he added.

"Police have also searched 53 hotels of the district and



CCTV footage of the incident. *FILE PHOTO

officer said.

Sub Inspector Adarsh Kumar was suspended for making the CCTV footage public, Mr. Kumar said.

Pathardih police station in-charge Umesh Manjhi was suspended on Saturday for lodging FIR about an autorickshaw theft two days after the accident, he said.

CBI probe ordered Chief Minister Hemant Soren had on Saturday decided to hand over the probe to the CBI.

The leaked CCTV footage showed that the judge was jogging on one side of a fairly wide road at Randhir Verma Chowk on Wednesday morning when an auto-rickshaw veered towards him, hit him from behind and fled the scene.

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल,
गिरिडीह

शुद्धि पत्र

ई- अल्यकालीन निविदा संख्या RDD /SD /GIRIDIH / 02 /2021-22 जिसका पी0आर0 संख्या 250576 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 प्रारंभ की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :- 20.08.2021 को 5:00 बजे अपराहन तक।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रघन 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।
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PR 250689 Rural Development(21-22).D

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Phone : 0755-2477770, Email : tenderqueries@smarthbhopal.city/www.smartcitybhopal.org
Bhopal, Date : 31.07.2021

Bhopal Smart City Development Corporation Limited को और से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु MPBSCDCL/TENDER No.-204 अंतिमलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं :-

S. No.	Tender Name (MPBSCDCL/TENDER No.-204)	Cost of Bidding Document (non Refundable)	Earnest Money Deposit/Bid Security	Date and Time of Pre-bid Meeting	Purchase of Tender End Date
1.	Selection of Service Provider for Supply, Installation, Operation and Maintenance of Electric Bicycle Sharing System in Bhopal Smart City (Fourth Call) (MPBSCDCL/TENDER No.-204)	Rs. 5,900/- (Rs. Five Thousand Nine hundred only)	Rs. 8,50,000/- (Rupees Eight Lacs Fifty Thousand only)	05 Aug. 2021 12:00 PM	14.08.2021 up to 17:30 hrs.

RFP दस्तावेज एवं निविदा संबंधित विस्तृत जानकारी www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।

म.प्र. माध्यम/101498-2021

SHORT NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR QUOTATION NO.19 of 2021-22

On behalf of the Governor of Assam, the Chief Engineer, PHE (Water), Public Health Engineering Department cum Additional Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission, Assam invites bids on line through e-Procurement system against RFQ No. 19 of 2021-22 from the NABL Accredited Testing and Calibrating Agencies for Jal Jeevan Mission Assam in two envelop system for "REQUEST FOR QUOTATION FOR RATE CONTRACT FOR CALIBRATION OF GLASSWARE AND INSTRUMENTS FOR DIFFERENT WATER TESTING LABORATORIES UNDER JAL JEEVAN MISSION, ASSAM."

The detailed RFQ Document will be available in the web portal www.assamtenders.gov.in and can be viewed from 03.08.2021 up to 16.00 Hr. of 17.08.2021. Bids will be opened at 15:00 hrs. of 18.08.2021. Bid is to be submitted through online and in no case manual bid shall be entertained.

Chief Engineer (PHE), Water, Assam, Cum
Addl. Mission Director, JJM Assam
Janasanyog/CF/794/21
Hengrabari. Guwahati-36.

Appeal for Identification

General public is hereby informed that one person Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 55 Yrs., Height: 5'18", Sex: Male, Complexion: Fair, Face: Oval, Build: Thin, Wearing: Cream Colour Shirt & Black Colour Pajama and Clean Shave & Moustache, Place of Recovery: Found dead in front of Solonki Barat Ghar, Sagarpur, New Delhi.

In this regard DD No. 34A, Dated 29.07.2021 has been lodged at Police Station, Sagarpur, New Delhi. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign. SHO P.S. Sagarpur, New Delhi Ph.: 011-28522653, 28522652 & 9873853985

DP/762/SW/2021

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

R RAVICHANDRAN (62) Retired Assistant Engineer (Pre-Press), The Hindu, Mumbai passed away on 31-07-2021. Address: 101/2D Narendra complex Vaishali Nagar, Dahisar (East) Mumbai - 400068. Mobile No: 9029983615

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I Shail Trika, inform that my husband (Late) Brig. Sheel Kumar Trika, s/o Kundan Lal Trika, R/o 23, Raksha Enclave, BRS-6, Pkt-2, Sector-Omega 1, developed by AFOSASL at Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar, (Uttar Pradesh) unfortunately passed away on 08/07/2017 in Greater Noida.

I request GNDA, to mutate/transfer the dwelling unit 23, Raksha Enclave, Sector-Omega 1, Greater Noida, (GNB) Uttar Pradesh in the names of 'Shail Trika', W/o (late), Brig. S.K. Trika, 'Nikhila Trika', D/o (late) Brig. S.K. Trika & Shal Trika & Harun Trika' s/o (late) Brig. S.K. Trika and Shail Trika. If anybody has objection, he/she may contact GNDA, Greater Noida / Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)

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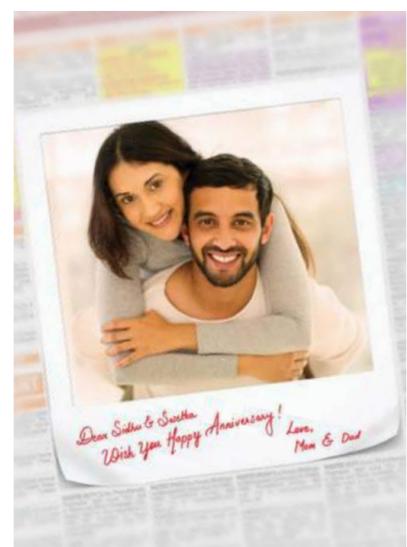
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PERSONAL

LOST & FOUND

I, Divya Sriram (born: P.A Divya, wife of Mangudi Sriram) lost my Bachelors Degree Certificate of University of Delhi (Roll No: 143721, CAC - 395/95, university Year 1999) & Post Graduate Diploma Certificate (Roll No: 030, Year 2002) of FORE School of Management around Delhi on 3rd July 2021. If found/seen, Please Contact: 7032904545

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IN BRIEF



A.P. corporation to mine coal in Madhya Pradesh

VIJAYAWADA
The Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation (APMDC) has set the stage for mining 5 million tonnes of coal per annum from the Sultiyari block in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh. APMDC officials did 'bhoomi puja' on Monday.

7 held over death of monkeys in Karnataka

HASSAN
Police and forest officials investigating the death of monkeys that came to light on July 28 have arrested seven people, including a couple. The animals were captured in bags to prevent them from raiding farms. It is suspected they died while being taken in the bags.

SC offers mediation in Krishna dispute

A.P. claims Telangana has deprived its people of their share of water

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana on Monday offered to send a water dispute case filed by Andhra Pradesh against Telangana for mediation, while saying, in the background of the Assam-Manipur border flare-up, that the people of the two States were "brothers", who should not even "dream" of doing harm to each other.

The CJI's remark came in response to an indirect allusion made by senior advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for Andhra Pradesh, to the Assam-Manipur violence. "Looking at what happened in the Northeast..." Mr. Dave began. Interjecting at this point, the CJI said: "Do not think like that even in your dreams... We are all brothers".

During the hearing, he said he hailed from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. He could not adjudicate the case legally.

So, the CJI gave the parties an option. "If you want to settle the issue through mediation, I will send it for mediation. On the other hand, if you want the case to be adjudicated or to be heard legally, I will list it before another Bench," CJI Ramana addressed the parties.

Counsel seeks time
Mr. Dave said the CJI's suggestion was "eminently fair". This was a "political issue", he stated and sought time to get instructions from the State government.

The case concerned Andhra Pradesh's petition accusing Telangana of depriving its people of their legitimate



Season's special: Twenty-two crest gates of the Nagarjunasagar dam on Krishna river in Telangana were opened on Monday owing to the heavy inflow. ■ T.VIJAYA KUMAR

share of water for drinking and irrigation.

Senior advocate C.S. Vaidyanathan, for Telangana, said the issue had become infructuous. The Centre on July 15 notified the Godavari and the Krishna river management boards in order to maintain neutrality and to ensure effective river water

management between the two States.

The focus of the current petition is a Telangana government order of June 28, 2021, notifying that "to tap more hydel generation in the State, the government has taken a decision to generate hydel power up to 100% installed capacity".

Centre taking anti-Telangana stand, says CM

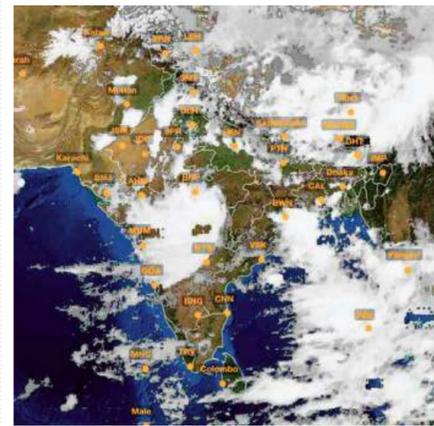
STAFF REPORTER
HALIYA

Reacting to last month's Central gazette notifications on jurisdictions of the Krishna and Godavari river management boards, Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu on Monday observed that the Centre was taking an anti-Telangana stand on the issue.

The Andhra Pradesh government, by constructing unauthorised projects across the Krishna was trying to boss over Telangana, he said while addressing leaders and locals at Haliya Agriculture Market Yard in Nalgonda district, as part of the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency development review

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over east & west Rajasthan, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, west Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Bihar, east & west Madhya Pradesh and Konkani & Goa. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Bihar

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	11	32.8	26.6	Kozhikode	10	31.0	23.8
Ahmedabad	0.4	30.4	26.0	Kurnool	0.6	33.2	24.4
Aizawl	5.3	26.2	19.0	Lucknow	3	32.5	26.2
Allahabad	31.7	25.8	19.6	Madurai	39.1	25.7	19.6
Bangaluru	27.8	19.6	19.6	Mangaluru	17.9	29.1	23.6
Bhopal	42.4	23.9	19.1	Mumbai	6	30.5	25.2
Bhubaneswar	33.6	25.0	19.6	Mysuru	29.0	21.0	19.6
Chandigarh	33.4	27.4	19.6	New Delhi	13	33.0	26.1
Chennai	35.8	28.2	19.6	Patna	34.2	27.0	19.6
Coimbatore	32.9	22.9	19.6	Port Blair	3	29.9	25.4
Dehradun	10	31.8	24.2	Puducherry	37.0	25.2	19.6
Gangtok	17.1	21.6	18.1	Pune	2.2	28.4	22.0
Goa	13	30.8	23.6	Raipur	29.4	24.6	19.6
Guwahati	11	34.6	26.9	Ranchi	30.6	22.9	19.6
Hubbli	27.0	21.0	19.6	Shillong	40	24.6	17.6
Hyderabad	31.8	22.6	19.6	Shimla	25.5	20.2	19.6
Imphal	54	27.3	21.5	Srinagar	31.1	18.6	19.6
Jaipur	10	29.3	24.4	Thiruvananthapuram	32.0	24.6	19.6
Kochi	4	30.4	29.2	Tiruchi	37.3	26.8	19.6
Kohima	40	26.8	18.4	Vijayawada	35.7	27.2	19.6
Kolkata	34.2	28.2	19.6	Visakhapatnam	38.6	27.2	19.6

Congo national's death triggers row

Held in drug case, he died allegedly of cardiac arrest; African nationals protest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A Congo national, who was arrested in a drug case, died allegedly of cardiac arrest in J.C. Nagar here on Monday, leading to outrage among the community.

Following the news of his death, members of an African association gathered in front of the J.C. Nagar police station and staged a protest, demanding a probe. The police had to resort to lathi-charge to disperse the protesters after accusing them of turning violent and attacking the police. Many protesters sustained minor injuries and were taken to hospital.

According to the police, Joel Shindani Malu, 27, from the Democratic Republic of



Seeking answers: Joel Shindani Malu, who died on Monday. At right, police personnel caning a protester in Bengaluru.

the Congo, complained of chest pain and was shifted to a nearby hospital.

After being given treatment for almost one hour, he was declared dead owing to suspected cardiac arrest.

Earlier, on Sunday night,

based on information, a police team laid a trap to nab Joel, an alleged drug peddler, near Banjara Layout. The police kept watch and waited till the early hours of Monday. Due to the presence of the police, Joel allegedly

changed the location of trade to Babusapalya in the Hennur police station limits. Around 12.30 a.m., two foreign nationals were passing by on a scooter and police informants identified the pillion rider as Joel, following which policemen in muffi apprehended him.

In the scuffle, as Joel was trying to flee, a few small plastic packets, containing a white substance, fell to the ground. It was later found out to be 5 g of MDMA, the police said. The other foreign national escaped. "We have considered this as a custodial death and informed the agencies concerned while ordering a probe," said City Police Commissioner Kamal Pant.

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"We have considered this as a custodial death and informed the agencies concerned while ordering a probe," said City Police Commissioner Kamal Pant.

SC refuses to entertain former priest's bail plea

He had raped, impregnated a minor

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court refused to entertain on Monday a plea by a 49-year-old former priest from Kerala, serving a 20-year prison stretch under an anti-child abuse law, for bail to marry a woman whom he had raped and impregnated when she was a minor.

The rape survivor from Kottiyoor had also filed a separate petition seeking his interim bail for a few months so they could marry and legitimise the child.

Appearing before a Bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari, advocate Amit George, for convict Robin Vadak-

kumcherry, said the marriage would lend a "veer of legitimacy" to the child.

Mr. George even said his client had a "fundamental right to marry" which could not be thwarted by the authorities. Both the convict and the rape survivor had appealed to the Supreme Court after the Kerala High Court had refused him bail.

"What is the age difference between you and the victim," the Bench asked the lawyer at one point.

Justice Maheshwari, after perusing the files, said the High Court "has consciously taken note of everything in the case... We find no reason to interfere with the High Court decision".

Why can't those fully vaccinated be allowed to use trains, asks HC

Benefit of immunisation must be made open to all, Bench tells Maharashtra govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday asked the Maharashtra government on why people who had received both doses of COVID-19 vaccine could not be allowed to travel by local trains in Mumbai.

The court was hearing a bunch of public interest litigation petitions filed by advocate Chirag Chanani and others through advocate Shyam Devani.

Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakar told a Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni: "The State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) is reluctant to permit all lawyers, judicial clerks and court staff to resume local train travel. Currently, only frontline health workers



People commuting by a local train in Mumbai. ■ FILE PHOTO

and government staff are permitted to use local trains."

Senior advocate Milind Sathre, appearing for one of the petitioners, said since the High Court and other courts are now conducting physical hearings all lawyers need to commute by local trains.

Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, representing the Railways, said that all three railway lines authori-

ties - Western, Central and Harbour - had agreed to issue monthly, quarterly or half-yearly travel passes to lawyers and court staff.

Mr. Kumbhakar said, "The SDMA, however, is a bit reluctant. This time (during the second wave of COVID-19) only frontline health workers and government staff are permitted to use the train."

The Bench said, "The dif-

ference between the first situation and now is that the situation has improved because of the vaccine. All lawyers are above 18 years of age and permitted to receive the vaccine now. So, a decision needs to be taken. Otherwise, what is the benefit of the vaccine? One is not supposed to sit at home even after taking the vaccine. Lawyers need to come to court at some point."

The Bench went on to say, "The Railways is also cooperating, so please use your good office. We must make a beginning. Spread the net wide. Not only for lawyers, but also people coming from other walks of life. A comprehensive plan is needed, otherwise it is affecting everyone."

The matter will be heard again on August 5.

IAS officer not allowed to take charge as collector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AURANGABAD

A woman IAS officer, recently transferred to Parbhani district as collector, couldn't join the office as the outgoing collector handed over the charge of the post to his deputy at the last moment, an incident which raised allegations of involvement of leaders of a ruling party who didn't want the new officer.

A local BJP MLA on Monday said the Shiv Sena should keep in mind the support given to the party by the people of Parbhani while a social organisation

held a protest demanding that the IAS officer, Achal Goyal, be given the charge.

"Everyone was curious who would succeed Deepak Muglikar who retired on July 31. We learnt that Ms. Goyal was posted here and the news of her appointment was published in newspapers. But on July 31, Mr. Muglikar was told by the State government to hand over the charge to additional collector Rajesh Katkar. This has happened due to some politicians, which is shameful," Jagrut Nagrik Aghadi president Madhuri Kshirsagar told reporters.

'No prejudice caused to Bhima-Koregaon accused'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) told the Bombay High Court on Monday that no prejudice was caused to all accused of the Bhima-Koregaon case when the sessions judge took cognizance of the charge sheet filed in the case.

A division bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and N.J. Jamadar was hearing a plea filed by advocate Sudha Bharadwaj and other accused in the case. The petition alleged that judge KD Wadane, who granted an extension to the Pune police to file the

charge sheet and took cognizance of it, was not authorised to do so.

Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, representing the NIA, told the court that no prejudice was caused to the rights of the accused just by Justice Wadane taking cognizance of the charge sheet.

He said the Central agency took over the case from the Pune police on January 24, 2020 and, hence, there was nothing wrong in a sessions court and not a special NIA court taking cognizance of the charge sheet filed by police.

Deshmukh skips ED summons again

Notice despite plea in apex court an attempt to sensationalise issue, says NCP leader

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Monday skipped the summons issued to him by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for a fourth time saying it was shocking that he was being summoned despite the fact that a Writ Petition (WP) filed by him was pending in the Supreme Court which is to hear the matter on August 3.

Mr. Deshmukh and his son are being probed by the central agency over alleged money laundering and allegations that bar owners in Mumbai had



Anil Deshmukh

paid him money.

The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader in his letter to the ED reiterated that the agency has neither furnished a copy of the ECIR nor the list of documents

sought from him and he was available for audio-video electronic mode.

"It appears that the subject summons have been issued solely with an aim to create a prejudice so as to either serve the media or sensationalise the matter before the Hon'ble court by alleging purported non-compliance thereof by me," he said, in the letter.

Mr Deshmukh said he was committed to the rule of law and shall not shy away from joining any inquiry or investigation which is not only fair and just but also manifestly appear to be so.

The NCP's alliance partner Congress slammed the ED saying the step to summon Mr. Deshmukh at a time when the apex court was hearing the matter was nothing but a part of conspiracy to defame the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

"The ED sent the summons on July 30, when the court was hearing the matter. The next hearing is planned on August 3. Why can't the agency wait till the hearing is over? This is nothing but an attempt to defame the government," said Maharashtra general secretary Sachin Sawant.

Pornography case: HC reserves order on Raj Kundra's petition

Prosecution says accused had to be arrested because they had started destroying evidence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday reserved its order on a plea filed by Raj Kundra challenging his arrest and seeking immediate release from Arthur Road Jail in the pornography racket case.

A single Bench of Justice A.S. Gadkari was hearing a petition filed by Mr. Kundra, businessman and husband of actor Shilpa Shetty, and his business aide Ryan Thorpe. The court conducted a physical hearing.

Chief public prosecutor Aruna Pai argued that a notice was initially issued by the Mumbai Police under Section 41A (notice of appear-



Raj Kundra

ance before police officer) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which Mr. Kundra refused, but Mr. Thorpe accepted.

He said Mr. Kundra was the admin of Hotshot, the app used to produce and circulate pornographic content. He refused to sign the notice and did not cooperate.

She said a lot of incriminating material was found against them and they had to be arrested because they had started deleting messages from WhatsApp groups, thereby destroying evi-

dence. Therefore Section 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was added.

She went on to say that there was a hard disk in the office which had over 100 porn videos and Mr. Kundra's laptop had a film script with sexual content.

Senior advocate Aabad Ponda, appearing for Mr. Kundra, contended that he was not issued a proper notice and was arrested in the garb of recording his statement. The duo was booked under Sections 354 (assault or criminal force on woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 292 (sale, etc., of obscene books, etc.) of the IPC and several relevant sections of the Information Technology Act and the Indecent Representation of Women Act.

Man's body found in car in Thane; murder suspected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THANE

The body of a 42-year-old man was found in a car in Thane district and the police suspect it to be a case of murder, an official said on Monday.

Some passersby found the man lying motionless in the car at Mankoli junction in Bhiwandi on Sunday and alerted the police, the official from the city police control room said. The police sent the body for post-mortem, the official said, adding that the man was allegedly strangled.

The victim earlier worked as a manager at a powerloom unit in Bhiwandi. However, he lost his job following the novel coronavirus-induced lockdown and had been working as a driver with a cab aggregator for the last one month.



The cusp

India must press ahead with vaccination to avoid repeat of troubles of the second wave

August has begun on a disconcerting note in India's coronavirus story. The seven-day weekly average of cases hovers around the psychologically important 40,000 mark and there is an uptick in daily new cases with the latest numbers a little over 41,000. A major concern that has assumed national proportions is the trajectory of cases in Kerala. With nearly 20,000 fresh cases being added every day, it is of concern that if a State with an admirable track record during the earlier wave is under siege now, then many other States could be particularly vulnerable against new variants at the start of a third wave. In Kerala, the rise in cases is concomitant with a rise in testing that has increased from 130,000 a day on July 25 to 162,000 as of Monday, indicating that the infection may be rapidly spreading. Nearly 11 States are now showing a weekly increase in cases. Kerala is not the only point of concern. The national situation has prompted the Health Secretary to write to States that all districts reporting a positivity rate of more than 10% in the last few weeks ought to consider strict restrictions to curtail the movement of people and formation of crowds to prevent the spread of infection. Apart from Kerala these include Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Manipur. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has also expressed concern that 46 districts are showing more than 10% positivity while another 53 districts are showing a positivity between 5%-10%. India's positivity rate is around 5%, that could well descend into a runaway climb in serious infections if unchecked.

The ICMR's flag-waving comes in the context of the agency's Fourth National Serology Survey finding that nearly 40 crore Indians likely lacked antibodies to the virus and were particularly vulnerable. On its own, the rise in infections would have been less of a concern had a substantial number of Indians — particularly those over 45 — been double vaccinated. As in previous waves, the elderly continue to be the most vulnerable. Nearly 80% of the mortality was from these vulnerable age groups and only 11% of the eligible adults have been fully vaccinated, which means significant numbers of the population are yet to get sufficient protection. India has so far administered 47.1 crore doses since the beginning of the vaccination drive in January. The Centre has said it will vaccinate all adults, 94.4 crore approximately, by the year-end. This target requires a daily inoculation of 90 lakh to 100 lakh doses per day. For most of July, the average inoculations have ranged from 30-60 lakh. States whose districts are most vulnerable ought to be given preference and there should be accelerated campaigns to double inoculate the elderly. Every effort should be made to break the link between infections and hospitalisation and deaths.

Being Bommai

The new Chief Minister will have to strike a balance between conflicting interests

The new Chief Minister of Karnataka, Basavaraj Bommai, has to reconcile several conflicting factors while appointing his Council of Ministers. His predecessor B.S. Yediyurappa was ejected by the Bharatiya Janata Party high command that wants a new start in the State. The new Chief Minister is seen as aligned to Mr. Yediyurappa and both belong to the Lingayat community that is strong, numerically and economically. Mr. Yediyurappa's heyday might be behind him, but he continues to hold significant sway among voters. Given the circumstance, the challenge before Mr. Bommai is to strike a balance between the imperatives of change and continuity. Mr. Yediyurappa had little moral scruples in pursuing political power and the Bharatiya Janata Party rode on his shoulders until recently. But the baggage that came with it has been heavy. He masterminded large-scale defections from the Congress and the Janata Dal (S) to aggregate an Assembly majority for the Bharatiya Janata Party that it had not won in the election. Allegations of nepotism and corruption shadowed his tenure. The steadfast support that he enjoyed among the Lingayats, who remain the backbone of the Bharatiya Janata Party's social base in Karnataka, was intimidating for the party central leadership. And when it finally managed to effect a change, it ensured that the baton was handed over to his nominee and not to any of his many detractors in the party.

Mr. Bommai has to demonstrate to the Lingayats that he is one among them while trying to reach out to other communities and expand the party's base. He has to balance various interest groups within the Lingayats. He has to shake off the debris of the past without earning the wrath of Mr. Yediyurappa. He has to demonstrate a capacity to govern better than his predecessor but keep various factions and interest groups that held sway during the previous regime happy. He has to deliver on the priorities of the Bharatiya Janata Party high command on the one hand and also balance his known personal convictions with the requirements of Hindutva politics into which he converted as late as 2008, at the age of 48. Even after taking over as Chief Minister, Mr. Bommai spoke about his father and former Chief Minister S.R. Bommai's "principled politics" that he said was inspired by Left leader M.N. Roy. Mr. Yediyurappa has said it is the Chief Minister's prerogative to choose his Council, but also expressed confidence that the defectors will be protected. All this at a time when it remains unclear whether the Bharatiya Janata Party's plans for him are for the longer term. Having come this far without alienating any section within the party or his support base, it is likely that Mr. Bommai will pass the test.

Fathoming serosurvey data, with caution

The data from the ICMR's Fourth National Seroprevalence Survey have clear implications for the situation in India today



GAGANDEEP KANG

The past two weeks have seen the release of the Fourth National Seroprevalence Survey for COVID-19 (<https://bit.ly/3lklmZj>), as well as the reporting of data of serosurveys independently conducted by State governments such as in Tamil Nadu. The data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) conducted national serosurvey are truly remarkable, indicating that between December-January, when the third serosurvey was conducted, and June-July 2021, at least 40% of the population of India, over 500 million people, were exposed to the novel coronavirus of which a small proportion have antibodies because they were vaccinated. The data also show for the first time that over half of all children tested have already been infected, which is expected and reassuring.

Not from infection alone

Such a high rate of infection seems incredible, and if true, needs to serve as a warning to India and the world because it shows the consequences of a combination of variants, inappropriate population behaviour and delayed implementation of public health measures. It is, of course, evident, that all of the seropositivity did not come from infection alone, but given that the seropositivity rate was 67% and the serosurvey reports that a quarter of eligible adults were vaccinated, a large proportion of the antibodies resulted from detected and undetected infections in the first or second waves, with the sharp seropositivity rise indicating that the bulk must have occurred during the second wave. With less than 32 million positive cases, of which many may be positive more than once,

and the likelihood of waning antibodies leading to some of those previously infected testing negative subsequently, the seropositivity of 67% is an under-estimate. There are other caveats as well.

Although the serosurvey methodology is similar to previous rounds and sampled individuals in 70 districts in 21 States, it is not clear how representative the survey really is — given the reported two-dose vaccine coverage of 13% in adults which is much higher than the national coverage at the time, and the known high heterogeneity between and within States. This is where State-level data can be useful, and the third Tamil Nadu serosurvey, conducted in over 26,000 participants and compared to previous rounds allows comparison of at least district-level information.

Data from the States

The National Serosurvey data indicated that Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Gujarat have over 75% seropositivity, while only Maharashtra, Assam and Kerala were below 60%, with Kerala the lowest, at 44.4%. Although heterogeneity across districts is likely, the fact that the national serosurveys were repeated in the same districts allows for some comparison of seropositivity rates over time. For example, in Kerala, when the national rates were approximately 0.7%, 7% and 24%, the corresponding rates were 0.3%, 0.9% and 11.6% during the first three rounds of serosurveys, showing a consistently lower exposure than the national average, but a large increase between the third and fourth serosurveys.

If we examine the data from Tamil Nadu, where the State-led serosurveys were done in October 2020, April and July 2021, some figures jump out. There appeared to be no change from October to April at the State level, with 31% and 29% positivity, but then there was a massive increase to 66%. Comparing the ICMR survey in three districts with the 38 district surveys of the Tamil Nadu Direct-



SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

rate of Public Health, shows that the ICMR serosurveys found a seropositivity of 43%, 24% and 31% in the districts of Chennai, Coimbatore and Thiruvannamalai in the serosurvey in December 2020-January 2021. The corresponding figures from the State serosurvey were 41%, 22% and 36% in October 2020, 49%, 20% and 34% in April 2021, which rose to 82%, 43% and 68% in July 2021. Some districts showed marked variability, with the central and southern districts showing significant declines in antibodies between October 2020 and April 2021 followed by a large increase in July 2021. For example, Madurai went from 40% to 19% to 79% and Thoothukudi from 39% to 21% to 72%.

Explaining variation

What explains these variations and how can these data be used at the national-State levels? First, there was inconsistency in the assays used for antibody estimation, with the ICMR using an ELISA test that measured antibodies to inactivated virus in its first round and then switching to a method that measured antibodies to nucleocapsid and spike proteins. Tamil Nadu used a chemiluminescence method for all its assays, while serosurveys in Delhi, Mumbai, Pune and other local serosurveys have used different methods — which means that some of the variations may be due to the testing methods which have varying sensitivity and specificity for antibodies directed against different viral antigens. Second, the sampling methods across serosurveys have differed with the ICMR using a cross-sectional survey in 70 districts that

were decided/based on reported cases with some lack of clarity on how villages/wards were chosen, while others have used population proportional to size, directed and convenience sampling. Third, the age groups have varied across surveys and with time and not all serosurveys have reported age-stratified results. Fourth, antibodies decay with time, as illustrated in the data from Tamil Nadu's first and second serosurveys.

So, analyses need to account for the underestimation of exposure. There are many other considerations for analysis, such as the proportion of people included who have reported previous SARS-CoV-2 infection or exposure or the proportion vaccinated. But in general, serosurveys more accurately reflect the experience of the population with an infectious agent than reported cases. This is especially true in India, where without targeted effort and sometimes despite detailed search, it is not possible to discern the reasons for testing, the numbers of individuals that have contributed to cumulative testing, the locations where tests were done or the types of tests used — all of which are essential to understanding the strengths and limitations of the data on reported cases, and the test positivity rate.

Reported cases represent the tip of the iceberg for a virus that can cause asymptomatic infection or result in mild symptoms that are not distinguishable from other respiratory viral infections. Serological data has value for public health because knowing where and how many have already been exposed to the virus gives a clearer picture of how and when infection has penetrated the population. The data from the ICMR's Fourth National Seroprevalence Survey therefore, have clear implications for the situation in India today.

The Kerala example

When Kerala is reporting the bulk of the country's positive cases and has a reproductive rate of infection of greater than 1, how con-

cerned should we be? Seroepidemiology shows that the State has over 18 months been able to limit the exposure of its population, and vaccination data indicates that the State is outperforming most others. In general, the health-care infrastructure has not been overwhelmed, deaths are low, and shortages of oxygen and hospital beds have not been reported. Relaxation of restrictions over Eid on July 21 are likely to have resulted in cases which should peak in the first week of August, but there is a need to ensure continued population compliance with restrictions, particularly with Onam approaching and a need to ramp up vaccination. In fact, given Kerala's success in controlling the virus so far, a key consideration should be whether States and districts with the lowest seroprevalence should receive a greater proportion of the vaccines while supplies are limited.

The immunity gap identified in Kerala demonstrates the value of serosurveillance and the need to ensure that we continue to use this very valuable tool not just to record the history of viral circulation in India but also to inform decisions going forward. At the State and district levels, what can be changed based on serosurvey data? Increasing vaccination in areas with the lowest exposure in parallel with ensuring high testing levels and health-care system preparedness in areas with high vulnerability are immediate responses.

However, serosurveys need to be continued and the data integrated with testing, vaccination and clinical data. These are needed to understand ongoing infection rates, age distribution of infections and cases, where variations could be driven by seasonal coronavirus exposure, vaccination and the effect of waning antibodies, all of which will be essential to inform policies on the need and use of booster doses and long-term system preparedness.

Gagandeep Kang is Professor, Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamil Nadu

A disconcerting picture behind the headline numbers

There is evidence to suggest that the PLFS data may underestimate the loss of earnings and fall in consumption



ISHAN ANAND

The third annual round of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data conducted during July 2019-June 2020 was released recently (<https://bit.ly/3fISDAX>). The PLFS captures key indicators of the labour market such as the labour force participation rate (LFPR) — the proportion of population working or seeking work; worker-population ratio (WPR) — the proportion of population that is working; and the unemployment rate (UR) — the proportion of population in the labour force that is seeking but unable to find work. It also provides data on the earnings of different segments of workers.

The PLFS 2019-20 was expected to provide official estimates of the labour market distress that followed dwindling GDP growth and a lockdown following the novel coronavirus pandemic that brought several economic activities to a standstill. The data, however, show a decline in the unemployment rate to 4.8% in 2019-20 — the lowest in three years. While the headline numbers may seem pleasing, a detailed analysis paints a rather disconcerting picture.

Falling unemployment rate

The LFPR, WPR and UR are measured using two approaches —

usual status and current weekly status. The usual status considers the activity of an individual over a relatively long period during the last 365 days, whereas the current weekly status is based on activity performed during the reference period of the last seven days.

The unemployment rate, as measured by the usual status, fell from 6.1% in 2017-18 to 4.8% in 2019-20. This is because even as the LFPR increased from 36.9% to 40.1%, the WPR increased from 34.7% to 38.2% during the same period. In other words, while there was an increase in the share of the population in the labour force over the last three years, there was an even higher increase in the share of those who were able to find work, and hence unemployment fell.

A fall in the unemployment rate would be heartening, except, it seems puzzling as it comes at a time of unprecedented economic distress. The quarterly GDP growth declined for successive quarters, sliding from 8.2% in January-March 2018 to 3.1% in January-March 2020, after which the economy contracted by 23.9% during April-June 2020.

Workforce composition

How were more people able to find jobs when economic activities were slowing down? The answer lies in the changing composition of the workforce.

The PLFS categorises the workforce into self-employed (which includes own account workers, employers and unpaid helpers in family enterprises); regular wage/



salaried workers and casual labourers. Own account workers run small enterprises without hiring any labour but may take help from family members, while employers hire workers. Of all the worker categories, only the proportion of unpaid family workers has gone up significantly in the last three years. In fact, between 2018 and 2019, while the workforce increased by 2.9%, the proportion of all other employment categories in the workforce declined, except unpaid family helpers.

Over the same period, almost the entire rise in the workforce was accommodated by agriculture. Agriculture continues to perform the function of a sink — absorbing the workforce that cannot find remunerative employment elsewhere.

There is also a gendered dimension to the changing composition of the workforce. The category of unpaid family workers is dominated by women. The story of the declining unemployment rate can largely be explained by a movement of women from primarily being engaged in domestic work to agriculture and other petty production activities as unpaid family helpers, possibly in the hope of in-

creasing family income in the times of unprecedented distress and lack of alternative employment opportunities.

The usual status is based on a loose definition of work that underestimates open unemployment. This is where the alternative measure of unemployment is relevant. Using the current weekly status approach, the unemployment rate was estimated to be 8.8%, unchanged during the last three years.

Impact of the lockdown

The PLFS survey for April-June 2020 overlapped with the national lockdown. The current weekly status unemployment rate in this quarter was 14%, and the urban unemployment rate was around 20%. Corrected for inflation, the average monthly income for the salaried increased by 2% in April-June 2020 over April-June 2019. The monthly earnings of the self-employed declined by 16% and the daily wage for casual workers declined by 5.6% over the same period. The real monthly per capita consumer expenditure declined by 7.6%.

The rise in the average income of salaried workers and the muted impact on consumer expenditure, as estimated from the PLFS, do not concur with other data for the lockdown period. Private final consumption expenditure declined by 26.7% in April-June 2020 over the same quarter in 2019. Numerous small-scale surveys also reported massive earnings loss during the lockdown. There is overwhelming evidence to suggest

that the PLFS data may underestimate the loss of earnings and fall in consumption during the lockdown. This is a missed opportunity for the official survey to capture the labour market dynamics during the lockdown.

Strengthen statistical system

There is no official data on poverty after 2011-12 or on farm income after 2013, and no recent data on migrant workers. While the consumer expenditure data for 2017-18 was buried, the data on situation assessment of agricultural households are not yet released, despite being conducted between January-December 2019, before the latest PLFS.

Minor tweaks in future PLFS surveys can fill the data gaps. Currently, the PLFS captures incomes from agriculture and monthly consumer expenditure, but the questions on these aspects lack credibility. The predecessor to the PLFS, the National Sample Survey employment and unemployment surveys, collected data on consumer expenditure using a detailed schedule. There is no reason why the PLFS cannot do the same. Adding questions on costs and returns from cultivation and related activities can also capture more accurate data on agricultural incomes. Lengthening the questionnaire has its costs — but the costs of the absence of reliable and timely data on important policy-relevant indicators are far higher.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

The bigger picture

The Assam-Mizoram issue may be moving toward a resolution, but it poses an important question. Are State governments forgetting what the idea of the Union of India is? One can draw up a list of issues between various States which harm the idea of India — i.e., one where you do not discriminate. Let us not forget the difficulty with which this great nation was created and then united.

RATNARAJ JAIN, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh

Legislature and history

In the article, "TN Legislature turns 100" (Tamil Nadu, August 1) and the reference to the two Government Orders (G.O.), famously called "Communal G.O.s" issued in September 1921 and August 1922, I wish to add that the resolution to pass the Communal G.O. was piloted by the (late) O. Thanikachalam Chettiar (my maternal grandfather), Justice Party Leader and Member of the Legislative Council. The speech he made while introducing the

resolution finds a place in *The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Speeches* by Rakesh Batayal with the title, "Proportion of Non-Brahmins in the Public Services".
G.V. BALASUBRAMANIAN, Chennai

What ails Indian sports

India's medal hunt at Tokyo has been powered by the women athletes. One cannot resist lamenting that while there is no dearth of talent in sports in India, the gold medal is still elusive.

Given the excellent form she is in, one sincerely hoped that P.V. Sindhu would get India a gold, but, alas, she seemed to lack the killer instinct in her matches. The Central and State governments must provide our sporting talent with world class training and supervised by proper coaches.

THARCUS S. FERNANDO, Chennai

The results do indicate how much we lag behind when compared to other nations.

Our sporting system needs to be blamed for this. We hardly give importance to any of the sports barring cricket. The development of more infrastructure, scientific training methods, international exposure, more funding and minimising political influence are needed. Unless any sport is developed from the grass-root level, India will continue to be at the bottom of the medals table.

V. GANAPATHY SUBRAMANIAN, Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu

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■ We need to ponder over our continuing medal drought. We have to set right our priorities right from the school level. The culture of encouraging sports is present only in a minuscule percentage of schools across India. Students across the country should be able to participate in a variety of sporting events so that talent can be spotted and nurtured from a very early age.
BRJ B. GOYAL, Ludhiana, Punjab

The hacking of Indian democracy

National security is important, but it can have an impact on human rights and civil liberties



DUSHYANT DAVE

The Pegasus revelations reflect an attack on Indian democracy and Indian citizens. Was the government directly responsible for the surveillance of a select group of Indian activists, politicians and journalists and others? Or was the surveillance at the instance of a private player? With the government in denial, a commission of inquiry by a sitting Supreme Court judge can alone unravel the mystery.

National security is important, but it can have an impact on human rights and civil liberties. The use of surveillance has serious implications for privacy. But the list of people targeted *prima facie* shows that national security is a pretext to suppress political and societal dissent in India.

Acting according to conscience
Pegasus is a technology sold to governments to fight terrorism. The Israeli Supreme Court, in September 1999, said in *Public Committee Against Torture in Israel v. Israel* that shaking, waiting in the 'Shabach' position, the frog crouch, excessively tight handcuffs and sleep deprivation were illegal. It held that they granted General Security Service investigators "the authority to apply physical force during interrogation of suspects suspected in involvement of... terrorist activities, thereby harming suspects' dignity and liberty". This, it said, "raises basic questions of law and society, of ethics and policy and of the rule of law and security."

Speaking for the Court, President A. Barak declared, "This decision opened with a description of difficult reality in which Israel finds herself... We are aware that this decision does make it easier to deal with that reality. This is the destiny of a democracy... A democracy must sometimes fight with one hand tied behind its back. Even so, a democracy has the upper hand. The rule of law and the liberty of an individual constitute important components in its understanding of security." He concluded, "We are aware of the harsh reality of terrorism in which we are, at times, immersed. The possibility that this



decision will hamper the ability to... deal with terrorist and terrorism disturbs us. We are, however, judges... in deciding the law we must act according to our purest conscience."

NSO Group and the Indian government must be reminded of these words. In the name of fighting terrorism, democracy cannot be undermined. Indian democracy is founded with the cherished ideals enshrined in the Constitution. It belongs to the people and not to political parties. The surveillance of the target group raises doubts about the functioning of democracy in India. The chilling effect, if the government were to succeed, would be to turn democracy into a dictatorship. The government has a constitutional duty to protect the fundamental and human rights of its citizens, irrespective of who they are. Even if the government is not complicit in the surveillance, it has miserably failed in discharging this duty. There is clear evidence that the rule of law has been undermined. More evidently, this reflects extremely poor governance. The Intelligence Bureau, the Research and Analysis Wing, and the National Security Council Secretariat should have forewarned the government and citizens against such surveillance seriously violating privacy and fundamental rights. Their silence speaks volumes about either complicity or poor governance. This being the case, an inquiry at the highest level under the supervision of the judiciary is a constitutional necessity. If this does not take place, India will cease to call itself a democracy.

The Supreme Court, in *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017), declared privacy a constitutionally protected value. The right to privacy is not absolute and its curtailment can take place only under a law which is

just, reasonable and fair and subject to constitutional safeguards.

India is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 12 provides that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks." The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, also signed by India, in Article 17 states, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks." The Supreme Court noted India's commitments under international law and held that by virtue of Article 51 of the Constitution, India has to endeavour to "foster respect for international law and treaty obligations..." The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 is a fallout of this commitment.

Recommendations of UNHCHR
The annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) in 2014 made fundamental observations and recommendations on "digital communications technologies". It said, "by amplifying the voices of human rights defenders and providing them with new tools to document and expose abuses, these powerful technologies offer the promise of improved enjoyment of human rights." But "communications technologies also have enhanced the capacity of Governments, enterprises and individuals to conduct surveillance, interception and data collection..."

Earlier, due to concerns of member states, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 68/167 affirming that rights held by people offline must also be protected online and called upon all states to respect and protect the right to privacy, including in digital communication.

The UNHCHR report also stated, "Judicial involvement that meets international standards relating to independence, impartiality and transparency can help to make it more likely that the overall statutory regime will meet the minimum standards that international human rights law requires. At the same time, judicial involvement in oversight should not be viewed as a panacea..." It recommended an independent oversight body to keep checks and stated, "The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights requires states parties to ensure that victims of violations of the Covenant have an effective remedy..." The report also dealt with the role of businesses and stated that when a state requires that an information and communications technology company provide user data, it can only supply it in respect of legitimate reasons.

Surprisingly, NSO, in its Transparency and Responsibility Report 2021, informed interested parties that it "strives to guarantee that our products are used... safely, effectively and ethically." If described options available if one of its customers "has acted in bad faith, or used one of our tools to target the electronic communications of someone who falls outside the prescribed target scope." It outlined the range of options available to it if this happened, including "completely ending a customer's access to our systems, as a situation may warrant." It stated, "We very much see today's release as a newly added necessity to the complex, ongoing international debate over electronic surveillance. We are opening our own processes to even deeper scrutiny..." Was this report prepared fearing the worst in the wake of the ongoing international debate?

Indians have a right to call upon NSO to terminate the agreement, if any, with the Indian government or any private player and to cooperate with citizens to unravel the truth.

Dushyant Dave is a Senior Advocate and former President of the Supreme Court Bar Association

Criminalising welfare issues

Before the legislature adopts coercive legal measures, a welfare response should be considered



SHRADDHA CHAUDHARY

The Supreme Court recently issued notice on a writ petition on the condition that the petitioner's prayer seeking a direction to "restrain beggars and vagabonds/homeless from begging on traffic junctions, markets and public places to avoid the spread of COVID-19 pandemic in all the States and Union Territories across India" be modified to focus on the rehabilitation of those forced to beg for a living. In doing this, the court rightly observed that being compelled to beg was a socio-economic issue that could not be remedied by directions of the kind originally sought. It required, instead, a welfare response from the state. This order points to the largely ignored nexus between coercive measures and welfare issues, which can be a useful guide to making and implementing criminal law in three ways.

What should be criminalised?

First, when decisions about criminalisation are being taken by the legislature, an important point of consideration should be whether the issue sought to be addressed might be better suited to a welfare response. Salient examples of welfare issues against which the coercive force of criminal law has inappropriately been deployed serve to illustrate the point. In holding the criminalisation of beggary under the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 (as extended to the NCT of Delhi) unconstitutional, the High Court of Delhi, in *Harsh Mander & Anr. v. Union of India* (2018), had noted that the criminalisation of beggary served only to invisibilise beggars without doing anything to address the structural deprivations that drove people to beg. Similarly, the criminalisation of triple talaq by the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, purportedly to 'protect' Muslim women, does nothing to address the structural gender inequality, social stigma, poor employment options, and lack of state support which actually cause the deprivations associated with divorce (and not just with triple talaq).

Second, socio-economic marginalisation and poverty may frequently make people susceptible to exploitation, whether through poorly paid/unpaid labour, trafficking and sex work, or indeed, begging. A criminal response to those who seek to take advantage of such vulnerability (but never the vulnerable themselves) might be appropriate, but it

would amount to little more than lip service to the predicament of the exploited without accompanying welfare measures. In other words, it is important to ensure that pimps, brothel owners, and traffickers are held criminally liable for sexually exploiting a person. Equally important is to create alternative, well-paying and dignified employment, to make such employment accessible by imparting requisite education and skills, and to have social security nets to ensure that no person feels that sex work is their 'least worst' option. This is essential not only to prevent exploitative practices, but also to rehabilitate those who have been rescued (and/or those who would like an exit option) from such practices. To 'rescue' a sex worker is meaningless unless they have a legitimate way out of such work, an option that is materially (not morally) better for them.

Focusing on the welfare aspect of exploitative practices also sheds light on structural forms of impoverishment, and on who is most likely to be exploited as a result. It is, thus, largely those marginalised and discriminated against based on gender, caste, class and even age who occupy the ranks of beggars, sex workers, bonded labourers, and child labourers. Such a focus also exposes the culpability of the state and society in creating or enabling the vulnerabilities of those prone to exploitation. This recognition is reflected in the apt remarks of the High Court in *Suhail Rashid Bhat v. State of Jammu & Kashmir and Others* (2019), "Begging is also in fact evidence of the failure of the Government as well as the society at large to protect its citizens from debilitating effects of extreme poverty and to ensure to them basics of food, clothing, shelter, health, education, essential concomitants of the right to life ensured under Article 21 of the Constitution of India."

Criminal law for whom?

Finally, when evaluating the function or necessity of a criminalisation response to something that is essentially or even partly a welfare issue, it is crucial to question whose interests the law does, in fact, serve. Does it help the vulnerable and/or the exploited, or is it a tool of persecution? Does it cater to the morality and sensibilities of the powerful? Does it hide the failures of the state? Or is it a quick fix that allows the government to abdicate and divert attention away from its welfare responsibilities? Only by following these interests can we, as citizens, hope to hold the state accountable in its use of the power to criminalise conduct.

Shraddha Chaudhary is Lecturer, Jindal Global Law School, Sonapat and a Ph.D Candidate (Law) at the University of Cambridge

We need more creators

Educators must upgrade their engagement strategies while integrating technology into their approach

VIKRAM VINCENT

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has rightfully identified 21st century skills as fundamental to developing creators. Critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural interactions, and productivity and accountability all strengthen the individuals' abilities at the workplace. Relying on traditional literacy and numeracy alone will not suffice and tends to marginalise differently abled learners. Educators could consider a design-based approach where students concentrate on a subject for two-three weeks to examine how it can be applied in the real world. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who studied happiness and creativity, said that creation requires 'deep work'. An individual must be motivated enough to remain immersed in a specific activity to be creative and happy.

Teacher training

But does our current classroom and content-heavy syllabus enable deep work? Also, how do we retrain teachers who have been trained in traditional systems? They know terms like 'constructivism' but do not know how it should be used in a classroom that is focused on exams rather than learning. And how ready are our future educators?

In a semester-long study that used Wikipedia as a pedagogical tool for teacher training, 65 pre-service (B.Ed) teachers were asked to improve the pages on Wikipedia related to educational concepts. Excluding a few, the content created by most participants was either sent back to them or deleted by neutral editors of Wikipedia. The content, it was found, was plagiarised, did not provide citations, lacked basic writing and grammar skills, etc. After three iterative cycles that were emotionally intense, the teachers were able to contribute content to over 75 Wikipedia articles in English and over 50 ar-

ticles in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Malayalam, Gujarati, Assamese and Punjabi. All the content was related to educational technology. The critical feedback from various Wikipedia editors was crucial because it was unbiased. This feedback forced the learners to re-evaluate their skills. This shows that constant engagement, an emotional connect, and immersive learning are important parts of education.

Using technology

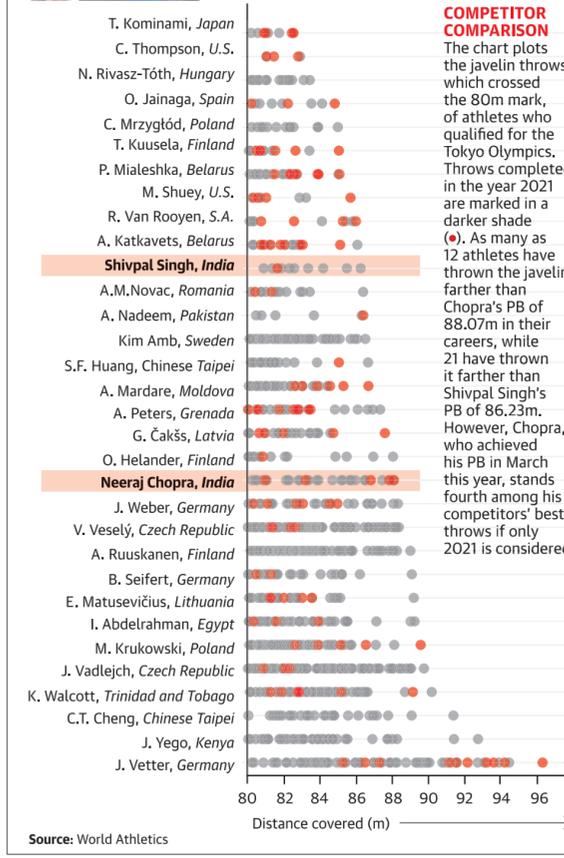
EdTech apps can deliver content that caters to multiple learning styles, learning curves and pace of learning. The pandemic has shown that traditional teacher and brick-and-mortar schools may become obsolete if radical pedagogical changes do not follow. However, over-reliance on technology comes at a cost. Technology tools are forcing human beings to remain consumers rather than become

creators. For example, social media forces you to scroll mindlessly rather than contemplate or engage meaningfully. Entertainment channels create addictive content that makes you suspend reality till all the seasons are done. And with the pandemic shutting down schools, children have lost all personal contact with their social group and parents are forced to rely upon technology to provide their children constant gratification to keep them engaged. With so many immersive distractions from deep work, is it even possible to develop creators? Can technology replace emotional and social engagement?

The disruptive nature of digital tools has thrown up interesting challenges to the traditional education system. Educators will have to find ways to upgrade their engagement strategies while integrating technology into their approach through hybrid learning. And while the NEP is catchy, policymakers will have to look again at the school education system if 21st century skills are to be truly actualised.

Vikram Vincent has a Ph.D. in Educational Technology from IIT Bombay

DATA POINT



Throwing for glory

All eyes will be on Neeraj Chopra when he takes the stage for the men's javelin throw at the Tokyo Olympics on Wednesday. Only three of his fellow competitors in the event have thrown the javelin farther than he has in 2021. He recorded his personal best (PB) throw of 88.07m this year in March, a new national record. The numbers show that he has improved his performance almost every year since 2013. His biggest challenge is Germany's Johannes Vetter, who has crossed the 90m mark on seven occasions, including many of his recent performances. By **Sumant Sen**



SERIOUS CONTENDER | Chopra's PB would have been good enough for the Bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics. The chart depicts his PB and the distances which bagged a medal at the Olympics and World Championships since 2012

Event	Distance (m)
World record (Set in 1996)	98.48
WC 2015 GOLD	92.72
Olympic Record (Set in 2008)	90.57
Rio 2016 GOLD	90.3
WC 2017 GOLD	89.89
WC 2017 SILVER	89.73
WC 2015 SILVER	88.99
WC 2016 BRONZE	88.32
Rio 2016 SILVER	88.24
Neeraj Chopra's National record*	88.07
WC 2015 BRONZE	87.64
WC 2013 GOLD	87.64
WC 2013 SILVER	87.64
WC 2019 GOLD	87.64
WC 2013 BRONZE	86.23
WC 2019 SILVER	86.21
Rio 2016 BRONZE	85.38
WC 2019 BRONZE	85.37
London 2012 GOLD	84.58
London 2012 SILVER	84.12
London 2012 BRONZE	83.34

* (Set in March, 2021) All distance in metre

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 3, 1971

India reacts to Yahya's statement

Mr. Swaran Singh, Minister of External Affairs, told the Lok Sabha amidst cheers today [New Delhi, August 2] that if President Yahya Khan made the success attained by the Mukti Bahini in establishing effective control over parts of Bangla Desh as an excuse to start a war with India, "undoubtedly our defence forces will give a fitting reply." He was replying to Mr. Samar Guha and others. Mr. Guha drew the Minister's attention to the reported statement of President Yahya Khan broadcast by Radio Australia that Pakistan was "on the verge of a total war with India" and sought his comment. Mr. Indrajit Gupta wanted to know what information Government had about the military build-up by Pakistan not only on the eastern side but also on its western borders with India. He asked if reports that Pakistan was intensifying the build-up were true and whether they indicated that Pakistan was preparing for committing aggression on India. The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, intervened to reply that whenever it came to India's notice that Pakistan was deploying its forces on any part of the border, "we also make our preparations." Mr. Gupta asked whether the reports of concentration of troops by Pakistan on India's border were really true. Mr. Jagjivan Ram: "I do not think it will be possible to give more information."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 3, 1921

Difficulties for Indian students.

The difficulties which Indian students have to undergo especially in the initial stages of their stay in England have not received sufficient attention in this country. Consequently the unofficial agencies working to help our youths by providing a ready home to welcome them in an alien land and saving them from the various pitfalls to which they are exposed in a strange society, have not received the support they are entitled to get from all well-to-do and patriotic Indians. The Y.M.C.A. hostel for Indian students in London, known as the Shakespeare Hut, seems to be one such institution. Its work and service is spoken of in highly appreciative terms by eminent Indians who have visited England. They draw pointed attention to the facilities provided in the hostel for mutual understanding between English and Indian youths and the cultivation of a liberal culture. The hostel it need hardly be said deserves the support of the Indian educated public.

FROM PAGE ONE

SC questions States on cases under 66A

In its response, the Centre said the police and public order were "State subjects" under the Constitution. "Prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes and capacity-building of the police are primarily the responsibility of the States," it submitted in an affidavit to the court.

Law enforcement agencies shared equal responsibility to comply with the judgment. They took action against cybercrime offenders as per the law. The Ministries of Information and Technology and Home Affairs had done their best to disseminate knowledge about the Supreme Court judgment in Shreya Singhal case, it stated.

Section 66A had prescribed three years' imprisonment if a social media message caused "annoyance" or was found

"grossly offensive".

The apex court had concluded the provision to be vague and worded arbitrarily.

Justice Nariman had agreed with Mr. Parikh on July 7 that the "state of affairs is shocking". The latter had urged the court to intervene and work out a mechanism to disseminate the Shreya Singhal judgment to every police station and trial court in the country.

The PUCL has submitted, "Section 66A of the IT Act has continued to be in use not only within police stations but also in cases before trial courts across India." The NGO had urged the court to direct the government to collect all the data/information regarding FIRs/investigations under Section 66A and pending cases in the district and High Courts.

Assam takes back case filed against Mizoram MP

Dr. Sarma was one of the accused named in the FIR at the Vairengte police station in Mizoram's Kolasib district. Mr. Vanlalvena had, after the death of six Assam policemen and a civilian in firing on a disputed stretch of the Assam-Mizoram border on July 26, gone on record saying the Mizoram police should have "killed them all".

"The case against the Mizoram MP has been abated," Assam's Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) G.P. Singh said.

Dr. Sarma said earlier the

withdrawal of the FIR was in response to Mr. Zoramthanga's desire to settle the border dispute amicably.

"However, cases against the other accused police officers will be pursued," he tweeted while asserting "Assam always wants to keep the spirit of the North East alive". The Assam and Nagaland police had begun withdrawing from the disputed areas of the border following a memorandum of understanding signed on July 31. "This is one big step towards restoring peace on our borders," he stated.

July exports 34% higher than pre-COVID level

"The target for the remaining eight months (requires) an average of \$33.68 billion per month," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said.

"While the non-oil exports were robust in July 2021, they remained below the March 2021 level. A spike in oil exports boosted the overall merchandise exports to a record-high level in July," noted ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar.

The economy's phased reopening has triggered the gold imports surge, she reckoned, adding that they have already crossed \$12 billion between April and July and would likely surpass last year's level of \$34.6 billion as festive demand is expected to push up the yellow metal's inflows.

In value terms, India's exports to the U.S. and China saw the sharpest spurt in July, rising 51.6% and 52.3%, respectively, from pre-COVID-19 outbound trade.

Imports from Iraq grew the most in terms of value, rising 76.3% over July 2019. Within the India-China trade basket, the biggest growth was reported in exports of engineering goods, up nearly 261% from July 2019 and petroleum products which surged by almost 98%.

Federation of Indian Exporters' Organisation (FIEO) president A. Sakthivel said July's exports were the highest in at least nine years and signal a swift recovery in global demand that is swelling exporters' order books.

Firozabad to be renamed as Chandra Nagar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
FIROZABAD (U.P.)

The newly elected Firozabad zila panchayat has passed a proposal to rename the district as Chandra Nagar, according to officials.

The proposal was passed on Saturday at the first meeting of the district panchayat board and it will be sent to the government for approval, BJP leader and block pramukh Lakshmi Narain Yadav said.

Mr. Yadav, who moved the proposal, said the district was earlier known as Chandrawad. "It is necessary to change the name to Chandra Nagar," he said.

Cabinet Minister Rajendra Singh alias Moti Singh during his oath ceremony last month had addressed the district as Chandra Nagar. Many organisations have demanded that it be renamed as Suhag Nagar as it is famous of its bangle industries.

Top PMO official quits

Amarjeet Sinha didn't cite any reason

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Amarjeet Sinha, adviser in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), has resigned from his post seven months ahead of his two-year tenure.

A retired IAS officer of the 1983 batch from Bihar, Mr. Sinha, who superannuated as Secretary from the Government of India, was appointed in the PMO in February 2020. He was tasked with handling social sector-related subjects.

He superannuated as Rural Development Secretary in 2019.

Top sources confirmed his resignation without citing any reason.

"He resigned from the post and July 31 was the last day," a senior official said.

Third official

There was, however, no official reason for his abrupt resignation from the coveted job for any retired civil servant.

Mr. Sinha becomes the third top official from the

In RS, Oppn. raises Pegasus, farm bills

Protests lead to two adjournments; House passes Inland Vessels Bill amid the din

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Opposition protest continued to disrupt the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha for the 10th consecutive day on Monday, with the parties raising objections to the three controversial farm laws besides the Pegasus 'cyberattack'.

While the Trinamool Congress (TMC) continued with the protest on Pegasus, the Congress, Left and others raised a demand to scrap the farm bills. The protests led to two adjournments, and the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, was passed amid din.

The TMC, Congress, SP and the Left parties were in the well of the House, while the NCP, Shiv Sena and the RJD stood at their seats in protest.

Many members, sources said, felt that taking a militant position on Pegasus



Heated arguments: Rajya Sabha proceedings were disrupted for the 10th consecutive day on Monday. •PTI

had left other issues unheard. The MPs from Haryana and Punjab especially took up the issue.

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dialled Mallikarjun Kharge, leader of the Opposition in the House. Sources said it was just a courtesy call.

No offer of an all-party meeting on Pegasus was made by Mr. Singh.

"The Opposition parties want Parliament to run and

discuss three important issues. A: Withdraw the farm bills and have a discussion on the ongoing agitation by farmers. B: A discussion on state of economy and unemployment. C: National Security that is Pegasus. But we have to start with C," TMC floor leader Derek O'Brien said. All the 15 parties who attended the morning meeting of Opposition parties were all on the same page, he asserted.

The Congress though is still uncomfortable with this position.

The sources said that they wanted to pause the protests to be able to participate in the debate on the Inland Vessels Bill. But with raucous protests from the TMC, Congress MP Shakti Singh Gohil, who was designated to speak on the Bill, could not raise his concerns.

The Congress did not join others in the well of the House once the Bill was taken up for discussion.

The Bill was passed as the Opposition members shouted "no" from the well of the House.

As the Opposition continued to protest, the House was adjourned for an hour, only to resume for a few minutes before being adjourned for the day.

(With inputs from Damini Nath)

5 journalists move SC over snooping

'Fundamental right of privacy violated'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Five journalists, reported to have been under surveillance through Pegasus software, have moved the Supreme Court for a judicial oversight mechanism to be set up to deal with complaints. Paranjay Guha Thakurta, S.N.M. Abdi, Prem Shankar Jha, Rupesh Kumar Singh and Ipsa Shataksi have moved the top court, saying they were subjected to "deeply intrusive surveillance".

Forensic examination

They said a forensic examination done by Amnesty International on mobile phones revealed traces of interference.

They said their fundamental rights, primarily of privacy, and dignity, were

violated by the snooping.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana is scheduled to hear on August 5 three petitions, including one filed jointly by senior journalists N. Ram and Sashi Kumar, seeking an independent probe headed by a retired or sitting Supreme Court judge into the Pegasus allegations. Mr. Ram's petition has asked the court to direct the government to come clean on whether the surveillance was done with the government's knowledge or not.

The five journalists have asked the court to direct the government to produce records or documents to show that it had in any way authorised the snooping of private citizens, journalists, activists and even its own Ministers.

Caste-based census: JD(U) MPs meet Shah

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A delegation of the Janata Dal (United) MPs led by new party president Lalan Singh met Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday demanding a caste-based census. This demand could have serious ramifications for the JD(U)-BJP relationship. At the party's national executive held in Delhi on Saturday, it was decided that the MPs will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Sources said Mr. Modi had directed the delegation to meet Mr. Shah.

Mr. Singh told reporters that the Bihar Assembly had passed a unanimous resolution on February 27, 2020 and February 18, 2019 on the demand. He said these two resolutions were backed by the BJP too and it was now up to the Centre to take a final decision.

Amid protests, LS passes Bill to amend insurance Act

It will allow government to bring down its stake in State-owned general insurance companies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Amid Opposition protests and sloganeering over the Pegasus snooping issue and the three controversial farm laws, the Lok Sabha on Monday passed a law to amend the general insurance business Act without a debate.

The Bill - The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021 - will allow the government to bring down its stake in State-owned general insurance companies, generate required resources and help public sector general insurers design innovative products.

But the Opposition and the Treasury benches got into a war of words as the Bill was being moved for passage.

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury accused the government of handing over decades-old institutions

to a handful of capitalists and termed the bill "anti-people and anti-national".

Nirmala's charge

Hitting back at Mr. Chowdhury, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman accused the Opposition of spreading falsehood and asserted that she would respond to his charges if they [Opposition members] agreed to debate the provisions of the Bill.

"If they are serious, they should sit down, debate and ask questions. Since you are afraid that truth will come out, you don't want a discussion," she stated while moving for the Bill's passage.

The Bill was passed through a voice vote after some of the amendments to it, moved by Revolutionary Socialists Party's N.K. Prama-chandran, were defeated. BJP's Rama Devi, who was in the Chair, adjourned the House for the day soon after



Making a point: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman speaking in the Lok Sabha in New Delhi on Monday. •PTI

the Bill's passage.

As per the statement of objects and reasons, the proposed amendments to the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Bill seeks to remove the mandatory requirement of the Central government holding not less than 51% of the equity capital in a specified insurer.

The Bill stated that certain amendments had become

'necessary' to provide for greater private participation in public sector insurance companies, enhance the penetration of the insurance sector, provide social protection by securing the interests of the policyholders better and contribute to faster pace of the economic growth.

In her Budget speech for 2021-22, the Finance Minister had announced an ambitious

privatisation agenda, including two public sector banks and one general insurance company. Of the public sector general insurance companies - the National Insurance Company Limited, New India Assurance Company Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited and the United India Insurance Company Limited - the government will dilute its shareholding in one company. The name of the company, however, is yet to be finalised.

The first half of the Lok Sabha proceedings also witnessed protests by the Opposition members, resulting in two adjournments before lunch. While the Ms. Sitharaman introduced the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021, after withdrawing an earlier bill on the issue, Mr. Chowdhury accused the government of "bulldozing one legislation after another".

Will remain MP but quit politics: Babul Supriyo

Singer-turned-politician says he took final decision after meeting Shah, Nadda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday managed to persuade Babul Supriyo against resigning as a Lok Sabha member even as the singer-turned-politician insisted that he will no longer be part of active politics.

'Will leave Delhi house'

Speaking to reporters after meeting BJP president J.P. Nadda, the Asansol MP said he will continue to discharge his constitutional



Babul Supriyo •

responsibilities as a parliamentarian but withdraw from politics and leave his

official residence in the national capital.

His decision will be a big relief to the BJP as it would not have liked to be forced to contest a bypoll against the Trinamool Congress, which is upbeat after handing a comprehensive defeat to the party in the recent West Bengal Assembly polls.

Upset at being dropped from the Union Council of Ministers by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two-term MP had announced

that he will resign as MP and quit politics.

He told reporters on Monday that Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Mr. Nadda had spoken to him, and he has taken a final decision after thinking over their suggestions.

He asserted that whatever he had said recently, some of which was seen to be critical of the party's affairs in the State, was in the interest of the BJP and that he stood by that.

Firozabad to be renamed as Chandra Nagar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
FIROZABAD (U.P.)

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Amarjeet Sinha didn't cite any reason

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Amarjeet Sinha, adviser in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), has resigned from his post seven months ahead of his two-year tenure.

A retired IAS officer of the 1983 batch from Bihar, Mr. Sinha, who superannuated as Secretary from the Government of India, was appointed in the PMO in February 2020. He was tasked with handling social sector-related subjects.

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Third official

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Mr. Sinha becomes the third top official from the



Amarjeet Sinha

PMO to go before the completion of tenure after the 2019 parliamentary poll.

Earlier, Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra stepped down after the 2019 general election. After his resignation, P.K. Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary, was elevated in his place.

Subsequently, in March this year, Principal Adviser P.K. Sinha, former Cabinet Secretary, resigned from the PMO. He was appointed in the PMO first as an Officer on Special Duty briefly and then as Principal Adviser.

Mamata inaugurates Khela Hobe event

Slogan became popular during polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Monday that the slogan 'Khela Hobe' (Game is on) will soon reverberate in every State across the country.

"Khela Hobe slogan has become very popular. We have to make it a permanent slogan. Khela Hobe was raised in Parliament. It will reverberate in every State and the entire country," she said after inaugurating 'Khela Hobe' event at the Netaji Indoor Stadium, under which footballs would be distributed among sports clubs.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson's statement came on a day when the party's general secretary Abhishek Banerjee was in Tripura trying to expand the party's footprint in the State. Ms. Banerjee had visited Delhi last week and met leaders of several Opposition parties. She said that



West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee at the opening of the 'Khela Hobe' event. •PTI

August 16 would be observed as "Khela Hobe Dibas" across the State.

She assured fans of East Bengal that the club would play the upcoming 2021-22 season in Indian Super League.

No move to curtail session, says Joshi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi clarified on Monday that the government is not thinking about curtailing the Monsoon Session of Parliament.

"As of now, we are not thinking in that direction," he told *The Hindu*.

For 10 consecutive days, proceedings of both Houses of Parliament have been disrupted with continuous protests from the Opposition parties over the Pegasus cyber attack.

The Opposition has demanded that the issue must be discussed in both Houses of Parliament in the presence of either Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Home Minister Amit Shah. Either of the two should reply to the debate since, they argue, it concerns national security.

The Monsoon session has nine more days to go and will conclude on August 13.

Rahul invites 17 Oppn. leaders to discuss strategy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi has invited floor leaders of 17 Opposition parties for a breakfast meeting on Tuesday to chart out a joint parliamentary strategy for the Monsoon session.

Mr. Gandhi's move is also an attempt to keep Opposition unity intact, as the session enters its third week.

Among those invited are DMK, Shiv Sena, NCP, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, Aam Admi Party,

National Conference, CPI and CPI (Marxist). It is not yet known how many leaders will turn up for the meet.

Two weeks of the Monsoon session that got under way on July 19 have been washed out because of the Opposition's insistence on first discussing the Pegasus snooping controversy and the farm laws before other issues. The government has, so far, rejected the demand for a discussion on Pegasus and carried out its legislative agenda amid Opposition protests.

APPEAL

I am Jaithun Jamima, 15 years old, suffering from B Cell - Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. My family is extremely poor and cannot afford the huge expenditure of Rs. 8,00,000/- to undergo Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. I need your blessings and support. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No.CNRB0016018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT.

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. GF-1, Corridor Apartments, O.No.13, H.No.23 Pyramids Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-42137401/2823524/733897827. E Mail ID: womenwelfare Syndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenwelfare Syndicate.org

Jaithun Jamima

No agreement yet on Gogra, Hot Springs

The 12th round of India-China Corps Commander-level talks was 'constructive', says joint statement

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 12th round of Corps Commanders meeting between India and China, held on Saturday, was "constructive", a joint statement issued on Monday said, though the two sides have not yet reached an agreement for disengagement at Gogra and Hot Springs in eastern Ladakh.

"The two sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on resolution of remaining areas related to disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector of India-China border areas," the joint statement said.

"The two sides noted that this round of meeting was constructive, which further enhanced mutual understanding."



Military movement: An Army convoy is seen heading towards Leh on the Manali-Leh highway. •PTI

standing." The statement further said that the Corps Commanders agreed to resolve these remaining issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols and maintain the momen-

tum of dialogue and negotiations.

Ensuring stability at LAC
The two sides also agreed that in the interim they will continue their "effective efforts in ensuring stability

along the LAC in the Western Sector and jointly maintain peace and tranquillity", it added.

Referring to the point that the talks were constructive, a defence official said several issues pertaining to the disengagement were resolved while a few others remained. An agreement for the second phase of disengagement has been held up since February after disengagement was completed on the north and south banks of Pangong Tso.

Officials had stated earlier that another round of Major General-level talks is scheduled to be held soon.

The talks held on Saturday at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point went on for around nine hours. This round of meeting was held following the meeting of the

Foreign Ministers of India and China on July 14 in Dushanbe and the 22nd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs on June 25.

Both sides had undertaken partial disengagement from Patrolling Points (PP) 15 and 17A in Gogra and Hot Springs last July after disengagement from PP14 in Galwan, but the process was stalled after the aggressive actions on the south bank of Pangong Tso in August.

India has been pressing for comprehensive de-escalation of the situation in eastern Ladakh to end the stand-off that began last year which includes disengagement from all friction points, de-escalation and working out new protocols for patrolling.

Preventive detention only to forestall public disorder: SC

'State should not arbitrarily resort to it'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Preventive detention, the dreaded power of the State to restrain a person without trial, could be used only to prevent public disorder, the Supreme Court held in a judgment on Monday.

"Preventive detention is a necessary evil only to prevent public disorder. The court must ensure that the facts brought before it directly and inevitably lead to a harm, danger or alarm or feeling of insecurity among the general public or any section thereof at large," a Bench, led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman, observed.

The State should not arbitrarily resort to "preventive detention" to deal with all and sundry "law and order" problems, which could be dealt with by the ordinary laws of the country.

"Whenever an order under a preventive detention law is challenged, one of the questions the court must ask in deciding its legality is: was the ordinary law of the land sufficient to deal with the situation? If the answer is in the affirmative, the detention order will be illegal," Justice Nariman wrote.

The court said two drunks fighting on a road was a law and order problem, and not public disorder. The solution here was not preventive detention.

Preventive detention must fall within the four corners of Article 21 (due process of law) read with Article 22 (safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention) and the statute in question, Justice Nariman said.

"Liberty of a citizen is a most important right won



by our forefathers after long, historical and arduous struggles... We must confine the power of preventive detention to very narrow limits, otherwise the great right to liberty won by our Founding Fathers, who were also freedom fighters, after long, arduous and historical struggles, will become nugatory," the court noted.

"Mere contravention of law, such as indulging in cheating or criminal breach of trust, certainly affects 'law and order', but before it can be said to affect 'public order', it must affect the community or the public at large," Justice Nariman stated.

The judgment came in an appeal filed by the wife of a man placed under preventive detention under the Telangana Prevention of Dangerous Activities Act shortly after he was granted bail in a cheating case. The top court said the State should have contested the bail order in a higher court rather than slap an executive order of preventive detention on him on the ground that, if set free, he would cheat more people.

"This ... certainly cannot provide the springboard to move under a preventive detention statute. We, therefore, quash the detention order," the court ordered.

J&K parties slam denial of jobs, passports to protesters

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Political parties from Jammu and Kashmir on Monday condemned the government's move to deny passports and jobs to people with "adverse police report", especially protesters and stone-throwers, and termed it against the spirit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech made during the all-party meeting on June 24.

"An 'adverse police report' cannot be a substitute for being found guilty in a court of law. A year-and-a-half ago, the J&K police were able to create an 'adverse police report' to justify my detention under the Public Safety Act that would never have stood up to legal challenge. An executive order cannot replace a court of law. Guilt or innocence must be proven in court and not based on vague unproven police reports," National Conference vice-president and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said.

Sajad Lone's Peoples Conference (PC) termed the fresh order of the Criminal Investigation Department as a move "to give arbitrary powers" to the officials of the Special Branch of the CID and to "appoint it as judge, jury and executioner". "It's in contravention of the spirit of the speech made by the Prime Minister at the all-party meet where he said the distance of hearts between Delhi and Srinagar needs to be decreased. Such orders will certainly increase the alienation of the people towards the institutions of government," PC spokesman Adnan Ashraf Mir said.

Father moves SC to extradite woman who joined IS

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The father of a woman from Kerala who joined the Islamic State and is detained in an Afghan prison with her seven-year-old daughter when last heard has moved the Supreme Court for their extradition.

V.J. Sebastian Francis, 75, from Kochi, is afraid that his daughter, Sonia Sebastian, alias Ayisha, presently lodged in Pul-e-Charkhi prison in Kabul, may be executed amid the fight between the Taliban and Afghan government forces.

"Subsequent to the withdrawal of the American forces there may be violent face off and war between Islamic Government and Taliban. Hence there is an imminent threat to the life of the detainees, or that they may be put to trial in Afghanistan and executed there itself," the petition said.

Mr. Francis said it is a violation of their fundamental rights that the Indian government has not initiated any steps for the repatriation/extradition of the mother and daughter.

He has urged the court to direct the government to take steps to provide "diplomatic protection/consular assistance to the detainees through its consular/diplomatic office in Islamic Republic of Afghanistan". The woman was charge-sheeted by the National Investigation Agency for various offences under the UAPA. She should face trial in India. Mr. Francis said he had tried in vain to contact the authorities in Afghanistan to get information about them.

Northeast BJP MPs blame Congress for clash

They submit memorandum to PM Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A group of BJP MPs from the northeastern States met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday and submitted a memorandum accusing the Congress of stoking tensions between Assam and Mizoram.

The group, which included Union Minister and former Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, told the Prime Minister that the Chief Ministers of Assam and Mizoram had expressed their desire to resolve the border dispute amicably. The MPs said they were pained to see the violence that took place on the Assam-Mizoram border, but at the same time dis-



Sharing views: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with BJP MPs from the northeastern States. •PTI

approved of the Congress playing politics over the issue. "A series of confidence building measures have also taken place over the last few days. Yet, the actions of the Congress party remain as devious and mischievous," the memorandum read.

The MPs said the NDA government had carried out "historic and unparalleled" development works in the

region, while successive Congress governments had failed to do so. They said the Congress had "zero regard" for the culture of the region, and added that the party and "its ecosystem" had tried to make the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens political issues, but the people rejected that.

"Now, they are stoking

tempers between Assam and Mizoram. We, the undersigned, want to state clearly that the nefarious designs of the Congress will not succeed in the northeast. They should stop politicising on issues and focus on development agenda," said the memorandum signed by Union Ministers Kiren Rijiju, Rameswar Teli and Pratima Bhoumik, among others.

Ex-Australian PM Abbott in India to push trade talks

Discussions had run into trouble over market access for Australian agricultural dairy products and tariffs

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

In an effort to restart India-Australia trade talks, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott landed in New Delhi on Monday for a four-day visit to meet Ministers and business leaders.

Mr. Abbott is in India as Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison's "Special Trade Envoy for India". Despite an agreement between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Morrison in June 2020 that India and Australia would "re-engage" on the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), talks on CECA, which have been suspended since 2015, have made no visible progress.

"Mr. Abbott looks forward to discussions on the India-

Australia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, which will propel our economic relationship to its full potential, to the mutual benefit of the Indian and Australian people," Australian High Commissioner Barry O'Farrell said, announcing the visit on Monday, describing bilateral ties at an "historic high". "This will be an opportunity to progress Australia's ambitious agenda to engage and expand our bilateral trade and investment relationship with India," a statement issued by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also said.

To meet Modi, Goyal
Officials said Mr. Abbott's schedule is still to be finalised, but he is expected to



Tony Abbott

meet Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and officials of the Commerce Ministry, address business chambers and think tanks in Delhi before he leaves on August 6. Officials did not rule out a meeting with Mr. Modi, who had met Mr. Abbott warmly, calling him a friend during a private visit to India in 2019.

During his first visit as Prime Minister in September 2014, Mr. Abbott had been particularly keen to see the CECA to its conclusion. After talks with Mr. Modi who travelled to Australia two months later, the two leaders had announced they hoped to finalise the deal by the end of 2015.

No progress
"By the end of next year we will have a free trade deal with what is potentially the world's largest market. And I want to make this declaration here in this Parliament: there are two can-do PMs in this chamber today and we will make it happen," Mr. Abbott had told the Australian Parliament in November 2014.

However, the talks ran in-

to trouble over market access for Australian agricultural dairy products, high tariffs and other issues.

After Malcolm Turnbull unseated Mr. Abbott in 2015, progress on the CECA talks slowed down, particularly as talks over the 16-nation ASEAN-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), that included Australia and India picked up.

India decided to walk out of the RCEP in 2019, however, and the bilateral CECA negotiations have been pending ever since. Mr. Abbott has been particularly critical of the RCEP agreement, that is expected to come into force on January 1, 2022, calling it the "trade arm of China's Belt and Road Initiative".

Jaishankar likely to attend swearing-in of Raisi

It is aimed at boosting India-Iran ties

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is expected to travel to Tehran to attend the swearing-in of the newly elected Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on August 5.

Mr. Jaishankar had met the President-elect on July 8, when he handed over a letter from Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulating him on the election victory.

"Appreciate [Mr. Raisi's] warm sentiments for India. Deeply value his strong commitment to strengthen our bilateral ties and expand cooperation on regional and global issues," Mr. Jaishankar had said after calling on Mr. Raisi. The meeting with Mr. Jaishankar was the first interaction between Mr. Raisi and a foreign dignitary since he won the election on June 19.

The ongoing exchanges

acquire significance in view of the escalating violence in Afghanistan.

An MEA source confirmed that the visit of Mr. Jaishankar is yet to be formally announced but hinted that it is on track. India is expected to fast track the remaining parts of work in the Chabahar port as it will ensure access to Afghanistan where the Taliban have gained a temporary upper hand in their battle against the Afghan government. Engaging the new President of Iran also comes in the backdrop of intensifying tension between Iran and Israel.

The high level exchanges will also take place after a pause in energy ties as India had stopped purchasing oil from Iran in May 2019, after the re-imposition of sanctions by the Trump presidency. The freeze in energy ties also affected other sectors of the bilateral ties.

Normal rainfall in August: IMD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department has said that monsoon rainfall in August, the second rainiest of the monsoon months, will be "normal" as would be the rainfall in August and September.

Normal in the IMD parlance implies a 5% window of error. The normal amount of rainfall during August is 25.8 cm, whereas during August and September it is around 42.83 cm.

The updated forecast, however, warned that "below normal to normal rainfall" was likely over many areas of central India and some areas over northwest India. Most parts of peninsula and northeast India are like to register normal rainfall. So far, cumulative rainfall from June 1 to August is 46.5 cm, or about 1% less than the 47 cm expected during this period.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
"e" - PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No. CCE, KIP (KCD-II)-06/2021-22
(Pertaining to Kanpur Canal Division No. II, Rimuli)

1. Name of the Work	"Construction of all Minors & Sub-Minors directly off-taking from RD 38,610m to RD 61,200m (Excluding Forest Area) of Kanpur Main Canal including all structures"		
2. Estimated Cost	Rs. 686.43 Lakh		
3. Period of Completion	18 (Eighteen) Calendar Months including rainy season		
4. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	Dt. 04.08.2021 from 10.00 Hours to Dt. 25.08.2021 up to 17.00 Hours		
5. Last date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal	Dt. 25.08.2021 up to 17.00 Hours		
6. Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Er. Prasanna Kumar Pani, Chief Construction Engineer, Kanpur Irrigation Project, A/PO : Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar, Odisha - 758047		

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal "www.tendersodisha.gov.in" (Er. Prasanna Kumar Pani) Chief Construction Engineer Kanpur Irrigation Project, Basudevpur, Keonjhar, Odisha OJPR-32236/11/0001/2122

DELHI JAL BOARD
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW)-VI
WEST SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT (WSP), KESHAPUR,
OUTER RING ROAD, NEW DELHI-110018, Email: eesdw06@gmail.com

Stop Corona : Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing and Maintain Hygiene
PRESS NOT. No. 06 (2021-22) (E) (SDW) VI

S. No.	Name of work	Estimate Cost in Cr.	E/Money in Rs.	Tender Fee in Rs.	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date / time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1	Deployment of 300 Nos. of Septage Cleaning Machines (combination of 150 big and 150 small) from 150 Nos. of bidders for Collection, Transportation and Disposal of Septage from unsewered, unauthorised Colonies at designated SPS/STPs/SPs of the Delhi Jal Board for a period of 05 years.	146.71	3,10,000/-	15000/-	In reference to Office Memorandum dt. 12.11.2020 of G.O. and further Endorsement by DJB vide Letter No. DJB/2020-21/Intra-@ (PT)/971 dt. 23.12.2020. All prospective bidders are hereby exempted from submission of EMD with strict compliance to all the terms and conditions of the same.	01.09.2021 at 3.00 P.M.

Further details in this regard can be seen at (https://govprocurement.delhi.gov.in)
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 234 (2021-22) J.C. Garg EE (SDW) VI

MALABAR CANCER CENTRE
NABL Accredited (an autonomous centre under Government of Kerala)
Thalassery, Kannur Dist., Kerala - 670 103, Phone: +91 490 239227 239224, 2355881
Fax: +91 490 2355880, Email: mectty@gmail.com, Web: www.mcc Kerala.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE 29/07/2021

Competitive e-Tenders for e-Tenders (Two cover systems) are invited from established manufacturers/authorized suppliers through www.tenders.mcc Kerala.gov.in for the supply of the following items in Malabar Cancer Centre, Thalassery. For details contact our Purchase Division.

1. LIQUID NITROGEN GENERATOR (Pre-bid meeting will be held on 10/08/2021, 11AM)
2. INTERFACING LABORATORY ANALYZERS WITH EAS/HRMS SOFTWARE AND LAB MANAGER
3. ANESTHESIA WORK STATION
4. ANTI-BIOTICS AND FUNGAL
5. APPLICATION TONEMETER HANDHELD
6. CHEMOTHERAPY CHAIRS - 06 NOS
7. HIGH RESOLUTION HLA TYPING REAGENT BY NSB
8. OPERATING MICROSCOPE (ON BUY BACK BASIS)
9. PORTABLE TELE MEDICINE TROLLEY
10. MULTIMODE PLATE READER
11. MOLECULAR DIAGNOSTIC KIT
12. COMMON DRUGS
13. CRYOTHERAPY
14. DEEP FREEZER
15. REAGENT FREEZER
16. HORIZONTAL STERILIZER
17. INC STAINING ANTIBODIES
18. MOLECULAR DIAGNOSTIC KIT
19. CENTRIFUGE
20. WIRELESS TEMPERATURE LOGGER - 1Set with 6Sensors

Sd/-DIRECTOR

CSIR - INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL BIOLOGY
4, Raja S. C. Mullaik Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700032

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Kolkata intends to invite online tenders (e-Tenders) from eligible contractors / firms for the following Civil Work at CSIR-IICB, Jadavpur Campus : e-tender No. : 2021_CSIR_82458_1. Name of work : External Repair and Renovation of CSIR-IICB Building (Phase-C) at Jadavpur, Kolkata. Estimated cost : ₹ 207.13 Lakh. N.B. : Publication in CPP, Date : 28th July 2021 and time 15:00 Hrs. For further details about eligibility criteria and other information visit our website www.iicb.res.in/tender.html and <https://etenders.gov.in/e-procure/app>

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer, Shanthinagar Division,
P.U. Building, 9th Floor, M.G. Road, Bengaluru-560001

No.: EE/SN/TEND/06/2021-22 Date: 31.07.2021

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER
(Only through e-Procurement Portal)
Single / Two Cover

The Executive Engineer (Shanthinagar Division), BBMP, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below. (Standard Tender Document - KW1 for Single Cover, KW2 for Two Cover)

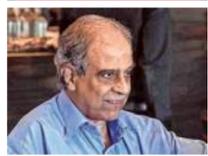
Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate value of work (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	Construction of Public Toilet in Ward No. 89, Jogupalya. (Category: Others)	15.00
2	Drilling of borewells and pipeline for supply to Appa Reddypalya and surroundings area in Ward No. 89. (Category: Others)	20.00
3	Drilling of borewells and providing pipeline at Appa Reddypalya and surroundings area in Ward No. 89. (Category: SC)	20.00
4	Improvements to Damaged BWSSB Road cutting roads at 1st Cross Road to 10th Cross Roads of Indira Nagara 2nd Stage and surrounding area in Ward No. 89. (Two Cover).	90.00
5	Construction of Multi purpose building in Ward No. 112, Domlur. (Call-2) (Two Cover).	200.00

Calendar of events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka from 10.08.2021. (2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before 4:00 p.m. on 27.08.2021 and the opening of tenders will be on 30.08.2021 at 4:30 p.m. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or website <https://e-proc.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Shanthinagar Division, BBMP
COVID-19: DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE

Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene

IN BRIEF



Film critic Rashid Irani passes away at 74

MUMBAI Eminent film critic Rashid Irani, a much-loved figure in the cinema circles of the city, was found dead on Monday at his residence here. He was 74. Mr. Irani, who had multiple health issues and lived alone, likely breathed his last on July 30 at his home in the South Mumbai neighbourhood of Dhobitalao, according to his close friend Rafeeq Elias. PTI

Sena cadre remove Adani board at Mumbai airport

MUMBAI Shiv Sena workers on Monday vandalised and then removed the 'Adani Airport' signboard displayed near the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj close to the airport in Mumbai, claiming the company was trying to change the name of the airport. A group of 15 to 20 workers damaged the signboard before removing it. Sena Lok Sabha MP Arvind Sawant said the attempt to change the name of the airport would not be tolerated.

Treat minorities as weaker sections, NCM tells SC

NEW DELHI The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has told the Supreme Court that minorities have to be treated as the "weaker sections" in the country, where majority community is so "predominant". The NCM said despite the safeguards provided in the Constitution and the laws in force there persist amongst the minorities a feeling of inequality and discrimination. "In a country like India where the majority community is predominant, the minorities have to be treated as the weaker sections within the meaning of Article 46," the NCM said in an affidavit. PTI

Delta and its sublineages reduce Covaxin antibodies: ICMR study

Despite this, the vaccine provides protection, it says

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Antibodies produced in response to Covaxin were reduced when tested against the Delta variant and its sublineages but continued to be high enough to remain protective, according to a study by scientists at the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology.

The antibodies were collected from fully vaccinated individuals, some of whom had reported breakthrough infections, and yet others who had recovered from COVID-19 and tested in the laboratory against lab-cultured coronavirus variants belonging to the Delta, AY.1 and AY.3 lineages.

In the vaccinated group, consisting of 42 individuals who never had COVID-19,



Virus shield: A beneficiary taking a jab during a vaccination drive in New Delhi on Monday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHAKAR

the neutralising antibodies were reduced by about 23% when tested against the Delta variant; 33% against AY.1 and nearly 47% against AY.3. These reductions were in comparison to a reference variant called B.1.

In those vaccinated who had COVID-19, the average number of antibodies produced was much higher, nearly 2.5 times higher than in those who had never had COVID-19. However the reductions were sharper — a

nearly 60% reduction when faced with the Delta variant, 70% compared with AY.1 and about 72% with AY.3.

The highest average neutralising antibodies were in those individuals with breakthrough infections, or who tested positive despite two doses.

Their average antibody levels were nearly three times that of the COVID-naive individuals but reduced by nearly 50% when tested against the Delta variant, by 65%

against AY.1 and 72% against AY.3.

Role of memory cells

"This demonstrates the possible role of memory cells in immune boosting with post-infection or infection after immunisation. The comparative analysis of all the groups revealed that the B.1.617.3 (AY.3) variant seems to be less susceptible to neutralisation followed by Delta AY.1 and Delta variants compared to B.1," the authors, including several senior scientists from the ICMR, noted in their preprint publication, which is yet to be peer-reviewed.

Despite these reductions, the authors said the antibody levels remained protective. "However, with the observed high titres, the sera of individuals belonging to all the aforementioned groups they would still neutralise the Delta, Delta AY.1 and B.1.617.3 (AY.3) variants effectively," they noted.

PM Modi launches digital payment solution e-RUPI

It is a symbol of how India is progressing, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched e-RUPI, a person and purpose-specific cashless digital payment solution, via videoconference on Monday.

Mr. Modi said the e-RUPI voucher was a symbol of how India was progressing by connecting people's lives with technology. He expressed happiness that this reform initiative had come at a time when the country was celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav on the 75th anniversary of Independence.

e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment, an official statement said, adding that it is a QR code or SMS string-based e-voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.

In addition to the government, if any organisation wanted to help someone for his or her treatment, educa-



PM Narendra Modi launching the digital platform. PTI

He asserted how technology was bringing in transparency in transactions and creating new opportunities and making them available to the poor. For reaching today's unique product, the foundation was prepared over the years by creating the JAM system, which connected mobile and Aadhaar. "Benefits of JAM took some time to be visible to people and we saw how we could help the needy during the lockdown period while other countries were struggling to help their people," he said.

More than ₹1.50 lakh crore had been transferred directly to the accounts of people via the Direct Benefit Transfer, he said. "More than 3,000 schemes are using DBT and 90 crore Indians are being benefited in some way or the other through in areas like LPG, ration, medical treatment, scholarship, pension and wage disbursement."

Zika virus: Centre rushes team to Maharashtra

It will work closely with State officials

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has rushed a multidisciplinary team to Maharashtra to monitor the Zika virus situation and support the State government in management of infections.

"A case of Zika has been reported in Pune district recently," a Ministry release said on Monday.

The three-member team consists of a public health expert from the office of the Regional Director, Pune; a

gynaecologist from Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi; and an entomologist from the National Institute of Malaria Research, ICMR, New Delhi.

The Ministry said the team would work closely with the State Health Department, take stock of the situation on ground and assess whether its action plan for Zika management was being implemented, and recommend necessary public health interventions for management of Zika.

Students upbeat in Punjab as schools reopen

VIKAS VASUDEVA
MOHALI

Students were upbeat in Punjab after physical classes started on Monday, following the government's decision to reopen schools for all classes amid the drop in COVID-19 cases.

At the Government Primary School in Kambali, students and teachers were jubilant. Most of the children were seen following COVID-19 norms.

"All the classes have started today and the cheerfulness among them is clearly visible. While we had been holding classes online over the past one year, physical



Back to school: Children attending class at a school in Amritsar on Monday. AFP

classes are better. There are children whose families are not financially very sound and cannot afford mobile phones or laptops or at

times spending on Internet data is a problem," Parminder Kaur, head teacher, told The Hindu.

"We have 394 students en-

rolled in Classes I to V and close to 200 students have come today, which is really encouraging. Some parents are yet to give written consent for sending their children. I am hopeful parents will give their consent in the coming days and more students will come to school," she said.

At the Government High School in Mauli Baidwan, principal Sanjeev said, "More than 50% have already come to school. We have a strength of 415. A sense of fear surrounding COVID-19 is natural among parents but most of them have left their wards on the campus after satisfying themselves of the safety steps we have implemented."

Playing with her classmate on the school playground Jasmeet, a Class III student, said, "I missed my friends. I am happy to be in school with my friend Rakhi. We will play the whole day and study a little."

Experts warn against mandatory food fortification

In letter to FSSAI, they say it will have adverse impact on health, livelihoods

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In a push back against the Centre's plan to mandatorily fortify rice and edible oils with vitamins and minerals, a group of scientists and activists has written to the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), warning of the adverse impacts on health and livelihoods. They cited multiple studies to show that dietary diversity and higher protein consumption are key to solving undernutrition in India, rather than adding a few synthetic micronutrients which could harm the health of consumers.

The letter, sent on Mon-

day to the FSSAI as well as to the Food, Agriculture and Health Ministries and the Ministry of Women and Child Development, was signed by 170 individuals and organisations, including eminent nutritionists, economists, doctors and farmers groups.

'Inconclusive evidence'

One of the signatories is Vee-na Shatrugna, former deputy director of the National Institute of Nutrition, who warned that "evidence supporting fortification is inconclusive and certainly not adequate before major national policies are rolled out".

The letter pointed to re-



Farm workers planting paddy seedlings. PTI

search were sponsored by food companies which would benefit from it, leading to conflicts of interest. Studies funded by the Nestle Nutrition Institute and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition were mentioned as cases in point.

The letter explained that a major problem with chemical fortification of foods is that nutrients don't work in isolation but need each other for optimal absorption. Undernutrition in India is caused by monotonous cereal-based diets with low consumption of vegetables and animal protein. "Adding one or two synthetic chemical vitamins and minerals will not solve the larger problem, and in undernourished populations can lead to toxicity," it said, citing a

2010 study that showed iron fortification causing gut inflammation and pathogenic gut microbiota profile in undernourished children.

The letter also argued that mandatory fortification would harm the vast informal economy of Indian farmers and food processors, including local oil and rice mills, and instead benefit a small group of multinational corporations.

Dietary diversity was a healthier and more cost-effective way to fight malnutrition, it said. "Once iron-fortified rice is sold as the remedy to anaemia, the value and the choice of naturally iron-rich foods like millets, varieties of green leafy vegetables and flesh foods will have been suppressed by a policy silence," it warned.

Over 58,000 rescued from child labour

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The number of children rescued or withdrawn from work has increased for the past four years, according to Union Labour and Employment Ministry data provided to the Lok Sabha on Monday.

Minister of State for Labour and Employment Rameswar Teli said in reply to a question about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child labour that the number of children rescued and mainstreamed had been 58,289 in 2020-2021, an increase from 54,894 in 2019-2020, 50,284 in 2018-2019 and 47,635 in 2017-2018.

Over 100 convicted in Vyapam scam cases

DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

More than 100 persons arraigned by the CBI in connection with the Vyapam scam cases have been convicted so far.

Among the latest convicted persons are a candidate in the Madhya Pradesh Police Constable Recruitment Test-2013, Om Prakash Tyagi, and a middleman named Satish Jatav. The CBI had taken over the probe from the State police in August 2015. The agency alleged that Mr. Tyagi had engaged a person to appear in the test in his place.

In another case, the CBI recently filed a supplementary chargesheet against 73 of them with respect to a

pre-medical test conducted in 2012. While 54 of them have been accused of manipulating digital data and the Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) answer sheets, 19 face the allegation of impersonation. The 19 accused candidates had deliberately left ovals of 120 to 130 questions blank in their OMR sheets following which the digital data of the answer sheets was manipulated by the accused Vyapam officials to assign them marks.

In several cases, students from outside Madhya Pradesh were allegedly engaged to appear in the test. The CBI found that 16 alleged impersonators were from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan.

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

TH CROSSWORD + 13316 (set by Neyantha)

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

- ACROSS
- 7 Little one brought back to bring down a collection of records (8)
 - 9 Nietzsche managed to conceal the outline (6)
 - 10 Did wrong by destroying real title in front of Democrat (3-7)
 - 11 Agile captain of sailors plying risky yachts (4)
 - 12 Grant's undergarment (4)
 - 13 Cynical vicars lacking leadership strangely suppress the wordless approval's reversal (8)

- 16 Surviving spouse gets dentist's directive to bottle a cry of pain (7)
- 18 Went weak in the knees from a chase inside the caves in retreat (7)
- 20 Roll back and let loose to adjust to a new home (8)
- 21 Last letter in the small test replaced by the chief provost for a joke (4)
- 23 Bow elicited by a number in recital (4)
- 24 Place to place a dining plate is up for discussion (2,3,5)
- 25 Object to the full measure after loss of note (6)
- 26 Possibly solitary supporter of the kings (8)

- DOWN
- 1 Pays a visit to get some stock market options (5)
 - 2 Heating response messed up reproduction without fertilization (15)
 - 3 Irritable model entering the location from the south captured inside the Philippines (7)
 - 4 Injured sailor gets taken out and put to work (4)
 - 5 Surprisingly chilly apology is, in a way, related to the science of life processes (15)
 - 6 Add exaggerated details to the doctor run out after spotting a duck flying around (9)
 - 8 Signal victory for the student to prevent a disaster (5)
 - 14 Quarrel with a Greek character on the radio (3)
 - 15 Stiff description of an animal's internals? (9)
 - 17 Cook's invitation in the Greek character's first letter gets pulled up (3)
 - 19 Credential review before aid withdrawal's a stand that could be taken by a politician (7)
 - 21 Raise doubt about half of a Canadian state being on top of a rift valley's borders (5)
 - 22 Trudge through melting snow inside the Oslo shack (5)
 - 24 Write up refusal above the axes with a gemstone (4)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13315

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Manifested life

All beings, with or without faith in the scriptures, are involved in some search that they hope will give them happiness. Naturally, they look for it in the objects of the world. But they do not know that the happiness is within their own self, which is the essence of Sat-chit-ananda, Eternity, consciousness and bliss. This self is the divine presence of the Supreme Self within. So, if one strives to look inwards rather than getting involved in this world and its cyclic activities, it is possible to rise to the level of the bliss, which is the goal of one's existence, pointed out Sri R. Krishnamurthy Satragil in a discourse. This is reiterated in all spiritual texts based on the scriptures, and most explicitly stated by the Lord in the Bhagavad Gita.

Sastras exhort people to know, understand and realise the Supreme Brahman who is unseen, unheard, unthinkable, and unknown. Then how is one to go about this quest? They say that sages and rishis have practised austerities and realised Him in the inner self and hence live in a state of bliss. In the fifteenth chapter, and earlier when the Lord revealed His divine form to Arjuna, it is shown that the manifested life is only a part of the Immutible Brahman. None can fathom what lies beyond both the manifest and unmanifest. The Lord's presence animates all that is perceived as manifest in this entire cosmic universe. So it follows that all beings in this universe, animate and inanimate, moving and unmoving, are sustained by the divine force. All beings belong to this world of manifestation. One has to discern between what is perishable and what is eternal and unchanging. The Supreme Lord is the sole ruler and controller and is above both the mutable and immutable. The highest wisdom is to realise that God is in all objects and worship Him.

U.S. pullout worsened Afghan crisis: Ghani

Security forces are up to the task to repel Taliban offensive in the next six months, says President

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KABUL

The Afghan President on Monday blamed the American troops' speedy pullout for the worsening violence in his country and said that his administration would now focus on protecting provincial capitals and major urban areas in the face of the rapidly advancing Taliban.

Ashraf Ghani also urged lawmakers to back a national mobilisation drive against the Taliban amid an intensifying war between the Taliban and Afghan government forces over the past few months as U.S. and NATO troops complete their pullout from the war-torn country.

"An imported, hasty" peace process — a reference to Washington's push for negotiations between Kabul and the Taliban — "not only failed to bring peace but created doubt and ambiguity" among Afghans, Mr. Ghani said in his address to Parliament.



Tight spot: President Ashraf Ghani inspecting a guard of honour as he arrives at the Parliament in Kabul. •REUTERS

The Afghan President arrived by helicopter for the extraordinary session of the house, called because of the dire situation on the ground.

The Taliban are now trying to seize provincial capitals after already taking large swaths of land and scores of

districts in more rural areas, as well as several key border crossings with neighbouring countries.

"The Taliban do not believe in lasting or just peace," Mr. Ghani said. He predicted a sea change on the battlefield "in the next six months" that would push the Taliban back, without

U.S. expands refugee programme for Afghans

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

The Biden administration on Monday expanded its efforts to evacuate at-risk Afghan citizens from Afghanistan. The State Department said it is widening the scope of Afghans eligible for refugee status in U.S. to include current and former

employees of U.S.-based news organisations, U.S.-based aid and development agencies and relief groups that receive U.S. funding. Current and former staff of the U.S. government and the NATO operation who don't meet the criteria for a dedicated programme for such workers are also covered.

elaborating any further.

He claimed that Afghan forces are up to the task and have the "capacity" to defeat the insurgents. But in past weeks, Afghan forces have struggled against the Taliban onslaught, and have often been left without reinforcements and resupplies.

On Sunday, the Afghan

armed forces spokesman, Gen. Ajmal Omar Shinwari, told reporters that three provinces in southern and western Afghanistan face critical security situations. Southern Kandahar — the birthplace of the Taliban — as well as Helmand and Herat provinces have witnessed several attacks.

J&K is integral & inalienable part of India, says Tirumurti

'If there needs to be a change in status, it is the vacation of PoK'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW YORK

Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India and if there needs to be a change in status it is the vacation of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), India's Permanent Representative to the UN and president of the UN Security Council for the month of August T.S. Tirumurti said on Monday.

India, currently a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2021-22 tenure, assumed the rotating presidency of the powerful UN organ for the month of August.

Briefing reporters at the UN Headquarters on Monday, Ambassador Tirumurti said India would host signature events on the key themes of maritime security, counter-terrorism and peacekeeping.



T.S. Tirumurti

In response to a question on Jammu and Kashmir and the abrogation of Article 370, Mr. Tirumurti said, "Right at the outset, I do want to make something very clear that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India. I think it's important to recognise that. And the issues relating to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are internal affairs of India. In fact, even the members of the Security Council, when

this was brought up, almost all of them agreed that this issue was not for the Council to discuss."

In response to another question on UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' statement of August 8, 2019, on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Tirumurti said, "As I told you, Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India. If there needs to be a change in status, it is the vacation of the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir."

The Secretary General's 2019 statement had recalled the 1972 agreement on bilateral relations between India and Pakistan — the Simla Agreement — which states that the final status of Jammu and Kashmir is to be settled by peaceful means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

ELSEWHERE



South Korea seeks to improve ties with North

South Korea said on Monday it will keep pushing to improve ties and resume talks with rival North Korea, despite the North's threat to rekindle animosities if Seoul holds its summertime military drills with the U.S. On Sunday night, Kim Yo-jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, warned the drills would seriously undermine efforts to restore mutual trust between the Koreas. AP

Israel top court delays decision on evictions

Israel's Supreme Court delayed a decision on Monday in the case of Palestinian families facing expulsion by Israeli settlers in annexed East Jerusalem, an issue that exploded into armed conflict in May. Palestinians said the offer was made that they remain in their properties in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood as "protected tenants", who would recognise Israeli ownership of the homes and pay a symbolic annual rent, but they refused the arrangement. AFP

33 killed as bus hits fuel truck in DR Congo

Thirty-three people died in a horrific collision between a fuel truck and a crowded bus in the Democratic Republic of Congo on Monday, police said on Monday. The victims were engulfed by a "huge fire sparked by the collision" overnight on Saturday in the west of the country, police said. The inferno occurred near Kibuba, along the national route between Kinshasa and Kikwit. AFP

Death toll triples to over 300 in China flooding

Majority of victims are from Zhengzhou

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING

More than 300 people died in recent flooding in central China, authorities said on Monday, three times the previously announced toll.

The Henan provincial government said 302 people died and 50 remain missing. The vast majority of the victims were in Zhengzhou, the provincial capital, where 292 died and 47 are missing. Ten others died in three other cities, officials said.

Record rainfall inundated the city on July 20, turning streets into rushing rivers and flooding at least part of a subway line. Video posted online showed vehicles being washed away and des-

perate people trapped in subway cars as the waters rose. Fourteen people died in the subway flooding. The previous death toll, announced on Friday, was 99.

Authorities said 189 people were killed by floods and mudslides, 54 in house collapses and 39 in underground areas such as basements, garages and subway Line.

The worst came after Zhengzhou was hit by 20 cm of rain in one hour starting at 4 p.m. on July 20, overwhelming the already drenched city. Children were trapped in schools, and stranded people stayed in their workplaces overnight.

Blazing inferno



Trail of destruction: A massive wildfire is raging through the seaside resort of Marmaris in Mugla province. The fires tearing through Turkey have destroyed huge swathes of forest and have forced the evacuation of tourists from hotels. •AFP

Millions under lockdown in China

Delta variant outbreak reaches over 20 cities, including Wuhan with 7 infections

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

Millions of people were confined to their homes in China on Monday as the country tried to contain its largest coronavirus outbreak in months including seven positive tests found in Wuhan, where the virus first emerged in late 2019.

China reported 55 new locally transmitted cases on Monday as an outbreak of the fast-spreading Delta variant reached over 20 cities in more than a dozen provinces.

The Wuhan cluster came after the official daily tally was released, but it was confirmed by state media, which said the infections had been traced to a train station.



Testing times: People maintain social distancing as they queue up to get tested for COVID-19 in Huanan. •AFP

"The seven were identified as migrant workers," Xinhua reported, citing COVID-19 prevention and control officials.

Major cities, including Beijing, have now tested millions of residents while cor-

doing off residential compounds and placing close contacts under quarantine.

Authorities in the capital met and agreed on the need to "raise vigilance, take strict precautions and defend (the city) to the death, sparing no

expense," in comments put out by the Beijing government.

'Situation grim'

Elsewhere, over 1.2 million residents were placed under strict lockdown for the next three days in the central city of Zhuzhou in Hunan province on Monday, as authorities roll out a citywide testing and vaccination campaign, according to an official statement. "The situation is still grim and complicated," the Zhuzhou government said.

China had previously boasted of its success in bringing domestic cases down to virtually zero after the coronavirus first emerged in Wuhan.

Military to help enforce Sydney lockdown

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY

Troops hit Sydney's streets on Monday to help enforce its prolonged lockdown, as stay-at-home orders in Australia's third-largest city Brisbane were extended to curb a worsening outbreak.

About 300 Australian Defence Force personnel will be deployed to the country's largest city after New South Wales state police requested military help to enforce COVID-19 rules.

Authorities have been struggling to stop the spread of the highly infectious Delta variant in Sydney — and ensure that residents follow containment rules.

Democrats call on Biden to extend eviction ban

3.6 million Americans face the risk

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House Democratic leaders called on the Biden administration to immediately extend the nation's eviction moratorium, calling it a "moral imperative" to prevent Americans from being put out of their homes during a COVID-19 surge.

An estimated 3.6 million Americans are at risk of eviction, some as soon as Monday.

Congress was unable to pass legislation swiftly to extend the ban, which expired at midnight Saturday, and the Democratic leaders said in a statement that it was now up to President Joe Biden's administration to act. They called on the administration to extend the moratorium through October 18.

'Moral imperative'

"Action is needed, and it must come from the Administration," Ms. Pelosi said in the statement signed by Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, Whip James E. Clyburn and Assistant Speaker Katherine Clark. "Science and reason demand that they must also extend the moratorium in light of the Delta variant. Doing so is a moral imperative."

The White House, which has urged localities and States to tap aid already approved by Congress, had no direct response to the Democrats' call for action.

Some Democratic lawmakers said they were caught by surprise last Thursday when Mr. Biden announced that he would not extend the moratorium again in the wake of a Supreme Court ruling that sug-



Nancy Pelosi

gested congressional action was necessary for another extension. Lawmakers were left with only days to act before the ban expired, creating frustration and exposing a rare rift with the administration.

On Sunday, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, said that Democrats had to "call a spade a spade" and pointed to her own party. "We cannot in good faith blame the Republican Party when House Democrats have a majority," she told CNN.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez and other Democrats joined Rep. Cori Bush, who camped outside the Capitol over the weekend in protest.

Landlords had argued for speeding up the distribution of rental assistance and opposed another extension of the moratorium.

Mr. Biden has called on local governments to "take steps" to disburse the funds. "There can be no excuse for any state or locality not accelerating funds to landlords and tenants that have been hurt during this pandemic," Mr. Biden said.

The White House has maintained that Mr. Biden wanted to extend the moratorium but that concerns remained over challenging the court.

Pak. polio vaccination team attacked, police officer killed

Third attack in two days on policemen aiding health workers

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PESHAWAR

Gunmen on Monday shot and killed a police officer assigned to protect a polio vaccination team in northwestern Pakistan, an official said. It was the third attack in two days on Pakistani policemen assigned to protect polio workers.

The deadly attack took place in the town of Kolachi in the Dera Ismail Khan district. Officer Dilwar Khan was on his motorcycle, heading to escort polio workers taking part in a nationwide campaign aimed at making Pakistan a polio-free state.

'Western conspiracy'

The gunmen fled the scene and a police search is under-

way, according to Mohammad Aslam, a local police official.

Pakistani militants often target polio teams and police assigned to protect them, claiming the vaccination campaigns are a Western conspiracy to sterilise children.

Two attacks targeted police working with polio teams on Sunday. In Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, gunmen killed a policeman returning home after security duty with polio workers. And a roadside bomb went off near a police van escorting a polio vaccination team in the district of South Waziristan, wounding an officer.

None of the medics on the polio teams were hurt in

these attacks. No one immediately claimed responsibility for any of the attacks.

Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan are the only two remaining countries in the world where polio is endemic, after Nigeria was last year declared free of the virus.

Last week, Prime Minister Imran Khan's government launched another polio vaccination drive in an effort to eradicate the crippling disease by the end of the year. According to authorities, as many as 23.6 million children are to be vaccinated in this latest anti-polio drive.

On Sunday, Aimal Khan, a spokesman for the anti-polio programme in northwestern Pakistan, said the vaccination effort would continue despite the challenges.

Malaysia MPs protest Parliament closure

Opposition lawmakers call it ploy by PM

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KUALA LAMPUR

Police blocked Opposition lawmakers from marching on Monday to protest a two-week lockdown of Malaysia's Parliament, which they consider another ploy for the embattled prime minister to dodge a no-confidence vote.

With a crucial parliamentary session due, Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin instead postponed it and Parliament will be shut for two weeks. The Health Ministry said Parliament was deemed a high-risk venue because four of 11 COVID-19 cases detected among staff and others were suspected to be the fast-spreading delta variant.

Lawmakers and activists questioned the timing of the announcement of Parli-

ment's closure, which came after the King rebuked Mr. Muhyiddin's government on Thursday for misleading Parliament on the status of ordinances it issued during the seven-month coronavirus state of emergency. The opposition filed a motion of no-confidence against Mr. Muhyiddin that was expected to have been raised on Monday.

Dozens of lawmakers gathered near Parliament held a banner calling for the resignation of Mr. Muhyiddin and his Cabinet.

Mr. Muhyiddin has led an unstable alliance since March 2020 after he initiated the downfall of the reformist government that won the 2018 elections. Parliament has been shut down for several months just after he took office.

Hong Kong Cantopop star charged for poll rally singing

Former lawmaker Au Nok-hin charged with 'corruption'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

A prominent Hong Kong popstar was charged on Monday with corruption for singing at an election rally of a pro-democracy politician, authorities said, the latest figure critical of China to face prosecution.

Anthony Wong Yiu-ming, a local Cantopop singer and one of the city's most visible LGBTQ activists, was arrested by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), which answers to the city's leader.

The watchdog said they charged Mr. Wong and former lawmaker Au Nok-hin with engaging in corrupt conduct by providing "entertainment to induce others to vote for the candidate" at



Anthony Wong Yiu-ming

a rally Mr. Au held on March 3, 2018 in the run-up to local legislature elections.

The arrests come as Hong Kong authorities carry out a widespread crackdown on dissent following huge and often violent pro-democracy protests two years ago. "At the rally, Wong per-

formed two songs on stage. At the end of the performance, he appealed to the participants of the rally to vote for Au at the election," the ICAC said.

The offence can lead to up to three years in jail and a fine of up to HK\$200,000 (\$26,000). Both Mr. Wong and Mr. Au will appear in court on Thursday to plea.

Hong Kong's anti-corruption watchdog has begun taking a more proactive role in bringing prosecutions against the city's pro-democracy opposition.

Last week, they announced corruption charges against jailed dissident Benny Tai and two others relating to pro-democracy adverts placed in newspapers five years ago.

MARKET WATCH

	02-08-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,951	0.69
US Dollar	74.34	0.10
Gold	46,917	-1.10
Brent oil	72.77	

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	692.00	17.50
Aslan Paints	2974.05	15.60
Axis Bank	721.15	12.25
Bajaj Auto	3841.55	11.95
Bajaj Finserv	14125.15	-97.05
Bajaj Finance	6200.50	-27.60
Bharti Airtel	565.15	3.50
BPLCL	457.80	12.30
Britannia Ind	3504.65	81.25
Cipla	921.05	1.00
Coal India	143.90	0.60
Divis Lab	4928.95	22.85
Dr Reddys Lab	4701.55	-9.65
Eicher Motors	2602.60	72.35
Grasim Ind	1591.65	40.30
HCL Tech	1035.40	10.45
HDFC	2462.05	20.90
HDFC Bank	1422.55	-3.80
HDFC Life	670.35	6.30
Hero MotoCorp	2782.20	18.90
Hindalco	445.80	1.00
Hind Unilever	2332.80	-0.50
ICI Bank	681.40	-1.10
IndusInd Bank	988.00	7.00
Infosys	1631.55	21.05
Indian Oil Corp	105.50	2.35
ITC	207.30	2.35
J&S Steel	746.70	9.75
Kotak Bank	1665.10	10.30
L&T	1613.95	12.50
M&M	757.70	14.60
Maruti Suzuki	7076.95	99.25
Nestle India Ltd.	17714.65	12.00
NTPC	117.75	-0.45
ONGC	117.10	1.80
PowerGrid Corp	171.00	-0.15
Reliance Ind	2072.50	37.20
SBI Life	1107.20	8.60
State Bank	434.90	3.10
Shree Cement	29294.25	1028.50
Sun Pharma	775.00	1.05
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	759.55	3.30
Tata Motors	296.85	2.90
Tata Steel	1410.05	-24.25
TCS	3219.40	51.95
Tech Mahindra	1210.70	1.15
Titan	1771.55	57.00
UltraTech Cement	7642.05	22.85
UPL	791.05	-17.50
Wipro	592.25	5.10

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.14	74.46
Euro	88.14	88.52
British Pound	103.08	103.57
Japanese Yen (100)	67.66	67.95
Chinese Yuan	11.48	11.53
Swiss Franc	81.91	82.26
Singapore Dollar	54.85	55.09
Canadian Dollar	59.49	59.75
Malaysian Ringgit	17.55	17.63

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Pandemic compels SIAM to defer auto exposition

NEW DELHI
The next edition of the Indian automobile exposition, dubbed Auto Expo - The Motor Show, scheduled to be held between February 2 and 9, has been deferred on account of the uncertainty related to the impact of the pandemic going forward, industry body, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) said.

Renault starts exporting Kiger SUVs to S.Africa

CHENNAI
Renault India has commenced exports of its sub 4 metre compact SUV Kiger to South Africa. Renault's diverse range of offerings in passenger vehicles has been consistently well received by the people of South Africa, said Venkatram Mamillapalle, country CEO & MD. Renault Kiger will further bolster our existing portfolio in the country, he added.

'Services exports rose 24% in June from May'

MUMBAI
India's services exports increased 24.1% month-on-month to \$19.72 billion in June, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said. It further said imports in June were valued at \$11.14 billion, up 24.8% on a sequential basis. The RBI said monthly data on services are provisional and are likely to undergo revision when the balance of payments (BoP) data are released on a quarterly basis. PTI

RBL Bank posts ₹459-cr. loss on higher provisions

MUMBAI
Private sector lender RBL Bank on Monday reported a loss of ₹459.47 crore for the June quarter as against a profit of ₹141 crore in the year-earlier period as the money set aside for future loan setbacks shot up by nearly three-times. The bank said 97% of its overall gross slippages of ₹1,342 crore came from the retail segment which was hit by the second wave. PTI

PMI hints at manufacturing recovery

Sector stops shedding jobs for first time in 16 months amid a rebound, IHS Markit's July survey shows

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's manufacturing sector stopped shedding jobs for the first time in 16 months in July even as it rebounded from June's sharp contraction to post its best performance in three months, IHS Markit's Purchasing Managers' Index survey showed.

Manufacturing PMI, which had slipped into a contraction for the first time in 11 months at 48.1 in June, recovered to 55.3 with a marginal increase in employment last month, the research firm said, adding that it was, however, premature to call it a complete rebound in the manufacturing jobs market.

"Although marginal, the rise in employment was the first since the onset of COVID-19," Pollyanna De Lima,



Spark of hope: In tandem with rising production needs, manufacturers hired extra workers in July. • REUTERS

economics associate director at IHS Markit, said in the PMI release. "With firms' cost burdens continuing to rise, however, and signs of spare capacity still evident, it's too

early to say that such trend will be sustained in coming months," she cautioned, adding, however, that the industry's recovery from the June blip was 'encouraging'.

'Willing to hand over VIL stake'

Birla tells Centre 'overseas investors need clarity' on norms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla has told the Centre he is 'willing' to hand over his stake in the struggling telco to any public or private entity that would ensure the firm's survival.

In a June 7 letter to Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, a copy of which has been seen by *The Hindu*, Mr. Birla said potential foreign investors were hesitant to invest in Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) due to lack of clarity from the government on issues such as adjusted gross revenue (AGR) liability, moratorium on spectrum payments and floor pricing.

Mr. Birla emphasised that without the government's immediate support on these three issues, VIL's financial



Kumar Mangalam Birla

situation would drive its operations to an "irretrievable point of collapse". He added that though VIL had been trying to raise ₹25,000 crore to sustain operations and pay governmental dues, potential investors - mostly non-Chinese - wanted to see "clear government intent to have a three-player telecom market... through positive actions on long-standing requests such as clarity on

AGR liability, adequate moratorium on spectrum payments and most importantly, a floor pricing regime above the cost of service".

Mr. Birla holds more than 27% in VIL while the U.K.'s Vodafone plc holds in excess of 44%.

Despite efforts to raise efficiency over the past year, VIL's financial condition "particularly the liquidity position) has sharply deteriorated," he wrote.

According to official data, the telecom services provider's AGR liability is about ₹58,254 crore, of which it has paid ₹7,854.37 crore. In addition, as of March 31, the company owed ₹96,270 crore in deferred spectrum payment obligations and ₹23,000 crore to banks and financial institutions.

PNB net rises more than threefold, expenses slide

Interest income dips, GNPA's climb

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

State-owned Punjab National Bank on Monday reported a more than threefold jump in standalone net profit to ₹1,023.46 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, mainly due to a decline in operating expenses and 'good' recovery.

The bank had posted net profit of ₹308.45 crore a year earlier. Total income declined to ₹22,515 crore from ₹24,292.80 crore, Punjab National Bank (PNB) said in a regulatory filing. Interest income fell to ₹18,921 crore from ₹20,638 crore.

Operating profit increased to ₹6,098.65 crore from ₹5,280 crore. Operating expenses dipped to ₹4,722 crore from ₹5,156 crore. Total recovery, including cash recovery and upgradation improved to

NMDC logs higher sales, production

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

India's largest iron ore producer NMDC has reported a nearly 40% jump in production and 28% higher sales for July.

Iron ore production stood at 3.06 million tonnes as against 2.19 MT in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. Production in Chhattisgarh was 2.08 MT (1.56 MT), while it was 0.98 MT (0.63 MT) in Karnataka, the company said in a filing.

The public sector mining company registered a sales of 3.29 MT (2.57 MT) in July.

The performance comes on the back of the best ever June performance, when the company registered an 18% year-on-year increase in iron ore production at 2.98 MT and 28% more sales at 3.18 MT.



₹8,270 crore, PNB said.

The lender said it had availed of the dispensation for deferment of provision of ₹392.69 crore in respect of frauds, as per RBI norms.

Asset quality was impaired further with gross non-performing assets (NPAs) reaching 14.33% of gross advances by June 30, from 14.11% a year earlier and 14.12% as at March 2021.

The capital adequacy ratio of the bank was at 15.19% by June-end, compared with 12.63% a year earlier.

Policybazaar files papers for ₹6,017.5-cr. IPO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

PB Fintech, that operates online insurance platform Policybazaar and credit-comparison portal Paisabazaar, has filed preliminary papers with market regulator SEBI to raise ₹6,017.50 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of ₹3,750 crore worth of equity shares and an offer for sale (OFS) of ₹2,267.50 crore by existing shareholders, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

The firm may consider raising about ₹750 crore by way of private placement. Proceeds of the fresh issue will be used towards enhancing visibility and awareness of the company's brands.

'Each Paytm Money user invested ₹70,000 in FY21'

MFs attracted 64% of the users: study

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Paytm Money said its users invested an average of ₹70,000 in various asset classes in FY21, with mutual funds (MFs) being one of the more popular choices.

Some 64% of users invested in MFs, 28% in equity and the rest in gold, Paytm said in a report.

Some 44% of the total user base belonged to five States viz. Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Karnataka, it added.

Interestingly, over 80% of investors were below 35 years of age. Also, the platform has seen the number of female investors, who experimented and invested using the platform, double compared with last year. Some of the most sold



MFs on the platform during the last fiscal included Axis Bluechip Fund (Growth Plan) with 1.2 lakh users investing more than ₹200 crore in this fund.

"In the last one year, we have seen a transformation in the way our users invested," said Varun Sridhar, CEO, Paytm Money said. "We believe that wealth management needs to be democratised, embraced and adopted by all."

"Output rose at a robust pace, with over one-third of companies noting a monthly expansion in production, amid a rebound in new business and the easing of some local COVID-19 restrictions. Should the pandemic continue to recede, we expect a 9.7% annual increase in industrial production for calendar" 2021, she said.

Improving global demand helped bolster manufacturers' order books with IHS Markit noting that new export orders expanded markedly in July, following a moderate contraction in June.

"Rising sales supported a recovery in output, which increased in July after falling for the first time in 11 months during June. The rate of production growth was sharp and outpaced its long-run av-

erage," the firm said.

In tandem with rising production requirements, manufacturers hired extra workers in July. The increase in employment, while 'mild', ended a 15-month sequence of job shedding, it noted.

Sentiment still 'subdued'

Producers still remain concerned about the pandemic's path and positive sentiment 'remained historically subdued', the firm said.

"With demand for inputs outstripping supply, there was another substantial increase in purchasing prices. The rate of cost inflation remained above its long-run average, but eased to a seven-month low," IHS Markit noted, based on its survey of 400 manufacturing sector purchasing managers.

'No formal proposal from Cairn to settle dispute'

Centre faces \$1.2-bn payout to the firm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Facing a payout of \$1.2 billion-plus interest after an arbitration award went against it, the government on Monday said it had not received any formal proposal from Britain's Cairn Energy plc to resolve the issue within the country's legal framework.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, MoS (Finance) Pankaj Chaudhary said the arbitration tribunal, which had its seat in the Hague, had on December 31, 2020, ruled in favour of Cairn. "It has asked India to pay Cairn an award amount of \$1.2328 billion plus interest and \$22.38 million towards arbitration and legal costs," he said.



"An order has been passed by a French court freezing certain Indian Government properties in Paris," the Minister said.

"The same has been communicated through diplomatic channels." Asked if Cairn had offered any kind of amicable solution to the dispute, he said, "No formal proposal for a solution within the country's legal framework has been received."

HDFC net dips a tad; 'second wave impacts NPAs, collections'

Demand strong, buyers prefer ready-to-occupy units: Mistry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (HDFC) on Monday said first-quarter standalone net profit was marginally lower at ₹3,000.67 crore compared with ₹3,051.52 crore a year earlier, on account of lower dividend income and declining profit on sale of investments.

However, consolidated net profit for the quarter rose 31% to ₹5,311 crore.

Profit on sale of investments stood at ₹263 crore compared with ₹1,241 crore a year earlier; dividend income stood lower at ₹16 crore compared with ₹298 crore. Net interest income (NII) rose 22% to ₹4,147 crore. The collection efficiency ratio for individual loans improved to 98.3% in



Keki Mistry

June compared with 98% in March. "Individual NPAs increased due to slippages on account of the impact of the second wave of the pandemic," vice-chairman and CEO Keki Mistry said in a conference call.

"Collection efforts were hindered due to recovery teams being unable to do field visits during the lockdown," he added. "Also, various court orders tempora-

'Govts. must help cut car buying cost to lift sales'

Maruti flags high tax rates, input costs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over a steady decline in the growth of car sales in the last decade, Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL) chairman R.C. Bhargava said the industry was unlikely to witness reasonable growth rates unless the Central and State governments work towards reducing the initial acquisition cost of cars.

"The slowing in the demand for cars is largely because the cost of acquisition by consumers has increased due to various reasons like regulatory changes, depreciation of the rupee, increase in cost of raw materials and taxes imposed by State governments," he said in the company's annual report. The Goods and Services Tax (GST) on cars, based on past excise rates, was much higher than in other major countries, he added.

On the outlook for Maruti, he said, while in March the company was quite optimistic about the prospects for FY22, the suddenness and ferocity of the second wave of the pandemic was a surprise to all and led to lockdowns and restrictions in most parts of the country. The performance in the next three quarters, he said, would depend largely on how effectively citizens follow the government's directions on vaccination and observe safety protocols. "If we can avert the third wave, or substantially reduce its effect, and there are no further waves, economic activities and sales of cars can improve significantly over what was achieved last year," he said.

He said Maruti Suzuki expected to be able to work smoothly and without disruptions as more than 90%



of its employees and their families were expected to have been vaccinated by the end of August.

There was a need to reduce import of oil and harmful emissions, he said, adding that in India, the use of CNG, particularly for small cars, had proved highly acceptable to customers.

"Our company will also seek to improve the technology for CNG cars. Hybrid technology also leads to a significant reduction in fuel consumption and emissions and is another area for our engineers to work. Thus, these two technologies, coupled with biofuels, gives the country a means of moving towards the final goal of net-zero emission," he said.

'Unprecedented rise'

In the report, the company's MD and CEO Kenichi Ayukawa added that the challenges in FY21 were not only limited to human safety and business continuity, but also extended to delay in new model development and significant cost pressures led by an unprecedented rise in the prices of commodities throughout the year.

Foreign exchange movement remained adverse during the year. Given uncertainty around the sustenance of demand, the company had undertaken a 'cautious approach' in raising car prices, he said.

Resumption slips a second week: Nomura

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Business resumption activities declined for the second consecutive week after a multi-week increase since the ebbing of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Japanese brokerage Nomura said in a statement on Monday.

The Nomura India Business Resumption Index fell to 95 for the week ended August 1, from 95.9 in the previous week, the brokerage said, adding that the level of activity was now 5 percentage points below the pre-pandemic levels.

This is similar to the post-first wave situation, when business resumption reached the near-normal peak, before consolidating, the brokerage noted.

"The key question is whether this softness will persist," Nomura said.

CUMI profit leaps to ₹63 cr. as sales rise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Carborundum Universal Ltd.'s (CUMI) standalone net profit for Q1 FY22 jumped sixfold to ₹63 crore on better volumes.

Income from operations almost doubled to ₹465 crore following a rise in sales volume from abrasives, ceramics and electro minerals, it said in a filing.

Segment wise, income from abrasives more than doubled to ₹224 crore, ceramics rose from ₹79 crore to ₹141 crore and electro-minerals to ₹134 crore (₹65 crore). The firm's step-down subsidiary Foskor Zirconia Pty. Ltd., South Africa (FZL) had incurred a loss of ₹4.11 crore of which ₹2.10 crore had been considered in the group's consolidated financials.

CG Power turns ₹44.5-cr. net, costs impact margin

TII arm's sales surge to ₹954 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd. has turned a standalone net profit of ₹44.5 crore for Q1 of FY22.

The firm, acquired by Tube Investments of India (TII) last year, had posted a net loss of ₹421.8 crore in the year-earlier period, the firm said in a filing.

Revenue from operations surged more than fourfold to ₹954 crore. The results included an exceptional item of about ₹5 crore on account of foreign exchange losses.

Material costs impacted margins on account of the continuous rise in prices of key commodities such as steel and copper.

However, the company was able to partially mitigate the impact through

prior procurement and pricing strategies.

There was no material impact on the group due to COVID-19, it added.

However, it said that during the quarter, operations at its plants were impacted due to lockdown and movement restrictions imposed in the wake of COVID second wave.

During the quarter, one of the erstwhile lenders to an erstwhile subsidiary had demanded entire outstanding amount of corporate guarantee worth ₹148.5 crore against principally agreed terms of settlement and this is being contested, the company said.

The company has made a provision of ₹33.63 crore in relation to such settlement. (With PTI inputs)

Va Tech Wabag bags ₹1,230-cr. Russian order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Va Tech Wabag, a leading pure-play water technology firm, has bagged a ₹1,230-crore order from Russia-based Amur Gas Chemical Complex LLC.

This order in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, especially in the Russian Federation, also marks Wabag's largest order in the oil and gas sector, the company said in a statement.

Wabag shall be the technology and system integrator for the waste water treatment unit. The facility will be designed to recycle and re-use the waste water released from the petrochemical unit, substituting about 25% of the raw water intake requirement, Va Tech Wabag said.

Indian women tame mighty Australia, march into semifinals

Gurjit fetches the winner as well as leads the defence in keeping the dangerous Aussies at bay; goalkeeper Ravita has a great day



SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

The Indian women's hockey team punched above its weight to beat World No. 2 Australia 1-0 and storm into the semifinals of the Tokyo Olympics.

The Indians continued their fairytale run and joined the men's team in the last-four stage. On Wednesday, the women will face Argentina, which beat Germany 3-0.

The Aussies – table-toppers in Pool A – served India

an early warning as Ambrosia Malone hit the post in the second minute.

But, thereafter, the Indian defence grew in confidence as Gurjit Kaur and Monika kept the opposition at bay. Savita Punia enjoyed a fantastic outing in goal, coming up with nine brilliant saves.

Near miss

Skipper Rani Rampal came close to putting India ahead in the ninth minute when she parried Vandana Katariya's pass but was denied by the post.

The first penalty corner of the game came in the 20th minute when Nisha was penalised for a push on Ambrosia. The defence was up to the task as it blocked three attempts.

India went ahead two minutes later.

Gurjit Kaur, who had failed to convert her last nine penalty corner attempts, rose to the occasion when it mattered, and her fierce drag-flick went between a defender's legs and took a touch of another's stick before nestling into the bottom of the goal.

Salima Tete made a scintillating run shortly after and skipped past two defenders but failed to keep her attempt on target. The momentum had slowly shifted in India's favour and Australia was struggling to get a hold of the ball.

But, in the 33rd minute when Australia did have possession, it let slip three penalty corner chances. And a shot on goal found Savita blocking the way.

Australia, the three-time Olympic champion, fought

tooth and nail in the final quarter.

It won a penalty corner in the 51st minute that was blocked by Savita and Monika made a goal-line save in the next minute.

Rising tension

The tension in the camp increased as Australia won penalty corners in the 56th and 57th minutes, but Savita booted away the first and pulled off a sprawling save on the second.

The women have moved into the medal round for the first time since finishing fourth in 1980.

Coach Sjoerd Marjine had earlier said his side's defence needed to turn up and they did so in style, keeping a clean sheet against the Aussies who had scored 11 goals in the group stages.



The heroine! Gurjit Kaur, left, scores and her teammates cannot hide their joy. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

'Put every drop of energy into the next 60 minutes'

Skipper Rani reveals how the team motivated itself for the quarterfinal clash against Australia



Savouring the moment: The Indians celebrate the result of executing their plan to perfection. • PTI

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

The heavens wept and so did the Indians.

When the hooter went off some sank to their knees, others looked to the heavens in disbelief and the bench ran onto the pitch. It was perhaps the fastest 50m dash of their lives.

The women's hockey team had done the unthinkable, beating three-time Olympic champion Australia for a place in the semifinals.

Super proud

"I seriously don't know what to say. I am super proud of the team. Before the game we told each other 'just give everything you have on the pitch today. Don't look ahead, it's the next 60 minutes that count. Put every drop of energy into the next 60 minutes and stick to your

roles," skipper Rani Rampal said. The women executed the plan with surgical precision. They split open the Australian backline at will, scored the all-important goal and stitched it up with a leak-proof defence.

The match-winning goal came from Gurjit Kaur, one of the seniors in this young squad. Gurjit had been under pressure throughout this campaign – the defence had shipped in 14 goals ahead of the quarterfinals and she had not converted any of her penalty corners. But on Monday, she struck gold.

"We had only one penalty corner and it was important to convert that. It was great that my team created the chance for me and each of us gets credit for it," she said, humble in victory.

Another heroine, goalkeeper Savita said the team

had been primed to play Australia.

"We wanted to face Australia in the quarterfinal because we have played them earlier and know that we can play our natural game against them. They give us space and we took advantage of that today," she said.

Coach Sjoerd Marjine said he had never lost faith in the squad despite the three successive losses at first.

Self-belief

"We believed in ourselves and the dream that these women have chased. We don't concern ourselves with the 'what ifs'. We focus on our job as a team and as individuals, and that's why we have made it so far," he said.

This bunch of 16 women have dared to dream. And we're living the dream with them.

'Winning back to back medals special'

Training in Gachibowli Stadium the best decision: Sindhu

BADMINTON

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

For P.V. Sindhu, the pain of missing an opportunity to have another crack at the Olympic gold medal stands replaced by the joy of adding a bronze to her collection.

"After the loss in the semifinals (to Tai Tzu-ying), I was really sad. I was in tears but my coach (Park Tae-sang) said it was not over yet. Park reminded me that there is a lot of difference between winning the bronze and coming fourth.

Focusing hard

"That really hit me and I started focusing hard on the match (against He Bingjiao)," said Sindhu at a virtual press conference along with Park. Going on to share the moment when she won the



Sindhu. • PTI

bronze-medal point, Sindhu said, "I was blank, my coach was literally in tears, it was a big moment. I hugged him and said 'Thank you'."

"I didn't know what to do for 5-6 seconds. I shouted, so all emotions came together at that moment. Winning back to back medals was very special." Sindhu said it was the de-

cision to train at Gachibowli Stadium early this year that helped her win a medal.

"We had this opportunity to play in conditions similar to those in the Olympics. So from February we have been playing there. It really helped us because drift played a big role (in the playing hall in Tokyo) and I learnt a lot in Gachibowli. In the last few months, I learnt to control the shuttle better."

For Park, Sindhu's bronze medal meant the world. "For the first time in my coaching career, my player has won an Olympic medal," said the jubilant Korean, a men's singles quarterfinalist in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

"When I took over, Sindhu was already an Olympic star. We worked hard on her defence and were going for a happy result. I believed in her."

MEDALS RACE

Country	G	S	B	T
China	29	17	16	62
USA	22	25	17	64
Japan	17	6	10	33
Australia	14	4	15	33
ROC	12	21	17	50
Great Britain	11	12	12	35
France	6	10	7	23
Germany	6	6	11	23
S Korea	6	4	9	19
Netherlands	5	7	6	18
62. India	0	1	1	2

ROC: Russian Olympic Committee

Allman dances her way to discus gold as Kamalpreet finishes sixth

Bakkali ends Kenya's winning streak in steeplechase; Tentoglou delivers; Sifan starts her quest for a treble

ATHLETICS

STAN RAYAN

As a little girl, American Valerie Allman was a very good dancer and excelled in ballet, tap, jazz and contemporary dance. Impressed with her height and coordination, her high school coach advised her to take up athletics.

She attempted the sprints and high jump and came to discus throw by accident, trying the event with an eye on the throwers' annual spaghetti dinner.

Allman danced her way to the discus throw gold with an opening-round effort of 68.98m that left the others fighting for minor medals at the Tokyo Olympics on Monday.

Indian hearts were wildly



Running away with it: Valerie Allman's first heave of the disc was enough to land the top spot for the American, while Morocco's Soufiane El Bakkali took the steeplechase honours ahead of Ethiopia's Lamecha Girma. • GETTY IMAGES, AP

dancing too but in the end, Kamalpreet Kaur – who had raised hopes of bringing the country's first-ever medal in athletics – finished sixth with a third-round 63.70m on a

rainy night which left the throwing circle slippery midway through and the throwers were given a short break.

Kamalpreet's national record 66.59m, which came in

the Indian GP in June, would have fetched her the bronze. But that was not to be.

The 25-year-old Punjab athlete's other two legal throws were 61.62 and 61.37.

Her sixth place equalled Krishna Poonia's sixth place at the 2012 Olympics, the best by an Indian discus thrower.

Dutee Chand (PB: 23s,

2018 Asiad silver) finished last in her heat, and 38th overall, in the women's 200m in 23.85s. It was her first run over that distance this year.

Greece's Miltiadis Tentog-

glou, this season's world leader with 8.60m, took the men's long jump title with a last-round effort of 8.41m.

That put him on level terms with Juan Miguel Echevarria's third round effort but the Greek triumphed as his next best jump (8.15) was better than the Cuban's (8.09).

Moroccan Soufiane El Bakkali ended Kenya's winning streak by taking the men's 3000m steeplechase gold (8:08.90s) while Ethiopia's Lamecha Girma and Kenya's Benjamin picked the other two medals.

And Dutchwoman Sifan Hassan, who is aiming for a distance treble, won her first, the 5000m in 14:36.79s after a patient waiting game while Jasmine Camacho-Quinn took the women's 100m hurdles.

GOLD MEDAL WINNERS ON MONDAY

Liu Yang (Chn): Artistic Gymnastics: Men's Rings
Shin Jea-hwan (Kor): Artistic Gymnastics: Men's Vault
Jade Carey (USA): Artistic Gymnastics: Women's Floor
Soufiane el Bakkali (Mar): Athletics: Men's 3000m steeplechase
Miltiadis Tentoglou (Gre): Athletics: Men's Long Jump
Sifan Hassan (Ned): Athletics: Women's 5000m

Jasmine Camacho-Quinn (Pur): Athletics: Women's 100m Hurdles
Valerie Allman (USA): Athletics: Women's Discus
Viktor Axelsen (Den): Badminton: Men's Singles
Greysia Polli & Apriyani Rahayu (Ina): Badminton: Women's Doubles
China: Cycling Track: Women's Team Sprint
Great Britain: Equestrian: Eventing Jumping Team
Julia Krajewski (Ger): Equestrian: Eventing Individual Jumping
Changhong Zhang (Chn): Shooting: Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions
Jean Quiquampoix (Fra): Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol
Wang Zhouyu (Chn): Weightlifting: Women's 87kg
Li Wenwen (Chn): Weightlifting: Women's +87kg
Luis Orta (Cub): Wrestling: Men's Greco-Roman 60kg
Mijain Lopez (Cub): Wrestling: Men's Greco-Roman 130kg
Aline Rotter-Focken (Ger): Wrestling: Women's Freestyle 76kg



Miltiadis Tentoglou. • AFP

Kamalpreet hints at cricket career

Says she was training with a bat as well as a discus in January

SHYAM VASUDEVAN
TOKYO

Kamalpreet Kaur is not too fond of the rain, especially when she competes. But as Mother Nature would have it, the Tokyo Olympic Stadium was drenched with a heavy spell as the 25-year-old discus thrower finished sixth in her maiden Olympics.

The downpour made Kamalpreet anxious as she was afraid of falling and getting injured. "I was nervous from the first throw. It began to rain as soon as I started to feel better and that drained my confidence again because I have never performed well in wet weather," she said. "I am not at all happy. I was hoping to go home with a medal," she said.

Kamalpreet was, however, thrilled to share space with Sandra Perkovic, who



Unexpected twist: Kamalpreet feels that the wet weather dampened her hopes of a medal. • REUTERS

won gold in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics.

"She's my inspiration. When I qualified for the final, she saw me in the dining hall and came up to congratulate me. It was a dream come true. I felt a little bad that she finished fourth today," she said.

She hinted at swapping the discus for a cricket bat.

"I like cricket more. I'll tell you something that nobody knows – I played cricket in January."

"I am fond of batting. Though I like fast bowling, the bowling action and discus action are different and there is a scope for injury. I yearn to play for the Indian women's cricket team one day."

INDIANS IN ACTION

Athletics: Women: Javelin (Qualification - Group A): Annu Rani, 5.50 a.m.; **Men: Shot put (Qualification - Group A):** Tajinderpal Singh Toor, 3.45 p.m.
Hockey: Men (Semifinals): vs Belgium, 7 a.m.
Wrestling: Women's Freestyle 62kg (1/8 final, from 8.30 a.m.): Sonam Malik vs Bolortuya Khurelkhuu (Mgl).

MEDAL EVENTS

24 Gold medals are on offer at the Games on Tuesday
Artistic Gymnastics: Men's Parallel Bars, Men's Horizontal Bar, Women's Balance Beam
Athletics: Men's 400m Hurdles, Men's Pole Vault, Women's 200m, Women's 800m, Women's Long Jump, Women's Hammer Throw
Boxing: Men's Welter, Women's Feather
Canoe Sprint: Men's Kayak Single 1000m, Men's Canoe Double 1000m, Women's Kayak Single 200m, Women's Kayak Double 500m,
Cycling Track: Men's Team Sprint, Women's Team Pursuit
Diving: Men's 3m Springboard
Sailing: Men's One Person Dinghy (Heavyweight), Men's Multihull-Nacra 17 Foiling
Weightlifting: Men's 109kg
Wrestling: Men's Greco-Roman 77kg, Men's Greco-Roman 97kg, Women's Freestyle 68kg

INDIAN ODYSSEY

Athletics: Women: Discus (final): 6. Kamalpreet Kaur; **200m (round 1, heat 4):** 7. Dutee Chand, Did Not Qualify (DNQ) for semifinals.
Equestrian: Individual eventing: 23. Fouaad Mirza.
Hockey: Women (quarterfinals): bt Australia 1-0.
Shooting: Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions: Qualification: 21. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, 32. Sanjeev Rajput. DNQ for final.

IOC looking into Saunders' gesture



Saunders. • REUTERS

REUTERS
TOKYO

The International Olympic Committee is looking into the gesture Raven Saunders made after the shot put silver medalist raised her arms in an X above her head on Sunday. The American had said her gesture was intended as a sign of support for the downtrodden.

The IOC is in contact with World Athletics, the international governing body for the sport, and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee.

Axelsen dethrones Chen for gold

Danish World No. 2 becomes first non-Asian men's singles champion since 1996

TOKYO OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Denmark's Viktor Axelsen won the Olympic badminton gold on Monday in Tokyo, becoming the first non-Asian man to win the singles title since 1996.

World No. 2 Axelsen beat China's defending champion Chen Long 21-15, 21-12, taking control early and never loosening his grip in a relentless performance.

Axelsen, who won bronze at the 2016 Rio Games, followed in the footsteps of compatriot Poul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen, the Atlanta Games champion and the last winner from outside Asia.

In attendance

Hoyer-Larsen, now world badminton's president, was in the arena to watch Axelsen match his achievement.

World No. 6 Chen was bid-



Momentous feat: Denmark's Viktor Axelsen gives vent to his emotions after besting defending champion Chen Long of China in the final. *REUTERS

BADMINTON

ding to emulate fellow Chinese Lin Dan in retaining his title.

But Axelsen held his nerve with the prize in sight, then broke into disbelief-

sobs when Chen hit the final shot long. Earlier, Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu won the women's doubles, breaking a Chinese stranglehold and claiming Indonesia's first title of the Games.

The pair beat China's

Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan 21-19, 21-15. China had won every women's doubles gold but two since badminton's debut at the 1992 Games, but the Indonesians came flying out of the blocks and never let up until the final point.

Biles helps Carey 'kill' the floor

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

American Jade Carey singled out Simone Biles' role in helping her to sweep her rivals off the floor for Olympic gold on Monday, 24 hours after trailing in a tearful last on the vault.

Carey tumbled her way to a score of 14.366 to take the title from Italian 30-year-old veteran Vanessa Ferrari.

For Carey, coached in Tokyo by her father Brian, this was rapid redemption after she stumbled on landing on her first vault on Sunday and cut a sorrowful figure after her second jump.

"Simone especially was helping me let it go and move on. She said, 'It happened, and you can't do anything about it.' She was like, 'Let's go out and kill floor', and that's what I did," said Carey.

Krajewski jumps into history, Fouaad 23rd



Phenomenal achievement: Julia Krajewski became the first female rider to win gold in individual eventing. *AP

EQUESTRIAN

AGENCIES
TOKYO

Germany's Julia Krajewski became the first individual female athlete to win Olympic gold in individual eventing, since it became a mixed event in 1964, with a near-flawless final jump on her horse Amande de B'Neville

at the Games on Monday.

Indian equestrian Fouaad Mirza and his horse Seigneur Medcott finished 23rd out of 25 as equestrian programme concluded following dressage and cross country over the past three days.

Britain's Oliver Townend, Laura Collett and Tom McEwen on Monday won the team gold.

SC asks PCI to include shooter Naresh for Tokyo

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Paralympic Committee of India to include shooter Naresh Kumar in the list of Indian athletes who will compete in the Paralympics Games in Tokyo scheduled to begin from August 24.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar passed the order after Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana referred the case for urgent hearing and relief on Monday.

Appearing for Naresh, senior advocate Vikas Singh said his client is qualified to compete as he had scored the necessary minimum qualifying scores (MQS) in international and domestic R7 metre shooting events.

Hopes pinned on star attractions Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia

The discipline expected to produce medal as Sonam, Seema, Anshu, Deepak, and Ravi are also keen to make a mark

WRESTLING

Y.B. SARANGI

Nineteen-year-old Sonam Malik will begin India's campaign in wrestling, which is expected to produce some medals, at the Olympics on Tuesday.

Sonam, the youngest in the seven-member squad, will meet Asian championships silver medalist Borotuya Khurelkhuu in a first round 62kg clash.

For India, the star attraction will be top-seeded Vinesh Phogat (53kg) and triple Worlds medalist

Bajrang Punia (65kg).

An in-form Vinesh, the only Indian woman wrestler to compete in two Olympics, stands a chance to erase her sad memories of Rio. Her biggest threat is Japanese Worlds silver medalist Mayu Mukaida, who has beaten the Indian multiple times.

Other big names

Twice Worlds medalist Chinese Pang Qianyu, 55kg American World champion Jacarra Winchester, Swedish World and Olympic medalist Sofia Mattsson, double World champion Vanesa Ka-



Bajrang Punia...ready to grapple. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ladzinshtaya from Belarus are the other big names.

Second-ranked superstar Bajrang, who has consistent-

ly got medals in elite events in the last few years, is another strong medal contender. Russian top seed and World champion Gadzhimurad Rashidov, former World champions Japanese Takuto Otoguro and Azerbaijanian Haji Aliyev will also be there in one of the most-competitive fields.

Rated highly

Fourth-seeded Ravi Dahiya (57kg), a Worlds bronze medalist who is rated highly, is keen to prove his worth.

His field comprises World champion Yuki Takahashi of Japan, Worlds medalists Su-

leyman Atli of Turkey and American Thomas Gilman among others.

Second-ranked Worlds silver medalist Deepak Punia (86kg) also faces a star-studded field, including World and Olympic champion Iranian Hassan Yazdani, Worlds bronze medalists Stefan Reichmuth of Switzerland and Artur Naifonov of Russia and former American World champion David Taylor.

Anshu Malik (57kg) and Seema Bisla (50kg) are also eager to make their mark.

For Anshu, World and Olympic champion Japa-

nese Risako Kawai, former World champion Rong Ningning of China, twice Worlds bronze medalist Belarusian Iryna Kurachkina and double World champion American Helen Maroulis are there in an extremely challenging field.

Top rivals

Triple Olympic medalist and multiple Worlds medalist Azerbaijani Maria Stadnik, double Worlds medalist Ana Vuc of Romania and Individual World Cup winner Russian Ekaterina Poleschuk are some top rivals in Seema's category.

Four-in-a-row for Cuba's Lopez

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

Cuban Greco-Roman wrestler Mijain Lopez became only the fourth athlete in history to win four Olympic golds in the same event as he successfully defended his heavyweight title again on Monday.

The 38-year-old, who beat Georgia's Iakobi Kajaia 5-0 in the final, joins Al Oerter (discus), Carl Lewis (long jump), and swimming legend Michael Phelps (200m medley) in the record books by winning the top weight category in four straight Games.



Mijain Lopez...phenom. *AP

He will be 41 by the time of the Paris 2024 Olympics, but did not rule out a bid for a record-breaking fifth gold.

'You need relentless madness'

Kohli on what it takes to win a five-Test series

INDIA IN ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOTTINGHAM

India captain Virat Kohli on Monday said it takes "relentless madness" and single-minded pursuit of excellence to win a Test series in England.

Led by Kohli, India will take on Joe Root's England in a gruelling five-match Test series, beginning here from Wednesday.

"I will answer your second question first, it takes relentless madness and pursuit of excellence every day over a five-Test series, to tell yourself I want to do the hard work and I want to get into situations, which are tough in every Test match on every day.

"And you are going to be ready for that kind of workload, and that kind of mental load," Kohli told 'Sky



Prize to play for: England's Joe Root and India's Virat Kohli with the series trophies ahead of the first Test. *GETTY IMAGES

Sports' when asked by former India wicket-keeper Dinesh Karthik on what it takes to win a Test series in England.

For Kohli personally, winning in England is nothing more than winning anywh-

ere else and it is all about the team culture of going for a win. "To answer your first question, for me personally, it means nothing more than winning a Test match or a Test series anywhere else in the world."

Concussed Mayank to miss opener

Batsman hit on the helmet during a nets session

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

Mayank Agarwal, who was tipped to open India's innings against England, has been ruled out of the first Test after suffering a concussion during a training session in Nottingham on Monday.

"Mayank was hit on the helmet while batting during India's nets session at Trent Bridge on Monday," the BCCI said in a statement. "The BCCI Medical Team assessed him, and a concussion test was conducted.

Stable

"He has shown signs of concussion and is ruled out of the opening Test. The 30-year-old is stable and will remain under close medical observation."

The Hindu has learnt that Mayank was hit on the helmet by a Mohammed Siraj

bouncer at the nets. Mayank's injury two days ahead of the first Test has added to the uncertainty over Rohit Sharma's opening partner.

■ Mayank has shown signs of concussion and is ruled out of the opening Test, the BCCI said in a statement

■ The 30-year-old will remain under close medical observation, it added

Front-runner After Shubman Gill's return to India, having aggravated a shin injury during the World Test Championship final, Mayank was the front-runner to walk out with Rohit.

During the three-day tour game in Durham last month, Rohit and Agarwal had opened the first innings

while Cheteshwar Pujara had partnered Agarwal in the second.

Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav, who were added to the squad as backup, are set to arrive in London on Tuesday.

They have completed the mandatory isolation after being identified as close contacts of Krunal Pandya, who tested positive, in Colombo.

Shaw and Suryakumar to quarantine again

But the duo will have to quarantine again after arrival and are set to be unavailable for the first two Tests.

As a result, it will be interesting to see whether K.L. Rahul, who scored a century batting at No. 5 in the tour game, is preferred over reserve opener Abhimanyu Easwaran in Nottingham.



Worrying moment: Mayank Agarwal gets treatment after he was knocked down by a Mohammed Siraj bouncer. *AFP

'Indians have a more fearless approach'

AYAN ACHARYA

England fast bowler James Anderson said on Monday that he feels fortunate to have bowled to multiple generations of Indian batsmen.

"It is a different challenge for bowlers when you face a player who is not afraid to go over the top in Test cricket," Anderson said.

"I think you can see a difference with the IPL generation of players.

"There's a more fearless approach, they are not scared of playing any shot in any format of the game.

The Pant example

"Rishabh Pant is an example, reverse-sweeping me with the new ball on our last tour to India. You never saw Sourav Ganguly do that."

'Stokes' absence a huge plus for India'

Gavaskar picks Rahul to open the batting

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

The five-Test series against England, set to begin in Nottingham on Wednesday, is being billed as a litmus test for Virat Kohli and Co. Ahead of the series-opener, former India captain Sunil Gavaskar discussed some of the key storylines. Excerpts:

Who should partner Rohit Sharma in the first Test?

With K.L. Rahul scoring a hundred in the three-day game, he should be considered. With a hundred under his belt, I think Rahul will have lots of confidence.

He is the person I would look at opening the batting, not having Pujara going up to open.

Also, don't forget, the last Test match that Rahul played in England [in 2018], he got a hundred at The Oval. With that in mind, it might be a good idea to look at Rahul as an opener.



Sunil Gavaskar. *FILE PHOTO

Will Ben Stokes' absence make it easier for India?

Oh, definitely. Stokes has been the game-changer with both bat and ball, so him not playing is a huge plus as far as India is concerned.

There's also the absence of Jofra Archer and Chris Woakes. Woakes, who had scored a hundred and taken five wickets [sic: four] in 2018 in the second Test.

So with the absence of these three players, definite-

ly England have weakened. It actually is very helpful for India. No doubt about that.

Does Pujara need to tweak his approach while batting?

Pujara has got to the international level playing a certain way, he has got to trust that method.

If the team doesn't trust that method, I think they have to look for somebody else. But this is a method that's worked for him, has worked for India.

He has held the fort at one end while the stroke-players at the other end have been at liberty to play their shots knowing that there is a solid player at one end.

He has got to believe in himself and carry on playing as he knows best because he has done a fantastic job for India over the years.

(Watch India's tour of England from August 4 live on Sony Six and Sony Ten 4 from 3.30 pm)

Important to start well: Rahane

Vice-captain raring to go after recovering from a 'niggle'

AMOL KARHADKAR

India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane has stressed on the importance of starting well in order to achieve a first Test series win in England since 2007.

"The conditions are completely different. We played them at home [earlier this year] where the conditions were familiar to us," Rahane said on Monday, ahead of the first Test in Nottingham.

"We have played a lot of cricket here, but getting used to the conditions is the key. Being in the present moment matters a lot. So for us, starting well here at Nottingham is very important."

A majority of India's core group has toured England thrice but has not been able to repeat the heroics of Rahul Dravid's team in 2007.

To add to that, India has been hit by a series of injury concerns ahead of the series. Rahane himself missed



Rahane. *FILE PHOTO

the tour game in Durham with a hamstring injury. Referring to it as a "niggle", the 33-year-old said he has recovered fully.

"I am completely prepared. The preparation has been really good so far for me," Rahane said.

"Even though I didn't play the three-day game, I was practising on the side. Here in Nottingham, we have had

The conditions are completely different. We played them at home [earlier this year] where the conditions were familiar to us

a couple of good practice sessions, so I am completely ready."

Pujara at No. 3

Asked whether Cheteshwar Pujara could be asked to open in the absence of Shubman Gill and Mayank Agarwal, Rahane said, "Pujara is our No. 3 batsman. Who will open our innings, we are finalising our combination. Pujara has been really solid for us as a No. 3 batsman and he will continue to bat at No. 3.

"As for the opening batsman, the captain, coach and management will decide the combination and you will get to know soon."

Don't want to be harsh on Bumrah: Nehra

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Jasprit Bumrah may not have taken a single wicket in the World Test Championship final, but former India seamer Ashish Nehra backs him to bring his A-game in India's Test series against England.

Speaking at an online media interaction, Nehra said it had not been a case of Bumrah bowling badly.

"We are talking of a guy who has been doing really well for the last five or six years," he said.

"[It must not have been easy for him] with his injuries and the COVID-19 bubbles."

He said bowlers like Mohammed Siraj would have to wait for their turn. "You don't want to be harsh on somebody like Bumrah [which makes him start thinking] that his place is not secure," he said. "He is your main guy."

TV PICKS

TNPL 2021: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7:30 p.m.
Tokyo 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 3 a.m. onwards (Wednesday).

IN BRIEF



Isner beats Nakashima to capture Atlanta title

WASHINGTON
John Isner won his sixth ATP Atlanta Open title on Sunday, firing 21 aces to defeat teen Brandon Nakashima 7-6(8), 7-5 in an all-American final. It was sixth-seeded Isner's 16th career ATP title and joined 20-time Grand Slam winners Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic as the only active players to win an event six times. **AFP**



USA stuns Mexico, wins Gold Cup

LOS ANGELES
The United States claimed its seventh CONCACAF Gold Cup title on Sunday with a 1-0 extra time win over defending champion Mexico. Miles Robinson headed in the winner deep into extra time. This was USA's first Gold Cup title since 2017. **AFP**

Racing Team India to skip 24 Hours of Le Mans

SPORTS REPORTER
CHENNAI

Racing Team India on Monday announced that it will not participate in the 2021 edition of the 24 Hours of Le Mans, scheduled to take place in Le Mans, France, on August 21 and 22.

The team, in a statement, said: "Despite being granted an invitation to participate in the event, due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions and other factors, it was not possible for the teams' drivers - Narain Karthikeyan and Arjun Maini - and other personnel to travel to France for this event."

India's bowling attack fantastic, says Lee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

India is producing enough talent in the fast bowling department with promising speed merchants ready to take over when it is time for Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah to hand over the baton.

Brett Lee, the former Australian great, feels that bench strength has been crucial to India's success in recent years. "A word here about the Indian bowling attack, which I feel has been fantastic," Lee said.

"They have experienced bowlers and some good young guys coming through. They have enough pace, are excited and enthusiastic, ready to take over from the likes of Bumrah and Shami. This trend may

Shubhankar ends tied 30

GOLF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BALLYMENNA (UK)

Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma had a whirlwind start to the final day of the ISPS HANDA World Invitational here and finished tied 30th.

He had three birdies in a row but that was followed by a double bogey as he ended the final day with even par 70, just as he had started the week.

At 4-under 276, he was tied 30, while teammate Gaganjeet Bhullar also finished

Anjum Moudgil backs young shooters

'Accept your performance and let us get started to best ourselves soon'

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

In the run up to the Games, Anjum Moudgil had won the women's air rifle silver at the World Championship in Changwon. It also won her the Olympic quota. Yet, an Olympic entry in women's air rifle slipped her grasp, partly because the statistics were not in her favour.

The 27-year-old took it in her stride and tried her best in the rifle 3-position event - in which she missed the final by four points - and the mixed air rifle, in the Tokyo Olympics. With a disappointing performance in the second successive Games, Anjum, who holds a Masters degree in psychology, understands the repercussions, and thus jumped up to lift the dropping spirits.

In an attempt to boost the confidence of the young shooters, Anjum had a message to them keep getting better and keep smiling.

"No matter the results, we know the amount of effort and hard work that has been put into it. Let us just keep the fire within us alive. Don't

let any negativity or trolling affect you," wrote Anjum.

Acknowledging the single minded devotion of the youngsters towards Olympic preparation, Anjum recalled how the young guns worked hard every single minute to make the nation proud.

"Not oversleeping, no over eating, making sure to rest well, train well, train for hours and hours in the range, and then do dry firing in hotel rooms, staying away from family for months. You are all special lot of youngsters," Anjum observed.

Appreciative

In her message, Anjum was particularly appreciative of the efforts of the younger shooters, like Manu Bhaker, Divyansh Singh Panwar, Saunabh Chaudhary, Elavenil Valarivan and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar.

"Accept your performance and let us get started from now to best ourselves soon," she signed off, expressing her respect for her team mates, and goading them to "keep smiling", despite falling short of their target.



Chin up! Anjum Moudgil, top right, was quick to send a message of support to the shooters. **•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

Wade to lead Australia in Bangladesh

Five-match T20I series to be played behind closed doors

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

Australia on Monday named wicketkeeper-batsman Matthew Wade captain for the five-match Twenty20 series against Bangladesh in the absence of the injured Aaron Finch.

Finch aggravated a knee injury in the lead-up to the recent T20 series in the West Indies that Australia lost 4-1, and did not travel to Bangladesh.

Wade led Australia against India in December when Finch was injured. He has also captained Victoria, Tasmania and the Hobart Hurricanes.

He said he was optimistic after Australia recovered from the T20 drubbing to beat the West Indies 2-1 in the ODI series.

Wade will lead a depleted side that is missing Steve Smith, David Warner and Glenn Maxwell.



Matthew Wade. **•AFP**

Australia will play five T20s against Bangladesh at Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium starting Tuesday behind closed doors.

Bangladesh has never won a T20 match against Australia.

The squads:

Bangladesh: Mahmudullah Riyad (Capt.), Soumya Sarkar, Naim Sheikh, Shakib Al Hasan, Nurul Hasan Sohan, Afif Hossain, Shamim Hossain, Mohammad Saifuddin, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Nasum Ahmed, Mahedi Hasan, Mustafizur Rahman, Mohammad Mithun, Tajjul Islam, Mosaddek Hossain and Rubel Hossain.

Australia: Matthew Wade (Capt.), Ashton Agar, Wes Agar, Jason Behrendorff, Alex Carey, Dan Christian, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Mitchell Marsh, Ben McDermott, Riley Meredith, Josh Philippe, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Swepson, Ashton Turner, Andrew Tye and Adam Zampa.

Travelling reserves: Nathan Ellis, Tanveer Sangha.

McDermott recovers
Batsman Ben McDermott, however, has recovered from the ankle injury he suffered having crashed into sideline advertising boards in Barbados.

Adhiban, Harikrishna eye quarterfinal spots

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

B. Adhiban and P. Harikrishna kept alive their chances of being among the quarterfinalists after 10 rounds of the \$100,000 Chessable Masters online rapid chess tournament on Sunday.

The Indian duo shared the ninth spot with five points. However, K. Humpy (two) fell out of contention after retaining her penultimate spot among 16 players.

USA's Wesley So led with 7.5 points.

The results: 10th round: Shakhriy Mamedyarov (Aze) bt B. Adhiban; P. Harikrishna drew with Aryan Tari (Nor); K. Humpy lost to Alireza Firouzja (Fra).

Ninth round: Adhiban drew with Le Quang Liem (Vie); Levon Aronian (Arm) bt Harikrishna; Jorden van Foreest

(Ned) drew with Humpy. **Eighth round:** Humpy drew with Adhiban; Harikrishna drew with Wesley So (USA).

Seventh round: Adhiban lost to Hikaru Nakamura (USA), Firouzja lost to Harikrishna; Mamedyarov bt Humpy. **Sixth round:** David Anton (Esp) lost to Adhiban; Harikrishna drew with Foreest; Humpy lost to Quang Liem.

Standings (after 10 rounds): 1. Wesley So (USA, 7.5 points), 2-3. Levon Aronian (Arm), Le Quang Liem (Vie) (7 each), 4-6. Hikaru Nakamura (USA), Alireza Firouzja (Fra), Shakhriy Mamedyarov (Aze) (6.5 each), 7. Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 6), 8. Vladimir Artemiev (Rus, 5.5), 9-10. B. Adhiban, P. Harikrishna (5 each), 11. Aryan Tari (Nor, 4.5), 12. Eduardo Iturrizaga (Esp, 4), 13-14. David Anton (Esp), Ju Wenjun (Chn) (3 each), 15. K. Humpy (2), 16. Abhimanyu Mishra (USA, 1).

Windies-Pakistan third T20 washed out

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
(PROVIDENCE, GUYANA)

The third Twenty20 International between the West Indies and Pakistan was abandoned following torrential rain, which left the outfield sodden, at the National Stadium on Sunday.

Just eight balls were bowled at the start of the match with the home side reaching 15 without loss before rain drove the players off the field and intensified to such an extent that it left the ground waterlogged in a

matter of minutes.

Extensive mopping up operations by the ground staff failed to improve conditions for the play to resume.

The match was called off 10 minutes before the scheduled cut-off time which would have allowed for the minimum requirement of a five overs-per-side match.

Pakistan leads the series 1-0 going into the final match on Tuesday at the same venue.

The first match of the series was also rained out.

Hamilton is second after Vettel disqualification

Latter's car deemed to have insufficient fuel left after the race

HUNGARIAN GP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BUDAPEST

Four-time World champion Sebastian Vettel was disqualified from the Hungarian Grand Prix on Sunday and stripped of second place, the FIA said. Vettel's Aston Martin car was deemed to have insufficient fuel left after the race.

Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes was promoted to second place behind race winner, Alpine's Esteban Ocon with Carlos Sainz in a Ferrari inheriting third place.

Seven-point lead

World champion Hamilton now has a seven-point lead over title rival Max Verstappen who moved up a place from 10th to ninth after Vettel's banishment.

"After the race it was not possible to take a 1.0 litre sample of fuel from car 5," said an FIA statement released five hours after the chaotic race ended at the Hungaroring.



Lewis Hamilton. **•AFP**

After the race it was not possible to take a 1.0 litre sample of fuel from car 5

—FIA

"The team was given several opportunities to attempt to remove the required amount of fuel from the tank, however it was only possible to pump 0.3 litres out.

"Given this situation, car No. 5 is not in compliance with the requirements of FIA Technical Regulations," FIA added.

The decision robbed Aston Martin of what would have been its second podium of the 2021 season.

Warne tests positive for COVID-19

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON

Cricket great Shane Warne was absent from London Spirit's clash with Southern Brave in The Hundred competition after testing positive for COVID-19.

The 51-year-old former Australia spinner is the head coach of London Spirit men's team for the Lord's-based franchise. "Shane returned a positive lateral flow test and will isolate from the squad and support staff whilst he awaits PCR re-



Warne. **•FILE PHOTO**

sults," the club said in a statement on Sunday. "A second member of the team management is self-isolating after also returning a positive test."

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38 CHAMPIONS SCRIPT HISTORY IN HOCKEY.

1.3 BILLION INDIANS WALK AN INCH TALLER...

Indian Men's and Women's Hockey teams made a historic entry into the Semi-Finals at Tokyo Olympics.

Jai Hind!

CONGRATULATIONS TEAM INDIA!



Odisha is proud to have partnered with Hockey India in this remarkable journey