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CJI slams speculative reports on SC collegium recommendations



Political scientist Ashwani Kumar sees onset of 'Mandal III' era



Myanmar junta crackdown death toll crosses 1,000 Rahul Dravid reapplies for Head of Cricket post at the NCA



NEARBY



Delhi police oppose Natasha Narwal's plea

The Delhi police have opposed JNU student Natasha Narwal's plea seeking modification in the bail condition asking her not to leave the city without the court's permission CITY ▶ PAGE 2

AAP cries foul over **Novelty Cinema plot sale**

NEW DELH The AAP on Wednesday protested outside the BJP headquarters after the North Delhi Municipal Corporation allegedly sold Novelty Cinema's plot worth ₹200 crore for ₹34 crore.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Shashi Tharoor discharged from Sunanda death case

Seven-and-a-half years of absolute torture, says MP

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday discharged Congress leader Shashi Tharoor from all charges, including abetment to suicide, in connection with the death of his wife, Sunanda Pushkar, in January

"The accused [Mr. Tharoor] is discharged," said special judge Geetanjli Goel while asking the MP from Thiruvananthapuram to furnish a requisite bond.

"Most grateful, your honour. It's been seven-and-a-



Shashi Tharoor with Sunanda Pushkar. • FILE РНОТО

half years of absolute torture. I really appreciate it," said Mr. Tharoor, who was present during the videoconference hearing, immediately after the verdict.

Sunanda Pushkar was found dead in a suite of a luxury hotel in the city on the night of January 17, 2014.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Only Sharia law, say the Taliban

New council may govern Afghanistan, with Akhundzada taking overall charge

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Afghanistan may be governed by a council now that the Taliban have taken over, while the Islamist group's su-

ranks, Waheedullah Hashimi, who has access to the group's decision-making, said in an interview.



be no democratic system at all because it does not have any base in our country," he said. "We will not discuss what type of political system we should apply in Afghanistan because it is clear. It is Sharia law and that is it."

Mr. Akhundzada would likely play a role above the head of the council, who would be akin to the President, Mr. Hashimi said. "Maybe his [Mr. Akhundzada's] deputy will play the role of President," he said, speaking in English.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8 **EDITORIAL** ▶ PAGE 6

Three killed in protests

At least three people were killed in anti-Taliban protests in the Afghan city of Jalalabad on Wednesday. More than a dozen people were injured after the Taliban opened

fire on protesters. PAGE 11

Jaishankar cuts short trip

In view of the developments in Afghanistan, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is cutting short his visit to the Americas, and will return from the UN after two meetings. > PAGE 9

J&K BJP wants security cover for party leaders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

There is a growing demand from the BJP in Kashmir to extend security to more leaders and workers as a spree of attacks on the party leaders left five dead in the past three months.

"In the past two years, 23 BJP leaders or workers were targetted by the militants. We lost nine BJP leaders only in Kulgam district. It is high time police provided security and ensured workers' sa-

fety. I appeal to the Director General of Police to provide both security and accommodations to our workers," said Altaf Thakur, BJP spokesperson in Jammu and Kashmir.

The fresh demand comes just a day after a BJP leader, Javeed Ahmad Dar, was killed in his house in Kulgam. Earlier, a grenade attack on a BJP leader's house in Rajouri and indiscriminate firing inside the residence of BJP leader in Anantnag left three dead.

In interim measure, SC allows women to take NDA exam

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued an interim order allowing women candidates to take the National Defence Academy (NDA) examination, scheduled to be held on September 5, while questioning why "co-education is a problem" in the armed forces.

"The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is directed to take out the ne-

cessary corrigendum in view of the interim orders today and give it wide publicity so that the intent of the order is translated into benefit at the ground level," a Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Hrishikesh Roy said.

The court snubbed the Union of India's affidavit

The directive is subject to further orders from the

"broadly" suggesting that

Sainik schools have "started

the process of admitting schools and it will be further expanded".

"As far as Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) is concerned, it is stated that it is a 99-vear-old institution, which will complete 100 years next year. The question is whether it completes its 100 years with gender neutrality or not!" the Bench said in its order.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

SP MP booked on sedition charge for remarks on Taliban

OMAR RASHID LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party MP from Sambhal Shafigur Rahman Barq was booked on sedition charges for allegedly drawing a parallel between the struggle of freedom fighters during India's Independence and the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban, the police said on Wednesday. He was charged with deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious



Shafiqur Rahman Barq

feelings and promote enmity between different groups.

The FIR was lodged on a complaint from Rajesh Singhal, reportedly a BJP leader,

but described as a private person by the police. On Monday, the five-time

MP said the Taliban wanted to run Afghanistan themselves as per their will. When India was fighting against the British, the entire country came together. Similarly, he said, the Taliban wanted to free their country that was captured by the U.S. and, earlier, Russia.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Probe into 'Sulli deals' hits legal hurdle

HEMANI BHANDARI

Nearly a month and a half after Delhi Police registered a case in connection with photos of Muslim women being uploaded without permishosting platform, GitHub, has replied to their notice.

Police sources said a notice under Cr.PC was issued to GitHub to share the details of the IP address of the web sion on an app called 'Sulli page where the photographs

deals', investigators said the were shared, but the company has responded asking the enforcement agency to take the legal route to approach them under Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 2

Assam detention centres for foreigners renamed 'transit camps' SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Assam's detention centres for foreigners and those declared such by specific tribunals have been renamed as transit camps.

detention centres within as many central jails at Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Jorhat, Kokrajhar, Silchar and Tezpur. A stand-alone detention centre with a capacity to house

para district.

A notification issued by Niraj Verma, Principal Secretary of the State's Home and Political Department, said "the nomenclature of deten-3,000 foreigners is under tion centre is changed to Himanta Biswa Sarma had

purpose" in partial modification of a June 2009 notification. The 12-year-old notification pertained to the setting up of the detention centres.

On July 19, Chief Minister

181 inmates, 61 of whom are declared foreign nationals and 121 convicted foreign nationals awaiting deportation. Two of these centres house 22 children along with their

the detention centres have

Haryana 'sports nursery' keeps the medal count ticking with Dahiya's feat

MDU has produced 4 Olympic winners

ASHOK KUMAR ROHTAK

Of the 30 Haryana players at the just-concluded Tokyo Olympics, 12, including men's wrestling silver medallist Ravi Dahiya, belong to Rohtak's Maharshi Dayanand University.

The university, popularly referred to by its acronym "MDU", has over the years turned out be the "sports nursery" of the State having produced 270-odd international-level players in various games, including 27 Arjuna awardees, since 1976.

Four of the Olympic medallists from the State - boxer Vijender Singh and wrestlers Yogeshwar Dutt, Sakshi Malik and Dahiya – are MDU alumni. While Vijender won bronze at the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Yogeshwar and Sakshi won bronze at the London and Rio Olympics in 2012 and 2016 respectively.

In fact, five of the players at Tokyo - Sonam Malik and Anshu Malik (both wrestling), and three members of the women's hockey squad are at present students of the university, ranked 76th on the National Institutional Ranking Framework.

Not only this, 93 of the 141 players across eight teams at the Pro Kabaddi League have been the students of the university, says Devender Singh Dhull, Director (Sports), MDU. Besides, 20 MDU alumni have participated



Ravi Dahiya with his silver medal in Tokyo. • FILE РНОТО

and won medals at the Commonwealth Games and 36 at the Asian Games.

World-class facilities

Though helped by the fact that the districts under the jurisdiction of the university, including Rohtak, Sonipat and Bhiwani, have an ageold culture of sports, especially wrestling and boxing, MDU has created an excellent infrastructure for sports that includes a centrally airconditioned multipurpose gymnasium hall, an international-standard cricket stadium, AstroTurf hockey field, synthetic athletics tracks, international-standard swimming pool and lawn tennis courts, among others.

"The university's Directorate of Sports has the best coaches for different games and organises around 70 inter-college tournaments/ games for its men and women student players. We have students playing all 131 games recognised internationally," said Dr. Dhull.



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The State currently has six construction at Agia in Goal- 'Transit Camp' for detention told the State Assembly that "foreigner" mothers.

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preme leader Haibatullah Akhundzada would likely remain in overall charge, said a senior member of the group. The Taliban would also reach out to former pilots and soldiers from the Afghan armed forces to join their

Many issues regarding how the Taliban would run Afghanistan have yet to be finalised, Mr. Hashimi said, but Afghanistan would not be a democracy. "There will



Haqqani leader Anas Haqqani in Kabul on Wednesday. • AP

IN BRIEF

47-year-old man tries to set himself on fire

A 47-year-old man allegedly tried to immolate himself on Talkatora Road on Wednesday afternoon, the police said, adding that he is yet to be identified. The man who sustained 30% burns was rushed to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital for treatment. The police said that the reason behind the step will be known only after his statement is recorded. However, it has been learnt that the man had been cheated of money.

HC seeks reports on death of Tihar inmate

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought status reports from the police and jail authorities on a plea concerning the alleged murder of an inmate Ankit Gujjar in Tihar jail earlier this month. Justice Mukta Gupta issued notice to police, jail authorities, the Centre and the CBI and ordered preservation of CCTV footage of the time of the incident as well as before and after.

Webinar on challenges in VUCA environment

The Electronics and
Communication Engineering
Department of Jaypee
Institute of Information
Technology, Noida, organised
a webinar on "challenges and
opportunities in the current
VUCA environment" on
Wednesday. The event was
held in association with 'The
Hindu Group' by the eminent
speaker Faizan Ahmad.

Police oppose Natasha Narwal's plea to let her leave Delhi at will

'She may destroy evidence, try to flee'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Delhi police on Wednesday opposed JNU student Natasha Narwal's plea, seeking modification in the bail condition asking her not to leave the national capital without the court's permission, stating that she may destroy evidence.

Ms. Narwal, an accused in three north-east Delhi riots cases, sought modification of a 2020 bail order in which she was directed not to leave Delhi, saying she has to travel outside for research purposes for her PhD and to visit her hometown but has to seek the court's permission every time.

'A conspirator'

During the hearing, Additional Public Prosecutor Rajeev Krishan Sharma opposed the plea and told the court that Ms. Narwal is a conspirator and may destroy evidence or run away if the condition of not leaving Delhi is changed.

"So much evidence may get destroyed. We have great suspicion and apprehension. The investigation is still going on," the prosecutor, representing the pol-



Natasha Narwal

ice, told Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat.

Mr. Sharma further said that there are conspiracy charges against her and a conspirator is always the most dangerous person as they can destroy the evidence and save themselves.

"Tomorrow if they go abroad or run away, who will catch them," he asked.

Meanwhile, advocates Kunal Negi and Adit S Pujari, representing Ms. Narwal, told the court she is an accused in three cases but the court while granting bail in the other two matters, did not impose any such condition on her.

"There is no such condition even in the conspiracy case. We will inform the IO prior to travel if the condition is modified," they emphasised.

Probe in 'Sulli deals' case hits legal hurdle

'CrPC notice sent to hosting platform not legally binding'

HEMANI BHANDARI

Nearly a month and a half after Delhi Police registered a case in connection with photos of Muslim women being uploaded without permission on an app called 'Sulli deals', investigators said the hosting platform, GitHub, has replied to their

notice.
Police sources said that a notice under Criminal Procedure Code was issued to GitHub to share the details of the IP address of the web page where photographs of Muslim women were shared, but the company has responded asking the enforcement agency to take the legal route to approach them under Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT).

"GitHub has asked for a legal request to be raised under MLAT. The procedure to raise the request has been initiated," an officer privy to the probe said.

'Will take months'

The MLAT is an agreement between two or more countries put in place for the purpose of gathering and exchanging information in an effort to enforce laws.

Explaining the course of action, sources said that be-



Pictures of Muslim women were shared without permission on the platform with the phrase "Sulli deal of the day".

cause GitHub is not an Indiabased platform, they can choose to not consider CrPC as legally binding.

"The documents prepared for the requested information will go to the Ministry of Home Affairs, who will then take it to the embassy concerned. The legal aid of the embassy then will take it further. This procedure will delay the information by at least a few months, sources said.

Derogatory term

In July, pictures of Muslim women were shared on the platform with the phrase "Sulli deal of the day".

Reportedly, Sulli is a de-

rogatory term used to refer to Muslim women. Many women who found their names on the list shared their anger on social media. A case under Section 354A (3) of the Indian Penal Code was registered at Special Cell on July 7 and the application was removed from GitHub. Police sources said that no statements have been recorded so far.

One of the women whose photo was on the web page said that while her name is not on the list of complainants in the case, she is connected with the women and in her knowledge, none of them have been contacted by the enforcement agency.

HC adjourns hearing on plea against Asthana's selection as police chief

Court may hear the matter next week

STAFF REPORTER

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing on a petition challenging the appointment of Gujarat-cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner for next week.

A Bench of Justices D.N. Patel and Jyoti Singh asked the counsel for the government to find out, by next hearing, if any other court was seized of a similar petition against Mr. Asthana.

The petition filed by one Sadre Alam has contended that the 1984-batch IPS officer, serving as the director general of Border Security Force, was appointed Delhi Police Commissioner on July 27, just four days before his superannuation on July 31.

'Appointment illegal'

Mr. Alam, in his plea, argued that the decision of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Appointments Committee of Cabinet in appointing Mr. Asthana for the post was "completely illegal on multiple grounds".

The plea said the appointment was "in clear and blatant breach" of the directions of the Supreme



Rakesh Asthana

Court as Mr. Asthana "did not have a minimum residual tenure of six months", and that no Union Public Service Commission panel was formed for appointment of the Delhi Police Commissioner.

Rule violation

The petition further submitted that the appointment of the police commisviolates fundamental rule which stipulates "no government servant shall be granted extension in service beyond the age of retirement of 60 years". The appointment was also in violation of the policy regarding Inter-Cadre deputation of All India Service Officers as prescribed under the Department of Personnel and Training's Office Memorandum of November 8, 2004.

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Dr. Rashmi Singh, IAS Member Secretary State Child Protection Society, Delhi

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Ready for some rain



A peacock dances in the enclosure of rhinoceros at the Delhi zoo on Wednesday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

HC: no anticipatory bail for Navy officer accused of raping woman

It takes exception to extortion accusation against victim

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected anticipatory bail of a senior Navy officer, accused of raping a woman on the pretext of marrying her, noting that he was allegedly trying to influence his colleagues to cause destruction of evidence.

Justice Yogesh Khanna also took serious objection to the allegation levelled by the Navy officer against the woman of trying to extort money from him.

"No doubt, the victim is

"No doubt, the victim is an educated lady, but is an educated person immune to cheating. The answer would be "no"," the judge remarked.

Marriage prospects "The facts do show the peti-

tioner [Navy officer] and prosecutrix [woman] did have such relations to kindle a hope in the prosecutrix that the petitioner shall marry her at all costs. It was not illogical for her to think so," the High Court said.

"Can he be allowed to

play with her dignity on the pretext he cohabited with her just for fun and later claim she is extorting money from him. Such allegations if not backed with proof are



rather insulting," Justic Khanna remarked.

Destruction of evidence

The court also took note of Delhi Police's status report in the case which stated that the officer, being a senior officer of the Indian Navy, was "rather influencing other officer of the Navy Navy of the Object of the Object

ficers of the (Naval) Academy (Kannur) to manipulate the things causing destruction of evidence".

The High Court was also of the view that the mobile

of the view that the mobile phone of the officer is also required to be seized "as it allegedly contains nude pictures and videos of the prosecutrix". It also noted that he has "deleted the electronic record in the form of chats, text messages and Facebook messages/chats exchanged between the

parties".

"This act of the petitioner rather reflects his intention

to cover-up his wrongs by erasing the relevant electronic record/data, which would otherwise had given a true picture of the facts," the judge said.

The woman, in her complaint, alleged that from December 2019 to January 2020 he has been calling her at Kota House, here in the Capital and having physical relations on the promise of marriage.

After January 2020, he went to Kolkata for training with a promise to return after 2-3 months, but did not return.

Subsequently, in March this year, she reached Kannur, Kerala to meet him. She was adjusted by him in the Guest House of Indian Naval Academy, Kerala. When she asked him to marry, he denied saying he did it only for fun.

When the woman threatened to lodge a complaint, he told her he had nude photographs of her and video recordings at Kota House and he shall upload the same on the Internet and shall ruin her career. Later, on June 15, 2021, the woman got to know that the officer had married another girl in Kerala. Following this, she lodged the complaint.

Conditions favourable for monsoon revival: IMD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
The India Meteorological
Department has said that
atmospheric conditions are
favourable for the revival of
monsoon in northwest India, which will bring relief
to the Capital where temperatures have been 4-5 degrees above normal for the

past few days.

The IMD said increased rainfall activity will start with scattered to fairly widespread showers with isolated heavy rain likely over Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and western Uttar Pradesh on

August 20-21.
On Wednesday, the maximum temperature in Delhi settled at 38°C, four degrees above normal. The minimum was 27.4°C, one degree above normal.

Thursday's forecast shows generally cloudy sky with possibility of very light rain/thundershower towards evening/night. The maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 36 and 28 degrees Celsius respectively. Delhi has recorded 63.2 mm of rainfall against the normal of 157.1 mm so far in August as the monsoon had entered a "break" phase.

DELHI

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Delhi Weather max min Delhi City

Delhi Palam Today 36°C A spells of light rain and thunderstorm may occur on a cloudy sky. Day would remian warm and humid

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 33°C Few spells of light to moderate rain and thundershower with cloudy sky and moderate winds. Day would © Copyright Skymet Weather 2019

IN BRIEF

NEW DELHI

Over 130 factory owners get DPCC closure notice

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) conducted inspections at Patparganj industrial area and teams have recommended to issue show cause notice for closure to over 130 owners for violations. Apart from this, the teams have also recommended to issue show cause notice to 70 units in white category

Action plan for elimination of single-use plastic gets nod

It focuses on researching, developing and promoting alternative products

NIKHIL M BABU

The Delhi government on Wednesday approved a comprehensive action plan (CAP) for eliminating selected single-use plastic (SUP) in the city, according to officials.

The plan has different deadlines for different projects and has identified departments responsible for each project. The projects include identification of alternative products and its research and development, awareness, among others.

As per the CAP, a districtwise assessment of plastic waste generation and infrastructure required for plastic waste management - collection, segregation, recycling – will be done by March 31, 2022. An analysis of existing infrastructure and a gap analysis will be done by the same time.

Focus on alternatives

The plan has also given a

strong focus on alternatives. "Development of schemes for providing assistance in setting up manufacturing capacities of alternatives including for enterprises tran-



sitioning away single-use plastics," the CAP

"Providing incentives for penetration of alternatives in the market, development of a database of producers of alternative products including compostable plastic manufacturing capacity, proscheme alternatives to prohibited single-use plastic items," reads some of the other pro-

'Research and development on creating alternative packaging materials to plastic' has been termed as a 2021, which prohibits specific single-use plastic items which have "low utility and high littering potential" by

Under these rules, by July next year, the manufacture of a range of plastic products will be banned. These include earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice cream sticks, thermocol for decoration, plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straws, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 microns, and stirrers.

States had been "requested" to constitute a Special Task Force for elimination of single-use plastics and effective implementation of Plas-Waste Management tic Rules, 2016.

The Delhi government formed the Special Task Force under the Chief Secretary in May and the CAP is a result of the meetings of the STF with different departments and other stakehol-

AAP cries foul after North body sells Novelty Cinema plot for ₹34 crore

Party says land was worth ₹200 crore; BJP refutes allegations

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The AAP on Wednesday protested outside the BJP headquarters after the North Delhi Municipal Corporation allegedly sold Novelty Cinema's 1,100 sqm plot worth ₹200 crore for ₹34 crore, the party said.

"BIP knows it will be defeated in the civic body elections, so it wants to fill its pocket by selling off public properties through municipal corporations. People of Delhi wants to bring an honest government like the Kejriwal government to the municipal corporation,' AAP national secretary Pankaj Gupta said.

Last week, the AAP had alleged that Novelty Cinema's land worth ₹150 crore has been sold for ₹34 crore and added that there was 'corruption' in the deal.

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj had claimed that if one wants to buy even a shop as small as 100 yards in these markets, it would cost ₹30-35 crore.

The North body has refuted the allegations made by the AAP and said that due procedure was followed. Standing Committee Chair-



AAP workers protest against corruption in the civic bodies, outside BJP HQ in Delhi on Wednesday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

man of NDMC, Jogi Ram Jain, had said that the total land of Novelty Cinema is about 1,157 square meters and the circle rate is ₹70.080

"Commercial rate and factor three is applied here. According to this, the cost of the land of Novelty Cinema comes to about ₹24 crore. Despite this, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation has kept the basic price of the land at ₹34.59 crore. A total of ₹34.75 crore has been received for the tender process for this land. The process of e-tendering has been

followed in the entire tendering process," he had said.

Mr. Jain said that the AAP is not aware of the complete facts, and it always make "false allegations".

BJP's response

Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor on Wednesday said that if AAP government feels that the plot is being sold at below market value then it should come forward and help cash starved North body by buying the plot at their own claimed market value of over ₹100 crore.

BJP stages stir against statue

vandalisation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Asserting that there was no

place for a "fundamentalist

mentality" in the country,

scores of BJP cadres staged

a demonstration against

the vandalisation of Maha-

raja Ranjit Singh's statue in

Lahore outside the Pakis-

tan High Commission, here

Delhi BJP president Adesh

Gupta. They were detained

by the police before being

let off later in the day. The

party also submitted a

memorandum to the High

The protest was led by

on Wednesday.

in Lahore

COVID-19 graph continues plunge, city reports only 36 cases, 4 deaths

Vaccine stock to last four days; 427 active cases in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER

The city reported 36 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,37,192, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government.

There were four new deaths and the total number of deaths stood at 25,077.

A total of 66,445 tests were done in a day and the test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.05%. Of the total cases, 14,11,688 people have reco-

According to the bulletin, there are 427 active CO-VID-19 cases in Delhi, a dip from 471 the previous day.

Of these, 141 are under home isolation, down from 156 a day ago. Out of 12,057 beds in hospitals, 247 are



A health worker administering vaccine to a beneficiary at a centre in Rajouri Garden on Wednesday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The number of containment zones in the city stands at 242, a minor increase from 241 a day ago, it

The COVID-19 vaccine stock of the city on Wednes-

day morning would last for four days, as per another bulletin. A total of 1,57,282

vaccinations were done on

Tuesday and till now,

1,18,33,596 doses of vaccines

have been administered in

the city, the bulletin said.

Applications pour in after faceless service launch

As many as 5,948 have applied for learner's licence in a week; more initiatives likely

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

long-term project with a dea-

dline of March 31, 2023, and

it has been assigned to the

Environment Department.

Another project is the identi-

fication of littering hotspots

of SUP items and develop-

ment of strategy for their col-

lection and further manage-

ment. Funds for many of the

projects under the CAP will

be from the Swachh Bharat

On August 13, the Union En-

vironment Ministry notified

the Plastic Waste Manage-

ment Amendment Rules.

Mission.

New rules

Since Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched faceless services initiative last Wednesday, the transport department has received around 6,000 - a daily average of almost 850 - applications for learner's licences. While a majority of the

applicants were successful, over 600 failed their tests. According to the transport department records, 5,948 applications for the issuance of learner's licences were received by the department between August 11 and August 18 (9 a.m.).

A senior government official said that as many as 5,341 applicants, who had applied for these licences from the comfort of their homes, had been issued ment, learner's licences during the

Nearly 2,000 applications for driving licence and registration certificate-related documents were received on August 15 despite it being a

national holiday TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

period. As many as 607, however, did not make the cut.

Gift to citizens

Terming it a gift to the citizens of Delhi in the run up to the country's 75th Independence Day celebrations, Mr. Kejriwal had on August 11 launched faceless services related to the transport department.

According to the governthe programme would initially cover 33 ma-

jor transport-related services covering almost 95% of the applications usually received by the department with more services to be added to the basket soon.

According to the transport department, nearly 2,000 applications for driving licence and registration certificate-related ments were received by it on August 15 despite it being a national holiday.

As many as 1,489 driving licence-related service requests and 462 registration certificate requests were received on August 15 in addition to 556 grievance messages received through the department's WhatsApp chatbot and 1,387 through helpline number 1076.

According to the governof services offered by the defices.

partment can be accessed online with only two requiring one to come to the office: giving a driving test and getting the fitness of vehicles checked. Four RTOs were closed

last Wednesday: IP Depot, Vasant Vihar, Sarai Kale Khan and Janakpuri. Institutional restructuring was also being undertaken at RTOs with the department having restructured its field functioning and three Deputy Commissioners having been deployed at Suraimal Vihar. Sarai Kale Khan and Dwarka covering all zones in Delhi, the government stated.

According to the government, the department will now provide its public services in a faceless manner dispensing with the require ment, a significant majority ment of a physical visit to of-

Commission. "India will not tolerate the way Pakistan has sup ported Taliban and the way the statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was vandalised in Lahore by people with a fundamentalist and narrow mentality," Mr. Gupta

> monstrators. "The way Maharaja Ranjit Singh's statue was vandalised is a violation of international norms and rules. People with such fundamentalist mentality should never be spared and punished," he added.

said addressing the de-

Community policing drive inaugurated

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana inaugurated a community policing programme 'Ummeed' in the North-East district on Wednesday. Mr. Asthana also highlighted the achievements of a communitybased organisation Nagrik Bhaichara Samiti.

He said that since it is not feasible to deploy policemen in every nook and corner, a self-disciplined and service-oriented society is required to assist the police to establish peace and harmony.

"Crime has no religion and only a few anti-social elements spoil the social environment. Such unscrupulous elements need to be identified and dealt with as per law," he said.

"We live in an age of technology, and economic progress can be attained only in a peaceful environment. We should all strive to live together in harmony," said Mr. Asthana, while hailing 'Ummeed' as an initiative to strengthen the common chord of togetherness and mutual trust between communities in order to live peacefully in the spirit of coexistence.

Mr. Asthana added that there was no place for violence in society as India was known for unity in diversity.

View obstructed



Work in progress on the Central Vista Redevelopment Project at Rajpath on Wednesday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

'U.P. CM wants Noida to be most-planned city'

State govt. lists upcoming projects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NOIDA/LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath wants to see Noida as the "mostplanned city" in the State and is working towards this end, the State government said on Wednesday.

Noida and nearby areas in Greater Noida and Jewar have major industrial proand investments worth thousands of crores are in the pipeline that have come during the current BJP-led regime, it said in an official statement.

"A drive from Delhi to Noida in the evening, with Noida's streets decked up with colourful lights makes one feel the difference clearly," it read. Citing infrastructure projects like the metro,

HP / 3457/21-22

proposed airport in Jewar, film city, toy park, MSME parks and medical device park, the government said Mr. Adityanath focused on development of Noida.

"The CM is taking steps towards making Jewar International Airport the largest airport in India," it said.

Big companies

The government said companies like Microsoft, Samsung, Hiranandani, Kent RO, Adani and Aika are setting up units, while construction of Noida International Airport and Film City is likely to start soon.

Apart from this, there are plans to establish a multimodal logistics park in Dadri and a transport hub in Greater Noida.

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

Govt. appeals against inclusion of NCR lawyers in welfare plan

HC seeks response of Bar Council of Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought response from the Bar Council of Delhi (BCD) on government's appeal against a single judge order extending insurance benefit under the Chief Minister's Advocates' Welfare Scheme to all lawyers registered here irrespective of whether they are registered as a voter in the national capital.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh issued notice on Delhi government's challenge to the order and also sought responses from the Bar Council of India (BCI) and lawyer Govind Swaroop Chaturvedi, the petitioner before the

Seeking a stay on the direc-

tions issued by the single judge,

senior advocate Rajiv Nayar, re-

presenting the Delhi government

date," the Chief Justice said. Mr. Nayar argued that the sin-

wyers in the NCT of Delhi.

gle judge misconstrued the government's policy by extending it to lawyers outside the city. "Why not extend it to Tamil Nadu? Why should those lawyers not get it?," the senior advocate said. Senior Counsel and Chairman

of the BCD Ramesh Gupta said

that even while extending the be-

clarified that it has no issues with

implementing the policy for la-

"We will see on the returnable

nefits under the scheme to NCR lawyers, the single judge did not interfere with the ₹50 crore budget allocated by the government.

Mr. Chaturvedi pressed that the single judge's directions should not be stayed. On July 12, Justice Prathiba M Singh, dealing with a batch of petitions including one by Mr. Chaturvedi, had ruled that the exclusion of lawyers registered with BCD but residing in NCR from the ambit of the scheme was discriminatory and arbitrary.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, Palampur Division, HPPWD, Palampur on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, revites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registration

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SI. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Starting date for down- loading Bid	Earnest Money	Deadline for submission of Bid					
1.	Construction of Cow Sanctuary at Kudan Dehal P.O. Jia Tehsil Palampur. (SW:- Construction of Attendant Room and Toodi Store)		26.8.2021	Rs. 34000/-	02.9.2021					
The	The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website <u>WWW.hptenders.gov.in</u>									

HPPWD. Division, Palampur PIN-176061 e-mail:-ee-pal-hp@nic.ir

On behalf of Governor of H.F

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Still studying OBC quota subcategorisation report: U.P. Minister

The report has been a political hot potato for BJP government as it suggested limited quota for dominant castes such as Yadavs, Kurmis and Jats

OMAR RASHID

Almost three years after a report recommending subcategorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBC) quota into three divisions was submitted to the Yogi Adityanath-led Uttar Pradesh government, a BJP Minister from the OBC community on Wednesday said the government was still examining the report.

The report has been a political hot potato for the BJP government as it suggested limited quota for dominant castes such as Yadavs, Kurmis and Jats.

Clubbing together the Yadays, who form the support base of the Opposition Samajwadi Party, with the Kurmis, who are tilted towards the BJP and even have a party Apna Dal led by Kurmi leader Anupriya Patel allied to the ruling party, puts the BJP in a tight spot and jeopardises its till now successful strategy of pitting the non-Yadav OBCs against the Yadavs.

Panel report

A social justice committee headed by retired Allahabad High Court judge Raghavendra Kumar in October 2018 submitted a report to the State government recommending a split in the 27% OBC quota into three categories; they would be the Pichda Varg (Backward Class), who get 7%; the Ati Pichda (More Backward), who get 11% and the Atyant Pichda (Most Backward), who get 9%

The panel listed 79 subcastes under the OBC category. Of these, nine fall under Backward Class, 37 under More Backward and 33 under Most Backward categories.

Despite being submitted to the government, the report is yet to be tabled in the Assembly or implemented. On Wednesday, Om Prakash Rajbhar, president of the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party and former BJP ally, demanded that the government clarify if it was going to implement the sub-categorisation.

"Six months are left for this government. Will this report be implemented or not," Mr. Rajbhar asked in the Assembly, accusing the BJP of betraying the backward caste people by dumping the report



The quota panel was set up by CM Adityanath in 2018. •

into a "dustbin."

Mr. Rajbhar was sacked as a Cabinet Minister in the Yogi Adityanath government in 2019 months after he had launched a campaign demanding the implementation of sub-categorisation of quota and turned rebel.

Following his departure, BJP's Rajbhar face Anil Rajbhar was allocated the Backward Class Welfare Ministry held by Mr. Om Prakash Rajbhar, in a strategic move to downsize the latter's impact.

Responding to Mr. Om Prakash Rajbhar's demands, Mr. Anil Rajbhar said the BJP government was fully committed to social justice and was examining the social justice committee report so that nobody could challenge it in court.

"The Yogi government doesn't want to leave scope for anyone to question it or get an opportunity to approach court," Mr. Anil Rajbhar said.

The BJP Minister, however, did not clarify if and when the government would implement the report.

"The government is exa-

representation.

The More Backward category would include castes such as Gurjar, Kushwaha-Maurya-Shakya, Prajapati, Gaderia-Pal, Baghel, Sahu, Kumhar, Teli and Lodh. The panel says that though these castes may not face cultural exclusion, they have poor representation politically and economically.

The third category, the Most Backward, consists of the most deprived castes, who are backward in all respects. Their political drawing power is also limited, the report notes. They include the riverine castes like Mallah, Nishad, Kewat, Kashyap and Kahar, apart from Bind, Rajbhar, Bhar, Loniya Chauhan, Dheevar and Ghosi.

'Gorakh Dhanda' term banned by Haryana govt.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government has banned in official communication the use of expression 'Gorakh Dhanda', generally used to describe unethical practices.

The decision was taken by Chief Minister Manohar Lal after a delegation of the Gorakhnath community met him, according to an official statement on Wednesday.

Mr. Lal said Gorakhnath was a saint and using this term hurts sentiments of his followers.

Therefore, the use of the word in whatsoever context has been completely banned, the CM said according to the statement.

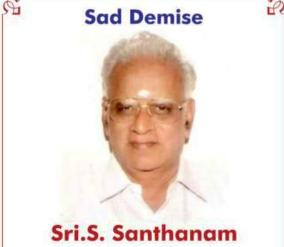
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Four teams had recently

Gehlot govt. looks to make mining auction transparent

Study done on process in four States

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Rajasthan government intends to adopt a transparent process for mining auction and data sharing following a study of mining operations in four States. The study has found Odisha's technology-based system suitable for replication in view of its target for collecting revenue worth ₹30,000 crore from mining activities. The models adopted in

Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka were also found effective in the stu-Additional Secretary (Mines & Petroleum) Subodh Agarwal said here on Wednesday that new technology and equipment would be acquired and the process modernised

visited the mining blocks in the four States and studied the innovations, modern technological applications and online data sharing methods adopted there. "We need to adopt similar procedures in Rajasthan with the emphasis on exploration of minerals through

scientific methods," Dr.

mining it. When it is done, the

picture will be clear. Yogiji's

government is committed to

doing whatever is necessary

for the welfare of the most-

backward and backward caste

[people]," Mr. Anil Rajbhar in-

As per a leaked copy of the

400-plus page report, listed

under the Backward Class.

meaning who will be restrict-

ed to 7% quota, are castes

such as Yadav, Kurmi and Jat.

The panel says these castes

are politically, socially, eco-

nomically and culturally

"strong" and have got em-

ployment in government jobs

more than the ratio of their

population, while also enjoy-

influential

formed the House.

Leaked report

Odisha model

Agarwal said.

At a presentation on the study's findings on Odisha, the officials pointed out that the revenue was mainly earned through the mining of iron ore, chromite, manganese and graphite. Odisha has a quality testing laboratory as well as the facility for X-ray fluorescence analysis of minerals, which has helped in speedy development of mining sector.

Trinamool Congress will win Tripura, says Mamata

'Leaders joining party in large numbers'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Coming down heavily on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Tripura, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Wednesday that the Trinamool Congress (TMC) will win the next Assembly polls in Tripura.

"They are not allowing us to stay in hotels. This is too much. The State of Tripura is not even adhering to the basics of democracy and law and order. Vandalism and hooliganism is going on," the Chief Minister said.

Ms. Banerjee said leaders of Tripura were joining the TMC in large numbers and added that, during the day, Jiten Sarkar, former Speaker of the Tripura Assembly, had written to her, expressing his willingness to join

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own him from all my inher-

2 I will not be responsible for

any act done by him and if

anybody deals with him, will

do so on his own responsi-

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declare that :-

"They cannot stop us like this. We will win Tripura. I want that people of Tripura should get benefits of welfare schemes that we have started in West Bengal," she

Over the past few weeks, Trinamool Congress leaders have been making visits to the Northeastern State. During the day Tripura High Court refused to put a stay on the investigation against TMC general secretary and five others for allegedly obstructing police from performing their duties.

Ms Banerjee announced that a Bengal Ministerial team will visit Delhi and seek allocation for Ghatal Masterplan, a mega flood protection infrastructure project for lower Damodar basin.

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE



General public is hereby informed that this female **Name:** Meenakshi, **W/o** Shri Ram Pal, R/o Village Dariyapur, Delhi, Age: 32 Years, Height: 5 Feet 4 Inch, Built: Medium, Face: Round, Complexion: Fair, Wearing: Red Colour Kurta with Salwar and Slipper in feet has been missing from her house since 12.07.2021 at about 10:00 AM. from the area of

P.S. Bawana, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 10-A, Dated 14.07.2021, has been lodged at

P.S. Bawana, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this female but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this female kindly

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Website: http://cbi.nic.in Fax: 011-24368639

inform to the following.

P.S. Bawana, Delhi Ph. 011-27751949, 27756090 Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

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the date extension for above NIT is available on the site www.jharkhand.gov.in. A revisesd Date and Time for Bid Submission and Technical

Bid Opening is as follows: Details

		Operation and FMS of AMI
1	Name of Work	System for consumers having load above 10 KW in
		JBVNL.
		Estimated cost Rs. 20 Crores
		(Rs. Twenty Crores)
3	Last Date / Time for receipt of bids	26.08.2021 at 04:00 PM
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General Manager (IT)

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Face: Round, **Built**: Mota,

Wearing: Aasmani Colour Suit and

Salwar has been missing/kidnapped

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(e-Tender id: 2021_COOP_ 8385 1) Last Date for Submission:08.09.2021 before 04.00 P.M.

Contact: 9942994136, 999480998 e-mail id: ponlaitmd@gmail.com e-procurement cell: 0413-2220225 MANAGING DIRECTOR

PUBLIC NOTICE nolitical party is proposed to be registered by ame of "PATHIK JANSHAKTI PARTY". name of "PATHIK JANSHAKTI PARTY". The office of the party is located at Khewat No 345, Khata No 793, Khasra No 82/15(0-13) Vill & PO: Sidhani, Tehsil: Tohana, Block - Jakhal Distt.: Fatehabad Pin Code -125133. Haryana. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951-Name/Address of the Office -bearers of the Party area \$ follows:

of the Party are as follows

of the Yarry are as follows:
President/Chairman: Mahender Singh/Add:
S/o: Ram Singh, Kakot, Kaithal Haryana-136043
General Secretary/Secretary: Raj Kumar/Add: S/o Prem Chand, Sidhani (215), Sidhani, Fatehabad-125133

nis is for notice of the general public that a plitical party is proposed to be registered by the olinical party is probosed to begistered by the name of Maulik Adhikar Kranti Party. The offici of the party is located at H. No. 402, 3rd Floor Plot No. 2-3, Gali No. 3, Friends Enclave Shahberi, Greater Noida Extension, Gautan Shahben, Greater Norda Extension, Gautar Budh Magar, Uttar Pradesh. This Party has submitted application to the Electio Commission of India, New Delhi for it registration as Political Party under Section 29. of the Representation of People Act, 1951 Names/addresses of the Office Bearers of the Debtace of Editor. rty are as follows:

President-Vijaypal Upadhyay, Village-Chhaprauli Bangar, Sector-168, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. Vice President- Sunil Kumar, Village-Salarpur Khadar, Noida, Gautam Budh General Secretary – Amit Sharma, Village

Chhaprauli Bangar, Sector-168, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. Treasurer- Kamlesh, Village-Chhaprauli Bangar, Sector-168, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. Organization Minister- Satvapal Singh

Upadhyay, A-329, Gali No. 16, A4-Block, Sonia Vihar, Delhi Sonia Vihar, Delhi If any one has any objection to the Registration of Maulik Adhikar Kranti Party, they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New

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PUBLIC NOTICE

सार्वजनिक सूचना मेरे मुवक्किल **श्रवण लाल** व श्रीमती **प्रेम** देवी निवासीगण मन बी—25—बी, बी ब्लॉक, ओल्ड स्लम क्वार्टर, पश्चिम पूरी, नई दिल्ली-110063, ने अपने पुत्र मनीष कुमार, उसकी पत्नी आरती व उसकी दोनों पुत्रियों को उसके दुर्व्यवहार के कारण अपनी चल-अचल . प्रम्पत्ति से बेदखल कर सम्बन्ध— विच्छेद गैर-कानूनी कार्य हेतु मेरे मुविक्कल उ उनका परिवार जिम्मेदार नहीं होगा। हर्ष बाला (अधिवक्त

Delhi High Court D-1991/16 Ch No 417, 4th Floor, Rohini Courts Complex, Delh

PERSONAL

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IT IS for general information that I, Umar Faruk S/o. M.D. Nazeer Ahmad, residing at H.No. 198, Shahpur Jat, New Delhi – 110049, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Umar Faruqe and Umar Farukh in my son Saqib Iqbal's educational documents and date of birth certificate respectively. The actual name of mine is Umar Faruk which may be amended

LOST & FOUND

LOST the document i.e. Relinguish ment deed in favor of Mr Birinder Singh. H:591046. T-122. 21809/11761/ I on 1/1/2021. If found please contact

DP/1170/ON/2021

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION General public is hereby informed that one male was found dead Near Kudesia Ghat Patri Ring Road, Near ISBT, on 10.08.2021. In this regard a DD No.75-A, U/s 174 Cr.P.C Dated 10.08.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Civil Lines, Delhi. Dead body has been preserved at Subzi Mandi Mortuary Delhi for 72 Hours. The description of the dead body is given as

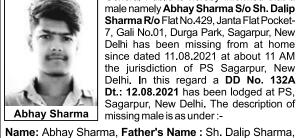
Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown R/o: Unknown, Age: above 60 years, Height: 5'4"Feet Face: Round, Complexion: Shallow, Built: Thin, Wearing: Linedar White Grey Shirt and Linedar Multicolour

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform

DP/1423/N/2021

P.S. Civil Lines, Delhi. Ph.: 011-23815444, 23810633

SEARCH FOR MISSING



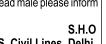
General Public is hereby informed that a male namely Abhay Sharma S/o Sh. Dalip Sharma R/o Flat No.429. Janta Flat Pocket-7, Gali No.01, Durga Park, Sagarpur, New Delhi has been missing from at home since dated 11.08.2021 at about 11 AM the jurisdiction of PS Sagarpur, New Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 132A Dt.: 12.08.2021 has been lodged at PS, Sagarpur, New Delhi. The description of Abhay Sharma missing male is as under:

Built: Medium, Wearing: Black T-Shirt, Black Jeans and Black Shoes in feet. If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

Age: 19 Years, Height: 5'6", Face: Round, Complexion: Fair,

Website: http://cbi.nic.in Fax: 011-24368639

Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S., Sagarpur, New Delhi DP/787/SW/2021 **Ph.: 011-28522653, 7065036228**



SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

PREARNA at P.S. Patparganj Industrial Area, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing/kidnapped girl but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing/ kidnapped girl please inform the undersigned.

Web-site: http://cbi.nic.in E-Mail ID: cic@cbi.gov.in Fax: 011-23011334 DP/660/ED/2021

SHO P.S. Patparganj Industrial Area, Delhi Ph.: 011-22146491, 22146490

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Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publicati Maulik Adhikar Kranti Party



schools in Telangana'

Telangana's Director of Public Health G. Srinivasa Rao said on Wednesday that it was time to reopen schools. Dr. Rao said Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao would take the final decision on school reopening.

Three killed as dumper rams SUV in Singareni

Three persons, including two workers of the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) and a contract driver, were killed when a high-capacity dumper rammed a Bolero vehicle on the premises of the Opencast Project-II in Manuguru town in the Bhadradri-Kothagudem district of Telangana on

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Telangana Governor and in-

charge Lt Governor of Pudu-

cherry Tamilisai Soundara-

rajan's mother Krishna Ku-

mari, 76, passed away at a

corporate hospital in Hyde-

rabad on Wednesday after a

sources, Mrs. Krishna Kuma-

ri was admitted to hospital

on Sunday for age-related

ailments. The end came at

3.30 a.m., official sources

wife of Kumari Anandan,

received here, the mortal re-

mains were brought to the

former MP of Nagercoil.

Raj Bhavan.

Mrs. Krishna Kumari was

According to information

According to Raj Bhavan

Man gets 33 years in jail for raping minor

Kerala court also slaps a fine of ₹88,000 on him

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A fast-track court here on Wednesday sentenced a man to 33 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a minor girl. He has been punished on various counts and the sentences will run concurrently. The victim is a close relative of the accused.

Arun, alias Gundu Arun, a resident of the Kunnukuzhi Thiruvananthapuram, was 28 when he committed the crime.

According to the order passed by fast track special Thiruvananthapuram, R. Jayakrishnan, Arun was sentenced under Section 450 of the IPC (housetrespass), Section 342 of the IPC (wrongful confinement),

Soundararajan's mother passes away

Later, the body was shift-

ed to the airport for onward

journey to Chennai for the

In a series of tweets on

Wednesday, Dr. Tamilisai

Soundararajan said: "I am

deeply saddened that my

mother who nurtured me is

no more. It was her upbring-

last rites.

Telangana Governor Tamilisai

and the relevant Sections under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, dealing with aggravated penetrative sexual

To get compensation

Arun has also been ordered to pay a fine of ₹88,000, failing which he would undergo a further two-and-a-half years of imprisonment. The amount paid as fine will be given to the victim. The victim is also entitled to compensation under the Victim Compensation Scheme, the order noted.

Special Public Prosecutor R.S. Vijayamohan appeared for the prosecution.

According to the case registered by the Museum Pol-

ing that instilled in us the virtues of serving the poor and

needy, to be always true to

your conscience and have

K. Chandrasekhar Rao, Ha-

ryana Governor Bandaru

Dattatreya, Union Minister

Kishan Reddy, Telangana

Pradesh Congress president

A. Revanth Reddy, BJP State

chief Bandi Sanjay, former

Minister E. Rajender and Pu-

ducherry Chief Minister N.

Rangasamy expressed their

Tamil Nadu Governor

Stalin,

Banwarilal Purohit, Chief

AIADMK leaders Edappadi

K. Palaniswami and O. Pan-

neerselvam paid homage to

condolences.

Minister M.K.

Telangana Chief Minister

faith in God at all times."

ice, Thiruvananthapuram, the girl was assaulted on May 1, 2019. Arun entered the kitchen of the victim's residence, and finding that her parents were out, dragged her to a verandah at the back of the house and sexually assaulted her.

After the incident, the girl, a minor at the time of the incident, entered the bathroom and hid there.

The younger brother of the victim had raised the

A subsequent medical examination of the victim revealed injuries on her body. The defence argued that the case was foisted upon Arun as a civil dispute existed between his family and that of

Man facing blasphemy charge in Saudi released

Those who created fake account held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A 34-year-old man from Kundapur taluk in Udupi district of Karnataka, who was detained in Saudi Arabia following charges of blasphemy, landed at the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru on August 18.

Harish Bangera was an air-conditioning technician with a company in Dammam. He landed in trouble in 2019 following a post on his Facebook account, and was detained.

In a complaint to the Kundapur police, his wife Sumana, who lives in Beejady near Kundapur, said some persons had created a fake Facebook account in her husband's name and posted blasphemous content. Fol-

lowing an investigation, police arrested Abdul Huyez and Abdul Thuyez from Moodabidri, who allegedly created the fake account and posted the content.

Human rights activist Ravindranath Shanbhag of Udupi worked closely with Mr. Bangera's family for nearly two years to enable diplomatic help. The Udupi police, through Director General and Inspector General of Police Praveen Sood and the Indian embassy in Saudi Arabia, informed the Saudi Arabian government about the arrest.

Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shobha Karandlaje followed up with embassy officials to ensure safe passage for Mr. Bangera to

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Konkan & Goa. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana, east Rajasthan, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Telangana

KAIN	IVIAX	IVIIIV	CITY	KAIN	IVIAX	
5	32.6	25.2	Kozhikode	0.1	30.2	2
22	32.2	23.3	Kurnool		32.8	2
–	–	–	Lucknow	0.7	36.3	2
–	36.2	28.1	Madurai	5	34.8	2
–	28.4	20.7	Mangaluru	0.7	29.6	2
4.4	28.5	23.7	Mumbai	16	27.0	2
0.2	29.6	25.6	Mysuru		29.0	2
–	36.2	26.0				
–	34.8	26.5	Patna	0.4	34.2	2
–	33.4	23.1				
–	34.2	24.6	Puducherry		33.8	2
. 23.2	20.8	17.9				
5	28.8	23.4				
6	32.8	25.6				
–	27.0	21.0				
6	27.8	22.3				
9	26.9	21.8				
–	37.8	29.3				
6	28.4	24.4				
14	26.4	18.5				
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	5 22 5 4.4 0.2 5 5 6 6 6 6 6	5 32.6. 22 32.2 - 36.2 - 28.4 4.4 28.5 0.2 29.6 - 36.2 - 34.8 - 33.4 - 34.2 223.2 20.8 5 28.8 6 32.8 - 27.0 6 27.8 9 26.9 - 37.8 6 28.4 14 26.4	*** MAN MAN	5 .32.6 .25.2 Kozhikode	5 32.6 25.2 Kozhikode 0.1. 22 32.2 23.3 Kurnool	5 32.6 25.2 Kozhikode 0.1 30.2 22 32.2 23.3 Kurnool - 32.8 - - - - 36.2 28.1 Madurai 5 34.8 - 28.4 20.7 Mangaluru 0.7 29.6 4.4 28.5 23.7 Mumbai 16 27.0 0.2 29.6 25.6 Mysuru - 29.0 - 36.2 26.0 New Delhi - 38.0 - 34.8 26.5 Patna 0.4 34.2 - 33.4 23.1 Port Blair 0.2 30.5 - 34.2 24.6 Puducherry - 33.8 23.2 20.8 17.9 Pune 65. 25.9 5 28.8 23.4 Raipur - 30.3 6 32.8 25.6 Ranchi 0.4 29.2 - 27.0 21.0 Shillong 15 24.8 6 27.8 <

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

4.00 p.m., Bhiwadi, Rajasthan recorded an

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

.35 ...107 ...15 .4227 ...68 .7237 ...56 .31 ..266 .261 .1821 ...29

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

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

dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and prematu

Two electrocuted during religious event in A.P. village

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Two persons were electrocuted and eight others were injured when a decorated pole, which was part of Chintala Muniswamy Prabhotsavam, came into contact with a power line, in Pesala Banda village of Adoni mandal in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

The deceased have been identified as Parika Veeranjaneyulu, 18, and Settibalija Venkateswarlu, 35.

The Adoni Taluk police claimed that despite COVID restrictions in place, the villagers did not take permission, and had reportedly increased the height of the 'Prabha' by two feet. The re-



Officials inspecting the spot where two persons were electrocuted in Kurnool district. • U. SUBRAMANYAM

cent repairs increased the height of the road, leading to the decorated pole touching the power lines. The singlephase power line was drawn from the 11 kV line meant for

agriculture three-phase connections.

The eight injured are said to be out of danger. The police have registered a complaint and are investigating.

Now, low interest loans for Navi Mumbai policeman Governor's delay in nominating 12 flood-hit small businesses

This is in addition to financial aid already announced by govt.

The Maharashtra government on Wednesday said that loans would be made available at as low as 5% to 6% interest rates from the district central cooperative banks (DCCB) to small business owners and shopkeepers in the Konkan region and western Maharashtra, who suffered losses during the recent incessant rain and subsequent floods.

Finance Minister Ajit Pawar held a meeting with senior officials of DCCBs from Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg. The meeting discussed the recent floods, which affected businesses and shops from these districts and the commercial losses they fared.



Aiit Pawar

"It was decided to sanction loans by these banks on a no-profit basis, observing social commitment. The loans will be at a marginally higher rate than the cost of fund. As a result, the available loan will be at 5% to 6% interest rates," said a Finance Department official. This scheme will benefit individuals with commercial establishments that were damaged.

The State government has already announced to provide ₹50,000 to every owner of affected commercial establishments. The low interest loans will be in addition to the already announced financial aid. Earlier, State Housing Mi-

nister Jitendra Awhad held a meeting with officials from his department and the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to discuss the rebuilding of Taliye village in Raigad district, which was buried in a landslide during the continuous rain. Mr. Awhad has already announced that MHADA will reconstruct the village without any cost to villagers.

"A total of 261 houses will be rebuilt," he said.

'China wants global public opinion confused about India'

Indian negotiators have an edge with flexible diplomacy, says former Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale

climbs one more step to MLCs unconstitutional: Shiv Sena target of 7 highest peaks

Gurav scales Mount Kilimanjaro on I-Day

RAINA ASSAINAR

Assistant police inspector Sambhaji Gurav, attached to the Navi Mumbai police, who is on a mission to climb the highest mountain peaks of all the seven continents within a year, finished his third summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa on August 15.

'Reverence for freedom fighters and salute to the soldiers' was the motto of this journey. "I consider myself lucky to have unfurled the Tricolor on Mount Kilimanjaro on the 75th Independence Day. With this, I became the first Indian policeman to scale the three highest peaks of three continents, including Mount Everest, in three

He started climbing the mountain on August 11. "I got to see various faces of nature at one single summit. Out of several routes to the mountain, we chose Marangu gate. Till the first halt, the journey was through dense rainforest. The first phase continued for around five hours. After the second halt, we passed through desert. The peak of

the mountain was glacier clad," Mr. Gurav added. After completing his expedition to Mount Everest on May 23, he had successfully scaled Mount Elbrus in Europe on July 26. He has planned his next summit of Mount Kosciuszko in Aus-

consecutive months," Mr. Gurav said.

gat Singh Koshyari came under fire from the ruling Shiv Sena on Wednesday over the former's delay in nominating 12 Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) recommended by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. Launching a broadside

against Mr. Koshyari, the Sena's mouthpiece Saamana alleged that the Governor's behaviour was "unconstitutional" and that he was acting like a "political agent" of the Central government. However, the editorial said that the tripartite MVA coalition would not "surrender" to such behaviour "like former Afghanistan President Ash-

STAFF REPORTER

Maharashtra Governor Bha-

"It appears that the MLCs will not be appointed until the Governor's 'favourite government' [the BJP] comes to power in Maharashtra," read the editorial.

raf Ghani did to the Tali-

ban".

The MVA government had submitted a list of 12 members to be nominated to the



Koshyari is acting like Centre's 'political agent', says Saamana

Bhagat Singh Koshyari

Upper House of the State legislature to the Governor on November 6, 2020, but Mr. Koshyari's decision has since been hanging fire.

Alluding to the order passed by the Bombay High Court in the matter, the editorial said, "The High Court has said it is Mr. Koshyari's duty to declare his decision on the nomination of 12 MLCs. But taking eight months to make a decision is an inordinate delay."

The Sena mouthpiece said that if the Governor thus breached the Constitutional framework, he stood in danger of losing his

"His own people [the BJP at the Centre] are playing

with his dignity... Mr. Koshyari's behaviour as the Governor is unconstitutional and politically biased... There can be no change of guard [in Maharashtra] using the Raj Bhavan, and the MVA will not surrender like former Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani," said the editorial.

The editorial further said that Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) supremo Sharad Pawar, who recently met Mr. Koshvari at a flag-hoisting event, had asked the Governor regarding the delay in the appointments.

"During the meeting, when Mr. Pawar asked the Governor about the inordinate delay in the appointments, Mr. Koshyari said that he [Mr. Pawar] ought not to insist on it when the State government was not requesting it," the editorial

However, Mr. Pawar had reminded the Governor that the Chief Minister had alreadv sent a letter urging him to take a decision soon on the long-pending appointments, said the editorial.

Land mafia kingpin held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The police on Wednesday arrested a land mafia kingpin, who had been on the run for the last eight days, in connection with a case of land grabbing in Osmanabad district. A special squad apprehended Devanand Rochkari in Mumbai, Deputy Superintendent of Police

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT BY AMWAY INDIA ENTERPRISES Notice is hereby given to all the Members of the Amway India

Enterprises Employees Provident Fund, who have resigned from Amway India Enterprises Private Limited and have not claimed their Provident Fund (PF) balances as on the date of this advertisement. The Board of Trustees of the Trust have decided to transfer the PF balances of all Members to the EPFO, Regional Office, Delhi (South) [RPFC] w.e.f. 01-10-2021 subject to grant of approval from Provident Fund Authority. Members may therefore contact the undersigned within 10 days from the date of this advertisement for any clarifications or settlement of PF balances by means of withdrawal or transfer of PF balances, as the case may be

E-mail id: Gaurav.Kapoor@Amway.com This notice is issued on behalf of the Trustees of the Amway India Enterprises Employees Provident Fund ("Trust") Date: 19.08.2021

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE The Chinese hide behind diplomatic walls to deploy an array of tools not available to democracies, said former Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale on Wednesday, remarking that the flexibility displayed by Indian negotiators can accord them an edge over their Chinese counterparts reluctant to engage with informal diplomacy. A veteran diplomat and a

China expert, Mr. Gokhale, who served as Ambassador to Germany and China besides several high-level appointments, was speaking on his recent book The Long Game: How the Chinese Negotiate with India in a talk organised by the Pune International Centre and chaired by diplomat Gautam Bambawale, who was also a former Ambassador to China.

"The Chinese prepare for negotiations very carefully which includes the study of old records which are undeniably better than us as they have a history and tradition of record-keeping. They prepare with wide consultations not just with those within the government, but with ex-government officials and people in different professions. This allows the Chinese ne-

gotiators to take the advan-

tage of 'institutional memory'," Mr. Gokhale said, stating that the objective behind writing the books was to present an account based on first-hand knowledge on how the Chinese approach negotiation with India, something that was missing in Western diplomatic narratives.

Through six incidents covering a period from 1950-2020, Mr. Gokhale has attempted to discern trends and traits about Chinese negotiating tactics and how

they achieved their goals. The Chinese want global public opinion to be confused about us. They want public opinion along the Ining its objectives in the region, any alliance we make with other countries automatically means it is an anti-China alliance, though it is nothing of the sort...We need to be aware of the image that the Chinese want to have about us and must work towards dispelling that," said the seasoned diplomat, who completed his tenure as India's Foreign Secretary in January last year.

do-Pacific region to think

that because India is pursu-

Setting agenda Given that in a democracy,

everything is open for discussion, Indian negotiators oftheir Chinese counterparts, for whom agenda setting is extremely important, Mr. Gokhale said. "The Chinese often attempt to circumscribe the

ten deviate from the agenda

to indulge in informal diplo-

macy in stark contrast to

scope of talks which is akin to a method of control during negotiations. It has taken a while for us to figure this out and become wise to the fact that agenda setting is important," he said.

Mr. Gokhale further said that the Chinese process of negotiation is very "theatrical", like acting in a play or drama

Raj Tilak Roushan said.

Aftermath

Only the threat of global backlash can stop the Taliban from inflicting harm on Afghan society

s nations come to terms with the abrupt change of regime in Afghanistan, they will seek answers Lto many questions about the nature of the new Taliban government that controls most of the territories. Almost as an emergency measure that reflects the sense of alarm in Afghanistan's prospects of a stable future, U.S. President Joe Biden and U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson have agreed to hold a virtual G7 leaders' meeting to discuss a common strategy and approach. Yet, it will be a complex and likely frustrating task for the G7 to reconcile its position on minimum governance norms for Afghanistan with the ground realities of rule by the Taliban. In its May 2021 Foreign Ministers' communiqué, the G7 noted that "a sustainable, inclusive political settlement would be the only way" to achieve a just and durable peace that benefits all Afghans. To that end, the G7 promised its support to the negotiations in Doha and efforts to convene a high-level conference on Afghanistan in Istanbul. But the sheer audacity of the Taliban takeover and its promise to make Sharia orthodoxy the basis of jurisprudence suggest that Taliban interlocutors attending these parleys may not truly represent the voice of their commanders and administrators on the ground. Similarly, the G7's enduring aspiration for meaningful participation and inclusion of the voices of women, young people, and those from minority groups, looks to be dashed.

Given that the project of long-term military occupation and regime change has amounted to naught in this country, going forward, the only lever that G7 might have to press for internal change in Afghanistan is foreign aid and, should the circumstances warrant it, sanctions. Indeed, the May 2021 communiqué noted that "Current and future support to the Afghan government relies on the adherence to the principles set out in the Afghanistan Partnership Framework and progress towards the outcomes in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework II as decided upon at the November 2020 Geneva donors' conference". Yet, if there is one signal that the conditional norms elucidated by the G7 will be brazenly disregarded by the Taliban it is that they have already been disregarded to the extent that the Islamist group has been linked to numerous attacks on civilians, including targeted campaigns against women in public life, human rights activists, and media persons. This means calls for eschewing violence and allowing unhindered access to humanitarian aid may fall on deaf ears unless there is a punitive element that lends teeth to such demands. If the Taliban have distilled past strategic learnings, it might hold out hope that this time around, they will limit the damage they inflict on the fabric of mainstream Afghan society, if nothing for fear that the backlash that it will bring from the global community will once again break their grip on power.

A delayed intervention

With global demand booming, the Centre must act faster to rev up export growth engine

fter much delay, the Government has notified the rules and rates based on which exporters can Aclaim rebates on taxes paid on their outbound cargo. That it took nearly eight months to come up with these critical details after the scheme promising such rebates kicked in has meant that exporters have had to conjure up additional working capital to the extent of taxes paid but not refunded during this period. A new scheme was necessitated to replace the erstwhile merchandise exports incentive scheme after the WTO dispute settlement body held it was not compliant with the multilateral trade watchdog's norms. The Government is confident that the new scheme, Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP), and effective from January 1, is WTO-compliant. Covering 8,555 tariff lines, or roughly 65% of India's exports, the remission rates now notified, range from 0.5% to 4.3% of the Freight On Board value of outbound consignments. For some goods, there is a cap on the value of the exported items. Steel, pharmaceuticals and chemicals have been excluded from the RoDTEP. Some sectors are concerned about the rates being lower than expected, while engineering firms are worried that taxes on key raw materials are not adequately offset. Fine-tuning may be needed, but a vacuum has been plugged at last.

There can be no doubt that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to scale up exports to \$400 billion this year helped expedite the disentangling of inter-ministerial red tape over the RoDTEP scheme. A new foreign trade policy, a couple of smaller export-related schemes and a mechanism to fork out the last two years' pending dues under the earlier export incentive programme are expected by September. This urgency must not be lost. Having opted out of RCEP, India is looking to re-ignite free trade pact negotiations with Australia, the U.K., the EU and the U.S. The global economy is on the cusp of one of its strongest rebounds as COVID-19 vaccination drives cross a tipping point in many advanced economies. As they look to go beyond China to service domestic consumption demand, India needs to aggressively step up to the opportunity. Although the second wave's damage on the economy is less severe than the wreckage from last year's national lockdown, domestic recovery is still feeble and uneven. Consumption may see some pullback on pent-up demand as well as the impending festive season, but its sustainability is fragile. Till that firms up, private investments are unlikely to take off. That leaves public capital spending and exports as the two growth engines with feasible firepower to aid the recovery momentum. There is no time to

The significance of the 'there is no data' answer

The Government's consistent 'no data' declarations on important issues are a critical part of a larger political project



SEEMA CHISHTI

t can be safely assumed that the popular American dictum, "In God we trust; all others must bring data", is unlikely to be found in any office of the Narendra Modi government. There is mounting evidence to show that either the Government has 'no data' about issues that show it in a bad light, or with its 'alternate facts', the answer is zero. If there was a filing cabinet that citizens maintained, then the file titled 'No Data' would be the thickest. The desperate scenes of migrants walking back to their villages after the announcement of the sudden lockdown on March 24, 2020 were recorded by global media. A World Bank report concluded that 40 million migrant iobs were impacted/lost in India in April 2020. But when the Government was first asked how many migrants had lost their jobs, the answer was that it had no data. When asked in September 2020 on how many frontline health workers had lost their lives during the pandemic, the then Health Minister announced that there was

Consumer data, other cases

Well before the novel coronavirus pandemic, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation decided not to release the results of the all-India Household Consumer Expenditure Survey conducted by the National Statistical Office during 2017-2018. The results of the Survey would have come before the 2019 parliamentary elections. But the Government waited for after the results, offering an excuse in November 2019 that there were "data quality issues". It is pertinent to note that leaks from the data had suggested a noteworthy slump in consumption expenditure, an ominous proposition that showed this for the first time since data collection had started in 1972-73.

The no data declarations have continued this year. The Government told Parliament in this monsoon session that the number of deaths caused by manual scavenging were not available. On the lack of oxygen claiming lives in the second wave of COVID-19, the Government said it had no information. On the number of farmers dead during the farmers' agitation, it has been a stubborn stonewall of no data. On the economic loss caused due to Internet shutdowns, in which India has the world record for the most by any democracy, the Government said it had no information. On a parliamentary question on vaccine shortage, clear as day with a number of inoculation centres shutting down due to no doses, the Union Minister of State for Health declared in Parliament (written reply to the Rajya Sabha) on July 20, that there was no shortage of vaccines.

The Government understands the power of constructing a narrative using data. The power of the ₹1.76-lakh crore 'notional loss' due to airwayes sold during the second term of the United Progressive Alliance government was a datapoint that was used masterfully to weave a narrative. A serious attempt to comprehend why it is saying no data is important, because this is no trivial matter but critical to a larger political project.

Hands off responsibility

The first reason why 'no data' is to be maintained is easy to understand. If the Government were to acknowledge any data, even if these were highly discounted numbers, it would be tantamount to entering the ring and opening itself up to scrutiny as being accountable for the mess and deterioration in the state of affairs. "Thank You Modiji" has replaced Acche Din on Government advertisements across the board, embodying the total personalisation of governance. The flip side is that any failure by the Government would imply failure of this centralised machine that continually claims

credit. Denial of data on important markers of governance, delivery and issues that matter to people whether it is farmers killing themselves, people consuming far less than before, hunger rising, the mismanagement of the pandemic or the botch-up in the vaccine policy – keeps responsibility at bay. If the Government knows, it must be responsible. And conversely, if it does not, it can pretend no one died or no one lost jobs and that the failures did not occur at all.

Bounced to States

The second reason for not acknowledging facts or numbers is to deflect accountability to the only other unit of power that continues to stand and challenge the Centre and that is State governments. The fall in the share of taxes due to States has never been so low in five years, as it is now. To continue to mesmerise citizens and keep them invested in the benefits of centralisation, washing hands off responsibility is critical for the Union government. Acknowledging data or information of failures derails the project and the creation of alternate facts is very important. This needs not just avoidance of responsibility but deflection from vital issues. So, we continually hear variants of "health is a State subject." India was told that there was no data on deaths due to 'no oxygen' because States did not give the data. And if it is not the States, it must be the political Opposition or past governments that will be held accountable by the Centre.

The third reason, apart from the direct evasion of responsibility and accountability, why 'no data' is consistently maintained is that it allows regimes to rewrite the story

riting history but about retaining the power to script the present at a future date. The truth does not matter, the narrative does. Recently, crucial health data from the National Health Mission's Health Management Information System went missing. It was only after data-watchers made a fuss that the data on the website was restored. Consider giving absolutely no data for the lack of oxygen deaths. The news cycle allows public memory to be only that long. It might be fully possible to tell the story of oxygen in the second wave in a year's time, by writing fiction, if data on it is simply withheld now. If data on this subject were provided now, it narrows the flight of how far spin can go on to market a dismal failure as a success.

Widening information gap

Information is power and a lack of information is the absence of power. There is a gigantic and growing information gap between the state and citizens. The state is building the largest ever technology-driven structure ever built by India for identification under Aadhaar, which wants biometrics before poor people even get their food grain rations. The state wants to be able to use facial recognition tools before putting in place a legal framework to be able to do so. All this data is sought to be extracted from citizens while it is trying to maintain an effective 'no data' position on the biggest snooping revelations that an international consortium has exposed globally, after the National Security Agency (NSA) revelations in the United States by Edward Snowden. The asymmetry of power can only be sustained by keeping citizens in the dark while increasing the rulers' reach to know everything about everyone else.

Moreover, there is a certain brazenness in saying with a straight face and on record, at constitutional for a such as Parliament, that the Government does not have the data. It is seen to feed the public image of a 'strong ruler' by demonstrating unbridled authority

partly is also apiece with the information skew - encouraged not only because the Government does not wish to part with data but because denying citizens the data helps to restate the emergent power equation between the Government and citizens. It is something that Right To Information activists witness routinely as they try and exercise their 'right' to get information. Lest the total concentration of power with the rulers get diluted, the data will not be given, shared or made easily available.

Sometimes, dead citizens speak up. At the height of the second wave of COVID-19, when poor and hapless citizens ended up burying their dead relatives on the shores of the Ganga, it was taken as the end of the matter. But being in denial did not help when it rained. Sixty buried bodies floated up on the banks of Allahabad's Phaphamau on July 30, and the Uttar Pradesh State government was forced to perform their last rites that

Challenge before citizens

But those were exceptional and dramatic circumstances. Eventually, lived experiences of people, those whose kith and kin died due to lack of oxygen, or of those who died of COVID-19 begging for medical aid, will have to challenge the Government narrative. This can be a tall order, expecting citizens to hold their reality as a contrast to sarkari spin, that too in a situation where several institutions and a large section of the media have turned into government mouth-

Denial of data is not a bug but a feature of the political ideology governing the country. In a scenario where a majority of citizens may be dead to the truth of their times, the challenge would be for them to recognise the truth and unhesitatingly push for it. It is a long road, but good and truthful information is the very basis of the quality of democracy. It matters to fight this

Seema Chishti is a journalist-writer based

Keeping an eye on China's expanding nuclear stack

Even if there is contention about the scope and prospective size of Beijing's capabilities, India needs to be watchful



HARSH V. PANT & KARTIK BOMMAKANTI

ore evidence emerged recently that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is expanding the size of its nuclear arsenal by building more missile silos. The debate, though, surrounding China's nuclear build-up is mired in considerable dispute. The source of contention is over the scope and prospective size of the PRC's nuclear capabilities. The construction of the nuclear missile silo field in Xinjiang region in western China indicates the PRC is fielding a larger nuclear force based on fixed land-based capabilities. The site is believed to host 110 silos. This development comes against the backdrop of evidence that China had built a site with 120 silos in the arid region of Yumen, in the Gansu province.

The most likely reason behind the current expansion of China's nuclear arsenal is: increase the survivability of its arsenal against a first strike from their nuclear adversaries, most prominently the United States. Washington, which possesses a larger arsenal, stands at 3,800 warheads, and paired with its growing missile defence

capabilities poses a threat to Chinese retaliatory nuclear forces. However, other countries too loom large in China's nuclear expansion such as Russia and India, even if Russia is not an overriding

Rate and extent is key

The key question is not so much why or whether the PRC is expanding its arsenal, but rather the rate and extent of the production. Does China want a usable and deployable atomic stockpile running into thousands of warheads, or does Beijing want an arsenal in the middle to high hundreds? Making a precise estimate of the PRC's nuclear strength is not easy. However, Chinese nuclear forces stand at roughly anywhere between 250 to 350 nuclear warheads according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) as well as the Federation of American Scientists (FAS)

Last year, the United States Strategic Command (USTRATCOM) chief Admiral Charles Richard stated that the PRC could double its current operational stockpile which is still in the "low 200s" over the next decade. However, the current silo-based missile expansion being undertaken by the PRC can be misleading, because the PRC's quest might be as much to conceal the number of missiles tipped with nuclear warheads in its possession as it is to disassemble and deceive by building a large



number of decoy missile silos.

A first strike strategy

Land-based nuclear capabilities also enable the Chinese to present a nuclear adversary with a larger menu of targets to strike, exhausting a large number of the enemy's missiles in a first strike. Indeed, some of the decoy silos are meant to absorb and exhaust a part of the enemy' first strike nuclear forces. Thus, the larger the target list for any potential opponent, the greater the chances of China's arsenal surviving a first strike thereby boosting the credibility of China's nuclear deterrent. In all probability, the PRC is expanding its nuclear forces if not to match the larger nuclear forces fielded by the Americans and the Russians, but sufficient to withstand a first strike and then execute a retaliatory attack that would defeat U.S. missile defences.

China's nuclear tipped ballistic missiles forces, whether land-

based or sea-based, have certainly improved in quantity and quality. The PRC's Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) capabilities and Intermediate Range Ballistic Misof the Dongfeng-41 (DF-41) and the DF-26, respectively, are its most potent land-based missile systems. At least 16 launchers of the DF-26 are known to be deployed in the Xinjiang region close to the Sino-Indian border.

In the case of the first, the silos being built in Xinjiang and Gansu could house DF-41 ICBMs that are capable of carrying multiple warheads much like their road mobile counterparts. In addition, the decoy silos can launch conventional armed ballistic missiles, and since they are likely to be interspersed with nuclear-tipped missiles, they inadvertent escalation

What New Delhi should track Consequently, the latest development of silos presents a grim and disturbing set of consequences for the world and India. The PRC has refused to enter any tripartite arms control negotiations with Americans and Russians that could forestall the deployment of a more numerically robust nuclear arsenal, and possibly sees its current build-up as a necessity to bridge the nuclear asymmetries it faces vis-à-vis Washington and

The growth in China's nuclear

arsenal might not have an immediate impact on India, but its development of land-based nuclear silos in the Xinjiang province should worry decision-makers and strasile (IRBM) capabilities in the form tegic elites in New Delhi given the region's proximity to India. More importantly, it is likely to have an impact on the ongoing boundary stand-off between the two countries in Eastern Ladakh. The issue is not so much actual nuclear use by the PRC against India, but the coercive leverage fixed land-based nuclear capabilities give the Chinese in consolidating their territorial gains in Depsang, Demchok and Gogra-Hotsprings. If anything, it is likely to produce a suppressive effect against any conventional military escalation. The more extreme and adverse outcome for India is that New Delhi is left with no choice but to accept China's fait accompli.

> The strategic balance between China and India is unlikely to be altered because of the Chinese nuclear expansion, but New Delhi would be wise to keep a close eye on its neighbour and work on enhancing its own strategic capabilities. Amidst an all-round sharpening of great power contestation, the nuclear issue will continue to challenge policymakers.

Harsh V. Pant is Director of Research at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi and Professor of International Relations, King's College London. Kartik Bommakanti is a Fellow at ORF

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.

Change in Afghanistan Those who hope to lead

Afghanistan must stand by their pledge to protect the person, property, and honour of all Afghans in an Islamic system of government: lasting peace and the well-being of Afghans. One should read the opening pages of the Islamic decree, 'Fatwa Against Terrorism and Suicide Bombings', written in book form by Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri, a scholar from Jhang, Pakistan. We should not only prevent a day such as 9/11, but the disease of terrorism itself. It would be

beyond shameful to pass this onto another generation on both sides of the Durand Line, Americans, and the world. The message of peace should never be destroyed. The Afghan desire for a peaceful, sovereign, united, and neutral nation must rise and shine. ZOHAL OSMAN, Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.

■ Going by the past record of the Taliban, one cannot rely on their "assurance" that they will uphold the rights of women and not pose threats to other nations. Afghanistan should not be allowed to

extremism, especially with the U.S. acknowledging that the Taliban is in possession of very sophisticated American-made weapons. Who will be held accountable in case there is a violation of rights? And how is the UN going to deal with a Taliban Afghanistan? S. HARITHA RAO. Wanaparthy, Telangana

drift and become a hub of

Kohlism

The columnist ('Sport' page, 'Between Wickets' - "Kohli did a great job, but Kohlism needs to be reviewed", August 18) has articulated what many cricket fans feel

strongly about. Winning is good; winning abroad and playing tough is spirit-lifting and great viewing when the Indian cricket team pulls off a victory against all odds. What is not palatable is the manner in which Virat Kohli personally leads with an ungentlemanly show of aggression, which is at odds completely with winning with grace. He does not need to stoop to such levels. Derisive comments go beyond sledging, though, unfortunately, now accepted as a way of playing the game. He must also realise that today's viewers, including

children in their formative years, can understand abuse picked up during a telecast. Let the bat do the talking. Virat Kohli should recall that Ajinkya Rahane and team pulled off a victory in Australia under tougher circumstances but won the hearts and respect of all. TERENCE D'SOUZA,

■ A great win does not justify poor behaviour on the field. Misplaced aggression is very much against the sporting ethos of cricket. It is time Virat Kohli matures as a sober leader. And emerging cricketers should not walk

into the trap of giving importance to sound over substance. We have to win the hearts too, not just the matches. Y.V.N. SARMA,

To read more letters online, scan the QR code

Maki Kaji

Maki Kaji, the creator of Sudoku, gifted us the pleasure of solving wonderfully challenging puzzles. Many of the puzzles are a great stimulant to the thinking process. They will continue to enthral millions. V. Anantha Subramanian, Chendamangalam, Kerala

dither on either of these fronts.

Why we watch sport

When our support turns into tribalism, we relinquish the most cherished principles that inhere in sport



SUHRITH PARTHASARTHY

Our reactions to the performance of India's athletes at the Tokyo Olympics have been telling. Neeraj Chopra's scintillating success in the men's javelin throw was met with deserved adulation, but it was also accompanied by dollops of now-familiar jingoism. In contrast, others who came up short, for no apparent fault of their own, have been served with affronts.

Disproportionate responses

The wrestler Vinesh Phogat, who won gold both in the Asian Games and in the Commonwealth Games, hadn't so much as set foot in India when the Wrestling Federation suspended her on grounds of indiscipline. Phogat, who had crashed out in the quarterfinal in Tokyo, was afforded no hearing before the decision was made. She has since written about the difficulties she faced in recovering from COVID-19.

"Since I got COVID first time (August 2020), I can't digest protein," Phogat wrote in *The Indian Express*. "One year and I have had no protein in my body. It doesn't stay inside. When I came back from Kazakhstan after Asian Championships, I fell ill again. I was tested positive COVID for the second time which I contracted in Almaty. I recovered and flew to Bulgaria. A few days later, my family back home tested positive."

Phogat's physical and mental struggles were compounded by the whims of the Wrestling Federation. While the men's contingent was accorded the support not only of the Indian national coach, but also a foreign trainer and a dedicated physio, the women's team was ostensibly denied equivalent benefits. It's impossible to tell whether Phogat would have won a medal had she been provided equal support. But the decision to deny her parity smacks of

What is worse is that despite the circumstances surrounding her loss, Phogat is now seen as a sportsperson past her best, as someone dispensa-



Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy and Mutaz Barshim of Qatar share the gold medal for the men's high jump in Tokyo. • GETTY IMAGES

ble in the nation's consciousness. If she didn't get the support she needed when she was seen as a favourite, imagine her fate now.

By themselves, these disproportionate responses to the performances of India's athletes are not surprising. As a society that consumes games as a commercial product, we've come to see victory as the ultimate purpose of sport, and we attach to it an ersatz transcendence. Our emotions are now built into watching sport not as the pursuit of human excellence, but the pursuit of something more grotesque - of a triumph that will serve our tribal demands.

To be sure, the organisation of any team sport invariably requires making a division along partisan lines. For instance, a local club or society is founded either on regional lines or on the lines of a commercial franchise. The division made in the case of the Olympics is nationality, which today may be unavoidable. But when the division is taken to its extreme, when partisanship turns into tribalism, we tend to relinquish the most cherished principles that otherwise inhere in sport, the primary reasons why we see sport as a thing of value.

In a recent lecture, Mukul Kesavan argued that partisanship is especially destructive when sport is seen as a vehicle for nationalism. Overcoming this isn't easy because sport, he said, citing the historian Eric Hobsbawm, is effectively constitutive of nationalism. "It is not the cherry on the cake, it is baked into the foundations of the nation state." Moreover, even when sport is organised along different lines, say in the form of franchises, as is the case with the National Football League in the U.S., "militaristic chauvinism," Kesavan said, has an uncanny way of creeping in.

Symbol of political nationalism

In the original conception, the Olympic Games were meant to serve as an antithesis for nationalistic zealotry. The founder of the Games, the 19th century French aristocrat Pierre de Coubertin, envisioned the Olympics as a means of engineering a sporting culture that would remain apolitical. For that reason, the 1896 Games at Athens even allowed for mixed teams. The gold in the men's tennis doubles, for instance, was won by a Briton paired with a German. But Coubertin's vaunted idealism, as many have argued, failed to account for the existing realities of the world, in particular inequalities based on race, class, sex, and nationality. As a result, the Games, far from fostering a culture of fraternity, came to serve as a symbol of political nationalism, exemplified best by the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Since then, repeated efforts have been made to depoliticise the Games. A United Nations General Assembly Resolution, titled 'Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal', has been adopted before every edition of the Games since 1994. But the structure of the event has at its heart a paradox: while athletes from across the globe come together to compete against each other, they play under the banners of their national flags. These athletes are seen not as individuals, but as representatives of a nation state. Thus, Indians, when the Games come around every four years, see the country being put on

This time around, as always, the inquest into the Tokyo Games in India was focussed on the medal count and on whether it does justice to our abilities as a nation. This, though, begs the question: what is the true value of sport? To many today, especially to those in power, sport is merely a means towards scoring geopolitical victories, towards the exhibition of national greatness on a global stage. Without doubt, it is perfectly fine to take pride in how athletes from India perform. But limiting our analysis – and our joy – to the narrow and the parochial does the Olympic Games a disservice.

Sports as a cultural good

Ultimately, if we want to benefit as a society from sport, we must take more seriously the values inherent in its practice. What might they be? The American scholar Jan Boxill has argued, for example, that sport helps establish a moral function for society, that it accords individuals a path towards freedom, towards "self-expression" and "self-respect." But to understand this we must start seeing sport through a lens less tinted by nationalism, and as spectators rather

than as supporters. When we do that, we can appreciate not just Chopra's gold medal, but also moments of genius from other athletes, from across the globe: Elaine Thompson-Herah's doubledouble in the 100m and 200m sprints, Katie Ledecky's battle in the pool with Ariarne Titmus, Mutaz Barshim and Gianmarco Tamberi choosing to share the gold medal in the high jump, and Karsten Warholm's breathtaking performance in the 400m hurdles are just a few of the many uplifting performances from the Games.

These feats mattered not because the athletes were representing their nations, but because they were striving to achieve the highest form of excellence that they were capable of. Each performance in the Games was an exhibition of sport as freedom. And it is that freedom that we should attempt to engender. To do so requires us to treat sport as an essential cultural good, to see in it its intrinsic values, to see it as a thing of merit to each of us as individual beings.

Suhrith Parthasarathy is an advocate

The police we need

India requires a police force that is responsive and respected and not one that is feared, as is the case today



R.K. RAGHAVAN & D. SIVANANDHAN

Ranjeeta Sharma, an Indian Police Service (IPS) probationer from Haryana, bagged the honour recently of commanding the passingout parade at the National Police Academy (NPA). She won two awards: the Best Allround IPS Probationer and the Sword of Honour for the Best Outdoor Probationer. Interestingly, the honour of being the Best Probationer went to a woman officer, Kiran Shruthi, last year too.

The ideal police officer

The choice of the probationer commanding the passing-out parade is reasonably objective. It takes into account both the outdoor performance and classroom performance of a trainee. The probationer cannot be a mere bookworm or a brawny athlete excelling in activities such as ceremonial parade or horse riding; he or she is expected to be an allrounder. The Best Probationer award recognises good conduct, empathy and a quick reflex. These are the ideal qualities of the police who are required to intervene in dangerous situations and also go to the rescue of the poorest when they are harassed by anti-social elements.

The most positive feature today is that many IPS officers are technology savvy. This augurs well for the future of law enforcement in India. Even the lower rungs of the police, who do not belong to the elitist IPS, are avid in the use of technology, especially for regulating public assemblies and solving crimes.

India stands out for entrusting independent responsibility to IPS officers even in the early years of their induction. This is why an IPS assignment is not only prestigious but is laden with unparalleled trust in an inexperienced youth just out of university. Only a few come in with previous work experience.

However, it is distressing to note the declining levels of integrity among senior IPS officers who are expected to be role models for their junior colleagues. Recently, a case of alleged extortion was registered against a former Mumbai Police Commissioner. A senior IPS officer in Tamil Nadu was recently served a charge sheet in court in connection with a case pertaining to the sexual harassment of a woman officer. Nothing can be more disgraceful for a premier police force.

Glittering passing-out parades therefore seem mere window dressing. The NPA has

the greatest role in building character. This is where its success is only modest.

What does an average citizen want from the police? Citizens desire a friendly police force which treats the rich and poor alike. They would also like to see less rapacious police stations where they receive service to which they are entitled, without having to pay any bribe. Except in a few places in the country, most citizens don't get all this.

We are still a country where crime against women is high. Arguing that this is the case in many other countries is no consolation. While many quote data, we would like not to do that since the available data have many issues: there is under-reporting of cases, and the police often refuse to register complaints made. We would rather go by perceptions about the police capacity and interest. The popular belief is that India is still not safe for women. The gang rape and murder in 2012 of a young woman in Delhi left an indelible scar not merely on the face of the Delhi Police but on the whole Indian police force. This is just one example – there are many more.

Occupying public positions

In this context, it is important to mention the management of police personnel. In an ideal world, brilliant and straightforward officials would be chosen to occupy public positions calling for objectivity and skill. Unfortunately, this is not the case with IPS appointments. Many officers are given plum posts based on their links and loyalty to the ruling party. A silver lining, however, is the Supreme Court mandate laying down the process for selection of Director General of Police. The State government now has to make the appointment from a panel of three names approved by the Union Public Service Commission. This will ensure that no outrageous appointments are made.

Ultimately it is the honest and hard-working officer at the top who will make the difference between good and tendentious policing. India needs a police force that is responsive and respected and not one that is feared, as is the case now. But for that, we need to know why some young men and women officers with a distinguished educational record and who often come from middle and lower sections of the society deviate from the path of virtue after solid training at the NPA. Is this because of faulty selection or poor supervision? Or is it due to the fact that new arrivals no longer have role models like the ones we had in the past?

R.K. Raghavan is a former CBI Director who is now Professor of Criminal Justice at the Jindal Global University, Sonipat, and D. Sivanandhan is a forme Commissioner of Police, Mumbai, and a former DGP,

A moral disaster for the west

Weak-willed, like Britain after World War II, the U.S. has enacted a shameful flight from Afghanistan

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

At the momentous fall of Kabul, Aisha Khurram, a young Afghan woman, had tweeted, "Dear world:/ Does your heart not ache?/ Does your blood not move?/ To see the displaced/ To see the agonizing pain my people face. How do you react to the number of people being killed and displaced in Afghanistan without feeling at least some level of panic?" It would be a reasonable surmise that U.S. President Joe Biden's heart does not ache for the people of Afghanistan. After all, once you have decided to have blood on your hands, you are no longer moved by human suffering. The President may have been acting out his presumed destiny, for buried deep in the psyche of the west is the conviction of the otherness of the east, whose people count for less than their own. After all, the Democrat Biden was only taking forward the intent expressed by the Republican Donald Trump at election time that he would bring the troops back.

A perfidious act

The American historian Stanley Wolpert has provided a useful foil to much of the academic history writing on India from Britain, characterising the U.K.'s departure from India in 1947 as 'Shameful Flight'. In the British official records, this event is presented as 'the transfer of power', eliding the partition of a subcontinent on religious lines and the horrific butchery that had followed. It is not just that this may be seen as an ungrateful act after Britain had gained immeasurably from the possession of India. The commodity and financial flows that were extracted from India had started with the East India Company but continued unabated after its rule was replaced by the British Crown once India's First War of Independence showed up the usurper's shaky hold on the country.

The rise of the U.S.'s economy, and thus political power, is not independent of this. The slave economy of the New World had thrived on the Industrial Revolution in England by supplying it the cotton that it devoured, and the latter had gained from a vast captive market in India, which India could not protect due to its dependent status, even as western powers protected theirs. All the while, the narrative was propagated that the British were in India to provide good governance, as if the record of Ashoka Maurya and subsequent native princes was inadequate.

Americans in Afghanistan

After the Second World War, Britain's mantle was taken over by the Americans. Ostensibly to checkmate a communism that suppresses human rights they preferred a Pakistan ruled by dictators over a democratic India, mercilessly bombed first Vietnam and then Cambodia, and effortlessly switched their allegiance from Taiwan to their one-time foe Mao Zedong. In their unflinching support to their ally Pakistan, they even sent the Seventh Fleet to intimidate an India that had gone to war in Bangladesh following a genocide unleased by Pakistani generals. In pursuit of this strategy they finally reached Afghanistan which had been overrun by the Soviets. The Americans funded the mujahideen, the forerunners of the present-day Taliban. Then 9/11 happened, and the hunt for Osama bin Laden began. Believing him to be hiding in Afghanistan, they first bombarded and then invaded it, only to find him ensconced in Pakistan. The Americans now found themselves in the wrong country, but remained there for 20 years. It is not clear what they did during this time but building a strong democratic state that could secure human rights was not one of them. Weak-willed, like the British after the Second World War, the Americans have re-enacted a shameful flight, leaving millions to face the Taliban, known for their misogyny, visceral hatred of democracy and intolerance towards anyone who dares question their interpretation of Islam. This is a moral disaster for the west, that has for the past 200 years projected itself as the pre-eminent defender of liberty and egalitarianism, the bedrock of democracy. In world politics, India is on her own now, and has no option but to be the sole defender of human rights. Will we rise to the challenge?

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches at Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

DATA POINT

Afghanistan: a fact-file With the Taliban's rapid advances, Afghanistan's cities, previously under government rule, collapsed like a pack of cards. On August 15, Kabul also fell without a fight. The country has been fraught with political instability and violence over the past few decades and lags in key economic, political and health indicators. With the re-entry of the Taliban, there is a possibility of further deterioration in human development indicators. The last time the Taliban were in power, the political rights and civil liberties of citizens were threatened.

Even though it has the highest proportion of young people, over 40% of its youth are not in school or employed. Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a per capita yearly income of \$2,110

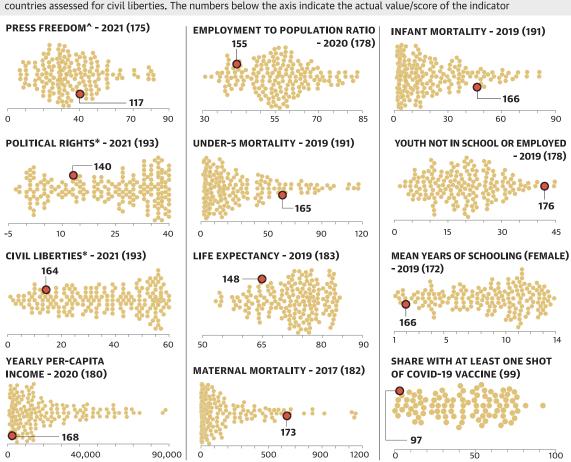
By **Jasmin Nihalani**



The average number of ■ vears of education received by women is as low as 1.4

It has the 10th highest maternal mortality ratio (638 per 1 lakh live births) and a significantly high under-5 mortality rate (60.3 per 1,000 live births)

■ HOW TO READ THE CHARTS | Each chart depicts Afghanistan's ranking in an indicator among other countries with relevant data. Each circle corresponds to a nation, and Afghanistan's position is highlighted. The total number of countries with data for an indicator is mentioned in the brackets after the indicator's name. The number near the Afghanistan circle indicates its ranking in an indicator out of the countries considered. For instance, Afghanistan ranked 164 of the 193 countries assessed for civil liberties. The numbers below the axis indicate the actual value/score of the indicator



The Man Prindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 19, 1971

Flood situation in Bihar

The Union Finance Minister Mr. Y.B. Chavan, who arrived here today for a two-day on the spot study of the flood havoc in the State, said that Bihar was faced with an "unbelievably grim situation caused by the recent unprecedented and devastating floods". He said the State Government should reframe its Plan in view of the widespread loss to crops and property. Addressing the Bihar Ruling Congress Flood Committee, Mr. Chavan promised assistance from the Central Government but cautioned that the State Government and the people should not solely depend on Central assistance. "Bihar's problem is a national problem and would be tackled on that basis," he said. On the quantum of possible Central assistance, Mr. Chavan said, "I cannot off-hand give any figure. I would, however, urge you to keep in mind the limitations of the Union Government and multiple demands on its financial resources." The unprecedented floods in Bihar have so far claimed 100 lives and forced over one million people to move out of their homes to places of safety. The Bihar Government has estimated the loss due to the floods at Rs. 134.68 crore.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 19, 1921 Bombay labour

After a quiet of several months, there occurred a sudden outburst of labour trouble at the workshops of the G.I.P. Railway on Wednesday afternoon. The work went on as usual in the morning. When the men were returning to the shops in the afternoon after recess at 1 p.m., some of the workers began to throw stones, lumps of iron, etc., at the time office and after half an hour's hooliganism, deliberately set fire to the time office, destroying the workmen's records and tickets. Police force not being near, the rowdies had their own way for a time until a detachment of auxiliary force arrived on the scene and succeeded in clearing men from the workshop compound. The damage is estimated at about twenty-five thousand due to total reckoning of the time office. The railway authorities are unaware of the real cause of troubles. They are inclined to think that a few budmashes among their workmen must have incited others to commit the outrage. Some of the workmen, they think, did not like guards erected at the entrance to the time office some months ago, but no official complaint was made about them.

SOURCE: *FREEDOM HOUSE RATINGS, ^REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS, WORLD BANK, OURWORLDINDATA

FROM PAGE ONE

Only Sharia law in Afghanistan: Taliban

The power structure that Mr. Hashimi outlined would bear similarities to how Afghanistan was run the last time the Taliban were in power from 1996 to 2001.

Then, supreme leader Mullah Omar remained in the shadows and left the day-to-day running of the country to a council.

The Taliban's supreme leader has three deputies: Mawlavi Yaqoob, son of Mullah Omar; Sirajuddin Haqqani, leader of the powerful militant Haqqani network; and Abdul Ghani Baradar, who heads the political office in Doha and is one of the founding members of the group.

Mr. Hashimi said he would be joining a meeting of the Taliban leadership

that would discuss issues of governance later this week.

On recruiting soldiers and pilots who fought for the ousted Afghan government, Mr. Hashimi said the Taliban planned to set up a new national force that would include its own members and the government soldiers willing to join.

"Most of them have got training in Turkey and Germany and England. So we will talk to them to get back to their positions," Mr. Hashimi said.

Former President Hamid Karzai met a Taliban commander and senior leader of the Haqqani network militant group, Anas Haqqani, for talks on transition, a Taliban official said on Wednesday.

Tharoor discharged from Sunanda death case

The police's chargesheet had named Mr. Tharoor as an accused for alleged offences under Sections 498A (husband or his relative subjecting a woman to cruelty) and 306 of the Indian Penal Code (abetment to suicide).

Senior advocate Vikas Pahwa, appearing for Mr. Tharoor, had argued that the investigation conducted by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) completely exonerated his client of all the charges.

Mr. Pahwa had asked to discharge Mr. Tharoor in the case as there was no evidence against him to prove the offences of cruelty or abetment to suicide.

SC allows women to take NDA exam

The Bench orally observed that it was "absurd" that women were not allowed to appear for the NDA even after the Supreme Court, in a judgment, had directed permanent commission for women in the Army.

"Why are you continuing in this direction? Even after the Supreme Court judgment expanding the horizons and extending Permanent Commission in the Army to women? This is unfounded now! We are finding it absurd! Will the Army only act when a judicial order is passed? Not otherwise?" Justice Kaul asked Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati.

Ms. Bhati argued that the court ought not to interfere in a policy decision by passing an interim order.

"NDA and IMA are modes of direct entry through the UPSC. Whereas through OTA, women are commissioned along with men, both through UPSC and non-UPSC mode of entry. They are granted Short Service Commission, both men and women, and subsequently are considered for grant of Permanent Commission," Ms. Bhati said.

The Union of India sub-

mitted that "women are not denied opportunity of entry or career progression on the same terms as their male counterparts in the Army".

The hearing was based

The hearing was based on a petition filed by Kush Kalra. The court listed the case for September 8.

Responding to the court order, a senior officer from the Army said the discussion on inducting women through the NDA had been ongoing. "The service chiefs from the Army, Navy and the Air Force had planned a visit to the NDA on August 20 to review the training and administrative arrangements for women cadets," the officer said.

(Inputs from Dinakar Peri)

MP booked for sedition for remarks on Taliban

"Taliban is a force there... They want to run the country themselves in their ways," said Mr. Barq, who also described it as an internal

matter of Afghanistan.

The Superintendent of Police, Sambhal, Chakresh Mishra, said Mr. Barq's comments were inflammatory.

Mr. Mishra said two others, Faizan Chaudhary and Mo-

hammad Muqeem, who allegedly posted comments in support of the Taliban, were also booked. "They made inflammatory statements," he said.

Later in a clarification, Mr. Barq said his statement was misinterpreted and stressed that he stood with his country and not the Taliban or its policies.

NHRC flags delay in criminal

Laggardness leading to human rights violations, says group

said the delay in disposal of

cases was leading to human

rights violations of the un-

NHRC member Justice (re-

tired) M.M. Kumar, who

chaired the meeting, said

that despite the Supreme

Court's directions on police

reforms, there had been

hardly any changes on the

ground. He said special laws

and fast-track courts could

der-trials and convicts.

Supplanting IPC

justice reform process

Collegium recommends eight judges for Supreme Court

Karnataka HC judge B.V. Nagarathna has a chance to become first woman CJI

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

The Supreme Court Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana, has recommended to the government nine names for appointment as judges in the court, and in the process, scripted history by naming Karnataka High Court judge B.V. Nagarathna, who may become India's first woman CJI a few years from now.

The Collegium, including Justices U.U. Lalit, A.M. Khanwilkar, D.Y. Chandrachud and L. Nageswara Rao, met until the late hours of August 17 to zero in on the names. It, however, formalised and published its resolution on Wednesday.

3 women judges

Eight judges and one lawyer from the Supreme Court Bar have been recommended. They are Karnataka High Court Chief Justice A.S. Oka, who is the most senior Chief



B.V. Nagarathna, left, and Hima Kohli, right, are among the three women recommended by the Collegium. $\, \, {}_{\sf FILE} \, {}_{\sf PHOTO} \,$

Justice; Gujarat Chief Justice Vikram Nath; Sikkim Chief Justice J.K. Maheshwari; Telangana Chief Justice Hima Kohli, who is also the only serving woman Chief Justice; Justice Nagarathna; Kerala High Court judge C.T. Ravikumar; Madras High Court judge M.M. Sundresh; Gujarat High Court judge Bela M. Trivedi; and senior advocate P.S. Narasimha, in that order.

The Collegium has for the first time, in one single reso-

lution, recommended three women judges. It has thus sent a strong signal in favour of the representation of women in the highest judiciary.

It has also continued the recent trend of recommending direct appointments from the Supreme Court Bar to the Bench of the court.

The top court currently has 10 vacancies. Judicial appointments to it have remained frozen since September 2019.

The last batch of appoint-

ments in September 2019 were of Justices Krishna Murari, S. Ravindra Bhat, V. Ramasubramanian and Hrishikesh Roy. The oldest vacancy is that of Justice Ranjan Gogoi, who retired in November 2019.

The tenure of Chief Justice S.A. Bobde did not see a single judicial appointment to the court though frequent discussions were held by the Collegium. Justice Bobde's tenure as CJI had to weather the breakout of COVID-19.

The Supreme Court Collegium has also recommended six judicial officers and a judicial member of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal for appointment as judges of the Telangana High Court.

The judicial officers recommended are P. Sree Sudha, C. Sumalatha, G. Radha Rani, M. Laxman, N. Tukaramji and A. Venkateshwara Reddy.

The ITAT judicial member is P. Madhavi Devi.

CJI slams speculative reports on collegium

He asks media to show responsibility

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana on Wednesday voiced in open court his extreme displeasure over "speculative" reports in certain sections of the media about the Supreme Court Collegium having recommended nine names for appointments to the court.

He said the reports were "irresponsible" and "counter-productive".

"Today's reflections in some sections of the media, pending the process, even before formalising the resolution is counter-productive. There were instances of deserving career progression of bright talents getting marred because of such irresponsible reporting and speculation. This is very unfortunate and I am extremely upset about it." he stated.

The CJI, who was heading a Ceremonial Bench convened on the occasion of Justice Navin Sinha's retirement, observed that Collegium meetings were going on.

The process of judicial appointment was a sacrosanct function of the Collegium. The media should not harm the integrity and dignity of the process by indulging in speculation.

'Process is ongoing'

"You are all aware we need to appoint judges to this court. The process of appointment of judges is sacrosanct and has certain dignity attached to it. My media friends must understand and recognise the sanctity of this process. As an institution, we hold the freedom of media and the rights of individuals in high esteem," he noted, urging the media to report with a certain sense of responsibility and maturity.

The Chief Justice commended journalists who had shown restraint.

The CJI said Justice Sinha would surely "forgive him from deviating a bit on this solemn occasion". "He [Justice Sinha] will understand my anguish."

Bihar local polls to start on Sept. 24

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PATNA

The long-awaited elections to the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Bihar will be held in 11 phases from September 24 to December 12.

Elections will be held for the posts of mukhiyas, sarpanchs, zilla parishad members, panchayat samiti members and ward members.

The notification for the polls will be issued by the State Election Commission on August 24.

Cabinet nod

The Cabinet approved the government's proposal of the elections on August 17. Polling is scheduled to be held on September 24 and 29, October 8, 20 and 24, November 3, 15, 24 and 29 and December 8 and 12.

The elections could not be held earlier due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PRIs, comprising panchayats, panchayat samitis and zilla parishads, had to be constituted by June 15.

The office of the State Chief Electoral officer had said the local body polls would be held through both ballot papers and electronic voting machines.

Additional Chief Secretary, Sanjay Kumar, said polling would be held first in those areas that were not affected by floods or were less affected.

In an apparent bid to woo voters, the government recently invited tenders for different welfare schemes in rural areas such as putting up solar lights in over 8,300 panchayats and 143 urban bodies.

Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal has protested against the government's welfare schemes when panchayat polls are round the corner.

replace certain offences un-

der the Indian Penal Code in

order to reduce the piling up

of cases at every police sta-

NHRC chairperson Justice

A.K. Mishra (retd.) said that

not only were trials getting

delayed, but court orders

convicting a person also

took years to implement. He

said digitisation of docu-

ments would help in speed-

ing up investigations and

trials

For a bountiful harvest



Fostering a custom: Tiwa tribesmen performing a traditional dance as they take part in the Wanchuwa festival in which they pray fior a bountiful harvest n Morten village in Karbi Anglong district of Assam on Wednesday. •RITU RAJ KONWAR

Raj Kundra gets interim protection

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday granted interim protection from arrest to businessman Raj Kundra till August 25 in connection with a pornography films racket case registered by the city police in 2020.

A single-judge Bench of Justice S.K. Shinde was hearing a petition filed by Mr. Kundra, actor Shilpa Shetty's husband, seeking protection from arrest after the sessions court refused to grant him relief.

The Bench directed the Mumbai police to file their reply and posted the matter to be heard on August 25.

The First Information Report (FIR), registered by the cyber crime cell in October 2020, said Mr. Kundra allegedly broadcast erotic content on an online platform.

Govt. adopts differing stance on snooping

In Parliament, it said Home Secretary is competent authority, but SC affidavit was filed by IT Ministry

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL NEW DELHI

An August 5 reply by the Union government in Parliament stated that the Home Secretary is the competent authority to deal with legal interceptions.

However, the affidavit by the government in the Supreme Court, denying "all or any" allegations in the Pegasus snooping case, was filed by the Information Technology Ministry.

On August 5, replying to the Rajya Sabha member John Brittas's question about "telephone interceptions", Minister of State for Communications Devusinh Chauhan specified that the "Union Home Secretary is the competent authority in case of Central government and Secretary in charge of Home Department in case of States/Union Territories".

The Home Secretary's power to approve legal interceptions was mandated under Section 5(2) of the Indian Telegraph Act,1885 read with Rule 419A of the Indian Telegraph (1st Amendment of 2014) Rules, 2014 and Section 69 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 read with the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Interception, Monitoring and Decryption of Information) Rules, 2009,

Aware of the law, the Supreme Court repeatedly urged the government, on two consecutive days of

the Minister said.



hearing, to have the "competent authority", that is the Home Secretary, address the Pegasus issue in a detailed affidavit.

National security But the government has so

far objected to the suggestion. It has refused to be a part of any "public debate" on the Pegasus issue or any The Supreme Court asked the Centre and the West Bengal government to respond to a petition challenging the formation of a Commission of Inquiry into illegal hackingand monitoring of mobile phones in the wake of the Pegasus snooping controversy. A Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana posted the case for August 25.

Centre, Bengal asked to respond

interception, whatsoever, by having the Home Secretary file a "detailed affidavit".

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta has maintained that a public discussion in court on the software used for interception would alert terrorists and compromise national security.

The court has not bought the government's argument.

Though it assured the Centre that nothing would be done to compromise national security, the Bench headed by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana said it still had to address the concerns of citizens, including persons of eminence, who had complained to the court that their mobile phones had

Gujarat govt. defends anti-conversion law in HC

'No ban on interfaith marriages'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

The State government has contended before the Gujarat High Court that there was no "ban on interfaith marriages" in the State, but defended its new anti-conversion law saying marriages cannot be tool for "forceful conversion".

The HC is hearing two petitions that have challenged the newly enacted amendment in the law, which deals with forcible religious conversion through marriages.

The court has posted the matter for an interim order on August 19, in response to the petitions that have challenged amendments to the Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021.

During the hearing, a

Bench of Chief Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Biren Vaishnav observed that the amended law keeps a sword hanging over interfaith couples because it has created an impression that interfaith marriages are not permissible in the State.

Student dies after falling off hillock chasing Internet signal

He was trying to access online learning material

SATYASUNDAR BARIK BHUBANESWAR

A school student, who was trying to access online learning material and chasing an Internet signal, died after falling from a hillock in Odisha's Rayagada district on Tuesday.

The deceased student identified as Adria Jagaranga was studying in Class 7 in a Bhubaneswar-based school. As schools were close on account of COVID-19 restric-

remote Kandhapanduraguda village under Padmapur block of southern Rayagada district. Hiren Bhati, a sub-inspec-

tions, he was stranded in his

tor who investigated the incident, said, "During the probe, I too could not catch a signal in the village. One could get mobile signal at about 400 metres from the village where the accident happened."

"The decease

tioned on another big boulder. Four children who had accompanied him to the hill said he was having a smartphone with him. He fell from a height in the afternoon," said Mr. Bhati. The boy was rushed to Padmapur block hospital where he succumbed to injuries. His family members said that Adria used to go to the hill to study on a regular basis.

M ND-NDE

climbed on a unstable rock,

which was dangerously posi-

CM YK

held its first meeting on Wednesday where experts

statement said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A group of experts under the

National Human Rights

Commission (NHRC) on

Wednesday expressed "se-

rious concerns over the slow

pace of reforms in the crimi-

nal justice system to ensure

speedy justice", an NHRC

The NHRC core group on

the criminal justice system

Human rights organisation says Afghan nationals seeking shelter in India should be granted the status of refugees

SUHASINI HAIDAR KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

In view of the developments in Afghanistan, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is cutting short his visit to the Americas this week, and will return from the United Nations after chairing over two meetings at the UN Security Council (UNSC). Mr. Jaishankar was due to travel to Mexico, Panama and Guyana after his visit to New York, but sources said these visits would now be "rescheduled" at a later date, evidently due to the fast-moving crisis in Afghanistan, which has triggered an exodus to neighbouring countries and beyond.

Mr. Jaishankar is due to return to Delhi on Friday to oversee logistical and diplo-

Congress

NEW DELHI

journed now

slams hike

in LPG prices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Former Finance Minister P.

Chidambaram on Wednes-

day hit out at the Centre for

the ₹25 hike in the price of

an LPG cylinder, and

claimed that the govern-

ment will also increase the

prices of petrol and diesel

since Parliament has ad-

"LPG cylinder price in-

creased by ₹25. (It has been

increased by ₹265 in 9

months). Wait for the in-

crease in petrol and diesel

prices. They will increase

every other day or every

third day. Now that Parlia-

ment has been adjourned

sine die, government will

make merry," Mr. Chidam-

tary Priyanka Gandhi Va-

dra alleged on Twitter that

the government's "collec-

tion scheme" was flourish-

ing with a regular monthly

increase of LPG prices. "By

showing the dream of Ujj-

scheme' of the BJP govern-

ment is flourishing by in-

creasing the prices of LPG

tormer Congress chief Ra

hul Gandhi modified Mr.

Modi's earlier slogan on

corruption "Na Khaunga

Na Khane Doonga [Will

neither eat nor let anyone

eat]". "The truth of empty

rhetoric is now before the

people," he wrote.

In a Facebook post,

every month," she said.

'collection

the

wala,

Congress general secre-

baram said on Twitter.



Diplomatic ties: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York. • PTI

matic meetings over the rapid turn of events in Afghanistan and India's stand on the new Taliban regime in power in Kabul and, in particular, the government's decision after Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a Cabinet Committee on Security to accept visa requests from all Afghan nationals, including Hindus and Sikhs who want

to leave Afghanistan. However, a human rights organisation in Delhi has said providing visas to Afghan nationals seeking shelter in India would not serve a humanitarian purpose and they should be granted the status of refugees. The Rights and Risk Analysis Group

(RRAG) has urged the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to defend the human rights of the Afghans who are fleeing to India by granting them the status of

'Highly inadequate'

Suhas Chakma, Director of RRAG, said the grant of 'e-Emergency X-Misc Visa' was "highly inadequate" to deal with the immediate concerns of the fleeing Afghans. "Visa comes with an expiry date that can be denied at any time. Visa by definition also excludes extension of any humanitarian assistance by the government and any possibility to work or engage in activities necessary for survival. The grant of emergency visa, therefore, does not take into account the needs of the Afghans who fled to India," said Mr.

Over the last few days, a large number of Afghans had arrived in India through commercial and special flights operated by India as the regime change got under wav in Kabul.

Among those who arrived were Wahidullah Kaleemzai, MP from Wardak; Abdul Aziz Hakimi, MP from Parwan; Abdul Qadir Zazai, MP; Senator Malem Lala Gul; Jamil Karzai, former MP and second cousin to former Afghan President Hamid Karzai; Shukria Esakhail, MP from Baghlan; and several other notables, including government officials and security personnel.

The RRAG said under the Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, the Afghan guests had the protection of their right to life and liberty, which would require basic support such as medical and health facilities, education for family members and opportunity to work in activities for survival.

The RRAG urged the NHRC to set up a division within the Commission to process the refugee claims of the Afghan guests who had to flee to India following the takeover of political power by the Taliban. Mr. Chakma said the Government of India had already extended similar humanitarian assistance to Tibetan and Sri Lankan refugees, adding, "Therefore, there is no reason as to why India must not formulate a policy on the Afghan refu-

'Over 200 from Bengal in Afghanistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Wednesday that more than 200 people from the State are stranded in Afghanistan.

said the Centre should take immediate steps to enable these people to return home. "My Chief Secretary is writing to the Ministry of External Affairs... The government should immediately arrange to get the people back to West Bengal," she told presspersons.

tions Security Council (UNSC) open debate on technology and peacekeeping, his first as External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar announced the rollout of a technological platform in partnership with the UN -'UNITE Aware' – to help enhance the safety of UN peacekeepers. India, as a major activities contributing nation to UN

Tech to help protect UN

Platform used in four UN missions

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

Presiding over a United Na-

peacekeeping activities, has

been keen on using its

month-long UNSC Presiden-

cy to prioritise peacekeep-

ing. The platform has been

used in four UN missions, an

Indian official told The

On Wednesday, the Se-

curity Council adopted a re-

solution that paid tribute to

peacekeepers and asked member-states that had

hosted them to bring to jus-

tice those who had killed or

committed acts of violence

against them. "The international community must

come together better to gov-

ern the digital space for

good, while addressing its

many challenges," UN Se-

cretary-General Antonio Gu-

four-point framework for se-

curing the peacekeepers at

the debate. First, he called

for the deployment of pro-

ven, cost-effective and field-

that were environmentally

friendly in their construc-

tion. Second, peacekeepers

needed sound information

technologies

serviceable

Mr. Jaishankar outlined a

terres said at the debate.

Hindu.

peacekeepers: Jaishankar

India is a major contributing nation to UN peacekeeping

head visualisation.

"It, therefore, gives me great pleasure to announce that India is supporting the UN in the rollout of the 'UN-ITE Aware' platform across select peacekeeping missions. This initiative is based on the expectation that an entire peacekeeping operation can be visualised, coordinated and monitored on a real time basis," Mr. Jaishankar said.

Finally, he called for investment in capacity building and training of peacekeepers with regard to technology, while announcing to the Security Council a Memorandum of Understanding between India and the UN in support of the "Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping" initiative and the UN C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations (UNCAP).

The Security Council adopted a "Presidential Statement" underscoring the importance of peacekeeping, the complexities and challenges of the environment in which it occurs and the importance of existing and new technologies to protect peacekeepers.

INTERVIEW | ASHWANI KUMAR

'Days of 50% cap are numbered'

OBC Bill a consolidation of the electoral dominance of OBCs: political scientist

NISTULA HEBBAR

The demand for a castebased census or lifting the cap on 50% reservation heralds the onset of 'Mandal III', says political scientist Ashwani Kumar on the approach of a new Mandal politics and its implications.

There is a rising clamour for a caste-based census or even a second Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC). How do you look at it?

■ Given the unprecedented political consensus on the recently passed Constitution 127th Amendment Bill in the otherwise fractious Parliament, it seems that India is fast becoming what political scientist Arend Lijphart called 'consociational' or a power-sharing democracy within the majoritarian polity. Though upper castes continue to account for 28-29% against 37% of the combined strength of OBC MPs and intermediate-caste MPs in the last three parliamentary elections as per a data analysis by the Trivedi Center at Ashoka University, the passage of the OBC Bill symbolises the consolidation of the electoral dominance of OBCs and their consequent rise to the pyramid of political pow-

Arguably, if Mandal was about a battle for job reser-

vation in the 1990s and the reservation in college admission in 2008 was dubbed Mandal II, then this demand for a caste-based census or lifting the cap on 50% reservation heralds the onset of Mandal III – a complex and transformatory phase of consociational settlements in Indian democracy.

The demand for a castebased census arises from the continuing deficits of democracy in India. Without the benefit of reliable castecensus data, the Mandal Commission estimated the share of the OBCs in India's population to be 52%. But for some strange reasons of constitutional engineering or political expediency, only 27% reservation was given to the OBCs. This led to perpetuation of a deceptive dichotomy between demography

For many years, the 50% cap on reservations in jobs and educational institutions have been a redline not to be crossed. But demands from non-Mandal communities for reservations are rising. Do you see a concerted move in the future for this cap to be

■ The 50% cap on reservation is like the doctrine of basic structure in the Kesavananda Bharati case – a smart judicial innovation to



caste-based census arises from the continuing deficits of democracy in India

ensure that the power of Parliament is not misused for subverting the constitutional principles of governance. The Constitution does not lay down any specific bar on the quantum of reservation or quota in jobs and educational institutions.

Tamil Nadu's historic 69% quota law - under judicial scrutiny for more than three decades - seems to have become the legal lodestar for States like Maharashtra, Haryana, Telangana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh vigorously breaching the cap beyond 50% to include agitating non-Mandal communities like Marathas, Jats, Gujjars in the reservation net... The days of 50% cap or 'creamy layers' are numbered.

What will be the political and electoral implications of

■ There will be two scenarios simultaneously playing out - one national and one regional. The first is the challenge of incorporating resurgent Mandal castes into a BJP dominant national polity and the second is the gradual politicisation of non-Mandal OBCs along with "lower backwards" in various regions. The intersection of these two trends will reshape the political and electoral landscape of parliamentary and Assembly elections in the near future.

How do you see Mandal parties dealing with an influx of non-Mandal castes within the ambit of reservations?

■ Other Backward Castes, including Mandal and non-Mandal castes, are a complex mixture of traditional inheritance, colonial invention and contemporary realignment of politics of social justice. If they are united by the democratic impulses of social justice politics, they are also internally fragmented in their pursuit of power So, the influx of non-Mandal castes into reservation is bound to exacerbate competitive tensions and frictions over sharing of their common pool resources.

> For full interview, visit: https://bit.ly/37We7js

and intelligence, he said, and this would require precise positioning and over-

(Formerly Orissa School of Mining Engineering [Degree Stream], Keonjhar) At: Jamunalia, P.O.: Old Town, Dist., Keonjhar, Pin: 758002 (Odisha) Web: www.gcekjr.ac.in / Mail id- principal@gcekjr.ac.in Advertisement No.: 705 Date: 13.08.2021

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, KEONJHAR

REGULAR RECRUITMENT OF PROFESSOR & ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR FOR GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, KEONJHAR

Applications in prescribed format along with details of qualification, experience and contribution to profession/ research are invited from Indian Nationals for the recruitment to the posts of regular faculty positions (Professor & Associate Professor) in the various departments of the Institute. The details of the number of posts including required qualifications, eligibility criteria, scale of pay, Application Form and other general information are available at the Institute website www.gcekjr.ac.in. The last date for the receipt of applications at GCE, Keonjhar is 28.09.2021 during office hours by Speed Post/Registered Post only. A copy of the complete application form along with all Annexures is also to be sent to the mail id recruitment@gcekjr.ac.in. The Institute will not be responsible for any postal delay. The qualifications, eligibility criteria experience and publications etc. as on the last date of submission of Application only will be considered. Incomplete application or applications received after the last date will not be considered. The Institute reserves the right to fill- up or not to fill-up the post advertised or alter the number of posts advertised or even to cancel the entire selection process without assigning any reason

Principal

Government College of Engineering , Keonjhar OIPR-14088/11/0001/2122 =

KK-60:

Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) (Institution of National Importance by the Act of Parliament No:35/2012) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India Sriperumbudur-602 105, Tamil Nadu

Recruitment for Teaching Post (Regular & Contract)

Advt. No. RGNIYD/Esst./Teaching-Reg-Cont/2021-22/001 Applications are invited from Indian Nationals possessing excellent academic record and relevant work experience for Regular teaching positions and Guest faculty positions.

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SI. No.	Department	Professor (Academic Level 14)	Associate Professor (Academic Level 13A)	Assistant Professor (Academic Level 10)			
1	Applied Psychology	-	-	1 (UR) 1 (OBC)			
2	Mathematics	1 (UR)	-	1 (EWS) 1 (GF)			
3	English	-	-	1 (UR) 2 (GF)			
4	Computer Science (Data Science)	-	1 (SC)	1 (UR) 1 (GF)			
5	Computer Science (Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning)	1 (OBC)	-	1 (GF)			
6	Computer Science (Cyber Security)	-	1 (UR)	1 (GF)			
7	M.S.W. (Youth and Community Development)	-	-	1 (GF)			
8	Development Studies	-	-	2 (GF)			
	Total	2 (Regular)	2 (Regular)	5 (Regular) 9 (GF)*			
*GF - Guest Faculty For further details please visit Institute's website: www.rgniyd.gov.in. Registrar							

Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) (an autonomous body under Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Govt. of India) Hyderabad

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for filling up of the following position on deputation (including short-term contract) at Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, an autonomous body under Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India:

	ost ode	Name of the Post	No. of Posts	Pay & Allowances	Age Limit (as on date of closure of application)
С)1	Scientist-C	One	Pay Level 11 of the Pay Matrix (Rs. 67,700 - Rs. 2,08,700) and allowances as per INCOIS rules.	56 years

Further details about the position, eligibility, academic qualifications, responsibilities, experience, application procedure and other general conditions are available at INCOIS website www.incois.gov.in under 'Vacancies'.

Closing Date: The last date of submission of online application is September 24, 2021 by 05:00 p.m. IST.

> **Director, INCOIS** Advt. No. INCOIS/RMT:02/2021

M.P. farmer to move court against IMD's predictions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A farmers' union leader in Madhya Pradesh's Malwa region has threatened to move court against what he claimed as the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) "wrong" predictions leading to crop losses for cultivators in recent times.

However, a senior IMD scientist said farmers might have been "misled" as a private weather service predicted early monsoon this year, in contrast to the IMD forecast. He also said that cultivators should check whether the information coming to them was from genuine sources.

"In most cases, the predictions released by the IMD have failed. This has led to huge losses for farmers," Bharatiya Kisan Sangh's Malwa *prant* spokesman Bharat Singh Bais said. He said they were planning to move court against the IMD's "wrong predictions" and a final decision will be taken soon. Mr. Bais said farmers prepare for sowing as per the IMD's forecast. "About 300-400 hectare of land was lying unused in Uiiain district alone due to the IMD's wrong rain predictions."

Government of India Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs invites applications for the post of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD)

Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO)

Last date of receipt of applications in MoH&UA is by 15:00 Hours on 20.09.2021.

> For details please visit website http://www.mohua.gov.in



RGUKT CET-21 NOTIFICATION

A Common Entrance Test (RGUKT-CET-21) will be conducted through OMR pased offline examination by Rajiv Gandhi University of Knowledge Technologies AP for admission into the 6 Year Integrated B. Tech Program for the year 2021-22. Candidates who wish to apply for RGUKT-CET-21 shall submit their application hrough online mode only. The detailed information regarding eligibility, age syllabus and related instructions are available in the detailed notific

isite. www.ig	unt.III								
IMPORTANT DATES FOR ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS									
Commence Application St		Last date for	Submission	Download of Hall Tickets from Website 18-09-2021 (From 10:00 AM)					
20-08-2 (From 10:		06-09- (upto 5:							
DATE, TIMI	NG OF TH	E TEST AND I	DETAILS OF	REGISTRATION FEE					
Date of Test	Sessio	on / Timings	A	Application Fee					
26-09-2021	11:00 AN	I to 01.00 PM	Rs.400/- for OC candidates Rs.250/- for BC candidates Ps.150/- for SC / ST candidates						

Note: Application fee may be paid online through payment gateway (CREDI CARD/DEBIT CARD/NET BANKING/UPI) LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF ONLINE APPLICATION WITH LATE FEE Rs.1,000/- up to 05.00 P.M on 11-09-2021 (Saturday) CONVENER, RGUKT CET-2021



Applications are invited from eligible candidates for admission into NIN Common Entrance Test - NCET (ONLINE) for 2-years M.Sc. (Applied Nutrition) & M.Sc. (Sports Nutrition) at ICMR-NIN. Last date: 31-08-2021. Please see the website https://www.nin.res.in for notification and link for Sd/- Senior Administrative Officer



राष्ट्रीय औषधीय शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान (नाईपर) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PHARMACEUTICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (NIPER) SECTOR 67, S.A.S. NAGAR (MOHALI) PUNJAB - 160062 Tel No. 0172-2214682, Fax No. 0172-2214692, 2230068

INVITATION FOR APPLICATION FOR USE OF INCUBATION FACILITIES (Advt. No. T4/2021)

National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) S.A.S. Naga (Mohali) is an institute of National Importance enacted by NIPER Act 1998. One of the nandates of NIPER is to act as nucleus for interaction between academic and industry. In pursuance of 'Make in India' of Government of India NIPER S.A.S Nagar is offering a space of approximately 4500 sq ft buildup area for incubation facilities. The institute can also offer water, electricity on actual basis and internet facilities besides offering use of various institutional facilities at discounted rates.

The party interested to set up incubation facilities may submit their proposal by 2[™] September, 2021 at **startups@niper.ac.in** or hardcopy to CPIE, NIPER, Sector-67, Punjab-160062. The details of the facility and guidelines are available on our institutional

> Ministry of Science and Technology **Department of Science and Technology**

18[™] ADVERTISEMENT call - 2021 INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship Scheme: A component under INSPIRE

Applications/ Nominations for the year 2021 are invited for INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship. INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship Scheme is a component under INSPIRE for young researchers in the age group of 27-32 years. The upper age limit as on 01 January 2021 is 32 years for General Category (i.e. those born on or after 01 January 1989) and 37 years for SC/ST/Women candidates (i.e. those born on or after 01 January 1984) candidates. For persons with bench mark disabilities (Divvnangian with not less than 40 percent of a specified disability) the upper age limit will be 42 years (i.e. those born on or after 01 January 1979)

- Eligible candidates should apply only through online. Please visit the website: www.online-inspire.gov.in and follow the process prescribed therein. After submission of online application, the candidate must obtain a printout of the application thus submitted for their records only. The last date for ONLINE submission of application is 4th October 2021.
- Detailed Guidelines of the component are available at the Website: www.online-inspire.gov.in.



IN BRIEF



ED quizzes Mehbooba's mother for 3 hours

SRINAGAR Gulshan Nazir, mother of former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, was questioned by the **Enforcement Directorate in** Srinagar on Wednesday in a money laundering case. Ms Nazir appeared before the ED around 11.30 a.m. and was accompanied by Ms. Mufti. She was questioned for about three hours, officials said. After the questioning ended, Ms. Mufti said, "The agencies, which were meant to do serious work, have been used against politicians.

Floods overwhelm five districts in Assam

Belated floods have affected five districts in Assam, temporarily displacing 22,022 people and forcing 770 of them to take shelter in relief camps, officials said. The districts are Bongaigaon and Chirang in western Assam and Dhemaji, Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur in eastern Assam. Dhemaii is the worst affected. An update by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority on Wednesday said 10 relief camps had been set up across affected districts. There was no loss of life, it said. The report said the Brahmaputra and some of its tributaries were flowing above the danger mark along certain stretches.

Policemen who beat iournalists transferred

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Wednesday transferred the police officer who was caught on camera beating photojournalists Muharram procession in Srinagar on Tuesday. An official said nine policemen including a Station House Officer (SHO), who was seen beating up the scribes, were transferred. Among them, three policemen, including the accused officer, Aftab Ahmad Bhat, were attached with the District Police Lines. The Kashmir Press Photographers Association said the police action was unjustified and uncalled for.

Odisha told to notify elephant corridors soon

BHUBANESWAR The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Odisha government to notify 14 elephant corridors and the action plan for elephant conservation in two months. The NGT, Eastern Zone, delivered the order after hearing a petition from the Wildlife Society of Orissa, an environmental pressure group that had moved the tribunal against the delay in notifying the corridor plan. In 2010, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests had made a presentation of the elephant corridors with an area of 870.61 sq km.

India can do more, hints climate official

emitter, has committed to

peaking its emissions before

2030 and achieving net zero

it would achieve net zero by

2050 and nearly halve emis-

sions by 2030. India is

among the major countries

that have not committed to a

2050 plan but has said it is

one of the countries that has

delivered on one of the 2015

Paris Agreements main goals

that is taking steps to ensure

that its emissions do not put

the globe on a road to heat-

ing one degree more than

present by the turn of the

century. Further, India's po-

sition is that it has among the

lowest per capita emissions,

The United States has said

New Delhi is on track to overachieve its Nationally Determined Contribution, says head of COP 26

ЈАСОВ КОЅНҮ NEW DELHI

Alok Sharma, President-designate, United Nations Conference of Parties (COP), said he hoped India would consider more ambitious emissions targets. Mr. Sharma is visiting India as part of a larger international tour building consensus among nations for concrete outcomes ahead of the 26th round of climate talks.

"I have been encouraged by the discussions I have had. India is on track to overachieve its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). I would request if India would consider any NDC that takes into account this overachieving," Mr. Sharma told reporters on Wednesday. Among those he met in this threeday India tour were Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

A major theme building ahead of the climate talks to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, in November is the question of how many nations can commit to a net zero target



Climate action: President-designate of COP 26 Alok Sharma at a meeting with Environment Ministry officials in Delhi. • PTI

and by when. Net zero or carbon neutrality is when more carbon is sucked out from the atmosphere or prevented from being emitted than what a country emits and is critical to ensuring that the planet does not heat up an additional half a degree by 2100.

Carbon neutrality A little over 120 countries have committed, with varying degrees of firmness, to reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. Five countries have net zero pledges set for after 2050, including Australia and Singapore, which have not set a firm target yet.

China, the world's biggest

is not responsible for the climate crisis, which the science establishes is due to historical emissions by developed countries, and cannot compromise on ensuring economic growth of its vast citizenry.

India's NDC includes reduc-

Renewable energy

ing the emissions intensity of GDP by 33%-35% by 2030 below 2005 levels; increase the share of non-fossil-based energy resources to 40% of installed electric power capacity by 2030, with help of transfer of technology and low-cost international finance including from Green Climate Fund and to create an additional (cumulative) carbon sink of 2.5-3 GtCO2e through additional forest and tree cover by 2030. It has committed to installing 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030 of which 100 GW is reportedly installed.

A thorn of contention is the over-\$100 billion that was to have come to developing countries from developed ones for clean energy

investments and mitigation that continues to be outstanding. Mr. Sharma said Canada and Germany were working with his team to set out a "delivery plan".

"Delivering the \$100 billion a year is a matter of trust. Germany and Canada will be setting out a delivery plan until 2025 and have it in place before COP 26. For the years beyond 2025, that will certainly require trillions of dollars, much is expected to come from the private sector," he said.

On Wednesday, the Union Cabinet approved ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol that envisages phasing out of hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) by 80-85% of present levels by 2040 in a phased manner by all signatory countries. The HFC are used in refrigeration and contribute to global warming. India in 2016 committed to phasing down HFC in four steps from 2032 with a 10% reduction in 2032, 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and 80% in 2047.

NE States pushed into total chaos: Congress

'Modi government remains oblivious'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Congress on Wednesday alleged that the northeastern States have been pushed into 'total chaos' and there is a complete breakdown of law and order and the constitutional machinery in the region under the watch of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Addressing a press conference, party general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala asked what the Centre was doing when there were war-like hostilities in parts of the north-eastern region. He was referring to recent firing on the Assam-Mizoram border and Tuesday's incident of Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik's motorcade being attacked in capital Shillong.

Gun-toting militants have been running amok through Shillong and the residence of the Chief Minister too was attacked with petrol bombs, Mr. Surjewala claimed.

conflict, "Uncertainty,



Randeep Surjewala

violent clashes and unchecked lawlessness have marred a large part of India's north-east. The situation is beyond alarming," he

"Shockingly and sadly, the Modi government and Home Minister Amit Shah remain oblivious to the goings-on," Mr. Surjewala al-

Meanwhile, the Congress appointed former Lok Sabha member Ajoy Kumar as the party's new in-charge for the north-eastern States of Tripura, Nagaland and Sikkim.

Rush for essentials as Shillong relaxes curfew

Tight curbs were imposed on Sunday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

COVID-19 protocols went for a toss as people in Meghalaya capital Shillong scrambled to buy essentials on Wednesday after curfew, imposed on Sunday due to a breakdown in law and order, was relaxed for 11 hours.

Shillong descended into chaos on Independence Day as masked miscreants ran amok damaging vehicles and indulging in looting and arson. The trigger for the violence was the killing of former extremist leader Cheristerfield Thangkhiew by the police in an alleged fake encounter on August

His funeral on August 15 coincided with the official I-Day programme in Shillong.

"There have been no reports of any incident over the past 48 hours," East Khasi Hills district's Superintendent of Police Sylvester Nongtnger told The Hindu. Shillong is the

headquarters of the district. He also said the police were still trying to locate the firearms snatched by the miscreants during the day of violence. Three policemen had been suspended for failing to prevent the miscreants from taking the INSAS rifles away.

According to the district administration, the curfew will remain in place from 4 p.m. on Wednesday to 5



A police vehicle vandalised by miscreants in Shillong.

a.m. on Thursday. "The 11hour relaxation may continue for a couple of days before extending the duration depending on the situation," an official said, declining to be quoted.

Essential and non-essential shops have been ordered to remain open till 3 p.m. Educational institutions, banks and government and private offices, which had obtained permission to function with 30% people, have been asked to close by 3 p.m. as well.

"The backbones of commoners have already been broken from a prolonged COVID-19 curfew. This curfew induced by the breakdown in law-and-order has added to their misery," Congress MLA and former Minister Ampareen Lyngdoh told reporters.

She also criticised the absence of a Home Minister during a crisis in Meghalaya, specifically Shillong.

Centre to boost oil palm farming

New plan to cut dependence on imports by increasing domestic production

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Centre will offer price assurances, viability gap funding and planting material assistance to oil palm farmers to boost domestic production and reduce dependence on imports via a new mission approved by the Cabinet on Wednesday. Over a five-year period,

the financial outlay for the National Mission on Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) will amount to ₹11,040 crore of which ₹8,844 crore is the share of the Central government, according to an official statement. The Mission hopes to increase oil palm acreage by an additional 6.5 lakh hectares by 2025-26 and grow production of crude palm oil to 11.2 lakh tonnes by 2025-26 and up to 28 lakh tonnes by 2029-30. At a media briefing after

the Cabinet meeting, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the government aimed to reduce the risk for farmers facing price fluctuation of the fresh



Push for cultivation: Less than four lakh hectares are currently planted with oil palm in India. • FILE РНОТО

fruit bunches from which oil is extracted, due to volatility in the international market.

Price mechanism

"The government will develop a mechanism to fix and regulate palm oil prices. So if the market is volatile, then the Centre will pay the difference in price to the farmers through direct benefit transfer," he said.

This is the first time the Centre will give oil palm farmers a price assurance,

with industry mandated to pay the viability gap funding of 14.3% of crude palm oil prices. In a bid to encourage oil palm cultivation in northeastern India and in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, the Centre will bear an additional cost of 2% of the crude palm oil prices in these States. The scheme has a sunset clause, ending November 1, 2037.

The Mission will also more than double the support provided for the cost

of planting materials.

Asked about biodiversity concerns involved in monoculture plantations, Mr. Tomar said an assessment by the Indian institute of Oil Palm Research had found 28 lakh hectares across the country which could be safely used for oil palm cultivation. Less than four lakh hectares are currently planted with oil palm.

Praise from industry

The Oil Palm Developers & Association Processors hailed the Cabinet decisions and said it has been relentlessly urging the government to usher reforms in the sector. The decisions would benefit farmers and make it viable for the industry to continue contributing towards making the country self-sufficient in edible oil requirements and consequently save foreign exchange, association president Sanjay Goenka said.

(With inputs from Special Correspondent in Hyderabad)

India, Vietnam navies hold joint exercise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The navies of India and Vietnam undertook a bilateral exercise in the South China Sea, the Navy said on Wednesday.

Four frontline ships of the Indian Navy are on an overseas deployment of over two months to South East Asia, the South China Sea and Western Pacific, during which they are undertaking a series of port calls and exercises.

"This visit also holds special importance as Indian Naval ships celebrated the country's 75th Independence Day in Vietnam," the Navy said. Guided missile destroyer INS Ranvijay and missile corvette INS Kora undertook the exercise with Vietnam People's Navy frigate VPNS Ly Thai

COVID protocols

The ships arrived at Cam Ranh, Vietnam, on August 15 for the harbour phase, which included professional interactions while maintaining extant COVID-19 protocols. "The sea phase included surface warfare exercises, weapon firing drills and helicopter operations. Regular interactions between the two navies over the years have enhanced their interoperability and adaptability. This has ensured a quantum jump in the complexity and scale of professional exchanges," it

Nod for Indo-Swiss medical research agreements

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Cabinet has approved agreements between the Indian Council of Medical Research and Swiss research agencies to promote collaboration on diagnostics and antimicrobial resistance, acstatement on Wednesday.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Switzerland's Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics in February, according to which ICMR is committed to make available funding up to

\$100,000 while the Swiss foundation will make available funds up to \$400,000 to local partners.

The other MoU was signed with the GARDP Foundation on Antimicrobial Resistance Research and Innovation in March. The Swiss foundation

aims to develop and deliver new or improved antibiotic treatments, and also ensure their sustainable access. The collaboration will involve joint strategy and financial and in-kind contributions by both parties, said the state-

THEROSSWORD+ 13330 Type your answers in our online grids.

(a) https://argo.page.link/jipTn

@ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

Display keystrokes of genius.



SCAN TO PLAY

16 French film is about son showing hostility (7)

19 Endless saga with a character going around in winged sandals (7) 21 Problems in factories losing money (4)

17 Men burn down fruit garden (7)

22 Entered into dilapidated urinal having a single chamber (10)

25 Gold one found in mother's vault (9) 26 Fancy red tux, trimmed and adjusted accurately (5)

27 Dismayed by rash teen foolishly conducting scam (5-8)

DOWN

2 Good time to replace Republican getting edgy (7)

3 Tight on rum, revolting chap goes around city in England (10)

4 One who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca is planning jihad (5) 5 Dissatisfaction of maiden, evident in bed (9)

6 Unpleasant weirdo wants cocaine (4)

7 Unexpectedly, teen secures victory in twist (7)

8 Uproar caused by fanatic, one cutting man up in a frenzy (11)

10 Popular son, high, enthralled by grass, getting rehabilitated (11) 13 Detectives about to receive optimal training to be discreet (10)

15 Stops controlling temper and threatens (9) 18 Solution to tackle extremely unusual time for society (7)

20 Flight in endless spin! Change direction (7)

24 Go-getter in bar, up after consuming ecstasy (4)

23 Rising star in company, most simple (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 13329 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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FAITH

Faultless Tiruvachagam

The Tiruvachagam stands as a towering work of devotion in the annals of Tamil spiritual literature. There is no better way to imbibe the tenets and spirit of Saivism than by getting initiated into the hymns of Manikkavachagar. In a discourse, Sri Ka Vinayakam drew attention to one such devotee, Turaimangalam Sivaprakasar, who lived around the end of the 17th century, and whose life and works have inspired many more to follow the path shown by Manikkavachagar.

Sivaprakasar was drawn to the spiritual tradition early in life and has authored many devotional works. Renowned for his scholarship, poetic talents, and his innate devotion to God, he came to be known as Karpanai Kalanjiyam Sivaprakasar, Jnana Kalanjiyam Sivaprakasar and so on. It is easy to sense the strong influence of Manikkavachagar in his many works. For instance, his poem 'Sona Saila Maalai' on Tiruvannamalai is inspired by Manikkavachagar's 'Neethal Vinnappam' that is hailed for its ability to melt one's heart in devotion. 'Sona Saila Maalai' too shares this quality to overwhelm the readers with devotion. Also, the similarity in the theme and the handling of it, the choice of words and phrases, etc, are quite striking.

In one of his other woks, 'Naalvar Naanmani Maalai', a poem in praise of the foremost Saiva saints, Gnanasambandar, Tirunavukkarasar, Sundarar and Manikkavachagar, Sivaprakasar's hymns on Manikkavachagar contain many exceptional insights on the saint and his hymns. 'If anything can be called a song it is only Manikkavachagar's songs. The Tiruvachagam is a faultless song and its sweetness is owing to its 'madhura vachagam.' It is couched in ancient Sanga Tamizh and hence it is rightly known as 'Sen Tamizh Maalai.' Manikkavachagar is compared to 'maa mazhai.'

M ND-NDE

1 Improve what one might do to mark a book page? (4,3,6)

11 To begin with, nebulise girl overcome by fit for minute (10)

8 Small tantrum by India's leading model (5)

9 Cooking tandoori murgh primarily for boss (9)

12 Very short skirt from showroom in Ibiza (4) 14 Get lire exchanged in Venezuelan city (2,5)

ACROSS

Etales

Madras and boxing: a love affair that started pre-Independence and continues. This Madras Week, explore sports that have their roots in the streets of the 382-year-old city and meet the people who helped them flourish

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

'Tiger' Nat Terry was one of the most feared names in the Madras of yore. This Anglo-Indian boxer, after successful bouts all over the country, challenged one of Madras' most popular boxers, Arunachalam, for a fight in the

That match proved fatal for Arunachalam, as one of Terry's fierce blows caught him unawares. He collapsed in nachalam's behalf. the ring at Kannapar Thidal.

Barely three months later, Terry took on Kitheri Muthu, a rising star of Madras boxing, in one of the most celebrated duels till date. During that match, thousands of enthusiasts from across the city are said to have gathered to witness Kitheri Muthu take down Terry in an intense clash, fuelled by crowds baying for payback, on Aru-

"It was a big deal," recalls Kitheri Muthu's grandson S Babu, who currently runs MKM Boxing Club in Chennai's Washermanpet along with his relatives Stephen and Sebastian.

"Back then, three things drew huge crowds in North Madras: political gatherings, stage plays and boxing." Tamil Nadu, with a rich history of

martial arts like silambam (stick fighting), took to boxing thanks to the British and Anglo-Indians. While Kitheri Muthu's father, Manicka Mudaliar, was a silambam exponent, his son took to boxing after he turned 16.

Fight clubs

The epicentre of all this was North Madras, bustling with members of the fishing community and manual labourers. Eager to beat the British at their own game, the city raised several talented boxers over the next few decades. "Based on the neighbourhoods they hailed from, they were divided into various parambarais (clan)," says

Sarpatta Parambarai, Idiyappa Naicker Parambarai, and the Ellapa Chettiyar Parambarai were among the most renowned boxing clans. Kitheri Muthu, from Royapuram's Panaimara Thotti, belonged to the well-esta-

A powerful punch

Students training at

Sundar Raj Boxing Club,

run by Sundara Ganesh

(top right); Kitheri Muthu

during a fight, and Sundar

Raj (above)

■ B IOTHI RAMAI INGAM

blished Sarpatta Parambarai and enjoyed as much popularity as leading film stars of that generation.

Several boxers emerged from the same parambarai, one of the most prominent among them being a fisherman named Sundar Raj, who also hailed from Royapuram. "A couple of boxing coaches saw him during a local brawl and were impressed with his confidence. They trained him, and he went on to become one of the best boxers of the Sarpatta clan," recalls

Sundara Ganesh, boxing coach and grandson of Sundar Raj. Today, paramba-

clubs; 30-year-old Sundara Ganesh and his father Tamil Selvan run one in Sundar Raj's memory. With over 50 aspirants training every day, stu-

rais have become

dents who usually train near Marina Beach, work at making an impression at local and national tournaments.

Outside the ring

If Royapuram was the epicentre of boxing in the past, other neighbourhoods started picking up the sport. In the 70s, people from Perambur and other neighbourhoods headed to Royapuram to pick up boxing skills, and subsequently

trained others closer home. Ramalingam and Govindaraj are two such aspiring boxers; their family has been into

decades now. G Thyagarajan aka Thiru, former National-level boxer and currently a coach, hails from a household in which boxing is an integral part

of their everyday lives. "It helps that it led to employment opportunities," explains Thiru, who currently runs Lakshmanan Boxing Club in Perambur's Muniappa Chetty Street, "My uncle, Jilla (Rajamani) and another relative, Selvam, got inducted

in the Integral Coach Factory due to

their boxing credentials. Many boxers got employment in the Railways, Army and the police force. Boxing not only taught us discipline, but also gave us a livelihood."

> Which is why Thiru, who got into the sport in 1999, is giving back now. Apart from guiding actor Arya for the recent hit boxing movie Sarpatta Parambarai,

Thiru is training 50-plus boxers, most of them in their twenties, to get to the next level. "Two things have changed the fortunes of boxing recently: Pa Ranjith's Tamil film, and Lovlina Borgohain's bronze medal in the recent Tokyo Olympics, Today, for the first time, I see mothers standing at 5am outside a boxing club to see their children excel in the ring."

Like his student, S Kishan Akash from Perambur. The 16-year-old has been training for three years, and is looking at a full-time boxing career. "When I joined, I thought it will be like in films where I can send people flying, but slowly, I realised it was much tougher than that. This last year, with restrictions on going outside, has helped me practise more: I train in the ring for almost five hours every day. Someday, I'll become an internationally-known boxer...."

And if he does, Madras' connection with boxing, from the days of fearing Anglo-Indian boxer Terry, would have come a full circle.



The precision strikers

Months of lockdown have failed to discourage the carrom enthusiasts of North Madras, whose board rooms have gifted India many a national and international champion

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

Maria Irudayam was 16 when he started playing carrom, back in the 1980s. From his first local match in the bylanes of North Madras to receiving the Arjuna Award in 1996, his rise is one of the prominent chapters in Chennai's love story with the game.

Now, as his training academy opens, re-shuts and gingerly opens again in tandem with lockdowns, Maria continues to help script the success story of carrom in Chennai, through all its ups and downs, club matches and world championships.

Yes, world championships. North Chennai has produced numerous world champions in carrom through the years, from 65-year-old Maria

who is the country's only car-Bosses of the board The city's carrom champs, like (foreground) N Mithun and M Khazima, start playing at an early

■ R RAVINDRAN

rom player to receive the Arjuna Award, to 35-year-old S Ilavazhaki who has won two world cups and two world championships till date.

But international medals and a few minutes of media spotlight are not what draws talent to the table in this part of the city. They are drawn to the thrill of the game – and, to an extent, to a small promise of economic stability. "The Postal Services, and some other Government departments like Excise, are happy to hire serious carrom players every year. A district or State-level certificate is helpful in getting a job," says B Ravi Kumar, president of the Chennai District Carrom Association, "But the main fact is that

people here just love playing. We have been trying

By children, Kumar means the likes of 14-year-old M Khazima and 15-yearold N Mithun, both sub junior Nation-

back and play."

places for a short while, so the children who miss their game can come

al-level winners and carriers of multiple accolades in the sport. Though high achievers, they are not a rarity in Chennai. "There are 800 to 900 carrom players in Madras today, belong ing to one of 64 clubs," says Irudayam, adding that before the pandemic hit, Chennai would see seven or eight club tournaments through the year, besides a district-level championship.

"From the district, we send 32 players to the State Championship, from where the winners go to the National Championship," continues the man who has held the title of national champion nine times. And then, there are the board room tournaments – a somewhat slick, more organised version of what once used to be a wobbly table, a streetside light, and a carrom board holding dozens of people in thrall till the wee hours of morning. "They used to play standing games in those days," recalls Kumar, "The games did not follow proper rules; it was mainly to pass the time."

Picking up pace

But now, says Kumar, even casual games are "serious", thanks to Chennai's many board rooms.

"There are about 30 to 40 now, not only in North Chennai but also in Santhome and Vadapalani. They are the place to go to, for extra guidance to better your game," he adds. These are not always formal set ups. "But some of the city's best talent comes from here," says Kumar.

The only place for carrom training recognised by the carrom association, is Maria's International Carrom Academy on Naval Hospital Road, Periamet. Other coaching centres have also cropped up around town, Kumar adds, but the buck still stops with the player. "In carrom, there is no formal coaching, no certification for trainers.





SRIVATSAN S

Our story begins in the 1970s, at IIT-Kharagpur, where Ken Liu, founder of Liu's Waldorf, is helping set up his brother-inlaw's restaurant.

The Chinese joint, also called Waldorf, turned out to be popular among the students, and a chance-meeting with an IIT professor helped Ken realise the prospects of a thriving restaurant business in then Madras, a city slowly warming up to a cosmopolitan character. Could he replicate this success?

In 1974, when Ken moved to Madras, he would find that the answer was yes. Adyar, which was bustling with student crowds from the nearby institutions such as IIT-Madras and Anna University, became a hotspot for business and before he knew it, Liu's Waldorf was a hit. It certainly was not the first Chinese restaurant in the city, since Mount Road at least had three: Chungking, Nanking and Southern Chinese. But it was the only Chinese joint in the Adyar, Besant Nagar and Taramani area.

Until 1975 when Ken bought the place to turn it into a full-fledged restaurant, Liu's Waldorf had minimal character: an open place with just a roof and small kitchen. Nestling between Ramco Systems and IIT-Madras, it was the only restaurant, or building for that matter, on the sidelines of Sardar Patel Road, which was thankfully breezy, courtesy a bed of trees. The entire region resembled a jungle and was pitch dark in the evening; the only light that shone was Liu's. Initially, Liu's Waldorf was seen as a

fast-food joint, especially by students who lined up for the Waldorf special soup, chilli chicken, chilli pork and beef. "The latter is popular even today. In fact, our customers come to us for the chilli pork and beef, since you don't get



Ethnic food Wang I Hsing, owner and head chef of Liu's Waldorf • SRIVATSAN S

them everywhere," says Wang I Hsing, head chef and current owner, adding that American chop suey and noodles, too, are popular.

The restaurant was a resounding success as it was priced economically: soup for ₹1 and a bowl of fried rice was ₹3.50 in the initial years. "It has gone up to 10, or even 15 times more today since we are no longer a restaurant for just students; it is now a family restaurant," adds Wang with a laugh.

Chinese vibe, Indian heart

Liu's Waldorf, like most Chinese restaurants in the city, is a show run by one family. Wang, 55, also known as Peter, joined as the head chef in 1980. He took over the business from his brother-in-law Ken and sister Susy, when the former passed away. For a long time, the family lived above the restaurant; a space now turned into a storeroom.

Wang is the third generation

of the family. His father, Wang Min Hsien, was from China. He came looking to start a business in Calcutta, where he met and married Wang's mother. As he chats, Wang effortlessly switches between English, Tamil and Hindi – a result of his cross-cultural life. "I find Tamil much easier than Hindi, since I have lived all my life in Chennai and I am very much Tamil," he says. The family also runs a few beauty parlours managed by Wang's sister, and his wife, Rochelle.

Waldorf's interiors have not changed much over the years. The tables once covered in red gingham are now set with placemats. The dimly-lit space comes alive in the evening, illuminated by Chinese lanterns and a welcoming laughing

What has changed, however, is unlike before when they ferried sauces and groceries from Calcutta, now they have agencies in Chennai who deliver the necessary ingredients. Wang says he learnt the recipes from his mother. "But, I had to make it spicy to meet the Indian

Unlike many other restaurants that shut operations due to floundering businesses during lockdown, Liu's Waldorf has managed to stay afloat. "I am able to run it because we own the place. Otherwise it would have been very difficult.

During a time like this, you cannot think about your margin, but your staff,"

Wang attributes the popularity of Liu's to the once-students of the 70s and '80s who have now become fathers and grandfathers. "They bring their grandchildren and reminisce. Some of them even remember and ask about Ken. Such has been our relationship," says Wang, heading back into the kitchen.

With a new book on pregnancy, actor Kareena Kapoor shares how her son Taimur is taking on the role of an elder brother to Jehangir

SWETA AKUNDI

"There was a day after I had Taimur, when I was alone in my room. I undressed for a shower. And I looked at myself in the mirror. Reality hit hard. There I was - scarred, chubby, puffy, tired," says Kareena Kapoor.

The Udta Punjab actor, who had her second child, Jehangir, with husband Saif Ali Khan earlier this year, is quite conscious of being a 'belching, bloated star', in her new book Kareena Kapoor Khan's Pregnancy Bible.

Published by Juggernaut, the book is an insight into her life as a pregnant woman from nutrition, fitness and breastfeeding, to preparing the nursery, shopping for the baby, pregnancy fashion and self care. "I think most new moms place a lot of pressure on themselves – I certainly did! I was so paranoid and nervous about handling Taimur, and I am so much more relaxed with Jeh," she says in an email interview.

Kareena's account of her experiences are interspersed with explanations from specialists such as dietitian Rujuta Diwekar, fitness trainer Namrata Purohit and Professor of Psychiatry at NIM-HANS, Dr Prabha Chandra.

"Today, we have access to lots of online information about pregnancy, but we were missing a one-stop book for pregnant Indian moms. A lot of us are vegetarian and we have to ensure we get enough protein, iron and calcium in our diets. Postpartum depression affects more than half of Indian moms.



wave of Covid-19 rose; Karee-Many Indian moms may not have an exclusive nursery for na was shooting Laal Singh their baby, so we need to

think about the changes they should make to their bedroom to make it babyfriendly," says Kareena, adding that the book is authorised by FOGSI, India's federation of obstetricians and gynaecologists.

"Above all I wanted to be completely frank about my experience," she says.

A pandemic baby Jehangir's birth in February was right before the second Chadha with Aamir Khan in Delhi during her second trimester. A second pregnancy at 40 already meant greater exhaustion, and adding to it, was the stress of the pandemic. "I think if life continues in this way for much longer, Jeh's 'normal' will be different from Taimur's," she ob-

Through the book, she compares and contrasts her two pregnancies, sharing how she prepared Taimur for the arrival of his baby brother. "I would even show him the ultrasounds - he didn't really understand them but he liked being included," she

Given the extra stay-athome time during the pandemic, Kareena says that she enjoys watching her two sons interact with each other. "By the time Jeh was two months old, Taimur had already been lying in bed with him, trying to read him stories. He has chalked out a bunch of games that he will play with his baby brother. Jeh is exciting for

him. He can't wait for him to

grow up. I can see Jeh will soon grow to adore his big brother," she says.

Mom and me

Kapoor Khan with son

Kareena

lehangir ■ SPECIAL

She credits Saif with Taimur's self assurance and lack of sibling jealousy. "Saif really carried the load for me when Taimur was born. I was nervous with Taimur. And while he is close to me, he shares an altogether different bond with his father. Saif has been my rock."

Though she hopes that her book will be a one-stop manual for moms to be, she acknowledges that true learning can begin only when there is a live, kicking baby in your arms that has a mind of its own. "You may know the exact method in which to make your baby latch on your nipple, but what if it doesn't happen? You may think your baby is crying with hunger but actually it might have colic. You may have read all about baby blues, but when it hits you like a ton of bricks you may be helpless," she says.

Whatever happens, she reminds us, "Be kind to yourself... though I know that is easier said than done!'

No custard like Ninan's

Starting Madras Day on August 22, Rakesh Raghunathan's Food Art videos will look beyond iconic city dishes to focus on the 'artists'

NAHLA NAINAR

Every city has its iconic restaurants, serving food with a flair that is satisfying in both taste and historicity. With his upcoming programme Food Art, chef, Carnatic vocalist and TV presenter Rakesh Raghunathan strolls down the bylanes of Chennai, to showcase seven such iconic food

Launching in time for Madras Day (August 22) on his YouTube, Facebook and Instagram accounts, Food Art is all about the emotions that go into creating dishes that become the calling card of an eatery.

"The programme not only talks about the food, but also the creator, who I am calling the 'artist'. I wanted to delve deeper into this, because today we only look at chefs with their signature dishes; we have forgotten dedicated cooks who have been basically satisfying the souls of hungry people," says Rakesh.

Like his earlier projects Puliyogare Travels and Dakshin Diaries, Food Art documents the culinary heritage of different communities. It looks at offerings like biryani, caramel custard, halwa, idli-pongal and ande ki mithai, each of which has made a certain place in Chennai en-

duringly famous. "We have documented Ninan's Restaurant in the historic YMCA building in Parry's Corner, that is famous for its caramel custard. We spoke to the third-generation owners of the restaurant, and the stories behind their recipes. We also went to Rayar Mess in Mylapore. What stood out here was the story of how their establishment evolved, and how they serve the customer in a comforting home-style ambience," he says.

While worked on the script during lockdown, Rakesh



Signature taste *Vadas* in the making at Rayar Mess; (below) Rakesh with caramel custard at Ninan's

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and his team did the filming last week, when restrictions were eased.

"It's interesting to see how some of these places have modernised their cooking methods, but still retained their quintessential taste, and how some have opted to stay off the grid of food delivery apps. Many of the people we spoke to weren't keen on expanding or changing the way

they work just to feed more people. Commercial success doesn't matter to them as much as customer satisfaction," says Rakesh.

Food Art the show will be followed by a book. "I decided to dedicate the first series to Chennai, a city where I have grown up and that has given me a lot. But this is a concept that can definitely be used to explore other parts of

Food Art is on You-Tube channel Rakesh Raghunanthan, with a new episode out every Sunday starting Madras Day, August 22.

Of hope happiness

KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival, which will be held online from August 19, will showcase LGBTQ+ films from Asia

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

In its first edition in 2010, KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival had some prominent guests, including Manisha Koirala, Rahul Bose, Zeenat Aman, and Shyam Benegal. But its size was fairly modest – just 110 films and a total cash prize of ₹85,000. Its audience, too, was limited, as the LGBTQ+ community in India was not as public or vocal as it is today. Since then, the festival has



grown in popularity and stature. The 12th edition, which will take place online from August 19 to September 5, for instance, has received over 800 submissions and will exhibit over 220 films. The fest offers ₹2,00,000 to emerging Indian filmmakers to make an LGBTQ+ themed short film. Filmmakers from Canada, Sweden, Belgium and other countries will also

Festival director Sridhar Rangayan says the kind of films exhibited has changed too. "The audience's taste has

evolved. Earlier, they wanted romcoms predominantly. But now they

Colours of resistance A still

want to see cinema that reflects dif-

from Brihonnola ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ferent cultures," he says, "Earlier, the films were more about people with anxious questions of their identities. Now, filmmakers, especially Indian directors, have gone beyond that to explore nuanced stories about romances, family acceptance and workplace acceptance. The stories have more hope and happiness." This is reflected in mainstream

cinema, too. Recent Hindi films like Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga, Geeli Pucchi (a short from Ajeeb Daastaans), and She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not (a short in Feels Like Ishq) explored homosexual romance.

This year's fest will highlight over 39 LGBTQ+ films from Asia. It is also the second year in a row that the fest is online.

For registration and more information on the festival, visit mumbaiqueerfest.com.

14 Temporarily lost (7)

16 Agreeable odour (5)

17 Miraculous food (5)

18 Cloth spread over a

The solution

will appear on

August 26, 2021.

coffin (4)

Solution No. 13425

C R Y S T A L B A L L

2 On the whole (3,2,3)

3 Insurgent (5) 4 Fortification

wall (7)

consisting of a low

5 Snow house (5)

6 Silly laughs (7)

7 Armed force (4)

11 Irish political

movement (4,4) 13 Messenger (7)

Mammookka at 50

Actor Mammootty's career reflects the importance of being earnest, as he continues to work hard and evolve, even after 50 years in the industry

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

Fifty years of shining bright on the silver screen has not dimmed the lustre of Mammootty, aka Muhammad Kutty Panaparambil Ismail. On August 6, 1971, Mammootty, then a lanky student of Maharaja's College in Kochi, made his debut as an actor in a blinkand-miss appearance in film director KG Sethumadhavan's Anubhavangal Paalichakal.

Mammootty reappeared in 1980 in a small role in Vilkkanundu Swapnangal (Dreams for Sale), written by MT Vasudevan Nair and directed by Azad.

It was the late IV Sasi's movies, many written by T Damodaran and MT Vasudevan Nair, that catapulted Mammootty into a superstar. Seema, Sasi's wife, who acted with Mammootty in several blockbusters, recalls meeting him on the set of Sphodanam in 1981.

"I liked his confidence and wondered who he was. I was told he was a newcomer called Mammootty. I went across and met him and told him that I liked the way he carried himself," she

When the actor was at his busiest, he got a call from auteur Adoor Gopalakrishnan for Anantharam (1987). "It was not the lead and I told him that. But it hardly mattered to him. He came up with a superb act. Then he played the lead in *Mathilukal* for which he



Mammootty with Tourism Minister PA Mohammed Riyas; a still Mammootty in One ■ SPECIAL

ARRANGEMENT

Class apart

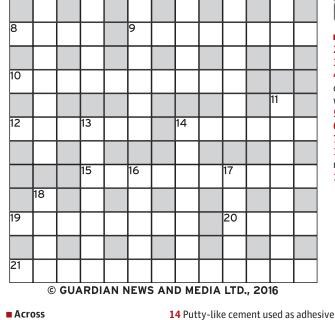
role. As soon as I called Mammootty, he said 'yes'. He asked if he could read the screenplay. Mammootty is the only actor in my films who has read a screenplay of mine before the film began," says Adoor.

Praising his discipline, Adoor says the halo of a 'star' was nowhere visible when Mammootty faced the camera. "Even at his peak as a superstar, here was an actor who was keen on doing offbeat films and enjoyed pushing himself to breathe life into his role," he adds.

During the Eighties and Nineties, Mammootty worked in several backto-back films under the helmsmanship of PG Viswambharan, J Sasikumar, Padmarajan, Bharathan, Lohitadas worked with Bharathan, KG George, Sibi Malayil, Shaji N Karun, Lohitadas and Shyamaprasad. He also went on to act in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi and an English film on Dr Ambedkar.

Among the younger lot, Lal Jose (Oru Maravathoor Kanavu), Lohitadas (Bhoothakkannadi), Anwar Rashid (Rajamanikyam), Aashiq Abu (Daddy Cool), Blessy (Kazhcha), Amal Neerad (Big B) and Martin Prakkat (Best Actor) are those who turned directors with a Mammootty film.

"It was Mammookka who made me a director. I was the cinematographer of Ranjith's Mammootty-starrer *Black* and was set to return to Mumbai where I was working. Once the film was over, out of the blue, Mammookka told me to



THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13426

1 Making trivial distinctions (4-9)

10 English-speaking (10)

12 Bring out – evoke (6)

8 Loose body fat (4)

9 Not absolute (8)

or filler (6) **15** Modest (10)

19 Canadian prairie province (8)

20 Necessity (4) **21** Living things (5,3,5)

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3 killed in anti-Taliban protests; What's next for Afghanistan? militants destroy statue of foe

Islamic scholars to decide role of women in Afghanistan: senior Taliban member

ASSOCIATED PRESS

At least three people were killed in anti-Taliban protests in the Afghan city of Jalalabad on Wednesday, witnesses said, as the group tried to set up a government and Western countries stepped up evacuations of diplomats and civilians.

More than a dozen people were injured after Taliban fighters opened fire on protesters in the eastern city, two witnesses and a former police official said.

Dozens of people had gathered in Jalalabad to raise the national flag a day before Afghanistan's Independence Day, which commemorates the end of British rule in 1919. They lowered the Taliban flag – a white banner with an Islamic inscription that the militants have raised in the areas they captured.

Myanmar junta

crackdown toll

passes 1,000

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

turn to democracy.

reached

Wednesday.

Activist group

fies the deaths and mass

arrests under the regime -

said the number of people

killed by security forces

1,001

The actual number is

likely far higher, said

AAPP's joint secretary Ko

is in power, they will conti-

nue to kill youths, profes-

sionals like doctors and

teachers, men, women and

ing our lives but the coun-

try's future and democratic

Ko Bo Gyi – whose

group has been named an

"unlawful" organisation by

the junta and is currently

in hiding – also accused

authorities of "weaponis-

ing" COVID-19 as the coun-

try weathers a deadly

corded more than 360,000

cases and 13,623 deaths

from the infection.

So far, Myanmar has re-

"They are not only kill-

children," he said.

hopes."

"As long as the military

Myanmar's security forces

have killed more than



Catching breath: Afghans rest while waiting for transport by smugglers after crossing the Iran-Turkish border. • AFP

Video footage later showed the Taliban firing into the air and attacking people with batons to disperse the crowd.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, the Taliban blew up a statue in Bamiyan depicting Abdul Ali Mazari, a militia leader killed by the Taliban in 1996. when the Islamic militants seized power from rival warlords. Mazari was a champion of Afghanistan's ethnic

Hazara minority, Shias who were persecuted under the Sunni Taliban's earlier rule. That further raised concerns about whether they would make good on their promises, including not seeking revenge on those who have op-

A senior Taliban leader said that the role of women in Afghanistan, including their right to work and education and how they should dress, would ultimately be decided by a council of Islamic scholars.

"Our ulema (scholars) will decide whether girls are allowed to go to school or not," said Waheedullah Hashimi, who has access to the group's decision-making. They will decide whether they should wear hijab, burqa, or only (a) veil plus abaya or something, or not. That is up to them.'

As the Taliban consolidated power, one of their leaders and co-founders, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, returned to Afghanistan for the first time in more than 10 years. A Taliban official said leaders would show themselves to the world, unlike in the past when they lived in secret. "Slowly, gradually, the world will see all our leaders," the senior Taliban official said. "There will be no shadow of secrecy."

China won't recognise Taliban until government formation

Hoping for an open, inclusive government in Kabul: Beijing

ANANTH KRISHNAN

1,000 civilians since the military ousted Aung San China on Wednesday indi-Suu Kyi from power six cated it would not consider months ago, an advocacy recognising the new Taliban group said on Wednesday. regime in Kabul until a go-The country has been in vernment was formed.

turmoil since February 1, Beijing was earlier this week the first major country when the armed forces seized power in a lightning to say it "stands ready to decoup, triggering dissent as velop good-neighbourly, friendly and cooperative reprotesters demanded a relations with Afghanistan" in the wake of the dramatic tatance Association for Politikeover by the Taliban and cal Prisoners - which verithe fall of Kabul.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Wednesday clarified it was yet to recognise the Taliban regime and that would not happen until government formation.

"It is an customary international practice that the recognition of a government comes after its formation," spokesperson Zhao Lijian said. "China's position on the Afghan issue is clear and consistent. We hope that Afghanistan can form an open, inclusive and broadly representative government that echoes the widely shared aspirations of its own people the international

Regardless of whether the Taliban does or does not follow through on its stated commitment of forming a truly "inclusive" government – an eventuality that is by no means a given considering the group's past record and the history of its treatment of women and minority groups – it appears to be a question of when and

community."



A July photo of Abdul Ghani Baradar, left, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. • AP

not if China does recognise the Taliban.

Several countries, including India, the U.S. and the U.K., have said they will not recognise a government that takes power by force and it remains to be seen how they will deal with the new regime in Kabul.

Terror outfits

China's message has been that it would be open to working with the Taliban but called on the grouping to "make a clean break" from its links with terror outfits, particularly the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) that has carried out attacks in China's Xinjiang

China had underlined that message in late July when it hosted a Taliban delegation, led by Abdul Ghani Baradar who was at the time heading its political office in Doha and is now expected to take up a prominent role in the new regime.

"As a friendly neighbour

to and sincere friend of Afghanistan, China upholds a friendly policy towards the entire Afghan people," Mr. Zhao said. "This did not, does not and will not change. China will continue to support peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan, and provide help for socioeconomic development in Afghanistan as our ability permits."

On a Taliban spokesman's comments that "rights of women would be respected within the framework of Islamic law" and that the group "intended to form an inclusive government in Afghanistan", Mr. Zhao said China "hopes that the Afghan Taliban and factions in Afghanistan will establish an open and inclusive political structure through dialogue and consultation, implement moderate and prudent domestic and foreign policies, and earnestly protect the safety of foreign institutions and personnel in Afghanistan".

"At the same time, we hope it will resolutely crack down on all kinds of terrorist forces, including the ETIM, and earnestly honour the commitment of not allowing any force to use Afghan territory to threaten the security of its neighbours," he said. "China will continue to work with the international community to support peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan and help it achieve lasting peace and stability."

There is little evidence to suggest that the Taliban have changed ideologically

STANLY JOHNY

Almost 20 years after they were ousted from power by a U.S.-led invasion, the Taliban, who rose from a group of madrassa students in the 1990s under the leadership of Mullah Omar, are back in Kabul. The city fell without a fight on August 15, as President Ashraf Ghani and most of his Ministers and elected lawmakers fled the country. The whole world is now looking at the unfolding situation in Afghanistan as the Taliban are now tightening their grip on the country.

What's happening?

The Taliban are yet to form a transition government. Their leaders, including Amir Khan Muttaqi, a former Information Minister, are currently holding talks with former President Hamid Karzai, top government negotiator Abdullah Abdullah and Hezb-e-Islami leader and former warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar on transition. The Taliban call them-

selves the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Currently, Afghanistan is an Islamic Republic, where President is the head of state. The Taliban are expected to change the name in the coming days, which would also mean that their supreme leader Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada would be the 'Emir' of Afghanistan. As the transition process is under way, the Taliban have moved to assure the foreign diplomatic missions as well as the public that they would not target anybody.

On August 17, Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban's spokesperson, held a press conference in Kabul where he said the new government would respect Afghan women's rights "within the framework of the Islamic law". Mujahid, who was a shadowy figure until recently, also said the Taliban would not target anyone who worked with the fallen government

or foreigners, and asked government employees, including women, to continue to go to work. Media houses continued to allow women journalists to work, while the streets of Kabul were patrolled by Taliban militants in the military vehicles abandoned by government soldiers. The Taliban have also set up checkpoints across the city.

Have Taliban changed? The press conference in Ka-

bul suggests that the Taliban are concerned about the public perception, at least for now, as the transition is under way. They also want to assure the Afghan people, many of whom are desperately trying to flee the country, that things have changed from 1996. But the question is whether these statements are mere optics given the delicacy and complexity of the current situation or signals of a genuine transformation. While clarity is yet to emerge on what kind of a regime is going to be formed in Kabul there is little evidence to suggest that the Taliban have gone through an ideological transformation.

When the Taliban were in power during 1996-2001, even basic human rights were suspended in Afghanistan. Women were not allowed to work and girls were not allowed to go to schools. Women could not venture out of their homes without a male companion. Men had to grow their beard.

Amputation, flogging and stoning were common. Kabul's famed football stadium had been turned into a public execution ground. Music, TV, cinema, photography, painting and even kite-flying were banned. The sixth century monumental statues of Bamiyan Buddhas were destroyed. The Taliban did all these because they believed in a puritanical interpretation of Islam and in their bid to establish a "pure Islamic system". They haven't dis-



A Taliban fighter standing guard outside the Interior Ministry in Kabul. • AFP

owned these beliefs. The Taliban may have taken Kabul within a day without bloodshed. But their long road to victory has been marred with violence. Over the past 20 years, they have carried out many attacks, including suicide attacks, killing thousands of civilians. Particularly after the U.S.-Taliban agreement was signed in February 2020, Afghanis-

EXPLAINER

tan saw a series of assassinations of journalists, liberal critics and even pilots. And in areas the Taliban captured since May, there were reports of public executions, beatings and forced marriages of young girls with Taliban militants.

In Kabul, many residents say, the Taliban were doing a door-to-door search, looking for those who worked with the government despite assurances from the group's leadership that no one would be harmed.

The chaotic scenes from Kabul airport indicate how much sections of Afghan society fear the Islamist militants. On Wednesday, Taliban militants in Jalalabad opened fire into a crowd of protesters, putting down the first demonstration of public dissent violently. So the Taliban spokesman's comments about moderation and rights of the people are not supported by the Taliban history and the developments on the ground. It's up to the militants to prove the sceptics wrong. On the other side, the Taliban have shown more willingness to engage with other countries this time, especially with China and Russia. And Pakistan has openly welcomed the Taliban's capture of power.

Is there any resistance? In 1996 when the Taliban took power, the Mujahideen government of President Barhanudeen Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Massoud retreated to Panjshir where they regrouped the Northern Alliance. This time, the Taliban appear to be more powerful. They reached Kabul after forcing the U.S., the world's most powerful country, to pull back. Most top officials in the Afghan government, including President Ghani, have fled the country. The only top official who still stavs defiant is Amrullah Saleh, the former Vice-President.

Mr. Saleh, a former aide of Massoud during the Northern Alliance days, is believed to be in Panjshir along with Ahmad Massoud, son of Ahmad Shah Massoud.

On August 17, almost at the same time as the Taliban's Mujahid was holding the press conference in Kabul, Mr. Saleh tweeted, saying he's "the legitimate caretaker President" of the country, according to the Afghan Constitution. He also asked Afghans to join the "resistance". It's too early to say which direction Mr. Saleh's efforts would take.

In the 1990s, Massoud had the backing of Russia, Iran and India, and the Northern Alliance was strong across northern and northeastern provinces. This time, Panjshir is the only province that stays out of the Taliban's control. It's to be seen whether Panjshir could hold off the Taliban and Mr. Saleh could muster enough domestic and regional support to mount a credible challenge

Support talks, says Ghani

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said on Wednesday he supports talks between the Taliban and top former government officials, and that he was "in talks to return" home after seeking refuge in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Ghani added that he had left Kabul to prevent

bloodshed and denied reports he took large sums of money with him as he departed the presidential palace.

"If I had stayed, I would be witnessing bloodshed in Kabul," Mr. Ghani said in a video streamed on Facebook. He left on the advice of government officials, he added.

(With Reuters inputs)

(SUBEER SINGH)

OFFICE OF THE ADDL. CHIEF ENGINEER, P.H.E.D., REGION-I-JODHPUR Tele-0291-2651750 E-Mail: rj_acejo@nic.in क्रंमांक अमुअ/जो./प्रथम/21-22/3824-3843 बिंड संशोधन सूचना, NIB संख्या 13 से 16/2021-22 इस कार्यालय द्वारा जारी की गाँद निविदा संख्या 13 से 1e/2021-22 में निविदा प्रपत्र में आंशिक संशोधन होने के कारण बिड संशोधन जारी किया जाकर https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in एवं https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर अपलोद किया गया। निविदा संख्या 13/2021-22 (UBIN No.PHE2122WLOB04999) निविदा संख्या 14/2021—22 (UBIN No.PHE2122WLOB05000 निविदा संख्या 15/2021-22 (UBIN No.PHE2122WLOB05001) निविदा संख्या 16/2021-22 (UBIN No.PHE2122WLOB05002) अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियंता जन स्वास्थ्य अभियात्रिक विभाग

China to curb 'excessive income' in push for 'common prosperity'

ANANTH KRISHNAN

In the wake of regulatory crackdown targeting alleged monopolistic behaviour of some of China's biggest private sector companies, China's Communist Party leadership has signalled that next in its sights are the country's wealthy.

Party General Secretary and President Xi Jinping said measures will be introduced to curb "excessive incomes" and promote "common prosperity", following a meeting on Tuesday of the Central Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs, which he heads.

Observers noted the timing of the meeting held particular significance, as the first notable public appearance of the leadership and the first major political announcement following the annual secretive retreat of top present and past leaders in the town of Beidaihe, beearly August. Mr. Xi was quoted as say-

ing by official media that "common prosperity is an essential require-ment of socialism". Specific measures were not mentioned but an adjustment to the taxation structure is one possibility, analysts said.

A readout of the meet said "rather than being egalitarian or having only a few people prosperous, common prosperity refers to affluence shared by everyone, both in material and cultural terms, and shall be advanced step by step".

Mr. Xi said "common

prosperity" would be essential "to strengthen the foundation for the party's longterm governance" ahead of "the second centenary goal", referring to 2049 when the People's Republic of China turns 100. Ending absolute poverty was the party's goal for the "first

It also called for implementing "the requirements of strict governance across the board" and to "enhance the supervisory capacity" of the financial system, suggesting that the regulatory crackdown of the past year

lieved to have taken place in centenary", marked this year when the party turned 100. The meeting "called for establishing a scientific public policy system and a reasonable distribution system". The readout said China's "reform and opening period" saw the party "summarise both positive and negative historical experiences", referring to the turmoil of the Mao years, realising that "poverty is not socialism" and "allowing some people and regions to get rich first". Since the 18th Party Congress in 2012, the party "placed greater importance on gradually achieving common prosperity for all people", the readout said.

is set to continue.

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (E&M) W&S C/N KANHIYA NAGAR, DELHI-110035 "STOP CORONA; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene PRESS NIT No. 08/EE(E&M)W&S C/N (2021-2022) Name of Work of release of tender in E-Procurement nder in E-Pro Solution curement Solution
021_DJB_207124_1 31-Aug-2021
6-Aug-2021 06:00 PM 11:30 AM Rs. 93000/- (EMD exempted vid

Further details in this regard can be seen at https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 295 (2021-22)



Nagar BPS Re-invited

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 695022 (फोन नं. / Ph. No: 0471- 2564568 / 2564537)

निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION OF TENDER

कार्य का शीर्षक/Title of work: आइआइएसयू, विष्ट्यूरकावु में आइटीसी भवन के अंदर परिशुद्ध अपकेन्द्रित्र के लिए नींव का निर्माण (सिविल कार्य) / Construction of Foundation for Precision Centrifuge inside ITC Building at IISU, Vattiyoorkavu (Civil works)

(PT)/971 dated: 23.12.2020)

ई-िनविदा सूचना स./E-Tender Notice No.: NIT No. VSSC/CMG/CIVIL/05/2021-22 Dt. 06.08.202

निविदा दस्तावेज डाउनलोड करने हेतु अंतिम तिथि	दिनांक 26.08.2021 तक बढ़ाया गया /
Last date for downloading the tender document	Extended upto 26.08.2021
निवेदाएं प्राप्त करने हेतु नियत तिथि	दिनांक 27.08.2021 तक बढ़ाया गया /
Due date for receipt of tenders	Extended upto 27.08.2021
निवेदा खोलने की तिथि	दिनांक 30.08.2021 तक बढ़ाया गया /
Opening of tenders	Extended upto 30.08.2021
. 4/: / / 0	00 100 10

योग्यता मानदंड तथा अन्य ब्यौरों को पाने के लिए इच्छुक निविदाकार ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए विस्तृत सूचना (ई-एनआइटी) का अवलोकन करें, जिस <u>www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO</u> से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। / Interested tenderers may please refer detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (E-NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details, which can be down loaded from website www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO Sd/- ग्रुप निदेशक, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Group Director, CMG, VSSC



Tender No.: HD/PUR/SP-39/SPM/15/2021-22/12877

ast Date for Receipt of Tenders: 15.09.2021 up to 17:00 Hrs IST For Details and Tender Document, please visit our website http://www.cmet.gov.in & also CPPP portal DIRECTOR Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Office of the Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division,

Hesaraghatta Main Road, Bengaluru-560 073. No.BBMP/EE/DD/Ten/06/2021-22. **INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)** (Short Term Tender) (Two-Cover System)

(Through GoK e-Procurement Portal Only) KW - 3 & 4 The Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, BBMP Bengaluru invites tenders, from eligible Tenderers for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

works detailed in the table below.								
Name of the Work	Est. Amount (Rs.in Lakhs)							
Improvements to Roads and other works in Abbigere, Pashchim County and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli.	100.00							
Improvements to Road and drain K.G. Halli, Gurunath Layout and surroundings in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli.	100.00							
Improvements to Roads Kempegowda Garden and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli.	51.00							
Improvements to Road and drain MM Layout and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli.	200.00							
Maintenance and repairs of UGD and desilting of drains in silt and tractors in Ward No. 12, Shettyhalli, Shettyhalli sub division.	60.00							
Maintenance and repairs of borewell and Maintenance of footpath and drain in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli, Shettyhalli sub division.	60.00							
Improvements to Roads Abbigere Circle to Lakshmi Temple and surrounding area (Pipe Line Road) in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli.	99.00							
Improvements of Ward Office Exterior and Interior and Supply of Tables, Chairs and Other accessories in Ward Office, Abbigere in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli Sub Division.	100.00							
	Improvements to Roads and other works in Abbigere, Pashchim County and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli. Improvements to Road and drain K.G. Halli, Gurunath Layout and surroundings in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli. Improvements to Roads Kempegowda Garden and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli. Improvements to Road and drain MM Layout and surrounding area in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli. Maintenance and repairs of UGD and desilting of drains in silt and tractors in Ward No. 12, Shettyhalli, Shettyhalli sub division. Maintenance and repairs of borewell and Maintenance of footpath and drain in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli, Shettyhalli sub division. Improvements to Roads Abbigere Circle to Lakshmi Temple and surrounding area (Pipe Line Road) in Ward No.12, Shettyhalli. Improvements of Ward Office Exterior and Interior and Supply of Tables, Chairs and Other accessories in Ward Office, Abbigere in Ward							

EMD Amount (in Rs.) Instead of EMD the tenderer must submit the Declaration as for the Government order No: DE 675 Cost-12/2020, Bengaluru, Date: 22-12-2020.

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka from: 21-08-2021. (2) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on 31-08-2021 before 4:00 p.m. (3) Pre bid for 2 cover tender meeting will be held on 25-08-2021 at 11:00 a.m. in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Dasarahalli Zone, BBMP, Bengaluru. (4) Technical Bids will be opened on 01-09-2021 at 4:30 p.m. (5) Financial Bids will be opened on 02-09-2021 at 4:30 p.m. Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days or from website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in



M ND-NDE

MARKET WATCH

	18-08-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	55,629	-0.29
US Dollar	74.24	0.15
Gold	46,328	-0.28
Brent oil	69.22	-0.85

Gold		
Brent oil	69.22	-0.85
NIFTY 50		
Adani Ports		CHANGE
Asian Paints		
Axis Bank		
Bajaj Auto		
Bajaj Finserv		
Bajaj Finance		
Bharti Airtel		
BPCL		
Britannia Ind		
Cipla		
Coal India		
Divis Lab		
Dr Reddys Lab		
Eicher Motors		
Grasim Ind		
HCL Tech		
HDFC		
HDFC Bank		
HDFC Life		
Hero MotoCorp		
Hindalco		
Hind Unilever		
ICICI Bank		
IndusInd Bank		
Infosys		
Indian OilCorp		
ITC		
JSW Steel		
Kotak Bank		
L&T		
M&M		
Maruti Suzuki		
Nestle India Ltd		
NTPC	116.55	-0.85

.113.20.

.2172.65

419.70

841.40

1500.45.

.7601.45..

Reliance Ind

State Bank

Sun Pharma

Products Ltd.

Tech Mahindra

UltraTech Cement

Tata Steel

Wipro

. 8.40

.. -1.80

.. 8.60

. -3.25

-1.20

... 192.40

EXCHANGE RA	TES							
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 18								
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL						
US Dollar	74.04	74.36						
Euro	86.79	87.18						
British Pound	101.90	102.35						
Japanese Yen (100)	67.46	67.75						
Chinese Yuan	11.42	11.47						
Swiss Franc	80.91	81.26						
Singapore Dollar	54.45	54.69						
Canadian Dollar	58 68	58 96						

IN BRIEF



Tata Motors introduces new version of Tigor EV

Tata Motors has unveiled a new version of the Tigor EV, which will be introduced in the market shortly. Starting Wednesday, the company commenced bookings for the EV at select dealerships at ₹21,000. "With Tigor EV, we want to lead this evolution to mainstream EVs in India. said Vivek Srivatsa, Head, Marketing, Passenger and Electric Vehicles Business.

Google unveils Pixel Buds A-series at ₹9,999

Foraying into the personal wireless audio segment in India, Google on Wednesday announced the unveiling of its Pixel Buds A-Series in the country at a price tag of ₹9,999. Pixel Buds A-Series will be available August 25 onwards at Flipkart, Reliance Digital and Tata Cliq and will be gradually made available at more retail outlets.

April-June GDP growth to be 'deceptively high' at 20%: ICRA

'GVA seen 9% lower than Q1 FY20; low base masks COVID second wave impact'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India's GDP is estimated to grow at the "deceptively high" level of 20% for the April-June quarter but would still remain far below the pre-COVID level, ratings agency ICRA said on Wednesday.

ICRA said the low base of the last fiscal year, when GDP had contracted by close to 24%, 'conceals' the impact of the second wave of CO-VID-19 infections.

Economic activity has been boosted by robust government capital expenditure, merchandise exports and demand from the farm sector, it said, estimating the GDP to grow by 20% and the



Shifting fortunes: The organised sector may have gained at the cost of the less formal space. • S.R. RAGHUNATHAN

gross value added (GVA) to register a growth of 17% for the June quarter. GVA is estimated to contract 15% compared with the preceding March quarter, showing the impact of the second wave.

"The double-digit expansion expected in YoY terms in Q1FY22 is deceptively high, as it benefits inordinately from last year's contracted base," ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar said.

"We forecast GVA and the GDP to have shrunk by around 9% each in Q1FY22 relative to the pre-COVID level of Q1FY20, highlighting the tangible distress being experienced by economic agents in the less formal and contact-intensive sectors."

Official data on economic activity is expected by the end of the month.

ICRA cautioned that the organised sector was expected to have gained at the cost of the less formal space. Available statistics were often unable to capture the pain experienced by the latter, which might result in an overestimation of growth under the present circumstances, it added.

HDFC Bank vows to recover lost credit card market share

'Will aggressively push existing products, unveil co-brands'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

HDFC Bank's MD and CEO Sashidhar Jagdishan on Wednesday said the lender will be aggressive and 'come back with a bang' as it seeks to win back lost market share in the credit card segment.

"With the lifting of the restriction on cards acquisition, all the preparations and strategising that we have put in place to come back with a bang will now be rolled out," Mr. Jagdishan said in an email to more than 1.2 lakh employees of the largest private sector lender.

Conceding that the bank had lost customer market share in the more than nine months of the ban, Mr. Jag-



Sashidhar Jagdishan

dishan said HDFC Bank would go aggressively to the market with existing products and unveil new ones in the form of co-brands and partnerships.

'Plans in place'

"We have the resources and plans in place to further reinforce our pole position

in the credit card segment," Mr. Jagdishan added.

The RBI on Tuesday partially lifted the ban on issue of new credit cards imposed on the bank in December last year after repeated instances of technology outages but continued with the restrictions on the new

launches on the digital front. "The restrictions on all new launches of the digital business generating activities planned under Digital 2.0 will continue till further review by the regulator," HDFC Bank said. "We will continue to engage with the regulator and ensure compliance on all parameters," the lender added.

(With inputs from Lalatendu Mishra in Mumbai)

India on track to meet climate goals, says FM

'Among select G20 nations set to do so'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India is among the few G20 countries on track to meet United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement goals and has taken decisive actions to tackle climate change, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

The Minister, in a meeting with COP 26 presidentdesignate Alok Sharma, said the government is taking concrete steps and at 'appreciable speed' to meet its commitments on the target of 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030. She also said 100 GW of this had already been achieved.



Nirmala Sitharaman

The Minister discussed issues related to climate change and specifically COP 26, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

The U.K. will host the international climate conference COP 26 in November

RBI to buy ₹25,000-cr. of bonds Aug. 26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday said it will conduct an open market purchase of government securities of ₹25,000 crore on August 26 under the G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP 2.0).

Earlier this month, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had said the RBI's secondary market G-sec Acquisition Programme (G-SAP) has been successful in anchoring yield expectations.

In a statement, the RBI said it will buy five government securities aggregating to ₹25,000 crore via a multi-security auction using the multiple-price method on August 26.

Honda confirms India specific SUV, plans mass model hybrid

'Sedans on decline, sport utility vehicle segment growing'

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

Honda Cars is developing a 'brand new' sport utility vehicle (SUV) for the Indian market and planning a mass market hybrid vehicle next year, said Gaku Nakanishi, president and CEO, Honda Cars India.

"Last time we had shared that Honda was keenly studying the SUV segment in India," Mr. Nakanishi told The *Hindu*. "Now, I can confirm that the brand new India focused SUV is under development," he added, declining to divulge further details.

However, a source said the new model was likely to



be available in the Indian market in 2023.

The company on Wednesday unveiled the New Amaze at prices starting from ₹6.32 lakh for the petrol variant and ₹8.66 lakh for diesel.

Mr. Nakanishi said that Honda Cars India was looking to start its electrification journey with a "mass model hybrid" which they intended to unveil next year. Given that this was better

than IC engines in terms of fuel efficiency and CO2 ratings, the government support would "definitely be helpful both to environment and the demand". Rajesh Goel, senior VP &

director, Marketing & Sales, said it was a fact that the sedan segment was overall on the decline and the SUV segment was growing.

However, since the market would keep growing, a couple of years down the line the absolute numbers for sedans would be more than now, he said.

'Affordable housing to aid HFC recovery'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

Recovery in economic activities and pent-up demand are likely to help in improvement of asset quality of home loans in the long term and affordable housing segment will lead the recovery in housing finance companies (HFCs), according to a report.

Brickwork Ratings, in a report, said, "the recovery in the economic activities will provide further fillip to the revival of asset quality of the home loans in the long term. It is expected that the affordable housing segment will grow much stronger and lead the sector (housing finance companies) going forward."

'Green bonds help projects net ₹26,300 cr.'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Indian renewable energy project developers have ₹26.300 crore through issuance of green bonds during January to June this year, according to a CEEW-CEF report.

"Indian renewable energy [RE] developers have issued green bonds worth ₹26,300 crore (\$3.6 billion) in the first half of 2021 alone, beating even previous one-year records, according to an independent study released on Wednesday by the CEEW Centre for Energy Finance (CEEW-

CEF)," a statement said. The study is titled 'Financing India's Energy Transition Through International Bond Markets'.

MG Motor unveils Astor with personal AI tool

Model to compete with Creta, Seltos

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MG Motor India on Wednesday unveiled its upcoming mid-size SUV 'Astor' that will come with a personal artificial intelligence (AI) assistant and level 2 autonomous driving technology.

Astor, which the company plans to start selling nearer the festive season, is the first model in the company's global portfolio to get personal AI, a system that has been designed by American firm 'Star Design'

When it hits the market, Astor will compete with the likes of Hyundai's Creta and Kia's Seltos.

Asked about the availability of Astor in India, Gaurav Gupta, Chief Commercial

Officer - MG Motor India, said, "We are trying to bring it near the festive season this year, but frankly the global chips shortage situation is so alarming that we have to be very, very flexible and be prepared for the situation which may not be that favourable; but currently, that's the time frame we are targeting."

On security of personal data, he stressed that the AI tool does not listen in to conversations, and will be activated only when users say 'Hello Astor'. Further, all car-related data is stored using Microsoft Azure. "We are working with Microsoft to ensure that the highest level of data security is maintained," he said.

VW begins production of Taigun SUV

LALATENDU MISHRA

Volkswagen Passenger Cars India on Wednesday announced the start of production and pre-bookings for mid-sized SUV Taigun.

The vehicle is built on the MQB AO IN platform under the India 2.0 project and is the first Volkswagen product under the project.

The first Taigun was rolled out from the company's Chakan plant in Pune on Wednesday. Deliveries will begin in September, the company said. Powered by TSI technology, the Taigun will be available in two engine options -1.0L and 1.5L.

(The writer visited Chakan, Pune, at the invitation of the company)

Global goods trade continues recovery: WTO

Trade barometer sees highest reading

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Global merchandise trade is continuing its robust recov ery from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, as per the WTO's Goods Trade Barometer, which hit a record high in its latest reading issued on Wednesday.

The latest barometer reading of 110.4 is the highest on record since the indicator was first released in July 2016, and up more than 20 points year-on-year, the Trade Organisation (WTO) said. The reading will augur well for India, as the country's exports are recording healthy growth rates.

"The rise in the barometer reflects both the strength of current trade expansion



and the depth of the pandemic-induced shock in 2020," it said, adding the reading suggests that goods trade will see an even larger year-on-year rise in the second quarter. However, it said the outlook for world trade continued to be overshadowed by risks such as regional disparities, continued weakness in services trade, and lagging vaccination timetables

expansion SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

₹100-cr. global

Neuberg plans _

Chennai-based Neuberg Diagnostics has drawn up a tiou-crore plan to set up diagnostics labs in African and west Asian countries during FY22, said CMD GSK Velu.

"During the fiscal, we are planning to open diagnostics facilities in Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Ghana," Mr. Velu said in a statement.

"In West Asia, we are looking to set up labs in a few middle eastern countries for which we have earmarked a sum of ₹100 crore," he added.

Currently, Neuberg has more than 120 labs and 1,000 touchpoints across four countries

Princepal Singh creates NBA history

Becomes the first Indian to be part of a championship roster

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Young cager Princepal Singh became the first Indian to be part of an NBA title winning team when his side Sacramento Kings clinched the 2021 NBA Summer League crown. The 6-foot-9 forward made history by being the first Indian to be part of a championship roster at any level of the NBA.

The Kings dominated the championship game against the Boston Celtics, clinching the title with a 100-67 win on Tuesday. The win also made the

Kings the only franchise to multiple Summer League titles, having previously clinched it in 2014, according to the NBA.

In the final, Princepal played the last 4:08 minutes of the game and put his alongside Satnam



Singh Bhamara. took them to 100, while also pulling down one rebound. Princepal finished with

two points by scoring the Kings final bucket which rance in the championship

The 20-year-old's appeamer League.

game comes exactly a week after he made his brief yet landmark debut at the Sum-

Japanese GP cancelled

ASSOCIATED PRESS

This year's Japanese Grand Prix was cancelled following discussions between the government and race promoters, Formula One organisers said on Wednesday. The race in Suzuka had been scheduled for Oct. 10, between the events in Turkey and USA.

The decision has been taken by the Japanese government to cancel the race this season due to ongoing complexities of the pandemic in the country," F1 said in a statement.

"Formula 1 is now working on the details of the revised calendar and will announce the final details in the coming weeks." The decision creates another dent in F1's calendar of Asia-based races following the cancellation of the Australian and Chinese GPs.

Thiem withdraws from the US Open

A 'tough decision' to make, says defending champion

TENNIS

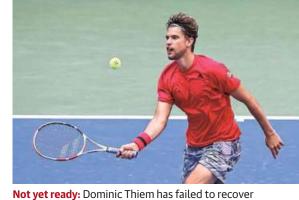
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Defending champion Dominic Thiem announced on social media on Wednesday the "tough decision" to pull out of this month's US Open after failing to recover sufficiently from a wrist injury he picked up in Mallorca in

The 27-year-old Austrian, who will also miss the remainder of the 2021 season, said he had been making good recovery before feeling renewed pain last week.

"It has been a tough decision but I know this is what I have to do," he said.

Thiem staged a memorable comeback in New York last year, losing the first two sets before beating Alexander Zverev in five sets in the



sufficiently from a wrist injury. • FILE РНОТО

The World No. 6 struggled for form after the win, taking a break from the game before losing his first round match at the French Open when he blew away a twoset lead against Pablo Andu-

"Unfortunately, I've had to withdraw from the US Open and will miss the rest

ed on Twitter. "I'm really disappointed not to be able to defend the

of the 2021 season," he post-

title in New York as I haven't

recovered from the wrist in-

jury I suffered back in June at the Mallorca Open." On Sunday, Roger Federer also pulled out of the US Open.

Historic mixed relay bronze for India

Quartermiler Priya, javelin throwers Ajay and Jay and shot putter Amandeep enter final

ATHLETICS

STAN RAYAN

Despite being the country's fastest quartermiler, Priya H. Mohan had been left out of the Indian 4x400m mixed relay team for the Tokyo Olympics as she was not a national cam-

But on Wednesday evening, the 18-year-old from Karnataka produced a strong second leg as India won the mixed relay bronze at the World athletics under-20 championships in Nairobi.

It was the country's firstever medal in a relay event at the global level and the team, comprising Bharath Sridhar, Priya, Summy and Kapil, clocked a season-best 3:20.60s to better the time (3:23.36) it had posted in the heat in the morning.

Abdul Razak had run the opening leg in the morning but the team management replaced him with under-20 Federation Cup champion Bharath Sridhar for the final. And when Priya took the baton for the second leg, she was in the fourth position but the national champion



Pathbreakers: The Indian 4x400m mixed team bagged the first ever relay medal for the country at the World under-20 championships. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

worked her way up nicely to help India to the third spot.

The next two runners, Summy - who manoeuvred through the traffic smartly at the start of the third leg and Kapil also did an impressive job to help India to a memorable bronze, behind Nigeria (3:19.70s) and Poland (3:19.80).

Incidentally, it was the third quartermile of the day for the two girls. In the morning, nearly two hours after the relay heat, Priya was back on track for the individual 400m and entered the final after finishing third in her heat. She clocked 53.79s and qualified as one the two fastest losers.

Summy, the other Indian in the event, finished fifth in her heat and 12th overall in 55.43s and failed to make the

There were no surprises as the two Indian javelin throwers, Kunwer Ajay Raj Singh Rana (71.05m) and Jay Kumar (70.34), progressed to the 12-man final after finishing sixth and seventh overall in the qualification round.

Amandeep Singh Dhaliwal (17.92m) also advanced to the final in men's shot but hammer thrower Vipin Kumar failed to make the cut, finishing 10th in his group and 20th overall with 63.17m.

He had a personal best 68.94m while winning the under-20 Federation Cup early this month.

Reinstorf, Worku reign

South Africa's Mire Reinstorf (women's pole vault, 4.15m) and Ethiopia's Tadese Worku (men's 3000m, 7:42.09s) won the day's other two

Some of the world's top countries, including USA, Australia, China, Britain, Germany and Japan have skipped the under-20 Worlds owing to the global pandem-

India deserved to win: Strauss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Former England skipper Andrew Strauss feels that the manner in which Joe Root's team capitulated against a fired-up India in the second Test could hurt the "bruised and battered" hosts in the remainder of the five-match

"They were favourites but let things slip before lunch (on the final day) and then had another top-order collapse," said Strauss.

"Those early wickets put huge pressure on the middle-order and India just had enough overs to bowl them out. It was feisty." He said India "thoroughly deserve" to go 1-0 up in the five-match series.

"Every series with India, and particularly (Virat) Kohli, is feisty and as the match was on the line you expected nothing else. It was five brilliant days of Test cricket.

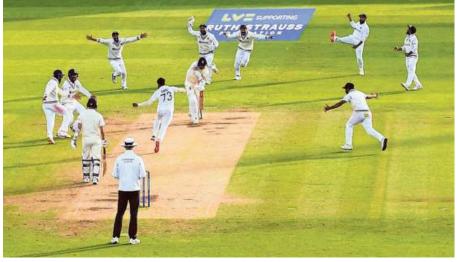
"India was exceptional and there were times when England looked like it was going to get out of jail but, in the end, you have to say that India deserved it... they did enough to win. England is going to be absolutely bat-

tered and bruised as a result of that," he added.

Strauss also called for a change in England's top-order after another disappointing show by the batsmen.

He was certain that the woefully out-of-form opener Dom Sibley could be dropped for the third Test at Headingley starting on Aug.

"There are a lot of problems for England, no doubt about that. If it had got away with it again, we might have been able to paper over the cracks, but not anymore."



Lords of Lord's: Kohli's men scripted a remarkable win in the second Test. • AFP

PM's breakfast with champions

Modi hosted India's Tokyo-returned Olympians on Monday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

On the night of August 7 at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium, Neeraj Chopra threw a javelin far into history. He won India's first-ever gold in athletics at the Olympics. His second attempt that night registered a distance of 87.58m, clinching gold. Nine days after that his-

toric moment, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked Neeraj why he looked so confident after that second attempt. The interaction occurred on Monday morning at the Prime Minister's residence, where Mr. Modi hosted a breakfast meeting Olympians.

The video of the event was released on Wednesday by Mr. Modi through his social media accounts. Early on in the video, you can watch him asking the young athlete about his winning throw: "I was surprised to find you in a victorious mood after your second attempt and starting celebrations. You must have been so confident. How did it happen?'

Sensing it

Neeraj said that from his effort, he sensed it was the best throw for the night: "It all comes from experience and training." The Prime Minister praised the young athlete's attitude: "Success doesn't get to your head and



The golden spear: PM Modi listens keenly as Neeraj Chopra holds court. ■PTI

loss doesn't stay in your

Neeraj may have been India's brightest star in Tokyo, but there were others too who shone brilliantly on sport's greatest stage. The Tokyo Olympics saw India come up with its greatest performance ven medals.

And it was not just the medal winners who had breakfast with the Prime Minister. There were also others who failed to reach the podium despite putting in their best efforts.

Mr. Modi had words of consolation for them. When Deepika Kumari, the World No. 1 archer, told him that she had not lived up to the expectations at the Olympics, her third, he said: "A sportsperson never loses

He also complimented C.A. Bhavani Devi, the first

Indian fencer ever to qualify for the Olympics. Examining her sword, he told the delighted fencer: "You have in-

spired the children of India

to take up this new sport."

The Prime Minister also kept a promise. During an online chat before the Olympics with badminton star P.V. Sindhu, who would go on to win her second successive medal, he had told her that they would have an ice cream after her victory. Sindhu's diet had been so strict that she was abstaining from her favourite food.

Earlier, she had presented her racquet to him, Neeraj his javelin, Lovlina Borgohain her boxing gloves and the men's hockey team, a signed stick. The Prime Minister asked them whether he could auction their equipment to raise funds for a good cause and the athletes readily agreed.

Neeraj Chopra down with exhaustion and fever

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Neeraj Chopra, suffering from exhaustion and fever, had to leave midway during a welcome ceremony at his native Khandra village, near Panipat, on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old, who has had a busy schedule the last week, has taken a break to give his body some much-needed rest.

A source close to Neeraj said that the star athlete should be fine after a good rest and that he left the function as a precautionary measure.

"A lot of people turned up for the welcome ceremony and Neeraj reached the venue on a cavalcade. Midway through the function, he felt exhausted and had slight fever. So he left the function and took rest at a place nearby," the source

"There were rumours that he had been taken to a hospital That is not true He is all right, it's not a serious issue.

"Basically, he is feeling exhausted due to attending functions non-stop after returning from Tokyo."

Injured Wood likely to miss third Test

REUTERS

England fast bowler Mark Wood is likely to miss the third Test against India due to a shoulder injury, coach Chris Silverwood said on Tuesday.

Wood, who landed awkwardly on his right shoulder while fielding on day four of the second Test at Lord's, bowled through the pain on the final day but aggravated his injury further after tumbling in his follow-through.

The 31-year-old picked up five wickets in the game, with three coming in the second innings.

"The medics are working on him, we'll find out more

in the next couple of days... we will make a decision, along with him and our medics, closer to the time. But if he's not right, he's not right," said Silverwood.

"He is a bowler who can hit 90mph-plus, so I've got to look after him, but he will be given every opportunity to be fit for Leeds.'

The hosts are already without the injured Stuart Broad for the rest of the series, while Jofra Archer and Olly Stone are also out with long-term injuries.

"(Wood) is a prized asset... when you lose Archer and Stone, you've got one guy left who can bowl that



recovers for the Headingley Test • GETTY IMAGES

Dravid reapplies for NCA's head post

Don't need to be a genius to guess he is going to continue: senior BCCI source



Dravid... keen for another stint. • FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Former India captain Rahul Dravid has reapplied for the position of Head of Cricket at the National Cricket Academy, a development that should end speculation about him replacing Ravi Shastri as head coach of senior national side after the World Cup November.

BCCI had to invite applications since Dravid's twoyear contract had ended. As per the new constitution, there is no provision for extension and the hiring process has to start afresh.

"Yes, Rahul has reapplied for the post of Head of Cricket. You don't need to be a genius to guess that he is going to continue after the tremendous work he has put in to change the face of NCA,

which is now truly a centre of excellence," said a senior BCCI source privy to the development on conditions of "In fact, as of now, save

Rahul, there are no other prominent names of stature who have applied for the

Deadline extended

It has been learnt that the BCCI has decided to extend the deadline for submission of applications by a few more days to ensure that interested candidates get enough time to apply.

"The BCCI top brass has decided to extend the deadline from August 15 by a few more days. When Rahul is in the fray, everyone knows that there is little meaning in applying for the post," the source added.

Rahul and

in rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Riding on his brilliant cen-

tury against England in the

second Test at Lord's, K.L.

Rahul jumped 19 spots to

37th place, while Virat Koh-

li continued to remain at

the fifth position in the latest ICC rankings released

on Wednesday.

Siraj soar

Jhingan joins **HNK Sibenik**



■ TWITTER/@SANDESHJHINGAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sandesh Jhingan will become the first India international footballer to play in the Croatian top-tier league Prva HNL after completing a move from ATK Mohun Bagan to HNK Sibenik.

Jhingan is excited to get

"I think I am at a stage of my career where I really want to test myself in the highest-level possible and I think this is the perfect platform for me," said Jhingan.

Manika faces Sreeja in quarters

Sathiyan loses to Stoyanov in the Round of 16

WTT CONTENDER

SPORTS BUREAU

Manika Batra overcame a stiff challenge from Giorgia Piccolin of Italy to prevail 3-2 and set up a women's singles quarterfinal clash with country-mate Sreeja Akula in the World Table Tennis Contender Budapest here on Wednesday.

Earlier, fourth-seeded G. Sathiyan bowed out of men's singles, losing to Niagol Stoyanov of Italy 1-3 in the Round of 16. Stoyanov overpowered Sathiyan with a sustained attack on both

The highlight of the day from the Indian angle was the performance of qualifier Sreeja Akula. The 23-yearold, ranked 150 in the world, scripted a facile 3-0 win over Barbora Balazova of Slovakia, ranked 97 places above her, in the pre-quarterfinals.

The results: Men's singles (round of 16): G. Sathiyan lost to Niagol Stoya-



good effect against Balazova. • TWITTER/@INDIA_ALLSPORTS

nov (Ita) 10-12, 11-7, 12-10, 19-17: Harmeet Desai lost to Dang Qiu (Ger) 5-11, 13-11, 11-6, 11-4; Manav Thakkar lost to Kirill Skachkov (Rus) 10-12, 13-11, 8-11, 11-6, 11-9.

Women's singles (round of 16): Manika Batra bt Giorgia Piccolin (Ita) 12-10, 11-13, 11-5, 4-11, 11-8: Sreeia Akula bt Barbora Balazova (Svk) 11-9, 11-6, 13-11: Archana Kamath lost to Mariia Tailakova (Rus) 11-4, 11-6, 11-6.

Sanil Shetty & S. Snehit lost to Vladimir Sidorenko & Kirill Skachkov (Rus) 9-11, 11-3, 11-7, 11-8; Harmeet Desai & Manav Thakkar bt Erik Huzsvar & David Szantosi (Hun) 11-8, 9-11, 11-8, 11-8. Mixed doubles (quarterfinals):

Men's doubles (quarterfinals):

G. Sathivan & Manika Batra bt Libomir Pistej & Barbora Balazova (Svk) 11-4, 3-11, 6-11, 11-6,

Smith set for IPL return, Finch T20 WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Australia batsman Steve Smith, who had been sidelined due to an elbow injury, is expected to make a return during the IPL, while limited-overs skipper Aaron Finch is on track to recover in time for the T20 World

Smith had given the tours of the Caribbean and Bangladesh a miss due to a left elbow injury, which had been troubling him since last year.

However, he has been recovering well with the 32year-old batting in the nets for an hour at a time at New South Wales' training and is set to be available for the resumption of the IPL, according to cricket.com.au.

Going well

"It seems to be going really well. I know that he's (Smith) been building up his batting time over the last couple of weeks - I know that would have been difficult to have a

time limit on his net times," Finch told cricket.com.au on Wednesday. "From all reports, he's

been really strict with that, making sure he doesn't overdo his elbow so it hinders his rehab," he added. The white-ball skipper,

who recently had a surgery on his left knee, is confident of being fit before the World

"I'm confident of that (being fit for the World Cup)," said Finch.

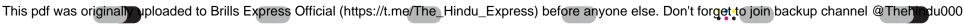


Opener Rohit Sharma and wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant also retained their sixth and seventh In the bowlers' list, India speedster Jasprit Bumrah

dropped a spot to 10th

while fellow pacer Mohammad Siraj, who took four wickets in each innings at Lord's, made significant gains, climbing 18 spots to James Anderson gained

one spot and is sixth after a five-wicket haul in the first innings of the second Test against India at Lord's while Mark Wood occupied the 37th spot.



India's first batch arrives in Tokyo

I am in a different role as I am not competing this year, says PCI president Deepa Malik

PARALYMPICS

The first batch of Indian para-athletes arrived in Tokyo on Wednesday for the Tokyo Paralympics which gets underway from August 24.

Fifty-four para-athletes from across nine sports disciplines will be featuring in the showpiece event. This is India's biggest ever contingent to the Paralympic

The first batch of the Indian contingent for the 2020 Paralympics had departed for Tokyo from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport in the wee hours of Wednes-

Ahead of departure, Tek Chand, a javelin thrower, said, "I will try my best to win a medal. There were a few hurdles but that is part of life. I overcame them. Now, I am going to represent the country.'

Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president Deepa Malik said the Indian team was in great shape.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi sent his wishes along with Sports Minister Anurag



Up for it: The Indians are confident of a good show at the Tokyo Games which begins on August 24. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

Thakur. I'm delighted. I'm in a different role as I'm not competing this year but it is a different feeling to work alongside the athletes. The

team looks in great shape. I wish them all the best for the Games," she said.

The Tokyo Paralympic Games is scheduled to be

held between August 24 and September 5. India will start its campaign on August 27 with the men's and women's archery events. T. Mariyappan, gold medal winner at Rio 2016, will be India's flagbearer at the Games while Gursharan Singh will be the chef de mission.

Having no spectators is a challenge: IPC chief

Believes global TV audience will put Paralympics on the centrestage

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Having no fans at the Tokyo Paralympics will be "a challenge", International Paralympic Committee (IPC) chief Andrew Parsons said on Wednesday, but he is confident the event will reach "more people than ever before".

The Paralympics are set to open behind closed doors on Tuesday, after organisers decided this week to follow the Olympics' example in banning spectators over virus fears.

State of emergency

Japan is currently battling record coronavirus infections, with Tokyo and other parts of the country under a state of emergency.

International Paralympic Committee president Parsons said the decision to ban spectators will have "an impact that we cannot minimise", but he believes a global TV audience will still put the Paralympics on the centrestage

"Of course, the fact that

we will not have spectators at the venues is a challenge, but we believe we will reach more than four billion people through broadcasting,"

"So we still believe the reach of these Games will be incredible. We will reach more nations and more people than ever before."

Surging cases

The Games comes with virus cases surging across Japan. More than 20,000 new daily infections have been recorded in recent days, driven by the more contagious Delta variant.

Japan's government has insisted the Paralympics will be held safely and that it remains committed to hosting

Around 4,400 athletes are expected to take part, and like their Olympic counterparts they will face daily testing and restrictions on

Parsons said the implementation of the Olympic 'bubble" convinced him the Paralympics can work.

Bopanna & Dodig bow out

SPORTS BUREAU

Filip Krajinovic and Fabrice Martin defeated Rohan Bopanna and Ivan Dodig 1-6, 6-4, [10-7] to in the doubles first round of the \$5,404,435 ATP tennis tournament here. The Indo-Croatian pair collected \$12,910.

\$5,404,435 ATP, Cincinnati: Doubles (first round): Filip Krajinovic (Srb) & Fabrice Martin (Fra) bt Ivan Dodig (Cro) & Rohan Bopanna 1-6, 6-4, [10-7].

\$15,000 ITF men and women, Monastir: Men, singles (first round): Gage Brymer (USA) bt Adil Kalyanpur 6-2,

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Blake Ellis & Dane Sweeny (Aus) bt Sascha Gueymard Wayenburg (Fra) & Adil Kalyanpur 6-3, 7-6(3).

Women, doubles (pre-quarrense, Spain: Doubles (prequarterfinals): Marina Bassols Ribera (Esp) & Jacqueline

Moment to savour



Special occasion:: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the Tokyo Games athletes over breakfast in New Delhi on Monday. ■PTI

ATK Mohun Bagan downs Bengaluru FC

Roy Krishna, Subhasish Bose on target for the winner

AFC CUP

SPORTS REPORTER

Goals from Roy Krishna and Subhasish Bose helped ATK Mohun Bagan defeat Bengaluru FC 2-0 in the Group D opener of the 2021 AFC Cup at the National Stadium in Maldives on Wednesday.

The star-studded ATKMB team handed debuts to 2020-21 ISL winners Amrinder Singh and Hugo Boumous, and Deepak Tangri, while fellow new signings including the pacy Liston Colaco, started on the bench.

Two changes

BFC's Marco Pezzaiuoli made two changes to the side that overcame Club Eagles, with Naorem Roshan



Sending it in: Roy Krishna scored ATKMB's opener in the 39th minute. • FILE РНОТО

Singh and Ajay Chhetri replacing Ashique Kuruniyan and Rohit Kumar.

Antonio Habas' side broke

the deadlock in the 39th minute when Carl McHugh's header from a Boumous cor-

ner was turned in from

point-blank range Looking for an equaliser,

BFC made a change at the break as summer signing Danish Farooq replaced Ajay

But ATKMB doubled its lead just moments after the restart, when David Williams found Subhasish in the middle of the box, who turned and smashed the ball low into the far corner.

Resolute defence

Even as BFC threw men forward in search of goals, ATKMB defended resolutely in the closing stages to ensure a winning start in the continental competition.

BFC will next take on Bashundhara Kings on Saturday while ATKMB meets Maziya SRC on the same day.

Boys: Chirag Duhan (Har) bt

Parv Nage (Har) 6-1, 5-7, 6-1; Aditya Nandal (Har) bt Deep Munim (MP) 6-3, 6-2; Denim Yaday (MP) bt Yuyan Nandal (Har) 6-4, 6-2.

(TN) 6-2, 6-0; Yogee Panwai

Daksh Ashok Agarwal

Girls: Reshma Maruri (Kar) bt Ruma Ashutosh Gaikaiwari (Mah) 6-3, 6-3; Tejsavi Dabas (Del) bt S.R. Ananya (TN) 6-4, 6-1; Lakshmi Prabha Arunkumar (TN) bt Apurva Vemuri (TS) 6-4, 6-3; Riya Uboveja

dali Majgaine (Utk) 6-4, 6-3; Veda Raju Prapurna (TS) bt Mirudhula Palanivel (TN) 3-6, 6-2, 6-4; Akanksha Nitture (Mah) bt Madhurima Sawant (Mah) 6-2, 6-1.

India gets decent draw in Thomas, Uber Cup

The country's teams failed to reach the knockout stage in the last edition in 2018

BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indian badminton teams were on Wednesday handed comfortable draws in the rescheduled Thomas and Uber Cup Finals, slated to be held between October 9 and 17 at Aarhus, Denmark.

The Indian men's team has been clubbed alongside defending champions China and minnows Netherlands and Tahiti in Group C, while the women's side will be challenged by last edition runners-up Thailand, Spain and Scotland in Group B.

The draw ceremony was held by the game's governing body BWF at Kuala Lumpur.

The top two teams in each group at the end of the group stage will make it to the knock-out round.

The Indian men's and women's teams had failed to reach the knockout stage in the last edition in 2018. The Indian women's team

had lost to champion China in the semifinal stage in the 2016 edition of Uber Cup. They also reached the semifinal in the 2014 New Delhi

Host Denmark, which had claimed the Thomas Cup trophy in 2016, was put in a challenging Group B with Korea, France and Germany.

Indonesia, which has won the Thomas Cup a record 13 times, are in Group A with Chinese Taipei, Algeria and Thailand, while last edition runner-up Japan are in Group D with Malaysia, Canada and England.

In Uber cup, defending champions Japan are in Group A with Indonesia, Germany and France, while Group C features Korea, Chinese Taipei, Tahiti and Egypt.

China, which has won the tournament 14 times but failed to make the final in

2018 for the first time since they started participating in the 1980s, is in Group D with Denmark, Malaysia and Canada. The event was originally scheduled to be held

from May 16-24 last year but

was postponed to August 15-

23. Later it was further de-

layed to October due to the

pandemic.

Withdrawals

COVID-19

Following a wave of withdrawals by top teams, including Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand and Chinese Taipei, amid the health crisis, the prestigious tournament was postponed again last September.

'My story at Real has been written'

Frivolous way that my future is covered is disrespectful: Ronaldo

Juventus star Cristiano Ronaldo has rubbished the "disrespectful" media reports which suggested the Portugal striker could return to Real Madrid.

The star footballer is entering the last year of his Juventus deal and there were talks of him moving to his old club.

"Anyone who knows me is aware of how focused I am on my work. L

"ess talk and more action, this has been my guiding motto since the start of my career.

"However, in view of

everything that's been said and written recently, I have to set out my position," Ronaldo said in a statement on Instagram.

"More than the disrespect for me as a man and as a player, the frivolous way that my future is covered in the media is disrespectful to all the clubs involved in these rumours, as well as to their players and staff.

"My story at Real Madrid has been written. It's been recorded. In words and numbers, in trophies and titles, in records and in headlines.

' It's in the Museum at the Bernabeu Stadium and

Expected Manika and Sathiyan to tell me about their plans of playing together, says Sharath

it's also in the minds of every fan of the club.

"And beyond what I achieved, I remember that in those nine years I had a relationship of deep affection and respect for 'merengue aficion, an affection and respect that I retain to this day, and that I will always cherish.

" I know that the true Real Madrid fans will continue to have me in their hearts, and I will have them in mine," he added.

The Juventus star also blasted the recent news and stories claiming that he is in talks with other clubs

'Learnt it from a text message from a fellow player'

WRESTLING

SPORTS BUREAU

UFA (RUSSIA) Ravinder took the men's freestyle 61kg silver medal, while Bipasha reached the women's 76kg final to assure India of another medal in the World junior wrestling championships here on Wednesday.

Bipasha defeated Dilnaz Mulkinova of Kazakhstan 6-3 and Odbag Ulzibat of Mongolia 9-4 to enter the final.

Among women, Simran (50kg), Sito (55kg), Kusum (59kg) and Arju (68kg) will fight their respective bronze medal matches. Simran lost in the semifinals, while Sito, Kusum and Ariu faced defeat

in the quarterfinals. Ravinder, who made it to the final on Tuesday, lost to



losing in the final. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA Iranian Rahman Mousa Amouzadkhalili 9-3 to take

the silver. Yash (74kg), Pruthviraj Patil (92kg) and Kumar Anirudh (125kg) got into the bronze medal matches. Yash

lost in the pre-quarterfinals

while Pruthviraj and Anirudh were beaten in the quarterfinals before witnessing revival of their fortunes.

On Tuesday, Gourav Baliyan (79kg) and Deepak (97kg) bagged bronze me-

Sharath. This pdf was originally uploaded to Brills Express Official (https://t.me/The_Hindu_Express) before anyone else. Don't forget to join backup channel @Thehindu000

Sharath Kamal has been left to search for a playing partner after Manika Batra and G. Sathiyan decided to join forces.

TABLE TENNIS

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

More than the decision, the way the issue was handled has hurt Sharath. "Forget my seniority, as a

teammate, I expected them to tell me about their plans. I learnt it from a text message shared by a fellow player," said Sharath, the only table tennis player to receive the Padma Shri for his enormous contribution to the sport.

"I will take a call once I resume my training next week and plan ahead," said





Not amused: Manika Batra's decision to pair up with G. Sathiyan without informing him directly has not gone down

For the record, Manika set its sights on the 2024 Pahad informed Sharath about ris Olympic Games. her decision in an email. The

On his part, Sathiyan Board, on August 4, took a wrote to the Table Tennis unanimous decision to issue Federation of India (TTFI) a show-cause notice to Maniindicating that the duo had ka for "indiscipline" during

was to respond within 10 However, the show-cause

the Tokyo Olympics, and she

notice has not been served on her yet.

On Tuesday, a non-com-

"I will be able to talk about the matter on Thursday," he said.

mittal TTFI secretary Arun

Banerjee sought more time

to explain the delay in issu-

ing the show-cause notice.



The results:

terfinals): Yuka Hosoki & Nana Kawagishi (Jpn) bt Maria Vittoria Viviani (Ita) 6-3, 6-0. \$25,000 ITF women, Ou-Cabai Awad (Swe) bt Sakura Hosogi (Jpn) & Sowjanya Bavisetti 6-3, 6-4.

Dhruv beats Dhananjay

TENNIS

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhruv Vikrambhai Hirpara had a walk in the park, winning 6-2, 6-0 against Dhananjay Athreya, in the boys' pre-quarterfinals of the Tennishub-MPTA National junior under-18 clay court tennis championships here on Wednesday.

top four seeds – Reshma Maruri, Akanksha Nitture, Suhitha Maruri and

Top four seeds advance

In the girls' category, the

Lakshmi Prabha Arunkumar - moved into the quarterfinals much ado. The results (pre-quarterfinals):

Dhruv Vikrambhai Hirpara (Guj) bt Dhananjay Athreya (Har) bt Azmeer Shaikh (Mah) 6-4. 6-1.

(Mah) bt Arjun Premkumar (Kar) 6-1, 6-1; Daksh Prasad (MP) bt Rushil Khosla (UP) 7-6(9), 6-4; Saheb G. Sodhi (Mah) bt Mukil Ramanan (TN) 6-3, 4-6, 7-6(5).

(Guj) bt Adithi Are (TS) 6-1, Kaavya Palani (TN) bt Kun-

Ravinder bags silver, Bipasha in final Former goes down to Iranian Amouzadkhalili