

After August deficit, IMD forecasts 'above normal' rain in Sept.



Bengal BJP sends legal notice to two MLAs who defected to Trinamool

collected fell as compared to July 2021

1,50,000

50,000



Era of wars to remake

India takes on England in fourth Test at The Oval from today page 15



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countries is over, says U.S. President Biden

NEARBY



Rawat meets Amarinder amid infighting in Cong.

Amid the ongoing infighting in the Congress, AICC in-charge of Puniab affairs Harish Rawat on Wednesday met Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, a day after he met State party president Navjot Singh Sidhu.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

Haryana government transfers Karnal SDM

The Haryana government on Wednesday transferred Karnal Sub-Divisional Magistrate Ayush Sinha, who was recently caught on camera directing police personnel to "smash the heads" of protesting farmers.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

Declare cow the national animal: Allahabad HC

The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday said that the cow should be declared the national animal and gau raksha should be included as a fundamental right of the Hindus.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

GST collections dip in Aug., but Finance Ministry sees growth

'Revenues crossed ₹1 lakh cr., which shows economy is recovering at a fast pace'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenues in August fell to ₹1.12 lakh crore from ₹1.16 lakh crore collected the previous month.

The Finance Ministry said the collections, which pertain largely to economic activity in July, indicated a "fast" economic recovery underway. But independent economists perceived it as a signal of an uneven and weak rebound.

"The revenues for August 2021 are 30% higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. Even as compared to the August revenues in 2019-20 of ₹98,202 crore, this [₹1,12,020 crore collection] is a growth of 14%," the Ministry stated, suggesting that the GST revenues have gone past their pre-pandemic levels.

The GST collections had fallen below the ₹1 lakh crore mark in June due to the second COVID-19 wave after a nine-month streak above that threshold.

"With the easing out of

COVID-19 restrictions, the GST collections for July and August 2021 have again crossed ₹1 lakh crore, which clearly indicates that the

economy is recovering at a

fast pace," the Ministry said. Chief economist of rating agency ICRA Aditi Nayar said the sequential dip in the GST revenues "belied the healthy improvement in the e-way bills to a daily average of 2.1 million in July 2021 from 1.8 million in June 2021, which was reflective of the lifting of especially restrictions, across the southern States".

"The dip in GST collections, lower than expected

core sector growth, and moderation in the August manufacturing PMI [Purchasing Managers' Index] suggest that some caution is warranted regarding the strength of the recovery that is underway in the ongoing quarter," she observed.

Marginal fall | While GST collections for August 2021 rose

by 30% compared to same month last year, the absolute revenue

But the government exuded confidence that the "robust GST revenues are likely to continue" in the coming months as well, as "economic growth" and anti-evasion activities, especially against "fake billers", have been contributing to the GST kitty.

Rajat Bose, partner at Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co., said the upshot from the latest numbers was the healthy 30%-plus increase in GST in manufacturing States such as Tamil Na-Maharashtra Karnataka.

GST collections (in ₹ crore)

Y-o-Y change (%, right-axis)

Among the larger States, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka both recorded a 35% jump in GST revenues, followed by Andhra Pradesh (33%), Maharashtra (31%) and Gujarat (25%). Overall, the GST revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) were 27% higher in August year-on-year.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Breakthrough infections on expected lines: report

Vaccines continue to protect against severe disease: INSACOG

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Amidst reports of rising numbers of "breakthrough infections", or infections following two doses of vaccine, in India, a government body said these numbers are on expected lines but did not officially quantify the extent of such infections.

"The number of reported vaccination breakthroughs in India are well within the numbers expected from the total number of infections, the fraction of population that is vaccinated and the known reduction in effectiveness of Covishield/Covaxin against infections by Delta. Vaccines continue to protect against severe disease and remain a cornerstone of public health strategy," the India SARS-CoV-2 Genome Consortium (INSA-COG) said in a weekly re-

The INSACOG is a consortium of laboratories coordinated by the Department of

Biotechnology (DBT). The published efficacy of Covaxin and Covishield

from Phase 3 clinical trials

Delta dominates The Delta and the Delta Plus variants of SARS-CoV-2 accounted for nearly 70% of the samples in India which were classified as having a 'variant of concern' till August 25

Delta 67.62 classified as having a 'variant of Gamma 0.01

has shown that they range from 70%-90% but their efficacy at preventing transmission is significantly reduced against newer variants such as Delta. Like other vaccines, they have been designed on the older version of the virus isolated from Wuhan, China.

Cases among health staff Last week, a study by scientists at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology and the Max Hospitals Group in Delhi, revealed that nearly a quarter of 600 fully vaccinated healthcare workers

were reinfected.

Earlier, studies from the Christian Medical College, Vellore and Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education Research, Chandigarh, too, had reported between 1%-10% of fully vaccinated healthcare workers as having been reinfected.

However, less than 5% of them have required hospitalisation and no deaths have been confirmed, indicating that vaccines continued to be effective – even against Delta variants – in preventing severe sickness and death.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Split accounts to tax **EPF income: Ministry**

New Income Tax rules notified

VIKAS DHOOT

The government has decided to split existing Provident Fund (PF) accounts into two separate accounts in order to operationalise the new tax on PF income arising out of employee contributions exceeding ₹2.5 lakh a year.

The Finance Ministry notified new Income Tax rules to this effect on Tuesday, but experts said this could prove to be an administrative nightmare for the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and a few thousand employers who manage their workers' EPF

savings in-house. "For the purpose of calculation of taxable interest..., separate accounts within the provident fund account shall be maintained during the previous year 2021-2022 and all subsequent previous years for taxable contribution and non-

taxable contribution made by a person," as per the Income-Tax (25th Amendment) Rules, 2021.

Accordingly, all EPF accounts will have to be bifurcated into a taxable and non-taxable contribution account, with the latter including their closing ac count balance as on March 31, 2021, any contributions made thereafter that are "not included in the taxable contribution account" and annual interest accrued on these two components.

To put that in context, the EPFO had 24.77 crore members with EPF accounts, of which 14.36 crore members had been allotted Unique Account Numbers (UAN) as of March 31, 2020. About 5 crore of these members were active contributors into their EPF accounts during 2019-20.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

No breaks



Duty-bound: Forest quards getting ready for patrolling in a boat from their flooded camp in the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam on Wednesday. • RITU RAJ KONWAR (REPORT ON PAGE 10)

No SC, ST, OBC quota for NRIs for NEET

Only one quota slot per head: Ministry

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

When Rohit Vinod applied for NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) this year, the online form asked him to select his nationality and the Indian citizen, who is a Kuwaiti resident, selected the "NRI" option. However, on the next page that asked him to select the category, he was only given the option of "general", although he had expected to be able to opt for Other Backward Classes and avail of reservation.

His case, now pending with the Kerala High Court, raises the question of whether NRIs are eligible for community quota.

Senior Health Ministry officials say they are operating on the principle of one candidate being able to opt for only one quota category, even if eligible for multiple

"Why should NRIs be denied community-based reservation? Are we not Indian citizens who are guaranteed constitutional rights? Why are we being treated similar to the foreigners' category?" asks his father Vinod Karthikeyan.

Shiv, another 18-year-old NRI based in a Gulf country who did not want to be identified with a surname, discovered the opposite problem. When he selected "Indian" under nationality while applying for NEET last year, he was not eligible for the NRI quota seats offered by deemed universities as well as some Central medical institutions, including JIPM-ER. When he applied again this year, he was about to choose "NRI" before being told that this would not allow him to opt for the OBC quota.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani dies

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR Hardline separatist leader Syed Ali Shah

Geelani, 91, passed away at his Srinagar residence on

night, according to family

Under house arrest for around a decade, Geelani, a resident of Sopore, had been battling severe lung ailments and dementia.

Police sources said security arrangements were being made for his final rites. "Security has been tightened across the Valley," a police official said.

Geelani had earlier expressed his desire to be buried at Srinagar's 'Martyrs' Gravevard' where most militants and separatist leaders are buried.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Students return to new rules in schools

Temperature check, hand sanitisation, social distancing part of daily routine now

Masked smiles: Students attending class at a Delhi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The pitter-patter of raindrops and footsteps brought schools back to life in the Capital on Wednesday morning. Students of Classes IX-XII returned to their schools after one and a half years of online learning in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The usual cheer associated with returning to school after a long break was, however, missing as students had to maintain strict discipline while lining up for temperature checks, sanitising their hands and maintaining social distancing in the classrooms.

Many schools decided to take some time before starting classes. Students were allowed to attend school only after taking permission from government school in Dallupura on Wednesday. • R.V. MOORTHY opened for a short period to allow students appearing for Board exams to complete the practical component of their assessment.

The government has instructed teachers not to rush into teaching-learning activities and ease students back into school life by assessing their social-emotional wellbeing through dialogue.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said, "In the last one and a half years, there was a lot of damage to the education of children... If

schools and colleges are not opened now, an entire generation will move forward with a knowledge gap."

Full alert mode He said all schools have been

instructed to be on full alert mode and ensure that CO-VID-related protocols are followed. "Based on the experiences of the first round, a decision on opening the school for other classes will be taken. At present, schools are being opened with 50 per cent capacity, but once these protocols become a habit among the students, schools will open with full capacity," Mr. Sisodia said. The students said they

were happy to be back at school. Many of them were unable to keep up with the learning as they did not have exclusive access to a smartphone or computer. "We sent our teachers assignments and even moved forward to the next class but the feeling of learning in school could not happen at home," said Sapna Kumari, a student of a school in Lajpat Nagar. Sachin Srivastava, a Class

XII student of Government Boys' Senior Secondary School in Pushp Vihar, said that he was excited to be back at school. "My parents let me attend offline classes as I have been at home all this while. I am really happy that I will get to see my friends more frequently now," said Sachin. With inputs from Adarsh

Tripathi

Kerala panchayat office bans 'sir', 'madam'

'Such salutations are remnants of colonial rule. People are the supreme authority'

ABDUL LATHEEF NAHA PALAKKAD

The Mathur gram panchayat in Kerala's Palakkad district has become the first local body in the country to ban the use of salutations like 'Sir' and 'Madam'.

A special meeting of the panchayat council on Tuesday took the historic decision that could likely kickstart a wave of reforms in the use of official language.

The panchayat viewed salutations like 'Sir' and 'Madam' as remnants of the colonial rule. "It's been 75 years since we secured freedom from the British. It's time we showed the supremacy of the people in a democratic government," said P.R. Prasad, vice-president of the Mathur panchayat, moving a resolution.

People reaching the panchayat office for various

MATHUR GRAMA PANCHAYAT purposes will no longer have to call officials "Sir" or "Madam". Instead, they can address them by their designations or names. Every panchayat official will now display their names on their table.

If people feel addressing an elderly or senior person by name will be disrespectful, they can use the more friendly and endearing terms like *Cheta*

(elder brother) or Chechi (elder sister). The panchayat has asked the Official Language Department to suggest proper alternatives to "Sir" and "Madam". The panchayat also

decided to drop words like 'apekshikkunnu' or 'abhyarthikkunnu' (meaning I request) in letters. Instead, people can use 'avakasapedunnu' (I demand) or

The panchayat has displayed a notice outside the office telling people that

'thalparyapedunnu' (I

if anyone is denied any service for not using the banned words, they can complain to the panchayat president or secretary. "In a democracy, government officials and elected representatives are

the servants, the people are

the supreme authority. People should not be at our mercy for their rights," said Mr. Prasad. Mathur panchayat

president Pravitha Muraleedharan said it was a bold step towards reducing the gap between officials and the people. The panchayat council took the decision unanimously, assuming that scrapping words that indicate colonial hangover will bring in an air of friendliness.

their parents as the Delhi government's guidelines said attendance was not mandatory and classes would continue in blended mode. Earlier in January, schools had





Same old story: Massive traffic jam on Ring Road near Dhaula Kuan; vehicles drive through knee-deep water near the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi on Wednesday. 🔹 shiv кимак ризнракак

Record rain creates mayhem as Delhi streets turn into rivers

Authorities get complaints of water entering houses, shops

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Heavy rain lashed the national capital for the second straight day on Wednesday, leading to chaos on the streets due to waterlogging.

Delhi received 112.1 mm of rainfall over a 24 hour period ending at 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, and 76.5 mm of rainfall thereafter. It is the highest single-day precipitation in September in 19 years

Delhi had recorded 126.8 mm of rainfall on September 13, 2002. The all-time record is 172.6 mm rainfall on September 16, 1963.

The rain led to waterlogging on several major roads and serpentine queues of vehicles were seen moving at snail's pace. There were also complaints about water en-

Name of the Work

(2)

Key Dates:

HP / 3736/21-22

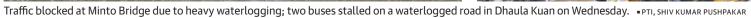
Date of Online Publication

Document Download Start and End Date

the website for the latest information related to the tender

Bid Submission Start and End Date





tering shops and homes.

At Connaught Place, water entered shops and the middle circle, and parking areas in the inner circle were waterlogged.

Areas categorised as 'critical' by the Public Works Department (PWD), such as

under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors / Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Pekhubela Road from km. 0/0 to 6/540) (SH: - Formation Cutting 5/7mtr.

wide including Retaining wall, Breast wall and Toe wall, Cross drainage

work and Cement Concrete Pavement Providing and Laying GSB,

WMM and 20mm thick premix carpet with seal coat, U and V-shape drain, C/O Parapet and kilometre stone and sign board in km. 0/0 to

0/990 including five years maintenance) UNDER NABARD RIDF-XXVI

Date of Technical Bid opening, Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid.

a. Cover 1: shall contain scanned copies of all ``Technical Documents/Eligibility Information.`

b. Cover2: shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid", where contractor will Quote his offer for each item

Key dates Sr. 4 on Tender Opening Date, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive

2. Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 07.09.2021.

Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document

6. TENDER DETAILS: The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover

Minto Bridge, as well as hundreds of those categorised as 'vulnerable' were inundated for most of Tuesday night

and most part of Wednesday.

The PWD logged over 119 waterlogging complaints between 8.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, com-

07.09.2021 (10.00 HRS)

15.09.2021 upto 10.30 HRS

15.09.2021 (11.00 HRS).

07.09.2021 (10.30 HRS upto 15.09.2021 (09.00 HRS)

07.09.2021 (10.30 HRS upto 15.09.2021 (09.00 HRS)

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

E-Procurement Notice

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

. The Executive Engineer, Una Division HPPWD Una H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the

Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website http://hotenders.gov.in. Bidder

would be required to register on the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the

authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: http://hptenders.gov.in Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can

. Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security/ Earnest Money (EMD) duly pledged in favour of undersigned and other Technical Documents in Executive Engineer, Una Division, HPPWD, Una H.P. as specified in

8. BID OPENING DETAILS: The bids shall be opened on 15.09.2021 at 11.00 HRS in the office of Executive Engineer, Una Division, HP: PWD, Una by the authorised officer. In their

10. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the

HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify

interest the tenderer is advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue. The date for opening of financial bids will be intimated separately after evaluation of

3. Cost of Bid Form::- As per detail in column No. 6 in form of demand draft in favour of Executive Engineer, Una Division HPPWD, Una payable at Una.

pared to 60 on Tuesday.

Apart from Minto Bridge, the Pul Prahladpur and Azadpur underpasss were flooded yet again. The average rainfall that the drainage network of the city can cater to, according to the PWD, is 50 mm per day.

Bid Security (Rs. Lakh)

The bid security is two per of the total cost, rounded to th

The intensity of rain is likely to reduce with the Meteorological Department forecasting a generally cloudy sky with light to moderate rain/thundershowers Thursday. Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 31 and 25

degrees Celsius respectively.

Delhi govt. statement On waterlogging causing

mayhem in the city, the Delhi government said: "It has been raining heavily over the last two days. But what bears testimony to the work done

vindKejriwal stands exposed, they have not worked on the Fundamentals which were the basic need of Delhi [sic]," North East Delhi MP

Manoj Tiwari tweeted. Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri shared a video of water falling from a flyover to prevent waterlogging over and tweeted: "Congratulathe last few days is that issues tions Kejriwal! They couldn't transform Delhi into London such as buses getting stuck or Singapore but by not below the Minto Bridge did not arise. In addition, many cleaning PWD drains effecplaces did not witness watertively the government has at least been able to inundate logging. In future, we will try to ensure that waterlogging Delhi with water from the does not take place no mat-

ter how much it rains. The

Delhi government will do

whatever is needed in this

took to social media to accuse the AAP government of

having completely failed at

"Government run by @Ar-

waterlogging

BJP takes to Twitter Meanwhile, the Delhi BJP

regard."

checking

across the Capital.

FYUP will dilute quality of courses'

STAFF REPORTER

The Academics for Action and Development (AAD) on Wednesday said the four year undergraduate programme (FYUP) under the New Education Policy (NEP) passed by Delhi University's (DU) Executive Council on Tuesday would dilute the quality and ri-

gour of courses. The university's highest decision-making body, on August 31, paved the way for implementation of FY-UP from the 2022-23 academic session.

Teaching jobs

"FYUP will dilute the quality and rigour of the courses and reduce the requirements of the teachers. The fluctuating workload caused by Academic Bank of Credit and Multiple Entry and Exit Scheme will enhance contractualisation of teaching jobs. The teachers moved a resolution for absorption of Adhoc and temporary teachers... but it was not allowed by the chairperson undemocratically," the AAD said.

Solan (B&R) Division

Over two lakh CBSE students register for UG courses at DU

First cut-off list likely on Oct. 1, admissions to begin from Oct. 4

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The highest number of an plicants to undergraduate courses in Delhi University this year were from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), showed data released by the university on Wednesday

Online registration to undergraduate courses closed on Tuesday and the university received over 2.77 lakh paid applications against the 70,000 seats that are on offer this year. Overall, 4,38,696 students have applied for admissions.

Out of the total paid applications, over 2.29 lakh aspirants are from the CBSE, followed by 9,918 from the Board of School Education (Harvana), 9,659 from the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), 8,000 from the Uttar Pradesh Board of High School and Intermediate Education, and 4,824 from the Kerala Board of Higher Secondary Education.

Due to a high number of



Students at the School of Open Learning, Delhi University. • FILE РНОТО

students receiving above 95% in their Class 12 Board results, the cut-offs are likely to see a spike.

The CBSE itself saw over 70,000 students scoring above 95% this year, nearly double compared 38,000 in 2020.

Regarding number of applicants from each State, Delhi came out on top with 1.15 lakh aspirants, followed by over 55,000 from Uttar Pradesh and over 37,000 from Haryana.

Under the Sports Category, the highest number of applicants, 1358, were for athletics, followed by 1,300

JNU Executive Council to take call

NEW DELHI Delhi University acting Vice-Chancellor P.C. Joshi on

DU will reopen in phased

manner, says acting V-C

Wednesday said the university will be opened in a phased manner as safety of students is a primary concern. A meeting of senior DU officials was held on Wednesday and the university might open from next week, said an official.

ties category, the highest number of registrations were received for the National Cadet Corps, 3,047 applications, followed by 1.775 for Debate (English). Due to the ongoing CO-

aspirants for football. For

the Extra-Curricular Activi-

VID-19 pandemic, admissions under the Sports and ECA categories will be based on certificates and no trials will be held this year.

The first cut-off list for merit-based undergraduate courses is likely to be released on October 1 and admissions are scheduled to begin from October 4.

ह्मारखण्ड सरकार ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग मुरब्य अभियंता का कार्यालय 102, द्वितीय तल्ला, अभियंत्रण भवन, कचहरी रोड, रांची

). The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 120 days after the deadline date for bid submission.

शुद्धि पत्र

एदत् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग (ग्रा०का०मा०), कार्य प्रमण्डल, गिरिडीह के ई-अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमत्रण संख्या- 19/RI/2021-22/RWD/GIRIDIH दिनांक 31.08.2021 PR NO.-252407 के द्वारा प्रकाशित निविदा की तिथि में सुधार किया जा रहा है—

- 2. वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि:- 06.09.2021
- 3. ई—निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय:— **15.09.2021** अपराहन 5.00 बजे |
- 4. (क) मुख्य अभियंता कार्यालय, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, अभियंत्रण भवन, कचहरी, राँची अथवा (ख) जिला नियंत्रण कक्ष, राँची अथवा (ग) जिला नियंत्रण कक्ष, गिरिडीह में से किसी भी कार्यालय में निविदा शुल्क, अग्रधन की राशि, शपथ पत्र के मूल प्रति एवं अपलोड किये गये तकनीकी योग्यता दस्तावेज की एक प्रति जमा करने की तिथि:- 16.09.2021 पूर्वाह्न 10.00 बजे से अपराहन 3.30 बजे तक।
- 5 निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:- 20.09.2021 पूर्वाह्न 11.30 बजे। अन्य शर्ते यथावत रहेगें।

PR 252430 Rural Work Department(21-22).D

नोडल पदाधिकारी ई—प्रोक्युर्मन्ट सेल

" CORRIGENDUM"

The Key dates for the below mentioned works as invitation for bids called vide this office letter No.PW.SD.CB.E-Tender/2021-22- 7136 dated: 03.08.2021 & published in GiriRaj weekly from 05.08.2021 to 06.08.2021 vide release order NO.3044/2021-2022 is hereby changed as under due to COVID-19 related restrictions & other administrative

Name of Work

HP / 3754/21-22

Executive Engineer

Una Division, HP: PWD, Una.

On behalf of Governor of H.P.

"Construction of Model Career Centre(MCC) building at Jatoli(Solan) H.P.(SH:-C/o main building including water supply & sanitary installation, Septic tank, Site development, Rain harvesting tank, Ground water recharging pit, retaining wall &

etc".	modeling a discurred installation
Key dates:-	
Date of Online Publication	02.09.2021 at 10.00 Hrs.
Pre-Bid meeting.	07.09.2021 at 3:00 Hrs.
Document Download Start and End Date	02.09.2021 at 10.00 Hrs upto 21.09.2021 at 11.00 Hrs.
Bid Submission Start and End Date	02.09.2021 at 10.00 Hrs upto 21.09.2021 at 11.00 Hrs.
Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	21.09.2021 upto 11.00 Hrs
Date of Technical Bid opening, Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by opening of Financial Bid.	21.09.2021 at 11.30 Hrs.
	Executive Enginee

on counter-terrorism course today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Iawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Vice Chancellor M. Jagadesh Kumar on Wednesday said the Academic Council of JNU had approved a course titled 'Counter Terrorism, Asymmetric Conflicts and Strategies for Cooperation among Major Powers' for students at the School of Engineering. The JNU Executive Council will discuss granting final approval to the course on Thursday.

The objective of the new course is to give an in-depth understanding on the challenges emanating from ter-

rorism to India's national security and how India can equip itself with the adequate responses in the case of any eventuality. "The way things have unfolded in India's neighbourhood are proving highly detrimental to India's national security. It is imperative that an academic institution like JNU takes the lead and builds a good set of counter-terrorism specialists," he said.

Teachers raise concerns A section of JNU teachers and students has objected to the introduction of the course, alleging it states that

'jihadi terrorism' is the only form of 'fundamentalist-religious terrorism'.

JNU Teachers' Association secretary Moushumi Basu said, "Such a course should not be taught and should be withdrawn. It's problematic and gives a simplistic view on the topic."

Mr. Kumar, however, said there is a need to evolve India's perspective in a balanced and objective manner: "The course has the potential to build a strong narrative for India and provide an in-depth understanding of global and regional terrorist networks."

Timings

DELHI THURSDAY, SEP. 02 RISE 06:00 SET 18:42 □ RISE 01:08 SET 15:39 FRIDAY, SEP. 03 RISE 06:01 SET 18:41

RISE 02:01 SET 16:28 SATURDAY, SEP. 04 RISE 06:01 SET 18:39

RISE 02:59 SET 17:14

Delhi Weather max Delhi City Safdarjang

Delhi Palam Today 32°C A pleasant and hazv morning turns warm day. Night remains comfortable. Spell of

rain and thundershower to **Delhi Palam Tomorrow** 33°C A warm and humid weather to continue. Night will be slight warm and humid Spell of light rain and

IN BRIEF

L-G reviews progress of Jal Shakti Abhiyan

of waterbodies here

thundershower to occur.

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L-G Anil Baijal on Wednesday reviewed the progress of the implementation of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan and restoration and rejuvenation

Families of COVID-19 victims still awaiting relief

Despite approval, requests are pending as govt. has not released funds; compensation scheme 'under process', says official

NIKHIL M BABU

Hundreds of people, whose family members died due to COVID-19, are yet to be given a compensation of ₹50,000 each, despite their requests being verified and approved, multiple officials told The Hindu. They have not got the compensation as the Delhi government is yet to release funds for it, as per officials.

Also, the government is vet to start distributing a monthly assistance ₹2,500 each to specific categories of people, who have lost their family members to COVID-19, and it is in "various stages of verification", according to officials.

Scheme for children

The beneficiaries of both the assistance include children who have been orphaned due to COVID-19 and others.

On May 18, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had promised that every child who has lost both parents due to COVID-19 will be given ₹2,500 per month till the age of 25 and will be provided



Relatives of a COVID-19 victim at Ghazipur cremation ground in Delhi to perform the last rites. ■ FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

free education.

"There was a meeting of senior officials last week on compensation ₹50,000 and work is being done on a war footing. Since it is a new scheme, funds have to be allotted under a new head by the Finance Department. It will be done in the next couple of days," a Delhi government official said. The official said that there is no "fund crunch" for the scheme and it is "under

But some people have got the compensation as district officials have paid them from the "relief fund" that all 11 districts have been getting from the government since the outbreak of the pandemic to meet all CO-VID-19 related expenses

Volunteers not paid

This fund is also used to pay expenses, including salary to civil defence volunteers (CDVs), who help the government with various CO

There was a meeting of senior officials last week and work is being done on a war footing. Since it is a new scheme, funds have to be allotted

the Finance Dept. DELHI GOVT. OFFICIAL

VID-19 work, including activities in containment zones.

under a new head by

But salaries of volunteers have not been paid for July in many districts and in some cases June also, as there is a "fund crunch" with this relief fund, several officials said. "We have paid the CDVs till June, but only some of them have been paid in July," a district official said.

Also, many labs, which do COVID-19 tests for the government, are not paid since April. "Districts have to submit utilisation certificates for money released by the department to pay labs and it is pending in many districts. So, many labs have not been paid in the current financial

year," a health department official said. multiple Despite

tempts, a Delhi government spokesperson did not respond to queries.

After the May 18 statement, on July 6, Mr. Kejriwal announced 'Mukhyamantri COVID-19 Pariwar Aarthik Sahayata Yojna', under which ₹50,000 will be given as a one-time compensation to all families who lost someone to COVID-19.

children Additionally, who were orphaned because of COVID-19, will get ₹2,500 every month, till they turn 25 years old, under the scheme, he said. An mount of ₹2,500 per month is also to be paid to other categories, as per the scheme.

'No money'

In several districts, more than 100 requests each, for the one-time payment of ₹50,000 have been approved after verification, but the beneficiaries are vet to be paid, said officials.

"We don't have money under the relief fund to pay even salaries of CDVs, then how will we pay the compensation? Whenever we get a request from a child who has lost parents, we try to prioritise it," a district official said.

There are 6,200 children who are left with a single parent and 292 left orphaned as on August 16 due to CO-VID-19, as per a status report filed by the Delhi government to the High Court.

On August 23, the High Court had said that it "would be unfair to expect children who lost their parents to be able to procure documents and avail benefits" and directed the government to fix issues in the process to get compensation.

The HC had also noted that the government should take a proactive approach rather than taking the applications in a routine way.

The High Court made the observation, after an NGO moved court that even though numerous schemes were framed after April this year, nothing much has moved on the ground.

Delhi reports 36 new virus cases, no death

STAFF REPORTER

The Capital reported no one new COVID-19 death in 24 hours and the total number of deaths stood at 25,082, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday.

Also, 36 new cases were reported, taking the total cases to 14,37,800. A total of 59.013 tests were done in a day and that test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.06%. Of the total cases, 14,12,375 people have recovered and there are only 343 active

This is the 20th time since the start of the second COVID wave in the national capital that zero fatality has been logged in

The COVID-19 vaccine stock of the city on Wednesday morning would last for four days, as per another bulletin.

A total of 1,35,815 vaccinations were administered in the city on Tuesday and a total of 1,35,18,513 doses have been given till now.

Speeches by Sharjeel was for particular community: police

JNU student tried to create complete anarchy, court told

Sharjeel Imam

(Amendment) Act and the

National Register of Citizens.

to take action were also from

one community. The speech

was definitely divisive. It was

not made for the general pu-

blic at large but a specific

community. He is attempt-

ing to create complete anar-

The alleged inflammatory

speeches were made by Mr.

Imam at Iamia Millia Islamia

on December 13, 2019, and

at Aligarh Muslim University

on December 16, 2019. He

chy," Mr. Prasad added.

At two universities

"The people called upon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Delhi Police on Wednesday said Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Sharjeel Imam began one of his inflammatory alleged speeches with As-salamu alaykum salutation, which shows it was addressed to a particular community and not the public at large

Sedition case

Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Amit Prasad, representing the police, made the remarks during the argument in a sedition case filed against Mr. Imam for speeches made by him at two universities in 2019, where he allegedly threatened to "cut off" Assam and the rest of the northeast from India.

During the hearing, Mr. Prasad apprised Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat that Mr. Imam attempted to create complete anarchy and gave divisive speeches during the protests against the Citizenship has been in judicial custody since January 2020.

that Mr. Imam is not a simple pickpocket or small-time drug peddler but a man with excellent oratory skills, who has written a thesis on rioting and has knowledge of how a critical mass can come together. Mr. Imam is accused of of-

fences under the Unlawful gration, and mischief.

The police had filed a chargesheet against Mr. Imam in the case, in which it alleged that he gave speeches inciting hatred, contempt, and disaffection towards the Centre and instigated the people which led to the violence in Decem-

Mr. Prasad emphasised

Activities (Prevention) Act. and has also been charged under IPC Sections for sedition, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, imputations prejudicial to national intepublic

'Boost Counter Magnet Areas to control migration'

State govts. concerned have taken little initiative to develop these areas, says draft NCR regional plan

ASHOK KUMAR GURUGRAM

The draft Regional Plan-2041 for the National Capital Region has put special emphasis on strengthening of the economic base of the Counter Magnet Areas (CMAs), the urban areas located sufficiently away from the NCR with significant economic growth, to intercept the flow of migration to the national

areas. However, the report said that the State governments concerned had taken "little" initiative for strengthening the economic base and regional linkages in these areas to enable them to undertake their assigned roles.

capital and its neighbouring

The report said the State governments were keener on adding more areas to the NCR rather than focus on the development of the CMAs.

Nine CMAs

The nine CMAs to the NCR spread across six States are: Hisar and Ambala (Haryana), Kanpur-Lucknow corridor and Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh), Jaipur and Kota (Rajasthan), Patiala-Rajpura

(Punjab), Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh) and Dehradun (Uttrakhand).

Population growth

The report identifies large size and continuing growth of the population in the NCR adding to the burden on infrastructure and natural resources as a major challenge, adding that migration was one of the major contributors to it.

The total population of the NCR is projected to be around 11.30 crore by 2041, with Uttar Pradesh sub-region contributing the maximum 3.75 crore, followed by Haryana 3.34 crore, NCT-Delhi 3.08 crore and Rajasthan 1.12 crore. Also, the NCT-Delhi is expected to be 100% urban by 2031.

The NCRPB in its 31st meeting on 11 November 2009, had decided that CMAs would not limit to urban areas only and development could be proposed in the form of corridors. It was also decided that these Counter Magnet Areas shall consider its zone of influence for migration as the area within about 120 km ra-



Migrant workers arriving in Delhi from Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. • FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

dius around them. Also, the State governments concerned were to notify their respective CMAs and prepare development plans and related plans of action for implementation.

Plans of action

But the draft report pointed out that the plans of action were prepared only for Jaipur and Kota. Out of the nine CMAs, only five CMAs have submitted a total of 14 projects to the NCR planning board financial assistance.

The report suggested that various Ministries should prioritise the CMAs in "improving transport linkages by providing high-speed connectivity through expressways, national highways, rapid rail transport systems, airports, and by creating robust digital infrastructure as

prioritise the CMAs in improving transport linkages by providing high-speed connectivity and by creating robust digital infrastructure as a tool for socio-economic development DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN-2041

Ministries should

a tool for socio-economic development". The State governments should develop the CMAs as model industrial estates, technology parks, tourist hubs or nodes (e.g. Jaipur, Patiala, Gwalior), education or coaching hub (e.g. Kota), special economic zones for attracting economic investments, said the draft plan.

The NCRPB, in its report, said it could also financially support the joint develor ment projects prepared by the State governments and the development authorities concerned for these CMAs through its prevailing funding pattern.

COVID-19 concerns over stir at UNHCR office

High Court notes lack of adherence to safety guidelines by Afghan protesters

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday expressed concern over a lack of adherence to COVID-19 appropriate norms by a large gathering of Afghan nationals protesting outside the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) office and seeking refugee status.

Justice Rekha Palli asked the Centre, the Delhi government and the police to coordinate and work out a solution so that the gathering does not act as a superspreader of COVID-19. "We are also dealing with

COVID-19. Look at the pictures. You should ensure some protocol is there. Why

they not wearing masks?" the court remarked. "It is not the inconve-

nience only with which I am concerned. I am more concerned that it should not act as a superspreader of CO-VID-19 again. The city has barely coped with the second wave. You have to ensure that the protesters follow the protocols. Let them wear masks and then protest," it said.

The court's observation came while hearing a petition which stated that the foreign nationals (refugees/ asylum seekers) have gathered outside the office of the UNHCR at B Block in Vasant Vihar since August 15, and the residents were facing difficulties due to this.

Auto driver held for raping minor

Victim had come to Delhi after eloping with her boyfriend

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly raping a minor in east Delhi's New Ashok Nagar. His accomplice has been held for robbing her mobile phone.

The police said that the incident happened on August 27 when the victim and her boyfriend – who had eloped from Bihar's Champaran -

came to New Delhi Railway Station and met the accused. They had been in touch with him for job opportunity in Delhi.

The accused, an auto driver, allegedly took the couple to his relative's house in New Ashok Nagar where he sent the boy for some work and raped the girl. The accused allegedly threatened her of dire consequences if she reported the matter. He then dropped the couple back at the railway station.

A beat officer spotted the couple after which they narrated the matter and reported it at the police station. The police registered a case under relevant section and began probe. The accused and his accomplice were arrested from Bihar's Champaran, the police said.

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THE HINDU India's National Newspape

Man bludgeoned to death over remark on cooking, 1 held

Victim's face was unrecognisable, tattoo with his name on arm helped police in identification

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI A 48-year-old man was bludgeoned to death and his face was found smashed in a field in North Delhi's Burari on Tuesday morning. The police have arrested his friend in connection with the

murder. A senior police officer said that the victim has been identified as Dahu Singh, a daily wage labourer hailing from Bihar and the accused has been identified as Ramesh Yadav, 22, from Uttar Pradesh.

The police received a call on Tuesday morning wherein the caller stated that he had found a body during morning walk. The police found a body with his face unrecognisable as it had been smashed with stones. "However, there was a tattoo on his arm with his name written on it which helped in his identification," the officer Further probe revealed

that on Monday night, the victim was with two persons Ashish and Ramesh. During investigation, it was revealed that Ramesh, Dahu and Ashish were drinking in the fields and a while later, Ashish left the place. Ramesh picked up

During sustained interrogation, it was revealed that both, the victim and the accused, were drunk at the When Dahu was cooking, Ramesh commented that it's not the right way to cook which the former didn't like and abused Ramesh

time of the incident and following a quarrel, Ramesh first thrashed Dahu and then bludgeoned his face with a stone to ensure he isn't recognised.

Preparing a treat

Sources said that Ramesh was working in a factory wherein he earned ₹10,000 a month and Dahu used to earn on a daily basis.

Ramesh had promised Dahu to get him a full-time job like himself. "Dahu bought alcohol and meat to treat the other two. When he was cooking, Ramesh commented that it's not the right way to cook which Dahu didn't like and abused Ramesh. The accused in turn slapped Dahu and told him not to abuse. The matter escalated

the officer said. The accused then dragged and dumped Dahu's body in the fields before fleeing the

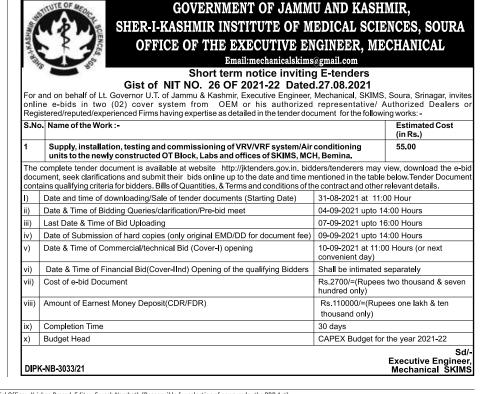
and Ramesh thrashed and

bludgeoned Dahu to death,"

spot, the police said. In another murder reported from Sarai Rohilla, a 25year-old man identified as and his brother Ravi is undergoing treatment after the two were attacked on Mon-

day night. The police said that a fight ensued between an autorickshaw driver and a vegetable van driver when two locals identified as Anil and Rahul intervened to stop the fight. However, the van driver and his accomplices attacked Anil and Rahul after which friends of both parties came to their rescue respectively.

Anil and Rahul were joined by victims Sunil and Ravi and van driver Amar Singh (48) was joined by his sons and Raj Kumar (53). One of Singh's sons brought the knife and stabbed the Sunil was stabbed to death brothers Sunil and Ravi.



Published by N. Ravi at Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Udyog Vihar, Greater Noida Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Group Editorial Officer: Krishna Prasad. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act) Regd. DL(ND)-11/6110/2006-07-08 • RNI No. UPENG/2012/49940 • ISSN 0971 - 751X • Vol. 11 • No. 209

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Notice is hereby given on behalf of Axis Bank Ltd that Mr. Vineet Chaurasia & Mrs. Maniu Chaurasia intend to purchase & mortgage the Flat No. 83, on First Floor, M-Block, Pocket-MG-1, situated at Vikas Puri, Delhi with our client Axis Bank Ltd against the financial assistance. Whereas Mr. Roshan Lal Malik acquired the said property by way of Conveyance Deed dt. 05.10.2017 Doc. No. 12283 and after his death his legal heirs Jyoti Malhotra, Rajneesl Malik and Mr. Sanjay Malik becomes the owner of said property as per Hindu Succession Act. Now Jyoti Malhotra, Rajneesh Malik & Sanjay Malik intend to sell the same to Mr. Vineet Chaurasia & Mrs. Manju Chaurasia.

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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

Dr. ZUBAIDA BEGUM,MD, DG

Pioneer founder of SHIFA HOSPITAL Research Centre, Chennai - 05 Passed away on 31.08.2021

Deeply mourned by-Family & Staff



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works of Construction of S&T Structures the work with its location: Balance works of Construction of S&T Structures, Platforms, passenger amenities, Platform cover shed, circulating area and other incidental works at Digsar-Vagadiya section between Surendranagar to Daladi stations in connection with Doubling of Surendranagar- Rajko Project. (2) Approx. Cost of the work: 19,53,94,710.00 (3) Earnest Money to be deposited: NIL. Bid Security
Declaration to be submitted. (4)
Completion Period: 06 (Six) Months
(5) Date and time for submission 17.09.2021 Up to 15.00 Hrs. Opening 17.09.2021 at 15.30 Hrs. (6) System of Tender: Two Packet System (7) A Certificate must be submitted by a tenderers as given in Annexure-V.
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Rawat meets Amarinder amid infighting in Punjab Congress

'Party colleagues should refrain from raising their grievances through media'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing infighting in the Punjab Congress, All India Congress Committee in-charge of Punjab affairs Harish Rawat on Wednesday met Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, a day after he met State party president Navjot Singh Sidhu.

After the meeting, Mr. Rawat said he expects his party colleagues to refrain from raising their grievances or issues through media as he himself follows the same practice. "When I impose restrain over myself not to talk to my party leaders through media, I believe that my party colleagues will also keep it in mind," said Mr. Rawat, talking to reporters.

Party's central leadership is learnt to have sent Mr. Rawat to resolve the infighting in Puniab after four Ministers, including Sukhjinder



AICC incharge for Punjab Harish Rawat • FILE РНОТО

Randhawa, Tript Rajinder Bajwa, Sukhbinder Sarkaria and Charanjit Channi, besides a few MLAs on August 24 had expressed "lack of faith in the leadership of the Chief Minister in fulfilling the party's 2017 Assembly election promises."

Mr. Rawat said that he has urged that certain relief to electricity consumers should be given by the government, besides on the is-

sue of Centre's farm laws, the Chief Minister was requested to meet the State Governor again. "The Chief Minister informed me that actions were being taken surrounding the 18-point programme of the central leadership," he said.

Earlier last evening, Mr. Rawat had a meeting with Mr. Sidhu and working presidents Kuljit Nagra and Pawan Goel and Punjab Congress Committee general secretary (organisation) Pargat Singh.

'Demand not justified'

Deliberations were held on finalising State unit's organisational structure, on which Mr. Rawat said that Mr. Sidhu has given an assurance that the whole process will be geared up in the next fortnight, said sources privy to the matter, adding that Mr. Rawat also conveyed that demand for replacing the Chief Minister ahead of the polls was not justified.

Party insiders said that Mr. Sidhu asserted that issues surrounding five priority areas of the 'high commands' 18-point agenda needed to be quickly addressed by the government.

Apology for remark

Meanwhile, Mr Rawat courted a controversy after comparing State party president and working presidents with 'Panj Pyaras' (five beloved ones, who have a special place in Sikhism). However, on Wednesday he apologised, saving he didn't have any intention to hurt the sentiments of the Sikh community. "It was wrong on my part to compare the working presidents with 'Panj Pyare', for which I sincerely apologies," he said.

AAP takes out 'Tiranga Yatra' in Noida

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to make its presence felt in the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, the Aam Admi Party took out a 'Tiranga Yatra' in Noida on Wednesday. Despite heavy rain, a large number of party workers turned up for the Yatra. Earlier this week, the

U.P. police booked over 500 workers, including senior party leaders Manish Sisodia and Sanjay Singh, for taking out a similar Yatra in Agra. The administration said the party workviolated COVID restrictions and took out the Yatra without permission when Section 144 was in place.

At a press conference in Noida, Mr. Singh asked when BJP workers, holding the party flag, could participate in Jan Aashirwad Yatra, why can't its cadre participate in a rally holding the National Flag.

Gandhian groups demand land restoration to Jaipur institution

The current value of the

land in Durgapura area, mea-

'City authority trying to convert it into prime real estate'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Gandhian organisations here have demanded restoration of land to one of the oldest and leading institutions, Rajasthan Samagra Seva Sangh, whose allotment was cancelled and the buildings were sealed by the previous BJP regime in 2014.

The land at a prime location in Jaipur also has the 'samadhi' of freedom fighter Gokulbhai Bhatt.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had assured a delegation of activists after the formation of Congress government in 2018 that the land would be restored without delay. However, the 'samadhi'and the buildings still remain locked and the evicted persons are waiting endlessly.

U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION

CORPORATION LTD. E-Ten-

der Notice Online e-Bids are

invited for "Supply of 400kV &

220kV Control and Relay Pan-

el" against Tender Specn. No.

ESD-8/165. E-tender upload-

ed on 31.08.2021 on https://

etender up nic in. EMD Cost for

the tender is Rs. 0.52 Lacs and

tender Fee of Rs. 7,080.00 will

be deposited through RTGS/

NEFT. Last date for submission

of tender is 04.10.2021 at 16:00

Hrs and opening of part-1 is

06.10.2021 at 16:00 Hrs. Total

Quantity, tender specification

and other terms and condi-

tions is as per tender document

available on the e-tender portal.

Undersigned reserve the right

to cancel the e-Bids without as-

signing any reason. Corrigen

dum, Addendum, Extension if

any shall be uploaded only on

the above website. Bidders are

advised to visit the website reg

ularly for updated information

from time to time. Superintend-

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SDC, 11th floor, Shakti Bha-

U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION

CORPORATION LTD. E-Ten

along with Insulator" against

Tender Specn No. ESD-

8/166. E-tender uploaded on

01.09.2021 on https://etender

up.nic.in. EMD Cost for the

tender is Rs. 2.95 Lacs and

tender Fee of Rs. 11,800.00 will

be deposited through RTGS/

NEFT. Last date for submission

of tender is 04.10.2021 at 16:00

Hrs and opening of part-1 is

06.10.2021 at 16:00 Hrs. Total

Quantity, tender specification

and other terms and condi-

tions is as per tender document

available on the e-tender portal.

Undersigned reserve the right

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dum, Addendum, Extension if

any shall be uploaded only on

the above website. Bidders are

advised to visit the website reg-

ularly for updated information

from time to time. Superintend-

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SDC, 11th floor, Shakti Bha-

wan, Extn. Lucknow.

Notice Online e-Bids

invited for "Supply of

Isolator

wan, Extn. Lucknow.

765/420/245/145kV

suring around 8 bighas, runs into crores of rupees. The Samgara Seva Sangh had bought the land with a token sum in 1959 to establish its office and opened a Gram Swaraj School there to promote Sarvodaya and Gandhian thought and organise conferences and training camps.

Allotment cancelled The Jaipur Development

Authority (JDA) sealed the premises, threw out all the residents and their belongings, cancelled the allotment and took over the land on June 7, 2014. Activists alleged that the JDA wanted to grab the property, convert it into real estate and grant it to land sharks.

Samagra Seva Sangh president Sawai Singh told The Hindu on Wednesday that the sealing of the land and buildings amounted to the BJP's "direct assault" on a civil society institution opposed to its ideology. "The BJP's prejudice is understandable. What is more surprising is that we are not getting justice even in the Congress regime supposedly led by a Gandhian leader," Mr. Singh

Mr. Singh has shot off a letter to Congress president Sonia Gandhi seeking her intervention in the matter. He pointed out that Samagra Seva Sangh had launched the Bhoodan-Gramdan movement and distributed about 6-lakh acre of land to landless villagers in the State.

Ladakh adopts State animal and bird

It's snow leopard, black-necked crane

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR

Ladakh Wednesday on adopted two endangered species, snow leopard and black-necked crane, as State animal and State bird, two years after it was carved out as a separate Union Territory (UT) from the erstwhile State of J&K.

snow leopard "The (Panther unica) and blacknecked crane (Grus nicricollis) shall be the State animal and State bird respectively of the UT of Ladakh from the date of issue of the notification," reads an order issued by the Lieutenant Administration (LG) of Ladakh.

Black-necked crane, only found in Ladakh region, was the State bird of J&K before August 5, 2019.

"Black-necked crane and



A snow leopard. ■ FILE PHOTO

snow leopard are two endangered species and the pride of Ladakh," said Konchok Stanzin, Councillor from the Chushul constituency.

Black-necked cranes, considered loyal couples, are only found in Ladakh's Changthang region.

Snow leopard, whose numbers are dwindling wordwide, has been categorised as "vulnerable" in the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.

Assam providing cash relief only to teachers of RSS-managed schools: SFI

'Govt. discriminating against teachers of pvt., venture schools'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Assam State Committee of the Students' Federation of India (SFI) has slammed the Himanta Biswa Sarma government for providing financial relief to teachers of schools managed only by the Rashtriva Swavamsevak Sangh (RSS)

The SFI's State committee members told journalists on Wednesday that the BJP-led Assam government has taken up a discriminatory policy of providing one-time financial aid of ₹5,000 from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund only to the teachers of Sankaradeva Shishu Niketan, a chain of educational institutions under Vidya Bharati, a private organisation managed by the RSS.

The aid is for minimising



Himanta Biswa Sarma •

financial difficulties faced by lowly-paid private school teachers due to the prolonged COVID-19 restric-

One-time support

"We condemn this biased act and demand extension of this one-time financial support to all teachers of private as well as venture schools," SFI's State general secretary Nirangkush Nath A venture school is a cate-

gory of education institution established by the people of a locality or village prior to January 1, 2006. The SFI said Dr. Sarma

had earlier provided a finan-

cial grant to the Sankaradeva Shishu Niketans for building infrastructure when he was the Education Minister. "The current Education Minister, Ronoj Pegu, said 'no' when our delegation had met him on August 28 to ask if any financial support was being provided to the private schools," SFI's State vicepresident Pratul Barman said.

The act of spending government or public funds for political gain cannot be accepted, the SFI said.

Five die of electrocution in Ghaziabad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GHAZIABAD

Five persons, including three children and a woman, died of electrocution in Sihani Gate area of

Ghaziabad on Wednesday. Shailendra Singh, Additional Deputy Magistrate (City), Ghaziabad, said the incident happened when electricity came in contact with the newly-laid tin shade of a shop in the market on Rakesh Marg.

"The domestic electricity line was going through the tin shade. It seems the wire had a cut. As there was heavy rainfall on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, it seems there was a flow of current into the shade and the adjoining pole that led to the unfortunate incident," Mr. Singh told reporters.

Meghalaya 'scraps' power project post protests

Govt. sought public hearing in April, a year after it was said to have been terminated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Meghalaya government has "scrapped" an agreement with private power developers to execute the proposed 210 MW Umngot hydroelectric project following protests.

But the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of local pressure groups is wary of the "ambiguity" of the announcement, as the government had sought public hearings on the project in April, a year after it was said to have been terminated.

On August 30, Power Minister James Sangma said the project on the Umngot river

was not on the government's capital Shillong. priority list. "We would like to supplement our existing hydropower generation with solar, wind and other renewable sources of energy," he

What planted the seeds of doubt about Umngot was his statement that the government would seek the views of stakeholders if the project was taken up in the future.

stated.

'Statement is ambiguous' "The Power Minister's statement is ambiguous. He did not specifically say if the pro-

ject will be scrapped," JAC

member Treibor Raul Su-

chen told journalists in State

derstanding for the Umngot

dam was signed with the JP Group in 2007 but the government, in 2020, said the project stood terminated. "Yet, the government called for a public hearing

The memorandum of un-

each in East Khasi Hills and West Jaintia Hills district, indicating some other motive. The government should come up with a clear message to the stakeholders opposing the project about its fate," Mr. Suchen said.

Tourism forums have also sought clarity from the government. Meghalaya Tourism Development Forum

(MTDF) president Allan West Kharkongor said, "We shall not entertain any discussions on the views of stakeholders on any future projects on the Umngot as the Power Minister said".

India's clearest river The government had defend-

ed its plan to dam Umngot, arguably India's clearest river. The dam was proposed to have been executed by the cash-strapped Meghalaya **Energy Corporation Limited** at a site in the coal-rich East Jaintia Hills district but more than a dozen villages downstream in the West Khasi Hills district opposed it.



Amit Shah to visit Karnataka today

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is visiting Karnataka on Thursday to attend a string of events in Davangere and Davangere along with Chief Minister Basavarai Bommai and inaugurate 'Gandhi Bhavan'. PTI

Panic after minor gas leak at HPCL Refinery

VISAKHAPATNAM There was a mild flutter at the HPCL-Visakh Refinery after a leak of hydrocarbon vapour was noticed in the plant on Wednesday. The HPCL officials confirmed that there was a small release of hydrocarbon vapour during the equipment handover activity in the Merox unit. There was no injury or damage, a release said.

Matrimonial racket busted, three arrested

HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda Cyber Crime police arrested two Nigerians and one person from Ivory Coast for allegedly cheating people on the pretext of marriage. Police said that the accused used to chat with victims, propose, and then call them from the airport claiming to have been stopped for carrying cheques. One woman was cheated to the tune of ₹26.30 lakh.

Kerala increases plus one seats in seven districts

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Cabinet on Wednesday increased Plus One seats in higher secondary schools in seven districts by 20% to ensure that students who cleared the SSLC examination did not miss out on admission. The districts eligible for more seats are Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod

Telangana walks out of KRMB meeting

Board turns down State's plea for power generation at Srisailam

N. RAHUL

Telangana on Wednesday staged a walkout from the meeting of the Krishna River Management Board (KRMB) after it refused to concede the State government's plea to be allowed to generate power at the Srisailam hydel station.

During the heated arguments at the meeting presided by M.P. Singh, Special Chief Secretary of Irrigation of Telangana Rajat Kumar said the State generated power at Srisailam only to evacuate water from the reservoir to meet its irrigation and drinking water requirements from Nagarjunasagar downstream.

The water was anyway getting stored at Nagarjunasagar and also meeting the needs of the Krishna delta

He said there was no other way for Telangana but step up power generation to meet its large requirement for its lift irrigation schemes. Telangana was largely dependent on its lift irrigation because geographically it was on a higher plateau and the rivers flowed at a lower level.

Mr. Kumar questioned the rationale of the board in stopping Telangana from generation at Srisailam.

The board decided to retain water sharing between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the ratio of 66:34. It also did not concede the request of Telangana that the unutilised share of the State in its water allocation for a year be carried forward to next year. The State did not



Telangana Special Chief Secretary Rajat Kumar arriving for the KRMB meeting in Hyderabad on Wednesday. • NAGARA GOPAL

use 45 tmc ft in 2020-21 and 50 tmc ft in 2019-20.

Another request of Telangana that did not find favour with the board was the surplus water, over and above 811 tmc ft, which was the allocation for the combined State, be accounted. Telangana insisted on accounting the surplus water as Andhra Pradesh was diverting a huge quantum during flooding from the Pothireddypadu

head regulator.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana shared 811 tmc ft in the ratio of 512:299 tmc ft. Telangana argued that the agreement was temporarily fixed for 2015-16. But, the board was not convinced.

Mr. Kumar argued that Telangana wanted the ratio revised to 50:50 till an award was delivered by the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal - II. This was because the State's

requirement increased considerably after the completion of Kalwakurthi, Nettemand Bheema lift-irrigation projects. They served the entire ayacut of these projects.

The demand for water sharing in the ratio of 70:30 mooted by A.P. was turned down by Telangana.

Telangana was also represented by its Engineer-in-Chief of irrigation C. Muralidhar and Chief Engineer of Inter-State River Water (ISRW) division Mohan Kumar. Andhra Pradesh's Principal Irrigation Secretary Shamal Rao, ENC Narayan Reddy and ISRW Chief Engineer Srinivas Reddy were present. Later, the two sides attended the joint meeting of Krishna and Godavari river management boards on the recent gazette notification of the Centre on the scope of the boards.

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Konkan & Goa, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Vidarbha, Yanam and Karaikal

ITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY
gartala	9	32.4	25.4	Kozhikode
hmedabad	9	34.0	26.2	Kurnool
izawl	. 77.2	–	19.1	Lucknow
llahabad	–	36.0	27.2	Madurai
engaluru	–	29.4	20.9	Mangaluru
hopal	. 27.7	31.0	23.6	Mumbai
hubaneswar	. 30.3	34.2	25.5	Mysuru
handigarh	–	32.2	25.0	New Delhi
hennai	–	33.2	27.5	Patna
oimbatore	0.3	32.8	23.4	Port Blair
ehradun	0.2	27.8	24.4	Puducherry
angtok	7	20.7	17.7	Pune
oa	41	29.8	23.4	Raipur
uwahati	–	34.0	26.1	Ranchi
ubballi	–	28.0	21.0	Shillong
yderabad				Shimla
nphal	–	29.2	22.0	Srinagar
aipur	. 11.8	30.6	24.0	Thiruvananthapuram.
ochi	3	29.8	25.4	Tiruchi
ohima				Vijayawada
olkata				Vicakhanatnam

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

. 4....30.0....20.0

4.00 p.m., Nandesari, Gujarat recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 196 indicating a pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI

 $Visakhapatnam \quad .17 \quad .41 \quad .28 \quad ... \ 33 \quad ... 64$ Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI) 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

. 100

... 49 .296

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 prematur death in people with heart or lung disease

National Monetisation Pipeline will lead to lay-offs: Sachin Pilot

Lessee would focus only on profits, says Congress leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Congress leader and former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot has argued that the Centre's National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) will lead to more layoffs by private firms and increase unemployment in the

Speaking to mediapersons at the party office in Bengaluru on Wednesday, Mr. Pilot said private companies who obtain infrastructure assets of the Central government on lease would not retain the same employees or even the same number of employees. With the intention of making a



Sachin Pilot

profit, they would lay-off staff in public sector companies, he argued.

The Centre has announced leasing infrastructure assets under a ₹6 trillion NMP while retaining ownership. Mr. Pilot said the Centre announced the NMP without consultation or discussion in Parliament. "Nobody knows what

would be the condition of these assets after the completion of the lease period," he said. He alleged that the government was entering into agreements with crony capitalists. As part of a nationwide plan, the Congress has decided to create awareness on the NMP and launch protests against the Narendra Modi-led government, Mr. Pilot said.

On expansion of the Ashok Gehlot-led Cabinet at Rajasthan, Mr. Pilot said the party high command would

Probe panel gives Kerala's Sprinklr deal a clean chit

No loss of money; Sivasankar cleared

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A government inquiry has cleared Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former Principal Secretary M. Sivasankar of the charge of mala fide abuse of position in the engagement of U.S.-based big data firm Sprinklr ostensibly to forecast the pandemic pattern in the initial days of the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020.

A panel headed by former Law Secretary and District Judge K. Sasidharan Nair found no "evil design, malice or bad faith" in the Sprinklr deal. There was no data loss or loss to the public exchequer either.

The panel faulted Mr. Sivasankar for keeping the



M. Sivasankar

Law, Finance and Health Departments in the dark about the nature of the government's engagement with Sprinklr. He should have sought prior consent of the departments. Mr. Sivasankar also did not adhere to a security protocol for the transfer and storage of sensitive data, the panel

14-day judicial

Armaan Kohli

custody for

Maharashtra records 4,456 fresh cases

State reports 4,430 recoveries, 183 deaths; spike of over 1,100 infections in Pune district

STAFF REPORTER

Maharashtra on Wednesday reported 4,430 recoveries against a surge of 4,456 CO-VID-19 cases. The see-sawing of temporary case spikes and recoveries saw the active case tally rise to 51,078. A high death toll of 183

took the State's cumulative fatalities to 1,37,496. The case fatality rate remains constant at 2.12%. The total have reached 64,69,332, while cumulative recoveries have risen to 62,77,230, with the recovery rate rising to 97.03%.

"Of 5,41,54,890 laboratory samples tested thus far, 64,69,332 (with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 12.01%) have returned positive, with more than 1.78 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," said State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate.

Pune reported over 1,100 new cases, taking its total cases to 11,20,093, while 56 deaths pushed the total toll over 18,690. As per district authorities, the active case tally has crossed 9,300. The Pune Municipal Corporation



market at Kandivali in Mumbai on Wednesday. • PTI

has directed hospitals in the city to reserve 50% of the beds for the exclusive treatment of COVID-19 patients, of which 10% are to be reserved for children.

415 cases in Mumbai

Mumbai reported 415 new cases to take its total case tally to 7,44,570, while the active case tally rose incrementally to 3,602. Four deaths took the city's toll to 15,981.

reported Ahmednagar 676 new cases and six deaths, taking its total cases to 3,09,868, of whom 5,655 are active. The district's

cumulative death toll rose to 6,544. Satara reported 548 new cases and 19 deaths, taking the total tally to 2,39,214, of whom 5,979 are active, while the toll rose to 6,023.

Neighbouring Sangli reported 250 new cases and eight deaths. The total case tally stands at 2,02,176, with active cases declining to 3,562, while its toll reached 5,490. Kolhapur district reported 99 new cases and 13 deaths, taking its total case tally to 2,04,102. The active cases have now dipped to 1,301. The cumulative death toll now stands at 5,802.

Maharashtra Cabinet approves PPP policy

head deck tag with 14 point

PUNE In a bid to ramp up Maharashtra's health infrastructure, State Medical Education Minister

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

Amit Deshmukh on Wednesday informed that the State Cabinet had approved a scheme under a public-private partnership policy to establish eight more government medical colleges and intensive care hospitals in the State

Currently, there are 18 government medical colleges and hospitals functioning in the State while eight more are in the pipeline.

'The move will greatly shore up the infrastructure in those areas where government medical colleges are absent. This deficit, which has been

brought to the fore by the pandemic, will now be rectified," Mr. Deshmukh

He said that the project to open new medical colleges would also ensure that vacancies in the medical field would be filled.

"The main objective of all the upcoming medical colleges, which would be equipped with all modern facilities, is to provide quality education and medical services to the people expeditiously," remarked Mr. Deshmukh.

He also said that while it was not possible to say with any certainty when or if a 'third wave' of the Covid-19 pandemic would strike, preparations to manage a medical crisis were in full swing.

Earlier, Mr. Deshmukh

Raj Thackeray meets injured civic official

MNS chief says party will take on illegal hawkers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray on Wednesday said the growing "courage" of illegal hawkers needs to be crushed after he met Thane civic official Kalpita Pimple, who was injured in an attack by a street vendor during an anti-encroachment drive.

Ms. Pimple, the assistant municipal commissioner of Majiwada-Manpada area in Thane, lost three of her fingers and received head injuries when a hawker stabbed her with a knife at Kasarvadavali junction on Monday

VIJAYA BANK

the health of Ms. Pimple. He appreciated the courage shown by her and wished her a speedy recovery. Later talking to media

persons at the hospital, Mr. Thackeray, whose party MNS is known for pursuing the sons-of-the-soil agenda, said in Marathi that he felt sad over the incident. "But at the same time, such tendencies are getting strengthened". MNS's fight against illegal hawkers will continue... such 'himmat' of these forces should be

crushed," he added. Mr. Thackeray said he discussed the issue with senior police officers. "Police are doing their job. We hope a strict punishment will be given to the accused. The court is also doing its work,"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A Mumbai court on Wednesday sent Bollywood actor Armaan Kohli, arrested in a drugs case, to 14-day judicial remand. Mr. Kohli, soon after being remanded in judicial custody, moved a bail plea before the court.

The actor was arrested on August 28 after being questioned by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) following recovery of drug from his house in Juhu. He was produced before the court at the end of his NCB custody on Wednesday.

The court sent the 49year-old actor to jail under judicial custody as no further remand was sought by the central agency.

Earlier, the NCB had told the court that it had seized more than one gram of cocaine from the actor's resi-

DENA BANK

Saira Banu doing fine after hospitalisation

Actor likely to be discharged soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Veteran actor Saira Banu (77) is doing well now after she was admitted to the intensive care unit of Hinduja Hospital three days ago following complaints of low blood pressure, a hospital official said on Wednesday.

"She is fine and much

to worry about," the official said, adding that he had spoken to her on Tuesday. He said the hospital is not

better now. There's nothing

a COVID-19 facility. The actor had tested negative for COVID-19, but was isolated as a norm in the wake of the pandemic. She is likely to be discharged in a day or two.

Ganeshotsav: negative RT-PCR test report must for travel to Raigad Mumbai-Goa cinated. "Against the back-

highway to be repaired on priority

RAINA ASSAINAR

Ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi, Raigad Guardian Minister Aditi Tatkare has said that travellers to the district must carry a negative RT-PCR report if they are not fully vac-

drop of a possible third wave of the pandemic, let us celebrate Ganeshotsav by following COVID-19 norms. For the safety of all, it is best to get vaccinated. Detailed guidelines will be framed in the coming days," she said.

In a review meeting with

the district administration,

Ms. Tatkare assigned officers

to repair the damaged Mum-

bai-Goa highway on priority. She also directed that all pending works be completed before the festival. "There are many heading

towards the Konkan region for Ganeshotsav. For smooth movement of traffic, the authorities concerned have been asked to repair roads immediately, especially the Mumbai-Goa highway," Ms. Tatkare said.

during the drive. Her securhe added. The accused, ity guard was also injured. Amar Yadav, who later Mr. Thackeray visited the threatened to commit suihospital and enquired about

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable pro

🎖 बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interes (Inforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement)Rules. 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the borrower(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice. The Borrower(s) /Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) having failed to repay the amount. Notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) /Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF BARODA for the amount stated herein below and further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section13 of the Act, in respect of time, available

to redeem the secured assets Branch / Name of Borrowers/ Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession / Amount Outstanding

Branch: Daudnagar Aurangabac M/s J G D Automobiles Prop:Shri Laxman Prasad S/o Sri Rameshwar Singh Kumar **Demand Notice**:10.06.2021

Date of Possession: 27.08.2021
Amount: Rs.25,51,160.50 (Rupees Twenty five Lac fifty one Thousand One Hundred sixty and Paise fifty only) as on 31.05.2021 + Int. Charges & Expenses

Date: 01/09/2021

Place: Daudnagar

Description of the Immovable Property/ies charged to Bank of Baroda

All that part and parcel of the property A) land of khata No. 67, plot no 829 thana no 75 Area 1 decimal, Situated at Mauza Bhakharua Thana Daudnagar, Dist-Aurangabad, Boundary-North-Road, South-Yadu Tiwari, East-Niz Vendee, West-Suresh Prasad
B) land of khata No. 341, plot no 828 thana no 75 Area 1 decimal, Situated

Mauza Bhakharua Thana - Daudnagar, Dist- Aurangabad **Boundary** orth-Road, South-NIZ Vendee, East-Sijatan Pandey, West-Saraswati Devi C) land of khata No. 341, plot no 826 thana no 75 Area 5 decimal, Situated at Mauza Bhakharua Thana Daudnagar dist Aurangabad Boundary-North-Vendee, South-Ramashish Tiwari, East-Vendee, **Authorised Officer**

Bank of Baroda

Fleeting cheer

Fiscal measures should ensure overall consumption demand does not weaken

The latest GDP estimates expectedly show that national output rebounded in Q1 of the current fiscal from the record contraction in April-June 2020, when the pandemic's onset and the lockdown gutted the economy. National Statistical Office data show GDP expanded 20.1% from a year earlier, as every one of the eight industries spanning the broad agriculture, manufacturing and services categories posted positive growth. And gross value added, which aggregates output from all the eight sectors, grew by 18.8%. The numbers, however, show a different picture when compared with either the preceding quarter or the prepandemic first quarter of fiscal 2019-20. GDP at constant prices was estimated at ₹32.38-lakh crore, a 16.9% contraction from January-March's ₹38.96-lakh crore and more than 9% shy of the ₹35.66-lakh crore in April-June 2019. That the second COVID-19 wave extracted a significant toll is evident. With the exceptions of electricity and other utility services and the non-contact intensive services grouping of financial, real estate and professional services, all other six industries posted double-digit quarter-on-quarter contractions. On the expenditures front, private consumption spending flattered to deceive, posting year-on-year growth of 19.3% but still shrinking by 17.4% from the preceding three months. And most disconcertingly, government consumption expenditure, which has invariably in the past helped shore up the economy, contracted 4.8% from a year earlier and 7.6% from the previous quarter.

Looking ahead rather than in the rear-view mirror, there have been signs of some traction in the current quarter as most States have gradually eased their localised second wave restrictions. Exports have been one of the bright spots as the U.S. and other western economies have ramped up vaccinations and posted economic recoveries that have underpinned demand for goods and services from India. And manufacturing has surged almost 50% year-on-year to be just under ₹24,000 crore short of the April-June 2019 output level. A fact borne out by the Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index from IHS Markit, whose August release shows the sector experienced a second straight month of increase in production, albeit at a slower pace than July. Still, the same PMI survey also points to the challenges ahead. Rising raw material costs have been forcing manufacturers to either absorb the impact or raise prices, as several automakers have done, risking the prospect of dampening the already tenuous demand. And lingering uncertainty has led companies to yet again freeze hiring, according to IHS Markit. With monsoon rains in deficit, agricultural output and wider rural consumption also face a likely downturn. Policy makers must remain laser focused on expediting vaccination coverage and taking fiscal measures to ensure overall consumption demand does not weaken any further.

For a bona fide press

HC order for weeding out 'fake journalists' is well-intentioned, but needs wide consultation

In directing the State government to establish a 'Press' Council of Tamil Nadu' within three months, the Ma-▲ dras High Court has come close to formulating policy and legislation. Its direction amounts to creating a body and clothing it with powers and functions, something that is normally done by law and after wider consultations. There is no doubt that it is a well-intentioned order that seeks to address problems arising from the dubious activities of 'fake journalists'. In fact, the directives may constitute a remedy to the maladies highlighted by the Division Bench in its recent verdict, but it is quite surprising that such a far-reaching measure has sought to be created by judicial direction while disposing of public interest litigation somewhat unrelated to the case at hand. The original case initiated by a man claiming to be a journalist contained some allegations against the special team investigating theft of idols from various temples. It was disposed of with a direction to the Idol Wing CID to proceed with the investigation in accordance with the law. As there was suspicion over the petitioner's credentials, the Bench has proceeded to address the larger problem of imposters masquerading as journalists for personal enrichment.

The issues highlighted by the Bench are quite real and need remedial measures. Some people claiming to be journalists do run letter-pad publications, or even print some copies of obscure journals, but devote much of their time to using "connections" to wangle benefits and gifts, try and swing transfers and postings; or be fronts for vested interests. Broadly, the court wants a State-level 'Press Council' to weed out 'fake journalists', regulate the distribution of identity and accreditation cards and the recognition of media bodies, besides receiving and disposing of complaints about the media. As of now, the Press Council of India performs the watchdog role about public complaints, but without any substantive enforcement powers. Accreditation and dealing with journalist bodies are now the functions of the respective governments. A powerful body that will identify and accredit journalists, decide their entitlements to bus and rail passes and welfare measures, as well as act as a complaints authority will surely need a statutory framework. Besides, a separate body created by executive order may act over-zealously and end up eliminating bona fide journalists. As 'newspapers, books and printing presses' are in the Concurrent List, the State government needs to examine if the field is occupied by central legislation, and whether it can create a watchdog body, as suggested by the court, encompassing all forms of media. It may have to weigh its options carefully, including an appeal.

The prognosis for school reopenings

A model shows that a rise in cases in children could occur, but in-person schooling can proceed with caution

BRIAN WAHL, SANDEEP KRISHNA

¬ chools began opening in a phased manner across several Indian States on September 1. These include the States of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, Schools for senior students have already been open for the past few weeks in a few States

Debates around when to open schools in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic have been divisive, and not just in India. These have focused on the balance between minimising the risk of disease for children and their family members, and maximising in-person schooling. The arguments have largely reflected the biases of those with strongly held points of view on both sides.

Mathematical models

With schools opening across India, will we observe an increase in cases in school children? Could this lead to another peak in overall cases as children bring infections back home? We addressed these questions using a mathematical model, presenting our findings (the meeting was in-camera) to an expert group of the World Health Organization this week.

How did our model address this question? Our model describes schools embedded within communities, that comprised families of different sizes. If schools are open, children move between their homes and schools. Children stay at home if schools are closed. Adults go to work at assigned workplaces or stay at home. The distribution of ages in the community is based on the age structure of the population in a typical mid-sized Indian city.

We describe the spread of CO-VID-19 from person to person, ac-

counting for reductions in this rate from non-pharmaceutical interventions including masking. We account for a level of prior infection in the community, as measured by serological surveys that look for antibodies for COVID-19. Our model accounts for the possibilities of asymptomatic, mild and severe disease, as well as hospitalisations and deaths. These vary across different age groups. We allow two doses of vaccinations, separated by 90 days, as well as the possibility of breakthrough infections, where the immunity granted by vaccines is breached. We incorporate what is currently known about the protection provided by vaccines against mild and severe disease. Our model reflects the current state of the epidemic in India at the moment. We start with children at home and then study how cases spread in children and in adults when schools

Findings of the model

Based on our model, an increase in cases in children is expected as schools are opened, relative to keeping them closed. However, this does not lead to a new wave under the current epidemic conditions in India. Specifically, in regions with the levels of seroprevalence expected across much of north India, we expect this increase in cases to be marginal. Children are at lower risk of severe disease associated with COVID-19 - very few of these infections are likely to lead to complications.

We can further restrict any increase in infections among children by ramping up immunisation in older age groups and by continuing non-pharmaceutical interventions, including requiring face masks, improving ventilation,

venues, and increasing the number of students attending school slowly over a period of several weeks. Such interventions should be continued until we achieve an overall seroprevalence of 75%-80%, adding numbers from recent infections and from vaccinations. Beyond this point, we find that these measures make little difference. We found that opening schools was not likely to contribute to an increase in cases among older individuals.

A typical Indian community considering whether to open schools should be on the downswing of the pandemic or past it in terms of having sufficient numbers of those who are – at least for the time being – relatively immune to the disease since they have been recently infected. Roughly speaking, this corresponds to about 45% seropositivity to begin, in the absence of vaccinations. Adding vaccinations on top of that cushions any sharp rise in cases, especially if combined with COVID-19 nonpharmaceutical interventions.

Interpreting the results

Much of India has encountered COVID-19, particularly the Delta variant. Some have been reinfected by it. Seropositivity levels in children are comparable to those in adults - keeping children at home has not served the purpose of keeping them from becoming portance has been insufficiently stressed: if children are as likely to pick up an infection from the community while staying at home, there is little reason to keep them out of school.

More than 60% of the vulnerable population have been given one dose of vaccine; in some cases, two doses. There is a case for prioritising the vaccination of family members, especially elderly ones, of school-going children as well as of teachers and other school staff. We see the advantages of this in our model simulations.

We stress that a rise in cases could occur once schools are opened. Indeed, children who show symptoms after testing positive should be screened for potentially more severe versions of the disease. However, the number of severe cases in children is very small since children are better protected against disease than adults.

With COVID-19 and schools, the trade-off is between the long-term consequences of disruptions in learning and socialisation in children and the short-term possibility of their contracting an infection. Finding the right balance between these two factors is crucial. Given the state of the Indian epidemic as well as the likely possibility that COVID-19 will transition into endemicity, there seems to be little reason to continue to have schools closed. This should be true especially in States and communities where seropositivity is in excess of 80%.

State-specific approach

For low seropositivity States such as Kerala and Maharashtra, a better understanding of the current fraction of the population that has antibodies, either from prior infection or from vaccination, would

vel, we see no reason why they should not also reopen. It remains important to continue studying the spread of COVID-19 over the next six months to understand how quickly immunity due to prior infection wanes over time.

Actions called for

Our simulations do not include testing and tracing, although this is one way of keeping any increase in cases in check; nor does it include the possibility of new variants. The possibility of random testing of schoolchildren at regular intervals has been raised. We favour, instead, local decisions to close schools if test positivity in the community exceeds a preset bound, since children seem to be acquiring the infection in their communities at the same rate at which adults acquire them.

While models are imperfect guides to the future, especially because they must make assumptions about human and virus behaviour, they often provide useful intuition. Comparisons to other countries are not particularly helpful, since each country's situation with respect to the disease is different. The recent uptick in vaccination numbers is encouraging and should hopefully be sustained in the coming weeks. This will help in ensuring that children can return to school. For this, we need not wait until vaccines for children are available.

Brian Wahl is an Assistant Scientist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, U.S. Sandeep Krishna is an Associate Professor at the Simons Centre for the Study of Living Machines, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru. Gautam I. Menon is a Professor at Ashoka University, Sonepat and at the Institute of views expressed here are personal

Where liberalism and nationalism are placed in Asia

India and China have used the present world system to fashion their rise, with no alternative based on Asian nationalism



KRISHNAN SRINIVASAN

iberalism and nationalism mean different things to different people, and the two concepts are often considered mutually exclusive. Over 70 years after Indian independence, it is claimed that their empire rested on liberal foundations and the transfer of power to nationalists evidenced this claim. But liberalism often clashed with anti-colonial nationalism; the greatest material support to anti-colonial movements during the Cold War came from the illiberal Soviet Un-

A 'cause' of war

After the rise of the nation state, wars were attributed to the power and expansionist policies of nations. In Europe, nations were in almost constant conflict, and Japanese nationalism led to wars, particularly with China. In the early period of the last century, nationalism was regarded as the root cause of war, but this was an oversimplification, since many, especially Marxists, would argue that capitalism, which led to colonialism, was equally if not mainly res-

ponsible. In Europe, as the national idea spread, it became ethnic-oriented and increasingly illiberal, with an exception being Giuseppe Mazzini's nationalist ac-

The early decades

Before Indian independence, nationalism was regarded with suspicion; Rabindranath Tagore had considered it a malign ideology, making a subtle distinction between the Nation of the West, which he critiqued as a mechanithe West representing Enlightenment values of internationalism and universalism. There were alternative strands of thinking; Vinavak Damodar Savarkar contrasted his espousal of Hindutva nationalism with Buddha's universalism, the latter's non-violence being regarded by him as weakening Indian patriotism, since "Buddhism had its centre of gravity nowhere"

Jawaharlal Nehru saw merit in nationalism as the focus of the Independence movement. In 1950, he asserted that "the strongest urge in Asia ...is the anti-colonial urge and the positive side of it is nationalism", and in 1953, "nationalism has been and is a very good thing. It has been a great liberating force in certain stages of a country's history". Yet, he feared that extreme nationalism among colonised peoples could degenerate into fascism and expansionism.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party's dogma harks back to the thinking of Savarkar and M.S. Golral nationalism and attempting an impossible balance between the projection of hard power and promotion of peace. Nationalism may take various forms but essentially, it is about collective identity, whereas liberalism implies the defence of individual freedom and self-determination, the state's role being to protect the private sphere. In practice, liberalism has advantages and disadvantages; it can underpin universal rights and Adam Smith's natural laws of economics. but its appeal is mainly to the professional educated class, and lacks nationalism's emotional appeal.

Asian democracy

Asian politics are politically conservative when the economy is booming, shown by lengthy autocratic governments in China, Singapore and Vietnam, whereas the Asian financial crisis of 1997 led to a democratic impulse in Taiwan, Indonesia, South Korea, and intermittently in Thailand. Democracy in Asia is not shaped by the liberalism of the West; the centrality of civil and political rights is less dogmatic and a degree of state intervention considered acceptable when it comes to individual auto-

The liberal tradition contributes the ideas underlying the post-Second World War international system, embracing democracy, free trade, international law, multilateralism, environmental protection and human rights Drobl when such ideas become a doctrine for nation-building irrespective of context, with western intervention in the developing world and its consequences of turmoil and Islamist extremism and terror. The current example of Afghanistan is a case in point.

Power hierarchy

Liberalism is now attacked in the West by both the far-right populism illustrated by former U.S. President Donald Trump, and the left represented by such as Senator Bernie Sanders who regard the global situation as the neo-liberal preserve of the rich and powerful. Despite American diplomatic rhetoric, there never has been a community of mutually supportive liberal democracies. International relations are conducted at the axial point of an egalitarian order of law and a hierarchical order of power: the United Nations repre-

sents this tension in the differing principles on which the Security Council and General Assembly are based. This is why the reform of the UN to include India, Japan, Germany and a few others as permanent members of the Security Council proves so difficult to

In a future Asia How will nationalism and liberal-

ism be reflected in a future Asia? Both India and China were at the receiving end of western imperialprinciples of international society reflected in the Panchsheel, namely sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. This implies rejection of western efforts to qualify sovereignty by making it dependent on human rights protection. The Non-Aligned Movement and Afro-Asianism were efforts to project a soft power model, but soon China, India and Pakistan joined the nuclear weapons club of hard power. The two leading Asian nations, India and China, used the present world system to fashion their rise while protesting against the control of the United Nations and world financial institutions but have not formulated any alternative based on Asian nationalism. Their current rivalry makes such a desirable outcome a remote prospect.

Krishnan Srinivasan is a former Foreign

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.

Vaccination drive

The Editorial, "The virtue of consistency" (August 31), on India's vaccination coverage, has justifiably emphasised the point about maintaining consistency rather than going to town with the achievement of a 'momentous feat'. There is also another issue: scepticism about these numbers, as the 'cooking up of data' is well known. My recent experience with a well-publicised house-to-house survey and affixing

vaccination-completion stickers - undertaken by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation – shows that the reported vaccination coverage is not completely correct. I was surprised to see one such label on the gate of my house without anyone having made an enquiry with any member of the

household. I was shocked to see a sticker on the locked gate of my neighbour, when his mother and him did not receive even a single dose. It is no wonder then that despite claims of more than half the eligible population having been vaccinated. some States continue to record high cases. K. VIJAYARAGHAVAN, Hyderabad

■ The vaccination drive may be reaching a certain milestone, but we must not let our guard down. We must understand that while vaccination can reduce the severity of COVID-19, it cannot protect us from being infected. It is getting hard to be patient but venting frustration by neglecting safety measures is only going to extend this pandemic. Let us not forget the deep losses we incurred during the

second COVID-19 wave. HARSHITHA GADDE, Hosur, Tamil Nadu

Notes on schooling It is imperative that schools

should open and physical classes are conducted. All parents and guardians do agree that children need school for more than one reason. However, one major question remains: how prepared are schools? And how hygienic and clean are they? Teachers more often than not cannot control children beyond a certain level. As a guardian of young children, I have visited a few of the so-called better schools only to find many amenities in a sorry state. The facilities provided are not in consonance with the fees collected. From now on, teaching

methods, examination

have to be of a different

patterns and pedagogy skills

should not be the criteria. JAYA,

Is this restoration? should not forget that mourning and of deep, of the Bagh itself is a there. To make structural 'revamp' is baffling and moving place of memory (Inside pages, "This is August 31). What a shame. BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE,

■ The history and events at

carving murals on the oriented and pushing the idea of getting students to narrow entrance and the next grade cannot and victims jumped with a and ignorant behaviour. erasing history. A visitor

The government of the day Jallianwala Bagh is a place of abiding grief. The starkness reminder of what happened modifications by calling it a destroys a very sombre and renovation, not restoration',"

quality. Just being exam

Jallianwala Bagh still send shivers down one's spine.

covering the well into which transparent barrier sheet, only highlight carelessness These have only ended up must experience grief, but this will not be the case now. SUKHJEET KAUR,

Flawed decisions such as

■ If what historians say is true, then it is unfortunate that the new-look Jallianwala Bagh memorial now presents a distortion of history. A place where innocent Indians were murdered cannot be made to resemble an amusement park. Future generations that visit the historic place will not have the faintest idea now of how the place looked like in 1919.. Jallianwala Bagh is no Eiffel Tower or the Niagara Falls.

Every single historic site

must be preserved and care

taken without the minutest

misrepresentation of what it is known for. SANATH KUMAR T.S.,

Thrissur, Kerala

Inclusive travel

The point in the report, "Accessibility in public transport still elusive for disabled persons" (Chennai, September 1), is right; that the focus should be on inclusivity right from the design stages. Does this endeavour have to be a battle though? Senior employees of the transport corporations and political leaders should try to use transport, perhaps in wheelchairs, to understand first hand what the problems are. It is, after all, public transport. RENU WEISS, Chennai



India must commit to net zero emissions

The country will need to take a stand on climate change action or risk being cast globally as an outlier



India is at the risk of being cast globally as an outlier on climate action, with a negative fallout. With over 50% of the global economy already committed to net zero emissions by 2050 – and China committing to be so before 2060 - this is not where vou want to be.

The pace and scale of climate action is only set to increase, with the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report unequivocal on the need for urgent and stronger responses. Events around the world underline the point towns washed away in Germany, subways turned into storm water drains in China, forests fried in the United States and so many more lives lost to flooding in India.

Massive opportunities

It is not only governments that are increasing climate action. The business world is too, not just to protect themselves against the risks of climate change but also to take advantage of the massive opportunities arising as the global economy shifts to net zero emissions. Last year, investors injected over \$500 billion into climate transition. In my country, Australia, the number of major companies that have put in place a target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050 has more than trebled in the past year.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November in Glasgow is shaping up to be the most important climate meeting since the Paris Agreement in 2015. It is squarely focused on supercharging global ambition and action on climate change, as all countries, including India, agreed to do in the historic Paris Agreement.

Over 100 countries have already committed to net zero emissions by 2050, with more expected at COP26. Two key holdouts are India and Australia. In the case of my country, under mounting pressure at home and internationally, the government is moving toward such an announcement and I am confident they will do



so by or at COP26.

I am not so confident about India. From what I hear through networks from my time as the Australian High Commissioner to India and as Australia's Ambassador for the Environment, India is resolutely not committing to net zero by 2050, including on the basis that as a developing country, it needs to see significant support from developed countries for climate action as part of making any such commitment.

Perhaps this is negotiating tactics. Either way, I fear India may shoot itself in the foot by resisting net zero

First, India itself has a national interest in ambitious global and national climate action. Like Australia, it is among the most vulnerable countries to climate change and, therefore, should be among the more active against the threats. India faces harmful impacts related to sea level rise, heat stress, drought, water stress and flooding, biodiversity and natural disasters. Climate change is not coming – it is here.

Second, as a rising power, India naturally seeks stronger influence globally. Being an outlier on the global challenge facing our generation does not support this aim. India is already the third largest emitter in the world, and is set to be the largest as the United States, China, and the European Union are all now signed up

This will become a significant drag on India's international diplomacy. This applies not just to key relationships like with the U.S., where President Joe Biden's administration is mainstreaming climate action into its economic, foreign and security policy, but also with much of the Group

of 77 (G77) states, who are increasingly concerned to see climate action, and in multilateral groupings such as the United Nations and

No longer a trade-off

Finally, as the famous phrase goes, "it's the economy, stupid". There is no longer a trade-off between reducing emissions and economic growth. Solar energy costs have fallen 90% in recent years, providing the cheapest electricity in India ever seen. Also, given the negative impacts, addressing climate change in India's economic development is now central to success, not an added luxury to consider. For example, agricultural policy that does not consider adaptive approaches to maximise productivity in the face of increased flooding and drought due to climate change is

The transition of the global economy to net zero emissions is the biggest commercial opportunity in history. In just the energy sector alone, an estimated \$1.6 to \$3.8 trillion of investment is required every year until 2050. China gets this, which is why it is investing heavily in gaining an advantage in the technologies of the new economy, be it renewable energy and storage, electric and hydrogen transport, low emissions industry, green cities or sustainable agriculture.

It is not as if India is at a standing start. It is set to significantly exceed its Paris Agreement commitment of reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33-35% below 2005 levels by 2030, providing ready room for higher ambition. India is impressing the world with its leading roll-out of renewable energy and target for 450GW by 2030, linked to its leadership on the International Solar Alliance and recent national hydrogen strategy. Indian corporates are also stepping up, with the Tata Group winning awards on sustainability, Mahindra committing to net zero by 2040 and Reliance by 2035. There is plenty on which to build.

And India should not be expected to build alone. India's national interests on climate action are now engaged in ways that go significantly beyond waiting for donor support to drive ambition, notwithstanding reasonable arguments about historical responsibility, per capita emissions and equity. With growing wealth and stature, India is increasingly disinclined toward handouts. But that does not mean well-targeted donor investments and international partnerships should not be a factor in raising India's climate ambition.

This could come in many guises, from stronger political engagement and dialogue to policy support in areas of mutual challenge such as energy policy, carbon markets and post-COVID green economic recovery. Practical support and cooperation in areas like rolling out renewable energy and integrating it with the national grid, zero emissions transport, decarbonising hard to abate sectors like steel, cement and chemicals and decarbonising agriculture offer significant scope to raise ambition. As does working with India on innovative green financing for decarbonising investments, including using donor support to mobilise private sector finance, green bonds and climate transition funds. Whichever it is, they need to be lasting partnerships that deliver results.

Yet, in the end, India's tryst with destiny rests in its own remarkable hands, as it always has been. In a land where the earth is called mother, and Mahatma Gandhi, major religions and the Constitution enshrine environmental care, commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 should almost be foretold. The world hopes we will see it soon.

Patrick Suckling was Australia's High Commissioner to India and Ambassador for the Environment. He is a senior fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI) and senior partner in Pollination, a specialist climate advisory and investment firm. This oped draws from his recent paper for ASPI on Catalysing India's Climate Ambition

Gauging household income key for microfinance clients

An assessment of cash inflows can avoid over-indebtedness



PRIYADARSHINI GANESAN & MISHA SHARMA

The microfinance movement in India is set to receive another dose of impetus with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recently released Consultative Document on Regulation of Microfinance in June 2021. Following the Malegam Committee Report, which is a decade old now, the current document looks to reassess the priorities of the sector.

Some of the key regulatory changes proposed in the document takes household income as a critical variable for loan assessment. The definition of microfinance itself is proposed to mean collateral-free loans to households with annual household incomes of up to ₹1,25,000 and ₹2,00,000 for rural and urban areas respectively. The document requires all Regulated Entities to have a board-approved policy for household income assessment. Moreover, it caps loan repayment (principal and interest) for all outstanding loans of the household at 50% of household income. Given the importance accorded to household income, measuring this accurately becomes critical for effective implementation of these norms.

An elusive figure

Household income, however, is an elusive figure. With a high degree of informality in our economy, income streams, especially for non-salaried workers, tend to be erratic in time and volatile in volume. Low-Income Households (LIHs), who typically form the customer base for Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), often also have seasonal and volatile income flows. An agricultural worker earns the most during the sowing seasons; households with migrant workers who migrate to the city for certain months of the year see an income peak during those months; and a flower vendor near a temple sees an income increase during festivals. These highs are also contrasted by lows during certain lean seasons when remunerative work is unavailable (drought), during growing season (before harvest) or general lull times.

Since income for LIHs are seasonal and volatile, there have been attempts to understand their inflows by measuring their expenditure. But, given the rotational debts they avail, expenditure also does not truly

reflect the household's income. Moreover, for most LIHs, their expenditure on incomerelated activity is not separate from their personal expenses. Ask a farmer what their profit was during the last season and you would likely be told the market price they got for the produce. It is difficult to separate the household's personal expenses from that of their occupational pursuits.

In spite of the complexity in assessing household income for a typical microfinance client, creative ways to capture accurate data about household-level cash flows could be devised. Here, we present three ways. First, a structured survey-based approach could be used by Financial Service Providers (FSPs) to assess a household's expenses, debt position and income from various sources of occupation. However, attention must be paid while designing such a questionnaire so that it captures seasonality and volatility in cash flows. Second, a templatebased approach could be used wherein FSPs could create various templates for different categories of households (as per location, occupation type, family characteristics, etc.). Household templates could be defined based on publicly available data sets that contain State/district-level information about household cash flows and occupation types. These templates could then be used to gauge the household income of a client matching a particular template. Third, FSPs could collect and maintain household income data through a centralised database. This would allow for uniformity in data collection across

It is worth acknowledging that the proposed suggestions to capture household income require time, energy and money on the part of FSPs. Therefore, finding cost-effective yet accurate ways of capturing this information becomes crucial. Technology service providers could play a crucial role in this exercise and create customised digital architecture for FSPs depending on their specific needs. Creating new technology to document and analyse cash flows of LIHs would not only facilitate credit underwriting/decisioning but also innovation in the standard microcredit contracts through customised repayment schedule and risk-based pricing, depending on a household's cash flows. Eventually, an accurate assessment of household-level incomes would avoid instances of over-indebtedness and ensure long-term stability of the ecosystem.

Priyadarshini Ganesan is a senior research associate. Misha Sharma is practice head with the Household Finance Research Initiative at Dvara Research

Effectiveness of vaccines

Natural infection builds better immunity, says study

R. PRASAD

That natural immunity following a virus infection stays robust and lasts longer is already well known. People infected with the 2002 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) have been shown to have strong immunity for up to three years. Now, a vaccine effectiveness study undertaken in Israel has shown that natural infection confers stronger immunity against the SARS-CoV-2 virus than even full vaccination. They found that people previously infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus had better immunity and had reduced risk of reinfection, symptomatic disease and hospitalisation caused by the highly transmissible Delta variant than uninfected people who were fully immunised with the Pfizer vaccine.

The results have been posted on medRxiv, a preprint server. Preprints are yet to be peer-reviewed and published in scientific journals.

Since Israel was the first country to vaccinate a large percentage of the population with the Pfizer vaccine, the researchers were able to compare over 16,000 people who were previously infected but not vaccinated with an equal number of people who had not been naturally infected but fully vaccinated.

During the follow-up, it became clear that even full vaccination with the Pfizer vaccine did not confer immunity that was superior to the one acquired through natural infection. There were 238 instances of breakthrough infections in the fully vaccinated compared with just 19 reinfections among those previously infected but not vaccinated. The infection or vaccination occurred during January and February this year. After adjusting for comorbidities, it was found that the risk of breakthrough infections was 13-fold higher than reinfection among the naturally infected group. Differences in protection were seen in symptomatic diseases too. At 191, the number of people with symptomatic disease in the fully vaccinated group was higher than in the previously infected group, which remained at eight. After adjusting for comorbidities, there was a 27-fold risk for symptomatic breakthrough infection compared with symptomatic reinfection.

But waning of natural immunity against the Delta variant was seen when infections that had occurred anytime between March 2020 and February 2021 were compared with vaccination during January-February 2021. The risk of breakthrough infections and symptomatic disease in the fully vaccinated was nearly six-fold and over 7.1% higher respectively than in those previously infected.

This study does not tell if the level and duration of protection varies depending on the severity of the disease, and whether asymptomatic infection confers the same protection as those with the disease. Since the correlates of protection are not yet known, it is unknown if the immune response from natural infection might be proving to be superior to antibodies generated in response to spike proteins in the case of vaccines.

Though this is the largest realworld study evaluating the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine in preventing infections compared with natural immunity, it is only an observational study. Testing for the infection was not undertaken, thereby underesti-

mating asymptomatic infections. More such studies involving Pfizer and other vaccines, carried out over a longer time period, are needed to fully understand the level and duration of protection conferred by CO-VID-19 vaccines. One encouraging finding is the absence of death among the vaccinated, a clear signal that the vaccine offers formidable protection against serious disease. Hence, natural immunity, even if found to be superior and long-lasting than vaccine-induced protection, is not what one should opt for.

Since January 2020, there have been 4.5 million COVID-19 deaths recorded globally. A sizable number of deaths have been among the healthy and those younger than 60 years, which flies in the face of a section of scientists that came up with the Great Barrington Declaration before vaccines became available.

Vaccination will always remain a safe and sure way to remain protected against severe COVID-19 disease and death, even if it means the protection is not robust or long-lasting.

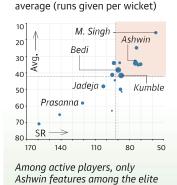
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DATA POINT

Even as the India-England Test series is delicately poised at 1-1 after three Tests, India's leading active wicket-taker has not played a game. R. Ashwin's performance in matches played away from home has improved over the years and his recent record shows that he tops the bowling charts for spinners, with a lethal hold over left-hand batters in particular. With The Oval, the venue for the fourth Test, being better for spinners as the game goes on, and considering Ashwin's recent form, his selection in the XI should be a no-brainer. By Sumant Sen, Srinivasan Ramani

1. INDIAN SPINNERS IN ENGLAND The chart plots the bowling strike rate (balls per wicket) of an Indian spinner who has bowled at least 50 overs in

England against his bowling



5. AGAINST LEFT-HANDERS The chart plots the average and strike rate of spinners who have bowled at least 20 overs since 2019. Size of the circle shows the % of false shots induced.

Four out of the 11 recognised

batters in England's squad for

the fourth Test are left-handers

(shaded region)

Washington 130

and 2021, Ashwin has picked up 109 wickets, the secondspinners. In the same period, he has taken 39 wickets playing away from India, the

fourth-highest



who have played in England and picked up more than 10 wickets, Ashwin is one among six or less. He also has the third-best average among all of them DATA COURTESY: VISHNU

VASUDEVAN (CRICKET21)

away venues

numbers for 2021

2. PLAYING THE BATTER | The table shows the share of false shots a spinner has induced against a batter in Tests played since 2018. A false shot is caused by a delivery that leads to a mistake by the batter. The 10 spinners with the best false shot % who have bowled at least 50 overs and have played in both home and away conditions are featured here False Shot % SR Average Bowler

Moeen Ali	19.9	50.8	29.8	
Dilruwan Perera	18.9	73.2	38.3	
R. Ashwin	18.7	51.5	22.1	100
M. Leach	17.9	59.7	30.0	7////
Nathan Lyon	17.2	72.5	33.4	II DI
R. Jadeja	16.5	61.8	28.7	Milli
Keshav Maharaj	16.4	68.2	37.9	
Yasir Shah	16.2	63.1	35.0	
R. Cornwall	15.0	75.3	35.4	
L. Ambuldeniya	14.2	65.9	37.2	
B. PROGRESS REPOR In Tests away from consisently over the In 2020, one of the	home has improve years. His bowl	red ing avera	age	127 wickets taken by Ashwin at

in 2020, one of the best years in his away career, was the best since 2011 and his strike-rate was the third-best

теаг	VV	ECON	Avg.	5K	False Shot %
2011	4	2.8	35.3	76.5	11.8
2012	5	3.6	84.8	140.4	10.4
2013	0	2.6	-	-	8.3
2014	10	3.1	43.8	84.7	11.9
2015	31	3.4	23.4	41.1	19.9
2016	17	3	23.2	46.2	17.4
2017	17	3	25.9	51.4	23.6
2018	24	2.4	30.2	75.8	16.8
2020	13	2.4	21.2	52.7	13.7
2021	6	2.9	35.7	74	12.4

have dippea slightly, it is he has featured World Test

4. SPINNERS AT THE OVAL | As a Test match progresses at The Oval, spinners become more effective. They tend to pick more wickets in fewer balls in the latter half of a match and induce more false shots by the batter

Day	Wkts	Runs	Econ	Avg	SR	False Shot %	
1	4	403	3.2	100.8	190.5	10.4	SOURCE:
2	13	585	4	45	67.8	14.7	CRICKET21,
3	20	575	2.8	28.8	62.8	16	ESPNCRICIN
4	21	678	3.4	32.3	57.2	19	
5	14	389	3.4	27.8	48.5	20.6	

Ashwin has an impressive record while bowling to left-handers in away Tests played since 2019. He has the best strike rate and average among spinners who have bowled in

The Man Pindu. FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 2, 1971

Poll in Bengal when peace returns

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, today ruled out the possibility of holding elections to the West Bengal Assembly next February unless the law and order situation in the State improved. Replying to a question at a press conference here before her departure for Delhi, Mrs. Gandhi said, "I will not say that it is satisfactory. Our reports say that the situation has improved. But there is much more to be done." She said except for what had happened in the Barranagar-Cossipore belt in the northern outskirts of Calcutta, the law and order situation was better. The Prime Minister said the type of extremist violence prevailing in West Bengal was increasing the difficulties for the people, especially the poorer sections. "Whenever any such difficulty is created, no matter what intentions the extremists have, it becomes a burden for the poorest and unemployed. Various steps are being taken to solve unemployment". Mrs. Gandhi told a questioner that she could not "prophesy" the time when the refugees from Bangladesh would be able to return to their homeland.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 2, 1921

Women franchise

Quite a large number of educated Bengali ladies, about fifty in number, went to the Bengal Council Chamber to follow the debate on the resolution about women franchise which came up for discussion in the Council today. Special arrangements had to be made for the accommodation and they were given seats in a portion of the hall set apart for them. There was one main resolution and three amendments which were moved one after another and discussed together for three hours, after which the Council adjourned, before the debate concluded. The original resolution demanded the entire removal of sex disqualification for registration on electoral rolls and the provisions enabling women to record their votes. The first amendment asked for the extension of franchise to lady graduates only. The second amendment went a little further and demanded extension of franchise to ladies who had passed the matriculation examination. The third amendment which was moved by Kumar of Tahirpur, an orthodox Hindu Zemindar, was practically in opposition to the original motion. The amendment wanted the question of the removal of sex disqualification be referred to a committee



GST collections dip, but Ministry sees growth

Of the ₹1,12,020 crore revenues in August, the Central GST (CGST) was ₹20,522 crore, the State GST (SGST) ₹26,605 crore, and the Integrated GST ₹56,247 crore (including ₹26,884 crore collected on import of goods). Compensation Cess of ₹8,646 crore was collected, of which import of goods contributed ₹646

crore. "The total revenue of the Centre and the States after regular and ad hoc settlements in August 2021 is ₹55,565 crore for the CGST and ₹57,744 crore for the SGST," the Ministry said.

EY India tax partner Abh-

ishek Jain said the collections were for the supplies made in July, when lockdown restrictions were relaxed in most parts of the country. "With increasing rate of vaccination and business supplies picking up, the uptrend is expected to continue in the coming months," he noted. Ms. Nayar said she now

expected the economy to grow between 7.8%-8.8% in the ongoing second quarter of 2021-22, with the absolute level of GDP to continue to trail the pre-pandemic level, as the services sector struggled to catch up with the rest of the economy.

Breakthrough infections on expected lines: report

The latest INSACOG report also noted that Delta continued to be the dominant lineage in India, though some of the Delta variants were in the process of being reclassified into sub-lineages comprising the 'Delta plus' category because of slight variations in the mumanifested.

One of these Delta plus categories is called AY.12, which raised concern after being associated with several cases of breakthrough infections in Israel. However, this wasn't yet of concern in India.

"It is specifically noted that the expanding phylogenetic cluster of AY.12 that was first noted in Israel, is not yet seen in India. Similar sequences that are also being classified as AY.12 at low stringency, do not have the same epidemiological significance. A detailed update will follow," the INSA-

Split accounts to tax **EPF income: Ministry**

The calculation of taxable interest for the year shall be computed as the interest accrued during the previous year in the taxable contribution account where all contributions over ₹2.5 lakh a year would be parked.

The same threshold is ₹5 lakh for PF accounts where employers do not contribute, but most EPF accounts, by definition, usualinclude matching contributions from employers and employees of 12% of monthly salary.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes' top brass had earlier said that taxpavers will have to include the taxable PF interest in their to-

"NRI should not be an option

under the nationality catego-

ry at all. Non-Resident In-

dians still hold Indian citi-

zenship and nationality and

are only counted as NRIs for

tax purposes," said Shiv's

to the Kerala High Court ear-

lier this month, he won an

interim order on August 13

that directed the Health Mi-

nistry and the National Test-

ing Agency (NTA) which con-

ducts the NEET to change his

application "in such a fash-

ion that he is able to claim

admission to MBBS course

against the quota marked for

OBC-NCL [non-creamy layer]

in the event of selection".

However, NTA has so far

failed to make the needed

A three-time legislator

from north Kashmir's So-

pore, Geelani was active in

the political landscape of

J&K for around five de-

member of now banned Ja-

maat-e-Islami (JeI) and also

headed the hawkish fac-

tion of Hurriyat, which op-

He served as a senior

cades.

Separatist leader

Geelani dies in Srinagar

When Rohit took his case

PF trusts run by companies may have to deduct tax and remit it to the exchequer from such accounts. A retirement benefits

suggest that the EPFO and

expert said it's not clear from the notification whether the tax has to be deducted from the taxable EPF account or simply added to one's I-T returns as earlier suggested.

maintaining two accounts from each member, if tax has to be deducted at source, this shall require the EPFO to issue tax deduction at source certificates or Form 26AS for each member making contribu-

changes, said Mr. Karthi-

keyan, noting that the exam

would be held on September

the NTA held that including

OBC category for NRI candi-

dates was "not sustainable".

"NRI is already a separate re-

served category for the

MBBS course. The petitioner

cannot be given the benefit

of sub-reservation," it stated.

Mr. Karthikeyan noted that

constitutionally, vertical re-

servation was allowed only

for the Scheduled Castes,

Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and

the Economically Weaker

Sections, while horizontal

reservation was allowed for

Persons with Disability in all

categories, including general

In its affidavit to the court.

tal income while filing tax tions over ₹21,000 a returns, but the new rules month," he pointed out.

"Apart from the hassle of

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, said, "It is too much



Hard hit: Most regions area seeing a rainfall deficit, affecting

er the country as a whole during September 2021 is most likely to be above normal (above 110% of the long period average) which is about 170 mm," the IMD said in a statement. "

Considering the expected above normal rainfall activity during September 2021, the current deficiency is very

likely to reduce, and accumulated seasonal rainfall during 1 June to 30 September 2021 is very likely to be around lower end of the

'Above normal' rain in September: IMD

Had rainfall been above 100% as the IMD had forecast in April and June, this would have been a rare event with three consecutive years

of normal or above normal rainfall.

Director-General, IMD, M. Mohapatra said at a news conference that the reasons for the IMD's inability to predict the August shortfall were being looked into. "The models that we were using, while able to predict the regions where there would be a shortfall, were unable to predict the quantum of deficit. These are relatively newer models and are still being improved."

Negative dipole

The factors that caused the August deficit were a "negative" Indian Ocean Dipole, characterised by warmer eastern Indian Ocean and colder closer to the Indian coast, which is considered unhelpful for the monsoon. Also, there were no significant depressions, that push the rain rising from the Bay of Bengal in August, unlike the two or three that were usual for the month, Mr. Mohapatra said.

The central equatorial Pacific was expected to show a "cooling trend" towards September and this could be favourable for the monsoon, Mr. Mohapatra said. But the Indian Ocean temperatures were not expected to be significantly helpful.

The IMD has formally

adopted a dynamic-modelling approach, whereby the weather conditions are simulated and projected into the future by supercomputer. Though the approach is more accurate at forecasting impending changes weather a week or two in advance, it has not proved reliable at long-range forecasting in the past three years. For instance, in 2019, the IMD forecast reduced monsoon rainfall at 96% of the LPA but India got recordbreaking rainfall at 110% of the average. In 2020, it first forecast 100% of the LPA and updated it to 102%, but India again got a torrential 109% which was outside the 5% error window.

NHRC notice on woman's suicide

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The National Rights Commission (NHRC) on Wednesday said it had issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police and Delhi Police Commissioner after a victim of alleged sexual assault and police apathy set herself on fire outside the Supreme Court on August

The NHRC said in a statement that it had taken cognisance of a complaint about the self-immolation by the woman and a man with her, who both died in hospital later. In 2019, the victim filed a rape case against Bahujan Samaj Party MP from Uttar Pradesh Atul Rai. She also alleged that police were supporting him.

The commission asked the two top police officials to submit detailed reports within four weeks, mentioning the action taken against the officials.

Delhi HC issues notice on appointment of Asthana

Court allows NGO to implead itself

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

an 8% surplus.

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued notice on a petition challenging the appointment of Gujarat-cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner. A Bench of Chief Justice

would be "above normal",

the overall June-September

rainfall would be at the "low-

In August, the IMD fore-

cast rainfall to be 101% of the

seasonal average, but it now

expects it to be around 98%,

The spurt in September will

help sowing in central India,

which is seeing a large rain

deficit, but would be insuffi-

cient to completely bridge

the nearly 9% shortfall in all-

India monsoon rainfall. All

regions - northwest, central

and eastern and northeast -

are seeing deficits in rainfall,

except for the southern pe-

ninsula, which has reported

"The rainfall averaged ov-

with a 4% error window.

Surplus in south

er end" of normal.

D. N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh also allowed an application filed by NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) seeking to be made a party in the case.

The court posted the case for further hearing on Sep-

On August 25, the Supreme Court asked the High Court to decide within two weeks the plea pending beit against the appointment.

The CPIL, in its impleading application, argued that the petition before the High Court, filed by one Sadre Alam, was a "copy-paste" of its plea before the apex



Rakesh Asthana

for a coincidence that same typographical error was

"It appears that Mr. Alam seems to have copied and followed the dangerous path of Mr. Bhushan [CPIL counsel]... Both have no business challenging the appointment," he said, adding that the High Court had to hear the "affected officer" as well before any order was passed in the matter.

The NGO said it got to know about the filing of Mr. Alam's petition from media and "was surprised to see some of the paragraphs of the instant writ petition as quoted by media"

High honour for Naval Aviation

Ram Nath Kovind to award President's Colour to INS Hansa, based in Goa

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

President Ram Nath Kovind will award the President's Colour to Indian Naval Aviation at a ceremonial parade to be held at INS Hansa, Goa, on September 6. The President's Colour is the highest honour bestowed on a military unit in recognition of its exceptional service to the nation.

Naval Aviation came into being with acquisition of the first Sealand aircraft on January 13, 1951 and the commissioning of INS Garuda, the first Naval Air Station, on May 11, 1953, the Navy said in a statement. "Today, Naval Aviation boasts of nine air stations and three naval air enclaves along the Indian coastline and in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands," it stated.

Over the past seven decades, it had transformed into a modern, technologically advanced and highly potent force, with more than 250 aircraft comprising carrierborne fighters, maritime reconnaissance aircraft, helicopters and remotely piloted



On board: Preparations ahead of President Ram Nath Kovind's visit to INS Hansa, near Dabolim, on Wednesday. • PTI

aircraft (RPA), the Navy said. The Navy was the first among the armed forces to be awarded the President's Colour on May 27, 1951 by then President Rajendra Prasad, as per the statement.

The arrival of the armed Firefly aircraft in 1958 added an offensive punch and 1959 saw the commissioning of the Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 550, with 10 Sealand, 10 Firefly and three HT-2 aircraft.

Over the years, a variety of rotary wing platforms have been added as well. Maritime reconnaissance also grew steadily, beginning

with the induction of the Super-Constellation from the Indian Air Force in 1976 to the state-of-the-art Boeing P 8I aircraft in 2013.

Carrier aviation The Navy heralded the be-

ginning of carrier aviation with the induction of INS Vikrant in 1957 and integral Sea Hawk and Alize Squadrons subsequently. "INS Vikrant with its aircraft played a crucial role in the liberation of Goa in 1961 and again in the 1971 Indo-Pak war, where its presence on the Eastern seaboard proved decisive," the Navy said.

cond carrier INS Viraat along with Sea Harrier aircraft in the mid-1980s and Naval Aviation was further strengthened with the arrival of MiG 29K fighters on INS Vikramaditya in the last decade.

The Navy inducted its se-

"The Indian Navy's Carrier capability received significant fillip with sea trials of the indigenously built aircraft carrier, the new avtar of INS Vikrant, commencing this month," the statement

Naval Aviation has played a major role in operations such as Cactus, Jupiter, Shield, Vijay and Parakram as well as spearheaded Humanitarian And Disaster Relief (HADR) operations on numerous occasions both in India and the extended neighbourhood.

Naval Aviators have been decorated with one Mahavir Chakra, six Vir Chakras, one Kirti Chakra, seven Shaurya Chakras, one Yudh Seva Me dal and a large number of Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) over the years, the Navy ad-

No SC, ST, OBC quota for Abhishek's wife skips ED appearance NRIs appearing for NEET

Rijura Banerjee says she is ready to meet the agency's officials in Kolkata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Rijura Banerjee, wife of Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, has expressed her inability to appear before the Enforcement Directorate in Delhi for questioning in a coal pilferage case. She said she could meet its officials at her Kolkata residence. The ED had issued her summons to appear before the agency in Delhi on September 1.

"I am a mother of two infants and travelling to New Delhi physically alone in the midst of the pandemic will put my [life] and the lives of my children at grave risk," she said in a letter to the Central agency dated August 31.

"It would be convenient to me if you consider asking me to appear in Kolkata at my residence since your organization has its office in Kolkata and I reside in Kolkata too. Besides, as per my understanding, the alleged cause of action of the subject matter of your inquiry too arises out of West Bengal," the letter pointed out.

Earlier, the CBI had questioned her at her Kolkata residence. ED has issued summons to Abhishek Banerjee and three serving IPS offic-

Narada sting tapes In another development, a special court in Kolkata ordered that summons be issued to West Bengal Ministers Subrata Mukherjee and Firhad Hakim under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in connection with Narada sting case. The orders were issued, taking cognisance of a chargesheet by the ED. Summons are to be

issued also to Trinamool Congress MLA Madan Mitra, former Kolkata Mayor Sovan Chatterjee and suspended IPS officer S.M.H. Mirza.

200 Army personnel for Zapad exercise

China, Pakistan taking part as observers in the multinational exercise in Russia

DINAKAR PERI NEW DELHI

A contingent of 200 Army personnel will participate in the multinational Exercise ZAPAD 2021 being held at Nizhniy, Russia from September 3 to 16, the Army said on Wednesday. Of the 17 countries invited for the exercise, there are nine Participating countries and eight Observers including China and Pakistan, a defence source said.

ZAPAD 2021 is one of the theatre level exercises of Russian armed forces and will focus primarily on operations against terrorists, the Army said. "The NAGA Battalion group participating in the exercise will feature an



beginning at Nizhniy in Russia on Friday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

cise," it stated.

been invited by Russia for the exercise. Of these nine are Participating countries which include Mongolia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Rus-

In all, 17 countries have

sia, India and Belarus. The other eight countries are Observers which include Pakistan, China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Uzbekistan and Sri Lanka, the source added.

The Indian Contingent has been put through a strenuous training schedule which encompasses all facets of conventional operations including mechanised, airborne and heliborne, counter terrorism, combat conditioning and firing, the Army added.

This month, the Army will take part in a multinational exercise peace mission in Russia with a 200-strong battalion from Sikh Li infantry, another source said.

Experiential webinar to be held on K-drama

It will have cooking, stand-up comedy

STAFF REPORTER

'K-Drama Talk Studio', an experiential webinar curated by The Hindu Weekend for The Hindu, in association with Korea Tourism Organization, will be held from 4 p.m. on Friday.

A panel of K-drama enthusiasts will aim to explore everyone's love and fascination for all things Korean. Moving away from the conversation-only format, the webinar will also have cooking demos and stand-up come-

Pooja Dhingra, chef and founder, Le 15 Patisserie; 📜 Dhruv Oberoi, ex-



Nishat Fatima, photographer and writer; and Anu Menon, actor and comedian, will participate in a session to be moderated by Puja Talwar, executive editor, entertainment

THEMMAHINDU O 🧺 🕾

A WEBINAR ON

K-DRAMA

TALK STUDIO

and lifestyle, Good Times. To register for

the webinar, log on to https://bit.ly/ KDRAMATH or scan the QR Code

Delhi HC's poser on LS Deputy Speaker election

STAFF REPORTER

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday gave time to the Centre to give its stand on a petition alleging inaction by Constitutional functionaries in not holding election to the post of the Deputy

Speaker of the Lok Sabha. A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti been elected.'

Pawan Reley, in his petition, said the post had been vacant for more than two years in violation of Article 93. "It has been 830 days that Deputy Speaker has not

Singh clarified "we are not

issuing notice" as it asked

Additional Solicitor General

Chetan Sharma to "take in-

structions" on the matter.

and advocated J&K's acces-

posed any unconditional dialogue with the Centre sion with Pakistan. Geelani resigned as head of the Hurriyat in June 2020,

eight months after the Centre ended J&K's special constitutional position.

"Saddened by the news of Geelani sahab's passing away. We may not have agreed on most things but I respect him for his steadfastness and standing by his beliefs. May Allah Ta'aala grant him jannat and condolences to his family & well-wishers," former Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti stated in a post on Twitter.

all arms combined task force. The exercise aims to enhance military and strategic ties amongst the participating nations while they plan and execute this exer-

ECI to assess situation

By elections to Assembly seats had been deferred in May

Officials of the Election Commission of India (ECI) are likely to hold a meeting soon to assess the situation in the States where bypolls are due, sources in the Commission said on Wednesday.

Byelections to Assembly seats had been deferred by the ECI in May, after the completion of the West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry elections, due to the COVID-19 situation. Since then, more vacancies have come up.

Mamata's clock ticking

The All-India Trinamool Congress had written to the ECI on August 26 seeking "immediate



Mamata Banerjee has to get elected before November to retain the CM's post.

ment" of bypolls in seven West Bengal Assembly seats. It had said there had been a "steep decline" in COVID-19 cases in the State, including the seven constituencies. Its supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who lost the election from Nandigram, has till November to become a member of the Assembly in order to retain her

An official said there had been no decision on holding bypolls yet. However, officials would assess the ongoing situation in the States soon. The Commission would be given a feedback after receiving the inputs from the States.

On August 9, the ECI wrote to the recognised national and State parties seeking their views and suggestions on the COVID-19 protocols in place in the context of the pending bypolls this year and elections in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa

No call on bypolls yet, Poll body wants 'stuck' EVMs to be released

ECI alerts SC to the need for moving voting machines to U.P. and other States where polls are due

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Wednesday asked the Supreme Court to intervene in releasing its Electronic Voting Machines "stuck" in Delhi and five States and a Union Territory that went to the polls in 2021.

The top poll body said the EVMs had to be moved to States such as Uttar Pradesh. where elections are due in early 2022.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, for the Election Commission of India (ECI), made an urgent oral mention of its plea before a Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Wednesday. The court indicated that it would consider listing the application for an early hearing.

The ECI said the problem lay with a Supreme Court order of April 27, which open-



Timely fix: The ECI wanted the court to fix a timeline for filing election petitions in States that went to the polls. • FILE РНОТО

endedly extended the "period of limitation" or the deadline for moving court due to the pandemic. The court's relaxation of the limitation period stretched to a large chunk of court proceedings, including filing of suits, appeals, petitions. This included election petitions.

The ECI said it was time the Supreme Court intervened urgently and fixed a timeline for filing election petitions in Delhi, which had gone to the polls in 2020, and Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry, where Assembly elections were held in 2021.

The Conduct of Election Rules of 1961 requires the EVMs used in an election to be kept in the custody of the District Election Officer and not be used in any subsequent elections without the approval of the Election Commission.

Back to back elections

"It is trite to mention that the Election Commission of India releases for reuse only those EVMs which have been used in constituencies in respect of which no election petition/writ petition has been filed raising any EVM-related issue," the ECI said in the application.

The ECI said there are back-to-back Assembly elections due in Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand and Punjab in March 2022. The election in Uttar Pradesh is on May 14,

The extension of the limitation period by the apex court on April 27 has frozen the deployment of 4.48 lakh

ballot units, 3.73 lakh control units and 3.95 lakh VVPATs in Assam, Kerala, Delhi, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

To conduct elections in 2022, it needs 4,55,149 ballot units, 3,77,037 control units and 4,04,612 VVPATs, the ECI said. The total present availability was 1,37,131 ballot units, 77,375 control units and 1.01.047 VVPATs.

If the EVMs continue to remain stuck in Delhi and the five States/Union Territory, then machines have to be transported from other States, leading to "serious logistical challenges which may delay the checking of ECMs and VVPATs", the poll body noted.

"It will be in the interest of justice that this Court may kindly direct a timeline for filing election petitions," the ECI said.

Bengal BJP sends notice to defectors

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Days after two party MLAs defected to the Trinamool Congress, the BJP leadership in West Bengal on Wednesday said it has issued legal notices to them.

"The way we have taken action against Mukul Roy, approached Speaker and taken the issue of his defection before the High Court, in a similar manner we have issued notice to Tanmoy Ghosh and Biswajit Das to explain their stand," said Suvendu Adhikari, BJP MLA and Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly.

Mr. Adhikari pointed out that more than 50 MLAs of the Opposition parties have crossed floor during the regime of the TMC since 2011.

"The Opposition parties then [Left and Congress] did not seriously take up these defections. From the BJP, we can assure that we will take it to its logical conclusion in a democratic manner." Mr. Adhikari said the two MLAs had not been keeping in touch with the party over the past few

Three BJP MLAs have defected to the TMC after the polls. Mr. Roy was the first to do so in June, followed by Tanmoy Ghosh (Bishnupur) and Biswajit Das (Bagda).

Brave front

State BJP president Dilip Ghosh tried to put a brave front and said such defections will not affect the party. "If dozens of MLAs came from the TMC to the BJP before the Assembly polls and a few of them go back to the TMC, it is not going to affect the party," he said.

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh targeted Mr. Adhikari and said he was trying to hide his inefficiency by saying the MLAs who defected were not in touch with the BJP for months.

New vision needed, says Rahul

GDP growth means rise in 'gas, diesel and petrol' prices, says Congress leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday attacked the Narendra Modi government over inflation and the repeated increase in fuel prices by asserting that "GDP growth" meant "increase in gas, diesel and pe-Addressing a press confe-

rence, Mr. Gandhi said the country was facing structural problems, much like the "catastrophic situation" in 1991, and needed a new visionto take the economy out of the crisis. "The Government has a new concept of GDP - an increase in GDP means an increase in gas, diesel and petrol prices. Over the past seven years, they have earned ₹23 lakh crore from the increase in diesel. petrol and LPG gas. And every single person is affected by this," Mr. Gandhi said.

"In 2014, when we [UPA government] left office, LPG gas price was ₹410 per cylinder; today, it is ₹885 per cy-

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The State of West Bengal on

Wednesday moved the Su-

preme Court in appeal

against a five-judge Bench

decision of the Calcutta

High Court to have the CBI

investigate allegations of

murder and rape commit-

ted in the aftermath of the

The State said it appre-

hended that the CBI, a Cen-

tral agency, may not probe

the cases fairly. It said the in-

vestigation may become an

In its decision in August,

the High Court Bench had

agreed with the National

political

for

Assembly election.

avenue

witch-hunting

NEW DELHI

SC against HC order

State fears probe by CBI won't be fair



Tough questions: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressing a press conference in New Delhi on Wednesday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

linder. That is a 116% increase. Petrol was ₹71.51 per litre; it is now ₹101.34 per litre, a 42% increase. Diesel was ₹57.28 a litre but now it is ₹88.77, a 55% increase," he added.

Mr. Gandhi pointed out that the current crude price of \$71 a barrel was much lower than the \$105 a barrel when the UPA was in power.

Comparing the situation with the "economic catas-

Human Rights Commission

report of July to order a CBI

probe into the alleged post-

mittee, the allegations are

about murder of a person

and crime against women

regarding rape/attempt to

rape, shall be referred to

CBI for investigation. The Committee, NHRC, any oth-

er Commission or Authority

and the State shall imme-

diately hand over entire re-

cord of the cases entrusted

to the CBI for investigation,"

the High Court had ordered.

rected a court-monitored in-

The High Court had di-

"All the cases where, as per the report of the Com-

poll violence.

trophe" of 1991, Mr. Gandhi said, "Our plan for the economy, which worked from 1991 to 2012, stopped working after that. We have to change our vision and need a new approach. Modiji promised that he would bring a new approach – all the talk about 'New India'. But they were hollow slogans." He claimed that neither the Prime Minister nor the Finance Minister were "capable of addressing" the structural problems but experts and think tanks should focus on tackling them. The Congress party was clear about what needs to be done and can share its expertise with the government, he said.

Transfer of wealth Taking a fresh dig at the

'Make in India' programme as well as the National Monetisation Pipeline, Mr. Gandhi said a large section of the population was being demonetised while friends of the Prime Minister benefited. 'There is demonetisation taking place, where farmers, labourers, MSMEs, contract workers, salaried classes and honest industrialists are being hit, and on the other side, there is dramatic monetisation taking place. They are three or four big industrialist friends of the Prime Minister who are benefited.

There is a transfer of wealth

taking place from the poor to

friends," he alleged.

Prime Minister's

Poll violence: W.B. moves AIUDF legislator

He was party's lone non-Muslim MLA

GUWAHATI

Phanidhar Talukdar, who was the only non-Muslim among the 16 MLAs of the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) in Assam, joined the BJP Wednesday.

He is the third MLA from the Opposition to join the BJP after Rupjyoti Kurmi (Mariani Assembly seat) and Sushanta Borgohain (Thowra), who quit the Congress in the past.

with the AIUDF, which I hoped would be part of the government. I represented a constituency where most people are poor and working with Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma will help me serve them better," he said after joining the BJP at the party's Guwahati headquarters.

Prior to joining the BJP, Mr. Talukdar resigned from the Assembly.

Wednesday evening.

Taliban urged to form inclusive govt.

Body seeks intra-Afghan peace process

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Taliban should form an inclusive government that will bring national reconciliation in Afghanistan, a group of eminent citizens, led by former External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh, has said. Extending solidarity to the Afghanistan people, it stated that the people of India stood "shoulder to shoulder" with them.

"Afghanistan needs an inclusive government that facilitates national reconciliaton after four long decades of wars and violence. Therefore, we appeal to the Taliban and other political forces to begin an intra-Afghan peace process leading to a democratic government establishment," declared a statement issued by the Indian Friends of Afghanistan. which comprises former Union Ministers Yashwant Sinha and Mani Shankar Aiyar and peace activist Sudheendra Kulkarni. The Taliban should en-

sure that no terrorist organisation is allowed to find sanctuary in Afghanistan. The new power holders of Kabul should respect every Afghan citizen irrespective of ethnicity, ideology or past political background. The Taliban should respect the rights of women and safe-



the completion of the U.S. pullback on Wednesday.

guard the developmental projects, it said.

The group appealed to the international community to not exclude any regional country from "collaborative efforts to bring peace in Afghanistan". "This requires India, Pakistan, China, Russia, Iran and other countries to evolve and implement a common strategy, in cooperation with themembers international community," it stressed.

"There should be no discrimination on grounds of religion in providing shelter to Afghans forced to leave their country. India should permit temporary stay to Afghan journalists, artists and civil society leaders feeling threatened by the conditions in their country," the group added.

STOP CORONA <u>"Wash Your Hand, Wear Mask & Maintain Social Distance</u>

DELHI JAL BOARD; GOVT, OF NCT OF DELHI

SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT KONDLI KONDLI, DELHI-110096

Ph:011-22613156, Mob.: 9650290862

Press Tender Notice- N.I.T. No.06 (2021-22)/EE(SDW)-IV

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
KARNATAKA SLUM DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Haryana govt. transfers Karnal SDM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Haryana government on Wednesday transferred Karnal Sub-Divisional Magistrate Ayush Sinha, who was recently caught on camera directing police personnel to "smash the heads" protesting farmers.

He will now be the Additional Secretary, Haryana Citizen Resource Informa-Department, at tion Chandigarh

The 2018 batch officer was among the 19 IAS officers transferred on Wednes-

Chief Minister Manohar Lal had admitted that the choice of words by Mr. Sinha was not appropriate, but maintained that "if anyone takes law and orders in their hands, then certainly the police have a role to play".

Last week, the Haryana Police baton-charged a group of farmers protesting against the visit of Mr. Khattar and other BJP leaders to Karnal - the assembly constituency of the Chief Minister.

Leaders of the BJP and and its coalition partner in the State government, the Jannayak Janta Party, have been facing backlash from farmers in connection with the three contentious agriculture laws.

ening of

After social security, Mamata turns her focus on industry

CM to set up empowered group of industries chaired by her

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said that after the implementation of social security schemes, the new focus of her government would be on industry.

Ms. Banerjee announced the setting up of an empowered group of industries chaired by her, where key Ministers and senior secretaries would take stock of the investment proposals every month.

The announcement is crucial as the Trinamool Congress government, since

assuming power in 2011, has been trying to brush aside its anti-industry image as it came to power after violent protests over forcible land acquisition at Singur and The event at Panagarh in

Bardhaman, where Ms. Banerjee made her fresh pitch for industry was to announce the setting up of a ₹400 crore worth plant that would produce polyester

The Chief Minister said the suggestion for setting up an empowered group came from the business community itself. "It will be a single window system. We have decided that there will be at least one meeting of the empowered group every month that will take stock of the proposals submitted," she Ms. Banerjee also spoke

about the world's second largest coal block, the Deocha Pachami Coal Mines, spread over 11,222 acres with coal reserves of around 2.2 billion tonnes in Birbhum's Mohammed Bazar area.

"We have the land for the first phase and for the second phase, we will have discussions with locals," she asserted.

joins BJP in Assam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

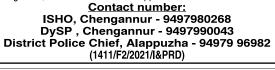
"I have not had any issues



He quit the AIUDF late

LOOK OUT NOTICE

Sri. Jobin Jose, Age 26, S/O Jose Mathai, Modiyi Veettil, Kallimel Muri, Vettiyar Village, Mavelikkara Taluk, Alappuzha district who is the accused in Cr.357/2021, U/s 376 (n)(h) 506 (ii) IPC of Chengannur Police Station, he is absconding after the commission of the crime. If any clue or information is obtained about him that may be intimated immediately to Chengannur Police station SHO, Deputy Superintendent of Police Chengannur, District Police Chief Alappuzha.



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS:TIRUPATI MARKETING DEPARTMENT **e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE** e-tender cum Reverse Tenderings are invited for procurement of Sugar (S-30) for a

Period Date of e-tender Date of Reverse Tendering **Proposed Quantity** 15-09-2021 16-09-2021 @ 40,00,000 Kgs (4000 Tons)of Sugar (S-30) Months @ 3.30 p.m. For tender notice and tender details log on to the web site http://www.tirumala.org and https://tender.eprocurement.gov.in Click or current tenders AP and select "more" and select "Tirumala Tirupat

Devasthanams-Marketing". For further details contact phone numbers: 0877 2264079, 2264555, Fax No.0877-2264554. Email:gmpttd@gmail.com. Roc.No.PR4/13934/Adv.No.143/PR0/2021/Dated:01-09-2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER



ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)

No. 55, Abhaya Complex, Risaldar Street, Seshadripuram, BENGALURU-560 020. Ph.:080-2346008 No: KSDB/Commr/TD-BC /PMAY-HFA /2021-22/861 Date :26/08/2021 **INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)** (TWO COVER SYSTEM) The Karnataka Slum Development Board (KSDB) Bengaluru invites item rate tenders for the Construction of Houses & Balance works for under progress houses in different slums of Rajarajeshwarinagara Constituency in Bangalore City under RAY scheme and Yeshwanthpur Constituency in Bangalore City under PMAY scheme from the eligible Class-1 registered

2021 DJB 207804

ı	Cal	endar of Events
l	Time and Date of Pre Bid Conference / Meeting	21/09/2021 at 11:00 AM
l	Last Date and Time for receipt of Tenders in Portal	29/09/2021 at 05:30 PM
	Time and Date of Opening of Tenders(Qualification Information)	01/10/2021 at 11:00 AM
l	Time and Date of Opening of Financial Bid	Time and Date will be Intimated for the eligible bidders
	Place of Receiving and Opening of Tender Documents	Office of the Technical Director Karnataka Slum Development Board #55, 1st Floor Abhaya Complex, Risaldar Street Sheshadripuram, Bengaluru-560020 Phone: +91 80 23564651, 23462436. Email id: Ksdbtd2@ gmail.com & ksdbtd1@gmail.com Web Site: https://karunadu.karnataka.gov.in/ksdb

If there are any changes to the above notification, it will be published in e-procurement portal only. Tender Documents schedule, specifications are available on the website: www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in Tender form fees & EMD details are available on the e-procurement portal. EMD and tender processing fees shall be paid using e-procurement payment modes only. Tender application must be accompanied by earnest money deposit specified for the works and shall have to be valid for 45 days beyond the validity of tender date

Sd/- Commissioner, Karnataka Slum Development Board, Bangalore DIPR/DDU/JA/1362/2021-22

STAY PROTECTED FROM 6 Feet Maintain Hand Follow Physical Distancing



pass order on Sept. 9

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday said it will pass an order on September 9 in the plea by actor Kangana Ranaut seeking to quash criminal defamation proceedings by the Metropolitan Magistrate initiated after lyricist Javed Akhtar filed a complaint. Justice Revati Mohite Dere heard the petitionCrPC.

11-member Cong. panel to plan I-Day celebration

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday constituted an 11-member committee, under former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, to plan and coordinate the year-long 75th Independence Day celebrations. The panel includes Ghulam Nabi Azad, Mukul Wasnik and Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Mr. Wasnik has been made the convenor. A.K Antony, Meira Kumar, Ambika Soni, Pramod Tiwari, Pradyut Bordoloi, Mullappally Ramachandran and K.R. Ramesh Kumar are also in the committee.

U.P. official moved after suspected dengue deaths

The Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday transferred the chief medical officer in Firozabad, where about 40 people, mostly children, died of suspected dengue. Dinesh Kumar Premi will be the new CMO. He had earlier held the charge of the additional CMO in Hapur. CMO Neeta Kulshresth has been transferred from Firozabad as senior consultant of Aligarh's Malkhan Singh District Hospital. PTI

Uttarakhand youth kills leopard in self-defence

A youth in a village here on Wednesday killed a leopard in self-defence, officials said. Naresh Singh was grazing his goats in a field when a leopardess attacked the herd. As the carnivore grabbed one of his goats, Naresh tried to save it but the leopard attacked him, Pithoragarh range officer Dinesh Joshi said. Naresh attacked the leonard with his sickle, killing it on the spot, he said. PTI

SC slams U.P. police for inaction on girl's kidnap

NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Wednesday slammed the Uttar Pradesh police for their inaction in tracking a minor girl believed to have been kidnapped over two months ago. A three-judge Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar ordered the case documents to be handed over to the Delhi police. It directed the petition filed by the girl's mother to be listed for hearing on September 3 on an urgent basis.

'Caste census needed for Muslims too'

Most funds are cornered by the elite in the community, says Pasmanda scholar Khalid Anis Ansari

and funds

funding

targeting of benefits, and a

real democratisation among

he said, have been marginal-

ised through history with

the Muslim voice only being

The Pasmanda Muslims,

Muslims," he said.

NISTULA HEBBAR NEW DELHI

Demands for a caste census are not just emanating from political parties in various States but also from organisations connected with the Pasmanda Muslim community, with the All India Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz raising the demand that people from all faiths be counted according to their caste catego-

ry.
The Mahaz, headed by Ali Anwar Ansari, former Rajya Sabha member, has announced an awareness campaign on this demand.

Khalid Anis Ansari, scholar with the South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), and active in the Pasmanda community advocacy space, says the counting of castes among Muslims should be included in any kind of format for a caste census that is adopted by the government.

Backward Class Muslims can avail themselves of reservations only in the OBC

"We saw drafts of letters by political parties demand-

We need a caste census of the Muslim community in India too, to better access development funding aimed at minorities for a real targeting of benefits, and a real democratisation among

ing a caste census where onprogrammes ly Hindu Most Backward through the Minority Affairs Castes (MBC) were being Ministry as well. "Much of the funds meant for minorimentioned. When we raised the issue of Pasmanda Musty Muslims is cornered by lims, the letter to Prime Mithe elite Muslims as they nister Modi from political have the educational and soparties in Bihar dropped any cial capital required to acmention of religion. As Pascess them," he said. manda Muslims, we our-"We need a caste census selves are not sure about the of the Muslim community in contours of the population India too, to better access developmental in the community. The British census authorities in coaimed at minorities for a real

Welfare schemes He said the issue is not just related to job reservations or

lonial India counted caste

categories among Muslims

too, but we have no further

figures," said Mr. Ansari.

represented by the elite in electoral mobilisation, but the community. "Even the discourse on of accessing existing welfare

for Muslims under the British, which voted for Muslim League candidates in the run-up to the partition, had very limited franchise restricted to those with property or education. Pasmanda Muslims who had neither were out of this process, and were in fact Congress supporters. In my own personal history, my grandfather in Bindki town in Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh opposed the partition of India and there were reported incidents of violence between Ashraf vs Pasmanda groups in various towns like Kanpur, Amroha, etc. We were ignored in the post-partition era also, with the secular parties buying into the elite Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb rhetoric. Muslim appeasement

partition ignores the fact

that the separate electorates

He points to the root of the issue as being embedded in the "first past the post electoral system".

happened but only of the

elite Ashraf Muslims," he

"The time has come to reconsider the first past the post system in elections, as it only encourages tokenism, while the proportional representation system can ensure more honest representation of demographic reality."

Social justice

"There are limits to the politics of demand without true social justice being ensured. Without a true reckoning of numbers and categorisation and hierarchy in an electoral system, and in the welfare system as well, its like you have invited me to a wedding at a five-star hotel, but I cannot attend as I don't have the clothes to let me in the door of the hotel in the first place," he said.

In the mid-2000s, Pasmanda outreach was at the forefront of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's political playbook under the old

After a hiatus of being in the background of any political party's interest, the Mahaz and the community are hoping the caste census issue will foreground them once again.

Assam wetland at risk till dumping stops: activists

'Notification alone will not help'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Green activists in Assam say that the Environment Ministry's recent notification on the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of the Deepar Beel Wildlife Sanctuary is meaningless unless the government puts an end to the dumping of garbage near the wetland.

The 4.1 sq.km. sanctuary is within the Deepar Beel, a wetland on the south-western edge of Guwahati that expands up to 30 sq. km in summer and reduces to about 10 sq. km in the winter. It is Assam's only Ramsar site, a wetland designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

The Environment Ministry's notification of August 25 specified an area "to an extent varying from 294 metres to 16.32 km" as the eco-sensitive zone, with the total area being 148.97 sq.km.

"The notification is meaningless if the government does not stop the dumping of garbage perilously close



Greater adjutant storks at a dumping site near the Deepar Beel wetland.

to the wetland. Seepage from this dump and sewage from Guwahati have already made the sanctuary toxic," said Bakul Rongpi, president of Deepar Beel eco-development committee.

He is from Mikirpara Chakardeo, where residents have for long resisted development projects around the wetland in vain.

"A thorough study of the notification showed the ESZ will serve no purpose. The minimum distance for polluting units should have been 5 km from the boundary of the sanctuary," Chakardeo-based dairy farmer and green activist Pramod Kalita told *The Hindu*.

Declare cow the national animal, says Allahabad HC

Court wants cow protection to be a fundamental right

OMAR RASHID

The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday said that the cow should be declared the national animal and that gau raksha (cow protection) should be included as a fundamental right of the Hindus. The court made the comments, along with a string of other observations, noting the religious and cultural significance of cows and the need for cow protection, while denying bail to Javed, a person from Sambhal, who has been in jail since March on charges of allegedly stealing a cow and slaughtering it with his

While holding the cow as a symbol of Indian culture and talking of threats to this



culture, a Bench of Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav also warned people that they should not forget the takeover of Afghanistan by the Tali-The court said history was

full of instances that "whenever we forgot our culture, foreigners attacked us and enslaved us and if we are not warned, we should not forget the unbridled attack on and capture of Afghanistan by Taliban".

Justice Yadav said that scientists believe the cow is the only animal that inhales and exhales oxygen. He invoked mythology at several points in the 12-page order in Hindi.

Justice Yadav also opined that Parliament should bring in a law to take tough action against those accused of cow slaughter. He described cows as a symbol of Hindu faith and culture, and claimed that even the majority of Muslims in the country were in favour of a nationwide ban on cow slaughter.

He added, "When the faith and culture of the country suffer injury, the country becomes weak."

Mental health centres must be covered: SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday passed a slew of directions for carrying out COVID-19 vaccination health mental institutions.

A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud has also agreed to incorporate in its order a suggestion to have the Centre operate a portal where the States could upload information in this regard.

The court directed the States to finalise a timebound schedule to vaccinate the inmates, staff and doctors in the institutions. It asked the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to file a status report by October 15 on the steps taken and the ground covered by the proposed inoculation drive.

Big turnout of BJP leaders at Kalyan Singh's rites

Adityanath names new cancer institute after former CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GHAZIABAD

In what is seen as an attempt to consolidate the non-Yadav OBC vote bank ahead of the Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh, the top Bharatiya Janata Party leadership of Uttar Pradesh descended on Atruali town of Aligarh on Tuesday to participate in the 13th day rituals of former Chief Minister Kalyan Singh.

In the district for the second time in a fortnight, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath described the Lodh leader, who was once the OBC face of the BJP, as one of the foremost warriors of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. Referring to the ongoing construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, he said Kalvan Singh worked tirelessly for the "fulfilment of the dream".

He said Babuji, as Kalyan Singh was fondly called, never stepped back from making sacrifices for this centuries-old dream, "whether it was sacrificing the Chief Minister's post after the disputed structure was removed in 1992 or taking full moral res-

ponsibility for its removal." Praising Kalyan Singh's simplicity and discipline, he said, Babuji worked for establishing "a fear-free government in the State" that worked for the socially underprivileged who were kept



In memory: Yogi Adityanath paying tribute to former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh on Tuesday. • PTI

out of government schemes. Mr. Adityanath declared that the newly constructed Cancer Institute in Lucknow would be named after Kalyan Singh. He said the government medical college coming up in Bulandshahr would also be named after the former Chief Minister.

'Loved by people'

Mr. Adityanath hailed the people of Atrauli, the native town of Kalyan Singh, for turning up in large numbers. "Considering Babuji was out of political life for two decades, the huge turnout shows that he was truly loved by the people of the region." He said local institutions would also be named after the leader and appealed to the people to strengthen the hands of Kalyan Singh's son Rajveer

deep Singh. Mr. Rajveer is a BIP MP from neighbouring Etah constituency while Mr. Sandeep is MLA from Atrauli and a junior Minister in the State government. Inclement weather did

Singh and grandson San-

not spoil the show, as arrangements had been made to feed around a lakh people. with around 1,400 cooks roped in to prepare the special meal.

Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Dinesh Sharma, State BJP president Swatantra Dev Singh and Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar were present.

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra, an old colleague of Kalyan Singh, and Uttarkhand Governor Baby Rani Maurya also addressed the

Assam floods hit 6.47 lakh people in 22 districts

Several rivers, including the Brahmaputra, flowing above the danger level

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Two more people drowned on Wednesday, taking the toll in Assam's delayed floods to five. According to an update by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), one person each died in Barpeta and Majuli districts. These two are among 22 of the 34 districts reeling under floodwa-

ters. Officials said the floods have so far affected 6,47,606 people, about 2.18 of them being women and 1.64 lakh children. More than 3,580 among the flood-affected have moved into 85 relief camps set up by the local authorities.

During the last 24 hours, Nalbari and Darrang surpassed Lakhimpur as the affected districts.

While 1.11 lakh people have been temporarily displaced in Nalbari, the number of such people in Darrang and Lakhimpur is 1.08 lakh and 1.04 lakh respectively.

Several rivers, including the Brahmaputra, were flowing above the danger level and incessant rainfall has continued to make them swell, officials said.

On the brighter side, the

crop area affected reduced by about 400 hectares from the 39,831 hectares on Tues-

The flood level at the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve remained constant for the third straight day though two more animals died on Wednesday. Of the 11 hog and swamp deer that died, seven were run over by vehicles.

TH CROSSWORD+ 13342

Type your answers in our online grids. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn



SCAN TO PLAY

16 Stop using hidden work (4)

17 Umgrigar's pet parrot? (5) 18 Take over ball placed in a container (4)

19 Commercial fair tune (6)

21 Satan's matches (8) 23 X co-ordinate computed from basics by special algorithm at first (8)

Display keystrokes of genius.

26 Scary peer goes back into empty city (6)

27 Cradle snatcher's sweet father? (5,5) 28 Badger a north-eastern Indian tribal (4)

1 Erroneously paint dome around electronic device for decryption (3,4,3) 2 Defences made with memory bits (8)

3 Left gold in a fish part and got a coin (6)

4 Correct, when tide comes back (4) 5 Inadequately go over Public Interest Litigation with youth initially (8) 6 Nut found in salmon delivery (6)

7 In the beginning, Valmiki exhorted: "Define a Hindu scripture" (4) 13 Permitted slaughter of lethal aliens to some extent (5)

15 Misfits in round holes? (6,4) 17 Update is revised to reserve for future use (3,5) 18 Alkaloid found when fiancée, after travelling, consumed food at first

20 Short relative 'ad had no dress (6)

22 Tail end of the human column comprised of commanding officer leading two hundred ten around Yugoslavia, initially (6)

SUDOKU



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FAITH

The Lord's Maya

The Gita stresses the importance of the knowledge to discriminate between the self and the body. The cause for the body and the senses of the jivatmas is Prakriti and is comprised of the three gunas, satva, rajas and tamas. All jivatmas are subject to the influence of the three gunas and they are able to experience joy and sorrow in every birth. When a jiva takes birth, the association with Prakriti, the senses, mind and intellect is automatic.

The jivatma appropriates all the qualities and nature of Prakriti as belonging to him. The jiva thus begins to think, "I am happy, I am sad, etc." This Prakriti is called the Lord's Maya and also His Sankalpa pointed out Asuri Sri Madhavachariar in a discourse. It is a powerful force on the jivatma and enslaves him in many ways. It draws him away from awareness of God and plunges him into a kind of chronic self forgetfulness.

Krishna tells Arjuna that unless one learns to see the self as distinct from Prakriti, and understands the importance of transcending the involvement with the gunas, it will not be possible to get out of samsara. The first step is to leave aside rajas and tamas and cultivate satva. This will help one to obtain a higher birth. But even satva has to be transcended if one has to seek that Truth which lies beyond the gunas and Prakriti. It is not possible to come out of this Maya on one's own effort, says the Lord; and He makes it clear that He does not want the jiva to continue in Maya.

Out of His infinite power and boundless compassion, He offers His helping hand to the jivatma, and promises to guide him out from this mire to experience the life of freedom. "He who surrenders to Me shall surely cross this otherwise insurmountable Maya," is His word.

A ND-NDE

ACROSS

8 Once upon a time in India, this money was transferred to get naan 9 Philanderer or female assassin? (4,6)

10 Proust was confused about mental numbness (6)

11 Brain lobe concerned with this world (8)

12 Rushed into a math carrying a banned colouring agent (8) **14** Include one drug in salt enrichment, for starters (6)

25 Assistant's silly idea (4)

24 Sad... mad Oscar leaves crab louse (4)

into Korean digital comics, which are finding

a stronghold in India as translations in

regional languages hit the market

dits her interest in everything K- to the Korean face masks she stumbled upon at a neighbourhood store. While K-beauty and fashion trends play seminal roles, K-pop - more specifically the boy band BTS forms the core of her love. Then, Prathyusha discovered K-webtoons, Korean digital comics that are specifically fashioned for smartphones.

Now, she collects digital episodes to binge-read over the holidays on her phone. Sixteen-year-old Subiksha, another loyal reader, says she enjoys Korean webtoons "way better" than Indian movies or TV shows. She got hooked in November 2020, and has not looked back since.

Even as the Korean cultural wave or hallyu has gained momentum in the past few years, it was the lockdowns that led a rush of Indians to Korean comics. In the form of webtoons that are available in regional languages, they are more accessible than ever before. In India, Kross Comics pioneered the entry of this format to the Indian market through its app, on which are titles - sometimes episodic – that can be accessed for free.

Manhwa, as K-comics are commonly referred to in South Korea, came into existence as early as the 1920s when Korea was under Japanese occupation. An offshoot of cultural imitation, manhwa quickly became a cousin to the more popular Japanese cartoons and comics, manga. In India, manga has had a strong and loyal fan base for many years, while manhwa the newest entrant, is often accessed digitally. Within South Korea, the format of webtoons that took form in the early 2000s, are now part of a billion dollar market.

A gradual boom

"The hallyu started in the early 2000s in Japan, with Korean dramas becoming popular. Since then, K-dramas have been finding new audiences across China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan... In India, in particular, back in 2015 I was surprised to find that the wave had not started

despite the glaring similarities in culture," says Hyunwoo Thomas Kim, co-founder of Kross Comics, headquartered in Seoul. Around 2019, the scene changed. By then, BTS was also on its way to becoming a household name in India.

'That's when I realised that K-pop and K-drama are already here in a big way. What could be next? I started showing some of the digital comics to Indian friends and the interest was palpable. From a storytelling point of view, K-dramas and Korean webtoons are very similar," says Kim.

In December 2019, they rolled out about 100 titles and have been growing fast since. Now, with the pandemic, their app stands at over three million downloads.

Some of them are also being adapted into K-dramas: Kross Comics' webtoons, A Business Proposal is currently being made into a serial-



logues. Visualisation is episodic. Tap to read

Author of the popular webtoon She Hates Me, Amadoji, 31, from Korea believes that webtoons resonate with the audience because of digital accessibility. "Many read webtoons as most people now own smartphones. I wasn't expecting it [the global reaction] at all, because this work includes a lot of parodies and memes that are specifically used in Korea, and the main background itself is Korea."

ised drama which is expected to re-

lease in 2022. Similar to music and

drama, webtoons also have a target

audience of people between the ages

of 15 and 24. Readership records

show that 80% of the response is

ics that the Indian youth is used to,

like Amar Chitra Katha for instance,

which deals with mythology, super-

heroes and so on. We talk about love,

dating, romance and just everyday

life," says Kim. Culturally, while In-

dians and Koreans in their mid-40s

might be very different in their way

of thinking, the Gen Z audience glo-

bally is similar in many ways. Kim

says that their online social exposure

is perhaps the reason for these simi-

More importantly, the webtoon

format strikes an easy balance bet-

ween visuals and text, with the latter

mostly in the form of concise dia-

"It is very different from the com-

from a female audience.

Illustrations and colours also contribute to this attraction, especially when published in a serialised manner, says Endless' creator Kim-Yeon. "I start doodling with-

out any plans. And when I encounter a character's face that I like, I start attaching surrounding characters one by one by imagining their personality and background," she says.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Now with translations made available in regional Indian languages like Hindi and Telugu apart from English, they are slicing through a larger Indian demographic. "The response from Telugu readers has been good. So we are thinking of adding more southern languages. Our goal is to expand to at least 11 Indian languages in the next few years," adds Kim. The average daily readership varies between 60,000 to 1,00,000, of which 70% reads in English, 25% in Hindi and 5% in Telugu.

Twenty six-year-old Dhanashree Kodkani had never read a Korean comic until she began translating one to Telugu in September 2019. Now, she feels disheartened when a series she is translating, ends. Dhanashree recalls titles she started with: Que Sera Sera and The Reason Why Raeliana Ended up at the Duke's Mansion. "As someone who has a habit of reading subtitles, it really gets me when a joke or a moment is lost in translation. Hence, I am extra careful when I do this," she says.

With the pandemic, there is a shift in preferences too. In 2021, K-webtoons that revolve around positive and uplifting stories are seeing more takers. Young adults are finding these simple narratives in the webtoon format a welcome escape.

"It is more convenient, doesn't cost any money if I am willing to wait for new episodes and it doesn't require me to go to a store," says Subhiksha, adding "For students like me, it is ideal entertainment. Everything can happen right from my phone."

THE GLASS PALACE TRAVELS TO SRI LANKA

Niluka Kadurugamuwa's Veeduru Maligawa, a translation of The Glass Palace, brings Amitav Ghosh to the Sinhala reader

MEERA SRINIVASAN

While crisscrossing the globe on diplomatic postings, there is one trusted companion Niluka Kadurugamuwa never forgets to take along – his books. The Sri Lankan foreign service officer does not stop with just reading them. He translates critically acclaimed fiction from around the world to Sinhala, the language spoken by a majority in the island nation.

His latest work Veeduru Maligawa (by Colombo-based Sumitha Publishers) is a translation of the novel The Glass Palace, bringing its acclaimed author Amitav Ghosh to the Sinhala reader for the first time. Kadurugamuwa began translating the historical novel - over 500 pages long - in October 2020, at the height of the pandemic. He completed the task in July this year and the Sinhala version, which is more than 800 pages, is now ready for launch. It marks his first major translation of an Indian author, and coincides with his time in New Delhi, where he is currently the Deputy High Commissioner at the Sri Lankan mission.

On why he chose Ghosh's historical fiction published in 2000, Kadurugamuwa said it was the "mesmerising prose". "I like all his work but this novel speaks to our shared histories. Ghosh captures the anti-colonial sentiment so powerfully. And that is something

intertwined with all our stories, because we were all colonised in the past," he says in a telephone

"The story spans generations and countries, covering South-East Asia, Burma and India... it is so well-researched and rich in context," adds the 46-year-old diplomat.

Growing up in Diyatalawa town in Badulla, located in Sri Lanka's scenic hill country, Kadurugamuwa began reading Sinhala translations of European, American and Russian writing, mostly fiction. Soviet literature has for long had a dedicated readership in Sinhala, especially in Leftist circles. Later, Kadurugamuwa took a strong liking to Latin American literature, introduced to Sinhala readers by writer-activist Gamini Viyangoda.

In his late teens, Kadurugamuwa attempted his first translation, with African-American author Richard Wright's short story Silt. "I was so thrilled to see my translation in print, although it was heavily edited," he says, chuckling at his writer's scepticism of newspaper editors. He continued through his university days, sending translated short stories to newspapers and magazines. "They would pay some 500 rupees (LKR), and that was big money for a student in the mid-1990s."

Kadurugamuwa's interest in world politics and languages led him to Masters' degrees in International Affairs and Languages, and eventually to Sri Lanka's foreign service in 2003. Despite a hectic career, marked by regular moves and busy days, his late evenings were invariably dedicated to a page or two of translation



Inhabiting many worlds Niluka Kadurugamuwa • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

work. Over the years, he has translated Columbian writer Gabriel Garcia Márquez's novel In Evil Hour, Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk's The Red-haired Woman, Chilean writer Isabel Allende's Island Beneath the Sea, American author Mario Puzo's Six Graves To Munich, and fellow Sri Lankan writer Manel Abhayaratne's novella Maya – in addition to several short stories - traversing genres such as crime, historical fiction and magic realism.

His translations have been published mostly by Colombobased Vidarshana Publishers until now. Kadu-

rugamuwa's translations sell at least 2,000, which is considered a good figure in the Sri Lankan market. The books are often priced a little over LKR 1,000 (roughly ₹366); The Glass Palace's translation will be priced at LKR 1,600.

With long days, full of high-stakes bilateral meetings or discussions at UN forums, it cannot be easy to meet deadlines, even those set by him. "Oh, it is certainly not. In the case of The Glass Palace, I bought a copy in Bangkok about a decade ago, but never got to reading and translating it. Then I bought another copy when I was posted to New York, but still couldn't do it. I brought it back to Colombo but never got to it. And then I bought a third +copy when I was posted to New Delhi this time, and actually sat down with it," says the writer-diplomat, who has won Sri Lanka's State Literary Award for the best translation twice.

In terms of style, Kadurugamuwa prefers literal translations. "I don't drop anything from the original, I try to be as faithful as possible to the text. Of course, there are things you can't translate quite literally, because the context could be vastly different. In those cases, I use footnotes. Veeduru Maligawa has about 110

Despite the effort and time that translation warrants, Kadurugamuwa revels in the exercise. "You get to inhabit another writer's head, temporarily becoming that person while writing. It is a marvellous

Silver chains that tinkle on

Salem's unique designs for handmade silver anklets have made the city one of India's leading manufacturing hubs. And, the ornament is a deserving candidate for a GI tag

NAHLA NAINAR

On a muggy afternoon, men in vests and lungis are busy at work at this nameless unit behind the Pallapatti Lake in Salem, assembling an ornament that the South Indian city has been famous for, for nearly a century: the silver *kolusu* or anklet.

Artisans lay out varying lengths of silver wire that has already been cast in the 'Khusbhoo' pattern (named, like the idli, after the actress when she was at the peak of her popularity in the 1980s) and manually fix die-cut embellishments like flowers and enamel accents in a

painstakingly slow process. Made of silver alloyed with copper, these ornaments come with tinkling

Mud from the road outside has been mixed with water to create a paste that is packed into iron trays, forming a non-reac-(salangai) tive base that keeps all the tiny

Unique patterns Salem's silver anklets are known for their intricate workmanship. (Below) Artisans at a production unit in the city • LAKSHMI NARAYANAN E

> ing. Once done, the tray is sent to another worker who solders the pieces on each anklet, until it is ready for the next process of cleaning and polishing.

> "There are 30 steps to making an anklet, and each one goes to at least 10 places before it returns to the unit for the finishing stage," says V Suresh, who has been manufacturing the ornaments with his elder brother for the past 15 years in Salem. "One of the unique features about the Salem anklet is that except for a few stages, most of the manufacturing is still done by hand," he

> In the inner chambers of his home-cum-office, Suresh keeps rods of kachcha silver, made of melted down anklets that will be mixed with pure silver to manufacture a new batch of orna-

parts of the anklet from dislodgments. Plastic bags of rasagolla (silver globules), screws and other accessories fill the small steel cupboard. With the recent easing of the lockdown, production is almost back to normal in this family-run business.

Historic links

Suresh is part of a cottage industry that is thought to employ up to 10 lakh people in and around the city. With nearly 60% of the anklets sold across India reportedly from Salem, the ornament has made the city one among the leading manufucturing hubs in India.

In areas of the city like Shevapet and Sivathapuram, it is possible to see anklets in different stages of manufacture laid out in long lines, twinkling in the sunlight. Despite this, Salem's kolusu industry does not have a Geo-

graphical Indication (GI) tag for its products.

A lack of supportive documentation to prove the antiquity and uniqueness of the business in Salem is the main cause, say local history enthusiasts and je-

wellery industry players. "According to our research, silver anklet production in Salem has been supported by a community of traders who migrated from Saurashtra. They were initially into textiles, but when the industry became shaky due to restrictions imposed by the British, they moved into making silver anklets," says A Anand Kumar, managing partner, ANS Guptha and Sons, a lead-

ing jeweller in the city. This demographic has changed in recent decades to include skilled artisans and sellers from a multicultural background. Anand Kumar is also a part of the local chapter of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), and has been spearheading an initiative to get a GI tag for the Salem

In 2019, the brand's ANS Dhivyam showroom got 20 anklet makers in the city to create a 127feet long anklet, weighing five and a half kilograms and featuring five of Salem's most popular patterns, within a month, for a special public display.

"We did this mainly to give some pride to the artisans who are always in the shadows, compared to the retailers," says

Anand Kumar. "Even when you take images and statuary of 200 years ago, you will find the anklet, which was called the *kaapu* then. It may be in a slightly different form, but it would be a key way to identify the cultural and ethnic origins of a woman," he

Among Salem's unique designs is the thala kolusu, made for infants. The silver wire is wound in such a way that it loosens as the child grows, and can be used for up to four years.

Impact of technology

Technology and competition from mechanised production have affected Salem's anklet industry in myriad ways.

While social media has facilitated nationwide trade, a growing number of people are making 'true copies' of the original product.

"North Indian manufacturers are putting up replicas of our designs on their Facebook pages, claiming it to be their product. A GI tag will help prevent this plagiarism," says C Srianandarajan, secretary of Salem District Kolusu Manufacturers Kaivinai

The industry body, which has 300 anklet manufacturers on its rolls, hopes to get this heritage jewel given due recognition.

"This is an industry that defines our city. We should do more to honour this ornament that has given Salem so much," says Srianandarajan.

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

From barracks to ancestral home, to wedding venue, Chennai's Luz House has seen many uses over the centuries. As the 250-year-old property inches its way back into the city's social life, after a pandemic-prompted hiatus, it finds other heritage properties in the fray, newly inaugurated to woo Chennai in imaginative ways.

Cafes, event venues, performance platforms, flagship stores... a clutch of young entrepreneurs are now basing their businesses in age-old city architecture. In the process, they not only find steady means of upkeep for these maintenance-heavy structures, but also make sure they continue to be a part of contemporary Chennai life.

Primrose, a 1950 bungalow in Mylapore, underwent an Art Deco renovation in 2020 before opening its doors in July 2021. The old family home now boasts subtly stylised pillars and lights, central cooling and an elevator, but still retains sloping red oxide flooring on the terrace, an inner courtyard open to the skies, and an old mango tree that has stood there for as long as Archana Kalpathi can remember.

"The property belongs to my husband's family, and we wanted it to be a space where the family could celebrate happy occasions," she says, adding that the idea of using it as an events space stems from there.

Since its opening, Primrose has hosted birthdays and intimate dinners, and plans to woo everything from exhibitions and bake sales to pre-wedding functions. "We plan to keep it exclu-



sive," adds Archana. "Since it's a family property, we want to make sure that it's used properly."

On the other hand, PH Cafe in Egmore welcomes anyone who wants to spend a day in their own little creative shell, and even provides a platform to some of them.

The indie music and art cafe has been functional since 2019. For Rashmi Nandita, the same old walls that house her childhood memories are now witness to her professional ones. She calls it her old "Kerala family house", built in 1948. "My family has been here for generations," says Rashmi, "We didn't want to touch the architecture, or do anything to the house. We just redid the garden. OTS [On The Streets of Chennai, a collective] performs here, and we have a little rural art setup inside," says Rashmi.

The old family home now boasts stylised pillars, central cooling and an elevator, but still retains sloping red oxide flooring on the terrace

PH used to have seating inside,

where freshly painted furniture

shared space with decades-old

wooden swings, a nostalgic Sin-

ger sewing machine complete

with a pedal, and even a badmin-

ton racquet from Rashmi's grand-

Traditional paintings from the

Ravi Varma Printing Press give

company to louvered windows

stumps that double up as seats.

hours working here.

mother's youth.

Keeping time (Clockwise from left) Kanakavalli uses the century-old architecture of Kingsley to match its traditionally woven products; Primrose is the city's latest wedding and events space; PH Cafe has a separate space for art; Luz House precedes them all • r ravindran, b velankanni raj and special arrangement



Explore the buildings that bridge Chennai's historic <u>and</u> contemporary life, and meet the entrepreneurs keeping them alive





tion below expands about two or three feet beyond the visible structure above ground. "It's difficult to even drill a nail into a wall, and plumbers and electricians have a tough time," says Rashmi, rapping her knuckles on a hefty balcony column.

Columns are an eye-catching feature not only of this 1940s house, but also of the over-a-century-old Kingsley on Spur Tank Road. Home to the flagship store of Kanakavalli, this colonial-era family home was deliberately picked out for that purpose six years ago by Ahalya S.

"The point was to create a showcase primarily for our Kanjeevaram saris. We wanted a space as well-crafted as the saris themselves," says Ahalya. "We had to renovate almost all of it – it was being used as a home, but as a store our requirements where high, like for example lighting and security. The floor used to be a regular cement I think; it is now a classic black and white chequered floor," she adds.

When it comes to renovating old properties, no one understands "tough times" better than Abhimanyu Prakash, the man who opened Luz House to the public. Abhimanyu remembers that entire year of work that went into Luz House, before the family property was ready in 2014. "It is more than two centuries old, and needs a lot of maintenance. I couldn't imagine selling it; in my mind, the house belongs not to me or my father, but to my children and those who will come after them. So I had to think of ways to make the place at least earn its own upkeep," he explains.

Curb your enthusiasm

The original plan was that of a yoga and spa retreat, but the family later decided to keep it open for multiple uses, interfering as little with the original structure as pos-

"We managed it without opening up a single wall, retaining the original teak wood and country tiles. Parts of the roof that had to be redone, were fixed with wood recycled from other parts of the house," he says, adding that the entire renovation was done under the watchful guidance of conservation architect Kalpana Mohamed, who "stayed our hand whenever we got too enthusias-

Built well before the times of indoor plumbing, Luz House required an overhaul of not only pipelines, but also the electric system, wall finish and parts of the roofing.

"Typically, in a normal building or house, you could expect to paint it about once every four years. Here, it has to be done twice a year with a light, limebased paint instead of the regular ones," says Abhimanyu, adding, "The walls are different. They are not meant to stop heat, but to absorb moisture and to breathe," he says with a hint of pride.

He adds, "It is about 8,000 square feet now, but there was a time when the whole property was 30 acres, and this was only one of three houses owned by the Buchi Babu family. This particular one was the zenana, or ladies quarters."

Since its opening in 2015, the centuries-old bungalow has been used to hosting about 12 to 15 events a month including traditional weddings. "In 2020-2021, there was barely any income," says Abhimanyu. "We wanted to put in a restaurant and five or six large rooms for people to stay, but that may not be a possibility

History has a steady hand here, but the future will have to wait.

An eerie world

Adithi Krishnadas' Malayalam short Kandittund won the Satoshi Kon Award for Excellence in Animation

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

Adithi Krishnadas was intrigued when Suresh Eriyat, her boss and founder of Eeksaurus Studio, told her about his father, who claims to have spotted various supernatural beings. These anecdotes, which Suresh had recorded, were sort of similar to Spirited Away, one of the most acclaimed works of Adithi's favourite animator Hayao Miyazaki.

When she put the recordings together, she saw the possibility of a film.

She worked on the idea for about one and a half years and came up with Kandittund ('Seen It', in Malayalam). The 12-minute short won the Satoshi Kon Award For Excellence in Animation at Fantasia International Film Festival (FIFF) Awards 2021. The film, produced by Nilima Eriyat, had Oscar-winner Resul Pookutty along with Vijaykumar working on its sound design.

Adithi, a graduate of the National Institute of Design, is now looking forward to working on more ideas, including an animated series. "I want to make something that gives you a feeling of having read a book," she says. Adithi

Krishnadas

6 Aquatic invertebrate - type

12 Hard crystalline limestone

The solution will

appear on September 9, 2021.

Solution No. 13427

11 In conjunction (8)

used for sculptures (6)

15 Spice used in chilli and

13 Farmyard fowl (7)

curry powder (5)

17 Weary (5) 18 Sound of thunder (4)

of cake (6)

The Banvan's first children's book tells the story of Jacklin and Amali who overcame homelessness to provide homes for women with mental disorders



A **nome** for you and me

SWETA AKUNDI

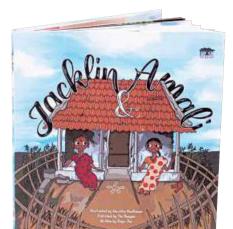
At the turn of the century, Jacklin Janaki found herself wandering the streets of Chennai, 300 ki lometres from her home in Kovandakurichi.

Homeless and in the throes of a mental breakdown she did not quite understand, she experienced two sides to the city: one that tossed stones and disdain at her, and the other, fortunately, that gave her shelter, meals, a diagnosis and the help to manage it. Over the next 10 years at The Banyan, she found her calling as an auxiliary nurse.

Wishing others like her too find the support they need, she returned to her hometown in Tiruchi to start an initiative, Home Again, with the help of her sister, Amali Margaret, and The Banyan. Spread across nine homes in Kovandakurichi and nearby villages, 44 women, who much like Jacklin, have experienced mental illnesses, homelessness and marginalisation, live together as families, supporting and caring for each other.

The sisters are the protagonists of The Ba-

grief, abandonment, finding support and care, and passing it on - makes for a stark subject for children, but author Rega Jha, believes that is why it is all the more important to narrate. "The Banyan is quite invested in introducing these themes to adolescents and bringing about mental health sensitisation," she says.



The narrative is complemented by loving illustrations by Akshaya Madhavan. The book was launched last week with a reading session that featured actors Shobana and Revathi, Dr Vikram Patel, and author Shaheen Bhatt among others.

A long way home

Sisters in survival Jacklin and Amali holding The Banyan's

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On a call from Home Again in Kovandakurichi, Jacklin recalls, hesitant but determined, the circumstances that led to her boarding that fateful train to Chennai. "My marriage broke apart a few years ago, and then, I lost my parents. I came to Chennai with ₹300 in hand, which soon got over," she says. She meant to find her aunt in Chennai but lost her way, and ended up living on the

She was taken to The Banyan, where she got better and re-trained herself in nursing. "This was my second time in Chennai, I had lived and worked as a nurse for a year here once before. This time, I also learnt how to nurse people with psychiatric issues," she says.

Amali, who had been battling depression on her own all this while, also came to The Banyan, where she picked up the skills of house management. Together, the two of them started Home Again in 2016. "I was inspired by the work The Banyan was doing – supporting people in need, and providing medication free of cost. I thought, why not go back to my home town and help my community," says Jacklin.

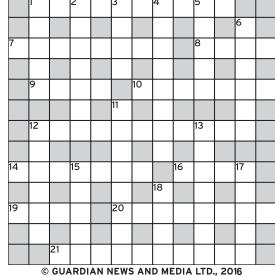
Awareness about mental health had been low in Kovandakurichi, says Amali, from her experience with depression in the village. "Sometimes, it gets labelled as a 'possession'. People who need medication and treatment are locked up instead. But now, things are changing. People voluntarily come up to us, asking for medication to become better," she says.

Jacklin also runs a private clinic under which she visits patients and fixes appointments with doctors. Home Again has been expanded by The Banyan to 10 other states, offering 49 homes to over 200 residents. "There is still work to be done," says Amali. "Of the 44 women with us, many of them have families that don't want to take them back because they don't know how to manage them at home."

Which is why the sisters are glad this book has come into being. "It is a proud feeling to have our life story written down. When we were young, we didn't have anyone telling us about mental illnesses," says Jacklin. She adds, "This book explaining these issues to children at a young age will have a huge impact."

A ND-NDE

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13428



■ Across 1 Community of women

(10)

7 Huge (8)

8 Mischievous children (4) 9 Sound of thunder (4)

10 Chic (7) 12 Interpret wrongly (11)

14 Shelf support (7) 16 Electrical SI unit named after a pioneering

Italian physicist, d. 1827

CM YK

19 Slender (4)

20 School holiday (4-4) 21 Off guard (10)

Down

1 Pry (5) 2 Citizens of Bratislava, say (7) 3 Simple (4) 4 Unable to manage

independently (8) **5** Due (5)

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

nyan's first illustrated book for children, Jacklin & Amali. Their journey - one of homelessness,

'Era of wars to remake countries is over' Biden had pressed Ghani

We must set missions with clear, achievable goals — not ones we'll never reach, says President Biden

A day after the last batch of American soldiers left Afghan soil, U.S. President Joe Biden defended his decision to go through with the withdrawal, which culminated in violent chaos focused around Kabul's airport, with Afghans scrambling to escape the tightening grip of the incipient Taliban regime and terrorists using the opportunity to strike.

In a televised address from the White House, Mr. Biden said an era of American interventions to "remake other countries" was ending.

"Imagine if we had begun evacuations in June or July, bringing in thousands of American troops and evacuating more than 120,000 people in the middle of a civil war. There still would have been a rush to the airport, a breakdown in confidence and control of the government..." Mr. Biden said.

While taking responsibility for the decision to withdraw troops, Mr. Biden said his predecessor, Donald Trump, had signed a deal with the Taliban that did not require the outfit to work with the government in Kabul and included the release of 5,000 prisoners. By the time he took office, the Taliban were at their strongest since 2001 and he was left



U.S. standpoint: President Joe Biden speaking at the White House on Tuesday. • REUTERS

with two choices - follow the agreement or send thousands of more troops in, Mr. Biden said.

"To those asking for a third decade of war in Afghanistan, I ask: What is the vital national interest? In my view, we only have one: to make sure Afghanistan can never be used again to launch an attack on our homeland," he said, adding, that al-Qaeda was "decimated" and Osama bin Laden had been brought to justice.

With competition and challenges from China and Russia, Mr. Biden said his duty was to defend America against the threats of 2021 and the future, not the threats of 2001. "And there's nothing China or Russia would rather have, would want more in this competition than the United States to

be bogged down another decade in Afghanistan," he said, adding that the country had to turn the page on two

decades of foreign policy. 'Extraordinary success'

"First, we must set missions with clear, achievable goals not ones we'll never reach. And second, we must stay clearly focused on the fundamental national security interest of the United States of America. This decision about Afghanistan is not just about Afghanistan. It's about ending an era of major military operations to remake

other countries," he said. Praising America's military and diplomatic personnel, and expressing gratitude to the family of killed soldiers for a "debt we can never repay", Mr. Biden said the mission had evacuated more than 120,000 individuals and was an "extraordinary success"

He said he had decided to withdraw troops by August 31 based on an assumption that the "more than 300,000" Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), trained by the U.S. over the past 20 years, would be a "strong adversary" against the Taliban.

"That assumption ... turned out not to be accurate," Mr. Biden said, adding that he had prepared for the eventuality that the ANSF would not fight beyond the U.S. withdrawal, authorising 6,000 troops - most of whom were flown back in at short notice - to secure Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport

Both Republicans and Democrats have criticised Mr. Biden for the manner in which the exit occurred. Less than 40% of Americans approve of how the exit was handled, with 49% saying U.S. troops should stay in Afghanistan until all Americans and Afghan allies are evacuated, as per the results of a pre-withdrawal survey conducted by Reuters/Ipsos poll (results of which were released on Monday).

With many vulnerable Afghans, citizens from third countries and up to 200 Americans still left in the country, Mr. Biden said on

Tuesday the administration had reached out 19 times to Americans in Afghanistan since March, with offers of help them evacuate.

Secretary of State [Antony] Blinken is leading the continued diplomatic efforts to ensure a safe passage for any American, Afghan partner, or foreign national who wants to leave Afghanistan," he said, adding that he would not take the Taliban at their word but by assessing their actions as regards their stated commitment to safe passage for these individuals. "...We have leverage to make sure these commitments are met," he said.

He said the U.S. had the ability to strike terrorists without boots on the ground ('over the ground capabilities') and warned the ISIS-K, the group that claimed responsibility for an attack that killed 170 civilians in addition to some U.S. troops. "And to ISIS-K: We are not done with you yet," he said.

In Tuesday's speech, Mr. Biden said the U.S. would continue to support and speak out for Afghanistan's people, particularly its women and girls, including via regional diplomacy and engagement, but was firm that the \$2.3 trillion military operation (a Brown University estimate that includes debt servicing costs) had to come

to 'change perception'

The Presidents spoke before the Afghan collapse

REUTERS WASHINGTON

In the last call between U.S. President Joe Biden and his Afghanistan counterpart, Ashraf Ghani, before the Taliban seized control of the country, the leaders discussed military aid, political strategy and messaging tactics, but neither of them appeared to be aware of or prepared for the immediate danger of the country falling to the militants, a transcript reviewed by Reuters shows.

The men spoke for roughly 14 minutes on July 23. On August 15, Mr. Ghani fled the presidential palace, and the Taliban entered Kabul.

Reuters reviewed a transcript of the presidential phone call and has listened to the audio to authenticate the conversation. The materials were provided on condition of anonymity by a source who was not authorised to distribute it.

In the call, Mr. Biden offered aid if Mr. Ghani could publicly project he had a plan to control the spiralling situation in Afghanistan. "We will continue to provide close air support, if we know what the plan is," Mr. Biden said. Days before the call,



the U.S. carried out air strikes to support Afghan security forces, a move the Taliban said was in violation of the Doha peace agreement.

The U.S. President also advised Mr. Ghani to get buyin from powerful Afghans for a military strategy going forward, and then to put a "warrior" in charge of the effort, a reference to Defence Minister General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi.

Mr. Biden lauded the Afghan armed forces, which were trained and funded by the U.S. government. "You clearly have the best military," he told Mr. Ghani. "You have 300,000 wellarmed forces versus 70-80,000 and they're clearly capable of fighting well." Days later, the Afghan military started folding across provincial capitals in the country with little fight against the Taliban.

In much of the call, Mr. Biden focused on what he called the Afghan govern-

ment's "perception" problem. "I need not tell you the perception around the world and in parts of Afghanistan, I believe, is that things are not going well in terms of the fight against the Taliban," he said. "And there is a need, whether it is true or not, there is a need to project a different picture."

Mr. Biden told Mr. Ghani that if Afghanistan's prominent political figures were to give a press conference together, backing a new military strategy, "that will change perception, and that will change an awful lot I think".

Mr. Biden's words indicated he didn't anticipate the insurrection and collapse to come 23 days later. "We are going to continue to fight hard, diplomatically, politically, economically, to make sure your government not only survives, but is sustained and grows," he said.

Mr. Ghani told Mr. Biden he believed there could be peace if he could "rebalance the military solution". But he added, "We need to move with speed." "We are facing a full-scale invasion, composed of Taliban, full Pakistani planning and logistical support, and at least 10-15,000 international terrorists, predominantly Pakistanis thrown into this," Mr. Ghani said.

In Panjshir, anti-Taliban forces repulse attacks

34 militants killed, 65 injured, they say

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PANJSHIR VALLEY

The Taliban on Wednesday called on fighters in the holdout bastion of the Panjshir Valley to lay down their arms, as the resistance movement said it had repulsed heavy attacks.

The rugged mountain valley with towering snowcapped peaks - which begins around 80 kilometres north of the capital Kabul – is the centre of Afghanistan's most important pocket of armed anti-Taliban forces.

The National Resistance Front (NRF), comprising anti-Taliban militia fighters and former Afghan security forces, have vowed to defend the enclave as the Islamist group sends fighters to encircle the area.

"My brothers, we tried our best to solve the Panjshir problem with talks and negotiations... but unfortunately all in vain," senior Taliban official Amir Khan Muttaqi said, in an audio message to the people of the Panjshir posted on Twitter.

"Now that the talks have failed and Mujahiddin (Taliban) have surrounded Panjshir, there are still people inside that don't want the problems to be solved peacefully," he added.

"Now it is up to you to talk to them," the Taliban message to the Panjshir people said. "Those who want to fight, tell them it is enough.

Bismillah Mohammadi, Afghanistan's Defence Minister before the government fell last month, said the Taliban had launched a renewed assault on Panjshir on Tuesday night.

"Last night the Taliban terrorists attacked Panjshir, but were defeated," Mr. Mohammadi tweeted on Wednesday, claiming that 34 Taliban were killed and 65

What did America achieve in Afghanistan in 20 years?

For the first time since October 2001, there are no U.S. troops in Afghanistan

STANLY JOHNY

For the first time since October 2001, there are no American troops in Afghanistan. While defending his decision to pull back the forces, U.S. President Joe Biden said on Tuesday he was left with only two options after the withdrawal agreement the Trump administration signed with the Taliban in February 2020 - either honour the deal or renege on it and send in more troops to continue the war. "I was not going to extend this forever war, and I was not extending a forever exit," he said.

So the forever war has come to an end. What did the U.S. gain from it?

Mr. Biden said on Tuesday the U.S. invaded Afghanistan not because it was ruled by the Taliban but because the September 11 attacks originated from Afghanistan. In early July, he said "America didn't go to Afghanistan to

nation-build". America's primary objectives were to disrupt al-Qaeda and capture or kill Osama bin Laden. The argument is that the Taliban were not America's main enemy and defeating them was not its primary objective.

While it's true that America went to Afghanistan because the 9/11 attacks originated from that country, Mr. Biden's assessment of the Taliban was not shared by his predecessors, as their actions suggest. The Taliban had offered to surrender on modest terms in December 2001, but President George W. Bush rejected the offer. America did not pull back from Afghanistan after the Taliban regime fell. America did not withdraw after bin Laden was killed in 2011 either. The U.S. stayed in Afghanistan, propping up the Islam-Republic because American leaders were of the view that a return of the



Taking control: A helicopter with a Taliban flag taking part in victory celebrations in Kandahar on Wednesday. • AFP

Taliban to power would derail the global war on terror. While it's still debatable

whether the Taliban have

NEWS ANALYSIS

changed over the past 20 years, American foreign policy thinking has clearly changed during this period. If the U.S. saw the Taliban, which hosted al-Qaeda, as part of the problem in 2001 and removing them from power as a key goal of the war on terror, in 2021, it ex-

tricated a victorious Taliban from the war on terror. The Taliban are now a problem of the Afghans, not of Americans, according to the Biden doctrine.

War on terror

When the U.S. invaded Afghanistan, it was touted as the first step in what Mr. Bush called a global war on terrorism. Where does that war stand now?

In 2001, al-Qaeda was largely concentrated in Afghanistan. The U.S. invasion and

the fall of the Taliban led to al-Qaeda's disintegration. The terrorist outfit was driven underground, but was not defeated. Over the years, new branches of al-Qaeda sprang up in different parts of the world. Of them, the deadliest was al-Qaeda in Iraq, which was led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The Jordan-born terrorist was killed in a U.S. strike in 2006, but the AQI transformed into the Islamic State of Iraq, which later became the dreaded Islamic State (IS) that declared a Caliphate and established a proto-state across Iraq and Syria in 2014.

Modest gains

The IS's physical infrastructure was destroyed by both coordinated and separate war efforts by a group of powers, including the U.S., Iran, Iraq, Kurdish and Shia militias, Syria and Russia. But the rump of the outfit continues to operate in parts of Syria and Iraq. The IS has also established provinces in other parts of the world, including the IS West Africa Province (ISWAP) and the IS Khorasan Province (ISKP) that claimed responsibility for the August 26 Kabul blasts in which about 200 people were killed, including 13 Americans. Al-Qaeda has also established a strong presence in Africa, particularly in the Sahel region, where they have carried out dozens of attacks in recent years, killing hundreds. So if al-Qaeda was an organised terrorist machinery concentrated in Afghanistan in 2001, it's now a decentralised amalgam that has metastasised across the world.

The U.S. can take credit for disrupting al-Qaeda's networks in Afghanistan which it thinks has neutralised the terrorists' capability to strike the American mainland – and for killing bin La den. But the question American policymakers and public faces is whether it was required to stay 20 years in Afghanistan, spend over \$2 trillion and lose over 2,300 soldiers to meet these modest objectives.

To contain food prices, Sri Lanka declares economic emergency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has declared an economic emergency to contain soaring inflation after a steep fall in the value of the country's currency caused a spike in food prices.

President Rajapaksa on Tuesday declared the state of emergency under the public security ordinance to prevent the hoarding of essential items, including rice and sugar. The emergency came into effect from midnight on Tuesday.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

China's new data security

law takes effect from Wed-

nesday – the latest effort to

tighten oversight of the

country's mammoth tech

seeks to tighten the leash on

China's tech giants and what

they do with information

from their hundreds of mil-

lions of users.

The broadly worded law

mulgated emergency regulations under the Public Security Ordinance on the supply of essential goods," presidential spokesman Kingsley Ratnayake told reporters.

"The President has pro-

Power to military

The government has appointed a former General as commissioner of essential services, who will have the power to seize food stocks held by traders and retailers and regulate their prices.

The military will oversee the action which gives power to officials to ensure that essential items, including rice and sugar, are sold at government-guaranteed prices or prices based on import costs at customs and prevent hiding of stocks, Mr. Ratnayake said.

The emergency move followed sharp price rises for sugar, rice, onions and potatoes, while long queues have formed outside stores because of shortages of milk powder, kerosene oil and cooking gas. The wide-ranging measure is also aimed at recovering credit owed to state banks by importers.

Over 4 bn don't have social protection: UN

Over half of all people in the world have no social protections, the United Nations said on Wednesday, even after the pandemic spurred countries to offer more services to their populations.

In a report on the state of social protection globally, the UN's International Labour Organization said that 4.1 billion people were living without any social safety net of any kind. Social protection includes access to health care and income security measures related especially to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity or the loss of the main breadwinner in a family, as well as extra support for fa-

In 2020, only 46.9% of the global population benefitted from at least one such protection, according to the report - ILOs first on the subject since 2017. That low rate came even as access to healthcare, sickness and unemployment benefits have more than ever proved their relevance dur-

PIMPRI CHINCHWAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CIVIL ENGINEERING G, B HO and BRTS DEPARTMENT **TENDER NOTICE No: - CIVIL/HO/54/3/2021-2022**

Offers by way of e-tendering (Percentage) are invited by the City Engineer, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation from contractors in

e-tendering system for following works

1) The contractor shall quote his Percentage offer on the Cost of work excluding Royalty and material testing charges as mentioned below 2) The offer for work shall be exclusive of GST. The GST at the applicable rate shall be paid separately by PCMC for work

Sr. No	Name of work	Estimated cost put to the Tender (Rs) (4+6)	Cost of Work excluding Royalty and Material testing charges (Rs)	Royalty (Rs)	Testing Charges (Rs)	Earnest money (Rs)	Security Deposit (Rs)	Time limit in calendar Months	Cost of Tender Document with G.S.T (non refundable) (Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
			Civil G	НО					
1.	Development of Roads by Concretization in Prabhag No.27 Rahatani Gaothan, Nakhatevasti area	12,42,08,302	12,40,59,952	6,25,857	1,48,350	6,21,042	62,10,415	24	37,430
			BRTS	;		•	•		
2.	Development of Dattamandir, Wakad DP road as per Urban Street Design in Prabhag No.25	61,09,64,754	60,49,83,804	39,57,664	59,80,950	30,54,824	3,05,48,238	30	74,704
			Civil B	НО					
3.	Construction and Development of 18.00M wide DP road and other road in Prabhag No.16 at Ravet SR.No.105 to 132	20,37,27,484	20,34,92,284	41,68,091	2,35,200	10,18,637	1,01,86,374	24	37,430

Time table for the tenders shall be as follows: Online sale of tenders Date 02/09/2021 to Date 29/09/2021 ast date of submission of tenders Date 29/09/2021up to 3.00 pm Pre Bid Meeting Date and Time Date 16/09/2021 at 3.00 pm for Sr.No.1 and 3 work Place of Pre Bid Meeting in the Office of City Engineer, 1st Floor, PCMC Main Building Pimpri, Pune - 411018 for Sr.No.2 work Place of Pre Bid Meeting in the Office of Joint City Engineer (BRTS), 1st Floor, PCMC Main Building Pimpri, Pune - 411018 Date 04/10/2021 at 03.00 Pm (if possible) Date of opening of tenders

The Municipal Commissioner PCMC reserves the right to accept or reject any tender partially or completely without any reason thereof. The details of above works, such as Security Deposit, Earnest Money Deposit, Terms & Conditions of the Tender and Schedule of works, are available on wel site www.pcmcindia.gov.in, http://mahatenders.gov.in. In case of any technical problem related to the tender document, the same can be referred to the NIC email support-eproc@nic.in or on telephone numbers 0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005,0120-627787

(Shrikant Savane) ADVT No. 1059 Joint City Engineer (BRTS) No: ENGG/TEN/D-HO/499/2021 Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Date :- 31/08/2021 Pimpri - 411 018

(Rajan Patil) City Engineer Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Pimpri – 411 018.

A ND-NDE

It also comes as fears

becoming increasingly dependent on cloud storage

grow over data security with government departments

Broad scope

Beijing rolls out new data law

Beijing has also flagged national security concerns as justification for the law. As Chinese tech firms look to branch out overseas, authorities fear domestic data will

end up in foreign hands. The law lays down the res-

of up to 10 million yuan (\$1.55 million) for a range of offences, including leaks and failing to verify the identity of buyers or sellers of information. Its scope is broad, and includes data stored and handled within China's borders as well as data abroad that could harm China's national security or the rights of its citizens.

ponsibilities of all compa-

nies and organisations han-

dling data. It stipulates fines

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

milies with children.

ing the pandemic.

MARKET WATCH

	01-09-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	57,338	-0.37
US Dollar	73.08	-0.11
Gold	46,123	-0.32
Brent oil	70.80	-3.03

Brent oil	70.80	-3.0
NIFTY 50		
		CHANG
Adani Ports		
Asian Paints		
Axis Bank		
Bajaj Auto		
Bajaj Finserv	16786.30	362.4
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	458.10	10.2
Hind Unilever		
ICICI Bank		
IndusInd Bank		
Infosys		
Indian OilCorp	110.75	0.1
ITC	209.50	1.8
JSW Steel	676.65	-10.9
Kotak Bank	1746.65	7.0
L&T	1686.40	14.2
M&M	769.90	23.4
Maruti Suzuki	6784.90	61.2
Nestle India Ltd.	19826.85	359.1
NTPC	115.40	0.5
ONGC		
	475.65	

Reliance Ind

State Bank

Sun Pharma.

Tata Steel

Tech Mahindra

UltraTech Cement

EXCHANGE RAT	TES .	
Indicative direct rate except yen at 4 p.m.		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.89	73.21
Euro	86.10	86.50
British Pound	.100.27	100.71
Japanese Yen (100).	66.04	66.33
Chinese Yuan	11.27	11.32
Swiss Franc	79.44	79.81
Singapore Dollar	54.11	54.35
Canadian Dollar	57.87	58.14
Malaysian Ringitt	17.54	17.63

... 2.50 ... 7.95

-39.05

-11.35

REUTERS

867.45

IN BRIEF



FM to chair GST Council meeting on Sept. 17

Finance Minister Nirmala
Sitharaman will chair the
45th meeting of the Goods
and Services Tax (GST)
Council on September 17 at
Lucknow, the Ministry said
late on Wednesday. The
Minister, who chairs the
Council, had assured States
that a special meeting of the
Council would be held to
discuss issues related to GST
compensation due to them.

PayPal says to evolve into commerce platform

PayPal, which recently shut down its domestic payments unit in India, on Wednesday said it continues to hire aggressively in the market, which is the 'bedrock' of its development capabilities. The company is working towards evolving from being a payments platform to a commerce platform, senior vice-president (omni payments) at PayPal, Jim Magats, said.

S.L. Jain takes charge as Indian Bank MD and CEO

CHENNAI,
Public sector lender Indian
Bank Ltd. on Wednesday said
that S.L. Jain has assumed
charge as MD & CEO in the
place of Padmaja Chunduru
who superannuated on
August 31. Prior to joining
Indian Bank, Mr. Jain was the
ED of Bank of Baroda. He has
been appointed for three
years with effect from the
date of assumption of office
on or after September 1, the
bank said in a filing.

NMDC saw higher sales, record output in August

HYDERABAD
NMDC produced 3.06 million
tonnes (MT) of iron ore and
registered sales of 2.91 MT in
August, an increase of 89%
and 63% respectively, from a
year earlier. It was the best
August-production
performance, the firm said in
a release on Wednesday. Iron
ore output at 15.02 MT and
sales of 15.67 MT up to
August this fiscal year are
44% and 45% higher,

respectively.

August manufacturing PMI shows recovery losing steam

Survey shows reading slipping to 52.3 from July's 55.3, input cost pressures linger

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

India's manufacturing recovery lost momentum in August with the survey-based Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) sliding to 52.3. from July's 55.3. as demand showed 'signs of weakness due to the pandemic' and input price pressures persisted. Growth in new orders softened, pushing the expansion below the long-term average.

With overall optimism weakening last month, there was a fresh pause on hiring in the sector that had resumed recruitment in July after shedding jobs for 15 months. A score below 50 on the IHS Markit index indicates a contraction. The PMI

India has urged utilities to

import coal despite having

the world's fourth-largest

reserves, with several power

plants on the verge of run-

ning out of fuel due to a

Coal-fired power ac-

counts for more than 70% of

India's electricity genera-

tion. Electricity generation

makes up three-fourths of

which may import coal for

blending, may explore

(ways) to enhance imports

of coal to tide over the cur-

rent crisis," the Power Mi-

nistry said in an August 30

Data from the Central

notice seen by Reuters.

"Thermal power plants,

India's coal consumption.

surge in power demand.

Govt. tells utilities to ship

in coal as demand surges

'Thermal units running out of stock'

Electricity

showed over half of the 135

coal-fired plants had less

than a week's supply of coal

left, of which 50 had fewer

than three days of coal left.

tion rose 16.1% in August,

while coal-fired output rose

23.7% from a year earlier, a

Reuters analysis of daily

load despatch data by grid

regulator POSOCO showed.

Overall electricity genera-

Six had run out of coal.

Authority



Job freeze: With overall optimism weakening, there was a fresh pause on hiring, PMI survey shows. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

had slipped to 48.1 in June, as the second COVID-19 wave took its toll.

Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit, said August saw the Indian manufacturing

sector extend its recovery, but growth lost momentum as demand weakened.

"Yet, factory orders and output rose across the consumer, intermediate and investment goods categories,"

'Fuel demand

recovery stays

patchy in Aug.'

India's fuel demand recov-

ery remained patchy in Au-

gust as petrol consumption

continued to rise but diesel

sales fell, preliminary data

from state fuel retailers

State-owned fuel retail-

ers sold 2.43 million tonne

of petrol in August, up

13.6% from August 2020. It

was 4.1% higher than pre-

COVID sales of 2.33 million tonne in August 2019.

most used fuel - rose 15.9%

to 4.94 million tonne dur-

ing August over the pre-

vious year, but was down

9.8% from August 2019.

Diesel consumption was

8% lower than pre-COVID

levels in first half of August.

Sales of diesel - the

showed on Wednesday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

she said. "The 12-month outlook for production remained positive, though confidence faded amid worries concerning the lasting scars of the pandemic and the adverse impact of rising costs on companies' finances parallel to a lack of pricing power," she explained.

Manufacturers' cost burdens have now been rising for 13 straight months, and were linked by producers to raw material scarcity and transportation problems.

"August data pointed to back-to-back increases in new export orders, but here too growth lost momentum. The pace of expansion was only marginal," the economics research firm added.

SBI raises ₹4,000 cr. via bonds at 7.72%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

State Bank of India (SBI) said it raised ₹4,000 crore via Basel-compliant Additional Tier 1 bonds at a coupon rate of 7.72%.

This is the first issuance of ATI bonds in the domestic market since SEBI put in place new regulations.

"The issue garnered overwhelming response from investors with bids in excess of ₹10,000 crore received against a base issue size of ₹1,000 crore which is an indicator of the trust the investors place on the bank," SBI said.

The bank said the coupon rate of 7.72% is the lowest pricing ever offered on such debt, issued by any Indian bank since the implementation of Basel III capital rules in 2013.

Power consumption rises 18.6% in August

'Third wave could dampen demand'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India's power consumption grew 18.6% in August to 129.51 billion units (BU) and remained higher than the pre-COVID level due to improved economic activities amid easing of lockdown curbs by States, according to Power Ministry data.

Power consumption in August last year stood at 109.21 BU, lower than 111.52 BU in the same month in 2019, as per the data.

Experts say the recovery in power demand and consumption in August is consistent and robust.

They are of the view that the recovery would further improve as many States have eased lockdown res-



trictions to boost economic activities after the number of new cases declined.

The only fear is that another wave of the pandemic can dampen this recovery in power consumption and demand, they said.

Peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day stood at 196.24 GW in August this year, which is 17.1% higher compared to a year earlier.

'Auto sales growth is healthy, but chip shortage is a worry'

Festivals to spur demand: TVS Motor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A majority of vehicle manufacturers posted strong growth in wholesales during August, and are betting on the festival season to help spur sales further. However, the shortage of semiconductors continues to impact production even as customer sentiment remains positive, they cautioned.

Maruti Suzuki said its domestic passenger vehicle (PV) sales rose to 1.13 lakh units, from 1.03 lakh a year earlier. Total sales, however, fell 4.6% at 1.30 lakh units due to a fall in exports.

"Sales volume of the company in August 2021 was affected due to electronic components shortage," Maruti said. Hyundai Motor India saw domestic sales rise 2.3% to 46,866 units and exports climbing 79% to 12,202.

Tata Motors said its domestic PV sales rose 51% to 28,018 units. However, sales declined 7% month-onmonth from 30,185 units in July. Domestic commercial vehicle (CV) sales also grew 55% to 26,172 units.

The semiconductor shortage continues to impact the auto industry globally and recent lockdowns in East Asia have aggravated the supply situation. Tata Motors is hence 'forced to moderate production and offtake volumes' in the coming months, the company said in a statement.

"The situation is fluid and we will continue to work to mitigate the impact of this and aim to meet our customer orders... the order book is strong," it added.

For Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M), PV sales increased



17% to 15,973 vehicles from a year earlier. However, commercial vehicle sales fell about 27% to 11,438 units.

"Supply of semiconductors continues to be a global issue for the auto industry and has been a major area of focus for us." M&M's tractor sales fell 15% to 19,997 units "due to high base effect". Hemant Sikka, president – Farm Equipment Sector, said, "With the festive period on the anvil, which also coincides with the harvesting season, we are anticipating robust demand in the coming months."

Two-wheeler sales dip

In two-wheelers, market leader Hero MotoCorp saw domestic sales dip 24% to 4.31 lakh units. Honda Motorcycles and Scooters India saw domestic sales slip 6% to about four lakh units.

TVS Motor said the domestic two-wheeler business registered sales of almost 1.8 lakh units compared with 2.18 lakh units a year earlier. "With pandemic restrictions easing and the festive season approaching, we expect the retails to improve significantly in the coming months," it said.

For Ashok Leyland, domestic sales grew 44% to 8,400 units. Bajaj Auto's CVs rose 91% to 14,624 units.

SEBI eases norms to boost liquidity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Markets regulator SEBI on Wednesday eased framework pertaining to time period for introducing liquidity-enhancement schemes on securities by stock exchanges.

SEBI, in 2014, permitted stock exchanges to introduce liquidity-enhancement schemes in equity cash and derivatives segments to enhance liquidity in illiquid securities.

Based on the experience of stock exchanges, it has been decided to modify the framework, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) said in a circular.

Under the scheme, brokers and other market intermediaries are given incentives to bring in liquidity and generate investor interest in securities with limited trading activity.

Investment scene looks optimistic: SBI Research

'70% of new projects from pvt. sector'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

State Bank of India's Economic Research Department said India's investment scenario looked optimistic and the private sector has started investing, with 70% of the new investments coming from the private sector. This, it said, was despite the prevalent risk of the third wave of COVID-19 gripping India.

"With the almost flat new announcements of around ₹11 trillion reported in FY21 as compared to ₹10.8 trillion in FY20, FY22 looks optimistic with around ₹5.6 lakh crore investment announcements made so far... (April-Aug), as per Projects Today," author of the report Soumya Kanti Ghosh, group chief economic adviser, SBI, said.

"Around 70% of this i.e. ₹3.84 lakh crore is coming



from private sector." As per the report, new project announcements scaled a new high in July with 988 projects worth ₹1.45 lakh crore.

The last instance when the number of new projects announced crossed the 900 mark was in January 2019 with 926 projecs. Sectors that reported fresh announcements include basic chemicals, iron & steel, plastic and plastic products, electronics, automobiles, non-conventional energy, roadways and real estate.

non-conventional energy roadways and real estate. Lapsed plans

Fund bought ₹1,000-cr. stake in 2016'

TVS family to buy back

CDPQ stake in TVS SCS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

TVS Supply Chain Solutions (TVS SCS) on Wednesday announced that TVS family members, along with their associates, would buy back stake from private equity firm CDPQ, having received approval from the Competition Commission of India.

The deal will allow the TVS family to consolidate its holdings in TVS SCS, the company said in a statement. It would also enable the firm to focus on scaling up business using 'technology and strong customer relationships', it added.

The repurchase by the TVS family (R. Dinesh and T.S. Rajam family and associates) reaffirms the company's growth potential, it



R. Dinesh

said. In 2016, Canadian pension fund CDPQ had bought a minority stake in TVS SCS for ₹1,000 crore. "With the global supply chain's centre of gravity shifting towards India and other ASEAN countries and the exciting future for the manufacturing and service sectors in India, TVS SCS is well placed to see exponential growth over the coming years," said Mr. Dinesh, MD, TVS SCS.

Lapsed plans can be revived till Oct. 22: LIC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

A special campaign of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to aid revival of lapsed policies will continue till October 22, it said.

The insurance major, which had rolled out the two-month long campaign on August 23, is also facilitating revival of policies at its satellite offices. Further, claim forms can be submitted at any of its branches across the country.

The market leader, with a share of 66.18% in First Year Premium (FYP) income and 74.58% in number of policies, sold 2.10 crore new plans in 2020-21.

crore new plans in 2020-21. It registered a 3.48% increase in new business in terms of FYP by collecting ₹1.84 lakh crore.



...

Can India rise from Leeds low?

Ashwin likely to be included on a pitch expected to aid the spinners

INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON

Vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane's wretched form and senior off-spinner R. Ashwin's possible inclusion will have the most significant impact on the Indian team's efforts to move on from its Leeds debacle when it takes on England in the fourth Test at The Oval from Thursday

India skipper Virat Kohli knows that all is not well with his batting unit and the biggest problem is the performance of its three middleorder stalwarts – the skipper himself, his deputy Rahane and Cheteshwar Pujara.

Pujara might have redeemed himself with a knock of 91 which was high on "intent quotient", but the same can't be said of Rahane, whose form is shaky despite a knock of 61 in the second innings at Lord's.

In all likelihood, Rahane would get another chance, but over the past two years, his inconsistency has hurt the team badly.

If Rahane is dropped, Hanuma Vihari has a better chance of coming in as he also bowls off-spin.

The Oval track has traditionally helped spinners and Ashwin is likely to get back into the side.

The form of rival skipper Joe Root, who has already tallied over 500 runs in just three games with a hat-trick of hundreds is another cause for concern for the Indians.

Prasidh included

Meanwhile, the selection committee, on a request from the team management, has added fast bowler Prasidh Krishna to the squad for the fourth Test.

The teams (from): India: Rohit Sharma, K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli (Capt.), Ajinkya Rahane (Vice-capt.), Hanuma Vihari. Rishabh Pant (wk). R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant

Can India end a 50-year wait?

India scripted its first Test victory and maiden series triumph on English soil at The Oval



1930-39 0 0 1940-49 1950-59 2 Alastair Cook 1960-69 0 0 **435**, **6** inns 1970-79 2 0 1980-89 0

2

0

0

0

2

3

THE REMARKABLE ONE

1990-99

2000-09

2010-19

■ Ajit Wadekar's

men won by four

wickets against

England at The

the final Test of

series, after the

a three-match

Oval in 1971,

0

0

3

Despite conceding

a 71-run lead, India

turned the match

on its head, thanks

to Chandrasekhar's

brilliant spell. After

skittling out Ray

Illingworth's side

Most wickets **Best bowling**

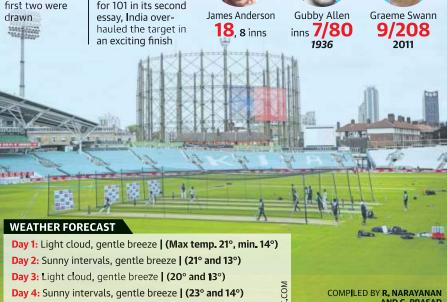
B.S. Chandrasekhar inns 6/38

Ian Bell

235, 2011

Gubby Allen





Sharma, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Shardul Thakur, Umesh Yaday, Wriddhiman Saha (wk). Abhimanyu Easwaran, Prithvi Shaw, Suryakumar Yadav and

Prasidh Krishna.

Day 5: Sunny intervals, gentle breeze | (26° and 15°)

England: Joe Root (Capt.), Moeen Ali. James Anderson. Jonny Bairstow, Sam Billings, Rory Burns, Sam Curran, Haseeb Hameed. Dan Lawrence. Dawid Malan, Craig Overton, Ollie Pone, Ollie Robinson, Chris Woakes and Mark Wood. Match starts at 3.30 p.m. IST.

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO

There's always room for improvement: Arun

India will put up a more spirited performance in Oval Test, says bowling coach

S. DIPAK RAGAV

India's bowling coach B. $oldsymbol{1}$ Arun defended the performance of his bowlers in the last match in Headingley, saying it was a one-off, especially considering the team was defending a low first innings score.

"In the last Test, yes, I would agree the English bowling looked a lot better. But I would like to see how they bowl when they are defending a total of 78," said Arun when asked about Inlacklustre bowling effort.

Not an excuse

"It is not an excuse for the bowlers, there is always room for improvement and we have looked at those areas. Ishant Sharma's form in the last game was a bit of concern but we have sorted things out. So it will be a different cup of tea in the Oval Test," he added.

Explaining the inclusion of Prasidh Krishna in the squad, he said, "It is a precautionary inclusion. Consi-



Dangerman: Arun feels the Englishmen are wary of Ashwin, especially when there is assistance from the track. • AP

dering the workload management issues, we needed to induct him into the Test team."

Discussing the chances of off-spinner R. Ashwin playing his first match of the tour at The Oval. Arun said the final call will be taken before the toss

"The history at Oval is that it takes spin but you also know the Englishmen are wary of Ashwin's abilities and what he could do if

there's any assistance from the track. I think the most realistic option would be to look at the track in the morning because anything can happen from now to tomorrow," said the former India

On the team's plans to contain England captain Joe Root who has made three centuries so far, Arun said, "We have given him pretty fast starts. Obviously, we will look deep into those areas

pacer.

precautionary scan that he

went through. All he had to do was wear the hospital dress. He took a picture of it and that created a big issue. There's nothing to it and Jadeja is absolutely fit

and stem those."

When asked about how the team can bounce back after the innings defeat in the last Test, he pointed out the comebacks in the series against Australia and England recently after losses in the first Test.

Done it in the past

"We have done it in the past. We have been bowled out for 36 (Adelaide 2020) and bounced back from that.

"Even in India, we suffered a big defeat to England in the first Test (Chennai). We can take confidence from what we have done in the past and I am sure you will see a much more spirited performance," said Arun.

'It always spins at Oval'

LALITH KALIDAS

England vice-captain Moeen Ali feels the Oval pitch will assist the spinners but doesn't expect exaggerated turn.

"I think in England, most grounds tend to spin a little bit anyway, obviously some more than the others. There's always some spin (at the Oval), but I am not expecting to be a dance on nails or something," Moeen said at a virtual media interaction on Wednesday.

He that England was surprised with the prolonged absence of India off-spinner R. Ashwin from the playing XI. "I think yes, a little bit maybe (absence of Ashwin). I also feel Iadeia is an amazing cricketer, he's one of my favourite players in the world. I would always have



Moeen. ■AFP

Jadeja in my side," said Moeen.

About being vice-captain, he said: "They considered me as somebody who can do the job. I don't see my spot cemented. I also know I am the vice-captain because Ben (Stokes) and Jos (Buttler) aren't there.'

Root reclaims top spot

Back at No. 1 after six years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Opener Rohit Sharma on Wednesday toppled his skipper Virat Kohli to become top-ranked Indian batsman after being placed fifth in the latest ICC men's Test Player Rankings. Rohit's scores of 19 and 59

in the third Test lifted him one place to a career-best fifth position, seven rating points more than Kohli for an aggregate of 773.

The last time someone other than Kohli was the topranked India batter was in November 2017, when Cheteshwar Pujara was second and Kohli fifth.

R. Jadeja and Ashwin held on to their third and fourth spots in the Test all-rounder



Joe Root. ■AFP

rankings, which is headed by West Indies' Jason Holder.

England captain Joe Root's sublime form against India has helped him reclaim + the top spot for batters after nearly six years.

Bangladesh bundles out NZ for 60, wins easily

Bangladesh defeated New Zealand for the first time in T20Is, skittling it out for 60 and winning by seven wickets in first match on Wednesday. **The scores:** New Zealand 60 in 16.5 overs (Mustafizur 3/13) lost to Bangladesh 62/3

Raikkonen to retire at the end of season

Kimi Raikkonen, who won the 2007 World championship for Ferrari, announced on Wednesday that he would retire from Formula One at the end of the season. The 41-year-old Finn is currently racing for Alfa Romeo. "This will be my last season," he said in an Instagram post. REUTERS

'Not possible to play the best XI always'

Important to rotate players in a packed schedule, says Australia coach Mott

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BRISBANE

Seven international matches, including a Test, in the space of 20 days will not allow Australia to field its best XI in all games against India in the upcoming series, head coach Matthew Mott said.

With Sydney and Melbourne being COVID-19 hot spots, the Indian team and 12 out of 18 Australian players are currently in a two-week hard quarantine. "Our sports science peo-

ple are quite rightly nervous," said Mott, referring to seam bowlers Ellyse Perry, Annabel Sutherland, Tayla Vlaeminck, Maitlan Brown and Stella Campbell, who are currently in quarantine.

"They won't bowl for 14 days and will go straight into a very congested schedule, so our management of the players has to be right on





Not so simple: Mott feels it will be an interesting battle between Mithali's India and Lanning's Australia given the complexities involved in selecting players. ■ FILE PHOTOS

point," he added.

"We'll try and make it work but it's going to be a really interesting series to see how we navigate around the complexities that will be

The schedule:

ODIs: Sept. 21, Great Barrier Reef Arena, Mackay (4.35 a.m.); Sept. 24: Great Barrier Reef Arena, Mackay (8.45 a.m.); Sept. 26: Great Barrier Reef Arena,

Test (day-night):

Sept. 30 to Oct. 3, Metricon Stadium, Gold Coast, 11.30 a.m. T20Is: Oct. 7, Metricon Stadium, Gold Coast, 2.10 p.m.: Oct. 9 and 10, Metricon Stadium, Gold Coast, 1.40 p.m. (all times IST).

Shuttler Pramod begins well

Tough day for Palak; India fails to win any medals

PARALYMPICS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

World No.1 Pramod Bhagat made an impressive start to his campaign in the men's singles badminton competition here on Wednesday.

World champion Pramod outwitted fellow Indian Manoj Sarkar 21-10, 21-23, 21-9 in his men's singles group A class SL3 opener that lasted 56 minutes.

Up against Japan's Ayako Suzuki, a gold medallist at the 2009 World Championships, 19-year-old Palak Kohli lost 4-21, 7-21 in just 19 minutes in a Group A women singles class SU5 match.

Palak and Pramod went down 9-21, 21-15, 19-21 against second seeds Lucas Mazur and Faustine Noel of France in a mixed doubles group B opener.



Pramod Bhagat. TWITTER /ODISHA SPORTS

In athletics, Amit Kumar and Dharambir ended fifth and eighth respectively in the F51 men's club throw competition with seasonbest efforts of 27.77m and 25.59m.

Swimmer Suyash Jadhav, who won gold at the 2018

Asian Para Games, endured a disappointing outing in the men's 100m breaststroke SB7 final as he was disqualified for a rule violation by 'performing more than one fly kick after the turn'.

Avani disappoints

Shooter Avani Lekhara, who became India's first female gold medallist two days ago, crashed out in the qualification round of the mixed 10m Air Rifle Prone SH1 event on Wednesday.

She finished a disappointing 27th with a score of 629.7, crashing out in the third round.

Other Indian para shooters in the men's event. Sidhartha Babu and Deepak Kumar witnessed a horrible outing, finishing 40th and 43rd respectively with scores of 625.5 and 624.9.

Djokovic overcomes Rune to kick-start calendar Slam quest

Cressy ousts Busta; Osaka gets a walkover in second round

U.S. OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE NEW YORK

World No.1 Novak Djokovic won without playing his best to reach the second round of the U.S. Open on Tuesday in his quest for a calendar-year Grand Slam and record 21st

The 34-year-old Serbiandominated much of the way in beating 18-year-old Danish qualifier Holger Rune 6-1, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-1 after two hours and 15 minutes in the night feature at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"It wasn't the best of my performances," Djokovic said. "At the same time, he played well in the second set when it mattered and I didn't serve well in the second set." Djokovic would complete

the first men's singles calendar-year Slam since Rod Laver in 1969 by winning the crown on the New York hardcourts. He would also break the deadlock for all-time men's Slam titles at 20 which he shares with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, both absent due to injuries.

Rune, ranked 145th, began cramping in the third set and struggled to finish. "From the third or fourth game in the third set, he couldn't move much," Djokovic said. "You could see he struggled a lot. I feel for him."

Djokovic won the first set in 26 minutes without facing a break point, fell behind 3-0 to start the second before battling into the tie-breaker, where Rune grabbed leads of 4-0 and 6-3. After two Djokovic service winners, he sent a backhand service return long to drop the set.

In the third set, Djokovic broke to lead 3-1 and Rune began getting treatments between games, grimacing at times and struggling to run for shots to the end.

qualifier French-born Maxime Cressy of USA fired 44 aces and saved four match points to upset Spanish ninth seed Pablo Carreno Busta 5-7, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6(7). World No.1 Ashleigh Barty,

coming off wins at Wimbledon and Cincinnati, began her chase for back-to-back Slam titles by defeating Russian Vera Zvonareva 6-1, 7-6



Big scalp: U.S. qualifier Maxime Cressy fired 44 aces to eliminate ninth seed Pablo Carreno Busta in a five-set thriller. • AP

(7). Meanwhile on Wednesday, defending champion Naomi Osaka advanced to

after Olga Danilovic withdraew with illness, on Wednesday as rain showers interthe third round by walkover, rupted play. 12th seed Simona Halep, ninth seed Garbine Muguruza and 20th seed Ons Jabeur also made the third round.

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Men: First round: 1-Djokovic (Srb) bt Rune (Den) 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-2, 6-1; Fritz (USA) bt 14-de Minaur (Aus) 7-6(4), 6-2, 1-6, 6-4; Seppi (Ita) bt Fucsovics (Hun) 2-6, 7-5, 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (13); Otte (Ger) bt 20-Sonego (Ita) 6-7(8), 7-5, 7-6(4), 7-6(1); Pospisil (Can) bt 28-Fognini (Ita) 2-6. 3-6. 6-1. 6-3. 7-6(4): 6-Berrettini (Ita) bt Chardy (Fra) 7-6(5), 7-6(7), 6-3; 31-Bublik (Kaz) bt Hanfmann (Ger) 6-0, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1; 17-Monfils (Fra) bt

Coria (Arg) 6-3, 6-2, 6-2. 13-Sinner (Ita) bt Purcell (Aus) 6-4, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2; Cressy (USA) bt 9-Busta (Esp) 5-7, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6(7); Harris (RSA) bt 25-Khachanov (Rus) 6-4, 1-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; 7-Shapovalov (Can) bt Delbonis (Arg) 6-2, 6-2, 6-3.

Women: Second round: 12-Halep (Rom) bt Kucova (Svk) 6-3, 6-1; 3-Osaka (Jpn) bt Danilovic (SRB), walkover; 9-Muguruza (Esp) bt Petkovic (Ger) 6-4, 6-2; 20-Jabeur (Tun) bt Osorio (Col) 6-0, 6-1; 5-Svit-

olina (Ukr) bt Masarova (Esp) 6-2, 7-5; 15-Mertens (Bel) bt Grammatikopoulou (Gre) 6-2, First round: 1-Barty (Aus) bt

Zvonareva (Rus) 6-1, 7-6(7); Tauson Cirstea (Rom) bt 29-Kudermetova (Rus) 7-6(5), 3-6, 6-0: Sorribes (Esp) bt 22-Muchova (Cze) 6-2, 7-6(3); 11-Bencic (Sui) bt Rus (Ned) 6-4, 23-Pegula (USA) bt Potapova

(Rus) 6-2, 6-2; 28-Kontaveit (Est) bt Stosur (Aus) 6-3, 6-0; 7-Swiatek (Pol) bt Loeb (USA) 4-Pliskova (Cze) bt McNally (USA) 6-3, 6-4; 14-Pavlyuchen-

kova (Rus) bt Riske (USA) 6-4, 6-2; 10-Kvitova (Cze) bt Hercog (Slo) 6-1, 6-2; 6-Andreescu (Can) bt Golubic (Sui) 7-5, 4-6, Fallen seeds:

Men: 9-Busta, 14-de Minaur, 20-Sonego, 25-Khachanov, 28-Fognini. 22-Muchova,

Women:

29-Kudermetova A ND-NDE

TV PICKS

Tokyo 2020 Paralympics: DD Sports & Eurosport (SD & HD), 7.30 a.m. onwards Sri Lanka vs South Africa: 1st ODI, Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 2.30 p.m. England vs India: Fourth

Test, day 1, Sony Six & Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. **US Open 2021**: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 8.30 p.m. & 4 a.m. (Friday)

European 2022 WC Qualifiers: Sony Ten 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

IN BRIEF



Tamim Iqbal withdraws from T2O World Cup

Bangladesh opening batsman Tamim Iqbal on Wednesday announced he is unavailable for selection for the upcoming T20 World Cup slated to be played in the UAE this year. ANI

Mohd. Arif in fine form

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Mohd. Arif unleashed two ultimate slams and a white slam to dominate the proceedings in the third round of champions league in the Indian online carrom challenge, organised by All India Carrom Federation.

Representing Uttar Pradesh, Arif cleared the eight boards missing 17 shots in all. His Universal slams, the clearance of both white and black along with the queen without a miss, in the second and fifth boards fetched him 20 bonus points, apart from five more for the white slam on the fourth board.

Thus, he had a net score of -8 for the round. He jumped into the lead after three rounds with a cumulative score of 42 points, a clear 20 ahead of Abdul Rahman.

Yogesh Dhongade and Mohd. Ghufran followed with 76 points while Riyaz Akbar Ali (77), Vikas Dharia (79), Abhishek Chavan (84) were breathing down the neck of the leaders in the race for the four semifinal

Sheikh withdraws

The leader of the first two rounds, Mohammed Sheikh of Karnataka, had to withdraw as his board not meet specifications.

In the women's section. two-time World champion Rashmi Kumari led with 96 points, 30 ahead of the reigning World champion S. Appoorwa. S. Shainy (129), Nidhi Gupta (130), Naga Jothi (131), Deepa Naik (139), Aakanksha Kadam (140), Kavya Shree (148) were the others aspiring for the semifinal slots.

The top four in the men's and women's sections, after the fourth round of the Champions league, will make the knock-out stage.

Manika Batra reiterates her stand

Says she wants personal coach to be court-side during tournaments

TABLE TENNIS

K. KEERTHIVASAN CHENNAI

Manika Batra, India's top woman paddler, is clear that she wants her personal coach Sanmay Paranjape to be court-side during the Asian table tennis championships in Doha from September 28 to October 5.

The 2018 Commonwealth Games singles champion insisted that it is not an issue as having a personal coach involves 'no cost' to the Table Tennis Federation of India

Happen naturally

"I think it should happen naturally. TTFI has never sent or paid for the coach or even the physio I have travelled with," said Manika, ranked 56th in the world, to The Hindu on Wednesday.

"In the team event, the other coach is fine but after that, we have a singles event, where I would want my coach to be there in every



No backing down: Manika Batra feels that the presence of the coach is a basic requirement of every player in an individual sport. • REUTERS

tournament and I think this is a basic requirement of every player in an individual

"So I really wish the problems aren't there for anyone and the best chance to play is made for the country," she added.

It is reliably learnt that Manika has replied to the show-cause notice issued by

TTFI and wants justice. "I hope the TTFI is fair and I am hopeful and wish they take some steps for justice. I am and have always been focused on my effort and the work we have to put in to give the best for India," she

Tough competition

Manika said the competition in the Asians will be tough and said that it would be good preparation for the 2022 Asian Games. "At the Asian championships, I will try to give my best and as you all know Asia is a very special continent so it will be a good outing for all of us to give our best and prepare for the bigger events like the Asian Games," she said.

According to Manika, Indian women paddlers have improved as they travel regularly and train hard with their coaches. "I will say that the overall game has improved as the girls work hard with their coaches in India or travel abroad for training. So the results are seen in the level of the game. Let's say I am willing to be a part of the growth and let's hope our [Indian] team does well," she

CA still hopes to host Afghanistan Test

Preparations proceeding as planned

CRICKET

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Cricket Australia says it is still hoping a planned Test match against Afghanistan will go ahead, despite the Taliban takeover of the country and acute uncertainty over their rule.

The governing body said preparations for the one-off match in Hobart beginning Nov. 27 were proceeding as planned.

"Cricket Australia's planning for the historic first Test match between Australia and Afghanistan in Hobart is well underway," CA said on its website late Tuesday.

"There is goodwill between CA and the Afghanistan Cricket Board to make the match happen."

The match was originally slated for late last year but was postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

men's 4x400m relay at the

2016 Rio Olympics, in a chat

CA was responding to reported comments from the Taliban saying the Afghanistan team's schedule would not be interrupted.

'Good relations'

"In the future, we want good relations with all countries," the deputy head of the Taliban's cultural commission Ahmadullah Wasiq told Australia's SBS televi-

"When good relations are established, Afghan players can go (to Australia) and they can come here."

The rescheduled match in the Tasmanian State capital will take place just after the ICC T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in which both Australia and Afghanistan are set to play.

The Australians will use the Test as a warm-up for its home Ashes series against England beginning in December.

Jeevan-Purav duo enters last eight

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU ST. TROPEZ (FRANCE)

Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Purav Raja overcame Mathias Bourgue and Valentin Royer of France 4-6, 6-2, [10-5] in the doubles prequarterfinals of the €44,820 Challenger tennis tournament on Wednesday.

In the €44,820 Challenger in Como (Italy), sixth seed Sumit Nagal lost 4-6, 6-7(4) to Andrey Kuznetsov of Russia in the first round.

Other results: \$15,000 ITF men, Allershausen, Germany: Singles (first round): Manish Sureshkumar bt Adrian Oetzbach (Ger) 3-6, 6-4, 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF men, Cairo, Egypt: Singles (first round): Valerio Aboian (Arg) bt Nitin Kumar Sinha 6-4, 6-1

Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Quentin Folliot (Fra) & Fermin Tenti (Arg) bt Noppadol Noikor (Tha) & Arjun Mahadevan 6-2,

\$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Gabriele Bosio (Ita) & Lorenzo Claverie (Ven) bt Adil Kalyanpur & Rishi Reddy 7-5,

\$60,000 ITF women, Collonge-Bellerive, Switzerland: Singles (first round): Jessika Ponchet (Fra) bt Sowjanya Bavisetti 6-0. 6-0. \$25,000 ITF women, Vienna,

Austria: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Veronika Bokor & Irina Dshandshgava (Aut) bt Kerstin Pecki (Aut) & Saumya Vig 6-2, 6-7(5), [10-6].

\$15,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Ma YeXin (Chn) & Moyuka Uchiyama (Jpn) bt Sharma-Balu & Sravya Shivani Chilakalapudi 6-3, 6-3,

Quartermiler Anilda Thomas working on a comeback

Olympian's goal is a spot in the Indian relay team for next year's Asian Games

ATHLETICS

STAN RAYAN

Just three years ago, India won the women's 4x400m relay gold at the Jakarta Asian Games but this year the country could not even field a team for the World Relays in Poland and failed to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.

There are three major events lined up next year -World Championships (USA), Asian Games (China) and Commonwealth Games (England) - and Olympian Anilda Thomas, who is now married to Jibin Reji and has a 15-month-old son Evan Sebastian, is dusting her spikes and working on a comeback after two and half years.

the Indian women's relav team has offered her hope. "I've started jogging at the

vananthapuram and I'm

houses who head into the au-

in charge of Germany after 15

years under Joachim Low.

Hansi Flick is the new man

Germany, however, will be

without captain Manuel

Neuer and forward Thomas

tumn with new coaches.

planning to join coach P.B. Jaikumar's camp in a week. Next year's Asiad is the big Poojappura ground in Thirumotivation," said Anilda,

Second innings: The dismal state of the Indian women's relay

team has offered Anilda some hope. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Wednesday. "If I can run the 400m in something like 53s, I have a good chance of getting back into the Indian team," said the 28-year-old whose personal best 52.40s came in New Delhi in 2016. Give it a try

"Because of the long break, I don't know how successful I will be. But I want to give it a try. I was in the national camp till 2018.'

In April, the AFI withdrew its women's 4x400m relay team from the World Relays as its top runners were either injured or had fitness issues. Later, the country was forced to miss the World Relays altogether as many nations banned flights from Universities in Kerala fre-

quently throw up quality quartermilers and Assumption College's V.K. Vismaya entered the national camp through this route in 2017 and a year later ran for the gold-winning Indian team at the Jakarta Asian Games.

P.T. Usha's trainee Tintu Luka was also a part of the Asian Games gold-winning team in 2014 (apart from being a former Asian 800m champion) while another trainee, former Asian 400m silver medallist Jisna Mathew helped India qualify for the Tokyo Olympics in the mixed relay after finishing seventh in the 2019 Doha

2022 could be a year of opportunities for Anilda.

European champ Italy still has some unfinished business

And the dismal state of

Uphill task for the Dutch; Germany will look to get back on track without key players

WC QUALIFIERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

For Italy it is back to business less than eight weeks after its Euro 2020 triumph. The Azzurri will take the acclaim of their own supporters when they play Bulgaria in Florence in a World Cup qualifier. Roberto Mancini's team

cannot afford to rest on its laurels because until it has secured qualification for the finals in Qatar, it will not have completely erased the memory of its failure to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

Italy is unbeaten in 34 games - including winning its first three qualifiers for



Challenging start: Louis van Gaal has been given the job of

Qatar back in March – and

Italy's game on Sunday in

reviving the Netherlands' fortunes. • AFF

now it faces three more matches in eight days with a trip to Switzerland and a home meeting with Lithuania also on the agenda.

Muller who are both injured and ruled out of Thursday's qualifier against Liechten-

Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno will deputise for Neuer, Basel against Switzerland, its who sat out training all week biggest rival in Group C, will with an ankle knock. Flick is hopeful he will be therefore be crucial.

fit for for their next qualifier At the moment the biggest European names with work against Armenia in Stuttgart. to do are the Netherlands and Germany, two power-

Leno to deputise

The Netherlands, which also failed to qualify for the last World Cup, sacked Frank de Boer after going out of Euro 2020 in the last 16 and has reappointed Louis van Gaal.

who ran for India in the wo-

The man who led the Oranje to the 2014 World Cup semifinals takes over a team currently trailing a point be-

hind Group G leader Turkey. It could be a challenging start to the 70-year-old Van Gaal's third stint as national coach as the Netherlands plays Erling Haaland's Norway in Oslo before hosting Montenegro and Turkey.

For England it is all about putting the pain of its Euro final defeat behind it as it faces potential pitfalls away in Hungary and Poland, either side of a home meeting with Andorra.

India takes on Nepal

As part of SAFF C'Ships preparations

FOOTBALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KATHMANDU

The Indian men's football team will kick start its preparations for the next month's SAFF Championships in Maldives with the first of the two international friendly matches against Nepal here on Thursday. The five-team SAFF Championships will be held from Oc-

tober 3 to Oct. 13 in Male. Besides India, the other participating teams are Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, hosts Maldives and Nepal.

"We are happy to be here and happy to be together again. These two international friendlies will help us

prepare for the SAFF Championship in the Maldives next month," India's head coach Igor Stimac said in a release. "I just know these games will be good and we need to learn on the pitch."

The second friendly will be played on Sept. 5.

This will be the first time India will feature in an international game since playing Afghanistan in its final group match of the 2018 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup joint-qualifiers in Qatar on June 15. With dark clouds hovering in the sky, rain threat looms large over the match. The pitch conditions at the practice ground were already tough because of torrential downpour.

Brazil missing key EPL players

Situation not so dire for Argentina in terms of personnel

ASSOCIATED PRESS SAO PAULO

Brazil will be missing nine of its players from the English Premier League for its next three World Cup qualifiers, including Thursday's clash at Chile.

But second place Argentina expects to have four of its England-based players at Venezuela on the same day. FIFA has told South American soccer body CONME-

BOL there will be consequences for clubs who don't release players as required. Brazil leads with six wins in six matches, but few ana-

lysts are taking any risks predicting who will play against seventh place Chile in Santiago on Thursday. The first training sessions in Sao Paulo did not offer any hints.

A win in Santiago could put Brazil on the verge of



qualification for next year's tournament in Qatar. If coach Tite's team brings three points from Chile and beats Argentina and Peru at home it will have 27 points after nine matches.

Second place Argentina, with 12 points, will have four Premier League players for

the match in Caracas. Captain Lionel Messi,

who finally lifted a major trophy with Argentina, will play for his country for the first time as a Paris Saint-Ger-Also Thursday, third place

Ecuador will host Paraguay. Colombia will travel to Bolivia. And Peru will host Uruguay, which will be without Edinson Cavani and the injured Luis Suarez.

Ansu Fati to slip into Messi's famous '10' shirt

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Barcelona's 18-year-old striker Ansu Fati is to inherit the number 10 shirt worn for years by Argentina legend Lionel Messi, the club said on Wednesday.

In a short clip published by the Catalans on social media, the teenager is thrown a blank shirt which he looks at quizzically before holding it up to the camera, where it is suddenly emblazoned with his name and the number

"Our new number 10, made in La Masia," the caption reads, referring to the club's prestigious youth academy which Fati joined when he was just 10-years-old. Before Messi, Barca's



number 10 was worn by other players like Ronaldinho, Rivaldo or

Romario, all Brazilians.

Fati, who was born in Guinea-Bissau, came to Spain when he was just seven, starting off at Seville before moving to Barcelona's youth academy in 2012.

Yashas Chandra's team wins



Best of the lot: Yashas Chandra's team, which won the Pro-Am event. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GOLF

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Yashas Chandra of Mysuru led his team to victory at the Pro-Am event of the Vooty & Haldi-sponsored Golconda Masters Telangana Open at the Golconda Golf Course here on Wednesday.

Yashas' team comprised Sanjay Chowdary Gaddipati, Nikhil Mathur and Sameer Maheendra and posted a score of 52.5.

Olympian and defending champion Udayan Mane and his team comprising Akash Reddy, Rahul Khanna and K. Sridhar was the runner-up with 53. The contest for the

the pin on hole No.7 was won by Sanjay Kamtam, who landed it within six feet and eight inches of the pin. The prize for the straight-

Incredible India closest to

est drive on hole No.5 went to N. Ashok Reddy who landed his drive within two feet and 10 inches from the line on the centre of the fairway.