



Centre urges States to help in lowering the prices of edible oils

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'When manipulated on social media, citizens distrust everything'

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In 'Mann ki Baat', PM expresses gratitude to health workers

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Vazquez, Alba score as Real beats Barcelona in El Clasico

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IN BRIEF



Navlakha's phone calls barred, says partner

NEW DELHI
Activist and journalist Gautam Navlakha, who was arrested in the Bhima Koregaon case in 2020, has recently been shifted to a high-security section of the Taloja jail in Navi Mumbai and not allowed to call his family and lawyers, said his partner, Sabha Husain on Sunday.

STATES PAGE 6

Lalu arrives in Patna, may campaign in bypolls

PATNA
Rashtriya Janata Dal president Lalu Prasad on Sunday reached Patna after over three-and-a-half years. He was accompanied by his wife Rabri Devi, daughter Misa Bharti and other family members. Mr. Prasad is likely to campaign for the RJD candidates in the bypolls scheduled for October 30 at Tarapur in Munger and Kusheshwarthan in Darbhanga districts.

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EDUCATION PLUS PAGE 7

J&K now free of strong-arm tactics by three families: Shah

'Any grassroots representative can now aim to become Union Minister or CM'

PEERZADA ASHIQ JAMMU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who is on a three-day tour of J&K, on Sunday said *dadagiri* (bullying) by three families had ended in Jammu and Kashmir, and any grassroots representative could now aim to become a Union Minister or even the Chief Minister of the Union Territory (UT).

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the foundations of grassroots representation in J&K where 30,000 *panches* and *sarpanches* were elected and tehsil and zila-level elections were held for the first time in 70 years. *Dadagiri* of three families will not work now. Any *panch* or *sarpanch* can become a Union Minister or even Chief Minister," Mr. Shah said, in his speech at Jammu's Bhagwati Nagar, in a veiled reference to the National Conference (NC), the Congress and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Investment inflow

He said that when the Centre introduced a new industrial policy, the three families, which exploited J&K, used to mock who would come to invest in the Union Territory.

"Due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts, ₹12,000 crore of investment



Seeking blessings: Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his visit to a gurdwara in Jammu on Sunday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

has come till now to J&K. We aim at ₹51,000-crore investments by 2022," he said.

On the security situation, Mr. Shah said the civilian deaths had come down in J&K during BJP rule.

"A total of 208 people were killed per year between 2004 and 2014. We saw 2,081 people lose their lives between 2004 and 2014. From 2014 to September 2021, 239 people lost their lives. We're not satisfied as we want to build a situation where nobody loses their lives and terrorism completely ends. The Centre is committed to saving the lives of the people of

J&K and end terrorism," Mr. Shah said.

He described the reading down of Article 370 in 2019 as a step to achieve the dream of leaders like Prem Nath Dogra and Syama Prasad Mukherjee, who believed in the slogan "*ek desh, ek vidhan, ek nishan*" (one nation, one law, one symbol).

"It's because of PM Modi we were able to realise the dream of Mukherjee and ensured his sacrifice did not go waste. Justice was delivered to Jammu, which will no more be sidelined. There will be neither injustice any

Pak. prisoner killed in Poonch

An arrested Pakistani terrorist was killed and three security personnel were injured on Sunday when militants opened fire on a joint search party of the Army and the police inside a forest in Poonch district of Jammu & Kashmir, officials said. Heavy firing and explosions were reported from the Bhatta Durrian forest of Mendhar, forest areas of Surankote (Poonch) and Thanamandi (Rajouri), where a search operation is on. ▶ PAGE 10

more nor any politics of appeasement," Mr. Shah said.

The Minister said J&K had finally been on the path of development. "No one will be allowed to disturb the era of development. Youth from J&K need to work for the development and defeat the sinister designs," he said.

Mr. Shah inaugurated the new campus of the IIT, Jammu and laid the foundation stone of a medical college. He also visited the forward areas in Makwal area and interacted with local people.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10
CIVILIAN KILLED PAGE 10

Punjab Congress fault lines widen

Manish Tewari, Sidhu spar on Twitter

SANDEEP PHUKAN NEW DELHI

The turmoil in the Punjab Congress resurfaced on social media on Sunday, with Lok Sabha member Manish Tewari describing the party's situation in Punjab as a "chaotic daily soap opera" while Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Navjot Singh Sidhu asserted that he would not let the political discourse deviate from "real issues".

"...In my 40 years plus in @INCIndia I have never seen such chaos & anarchy as what is playing out in @INCPunjab today. Repeated open defiance of AICC [All India Congress Committee] by a PCC President, colleagues squabbling publicly with each other like children," Mr. Tewari tweeted on Sunday.

'Daily soap opera'

"For the past 5 months it is @INCPunjab versus @INCPunjab. Do we think that people of Punjab are not disgusted by this daily soap opera? Irony is that those who complained loudest of transgressions & aberrations were unfortunately & continue to be worst offenders themselves," he added.

Tweets from Mr. Tewari, known to be close to former Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh (retd.), came in response to the AICC's form-



Navjot Singh Sidhu

er Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat's interview, in which Mr. Rawat claimed that Capt. Amarinder was replaced because the MLAs were restless and that leaders like Mr. Tewari didn't fully "understand the ground realities".

The Lok Sabha member also said that history would record the work of the Committee (Mallikarjun Kharge-headed panel) to address grievances of the MLAs as "a serious error of judgement".

"Where is progress on the issues that agitated these MLAs & other eminences - Bargari, Drugs, Power PPA's, illegal sand mining. Has there been any movement forward?" asked Mr. Tewari.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

China's new law 'formalises' its LAC actions

ANANTH KRISHNAN HONG KONG

China's legislature has adopted a new border law, to take effect on January 1, that calls on the state and military to safeguard territory and "combat any acts" that undermine China's territorial claims.

The law was first proposed in March this year, a year into tensions that erupted along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) mobilised two divisions in forward areas and carried out multiple transgressions.

China has unresolved border disputes with India and Bhutan. The new law, observers said, would formalise some of China's recent actions in disputed territories with both India and Bhutan, including the PLA's massing of troops in forward areas along the India border, multiple transgressions across the LAC, and the construction of new "frontier villages" along the border with Bhutan.

The legislature, which is largely ceremonial and controlled by the Communist Party, on Saturday "voted to adopt a new law on the protection and exploitation of the country's land border areas," the Xinhua news agency said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Graft charge against NCB officials in Aryan case

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE PUNE

In a twist in the Aryan Khan drug racket case, a witness has alleged that he was made to sign on blank papers by Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) authorities and that he reportedly overheard an alleged pay-off of ₹8 crore to

the NCB's Mumbai zonal director, Sameer Wankhede. However, the NCB has denied the allegations.

These revelations were made in a notarised affidavit by Prabhakar Raghooji Sail, 40, who claimed that he had worked as a bodyguard for K.P. Gosavi, allegedly the

'private investigator' whose selfie with Aryan Khan, son of actor Shah Rukh Khan, after the young Khan was taken into custody on October 2, went viral. Mr. Sail's video, in which he recounted his revelations made in the affidavit, was widely circulated on social media on Sunday.

In the affidavit, Mr. Sail claimed that Mr. Wankhede had instructed a member of his staff "to take his signature on 10 blank papers" on the intervening night of October 3-4 (a day after the alleged cruise drug bust on October 2).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Right wing activists attack web series set in Bhopal

A CORRESPONDENT BHOPAL

Filmmaker Prakash Jha allegedly faced an ink attack and at least three members of his production unit were beaten up when they were shooting for the upcoming web series - *Ashram 3* - in Bhopal on Sunday evening.

Tension gripped Bhopal's Old Jail when Bajrang Dal activists entered the premises where the shooting was under way. The activists raised slogans against Mr. Jha and Bobby Deol, the lead actor of the web series, assaulted some members of the crew and damaged vehicles of the production unit. According to unconfirmed sources, the attack was led by Bajrang Dal office-bearer Sushil S.

Speaking to the media outside the jail after the incident, Mr. Sushil said, "Ink has been thrown on Prakash Jha, whose web series *Ashram* is hurting Hindu sentiments. We want Prakash Jha to change the name of the web series."

The Old Jail is located in Arera Hills, considered to be a highly secured area where the State secretariat, Assembly complex, District Court and BSNL Telephone Exchange are located.

"DIG, Bhopal, Irshad Wali is personally monitoring the situation," an official said. The police is yet to receive a complaint from Mr. Jha and his team.

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Heroin seizure takes the lid off inter-State drug cartel network

HC rejects bail plea of man from West Bengal, who allegedly is part of the syndicate

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The seizure of 10 kg of crude heroin from two persons near Nigambodh Ghat on Ring Road last year by the special cell of Delhi Police has laid bare a well-oiled network of inter-State drug cartel operating between Manipur, West Bengal, and Delhi.

The details of the inter-State drug network came out in a judgment delivered by the Delhi High Court last week in which it rejected the bail plea of a man from Malda in West Bengal, who allegedly was also part of the cartel.

Tip-off and seizure

On June 22, last year, the special cell got a tip-off that one Md Samiul alias Raj and Md Mukhtiyar, both residents of West Bengal, were bringing heroin from Manipur to Delhi. The special cell was informed that the duo would be supplying heroin at Nigambodh Ghat on Ring Road towards ISBT Kashmir Gate and they would be in a pick-up vehicle.

A raiding party was set up. About 11.30 a.m., one pick-up van was spotted coming from Yamuna Bazar flyover. The vehicle was stopped and the two people who boarded the vehicle were overpowered.



After serving notices under Section 50 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, a search of their bags was carried out. Five kg of heroin was seized from a black backpack carried by Mr. Samiul while another five kg was found in a black backpack carried by Mr. Mukhtiyar.

A case was registered. During investigation, the duo revealed that they were part of a narcotics syndicate. They also said that they worked for one Manju Didi, a resident of Manipur, and the seized heroin was taken from her. The duo claimed that the contraband was crude heroin.

They further said that they had been working in the heroin trade for the last one to one-and-a-half years with Manju Didi and they had supplied the drug to Abul Kalam alias Sultan, a resident of Malda in West

Bengal.

Code words

The special cell told the court that on receipt of information, some mobile numbers were put on surveillance after obtaining requisite permissions. After monitoring the interception, it was revealed that all the accused were communicating with their associates in code words.

On June 27, 2020, Mr. Samiul was made to call Mr. Kalam from his mobile number about the supply of four kg of heroin. The next day, a special cell team arrested Mr. Kalam in West Bengal and later, brought him to the Capital. However, during a search, no drugs were seized from his possession.

Further investigation revealed that all the accused had taken SIM cards by furnishing fictitious addresses so that they could not be traced. Mr. Kalam's mobile number was found in the name of one Phutu Tudu, a resident of Shampur Tapan village, Dakshin Dinajpur, West Bengal. On verification, Mr. Phutu Tudu said that he had never purchased the said number and it did not belong to him.

Similarly, the mobile number found with Mr. Samiul was in the name of one Kanai

Mahanta of Gangarampur Naya Bazar, Dakshin Dinajpur. On verification, it was revealed that no person in the name of Kanai Mahanta resided in the village.

Bail rejected

Grant or rejection of bail under the NDPS Act is governed by Section 37 of the Act.

On behalf of Mr. Kalam, it was argued that no contraband was seized from his possession and that he was arrested based on the disclosure statement of Mr. Samiul and Mr. Mukhtiyar.

Justice Subramonium Prasad, however, said that the facts of the present case disclosed that the accused had taken mobile numbers on the basis of fictitious addresses so that they could not be traced.

"All this indicates that the petitioner (Mr. Kalam) and his associates are part of the well-organised syndicate and are involved in inter-State transport, supply and sale of drugs," the High Court said.

"Material placed at this juncture is sufficient to indicate that the petitioner (Mr. Kalam) herein is part of the criminal conspiracy to commit offences under the NDPS Act," Justice Prasad said while rejecting his bail.

Home guard sustains gunshot injuries in east Delhi

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A home guard sustained gunshot injuries after a few people, who were caught slaughtering a cow in east Delhi's Madhu Vihar, fired upon him and a head constable, the Delhi police said on

Sunday.

DCP (East) Priyanka Kashyap said around 4 a.m. on Sunday, some passersby informed the police picket staff that cow slaughtering was taking place. Head constable Naveen Kumar and home guard Joginder rushed

to the spot and tried to stop the people involved in it. However, they resisted and tried to flee in their four-wheeler.

The policemen intercepted them, but the accused hit their bike and the duo fell down, the DCP said, adding

that they also fired upon the police party, injuring Mr. Joginder. He is out of danger, the DCP said.

A case was registered. A few suspects have already been identified and raids are being conducted to arrest them.

Two days after minor's rape, 20-year-old held in Haryana

Accused was previously involved in another case of rape: police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Two days after a seven-year-old girl was allegedly sexually assaulted in central Delhi's Ranjit Nagar, the Delhi police on Sunday arrested a 20-year-old man in Haryana in connection with the incident.

The accused has been identified as Dinesh Shah, a resident of Raghuraj Nagar. After the incident of rape was reported on Friday, a case under the relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the POCSO Act was registered at Ranjit Nagar police station and a police team was constituted.

DCP (Central) Shweta Chauhan said that the police checked footage from around 800 CCTV cameras and zeroed in on the suspect. "It was found that the suspect was neither related to the victim nor he was a resident of the area. The police even did not have his mobile number," she said.

With the help of dossiers, local sources and technical surveillance, the suspect was identified by the police team. The DCP also said that another team of the Central District found out that the accused had been arrested in another case of rape. He was on an interim bail in that

case.

After raids were conducted at all the possible hideouts of the accused, Mr. Shah tried to flee but the police tracked him till Rohtak district in Haryana where he was eventually nabbed, Ms. Chauhan said.

In a CCTV footage, the girl could be seen crossing the street alone, but a little while later, the accused could be seen walking with her and talking to the child. After the girl went home and narrated the incident to her mother, the latter approached the police. The girl, who was admitted to a hospital, is now stable.

HC denies bail to woman found with 600gm of methamphetamine

Clean and tidy track record does not absolve you, says judge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has refused bail to a woman in a case under the anti-drug law, saying that a "clean and tidy track record" would not absolve her from being in possession of 600 gram of methamphetamine, it said.

"An uneducated person may claim no knowledge of the substance found in his or her possession and may raise a defence of the substance being planted on them, but being a highly educated person, there is a greater presumption that carrying large quantities of narcotics is a crime and that it would entail consequences in law which could be harsh and irrevocable," the judge said in the order, dismissing the petitioner's bail plea.

The court also noted that the petitioner's disclosure statement resulted in the arrest of two Nigerian accused

persons, who were found living illegally in India on fake passports and possessing narcotics.

"The clean and tidy track record of the petitioner does not absolve her from being in possession of 600 gram of methamphetamine," it said.

"An uneducated person may claim no knowledge of the substance found in his or her possession and may raise a defence of the substance being planted on them, but being a highly educated person, there is a greater presumption that carrying large quantities of narcotics is a crime and that it would entail consequences in law which could be harsh and irrevocable," the judge said in the order, dismissing the petitioner's bail plea.

The petitioner was arrested

in February 2018 after the police received a tip-off that she would be travelling to Mumbai by train from Hazrat Nizamuddin Station, carrying contraband in her baggage.

Seeking bail, the petitioner contended that as she was searched by the police in a toilet inside the train and her bag was not there with her, the possibility of the bag being tampered with could not be ruled out.

It was further said that the petitioner was an educated woman with no criminal record.

The prosecution opposed the release of the petitioner and told the court that the commercial quantity of the drug was kept clandestinely and recovered from one of her baggages marked as 'baby carrier'.

Light showers improve city's air quality

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Several parts of the Capital received light showers on Sunday, keeping the air pollution in check. The air quality index (AQI) settled at 160, which is in the 'moderate' category.

According to the AQI bulletin for Delhi, the city's air quality is likely to range between the 'moderate' and 'satisfactory' categories on Sunday. It will remain in the 'moderate' category throughout the week.

The weather station at Safdarjung, which keeps the official record for the city, received 0.6 mm rainfall until 5.30 p.m. on Sunday. The maximum temperature recorded was 31.5 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature was 19 degrees Celsius, two degrees above this season's average.

The forecast for October 25 reads partly cloudy sky with the maximum and minimum temperatures ranging between 31 and 18 degrees Celsius respectively.

Minister kicks off campaign

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Sunday kicked off a campaign to promote physical activity and walking and encourage people not to follow a sedentary lifestyle. The campaign, Ayurwalk, was aimed to promote Ayurveda and Yoga as disciplines to help lead a healthy life.

The walk began at Central Park, Connaught Place, and ended at Ayurvedic and Unani Tibbia College, Karol Bagh.

E-waste disposal, a mounting headache

The system mostly hinges on informal players like ragpickers

MUNEER KHAN
NEW DELHI

For a little over 10 years, Sakir Mohammad, a ragpicker in the city's Patparganj Industrial Area, has been collecting electronic waste from nearby companies. A growing concern for Delhi despite measures in place for collection and recycling, the industry has been dependent on informal players like ragpickers for e-waste disposal.

As per the data provided by the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC), 39 pickup requests were made for e-waste collection to Atero Recycling, a private firm roped in by the municipal body, from July 29 to September 30 this year. However, 25 of these requests were cancelled.

Only "12 pickups were done" and "129.97 kilograms" of e-waste were collected during the period. It further said that "lots of calls" were made for "picking up material in working condition" and that users' "expectation of cost was high".

Lack of awareness

EDMC Mayor Shyam Sunder Aggarwal said that "people lacked awareness". "We are working to create awareness through various mediums and by getting in touch with resident welfare associations. I agree that a significant portion of the e-waste goes to the informal sector, and they are also welcome to join the formal sector, but only if they meet the requirements," he said, adding that more private players for e-waste collection will be invited in the near future.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation Mayor Mukesh Suryan said "they have already taken the initiative" to collect e-waste through a private player. "It will take some time for people to understand and follow the system. We are trying to create awareness regarding collec-



A scrap shop selling outdated and discarded electronic waste in Seelampur in Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

tion and recycling of e-waste in colonies through various methods. We have an online portal which people can make use of," he said.

Staggering numbers

According to a 2018 report by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), India had generated close to two million metric tonnes of e-waste, with a significant portion of the waste going to the informal sector. Delhi was among the top e-waste contributors in the country with 9.5% and a future estimate of three million metric tonnes in India was quoted.

Thirty-year-old Mohammad is one among the city's many informal waste collectors, who collects old and unusable electronic items with regular scrap materials. "I collect whatever comes in the scrap, including old phones, air conditioner parts and compressors. Once collected, I sell it to whoever is willing to buy — mostly shopkeepers who want to resell it. Otherwise, I send the remaining waste to a place near the Ghazipur Dairy Farm," said Mr. Mohammad, who has no knowledge of what happens to the

e-waste after he sells it.

While Mr. Mohammad said he does not have a licence to collect e-waste, he is not keen on acquiring one. "Sometimes, I end up paying a meagre fine to the municipal corporation authorities but the matter does not escalate beyond that. I have monthly expenses to maintain my business, which includes paying police officers every month. They keep our set-up safe when we are not around and also give us tip-offs prior to any raids that are going to be conducted by civic bodies," he said.

Sahil Khan, an e-waste collector of old computer parts, wonders "what happens to the e-waste generated by big tech companies".

"We follow a system where we dismantle the waste we collect and recycle it at plants outside Delhi. We also keep a record by taking videos of the recycling process. Every electronic waste item has a different method of dismantling and recycling, but one should visit the recycling plants that handle e-waste from big tech firms," Mr. Khan said, adding that he suspected a foul play in their process of han-

dling the waste.

Broader issues

In the city's Seelampur, a hub of the informal sector, one can see scores of local shops selling outdated and discarded electronic waste, from old mobile phones, phone batteries to motherboards, hard disks, fridges and compressors.

A shopkeeper in the area said he dealt with "old mobile phones" which he would dismantle and sell "to buyers who resell the same in the market". "We only dismantle and sell the core parts of the device; we sell it in bulk quantities and the demand for these parts is quite high," he said.

A cart puller, who regularly transports the waste to these shops, said, "We only pick up and drop the waste as instructed. For us, it is a matter of daily earnings and we do not get into the specifics of what happens after that."

Satish Sinha, associate director at Toxics Link, a city-based group focusing on environmental issues, said the role of informal players cannot be denied and they should be included as part of the solution.

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RISE 22:34 SET 12:13

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	33	18
Safdarjung	33	18
Palam	32	21

Delhi Palam Today
30°C A pleasant hazy morning and warm day. Light to moderate rain and thunderstorm with cloudy sky likely.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
30°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm with few clouds. Night will be cool and hazy.

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A fight for motherland on a foreign land, says Vishal Jood

He was convicted for altercation with Sikhs in Australia

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Just out of his teens, Vishal Jood, left his home in Haryana's Kurukshetra four years back to pursue his dreams of a bright career in Australia. But he ended up convicted on three charges after a brawl with the Sikh community in his host country, which he says was to protect the honour of his motherland - India. "No doubt, all this has hurt my career and future prospects, but I can't stand disrespect to the nation and the Tricolour. Everyone should respect their country," said Vishal Jood, now returned back in his village in Haryana following in-

tervention by the Indian government.

Son of a farmer, Mr. Jood was working as a stocks manager in a private firm in Australia for the past two years after completing a diploma course in business and management when a series of incidents, coinciding with the farmers agitation in India led to his arrest by the New South Wales police in April this year on a dozen charges.

Eight of these charges, including racial hatred, were later dropped.

It all started with a farmers rally at Quakers Hill in Sydney in December 2020, when a group of Sikh men



Vishal Jood at a welcome function in Kurukshetra.

FILEPHOTO

tired to "trample" the Tricolour and raised pro-Khalistan slogans, Mr. Jood told *The Hindu* over phone. "I managed to snatch the flag

from them and unfurled it, following which they surrounded and assaulted me. It did not end here and was followed by numerous threats to me on social media," he said.

On Republic Day this year, an attempt was made to disrupt a Tiranga rally held by Mr. Jood and his friends in Sydney, he claimed.

This was followed by an attack on February 14 at another Tiranga car rally. "At the end of the rally, a large number of men armed with baseball bats and golf sticks attacked me at Harris Park. But I managed to snatch their baseball bat and ran away after breaking the windscreen of one of

their cars," said Mr. Jood. He was also injured his left arm in the attack.

Naseeb Singh, president, Akhil Bharatiya Ror Mahasabha, said initial reports depicted Vishal as "villain" for targetting the Sikhs, but the perception changed after his video unfurling the Tricolour went viral.

Support pours in

Soon support from many quarters, especially Rajputs poured in, and pressure was mounted on State political leadership to intervene with growing agitation across the state seeking release of Mr. Jood. Mr. Singh said Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal and Karnal MP Sanjay Bhatia and Kurukshetra MP

Nayab Singh met the Union Ministers to facilitate Mr. Jood's release.

Alex Hawke's tweet

Following his return, Australia's Immigration and Citizenship Minister Alex Hawke, in a tweet, said that "attempts to undermine Australia's social cohesion will not be tolerated" hinting that Mr. Jood's act was seen as one causing communal disharmony. A news item by IndiaLink NEWS, shared by Mr. Hawke on his Twitter handle, said: "It is believed that there was lobbying undertaken at very senior levels in the Indian government to secure the release of Vishal Jood due to political pressure from the

ruling BJP in the state from which he hails."

Returning to hero's welcome to India a week ago, Mr. Jood said he was reluctant to be part of the road show fearing a backlash from Sikhs, especially in view of the Singhu border murder case. He said he grew up with Sikhs being in majority in his locality in Kurukshetra's Govindgarh and lamented being labelled as anti-Sikh.

Busy meeting people who had supported him during his stint in jail, Mr. Jood said his Australia dream seemed over and he had no plans to go back at least for a couple of years, but was ready to serve his country in any capacity.

Nature's bounty



For the pot: Villagers fishing in a wetland at Budha Mayong village in Morigaon district of Assam on Thursday. FILEPHOTO

HC raps officials as Sabarmati river remains highly polluted

Centre allocated ₹200 cr. to curb pollution in the river from 2014-15 to 2017-18

MAHESH LANGA
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat's Sabarmati river remains highly polluted despite the spending of nearly ₹200 crore that the Centre had allocated to curb pollution in the river from 2014-15 to 2017-18. But the situation has only worsened, inviting wrath from the High Court.

The Gujarat High Court has reprimanded the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) and the Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB) for the pollution on the Sabarmati riverfront, and admonished that officials accountable for the functioning of laboratories in sewage treatment plants (STP), who failed to keep a check on polluted water dumped into the riverfront, will be "dealt with strictly".

The High Court observed that the root cause of pollution in the Sabarmati was the lack of accountability on part of the authorities, as there appears to be a nexus between the officials and industries that discharge untreated effluents into the river stream, polluting its water.



Sabarmati river in Ahmedabad. FILE PHOTO

The Division Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Vaibhavi Nanavati is hearing a *suo motu* petition on large-scale pollution in the river due to the discharge of untreated sewage and industrial effluents. The court has also constituted a joint task force (JTF), which submitted its report highlighting the failures of STPs and effluent treatment plants.

The JTF brought out systemic flaws in the running of STPs. The Bench has learnt that the laboratories inside STPs across the city, which were supposed to keep a check on the water dumped into the Sabarmati river, were almost non-functional.

The JTF and the *Amicus Curiae* Hemang Shah submitted that the Sabarmati riverfront was in poor state due to the "legal" as well as the illegal release of untreated industrial effluents and sewage water in Ahmedabad city.

A JTF member and leading environmental activist Rohit Prajapati told the court that the treatment plants were not functioning properly and there is no monitoring system in place. He suggested that while the civic body can outsource the functioning of treatment plants, it must not outsource their monitoring, and there must be continuous monitoring of the functioning of the treatment plants.

"Effluents and sewage from industrial units are continuously being discharged into the Sabarmati river. Despite all this, industrial units have been provided legal permission to carry out these activities," Mr. Prajapati submitted, demanding strict action against industries that violated environmental norms.

This is not for the first time the issue of critical levels of pollution in the Sabarmati has surfaced. In 2019, a report by non-governmental organisation Paryavaran Suraksha Samiti (PSS) revealed that 120 km of the river, before it meets the Arabian Sea in Gujarat, was ridden with industrial effluents and sewage.

Originating from the Aravalli hills in neighbouring Rajasthan, the Sabarmati meets the Arabian Sea in the Gulf of Khambhat area, after traversing a distance of 371 km, passing through districts like Udaipur in Rajasthan, and Aravalli, Sabarkantha, Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad and Kheda in Gujarat. It has a total catchment area of 21,674 sq. km.

'Close clergy's personal trusts in T.N.'

They become financial and political power bases for priests: Pope's envoy

B. KOLAPPAN
CHENNAI

Expressing concern over the "tendency among the Catholic clergy in Tamil Nadu to establish and manage independent trusts", Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, Apostolic Nuncio to India, has instructed Bishops to close the existing personal trusts.

Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, who visited the Diocese of Kottar, said the trusts were being registered as NGOs, ostensibly to provide assistance to those in need. "Even if the aim of such trusts may appear to be praiseworthy, all too often they become financial and political power bases for the priests involved," he said in a letter to the Archbishops and the Bishops and the Tamil Nadu Bishops' Council (TNBC) on October 8.

He said that according to the canon law 286, "clerics are prohibited from conducting business or trade

That is why I have been pressing for a committee of faithfuls, with professional knowledge, to look after the properties

M.G. DEVASAHAYAM
former IAS officer

personally or through others for their own advantage or that of others, except with the permission of legitimate ecclesiastical authority". "Clerics or religious who exercise a trade or business contrary to the precepts of the canons are to be punished according to the gravity of the deceit," he said, quoting canon law 1392.

'Find out the details'

Urging the TNBC to find out the details of the personal trusts held by priests in the diocese, the Apostolic Nuncio instructed the Bishops to close them and not to allow any new one. He made it clear that no trust should be

under the sole control of a member of the clergy. "Bring under the control of the diocesan trust or the diocesan social services trust those trusts that are of genuine benefit to the life and mission of the diocese."

Bishop Thomas Aquinas, Bishop of Coimbatore, has already circulated the Apostolic Nuncio's letter to the priests and asked them to close their trusts. "Our diocese is not willing to bring them under the diocesan control," he said in his letter to the priests on October 16.

Asked for his opinion, Peter Alphonse, chairman, State Minorities Commission, said the issue had already been brought to his notice. "It is the right time for the Catholic community... to keep their house in order. The purpose of the mission is to help the downtrodden, and not individuals, whoever they may be," he said.

Former IAS officer M.G.

Devasahayam said that according to the canon law and the Bible, the clergy should take care of only spiritual and ecclesiastical affairs, and are not supposed to handle properties and material affairs. He said that it was the failure of the project to open a medical college and hospital at Muttom, Kanniyakumari district, on a huge loan, that had necessitated the visit of the Nuncio and his subsequent instructions.

'They lack knowledge'

"That is why I have been pressing for the constitution of a committee of faithfuls, with professional knowledge, to look after the properties and other issues. Of course, there are non-corrupt priests. But they lack knowledge," said Mr. Devasahayam, who was involved in the restoration of church properties at the Boat Club and the properties of D'Monte Trust in Chennai.

Leopard released into the wild

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHOPAL

A female leopard, rescued from a forest in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district over two months back, has now been released in the Satpura Tiger Reserve in Hoshangabad district, a forest official said on Sunday.

It was found injured in Juharpur forest beat of Raisen on August 9 this year, he said.

The feline was subsequently brought to Bhopal's Van Vihar National Park where it was treated by a team of veterinarians, the official said.

Sena, BJP spar over Centre's 100-crore vaccination claim

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE
PUNE:

A slanging match has erupted between the estranged saffron parties, the Shiv Sena and the BJP, over the Centre's assertion that 100 crore doses had been administered thus far with Sena MP Sanjay Raut challenging the BJP-led Centre's claims on the "milestone achievement".

'23 crore doses given'

Mr. Raut told a party meeting on Saturday that the Centre's claims were "utterly false" and that not more than 23 crore doses were given to eligible citizens so far.

Saying he would also give proof to support his allegations, the Sena's chief spokesperson hit out at the Centre without naming it: "How much will you lie? In the last fortnight, 20 Hindus and Sikhs have been killed [in Kashmir], 17 to 18 soldiers have been martyred, China is creating problems in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh, but we are celebrating 100 crore vaccinations which is not true."

In a sharp riposte, BJP's chief Maharashtra spokesperson Keshav Upadhye on Sunday dubbed the allegations 'bizarre' and 'laughable'.

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स्वशासी राज्य चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, प्रतापगढ़



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ईमानदार
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और रसायन एवं उर्वरक, भारत सरकार

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उत्तर प्रदेश

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सांसद
डुमरियागंज

बृज लाल
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जिला अस्पतालों में सुविधाओं का आधुनिकीकरण

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आइसोलेशन बेड, ब्लड बैंक की स्थापना

प्रत्येक जनपद में पब्लिक हेल्थ यूनिट एवं मोबाइल हॉस्पिटल की स्थापना

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मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश

डॉ. मनसुख मांडविया
मंत्री, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण
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डॉ. महेंद्र नाथ पांडेय
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एवं अन्य गणमान्य महानुभाव

दिनांक : 25 अक्टूबर, 2021 | समय : मध्याह्न 12:00 बजे | स्थान : मेंहदीगंज (राजा तालाब), वाराणसी

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Navlakha's phone calls, walks stopped: partner

'His health will be further jeopardised by these actions'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



Gautam Navlakha

Activist and journalist Gautam Navlakha, who was arrested in the Bhi-ma Koregaon case in 2020, has recently been shifted to a high-security section of the Taloja jail in Navi Mumbai and not allowed to call his family and lawyers, said his partner, Sahba Husain, in a statement on Sunday.

Ms. Husain said Mr. Navlakha, who is nearly 70 years old, was shifted to the "Anda Circle" from the barracks on October 12.

"His telephone calls to me and his lawyers, his lifeline to the outside world, have been discontinued on the pretext that physical *mulaquats* [meetings] have resumed in jail. I, his partner, Sahba Husain, am over 70, and I live in Delhi. Travelling to Taloja jail in Navi Mumbai frequently to meet him for the allotted 10 minutes is difficult and Gautam's only contact with me is

through the two calls he was allowed every week to me that enabled me to send him articles of need, including medicines, books etc," she said.

"Height of unfairness" He would be able to make contact only by letters that take at least two weeks to reach. She said not allowing under-trial prisoners to call their lawyers was the height of unfairness.

"Gautam's fragile health and well-being will be further jeopardised by this withdrawal of the phone call facility to his family and lawyers. Already, in the Anda Circle, he is de-

prived of daily walks in the jail's non-concreted greener areas and fresh air, and his health has deteriorated further, making specialised medical care an absolute necessity, if he is to live to fight this unjust and false case foisted on him," she said.

She quoted Mr. Navlakha as saying he spends 16 hours a day inside his cell and the remaining eight hours in a cemented corridor surrounded by high walls.

Citing the recent death of another accused, Father Stan Swamy, while in custody, she said: "These are prisoners of conscience, who have had to face indignities and humiliation for the smallest needs, and wage court battles for basic dignities in prison...Gautam has faced his unjustified incarceration with courage and spirit. How much longer is he going to be persecuted for his views, and to what extent will the authorities go to break his spirit?"

Drug parcel booked on fake address: SP

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the West Godavari police probing the pseudoephedrine drug smuggling case have said that the racket has no link to Andhra Pradesh.

The NCB officials had seized 3 kg drug concealed in 'lehengas' a couple of days ago. The parcel was allegedly booked on the address of Narsapuram in West Godavari district. The NCB officials picked up the consignor, a native of Chennai.

With the NCB officials alerting the A.P. Police, the West Godavari police swung into action.

"According to the investigation officers of the Central agency, the accused produced fake Aadhaar card and fake documents to book the drug parcel. The address on which the drug parcel was booked is false," West Godavari District Superintendent of Police Rahul Dev Sharma said on Sunday.

Investigation officers are trying to find out the origin and destination of the drug racket.

1 dead in Thane building slab collapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
THANE

One person was killed after a portion of the slab of a five-storey residential building collapsed in Maharashtra's Thane district, a civic official said.

The incident took place in Ulhasnagar town around 10 p.m. on Saturday when the slab of an apartment's bedroom located on the fifth floor crashed on the fourth floor, Thane Municipal Corporation's Regional Disaster Management Cell chief Santosh Kadam said. Nareshlal Poptani, 24, received injuries and died on the spot, he said.

Over 43 lakh people skip second vaccine dose in M.P.

Officials attribute this to the harvesting season

ANUP DUTTA
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh's State Health Department is struggling to motivate people to get their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine. According to the latest data, more than 43 lakh people have not taken the second dose despite reminders.

According to senior health officials monitoring the vaccination drive, more than 1 crore people will be given the second dose at the prescribed time in the State. However, 43.60 lakh of them have not taken it. "We have sent reminders on the registered mobile numbers to those who have not come forward to take the second dose as per schedule," Dr. Santosh



Shukla, State Expanded Programme on Immunisation Officer (SPEIO), Madhya Pradesh told *The Hindu*.

Agrarian population One of the biggest reasons why more people are skipping the second dose is primarily because Madhya Pradesh is an agricultural State where more than 72% of total working population is engaged or directly associated with agriculture as farmers and farm labourers. Current

ly, harvesting of kharif crops is under way, a senior doctor posted in a rural area of Bhopal district said.

"After taking the first dose, most of them had to take rest. As these days are very important during the harvesting period, no one wants to waste a single day," he added.

"The wheat harvest has begun in the State. It's an important time of year when the foodgrain gets collected and tailed," said Laxman S. Thakur, a farmer from Bagrasia village, on the outskirts of Bhopal district.

Once the harvesting and festival seasons are over, people will automatically get their second dose, a senior health official said.

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It is publicly notified that the Plot No E-36, Sector-40, Noida, has been allotted in the name of Prakash Jagyasi S/o Shri T.D. Jagyasi & Mrs. Vasha Jagyasi W/o Shri Prakash Jagyasi both R/O C-23, Sector-28, Noida, had sold the said plot, on the basis of GPA to the following persons: A GPA was executed in favour of Rakesh Gupta S/o Shri G.L. Gupta R/O A-66, Sector-31, Noida at SR-I, Noida Vide Book No IV Volume No 746 on pages 107-118 at Document No 222 dated 19.01.2013 and the Agreement to Sell was not registered. So with the help of the notice it is informed the transfer of the above plot goes in favour of Mrs. Deepi Sahibak W/o Shri Anil Sahibak, R/O E-63, Sector-41, Noida if any one has have any objection he/she may submit his/her, objection in the Residential Plot Department of Noida Authority along-with sufficient proofs within 30 days of the publication this notice.
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IN BRIEF



Primary classes to begin in Karnataka today

MYSURU
Classes 1-V will commence across Karnataka from Monday after almost 20 months. The schools were closed owing to the outbreak of COVID-19. Children will be taught for half a day only, officials said. Only 50% of students will be allowed inside the class to ensure social distancing. Students should compulsorily produce a no-objection letter from their parents. Teams would conduct inspections at schools, said officials.

Union Minister launches air disinfection device

HYDERABAD
An air disinfection and purifying device called "Bipolar Air Disinfectant and Purifier", made by Hyderabad-based Jaitra Devices and Systems LLP, was launched by Union Minister of Tourism and Culture Kishan Reddy at an event held in the city on Sunday. The device can inactivate pathogens like SARS-COV-2, influenza, legionella virus, rhinovirus, varicella-zoster virus, TB bacteria, e coli, fungi and moulds, according to a press release.

Hyderabad-based firm sets up defence factory

HYDERABAD
The Hyderabad-based VEM Technologies, which became the first private sector unit to make a central fuselage for the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas being manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, is scaling up its defence manufacturing capabilities by setting up a ₹1,000 crore integrated defence facility at Yelgoi near Zaheerabad in Sangareddy. The factory will be involved in making next generation weapon systems, and will employ nearly 2,000 people.

Villages on Periyar banks in alert mode

Water level in Mullaperiyar dam rising

A CORRESPONDENT
IDUKKI

In the wake of the increasing water level in the Mullaperiyar dam in Idukki district of Kerala, officials of the Revenue Department and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) visited houses on the banks of the Periyar to create awareness of the precautionary measures to be adopted in case the shutters of the dam are opened.

The team visited the houses at the Inchikadu, Vikas Nagar and Manjumala areas of the Periyar village which are on the downstream of the dam.

An official of the Revenue Department said the team cleared doubts of residents regarding the opening of the



Dos and don'ts: Officials of the Revenue and the National Disaster Response Force visiting houses on the banks of the Periyar on Sunday. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dam and the steps taken by the Government. The NDRF team was led by team commander T. Rajan.

Water level in the Mulla-

periyar dam reached 136.85 ft on Sunday. The dam in Idukki district is under the control of the Tamil Nadu Government as per a British-

era lease agreement. Tamil Nadu issued the first warning regarding the opening of the dam on Saturday when the water level

reached 136 ft. The maximum water level is 142 ft. Tamil Nadu was drawing water at 2,200 cusecs while there was an inflow of 2,900 cusecs on Sunday.

Steady at Idukki

Meanwhile, the water level at the Idukki dam was almost stagnant at 2,398.26 ft on Sunday. One of the shutters of the Cheruthoni dam remained open and the power generation was at maximum at the Moolamattom power plant. The full reservoir level is 2,403 ft. The red alert level is 2,398.31 ft.

The India Meteorological Department on Sunday issued an orange alert to four districts, including Idukki, for October 26. The orange alert denotes rainfall of 6-20 cm of heavy rain. The other three districts are Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Kottayam.

Monson staffer held under POCSO Act

Makeup man Joshi arrested in Kochi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala Crime Branch team that is probing the case against fake antiquities dealer Monson Mavunkal has arrested Joshi, his makeup man, under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act on Sunday, on the basis of a statement given by a minor girl who was reportedly raped by him.

Monson, who is in police custody charged with selling fake antiquities and hoodwinking people, was earlier charged under POCSO Act, for sexually abusing the girl, the daughter of his domestic help, on multiple occasions. Police sources said Joshi was arrested from his house in

Kochi. He will shortly be produced in the court.

Crime Branch personnel reportedly collected material evidence from Joshi's house based on the girl's statement. According to unconfirmed reports, Joshi had gone into hiding outside the State following Monson's arrest.

'Whale skeleton'

Meanwhile, personnel of the Forest Department raided a house that Monson had reportedly rented at Vazhakkala and found, among other items, what appeared to be the skeleton of a whale.

The team is probing whether it is indeed a whale skeleton, official sources said.

A.P. crosses 5 cr. COVID-19 vaccine doses

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh crossed another milestone by administering more than five crore vaccine doses against COVID-19 on Sunday, according to the CoWin portal.

As of 9 p.m., about 3.12 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the State, taking the total count to 5,02,24,248 doses.

Around 3.17 crore people have received at least one dose of the vaccine while 1.84 crore people have been administered two doses.

The cases of Adverse Effects Following Immunisation (AEFI) stand at 0.002% in the State. During the past month, 104 such cases were reported.

Stalin urged to drain water from Periyar

Kerala Chief Minister cites dam safety

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has written to his Tamil Nadu counterpart M.K. Stalin, stressing the "urgent need for the gradual release of water from the Mullaperiyar dam through the tunnel to Tamil Nadu".

Mr. Vijayan said 2,109 cusecs of water was accumulating in the reservoir even after diversion from the Tamil Nadu side.

Given the current inflow, the water level would reach the safety threshold of 142 feet if the rain intensified, the Kerala Chief Minister added.

He requested Mr. Stalin to "give immediate directions to the authorities to ensure

that the maximum quantity of water is drawn from Mullaperiyar dam through the tunnel to Vaigai dam and gradually release the water downstream".

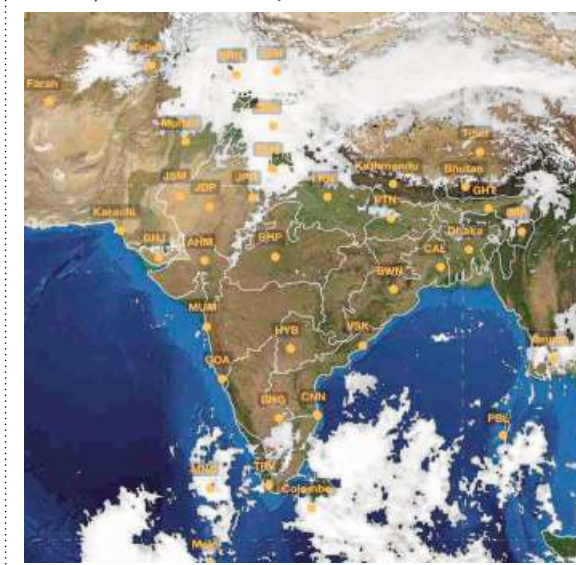
Mr. Vijayan also requested Mr. Stalin to direct the authorities to intimate the Kerala government at least 24 hours in advance of the opening of the shutters to "help us take precautionary measures to ensure the safety of the people living downstream".

He requested Mr. Stalin's "kind and positive" response to ensure the "safety of the lives of our people".

The Chief Minister said rainfall was heavy in the catchments of the Mullaperiyar dam.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 12.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, south interior Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...	32.2	22.0	Kozhikode	...	33.0	24.6
Ahmedabad	...	33.6	23.0	Kurnool	...	32.4	24.1
Aizawl	...	17.5	...	Lucknow	...	32.8	20.4
Allahabad	Madurai	...	35.2	23.4
Bengaluru	42.0	29.4	19.2	Mangaluru	...	30.6	24.0
Bhopal	...	31.3	16.2	Mumbai	...	32.8	22.9
Bhubaneswar	...	32.4	21.0	Mysuru	...	29.5	22.0
Chandigarh	...	4.0	19.3	New Delhi	...	31.5	19.0
Chennai	...	33.2	26.5	Patna	...	...	...
Coimbatore	...	4.9	32.5	Port Blair	...	31.0	24.3
Dehradun	...	25.8	17.2	Puducherry	...	0.2	31.4
Gangtok	...	1.0	19.5	Pune	...	31.8	17.4
Goa	...	1.0	29.0	Raipur	...	31.0	18.0
Guwahati	32.5	Ranchi	...	29.9	17.4
Hubballi	Shillong	...	22.3	12.9
Hyderabad	Shimla	...	14.6	10.1
Imphal	...	28.7	13.8	Srinagar	...	34.0	10.0
Jaipur	...	30.0	20.6	Thiruvananthapuram	...	5.0	31.7
Kochi	...	3.0	30.6	Tiruchi	...	0.4	33.9
Kohima	...	24.0	13.8	Vijayawada	...	...	33.2
Kolkata	...	33.6	25.7	Visakhapatnam	...	...	32.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	52	39	5	84	105	...	...
Bengaluru	2	61	39	55	...	...	...
Chennai	12	79	101	47	...	...	...
Delhi	7	89	40	239	139	...	...
Hyderabad	16	66	...	154	...	...	...
Kolkata	18	31	29	259	155	...	...
Lucknow	16	83	38	276	322	...	...
Mumbai	16	5	...	93	95	...	...
Pune	91	51	69	93	82	...	...
Visakhapatnam	17	29	26	69	87	...	...

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 246 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution.

In contrast, Hassan, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 24

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

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

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

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

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

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NAHLA NAINAR

"I remember children asking if we had elephants walking on the roads. They were surprised to know that I lived in an apartment," recalls Carolyn Davies, a Bengaluru-based social media professional, who is one of the 214 youngsters to have left for France to be posted as English Language Assistants in primary, secondary and higher secondary schools there.

This group is part of the historic Assistant d'Anglais (English Language Assistants) programme launched 115 years ago by France's Education Ministry to expose its school students to foreign languages and cultures through native speakers. With partnerships in 64 countries to fill up at least 4,500 language assistant positions in France, the programme operates in India under the auspices of the Embassy of France/Institut Francais.

Indian assistants are popular as they ease with English-medium education and competence in French. Fatima Kammoussi, Attaché de Coopération in Language and Education at the French Embassy in Delhi, says that Indian assistants are popular because of their attention to students' needs.

"Schools either renew the contracts of Indian Assistants or ask specifically for them whenever there is a new posting. In 2015, there were 42 candidates from India; this year, it is 214. Four of the last session's language assistants were recruited as English lecturers by presti-



Building linguistic bridges

Young Indians, fluent in English and French, are in great demand as English Language Assistants in France's public schools

gious French universities."

The programme did not stop during the pandemic-induced lockdown. "Last year, when the French Government laid out detailed guidelines to assist the candidates with visas, we saw the entire Indian batch go to France. Some of the Indian assistants have decided to pursue higher studies in France and some have found a full-time job," says Kammoussi.

With assistants required to work just 12 hours a week, their schedule is quite relaxed compared to that of regular teachers. "On my first day, I was taken into different classes to introduce

myself. The children asked me questions about myself and life in India. We did it in English and French," says Davies who worked at Lycée François Rabelais in Ifs and Collège Dunois in Caen, Normandy, last year.

The programme also gives Language Assistants an opportunity to explore France at their own pace. Delhi-based Gaurishma Suneja, who shifted from med-

Schools either renew the contracts of Indian Assistants or ask specifically for them whenever there is a new posting

ical studies to learning and then teaching French, says, "I was posted in Lille, the capital of Hauts-de-France region. I had spent 15 days in France as an exchange student in 2012 but could not visit Lille then, so I opted for it this time."

With classroom seating arranged like a conference table, students were always facing each other, says Gaurishma. "So classes were always more of an interaction than a presentation. When I started, many children did not know where India was. I think this is the main objective of the programme: to show the diversity of India to France."

Programme details

- The seven-month programme (October to April) is open to students (up to 35 years) of Indian universities / Alliance Française who are proficient in both English and French.

- They should either have a degree or be in the final year of a Bachelor's course and have an IELTS Certificate of Proficiency with a grade above 7.5.

- Candidates should have a good level of French, with French B1 minimum (DFP, DELF, TCF, TEF, etc.) or B.A. in French from an Indian university.

- For more, visit www.ifindia.in

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Living with a host family also helped to polish her own French communication skills. "Even though I have a CI certification in French, when I first started, I could not understand anything that was being spoken here," she recalls.

A former freelance online French tutor, Jeevashree Bannerjee from Delhi says the programme offered a chance to test her teaching skills in a physical classroom. She has been appointed at the Ecole Primaire Les Montagniers, a primary school in the Franco-Swiss border town of Bellegarde Sur Valserine.

"As per our contract, we are going there to teach French kids a language that they hardly know. But since I have always been very passionate about French, this is an opportunity to know the culture and discover more about a country that I have heard my tutors talking about for so long," she says.

Look beyond

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This Q&A column may help



OFF THE EDGE
NANDINI RAMAN

My daughter is preparing for the USMLE for PG in medicine in the U.S. She has become stressed and wonders if she will clear the exams. She also does not know whether to choose a MD in Community Medicine or Psychology. How can we help her? - Harikaa

Dear Harikaa, Candidates being stressed out, worried and anxious prior to the USMLE is common. However, please watch her closely and get her assessed or evaluated immediately if she is not eating or sleeping well, experiencing mood-swings, exhibiting lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem, becoming crabby and irritable, not being able to concentrate and study at all. She will benefit from meeting an encouraging counsellor and start 'talk-therapy' to stay calm and rebuild her confidence. The professional will also be able to help her discern what course her heart is in during their various conversations.

I will be appearing for JEE next year but find that I'm

either falling asleep over my books or tend to day dream. It has been my dream to pursue Biotech Engineering at IIT. But I am unable to deal with this. - Ananmol

Dear Ananmol, First, REST well and make sure that you have no sleep deficit. Then, gear up for a dream that you have nurtured. There is no pressure but, since you have wanted this, how badly do you want it? What are the sacrifices that you are willing to make? Discipline, consistency, regularity are non-negotiable. Set a realistic time-table with enough rest, exercise and study time. Or, sign up to some classes if you believe that is something that will kick in the seriousness for you.

I am in the first year of the MBBS. I want to do my PG in the U.S. But I have been hearing that the USMLE is hard and that the NEET PG is easier. Is that true? - Ritika

Dear Ritika, Both need hard work, sincerity, a lot of preparation, discipline and studying! Introspect and identify where you see the blocks in your prep for the USMLE. Can a mentor or regular curriculum classes and structure help? Make a plan and break it down and work towards small short-term goals first. You have a long time ahead of you and, across the next

four years, you can certainly make this happen. NEET PG can also be plan B or vice-versa.

I am a 21-year-old B.Sc. Chemistry student. I am confused about what I should do next. I have no interest in teaching or research or in the civil services. I want to do a professional course that will provide me with a job. I am interested in working in the medical field (but not as a doctor). - Minakshi

Dear Minakshi, Some of the hottest healthcare careers for Chemistry majors are available in both direct care and laboratory settings. You could look at becoming a Biomedical Chemist, a Medical lab scientist, an Industrial Hygienist or Toxicologist, a Physician's Assistant or even a Veterinarian. There are specialisations and Master's programmes for each depending on what you decide.

Disclaimer: This column provides advice and suggestions and is not a substitute for long-term therapy. Some issues may need medical intervention.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line 'Off the edge'.



No change

The FATF must ensure that the investigation of Pakistan comes to an effective conclusion soon

In a repetition of its decisions over the past three years, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said that members of the 39-member grouping voted to retain Pakistan on its 'grey list' of jurisdictions under increased monitoring. The FATF, which evaluates countries on efforts to check terror financing and money laundering, also placed Turkey on the grey list and cleared Mauritius from it. The FATF found that Pakistan had cleared 30 of a total of 34 tasks assigned in two batches, and would face another review in February 2022. In particular, the FATF President, Marcus Pleyer, said that Pakistan had failed to resolve the single task that remains from the first batch, of demonstrating that effective investigations and prosecutions are being pursued against the senior leadership of United Nations-designated terror groups. From New Delhi's perspective, the most significant of these are Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed, Dawood Ibrahim and other command and control chiefs of terror groups that target India, that have yet to be brought to justice for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008, the IC-814 hijacking in 1999 and several major attacks and bombings in Jammu and Kashmir. It is indeed disappointing that the increased monitoring by the FATF of Pakistan – from 2008-2009, 2012-2015, and 2018-2021 – has failed to ensure that while some of these leaders have been tried and convicted for terror financing charges in Pakistani courts, none of them has been effectively prosecuted for violence in India. These much-delayed outcomes speak as much to Pakistan's lack of credibility on terrorism as to the FATF's own lack of effectiveness.

Despite Pakistan's failure to fulfill its task list, the FATF President has made it clear that they are not considering placing Pakistan on the 'black list', as they say it "continues to cooperate". On the other hand, the FATF has also said that it will not remove Pakistan from the grey list, despite the country completing 26/27 of the original tasks it was assigned. The actions open the world body to accusations of 'politicising' the process, both from those who would like to see tough action for non-compliance by Pakistan, and from Pakistan itself, which has accused India of turning the technical process into a political one by "targeting" Pakistan. As a result, the FATF must stop kicking the proverbial can down the road. It must ensure that the investigation of Pakistan is not an open-ended process, and is brought to a credible and effective conclusion at the earliest. In light of the developments in Afghanistan, and concerns over the growth of transnational terror groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIL, as well as JeM and LeT taking advantage of the Taliban takeover to build new safe havens and financing networks, it is particularly important that the FATF keep its commitment from 2001 (when it added terror financing to its mandate) to prevent all terror groups from accessing these funding networks.

Mitigating a crisis

The COP can at best incentivise adaptation that aids a transition towards clean energy

In a week, heads of state from at least 120 countries are expected to convene in Glasgow for the 26th meeting of the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP). The annual two-week-long exercise was disrupted last year due to COVID-19. The year 2020 was to have been an important year in the COP calendar as most of the major economies were expected to review the actions undertaken so far in meeting voluntary targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement of 2015. However, the disruption has meant that these discussions will now move to Glasgow. Following the exit by former U.S. President Donald Trump from the Paris Agreement, the Biden administration is making a concerted effort to commemorate the country's return. To this end, it has sent emissaries and multiple delegations to several countries to coax them into committing to some sort of a deadline or a 'net zero' timeline by when their emissions would peak and eventually abate.

To limit global warming to 1.5°C, net zero emissions would have to be achieved by 2050 and emissions would need to be drastically cut by at least 45% from 2010 levels by 2030. India and China are the major emitters of the world that haven't committed to any 2050 deadline. Their argument, which has been consistent for many years, is that the climate crisis exists because of excess emissions by the developed West for more than a century. Any attempt at solving the crisis would involve the western countries doing much more than what they have committed to and, at the very least, making good on promises already enshrined in previous editions of the COP. As years of COP negotiations have shown, progress is glacial and the effort is more on delivering a headline announcement rather than genuine operationalisation of the steps that need to be taken. In real terms, for developed countries, complying with the demand by developing countries to pay reparations means shelling out sums of money unlikely to pass domestic political muster. And for developing countries, yielding to calls for 'net zero' means that governments such as India will appear as having caved into international bullying. The COP, despite all the media interest it generates, can at best incentivise adaptation that aids a transition to clean energy. But even without immediately retiring fossil fuel assets, the world needs to frame a meaningful response to a warming globe.

In Glasgow, all eyes on 2030

COP26 must focus sharply on reducing emissions till 2030, rather than on net zero 2050, which is too distant a goal



D. RAGHUNANDAN

The stage is set for the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, starting October 31. Major preparatory conferences and bilateral meetings have been held to persuade countries to raise their emission reduction commitments from the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. Some positive outcomes have been achieved. Yet, many high-emitter countries are woefully short of the emissions reductions required by 2030 to restrict global temperature rise to "well below 2°C" or the now de facto goal of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The loudest buzz now, however, is around net zero emissions by 2050 i.e., greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions equalling absorption by sinks such as forests, even though the substance is much less than the slogan suggests.

Net zero mirage

Media reports and commentary in India and abroad greeted the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released in August 2021 with shock and awe, but the revealing scientific data were glossed over. Far from emphasising net zero alone, AR6 emphasised that to keep temperature rise within 1.5°C, global emissions should be reduced by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, on the way to net zero 2050.

Importantly, in the net zero drumbeats spurred on by the U.S. and the UN Secretary General, the foundational principle of the UN

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), has been forgotten. Developed countries, responsible for over 75% of accumulated atmospheric GHGs causing climate change, should shoulder most of the burden for reducing emissions, while developing countries should do what they can, with technological and financial assistance from the former. So, if the goal is global net zero emissions by 2050, all countries cannot be obliged to reach that goal by the same year. CBDR would imply that developed countries should reach net zero by, say, 2035-40, while developing countries can get there later.

Net zero 2050, as currently posed, is at best a distracting message and at worst deliberately diverts attention away from the urgent 2030 target that COP26 should focus on. The net zero 2050 target is also no proverbial silver bullet, as clearly shown by numbers put out in the UNFCCC Synthesis Report on the updated NDCs, released in September 2021.

2030 targets critical

One hundred and thirteen parties out of 194 submitted updated NDCs by end-July 2021. The UN NDC report tells us that even accounting for these, global emissions in 2030 are expected to be 16.3% above the 2010 level, whereas the IPCC has called for 2030 emissions to be 45% less from 2010 levels for the 1.5°C goal. The report therefore calls for "a significant increase in the level of ambition of NDCs" till 2030.

Several large emitters have announced deeper emission cuts than in the Paris Agreement. The U.K. and the European Union have raised their targets to a significant 68% and 55%, respectively, compared with 1990 levels by 2030. The U.S. is still lagging behind,



even as U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry tours the world pushing other countries for deeper emission cuts. The U.S. has now promised net zero emissions by 2050 compared to the 80% reduction that it had promised earlier. The Biden administration has also promised to reduce emissions by 50-52% below 2005 levels by 2030. This is grossly insufficient as the U.S. is the world's second largest emitter, and the 2005 baseline makes its commitment considerably lower than those of the EU, the U.K. and others using the Kyoto 1990 baseline. Others standing in the way of rapid reductions are Russia, Brazil under Jair Bolsonaro ravaging the Amazon forests, and China, the world's largest emitter, whose relentless push to add maximum infrastructure, industrial and power-generation capacities before peaking in 2030, may use up much of the cumulative global emissions available for 1.5°C.

The gravity of the situation may be better appreciated through the more scientific metric of carbon budgets, as highlighted in AR6 and AR5. Carbon budgets represent the quantum of CO₂ the atmosphere can hold for a given global temperature, best assessed through cumulative emissions and not annual flows. The report of updated NDCs states that "the cumulative CO₂ emissions in 2020-2030 based on the latest NDCs would likely use up 89% of the remaining carbon budget, leaving a post-2030 carbon budget of around 55 Gt CO₂,

which is equivalent to the average annual CO₂ emissions in 2020-2030." Although negotiators and analysts are steeped in using annual flows, estimates based on carbon budgets should be used at Glasgow, if only to assess flows-based arrangements arrived at. As the NDC report says, reaching net zero is necessary to stabilise global temperature rise at a particular level, "but limiting global temperature increase to a specific level would imply limiting cumulative CO₂ emissions to within a carbon budget."

Whither Glasgow COP26?

To reiterate, COP26 must focus sharply on reducing emissions till 2030, rather than on net zero 2050, which is too distant and with possibilities of gaming the system. If COP26 does not focus on achieving the 45% emission cuts from 2010 levels required by 2030 for limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C, and continues with geopolitics as usual, then the world may well have squandered away one of its last chances to avert disastrous climate impacts. Pressure will undoubtedly come from Africa, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island States and others, but will that tilt the scales against the powerful status quo? It was suggested some years ago that the COP ensures that Parties iteratively raise their commitments till they add up to the requisite 45% reduction by 2030. But who will hold their feet to the fire? Or will the U.S. and others succeed in focusing on the false net zero 2050 solution, escaping their own obligations for 2030 and dangerously kicking the can down the road?

As usual, India is in its own double-edged position. The country emits 7% of global emissions, has extremely low per-capita emissions that are far below the global average and yet ranks as the world's third largest emitter. It is a

G20 member and reputed economic and industrial power. India has so far resisted pressures to raise its Paris Agreement emission reduction commitments. But it has not yet submitted its updated NDC as required and may face difficulties at Glasgow, especially from LDCs and most vulnerable countries feeling existentially threatened even as powerful nations wheel and deal. The well-known website Climate Tracker has now placed India in its second-worst performing category of countries regarding conformity with global 1.5°C goals, down from the top category for 2°C just after the Paris Agreement. India can, without much difficulty, raise its NDC pledge of reducing Emissions Intensity (ratio of emissions to GDP) by 33-35% from 2005 levels by 2030 to 38-40%. This is quite achievable since India has been averaging around 2% p.a. reduction in EI as per its own NDC. Given the net zero chorus, India could also offer to achieve that by 2070-75, invoking CBDR and comparing well with China's 2060 pledge. If pressed on a peaking year, a 2040-45 guesstimate may not be far off the mark, especially if increasing forest and tree cover are stepped up instead of undermined. For India to convert its ambitions of installing 450GW of renewable power by 2030, adding green hydrogen or increasing electric vehicles into commitments may require more homework than done so far. Will India have the gumption to leverage these offers to push the U.S. and other developed country laggards to step up their commitments and actions towards the 2030 goal, without trade-offs on promises of financial assistance? Only time, of which the world has little left, will tell.

D. Raghunandan is with the Delhi Science Forum, a constituent of the All-India Peoples Science Network

The only way to halt the BJP juggernaut

A united opposition alone can pose a formidable challenge to the BJP in the coming Assembly elections



SANJAY KUMAR

The stakes are high for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has to ensure that it retains power in four (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur) of the five States which go to the polls early next year. In Punjab alone, the Congress is in power, albeit in a mess.

Nature of contest

This will be the first Assembly election after the second wave of COVID-19, which resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and attracted a lot of criticism of the BJP government. The ongoing farmer's agitation and the recent incident in Lakhimpur Kheri, where four farmers were crushed to death allegedly by the son of the Union Minister of State (Home), seems to have only added trouble for the BJP. But if anyone believes that these reasons will cause the BJP's defeat in these elections, they would be mistaken.

In these four States, the BJP may not be as popular as it was during the 2017 Assembly elections, but the nature of the electoral contest could give the party an advantage.

A possible multi-cornered contest in these States could result in fragmentation of anti-BJP votes, which will give the BJP an edge. The Congress will find it hard to attract all the anti-BJP votes and defeat the BJP, but it could emerge as the main opposition party in many States after the 2022 Assembly elections. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Trinamool Congress (TMC), which are making serious efforts to contest elections in some of these States, could damage the prospects of the Congress as they may be able to corner some votes. This will be enough for the BJP to retain power even if its vote share declines. Therefore, what the opposition parties need in order to minimise splitting of the anti-BJP votes is an alliance.

The BJP's dominance in U.P.

Those who think that Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's protest against the Lakhimpur Kheri incident and her announcement that 40% of the tickets in U.P. will be given to women candidates can be a game-changer for the party are mistaken. It will be impossible for the Congress, which has performed miserably in the State in recent years, to bounce back merely through protests and symbolism. The party's decision of giving 40% tickets to women is a bold step, but it is too late and too little to mobilise women voters. The Congress may be able to increase



its vote share, but it may still be far from posing any challenge to the BJP if it contests the election alone.

The challenge to the BJP can come neither from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) nor from the Samajwadi Party (SP) if these parties contest against each other. Both these parties command roughly 20% each of the vote share in U.P. The SP's core supporters are Yadavs, while Dalits, especially Jatavs, constitute the BSP's core support base. Both these parties compete against each other for the Muslim votes, which results in a split in these votes with the SP gaining an upper hand. At least these two parties need to form an alliance to minimise the splitting of anti-BJP votes in U.P. This alliance should ideally also rope in the Congress and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) to mobilise additional votes. Only a united opposition can defeat the BJP in U.P. in 2022. An alliance of the SP and

RLD will not be enough.

In order to defeat the BJP, which polled 39.6% of the votes in the 2017 U.P. Assembly elections, about 7-8% votes need to be pulled away from it. This can be accomplished only by the largest opposition party, but there is a very remote possibility of the SP, the largest opposition party during the 2017 Assembly election, gaining about 8-9% votes on its own at the cost of the BJP. Only a united opposition can achieve this.

In Uttarakhand, despite getting a massive majority in 2017, the BJP government has been unstable. The State has seen three Chief Ministers since that election. If the 2022 Assembly election becomes a bipolar contest between the Congress and the BJP, the Congress has a good chance of defeating the BJP. But things do not seem so simple for the Congress with AAP's entry in the electoral contest. The AAP may not be able to win the election on its own, but may poll enough votes to damage the prospects of the Congress, thus giving an advantage to the BJP by default.

The entry of the TMC and AAP in the electoral fray in Goa might result in a multi-cornered contest in the State. A divided opposition will again give the BJP an advantage. Also, the Congress in Goa is no longer the Congress of 2017 as many leaders have left the party and joined other parties, mainly the BJP.

In Manipur, a lot depends on how the BJP manages to form an alliance before or even after the election. The BJP has been ahead of the Congress in forming post-poll alliances in many States, even with a lower number of seats.

Lessons from history

In India, whenever a political party has become extremely dominant, it has been challenged only by a united opposition or by pre-poll or post-poll alliances of opposition parties. The Congress received a setback in the 1977 Lok Sabha election when the Janata Party defeated it. In the 1998 and 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress was challenged by the BJP which had formed alliances with various regional parties; the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won both these elections. The NDA government was challenged by the Congress in the 2004 and 2009 Lok Sabha elections when the Congress formed alliances with regional parties. Thus, the dominant party of the present times, the BJP, can only be challenged by a united opposition. Nothing else can push back the BJP in an electoral race given the current political mood of the people of India.

Sanjay Kumar is Professor and Co-Director of Lokniti, a research programme at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi

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.

Valley of disquiet

More than two years since restrictions were imposed in Jammu and Kashmir, the aim of restoring peace has not met with success ("Curfews, Internet curbs a 'bitter pill' to save Kashmiri lives: Shah", October 24). Civilian killings have complicated the issue. Terrorists never want peace; their intention is to create fear. By imposing restrictions for longer periods, what kind of signals are we sending? The Home Minister's approach is laudable but he should also consider talking with families that have been demanding lifting of the curfew. Visits, meetings and discussions should be more

frequent to gain the trust of the people of the Valley. BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI, Secunderabad

Terrorism has not been wiped out and there is no democratically elected government yet in J&K. Curfews and Internet curbs continue. Ahead of the Home Minister's visit, about 700 people were detained. How long can the administration be run with the help of security forces and by enforcing restrictions without taking local people and leaders into confidence? D. SETHURAMAN, Chennai

The targeted killings of

minorities and migrant workers by terrorist groups in the Valley have pushed the besieged territory into new heights of despair. These incidents have the potential to deepen the communal divide and create conditions for an exodus. After every incident, the government announces that it has dealt firmly with the terrorists and will continue to do so. Notwithstanding these security operations, the way to check this alarming situation is by restoring the statehood of J&K, resuming political dialogue with mainstream parties and giving freedom to the press. S.K. KHOSLA, Chandigarh

The Home Minister indicted three families for the state of affairs in J&K. He seems to have forgotten that the BJP joined hands with one of them to form the government. DEEPAK SINGHAL, Noida

Increase vaccination

This is a time to plan and introspect, not celebrate ("Gap between first, second doses is the starkest in India", Oct. 24). The one lesson that India does not seem to have learned from the recent past is that it cannot afford to celebrate or that even if it does, it needs to do so with some caution. And while

celebrating, the government is also wrongly claiming that the vaccine was made available free for everyone. The fact is that many had to pay for the vaccine. M. JAMEEL AHMED, Mysuru

With cases rising in other countries and more variants of the virus emerging, India cannot afford to let its guard down. The latest report proves that there are still a few issues to address. Some people are under the illusion that they are fully protected after taking one dose. Periodical reminders need to be sent on the need to take the second dose.

When the pandemic was at its peak, health workers went door to door to trace cases. However, once the cases dropped, this stopped. While this practice is hard to sustain, it is important to renew this for a while so that these workers can persuade those who are unvaccinated to get their doses. Information provided by them would also help authorities identify areas where more attention is required in terms of vaccination coverage. V. SUBRAMANIAN, Chennai

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Transcending borders and boundaries

Kamla Bhasin's genius lay in her ability to work past different fault lines and build diverse coalitions



MEENAKSHI GOPINATH

The domains of peacebuilding and protest are ordinarily seen as occupying separate and discrete worlds. Yet in the women's movements in South Asia, beginning with the 1980s but more visibly in the 1990s, these became increasingly intertwined as scholars and activists forged synergies and cross-border solidarities.

Feminist icon Kamla Bhasin, who passed away in September, contributed to this denouement. She invested her unique energy towards transcending borders and boundaries, past monocultures of the mind that reinforce stereotypes, mistrust and militarism, and reflect the cartographic anxieties of nation states.

Bhasin famously said, "Main sarhad par khadi deewar nahi, us deewar par padi daraar hoon [I am not the wall that stands at the border, I am the crack in that wall]". This captured the spirit with which women conflict "revolutionaries" in South Asia, often in the face of stiff opposition, bricolaged around cordons of territoriality to join forces and mobilise across fault lines of country, caste, religion, class and gender.

The recognition that women across South Asia face a continuum of violence – both structural and overt – as they confront the patriarchies of the family, the community and the state, and "the complicities between them", sustained networks unfettered by national identities.

Bhasin's book with Ritu Menon, *Borders and Boundaries*, and Urvasi Butalia's *The Other Side of Silence*, both published in the 1990s, were path-breaking in their accounts of the narratives of pain, loss, displacement and violence that the Partition of India had wrought on women on both sides of the border and the similarity of their experiences. These works revealed how community and even national honour were inscribed on the bodies of women and the gendered nature of citizenship. It triggered explorations around what country, religious identity or even nation really meant for



SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

women. It also opened the space for research and activism that interrogated the "sanctity of borders".

Singular experiences

Several ethnographic narratives that gave voice to the singular experiences of women in situations of conflict – in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan and Pakistan – added to the repertoire, enabling civil society transversal engagements across South Asia around the issues of justice, rights, patriarchy, militarisation and nuclearisation. Through periods of adversarial face-offs between different Governments and their neighbours – especially between India and Pakistan – feminists like Bhasin were hard at work to ensure that people-to-people contact and a form of public diplomacy sustained dialogue and nurtured synergies.

With women in the lead, initiatives like the Women's Action Forum (WAF) in Pakistan that reached out to their sisters in Bangladesh to apologise for the atrocities of the Pakistan army in 1971; the Women's Peace Bus undertaken by the Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA) from Delhi to Lahore in 2000 to demand a war-free South Asia; Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) bringing young South Asians together in workshops on conflict transformation; and Sangat with its innovative regional gender training conclaves, to name a few, persevered with the mission to expand constituencies for peace.

In recent decades, South Asia has been witness to collectives of "disobedient women" articulating peace and defying state-centric notions of security and order. They have been visible in the mother's movements in Sri Lanka, the Thappa Force in the

"Malki ya Maut [ownership or death]" farmers struggle in Pakistan, and in the Chipko, Narmada, Bhopal and Kudankulam movements in India. Demonstrations like the *Meira Paibis* (women with torches) in Manipur, and the congregation of women at Shaheen Bagh and at the farmers' protests are also part of these traditions of dissent.

Drawing from the experience of activists like Bhasin of making a woman's place "in the resistance", these movements have largely entered the peacebuilding arena through the corridors of human security – voicing democracy and reclaiming citizenship.

Core of their engagement

Highlighting the tensions between people's security and what often passes as national security, opposition to war and the cultures of militarism have been at the core of their engagement. Foregrounded is also the need to link issues of peace and security to development in order to address the structural causes of conflict. Feminist scholars have often made the connections between the formal security discourse and certain types of hegemonic masculinity, and how policy priorities and (techno) strategic discourse are skewed to preserve power hierarchies nationally, within the international system and the world economic order.

Women's movements have interrogated the conventional peace metaphor of the figure in white, passively holy or wholly passive. To "wage conflict non-violently", transgressing received notions of security, in their everyday resistances against injustice and oppressive socio-political institutions in order to build structural peace, has been their clarion call.

The feminist "weapons" they bring to their engagement blend the cerebral, the celebratory and the performative. Bhasin herself, with her extraordinary communication skills, drew in large numbers of young enthusiasts, "deploying" slogans and art, music and humour, making her succinct, accessible primers on gender, patriarchy and peace resonate across groups, while unpacking the most complex of feminist concepts. These forms of protest and peace praxis draw from the global palimpsest of feminist activism chiselled by women the world over.

Feminist peace activists today recognise that the search for common ground involves acknowledging differences, while building on commonalities. Women's experiences of conflict and violence are mediated by their "location" and the intersectionality of caste, class, region, religion and gender. Bhasin's genius lay in her ability to work past these different fault lines and build diverse coalitions and communities of practice.

Since the mid-1980s, South Asian women activists have sought to "engage" peace by drawing in larger numbers even from perceived "hostile" neighbourhoods into safe "disarmed", empathic spaces of trust.

This was well before the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000 had set the global normative template of the Women Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. Did South Asian feminist peace activism then offer crucial conceptual alphabets for the international template on positive peace (peace with justice) as an inclusive public process, and not just "brokered" in closed negotiations only by men? The story of their seminal contributions to the WPS discourse needs to become more visible.

A people's peace is a perpetual work-in-progress. It is also an invitation to civil society to continuously fine-tune the song of democracy. Nurturing a South Asian identity was Bhasin's labour of love. With love, she strove to inscribe it into the lives of others. And she did it, as we all must, with "passion, compassion, humour and style".

Meenakshi Gopinath is Chair, Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and the Director of Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), New Delhi

India's Central Asian outreach

Afghanistan's situation has thrown up challenges for New Delhi



HARSH V. PANT
AYJAZ WANI

The dramatic developments in Afghanistan have catalysed new geostrategic and geoeconomic concerns for the region. The evolving situation has also thrown up renewed challenges for India's regional and bilateral ties with Central Asia and the Caucasus, prompting India to recalibrate its rules of engagement with the region.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar was in the region earlier this month – his third within a span of four months. In Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Jaishankar extended a credit line of \$200 million for the support of development projects and signed an memorandum of understanding (MoU) on High-Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP). His next stop was the Kazakhstan capital, Nur Sultan, where he attended the 6th Foreign Ministers' Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

At CICA, Mr. Jaishankar targeted China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Admonishing China's methods in promoting the BRI, he said while greater connectivity was essential for the promotion of regional stability, it must not be pursued for parochial interests. He also confronted Pakistan for its support towards cross-border terrorism. Before reaching Armenia on October 13, Mr. Jaishankar met his counterparts from Russia, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to discuss regional cooperation.

India-Armenia ties

Mr. Jaishankar has become the first Indian External Affairs Minister to visit Armenia. The Minister and his Armenian counterpart, Ararat Mirzoyan, agreed to enhance trade and cultural exchanges to boost bilateral relations. During the visit, Mr. Jaishankar also supported efforts for a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk group.

The Taliban re-establishing its supremacy over Afghanistan has also exposed the weaknesses of coalitions such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), created in response to the threats of terrorism that sprang from Afghanistan. However, the SCO has been used by most member countries for their own regional geostrategic and security interests, increasing the trust-deficit

and divergence within the forum.

As the SCO failed to collectively respond to the Afghan crisis, the Central Asian leaders met in Turkmenistan in August to voice their concerns over the Afghan situation, and also discussed the presence of Central Asian terror groups within Afghanistan and along their borders.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union and the formation of the independent republics in Central Asia, India reset its ties with the strategically critical region. India provided financial aid to the region and established diplomatic relations. New Delhi signed the Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to stimulate defence cooperation and deepen trade relations. In 2012, New Delhi's 'Connect Central Asia' policy aimed at furthering India's political, economic, historical and cultural connections with the region. However, India's efforts were stonewalled by Pakistan's lack of willingness to allow India passage through its territory. China took advantage of the situation and unveiled the much-hyped BRI in Kazakhstan.

The growing geostrategic and security concerns regarding the BRI's China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and its violation of India's sovereignty forced New Delhi to fix its lethargic strategy. Soon after assuming office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited all the Central Asian countries in July 2015. Eventually, Central Asia became the link that placed Eurasia in New Delhi's zone of interest. India signed MoUs with Iran in 2015 to develop the Chabahar port in the Sistan-Baluchistan province that was in the doldrums from 2003. Most of the Central Asian leaders view India's Chabahar port as an opportunity to diversify their export markets and control China's ambitions. China's assertive approach led to rising social discontent on the ill-treatment of their ethnic brethren in neighbouring Xinjiang.

Central Asian countries have been keen to have India as a partner as they have sought to diversify their strategic ties. They have admitted New Delhi into the Ashgabat Agreement, allowing India access to connectivity networks to facilitate trade and commercial interactions with both Central Asia and Eurasia, and also access the natural resources of the region. Rising anti-Chinese sentiments within the region and security threats from the Taliban allow New Delhi and Central Asia to reimagine their engagement. India cannot afford to lose any time in recalibrating its regional engagements.

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

On the future of the Congress

The party can play a role in checkmating the BJP

SHAIKH MUJIBUR REHMAN

Kanhaiya Kumar's joining, and the exit of Sushmita Dev, Jitin Prasad and Jyotiraditya Scindia, present an interesting context to interrogate the Indian National Congress's relevance in politics today. Jignesh Mevani also spoke strongly in support of the Congress, but is yet to join the party formally. Some have celebrated the decision as an attempt to introduce fresh blood into the party. What these two young faces could bring to the party, or vice versa, is a bit too early to forecast. There is a fair chance that Mr. Kumar might do to the Bihar Congress what senior leaders like Pranab Mukherjee and P. Chidambaram did to the West Bengal and Tamil Nadu Congress respectively, which is not much other than self-aggrandisement

Any attempt to examine the future of the Congress or its relevance must begin with a caveat – the present party led by Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi is not the same as the one that was once led by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi transformed it into a dynastic party. It is a family firm, though the family has occasionally been generous enough to let non-family members lead its Government. But the party's ideology or its internal democracy are at the mercy of the whims and fancies of the family.

The assumption that the present party is the legitimate heir of the one that brought freedom to India has been the potential source of numerous grand illusions. Once this fact is recognised, then all the illusions, including that the present Congress will be able to restore India's secular polity, can easily be addressed. That does not, however, imply that the party cannot not play a significant role in checkmating the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

At this juncture, the Congress continues to enjoy the advantage of being an alternative coalition to the BJP. It is the only national party that has legitimate regional character, represented by its social bases in a few major States. Nearly all regional parties are one State-based parties. What has further created a vacuum in the national pool of political leadership is

that the so-called regional leaders have limited ambitions. They aspire only to be Chief Minister. Consider Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav, a politician who barely understands the value of being a former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister. If he had used the opportunities presented by the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests or the farmers' movement, he would have been a contender for the prime ministerial post. Given the stunted growth of regional parties, the Congress remains unrivalled with respect to leading an alternative coalition.

What is the prospect of such a role in the 2024 parliamentary election? One answer is that it is too early to take a call. There is solid evidence of the Narendra Modi-led Government's unpopularity. However, Mr. Modi, along with Home Minister Amit Shah and the BJP, have changed the ground rules of India's electoral politics – that a mere defeat in an election does not foreclose the possibility of the formation of a BJP Government. This has been the case in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and elsewhere. This rule remains valid for New Delhi as well. Hence, any attempt to prevent Mr. Modi from becoming the Prime Minister for a third term means that the BJP's margin of defeat has to be significant in terms of seats.

But it is plausible to engineer a defeat and put the country back into coalition mode, which might shake up the Hindutva momentum, even if the BJP Government returns. To achieve this, the Congress has to make the election candidate-centric and win between 80 and 100 seats in 2024. The party will have to select competent candidates early and have a large heart in granting concessions to coalition partners.

There seems to be a small window to puncture the Hindutva balloon. But no one knows how the BJP is going to use the Ram Mandir, which is being built in Ayodhya, in its campaign. It is expected to be spectacular, which might neutralise issues that have undermined the BJP's rule today, particularly in north India.

Shaikh Mujibur Rehman teaches at Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi. He is the author of the upcoming book, *Shikwa-e-Hind: The Political Future of Indian Muslims*

DATA POINT

Rice's share in India's exports

About 500 tonnes of broken rice imported from India were claimed to be genetically modified (GM) by a French manufacturer. This has drawn sharp reactions from the European countries as the European Union (EU) does not permit GM rice. An American company recalled four of its product lines fearing GM contamination. Data show that rice exports form the fifth-highest share in terms of India's total exports. India is also the biggest exporter of rice globally, forming over 30% of the world's exports. However, less than 5% of the rice exported from India is destined for the European countries. But for many European countries, India is their primary source of rice imports. By Sumant Sen, Jasmin Nihalani and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

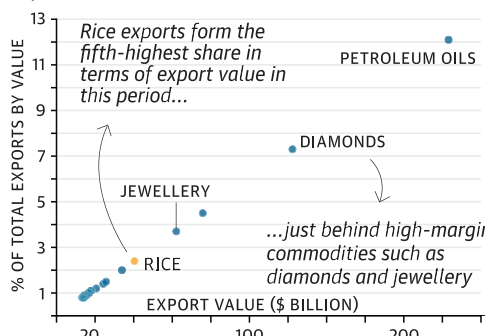
1 Between FY17 and FY22, India exported \$40.4 billion worth of rice

2 Over 90% of India's rice exports goes to Asian and African countries

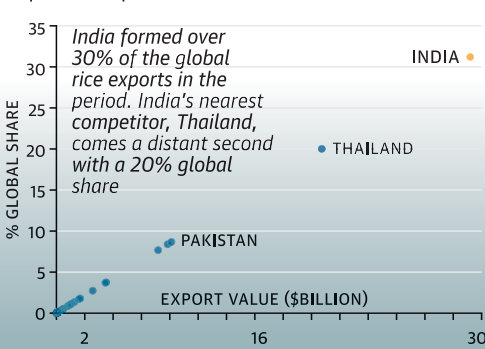
3 India forms over 10% of the total rice imports of at least 9 European countries



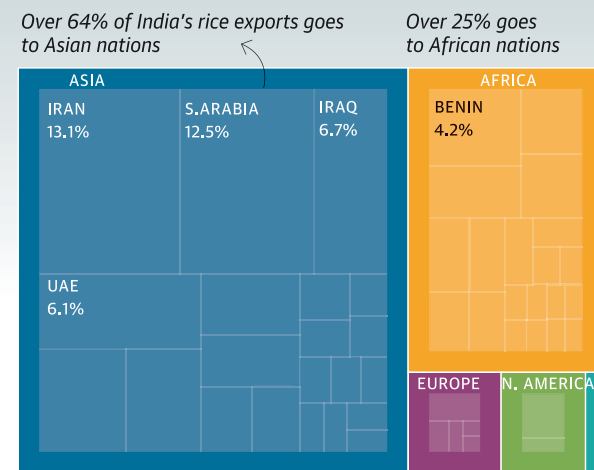
1. SHARE OF RICE | The chart depicts the value of various commodities exported by India between FY17 and FY22 in the horizontal axis. In the vertical axis, % of each commodity in India's overall export value is depicted



2. INDIA'S SHARE | The chart depicts the total export value of rice in \$ billion of various countries between FY17 and FY20 in the horizontal axis. In the vertical axis, the % share of each nation in the overall rice exports is depicted

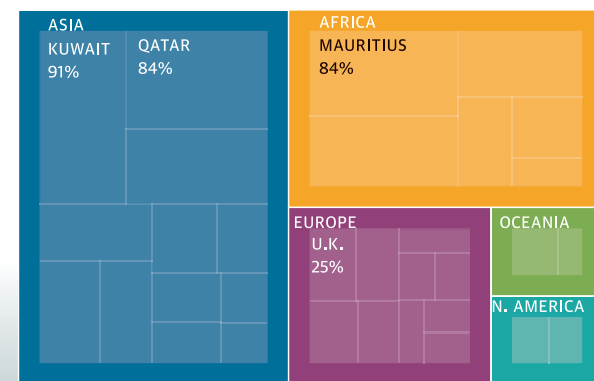


3. EUROPE'S SHARE | The tree map depicts the countries to which India exports rice. The bigger the box, the higher the export value. Europe forms a relatively smaller share of the total export value. A very high share goes to Asian and African countries



About 4.75% of India's rice exports goes to European nations. About 1.7% goes to the United Kingdom. About 3.4% goes to North American countries

4. PRIMARY SOURCE | The tree map depicts India's share in a country's total rice imports in 2020. For instance, India forms 25% and 23% of the total rice imported by the U.K. and the Netherlands respectively, their chief source for the product. Many European countries depend on India for a significant share of their rice imports



In at least nine European countries – the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Netherlands, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Iceland, Italy, Austria and Switzerland, India formed 10% of the total rice imports in 2020. About 12% of EU's rice imports were from India

SOURCE: COMMERCE MINISTRY DATA BANK, UN COMTRADE DATA

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 25, 1971

Pak. High Commission evacuation

Pakistan is preparing for what appears to be mass evacuation of its staff in the High Commission in New Delhi. According to diplomatic sources, orders have been issued to 56 members of the staff to be ready to move to Pakistan at short notice. The High Commission has, in its mass transfer order, expressed "regret" for the inconvenience caused to the staff due to the short notice "necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances prevailing at present". The order requires the officials to keep their luggage ready for onward transportation to the border. Arrangements would be made by the High Commission to collect them on the day of their departure. The order does not, however, stipulate the actual date of departure. The fifty-six members of the staff under orders of transfer include all the remaining Bengali staff of the mission numbering about 10. When contacted about the evacuation, a spokesman of the Indian External Affairs Ministry said he had no comment to make on the reported decision. The Government had not been intimated about any such evacuation by the Pakistan High Commission. Normally, members of the staff on transfer are given six days as joining time to make preparations for their departure.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 25, 1921

The Portuguese revolution

A British official despatch from Lisbon says that the new Government has been constitutionally formed under a presidential decree. A proclamation which has been issued in Lisbon announces the assassination and says that the victims are to have a state funeral. A state of siege has been declared for a fortnight. Steps are being taken to punish the assassins and disarm the ruffians who somehow have obtained weapons for the outbreak of the revolution. The British Warship "Calypto" has arrived. The whole country is quite. A Lisbon telegram states that the revolutionary movement in Lisbon was directed by the Colonel commanding insurgent troops. The Revolutionaries liberated Corta who murdered President Paes in 1918, but President Coillhow has stated that he ordered his arrest. A Vigo telegram to the "Echo-De-Paris" declares that the revolutionary movement in Portugal is of a Bolshevik character. General Rosa commanding Oporto division is reported to be marching on Lisbon.

FROM PAGE ONE

J&K free of strong-arm tactics by 3 families: Shah

Earlier in the day, Mr. Shah paid obeisance at the Digiana gurdwara. He was accompanied by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The Minister said the August 5, 2019 was "a historic decision by the PM".

"Earlier people did not have the right to buy land, refugees did not have rights, people did not get reservation. But, now no one has to fear, because all the rights under the Indian Constitution are available to everyone," he added.

He said the fresh investment will help create five lakh new jobs.

"So far, land has been allotted for an investment of ₹7,000 crore in Jammu and ₹5,000 crore in Kashmir. It's the magic of Modi ji," he added.

Mr. Shah said a helicopter policy has been announced for J&K under which helipads will be built in every district. "People from the private sector will invest and different sectors will be linked together," he added.

Punjab Congress fault lines widen

His outburst comes at a time when Punjab's Deputy Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Randhawa and Capt. (retd) Amarinder Singh are engaged in a bitter public spat over the latter's friendship with a Pakistani national, Aroosa Alam.

Without directly referring to it, Mr. Sidhu tweeted, "Punjab must come back to its real issues that concern every *punjabi* and our future generations. How will we counter the financial

emergency that stares upon us? I will stick to the real issues and not let them take a backseat!"

"The choice is clear between irreparable damage and the last chance for damage control. Who will bring back State's resources to the State's coffers, instead of them going to private pockets? Who will lead the initiative for resurrection of our great State to prosperity!!" asked the Punjab Congress chief in another tweet.

China's law 'formalises' its LAC actions

The law "stipulates that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China are sacred and inviolable", the text said, adding that "the state shall take measures to safeguard territorial integrity and land boundaries and guard against and combat any act that undermines territorial sovereignty and land boundaries".

It also calls on the state to "take measures to strengthen border defence, support economic and social development as well as opening-up in border areas, improve public services and infrastructure in such areas, encourage and support people's life and work there, and promote coordination between border defence and social, economic development in border areas".

The law designates the various responsibilities of the military, the State Coun-

cil or Cabinet, and provincial governments in managing the security and economic issues in border areas.

Article 22 of the law says the PLA "shall carry out border duties" including "organising drills" and "resolutely prevent, stop and combat invasion, encroachment, provocation and other acts".

The law also says China will "handle land border-related affairs with neighbouring countries through negotiations to properly resolve disputes and long-standing border issues".

The passing of the law coincides with stepped up Chinese activity along the land borders, which have mirrored actions in disputed waters in the East and South China Sea. The law will give a stamp of approval for the military's recent actions in disputed areas.

Graft charge against NCB in Aryan case

The witness said that after this, he allegedly overheard Mr. Gosavi speaking with a certain Sam D'Souza and tell the latter: "You put a 'bomb' of ₹25 crore, let's settle for ₹18 crore and give ₹8 crore to Sameer Wankhede."

Mr. Sail claimed that he had seen Pooja Dadlani (Mr. Shah Rukh Khan's manager) talking with Mr. Gosavi and Mr. D'Souza and later he was instructed by Mr. Gosavi to go to a particular location to collect ₹50 lakh cash, which was delivered to him in two bags. He then handed over the same to Mr. Gosavi at the latter's home in Vashi.

Mr. Sail recounted that he was later directed by Mr. Gosavi to hand over the bags to Mr. D'Souza.

The witness said he feared a threat to his life as Mr. Gosavi had allegedly gone missing.

"I fear that NCB officials and other persons involved may kill or abduct me like Gosavi. As seen in big cases, witnesses are often killed or taken away and therefore I want to state the truth," Mr. Sail said in his affidavit.

The NCB released a notice stating that Mr. Wankhede had refuted all of Mr. Sail's allegations.

"As he [Mr. Sail] is a witness in the case and as the case is before the honourable court and sub-judice, he needs to submit his prayer to

the honourable court rather than through social media if he has anything to say. In addition, there are certain vigilance-related allegations against certain persons in the affidavit which are based on overhearing by Mr. Sail. Our zonal director, Mumbai Zonal Unit, Mr. Sameer Wankhede has categorically denied these allegations," reads the NCB notice.

Raut demands probe
Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut alleged that there was a concerted attempt to defame Maharashtra using Central agencies and that the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi Government must conduct a *suo motu* probe.

Mr. Raut shared a video detailing Aryan apparently in the NCB custody with Mr. Gosavi, while tweeting: "Witness in Aryan Khan case made to sign on blank paper by NCB is shocking. Also there are reports that there was demand of huge money. CM Uddhav Thackeray said that these cases are made to defame Maharashtra. Police should take *suo motu* cognisance."

Mr. Raut said cases of a highly suspicious nature were being lodged against the Bollywood fraternity and that whoever questioned the dubious nature of probe were being dubbed "brand ambassadors of Pakistan".



Netherlands keen on Naval Liaison Officer

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

The Netherlands is interested in posting a Liaison Officer (LO) at the Navy's Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) for Maritime Domain Awareness and information sharing, Vice Admiral René Tas, Commander of the Royal Netherlands Navy, says.

In a telephonic conversation with *The Hindu*, he stressed the need for greater cooperation and interoperability between like-minded countries in tackling maritime threats.

"We could not participate in Malabar [naval exercises] because it didn't fit in the schedule of the Strike Group. We are excited to hear about Malabar and get lessons from that as well," he said when asked if the Netherlands was interested in also joining the exercise.

"The more we exercise, the more we can learn from each other. Nobody can win the fights against adversaries, extremism or terrorism alone. We need each other, we need to partner up more and more. Nations alone cannot fix the problem, nations together they can. So we are eager to learn from Malabar as well," he said.

The second phase of the Quad Malabar exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal earlier this month.

Vice Adm. Tas is in India coinciding with the visit of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group (CSG), led by the British carrier *Queen Elizabeth*. The Netherlands Frigate, *HNLMS Evertsen*, is also part of the CSG. The maiden India-U.K. joint tri-service exercise Konkan Shakti is scheduled in India from October 21 to 27.

Pak. prisoner killed in Poonch firing

Zia Mustafa, Lashkar-e-Taiba operative, was being taken to forest area to identify a hideout, police say

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAMMU

An arrested Pakistani terrorist was killed and three security personnel were injured on Sunday when militants opened fire on a joint search party of the Army and the police inside a forest in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Heavy firing and explosions were reported from the Bhatta Durrian forest of Mendhar, where, along with the forest areas adjoining Surankote (Poonch) and Thanamandi in Rajouri district, a massive search operation is on.

The operation, in which nine Army personnel were killed in ambushes in Surankote and Mendhar on October 11 and 14, entered the 14th day on Sunday.

A police spokesperson said two policemen and an Army jawan along with a prisoner Zia Mustafa, a Pakistani terrorist affiliated with the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), were injured in firing by terrorists in the Bhatta Durrian forest.

"Detenue Mustafa was ta-



Prolonged operation: The encounter between security personnel and militants at Mendhar in Poonch district entered the 14th day on Sunday. •PTI

ken to the area for identification of terrorist hideout during the ongoing operation in which three Army jawans and a JCO were martyred (on October 14). During the search when the team approached the hideout, terrorists again opened fire on the joint team of police and Army personnel in which two policemen and an Army jawan sustained injuries," the

spokesperson said. The police said Mustafa sustained injuries and he could not be taken out from the site in the heavy firing.

Body retrieved

"During the subsequent operation, reinforcements were sent and the body of Mustafa has been retrieved from the encounter site," the spokesperson said, adding

that legal process has been initiated in connection with the killing of the Pakistani terrorist.

Officials said Mustafa, a resident of Rawalakot in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, had been lodged in the Kot Bhalwal jail for the past 14 years and was shifted to Mendhar on police remand after investigation revealed his link with the hiding terrorists. He

Civilian killed in crossfire in Shopian, say police

SRINAGAR
A civilian was killed near a CRPF camp in Shopian on Sunday in an exchange of fire with militants, according to the police. The victim, Shahid Aijaz from Anantnag, was a milkman. "During cross-firing, one person died," the police said. The regional parties have demanded a probe. "Another innocent civilian killed allegedly by CRPF in Shopian today. It is sad the armed forces are showing little restraint and operating with such impunity," Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti said.

had sneaked in from the same route before he was arrested from south Kashmir, the officials said. The operation in the two border districts started on October 11 when terrorists ambushed a search party killing five soldiers including a Junior Commissioned Officer in the Surankote forest before another gunfight in nearby Thanamandi the same day.

States told to help cut edible oil prices

Food Secretary writes to them, convenes review meeting with representatives today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With edible oil prices remaining firm ahead of the festive season, the Centre has urged the States to take suitable action to ensure lower prices for consumers, including a review of their stockholding limits.

Food and Public Distribution Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey has written to the States outlining the initiatives taken to ease prices for consumers "keeping the festive season in mind", and convened a review meeting with them on Monday.

He has also advised them not to allow any stakeholder in the supply chain to hold stocks in excess of two months of storage capacity.

Retail inflation in edible oils and fats stood at 34.2% for September, even as the



Sizzling hot: Retail inflation in edible oils and fats stood at 34.2% for September. •FILE PHOTO

headline consumer price inflation cooled off to 4.2% and food price inflation fell to just 0.68%.

Festival demand

"Demand and consumption of edible oils is different for different States and Union Territories as per the preference of the consumers...

The Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) is monitoring the prices of edible oils and their availability to the consumers. This is especially important in the context of the upcoming festival season in which demand for edible oils will increase," the department said in a statement.

"It may be considered that any stakeholder (refiners, miller, wholesaler, etc.) should not hold stocks in excess of two months of the storage capacity," the department has suggested, adding that various steps have already been taken by the Centre based on earlier interactions with the States and edible oil industry associations.

A stock disclosure notification has been issued, backed by a web portal to monitor the stock of edible oils and oilseeds on a weekly basis in the country.

Earlier this month, the Union Government slashed the import duties and the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess levied on crude palm, soya bean and sunflower seed oils.

Ambergris worth ₹8 cr. seized in T.N.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Forest Department officials seized 8.013 kg of ambergris at Muthupet in Tiruvallur district and arrested two persons. "One kg of ambergris costs ₹1 crore-₹1.5 crore," District Forest Officer K. Arivozhi said.

Ambergris, used for making perfumes, is produced in the stomach of sperm whales when indigestible parts move into the intestines and bind together. They slowly become a solid mass, growing over many years. "When the animal vomits the mass, it floats a foot below the surface of the sea," he said.

Mr. Arivozhi, with Chief Conservator of Forest Sathish, formed a team, posed as buyers, and arrested Nizamuddin and Jahir Hussain.

Punjab uses tech against illicit brewing

Precise tracking systems, administrative coordination help curb illegal distillation

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

In 2020, Punjab's Excise Department launched Operation Red Rose to curb illicit liquor trading and nail excise-related crimes. A year-and-a-half later, with the use of precise tracking and monitoring systems to check illicit distillation and smuggling of liquor, the results in terms of the number of suspects booked for crimes, convictions and rise in revenues are encouraging.

In December 2020, the department busted an illegal bottling plant at Rajpura in Patiala district using the Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. It has been made compulsory for transporters of extra neutral alcohol (ENA) and spirits to install GPS systems in their vehicles. A control room at the department's head office in Mohali keeps a tab on the movement of all vehicles round the clock. On December 12, the control room flagged a tanker carrying 20,000 litres of ENA that had started from a distillery from Patiala but halted near Rajpura for an unusually long time. A squad of local officials was rushed to the spot, which found that ENA was being siphoned off from the tanker to an illegal bottling plant. A huge cache of liquor, blends, empty bottles and unused caps were also recovered, and a case was subsequently registered.

This is one among several cases that the department has busted by deploying the latest technology.

"The basic idea behind Operation Red Rose was to



Killer brew: A man undergoes treatment after drinking hooch in Tarn Taran of Punjab on August 2, 2020. •PTI

ensure that there should not be illicit or illegal movement of liquor in Punjab. We have adopted zero tolerance on this front. Our conviction rate for 2021-22 (till April-August) is 90%, which in 2019-20 was at around 67%; and in 2020-21, the conviction rate was 77%," Rajat Agarwal, Punjab's Excise Commissioner, told *The Hindu*.

Pointing out that the objective of the project is to keep an effective check on spurious and counterfeit liquor, Mr. Agarwal said: "We wanted to keep strict control over manufacturing units, the wholesale and the retail chain so that the quality of liquor is not compromised at any point. Under this operation, better coordination has been developed among the three wings - the civil administration, the Excise Department and the police - and the results are encouraging. The rise in revenue and increase in the number of FIRs and arrests, besides the rise in conviction rate, is testimony to the success of Operation Red Rose."

In 2019-20, the department's revenue was ₹5,118 crore; in 2020-21, it rose to ₹6,335 crore. The department is expecting the revenue to touch ₹7,000 crore this year.

In 2019, a total 11,953 FIRs were lodged and 13,243 arrests were made in cases related to illicit alcohol. From May 2020, when the operation was started, till May 2021, as many as 17,541 FIRs were registered and 16,216 people arrested. The number of convictions in excise-related crimes has also gone up.

Dynamic enforcement
"We are ensuring cases are taken to the logical conclusion. Enforcement is a continuous and dynamic activity so, of course, at times, unscrupulous elements will come out with some novel ways to work out their activities, but we have been improvising and efforts are paying off," Mr. Agarwal said.

The department has used several technologies - flow meters in bottling plants, QR code-based passes, GPS-enabled transport vehicles, and e-transit passes - to curb different modules of excise

theft, which include direct supply of liquor from the manufacturing unit without paying excise duty; liquor smuggling from neighbouring States; and preparing liquor in villages, especially in the areas adjacent to rivers.

Naresh Dubey, Joint Commissioner with the State Excise Department, asserts that human intelligence, along with technology, is being effectively put to use. "I can assure that no liquor is illegally coming out from distilleries in Punjab," he said, adding that the department has used the latest technologies in a manner that "each and every bottle is accounted for as there is a complete check on the inputs".

"The entire manufacturing process of liquor in the State is now online, which is monitored in real-time. The total movement of liquor, consisting of PML (country liquor), Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and beer, starting from manufacturing units to wholesalers and then further to retail shops or bars, is being done online. We have a control room, where our team members monitor the quantity, brand, etc., of the liquor being processed at a given manufacturing unit. On the wholesale front, all the permits are now given online. The retail module for online permits to retail licensees has also been implemented. All the passes have been made QR code enabled, which carry details of transactions that can be checked by any authority in transit - this has curbed the practice of duplicate passes," Mr. Dubey said.

Gorias feel heat of eviction drive in Assam

They fear losing grazing land

RAHUL KARMAKAR
SANOWA (ASSAM)

Indigenous Muslims in northern Assam's Darrang district are now feeling the heat of an eviction drive that was ostensibly aimed at migrant Bengali Muslim settlers on the banks of the Brahmaputra.

Between June 7 and September 23, the district authorities evicted more than 1,000 migrant Muslim families from the Dhalpur area to make way for the Government-run Garukhuti farm project. The eviction was paused after two persons, one a minor, were killed in police firing.

A month on, the indigenous Gorias - a category of Assamese Muslims who played a part in bringing the 'encroachment' issue to the fore six years ago - have found themselves at the receiving end.

They are worried about losing access to the land they had been using through generations for seasonal farming and grazing their livestock.

"We have nothing against the Government's Garukhuti project and the eviction of the encroachers. We also gave up about 700 bighas for the project but sought to retain about 300 bighas closer to our village. But they took that too, leaving us with hardly anything to subsist on," Sanowa resident Abed Ali told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Ali is the son of Kobad Ali, president of the local milk producers' association and one of four who had



A policeman patrolling the government land after the recent eviction in Garukhuti. •RITU RAJ KONWAR

filed a case in 2015 under the Assam Land Grabbing (Prohibition) Act, 2010, seeking the eviction of encroachers from the village grazing reserve and professional grazing reserve south of Sanowa and the adjoining Rajapukhuri inhabited by Assamese Hindus.

"We had a discussion with the local authorities and those in charge of the Garukhuti farm project. We were told that our land would be taken temporarily, but now they have ordered us not to till our land because we have no documents though our forefathers have been using this land for farming and grazing our livestock since the 1800s," said Julhas Ali, a village leader.

District officials pointed out that the land is Government-owned and the onus was on the authorities to decide how it would be used. "We have just started the project. There is a long way to go," said BJP legislator Padma Hazarika, who heads the committee set up to implement the project.

INTERVIEW | MARIA RESSA

'When citizens are manipulated on social media, they distrust everything'

With strongmen governments increasing their presence online, the mission for journalists has never been as important as it is now, says the Nobel Peace Prize winner

SUHASINI HAIDAR

Journalist Maria Ressa from the Philippines is one of two journalists to have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2021, along with Russian Editor Dmitry Muratov. Ms. Ressa, who is the author of upcoming book *How to Stand Up to a Dictator* speaks about her battles with the Philippines Government and 'Big Tech' social media companies.

It is not since 1935 that the Nobel Peace Prize went to a journalist. Carl Von Ossietzky, who wrote about the Nazi regime and Germany's remilitarisation plan, won that year. So what do you think is the message the Nobel Peace Committee is sending in 2021?

■ That it is that kind of moment, you know, that it is an existential moment, where, what happened after 1935, you had Second World War. And I use that analogy all the time, because I always say that our information ecosystem, it's like an atom bomb exploded. And we need to come together globally and find a solution, much like the world did after Second World War, they created the UN, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, right, these values, because I got to say, I keep asking for "tech values", beyond making money, and [for tech companies] to take the role of being

the gatekeeper to the public sphere seriously. I will also say: this prize is for all journalists. I feel like I'm the placeholder for every journalist around the world who have found it so hard to just do their jobs. And I keep hoping that this creative destruction will lead us to a place that is better than where we are.

Both the Philippines and India are on the list of top 10 countries where journalists had been killed or targeted. For journalists, the growing threat is coming from democratically elected, populist, and increasingly authoritarian regimes worldwide. What do you think led to the rise of populism?

■ Technology! [These regimes] were always there, if you see that Hitler and others were elected democratically, but I go back to the past decade where journalists lost our gatekeeping powers [to

social media] technology. And, globally I would say the first time we saw different realities being put out was in Ukraine, for example, by Russian military led information systems or in the [Indian election campaign] in 2014. We saw that the use of social media lead to an erosion of trust in [mainstream media]. When citizens are being manipulated by parties on social media, they begin to distrust everything. This year an Oxford University research 'Project on Computational Propaganda' (now known as the Programme on Democracy and Technology demtech.oxi.ox.ac.uk) found that these "cheap armies on social media" are rolling back democracy in 81 countries around the world.

The hard part is that it manipulates our biology. As human beings, we have a lot more in common than we realise because the very same platforms are using an algorithmic manipulation in order to change what we think, to change how we feel. According to one biologist who studied this behaviour, our greatest crisis comes from "palaeolithic emotions, medieval institutions and God-like technology". The technology is God-like be-



cause social media has become a behaviour modification system. And with a lack of accountability, and the potential to make significant amounts of money, it is a business model that takes our data and uses it to manipulate us.

The counter argument is that social media, big tech companies have democratised expression, given everyone a platform. Why do you think they are, as you describe, an agent for authoritarianism and not an agent for the people's right to know?

■ Well, I would point you to 2011, and how the Arab

Freedom of expression is also the idea that you should be able to speak what you think without fear of retribution

Spring became an Arab Winter. At the beginning, [social media] was empowering. But then, governments realised they could exploit those weaknesses of micro-targeting, those weaknesses of what was used for marketing, and governments began to manipulate those tools. Mark Zuckerberg says all the time that this is a freedom of speech issue. But I like to quote comedian Sacha Baron Cohen who said that this is

actually a 'freedom of reach' issue.

We are talking about algorithmic amplification, algorithmic distribution, and studies now have shown us that lies laced with anger can be spread faster and further than facts. If the social media platforms are biased against the facts, then they are biased against journalism which seeks facts. And this contestation leads to a divided society.

In the Philippines, for example, we never argued about facts, regardless of where we stood [on politics]. But after the election of President [Rodrigo] Duterte in 2016, if you were Pro-Duterte, and you can substitute pro-[former U.S. President Donald] Trump here as well, you would move further right. If you were anti-Duterte, you would move further left. This kind of [algorithmic manipulation] has torn apart the shared reality. Freedom of expression is also the idea that you should be able to speak the truth, speak what you think without fear of retribution. Information [surveillance] operations on social media make that more difficult, and as a result these strongman leaders brought out the worst of

human nature, gave permission for very destructive [online] behaviour.

Tell us a little bit about your own journey fighting the strongman leader President Duterte, leading up to your arrest in 2019.

■ In the Philippines, President Duterte was democratically elected, but like many of these digital authoritarians, once he was President, he then took the levers of power and changed it from within. We have seen at least 19 journalists killed during his administration, 63 lawyers, over 400 human rights activists, and then he had his very bloody drug war. Our first battle for truth was, just to collate how many people had died in the [war on drugs], because the police would give one figure and then they would roll it back. In 2012, we set up *Rappler* with 20 young employees. One of the things that had begun to alarm was that how anyone who questioned the drug war was just pounded on social media. So the first thing we exposed was [the government's] information operations, we showed our people the data of how they were being manipulated on-

line. I wrote a series called "Weaponising the Internet", on how social media algorithms impact a person. Then we looked at manufactured reality and how just 26 fake accounts could reach up to three million users via social media.

I have to say, I didn't expect to get arrested. I didn't expect 10 arrest warrants in less than two years. But we just kept doing what we were doing. The four of us, the co-founders of *Rappler*, have this pact that only one of us is allowed to be afraid at one time, and then we rotate that. (Laughs)

What are your suggestions for journalists just starting out? Is there a toolkit on how to deal with a tough state?

■ The first thing is that journalists, news organisations [must move] from the age when we were competing against each other. We are on the same side. When it is a battle for facts, we are on the same side, and especially on social media. Collaboration is the way forward. This is an amazing time to be a journalist, because the mission has never been as important as it is today.

IN BRIEF



Ashish Mishra contracts dengue

LAKHIMPUR KHERI Union Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish Mishra, arrested in connection with the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, has contracted dengue and was shifted to the district hospital, an official said on Sunday. Ashish, who was in police remand, was sent to the district jail on Saturday for treatment at its healthcare facility, a senior police official said. Ashish, along with three others, was taken in two-day police custody on Friday evening for further interrogation in the case. PTI

NIA arrests person 'linked to IS outfits'

NEW DELHI The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a person for allegedly having links with the banned Islamic State-affiliated outfits. "Earlier in 2013, Muhammad Tauqir Mahmood, along with his associate, had also visited Syria illegally to liaise with Daesh leadership and had offered support from Indian Muslims," the agency said on Sunday. The arrest of Mahmood, 33, a resident of Bengaluru, has been made in a case registered by the NIA last year against him, Zuhab Hameed aka Shakeel Manna, Irfan Nasir and Mohammed Shihab.

NCPCR seeks report on Minister's visit to school

BHUBANESWAR The controversy over the murder of a teacher in Kalahandi got thicker with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) seeking a report on the alleged frequent visits by Ministers to a school promoted by Gobinda Sahu, who is accused of the teacher's murder. Most of the allegations insinuate sexual favours sought by influential Ministers and officers. Earlier, NCW Chairperson Rekha Sharma had written to Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik.

Lalu arrives in Patna, may campaign for party in bypolls

He slams State Congress in-charge for insinuating that RJD may tie up with BJP

AMARNATH TEWARY PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal president Lalu Prasad on Sunday reached Patna after over three-and-a-half years. He was accompanied by his wife Rabri Devi, elder daughter Misa Bharti and other family members.

Mr. Prasad, who was accorded a warm welcome by party leaders and workers at the airport, is likely to campaign for the party candidates in the byelections scheduled for October 30 at Tarapur in Munger and Kusheshwarthan in Darbhanga districts. Both Tej Pratap and Tejashwi Yadav, sons of Mr. Prasad, were present at the airport to receive him.

Rift with Congress

"We are excited that our party leader and bhagwan [God] has come to Patna today and now leaders of all political parties will realise the importance of being Lalu



Grand homecoming: RJD supremo Lalu Prasad being welcomed by supporters in Patna on Sunday. •PTI

in Bihar," an RJD worker from Arwal said.

Earlier in Delhi, while speaking to media persons, Mr. Prasad slammed Bihar in-charge of the Congress, Bhakt Charan Das. "Bhakt Charan Das is bhakchonaahar [stupid and fool]", said Mr. Prasad when asked for his reaction over the Congress leader saying that the RJD would join forces (obliquely referring to the BJP) against whom the mahagathbandhan (grand alliance) had

fought earlier. Mr. Prasad also denied differences between his sons. "Both are my sons and there is no difference between them," he said.

Convicted in several fodder scam cases, Mr. Prasad was later admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi with multiple diseases. After getting bail, he was recuperating at the residence of Ms. Bharti since April 30 this year. Since his incarceration in the

fodder scam cases on December 23, 2017, Mr. Prasad visited Patna only for a few days on parole in May 2018 to attend the marriage of Mr. Tej Pratap on May 12. Family sources told *The Hindu* that Mr. Prasad might celebrate the Chhath (Sun god worship) festival in Patna in October after a long gap.

Campaign likely

Mr. Prasad is also likely to campaign for the RJD candidates in Tarapur and Kusheshwarthan for the byelections. "He may address one public meeting at each constituency", said a senior party leader, adding, "everything depends on his health condition."

The RJD has been striving to win both seats. The party is locked in a multi-cornered contest as the Congress and the Janata Dal(U) have fielded candidates. Mr. Tejashwi has been campaigning in both the constituencies.

Rahul terms fuel price hike 'tax dacoity'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday slammed the Centre over rising fuel prices with former party chief Rahul Gandhi taking a dig at the government, saying the "tax dacoity" on petrol prices is rising and there would be some respite from it if elections take place somewhere.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also attacked the Centre over rising prices of petrol and diesel, alleging that the Modi Government has created records in "giving trouble" to people.

Record rise

Taking to Twitter, the Congress general secretary tagged a media report which said that this year petrol prices have increased by a record ₹23.53.

Petrol and diesel prices on Sunday were hiked for the fifth straight day by 35 paise per litre each, pushing pump rates to a new high across the country.

'Misinformation, hate speech in FB'

Report cites internal documents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW YORK

Internal documents at Facebook show "a struggle with misinformation, hate speech and celebrations of violence" in India, the company's biggest market, with researchers at the social media giant pointing out that there are groups and pages "replete with inflammatory and misleading anti-Muslim content" on its platform, U.S. media reports have said.

In a report published on Saturday, *The New York Times* said that in February 2019, a Facebook researcher created a user account to look into what the social media website will look like for a person living in Kerala. For the next three weeks, the account operated by a simple rule: follow all the recommendations generated by Facebook's algorithms to join groups, watch videos and explore new pages on the site.

The result was an inundation of hate speech, misinformation and celebrations of violence, which were documented in an internal Facebook report published later that month, the *NYT* report said.

Biggest market

"Internal documents show a struggle with misinformation, hate speech and celebrations of violence in the country, the company's biggest market," said the report based on disclosures obtained by a consortium of news organisations, including *The New York Times* and the Associated Press.

The documents are part of a larger cache of material collected by whistleblower Frances Haugen, a former Facebook employee who recently testified before the Senate about the company and its social media platforms.

The report said the internal documents include re-



ports on how bots and fake accounts tied to the "country's ruling party and Opposition figures" were wreaking havoc on national elections.

In an internal document titled "Adversarial Harmful Networks: India Case Study", Facebook researchers wrote that there were groups and pages "replete with inflammatory and misleading anti-Muslim content".

The internal documents also detail how a plan 'championed' by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg to focus on "meaningful social interactions" was leading to more misinformation in India, particularly during the pandemic.

Efforts by Bajrang Dal

The *NYT* report said another Facebook report detailed efforts by Bajrang Dal to publish posts containing anti-Muslim narratives on the platform. "Facebook is considering designating the group as a dangerous organisation because it is 'inciting religious violence' on the platform, the document showed. But it has not yet done so," the *NYT* report said.

The documents show that Facebook did not have enough resources in India and was not able to grapple with the problems it had introduced there, including anti-Muslim posts.

A Facebook spokesman, Andy Stone, said Facebook has reduced the amount of hate speech that people see globally by half this year.

Om Prakash Rajbhar changes tack, again

After stormy alliances with the BSP and BJP, the MBC leader has now reached out to Samajwadi Party

OMAR RASHID LUCKNOW

Amid rising political temperatures in Uttar Pradesh ahead of next year's Assembly election, OBC leader Om Prakash Rajbhar has planned a big rally - a Van-chit, Pichda, Dalit, Alpsankhyak Bhagidhari Mahapanchayat - in Mau on October 27, the 19th foundation day of his party, the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP). And significantly, the SBSP leader has invited Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav to be the chief guest at the rally.

The two parties are expected to declare an alliance for the 2022 election, in



On the fence: SBSP president Om Prakash Rajbhar (left) with Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav. •FILE PHOTO

what has been a complete turnaround for the SBSP over the past five years, with Mr. Rajbhar emerging not just as leader within his community but also a sought-after mobiliser of the non-Yadav MBC voters for the bigger players in the Purvanchal re-

gion. The SBSP's relevance for the BJP can be gauged from the fact that despite commanding 73 out of 80 Lok Sabha seats in 2014, the BJP felt the need to ally with a second party, one that did not have a single MLA.

In 2017, the BJP and its

two allies won 325 out of the 403 seats, registering a brute majority. The SBSP contested eight and won four but mobilised votes for the BJP in Purvanchal. The alliance provided beneficial for Mr. Rajbhar personally as he went on to become an MLA for the first time. Though a small player in the larger landscape, over the last few years, the SBSP chief has emerged as a leader who speaks unabashedly for OBC interests, leveraging his rustic style rooted in the Purvanchal.

However, Mr. Rajbhar's political affiliation has hardly been predictable, making him a risky bargain for any

potential ally. Mr. Rajbhar's political journey traces the shift of caste mobilisation in U.P., from the BSP's Kanshiram to the BJP and Mr. Modi, and now Mr. Akhilesh Yadav.

The SBSP has found little electoral success despite contesting elections regularly. In 2012, the party contested 52 seats and secured over four lakh votes but failed to open its score. Mr. Rajbhar again stood third. Then in 2014 Lok Sabha, SBSP became a part of the Ekta Manch that included the Quami Ekta Manch of jailed MLA Mukhtar Ansari. This time Mr. Rajbhar stood fourth but received a decent 66,084 votes in Salempur.

Hearing a petition on the detention centres, Justice Kalyan Rai Surana had more than two months ago observed: "...The State envisaged that the construction of detention centre at Matia, Goalpara, would be completed by September 2021... the learned Advocate General has prayed for allowing six weeks' time to the State to complete the

construction of the proposed detention centre and to shift the detainees of the various detention centres..."

People adjudged non-citizens by the quasi-judicial Foreigners' Tribunals are sent to detention centres. Such people are tried after the Assam police's Border wing serve them notice on suspicion of being foreigners.

Assam Govt. overshoots HC's detention camp deadline

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The Assam Government has overshoot a 45-day deadline set by the Gauhati High Court for the completion of a standalone detention centre for declared foreigners.

The court had on August 11 asked the State Government to complete the construction of

the detention centre, now called transit camp, at Matia in western Assam's Goalpara district and file a status report within 45 days.

The Gauhati High Court had also sought the shifting of 177 inmates across six existing detention centres within as many central jails. These jails are in Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Jorhat,

Kokrajhar, Silchar and Tezpur.

"The construction of the Matia facility is almost complete," Manivannan S., the State's Home Commissioner-Secretary told *The Hindu*. Home and Political Department officials said the Government had sought some more time to complete the detention centre and the formalities associated with it.

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Sl. No.	Name of the Equipment	Tender Number and Date	Last date for receipt of Tender	Opening Date of Tender
1	Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectrometer with Accessories	No. MSUR/PP&D/GO2559TNC/CF/NMR/2021, dated 25-10-2021	26.11.2021 11.00 a.m.	26.11.2021 12.00 noon
2	MALDI-TOF / TOF with Accessories	No. MSUR/PP&D/GO259TNC/CF/MALDI TOF/2021, dated 25-10-2021	29.11.2021 11.00 a.m.	29.11.2021 12.00 noon
3	HR Mass Spectrometry with Accessories	No. MSUR/PP&D/GO259TNC/CF/HRMS/2021, dated 25-10-2021	30.11.2021 11.00 a.m.	30.11.2021 12.00 noon

Tender Document, eligibility criteria, important dates, details about tender document fee, earnest money deposit, instructions, terms and conditions can be downloaded from the University website www.msuniv.ac.in.

Date: 25.10.2021 DIPR / 3079 / TENDER 2021 REGISTRAR

செயலகம் மூன்று கட்டிடங்கள் அமைப்பதற்கான சரங்கம் புதித்து எந்திரங்கள் அமைப்பதற்காக

INTERVIEW | ANURADHA GUPTA

'India's vaccine pace is inspirational to lower-income countries'

Large-scale use of technology such as the CoWin app has been a big game-changer for the country, says deputy CEO of Gavi, the global Vaccine Alliance

HINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, is working with countries to support COVID-19 response and maintain and restore routine immunisation. The Alliance is also co-leading global efforts on equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Anuradha Gupta, deputy CEO of Gavi, speaks about India's vaccination journey and how it makes for a global case study.

Do you think the COVID vaccination experience can serve as a critical threshold for the public health policy and implementation in India to take a leap?

■ There is always a risk with these pandemics. When they hit, everybody wakes up. Once they fade, they are soon forgotten. It will be extremely important for any country, not just India, to ensure that learnings out of this crisis are used to improve our health systems and make them pandemic-proof.

Certain solutions have proved so compelling that they will outlast the pandemic. For example, I see CoWin being repurposed for routine immunisation services and other healthcare programmes. For instance, in tu-

berculosis programmes, there has been a persistent challenge of tracking patients who went to private healthcare services and discontinued their treatment. That can be solved with a shared database on platforms like CoWIN, enabling effective exchange of information between public and private sector providers, and proving extremely helpful in addressing diseases that cause deaths, and medical impoverishment.

Another important lesson coming out of this pandemic is that we should have more distributed manufacturing of life-saving commodities, geographically speaking. So, whether it is personal protective equipment (PPE), syringes, vaccines, drugs, or testing kits, the more distri-

buted manufacturing we have across the globe, the better it is for the world.

Finally, India will need to reflect on how to build public-private partnerships in the healthcare sector that are mutually reinforcing. Most discourses around the roles of the private sector and public sector in healthcare have positioned the two as mutually exclusive options, in an "either/or" manner. But models like Gavi, for instance, show that there are ways to create highly effective public-private partnerships and craft win-win models for all stakeholders.

It is such a proud moment for India to have hit this one billion inoculations mark. The country deserves to celebrate the distance it has covered amid extreme uncertainties. We are hopeful and confident that India will build on this success and contribute to the global good by making vaccines available to other countries, where even the most vulnerable populations are still waiting to access COVID-19 vaccines.



One lesson from this pandemic is that public health system capacities need to be continuously bolstered

What are the major steps you think have most contributed to achieving its vaccination coverage?

■ First, the huge political commitment to vaccination, and very decisive leadership. I think that makes all the difference. Once India decided that vaccination needed to be ramped up, particularly after the second wave hit the country, we immediately saw tremendous progress.

Second, India has a huge advantage coming out of systematic investments that have been made in strengthening public health systems since 2005, under the National Health Mission, previously National Rural Health Mission. The one million ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) on the ground, the anganwadi workers, the ANMs (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives), and the health infrastructure really reaching out almost to the last mile, gave India the strength to very quickly mobilise millions of health workers to carry out this ambitious drive.

Third, India's historical strength in building indigenous vaccine manufacturing prowess inspired confidence among the global community to transfer technology for manufacturing COVID-19 vaccines to Indian manufacturers like the Serum Institute of India (SII). SII's capability and track record gave institutions like Gavi the confidence to provide financial backing and pre-payments to

enable the ramp-up in production.

Fourth, the public confidence in vaccines, institutions, and the provincial and national governments made this journey possible. The tone was set at the top; people believed in that message, and they actually came forward to get vaccinated.

Does India's COVID vaccination experience have a few lessons for other countries?

■ That India has been able to deliver one billion inoculations at such a rapid pace is inspirational, particularly for lower-income countries. It's also a great case study, on how to quickly activate health system capacities to vaccinate, overcoming several weaknesses. One of the most important takeaways from this experience is the exemplary use of digital innovations, and the ability to continuously adapt in a crisis setting.

CoWIN is a brilliant example of digital innovation

which helped India organise its vaccination efforts in a remarkable way, enabling vaccine tracking and vaccine management, otherwise not possible through manual efforts. The use of CoWIN sends a powerful message to the world: that digital technologies can actually be leveraged very fast – at a low cost, but to great effect. We at Gavi are very proud to have funded and supported CoWIN at an early stage.

The large-scale use of technology in vaccinations has been a big game-changer for India. In many other countries, where digital technologies are not mature, even prioritisation of populations for vaccine eligibility can be a very big challenge.

Are there any specific lessons, knowledge gains that can really be transferred to other infectious disease programmes or public health space in general?

■ One of the lessons that has emerged very clearly from

this pandemic and India's response is that public health system capacities need to be continuously bolstered.

To expect so many poor people to maintain physical distancing, hand-washing hygiene – when some of them struggle for clean drinking water – is unreasonable. Also expecting them to buy sanitiser and masks daily, when they are trying hard to make ends meet, is beyond logic. If India hadn't systemically invested in and developed its health infrastructure over the past decade, probably the story would have been different. That highlights the importance of further increasing investments in public health, pandemic preparedness, and health systems. India has repeatedly committed to increasing investments in public health beyond 1% of GDP. It is time we honour that commitment, because this is not the first or the last pandemic.

(For full interview, go to bit.ly/AnuradhaGupta)

U.P. to get nine new medical colleges

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Uttar Pradesh on Monday to launch the Pradhan Mantri Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana (PM-ASBY) and inaugurate nine medical colleges in the State.

The Yojana, according to a release issued by the Central Government, will be one of the largest pan-India schemes for strengthening healthcare infrastructure across the country.

The objective of PM-ASBY is to fill critical gaps in public health infrastructure, especially in critical care facilities and primary care in both urban and rural areas.

Meanwhile, the Health Ministry, in a release, noted that the Central Government has given its approval for 157 new medical colleges in India since 2014 and has invested a total of ₹17,691.08 crore on them. "On completion, nearly 16,000 undergraduate medical seats would be added. Of these, 6,500 seats have already been created with the functioning of 64 new medical colleges. Under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), the Central Government has also provided about ₹2,451.1 crore for upgradation of existing State government or Central Government medical colleges," it said.

Vaccine record shows India's capability: Modi

He praises health workers in Mann ki Baat radio show

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country's health workers had set a new example by achieving the milestone of administering 100 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses. They had established a new benchmark in service to humanity through innovation and sheer determination, he said.

Addressing the nation through his Mann ki Baat radio show, Mr. Modi said the success of the vaccine programme displayed the capability of India. "There are innumerable instances about them (health workers) that convey how they crossed all hurdles and provided the security shield to the maximum number of people," he said.

On the show, Mr. Modi talked to a healthcare worker, Poonam Nautiyal from Bageshwar in Uttarakhand, whose team accomplished the task of administering 100% first doses in the area. She and her team used to cover 8-10 km a day in the hills for vaccinating people.

National unity
The Prime Minister paid tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose birth anniversary is celebrated as 'National Unity Day' on October 31.



Safety for all: Narendra Modi lauded health workers for their commitment to the vaccination campaign. ■BISWARANJAN ROUT

Noting that police personnel in Gujarat, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir were taking out motorbike rallies to spread the message of national unity, he said many women from Kupwara were working to make the Tricolour for the Army and government offices.

Highlighting the importance of music, art and literature in life, Mr. Modi said the Culture Ministry would be organising competitions on patriotic songs, Rangoli and lullabies. "In these lullabies, there should be a reference to modern India, the vision of 21st century India and its dreams," he said. The competitions would commence on October 31.

Paying homage to Bhagwan Birsa Munda, whose

birth anniversary is on November 15, Mr. Modi said he taught the countrymen to be proud of their culture and roots. "The foreign rule subjected him to countless threats and applied immense pressure, but he did not relinquish the tribal culture," he said.

"Today, on October 24, 'United Nations Day' is celebrated. India had signed the Charter of the United Nations in 1945 prior to Independence. A unique feature related to the UN is that the women of India have played a large role in increasing the influence and strength of the United Nations," he said, recounting the contributions made by Hansa Mehta, Lakshmi Menon and Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit.

PMs' Museum likely to miss deadline

Culture Minister had told Parliament that it would open in October

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The Prime Ministers' Museum on the Teen Murti Bhawan premises is likely to miss yet another deadline, this time the "October, 2021" tentative date, for completion given by Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy to Parliament in August, according to officials.

The museum, being constructed next to the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, was approved in March 2018 and would cost ₹271.07 crore. Mr. Reddy had said to a question in the Lok Sabha on August 9. He said it would "showcase the life and contribution made by all Prime Ministers of India".

The museum was sup-



Grand plan: A model of the proposed museum on all the Prime Ministers of the country. ■SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

posed to open in October 2020 but Culture Ministry officials said the pandemic had contributed to the delay. Two senior officials confirmed that work was pending. They said there was no opening or inauguration

date set so far. One official said the project would take at least a couple more months. Requests for comment from a spokesperson of the Ministry were not answered.

According to sources, the

museum would open on a date of significance, with one option being the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, December 25, which has been declared "Good Governance Day" by the Narendra Modi Government.

The project may not be complete in time to open on Jawaharlal Nehru's birth anniversary, November 14, a source said.

Among the features of the museum are audio-visual displays on the lives of all Prime Ministers, holograms, projections and interactive content.

A souvenir shop was also being developed, for which the NMMML had awarded the contract to an agency in July.

Use anti-drug fund for de-addiction: Ministry

Policing must not be the sole focus, says official

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has recently recommended that the National Fund to Control Drug Abuse be used to carry out de-addiction programmes, rather than just policing activities, a top Ministry official said on Sunday.

R. Subrahmanyam, Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, said the fund, which was created in accordance with a provision of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, had a nominal corpus of ₹23 crore.

"It is being used only for policing activities. We recently proposed to add de-addiction to it," Mr. Subrahmanyam said.

He added that a proposal to decriminalise possession of "small quantities" of drugs, as defined in the

NDPS Act, had also been sent to the Department of Revenue under the Finance Ministry. He said his department, which is tasked with conducting de-addiction programmes, would then intervene and have the persons caught with small quantities of drugs for personal use directed to rehab, instead of being prosecuted and sent to jail. Mr. Subrahmanyam said the department had a ₹250 crore annual budget for its de-addiction activities.

A retired IPS officer and

Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Delhi Police Crime Branch from 1985 to 1990, at a time the NDPS Act was implemented, Amod Kanth, said the Act itself intended to do what the Social Justice Ministry has suggested.

"I agree with their proposal to decriminalise possession of small quantities. The intention of the law is not what the NCB is doing today," he said, in reference to the NCB's recent case against Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan.

TH **CROSSWORD** + 13385 Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids: @ <https://qr.go.page.link/jjpTn> SCAN TO PLAY

(set by Vulcan)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8								
10				11				
12				13				
15				14				
17	18		19		20	21		
22		23		24				
26				27				
		28						

- 16 Old wing's visual style (2,3)
- 17 Trouble in group settlement (5)
- 19 Bug entering a fruit (9)
- 22 With ease swimming in these waters (5,3)
- 24 What a writer may use to eliminate characters (6)
- 26 Place and day to wear a robe (7)
- 27 European guy worried to come out (7)
- 28 Stop after large train had got derailed (5,2,1,4)
- DOWN
- 2 Woman's quote about a nonconformist (7)
- 3 Good home/retreat and a new town basically to roam (9)
- 4 Indication of warnings ignored (4)
- 5 Terrible strain man finds severe (10)
- 6 Pressure on workers to make clothes (5)
- 7 Symbols of royalty relating to celebration around India (7)
- 8 It means the end time (6)
- 9 Authenticate an examination, say (6)
- 14 Upset it's poorly garnished on the outside (10)
- 16 Go too far past a stretch of water (9)
- 17 Expose one in Paris with clout (6)
- 18 Climb to go for a party (7)
- 20 Establish a booth at home initially (7)
- 21 Student starting off a profitable venture (6)
- 23 Adhesive ultimately found in tree, one kind of resin (5)
- 25 Vulcan gets second reminder (4)

- ACROSS
- 1 Perhaps light, funny and something hilarious (5-7)
- 10 Wyatt to carry silencer (7)
- 11 Firm working through this evening (7)
- 12 Have a hunch about Arctic people keeping time (6)
- 13 End of girl's answer (8)
- 15 Speaking of Titanic – extremely depressing – it's sad (9)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13384

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH
Keeping to dharma

The whole subject of dharma is difficult to comprehend. First of all, one needs to know what dharma is. Secondly, even if one happens to be aware of one's dharma to some extent, keeping to it is difficult, elaborated Kidambi Narayanan, in a discourse.

Vibhishana, knowing that Ravana's sin of abducting Sita is grievous, leaves him and goes to Rama. Kumbhakarna applauds Vibhishana's decision. He says Vibhishana knows dharma, and such a one should be the king of Lanka. In the Mahabharata, we find Yudhishtira initially reluctant to wage war against his cousins. But once war becomes inevitable, he is unwavering in his commitment to securing victory. Arjuna, on the other hand, is eager for war, but when he gets to the battlefield, he begins to waver.

Yudhishtira, among the five Pandavas, is the one who knows dharma the best. And yet, even he has some questions regarding dharma, for which he seeks answers from Bhisma. Bhisma says that dharma is subtle. It is like an ocean, about whose depth you know nothing. Nor can you guess in which part of the ocean pearls can be obtained. Dharma is like the tip of a sharp sword. Can you stand on the tip of a sword comfortably? The answer, obviously, is in the negative. Likewise, keeping to dharma is not easy. It can shake us out of our comfort zone. Dharma is defined thus – *chodanaa lakshanaartho dharmah*. That is, dharma is that which tells us what to do and what not to do. Another definition of dharma is: *dhreeyate anena iti dharmah*. This means that that which supports and sustains the world is called dharma. A society can function only within a framework of rules. Without rules, there will be chaos. These guidelines are found in our scriptures, and these constitute dharma.

INTERVIEW | MOHAMED NASHEED

'Climate vulnerable nations will go to COP26 with a view to restructuring debt'

The first impact of climate change, the very quick impact of climate change, would be a default on debt by country after country, says former President of the Maldives

MEERA SRINIVASAN

Mohamed Nasheed, *Parliamentary Speaker and former President of the Maldives, who survived an explosion just outside his residence in capital Male on May 6, is back in the country following medical treatment abroad for grave injuries. He spoke on the lingering threat of religious extremism, his political plans amid differences with President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, Maldives-India ties, and the coming COP26 summit where he will make a strong case for climate vulnerable nations. Excerpts:*

You had vowed to come back stronger. How are you feeling you now?

I am much better. I am very fortunate to be back at home. Of course, cautious. The government is conducting investigation.

They have already charged about a dozen people. But the investigation is not yet over.

We are hopeful that we will be able to find all the perpetrators, including those who might have schemed it, funded it, or had other links with terrorism.

Are you concerned about your safety?

Well, yes, my security detail has got bigger and bigger. Of course, I am very concerned about my safety. But we all have to have normal lives and see that our way of life is defended, and that we proceed with the work that we are entrusted to do by our people. I hope to keep on doing that as long as I can.

You have openly criticised the government's response to religious extremism and

asked President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih to "course correct before it is too late". Has that happened?

The government is trying to see if they can come to a ground where safety and security become the most important issues; where terrorism is not at all tolerated. And any acts or missions to encourage terrorism is also legislated against.

I think the government will find ways to correct its path and to see that they maintain the MDP [Maldivian Democratic Party] policies of progressive development, and to see that the people of the country have a prosperous life. I am confident that the government will be able to do that with the Parliament and with other political parties.

You sound more hopeful than you did in July. What has changed in this time?



We have decided that our foreign policy should be 'India first'

Well, I am back. I am able to now therefore have discussions and conversations with the people on the ground. I think we all understand where we stand. We all are very clear on what will happen if we are unable to find amicable solutions. I think therefore, it is possible for us to resolve differences and move forward.

You have been pushing for a switch to a parliamentary system from the current presidential rule, while also indicating that you might run for the MDP's presidential primaries. Which of these do you see happening first, realistically?

We had the new Constitution in 2008. And this Constitution had created two power centres.

The bulk of the Constitution was largely drafted for a parliamentary form of government. But at the very last stage, President [Mauoom Abdul] Gayoom decided to have a referendum and prescribe a presidential form of government. We have run this Constitution for the past 12, 13 years now, and it is obvious that it has contradictions.

What I am suggesting is a manner in which we can share power with the Parlia-

ment and the Executive. And to see that there are no two power centres. And that governance is streamlined and smooth.

I will have discussions with the President. Will I seek election as a presidential candidate? Even if I do, that would be to change to a parliamentary system. My rationale for any political contest would be to get a mandate to change. I believe that once we have the fundamentals laid, it is not so much about my political future, but the political future of this country.

The government's close ties with India are under growing scrutiny. Is there a domestic political cost for the Solih government's close relationship with India?

Well, sections of the political society in the Maldives have always thought that xenophobic ideas would win

them acceptance from the people. The MDP has never had that view. We still don't have that. We are very, very convinced that people in the Maldives do understand the political realities of the Indian Ocean, the geopolitical situation in the Indian Ocean, and the part that the Maldives has to play in these conditions. Our people are asking a basic question - how do we ensure safety and security for our people? What is the best way of going about that? Would it be better to remain neutral in the Indian Ocean, or should we take a side? We have clearly taken a side. We have decided that our foreign policy should be 'India first'.

You are headed for the COP26 summit at Glasgow. You have been calling for an urgent restructuring of debt owed by climate vulnerable nations. Are you expecting some good news?

Of the 48 CVF [Climate Vulnerable Forum] countries, a number of countries already pay 20% of our budget for debt repayment, and another 30% on adaptation.

The first impact of climate change, the very quick impact of climate change, would be a default on debt by country after country.

All the vulnerable countries will default on their debt.

That would not be in the interest of anyone. If you do not have a Maldives, Maldives cannot pay their debt back. I am expecting good news. I hope that the COP presidency would understand that these 48 countries have had their internal discussions, regional discussions, and we will go to the COP with a singular view. And that singular view would very definitely include restructuring debt.

(For full interview, visit <https://bit.ly/NasheedCOP26>)

New air raids target west, north Tigray

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE ADDIS ABABA

Ethiopia's military on Sunday launched two air strikes on what a government official said were rebel-held facilities in Tigray, the seventh and eighth bombardments in its war-torn northern region in a week.

The strikes, far from the regional capital Mekele, signalled the military was potentially widening its campaign of air strikes, which has drawn international rebukes and disrupted UN flights to the famine-threatened region.

"Today the western front of (Mai Tsebri) which was serving as a training and military command post for the terrorist group TPLF has been the target of an air strike," government spokeswoman Selamawit Kassa said. The same mission destroyed a facility in the northern town of Adwa used to manufacture "military equipment".

Taliban offer jobs for wheat to tackle hunger

It is a key step in fighting unemployment, says Mujahid

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KABUL

The Taliban Government in Afghanistan launched a programme to tackle hunger on Sunday, offering thousands of people wheat in exchange for labour.

The scheme will be rolled out around Afghanistan's major towns and cities and employ 40,000 men in the capital alone, the Taliban's chief spokesman said at a press conference in southern Kabul. "This is an important step for fighting unemployment," Zabihullah Mujahid said, adding that the labourers must "work hard".

Afghanistan - which is already suffering from poverty, drought, electricity blackouts and a failing economic system - is now facing the onset of what may be a harsh winter. The Taliban's food-for-work scheme will not



Winter wear: Women selling second-hand clothes at a market in Herat. AFP

pay labourers, targeting those who are currently unemployed and most at risk of starvation during the winter.

The two-month programme will see 11,600 tonnes of wheat distributed in the capital, with about 55,000 tonnes for elsewhere in the country, including Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif and Pol-i-Khomri. Work for the labourers in Kabul will include

digging water channels and catching terraces for snow in the hills to combat drought.

Mujahid and other senior officials, including Agriculture Minister Abdul Rahman Rashid and Kabul Mayor Hamdullah Nomani, cut a pink ribbon and dug a small ditch at a ceremony in the rural Rish Khor area of the capital to launch the programme.

Adani to meet Gotabaya in Colombo today

They are likely to discuss projects related to ports, power and renewable energy

MEERA SRINIVASAN COLOMBO

Gautam Adani, chairman of the Adani Group that was chosen to develop a major port terminal in Sri Lanka, is scheduled to meet President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in Colombo on Monday, according to official sources in Colombo and New Delhi.

"It is a private visit and Mr. Adani is expected to meet the President to discuss the West Container Terminal (WCT) at the Colombo Port.

According to sources in India familiar with the development, Mr. Adani "is interested in projects related to ports, power and renewable energy" in Sri Lanka.

said to include meetings with "top Sri Lankan dignitaries".

Mr. Adani's visit comes less than a month after the Adani Group, in a virtual ceremony, signed a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) agreement with its Sri Lankan partner in the project, John Keells Holdings, and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), to jointly develop the West Container Terminal (WCT) at the Colombo Port.

Following Sri Lanka's controversial decision early this year to scrap a 2019 trilateral agreement with India and Japan to jointly develop the East Container Terminal at the Colombo Port, the Rajapaksa government offered the WCT project as "a compromise".

"Mr. Adani will discuss possible projects in these sectors when he meets President Rajapaksa," a source said.

Private investor Unlike in the ECT project envisaged earlier, there is no Indian governmental role in the WCT project, with the

Adani Group entering the picture as a private investor, amid questions from Sri Lankan experts on the apparent lack of transparency in how the investor was chosen.

Confirming the project in a tweet on March 15, 2021, Mr. Adani said: "Grateful to the leaders of GoI, GoSL, SLPA & John Keells for the opportunity to build WCT, Colombo. This partnership is a symbol of the deep strategic relations between countries with great intertwined history. It will launch decades of container growth."

(With inputs from Mahesh Langa in Ahmedabad)

'U.S. sabotaging CPEC with India's support'

They are trying to manoeuvre Pakistan out of BRI, says Imran Khan's aide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD

The chief of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority has accused the U.S. of sabotaging the multi-billion dollar project, the economic lifeline of Pakistan, a media report said.

The ambitious CPEC was launched in 2015 when Chi-

nese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan. It aims to connect western China with the Gwadar port in southwestern Pakistan through a network of roads, railways and other projects of infrastructure and development.

"From the point of view of the emerging geo-strategic situation, one thing is clear: the United States supported

by India is inimical to CPEC. It will not let it succeed. That's where we have to take a position," Khalid Mansoor, the Special Assistant to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on CPEC affairs said while addressing the CPEC Summit in Karachi on Saturday. Islamabad is the seventh largest recipient of Chinese overseas development fi-

nancing with 71 projects worth \$27.3 billion under way as part of the CPEC.

Mr. Mansoor said the U.S. and India continue to "make attempts to manoeuvre Pakistan out of" China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) under which the Chinese government has been investing heavily in about 70 countries, the Dawn reported.

Colombia's most-wanted drug lord 'Otoniel' captured

U.S. had offered \$5 million bounty

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BOGOTA

Colombia's most-wanted drug trafficker "Otoniel" has been captured, officials said on Saturday, a major victory for the government of the world's top cocaine exporter.

Dairo Antonio Usuga, who headed the country's largest narco-trafficking gang known as the Gulf Clan, was captured near one of his main outposts in Necocli, near the border with Panama. Images released by the government showed Otoniel, 50, in handcuffs and surrounded by soldiers.

"This is the hardest strike to drug trafficking in our country this century," President Ivan Duque said in a message, adding that the arrest was "only comparable to the fall of Pablo Escobar", the notorious Colombian narco-trafficking kingpin. Some 500 soldiers



Dairo Antonio Usuga, alias Otoniel, after his capture in Bogota. AFP

backed by 22 helicopters were deployed in the Necocli municipality to carry out the operation, which left one police officer dead.

Colombia's police chief Jorge Vargas said during a press conference that authorities carried out "an important satellite operation with agencies of the United States and the United Kingdom". The U.S. had offered a \$5 million bounty for information leading to the arrest of Otoniel, one of the most feared men in Colombia.

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Sl. No.	Description of tender process	Date
1.	Bid document download start date	25.10.2021
2.	Pre-bid meeting	29.10.2021 at 11:00 AM
3.	Bid submission closing date & time	08.11.2021 at 3:00 PM
4.	Contract Period	18 months (Extendable for another 6 months)
5.	Minimum Annual Remittance Payable	Rs. 500.00 Crores

For further details and to download the Bid Document, log on to <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> or <https://www.hmda.gov.in>.

Any Amendments, updates regarding this Bid Notice will be published in the HMDA web site /e-Procurement Platform only.

For further queries please email: cgmhgcl@gmail.com, Phone No. 040-29559433

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TV PICKS

Men's T20 World Cup. (Super12s): Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7:30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Bucks bounce back to beat Spurs in Texas

LOS ANGELES
Khris Middleton scored 28 points as the injury-hit Milwaukee Bucks beat San Antonio Spurs 121-111 on Saturday.
The results: Cavaliers 101 bt Hawks 95; Pacers 102 bt Heat 91 (OT); Raptors 95 lost to Mavericks 103; Bulls 97 bt Pistons 82; Timberwolves 96 bt Pelicans 89; Spurs 111 lost to Bucks 121; Trail Blazers 134 bt Suns 105; Clippers 114 lost to Grizzlies 120. AFP

Fabio Quartararo wins MotoGP World title

MISANO ADRIATICO (ITALY)
Frenchman Fabio Quartararo (Yamaha) won his first ever MotoGP title on Sunday after his closest rival Francesco Bagnaia (Ducati) crashed out of the Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix. Bagnaia, 52 points behind Quartararo heading into the race, was leading when he fell with just a few laps remaining in the race won by Honda's Marc Marquez. AFP

Jennifer Luikham finishes runner-up

MONASTIR (TUNISIA)
Lukiska Kumkhum of Thailand beat Jennifer Luikham 6-2, 6-2 in the final of the \$15,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here on Sunday. It was the second singles final in the professional circuit for the 22-year-old Jennifer, ranked 923.



Ko regains top rank with BMW Championship win

BUSAN
South Korea's Ko Jin-young regained the World No. 1 spot on Sunday on capturing her fourth LPGA title of the season at the BMW Ladies Championship here. Ko beat compatriot Lim Hee-jeong, who had been leading the tournament, in a sudden-death playoff. Ko first rose to No. 1 in 2019, but was dethroned by Nelly Korda in June this year. AFP

Big wins for SAI, RSPB, CCSCSB

KOLKATA:
Sports Authority of India (SAI), Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) and Central Civil Services Cultural And Sports Board (CCSCSB) registered big wins in their respective pool matches in the National women's inter-department hockey championship here on Sunday.
The results: Pool A: SAI bt UCO Bank Women's Hockey Academy 12-0, RSPB bt Defence Accounts Sports Control Board 33-0.
Pool B: CCSCSB bt Tamil Nadu Police 19-0.

Uchimura not ready to quit just yet

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KITAKYUSHU (JAPAN)
Japanese gymnastics legend Kohei Uchimura said he would consider his future after finishing the world championships empty-handed on Sunday, but hinted his love for the sport may lure him back.
Uchimura finished sixth in the horizontal bar final — the only competition he entered this week to save wear and tear on his ailing shoulders.
The world championships were being held in his home town of Kitakyushu in western Japan, and some had speculated that he would call time on his storied career afterwards.
But the 32-year-old shrugged off talk of retirement, saying the competition had refueled his fire.

Nitu and Ankushita in the quarterfinals

Manju Rani, Pooja Rani and Kalaivani also make the last-eight stage

BOXING

SPORTS BUREAU HISAR
Former World Youth champions Nitu and Ankushita Boro continued their winning run to book places in the quarterfinals of the National women's boxing championships at the St. Joseph's International School here on Sunday.
Haryana girl Nitu got past Purabi Karmakar of West Bengal 5-0 in a 48kg bout, while Assam's Ankushita thrashed Amandeep Kaur of Punjab to win by the referee stopping the contest in the

first round of a 66kg contest.
World championships medallist Manju Rani, Asian champion Pooja Rani and South Asian Games gold medallist S. Kalaivani also reached the last eight stage.
Important results (preliminary rounds): **48kg:** Nitu (Har) bt Purabi Karmakar (WB) 5-0, Manju Rani (RSPB) bt Sobha Kahali (Utk) 5-0, Minakshi (Pun) bt Sushma Tamang (Sik) RSC-R2, S. Kalaivani (TN) bt Shital Dataniya (Guj) RSC-R1.
63kg: Parveen (Har) bt Chaoba Devi Hemam (AIP) 4-1, Nomita Kachari (Asm) bt Indira Singh (Cht) 5-0.
66kg: Niharika Gonella (Tel) bt Bhagyashree Purohit (Mah)

RSC-R2, Jyoti (RSPB) bt Devika D. (Ker) RSC-R2, Ankushita Boro (Asm) bt Amandeep Kaur (Pun) RSC-R1, Latbuahtsaihi (AIP) bt Jyoti Rani (Har) 5-0.
70kg: Arundhati Choudhary (Raj) bt P.Sandhya (TN) RSC-R1, Sohini (Chd) bt Komalpreet Kaur (Pun) 5-0.
75kg: Shalakra Singh (Del) bt Pranshu Rathore (Chd) 5-0, Saavee Boora (Har) bt Bhawna (AIP) 4-1.
81kg: Lalpakmawii Ralte (Miz) bt Shaily Singh (UP) 3-2, Pooja Rani (Har) bt P.Parvathi (Ker) RSC-R1.
81+kg: Lipakshi (Raj) bt Naganika Gonella (Tel) 5-0, Kavita Goyat (AIP) bt R.Jeevitha (TN) RSC-R1, Anisha (Chd) bt Arpita Shukla (MP) 4-1.



Easily done: Nitu breezed past Purabi Karmakar to advance in the 48kg category. ■ FILE PHOTO

New-look Indian squad eyes strong show

HPD Nieva's final assignment with the team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA BELGRADE

With a largely fresh-faced squad, the Indian men's boxing team would be in for a challenging time at the AI-BA World championships beginning here on Monday. Despite the top-notch field, the Indians will look to equal or better the two medals secured in the previous edition.

World No. 1 Amit Panghal, who claimed the country's maiden silver at the event's 2019 edition, and Manish Kaushik, bronze-winner the same year, are absent.

Asian medal-winners Deepak Kumar (51kg), Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) and Sanjeet (92kg) form the experienced core of the squad.

While Sanjeet is reigning Asian champion, Deepak is a former silver-medallist and Shiva is a record five-time podium finisher at the continental showpiece.

But, Shiva is the only one with prior experience at the Worlds, having claimed a bronze in the 2015 edition.

The remaining 10 in the squad are newly-crowned national champions, eager to make a mark.

The boxers are accompanied by a rejigged support staff led by high performance director Santiago Nieva and newly-appointed head coach Narendra Rana with former Commonwealth Games silver-medal-



Core group member: Shiva Thapa is the only one with prior experience at the Worlds, with a bronze in 2015. ■ FILE PHOTO

list L. Devendro Singh among the assistant coaches.

This would be Nieva's final assignment with the Indian team after the Boxing Federation of India decided against giving him a long-term extension at the end of the Tokyo Olympics.

More than 600 boxers from 105 countries are set to fight it out in the tournament where gold-winners will walk away with \$100,000, silver medallists \$50,000 and bronze-me-

dallists \$25,000.
It will feature AIBA world champions, including Andy Cruz Gomez, Roniel Iglesias, Arlen Lopez, Julio La Cruz, as well as Lazarov Alvarez, all from Cuba.

The Indian squad: Govind Sahani (48kg), Deepak Kumar (51kg), Akash (54kg), Rohit Mor (57kg), Varinder Singh (60kg), Shiva Thapa (63.5kg).

Akash (67kg), Nishant Dev (71kg), Sumit (75kg), Sachin Kumar (80kg).

Lakshya (86kg), Sanjeet (92kg) and Narendra (+92kg).

Verstappen takes pole in Austin

Hamilton, who shares front row, has won five of eight races here

US GRAND PRIX

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE AUSTIN

Max Verstappen in a Red Bull stormed to pole position for the US Grand Prix, edging out title rival and Mercedes' world champion Lewis Hamilton in front of an estimated 120,000 people on Saturday.

Verstappen, who leads Hamilton by six points in the championship race, claimed his ninth pole of 2021 with a time of 1min 32.910sec, just two-tenths faster than the Brit.

Sergio Perez, in the second Red Bull, was third, on-

ly 0.15sec behind Hamilton. Valtteri Bottas, in the other Mercedes, was fourth quickest, but will drop to ninth on the grid for Sunday's race after changing his engine.

Hamilton has won five of the eight races held at the Austin track since its 2012 debut. He also wrapped up world titles at the Texan circuit in 2015 and 2019.

Bottas was victorious once, in the last event held in 2019, before the 2020 race was dropped from the schedule due to the pandemic. Verstappen has finished fourth, third and second.

Despite Hamilton's love of

the track, Red Bull does at least have one win in Texas courtesy of Sebastian Vettel in 2013.

The rest of Sunday's top half of the grid is made up of Ferrari duo Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz followed by Daniel Ricciardo and Lando Norris in the McLarens.

AlphaTauri duo Pierre Gasly and Yuki Tsunoda were the next fastest.
Former world champions Fernando Alonso, of Alpine, and Aston Martin's Vettel, as well as George Russell in a Williams, will all start from the back of the grid on Sunday after power units were changed on their cars.



Going strong: Max Verstappen will start in pole position for the ninth time in 2021. ■ AFP

Deepika sets under-16 National mark

Kishore Jena wins unchallenged with four excellent throws

JAVELIN NATLS.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Haryana's Deepika set a new national record in the girls' under-16 section with an effort of 49.31 metres in the 3rd National javelin throw championship at the Nehru Stadium complex here on Sunday.

Deepika was never threatened in the race to the gold as she improved upon her previous best of 48.21m that came in February this year.

In August this year, at Sangrur, Deepika tossed the javelin in the under-20 section

— where the weight of the javelin used is 600 gms as against 500 gms for those in the under-16 section — to a personal best of 49.28 metres.

In other sections, too, the results came on expected lines with Kishore Kumar Jena coming up with four valid throws in excess of 70 metres to take the title with a high of 74.26 metres. Harish Kumar surprised Vipin Kasana to take the silver.

The results: Men: 1. Kishore Kumar Jena (Odi, 74.26m), 2. Harish Kumar (Raj, 72.61), 3. Vipin Kasana (Del) 71.89).

Boys: Under-20: 1. Jay Kumar

(UP, 70.72m), 2. Vivek Kumar (MP, 66.01), 3. Vinit (Har, 65.39); **Under-18:** 1. Narayan Singh (UP, 68.89m), 2. Sujit (Har, 68.38), 3. Rahul Yadav (UP, 65.08); **Under-16:** 1. Mangal Singh (UP, 71.37m), 2. Rohan Yadav (UP, 70.14), Gaurav Patel (UP, 66.68).

Women: 1. Uma Choudhary (Raj, 46.41m), 2. Manu Kumari (UP, 44.67), 3. Priyanka (Har, 44.65).

Girls: Under-20: 1. Sakshi Sharma (UP, 46.29m), Sheetal (Har, 44.30), 3. Jyoti (Har, 43.61); **Under-18:** 1. Komal (UP, 44.70m), 2. Pratishtha Patel (UP, 44.55), 3. Himanshi (Har, 41.09); **Under-16:** 1. Deepika (Har, 49.31 (NR, old, 48.21); 2. Manisha (Har, 42.26), 3. Sapna (Har, 41.29).

Juliette favoured for Golconda St. Leger

HYDERABAD: Trainer Karthik Ganapathy's champion mare Juliette should extend her winning streak by claiming the Golconda St. Leger (Gr.2), the main attraction of the concluding day's races of the Hyderabad Monsoon season here on Monday (Oct. 25).

1 MIDNIGHT COWBOY PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) - 1.30 p.m.: 1. Flying Jet (3) R.S. Jodha 60, 2. Ambitious Star (8) Nakhat Singh 58, 3. Beauty Flame (1) B. Nikhil 56, 4. Bruno (10) Mukesh Kumar 56, 5. Joy O Joy (6) Gaurav Singh 55, 6. Open Affair (7) A.A. Vikrant 55, 7. Reining Queen (-), 8. Sharp Mind (4) Khurshad Alam 54.5, 9. Star Cruise (2) Aneel 54, 10. Ashwa Pushkin (6) Ashad Ashar 53.5 and 11. Exotic Dancer (9) Ajeeth Kumar 53.

1. JOY O JOY, 2. ASHWA PUSHKIN, 3. FLYING JET

2 PLAYBOY PLATE (1,400m), 2 rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2:05: 1. Due Diligence (2) Surya Prakash 60, 2. Red Sniper (9) N.B. Kuldeep 60, 3. Able Love (7)

Gaurav Singh 57.5, 4. City Of Blessing (4) Mukesh Kumar 56.5, 5. Indian Glory (12) A.A. Vikrant 55, 6. Star Babe (8) Akshay Kumar 54, 7. Steve Rogers (10) S.S. Tanwar 53.5, 8. Explosive (6) B.R. Kumar 52.5, 9. Rhythm Selection (5) Md. Ismail 52.5, 10. Sacred Lamp (3) B. Nikhil 52.5, 11. Sheldon (11) G. Naresh 52, 12. Royal Pal (4) Nakhat Singh 50.5 and 13. Magic Mark (1) Afroz Khan 50.

1. STAR BABE, 2. ABLE LOVE, 3. SACRED LAMP

3 MIDNIGHT COWBOY PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2:40: 1. Thanks (5) Nakhat Singh 60, 2. Gregor Clegane (4) Mukesh Kumar 57.5, 3. Ok Boss (3) Surya Prakash 57.5, 4. Garnet (10) Ashad Ashar 56.5, 5. One More Time (9) B.R. Kumar 56.5, 6. Hot Seat (7) Akshay Kumar 56, 7. Syc Ra (8) Ajeeth Kumar 56, 8. Total Darc (2) Afroz Khan 56, 9. Artemis Arrow (1) Rafique Sk. 55.5 and 10. Divine Chakram (6) Aneel 54.

1. THANKS, 2. HOT SEAT, 3. SYE RA

4 NEON PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25

(Cat. III), 3:15: 1. Dillon (7) Gaurav Singh 62, 2. Win Vision (8) Santosh Raj 62, 3. Lorena (5) Deepak Singh 61.5, 4. Urvasi (3) Akshay Kumar 61.5, 5. Bedazzled (11) Ajeeth Kumar 59.5, 6. Hip Hop (2) C.P. Bopanna 59.5, 7. Queen Blossom (10) B.R. Kumar 58.5, 8. Royal Girl (9) Abhay Singh 58, 9. Proud Legacy (1) Mukesh Kumar 53.5, 10. Cephalonia (4) B. Nikhil 52 and 11. Turf Monarch (6) Surya Prakash 51.

1. DILLON, 2. URVASI, 3. CEPHALONIA

5 BOLD VENTURE PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3:50: 1. Lagos (3) Deepak Singh 60, 2. Mirana (12) Akshay Kumar 58, 3. Incredible (7) A.A. Vikrant 57.5, 4. Good Connection (9) Gaurav Singh 55.5, 5. Mystery (8) Kiran Naidu 54.5, 6. Apollo (6) Rafique Sk. 54, 7. Four One Four (5) Santosh Raj 54, 8. Lockhart (11) Afroz Khan 53.5, 9. Different (10) Md. Ismail 52, 10. Green Turf (4) Abhay Singh 52, 11. Angel Tesoro (2) Ajeeth Kumar 51.5 and 12. Once More (0) R.S. Jodha 51.5.

1. LAGOS, 2. GOOD CONNECTION,

3. MIRANA
6 GOLCONDA ST. LEGER (Gr. 2) (2,800m) (Terms), 4-y-o & 5-y-o & upward, 4:25: 1. Point To Prove (3) Antony Raj 57, 2. Bisate (1) Akshay Kumar 55.5, 3. Juliette (2) Sandesh 55.5 and 4. Lombardy (4) Ashad Ashar 55.5.

1. JULIETTE

7 NEON PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 5:00: 1. Rhine (10) Mukesh Kumar 62, 2. Ice Berry (5) C.P. Bopanna 61.5, 3. Turning Wheel (6) Akshay Kumar 61.5, 4. Winning Player (3) Gaurav Singh 61, 5. Silver Set (4) Md. Ismail 59.5, 6. Fantastic Show (1) Ajinkya 58.5, 7. Lighting Fairy (9) Ajeeth Kumar 58, 8. That's My Speed (8) G. Naresh 58, 9. Theo's Choice (7) Santosh Raj 54.5 and 10. Royal Avenger (2) Afroz Khan 50.

1. WINNING PLAYER, 2. RHINE, 3. TURNING WHEEL

Day's Best: JULIETTE
Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7; Mini Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 4, 5, 6 & 7; Treble: (i) 3, 4 & 5, (ii) 5, 6 & 7; Tanala: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7.

Poonacha and Zeel get top billing

Presence of former champions adds to the competitive flair

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI

The presence of young aspirants Karan Singh and Chirag Duhan should make it lively in the men's section of the Fenesta National tennis championship at the DLTA Complex this week.

With one of the final round men's qualification matches yet to be completed, the suspense continues about the position of the qualifiers in the main draw.

The presence of former national champions top seed Niki Poonacha, V.M. Ranjeet, Dalwinder Singh, Vishnu Vardhan and Siddharth Vishwakarma should also add to the competitive flair.

Quite interestingly, the men's and women's competition will feature two brothers and a sister from Rajasthan, Faisal Qamar, Fardeen

Qamar and Farhat Aleen Qamar.

In the women's section, top seed Zeel Desai starts the favourite though the field has many quality players.

Zeel starts against Yubrani Banerjee, while second seed Vaidehi Chaudhari will open against lucky loser Niyati Kukreti. Sharmada Balu came through the qualifying event and will start against her friend Rishika Sunkara.

Multiple-time National champion Prerna Bhambri is in the same quarter as fourth seed Sai Samhitha who plays Kashish Bhatia in the first round.

It should be a week of interesting tennis with the men's and women's champions are set to pocket ₹3,00,000 each, and the runners-up ₹2,00,000 each.

The results (qualifying event, third and final round): Men: Faisal Qamar bt Parav

Garg 6-2, 6-3; Vishnu Vardhan bt Ajay Malik 6-2, 6-1; Bopathy Sakthivel bt Siddharth Arya 6-4, 7-5; Siddharth Vishwakarma bt Lohtith Bhatrinath 6-2, 6-4; Karan Singh bt Madhwin Kamath 3-6, 6-3, 6-3; Parikshit Somani bt Jagmeet Singh 6-3, 6-2; Neeraj Yashpaul bt Deepender Grewal 4-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Women: Shruti Ahlawat bt Anjali Rathi 6-2, 6-1; Priyanshi Bhandari bt Lakshmi Gowda 6-3, 6-3; Farhat Aleen Qamar bt Sonashe Bhatnagar 6-3, 6-3; Shefali Arora bt Radhiya Yadav 6-4, 6-0; Sudipta Kumar bt Ihwari Matera 6-3, 6-0; Vanshita Pathania bt Nandini Dixit 7-5, 6-1; S. Srinidhi bt Niyati Kukreti 6-4, 5-7, 6-1; Sharmada Balu bt Kiran Kalkal 6-1, 6-2.

The seedings: Men: 1. Niki Poonacha, 2. Ishaque Eqbal, 3. Nitin Kumar Sinha, 4. Paras Dahiya, 5. Abhinav Sanjeev Shanmugam, 6. Prithvi Sekhar, 7. Dalwinder Singh, 8. S.D. Prajwal Dev.
Women: 1. Zeel Desai, 2. Vaidehi Chaudhari, 3. Sravya Shivani, 4. Sai Samhitha, 5.

Harmanpreet stars for Renegades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MELBOURNE

India's T20 skipper Harmanpreet Kaur dished out an all-round performance to guide Melbourne Renegades to a seven-wicket win over Sydney Sixers in the Women's Big Bash league on Sunday.

The 32-year-old took two for 17 to restrict Sydney Sixers to 118 for four and then blasted an unbeaten 35 off 29 balls, studded with one four and two sixes.

Harmanpreet was adjudged Player-of-the-Match.

Elsewhere, Poonam Yadav bled 19 runs for no wicket in two overs, but her team Brisbane Heat beat Adelaide Strikers by five runs in a rain-hit game.

I have developed a bridge between India and Europe, says coach Jignesh Rawal

For becoming professionals, off-court work plays a bigger role than on-court training

KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI

For professional players, travelling is as much a test of character as playing their best tennis on any given day.

Zeel Desai, the top seed in the Fenesta National tennis championship, was at the DLTA Complex on Saturday morning, after a tough journey back from Germany, where she had beaten Karman Kaur Thandi.

"I reached on Saturday morning. It was hard travel. We were in the aircraft for about four hours before it took off, because of some technical reason.

"Then, there was eight hours of flight," said Zeel, cheerful despite the ordeal.

Even though she will be playing only on Monday, Zeel was at the court to meet her coach Jignesh Rawal and other players.

Jignesh, who guides a bunch of players with potential at the Altevöl Academy in Ahmedabad, was watching another trainee, Riya Uboveja, along with the finalist of the last National championship Vaidehi Chaudhari.

The coach was understand-



Jignesh with Vaidehi. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

them develop a professional approach to their career."

Jignesh also said that financial management was an important aspect of player development. "Alex has helped both Zeel and Paras sign with clubs in Germany that would help them earn money by playing week-end matches," said Jignesh.

Quite proud

Quite proud of the fact that a bunch of players from Gujarat had played in junior Grand Slams in recent years, like Zeel, Akanksha Bhan, Mann Shah, Dev Javia and Vipasha Mehra, or were eligible like Vaidehi and Megh Patel, Jignesh said that the next step was to ensure success of the players in the professional circuit.

"For becoming tennis professionals, off-court work plays a bigger role than on-court training," said Jignesh. We have developed a bridge between India and Europe, so that our players train and compete in Europe," said Jignesh, quite clear that tuning the players in terms of their "character, attitude, commitment and finance" was crucial to ensure success.

nis language, as to what they teach in Germany.

"We plan 20 weeks of tournaments for our players, and the rest of the time is devoted towards training in Germany and India in equal measure," revealed Jignesh.

The coach stressed that the German academy played a key role in "tuning the fitness of the players and helps

Pakistan finally gets it right against India in the World Cup

Afridi, Rizwan and Babar star in the team's 10-wicket win, its first against the Men in Blue after 12 losses; nothing goes right for Kohli's side

ICC T20 WC
AMOL KARHADKAR
DUBAI
Shaheen Afridi rattled India's top-order with his fiery left-arm pace to lay the foundation before the opening combination of Babar Azam (68 n.o., 52b, 6x4, 2x6) and Mohammad Rizwan (79 n.o., 55b, 6x4, 3x6) built on it to help Pakistan register its maiden win in a World Cup match against India in their ICC T20 World Cup opener at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday night.
The victory by 10 wickets with 13 balls to spare was Pakistan's first against India in a World Cup after having lost 12 previous contests (seven in ODI and five in T20 World Cups).
Once Afridi struck a double blow to dismiss openers Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul in his first two overs after Babar asked India to bat, the Indian innings – just like Kohli's knock – couldn't really take off. With Kohli (57, 49b, 5x4, 1x6) and Rishabh Pant (39, 30b, 2x4, 2x6) staging a recovery after the team lost three wickets in the Power-



Fire and ice: After Afridi proved too hot to handle for the Indians, Rizwan steered the team home in the company of Babar. ■AFP

Play, India scored 151 for seven.
Babar and Rizwan then pulverised the Indian attack to take the team home in style. Such was the dominance of the two that all five of India's specialist bowlers – Bhuvneshwar Kumar was

preferred over Shardul Thakur as the third seamer option – looked ordinary in conditions that favoured the batters as the evening progressed.
No wonder then that by the time captain Babar sprinted for the winning run,

almost all the Indian supporters had disappeared from the stands, with Green replacing the Blue at the Ring of Fire.
The game was set up by Afridi's impressive spell up front. The lanky left-armed fourth ball, Rohit Sharma's



first, was a perfect inswinging yorker that thudded into the opener's backfoot.
In his next over, Afridi castled K.L. Rahul, the batter guilty of attempting to whip a full delivery on the leg-side.
At six for two in the third over, Suryakumar Yadav

cleared the long-leg boundary with a pull off Afridi. Hasan Ali's introduction in the last over of the PowerPlay saw Suryakumar nick to 'keeper Mohammad Rizwan, who lunged to his left to pouch his 100th catch.
Though the PowerPlay

Innings scan		
India		Pakistan
46	Dots	33
11	Fours	12
4	Sixes	5
36/3	PP	43/0
7.55	RR	8.52

yielded just 36, Pant and Kohli batted sensibly for the next five overs before the former switched gears by going after Hasan.

Pant hit audacious one-handed sixes off successive balls – over square-leg and mid-off – hinting at a momentum swing in the contest. However, the left-hander's double-handed swat off leggie Shadab Khan's googly did him in.

At the other end, Kohli rotated the strike and also played the conventional strokes with aplomb. An on-drive off Afridi in the PowerPlay and a classic cover drive off Hasan were the pick of the shots.

But the Indian innings never clicked into gear and the team finished with a total that never threatened Pakistan.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
K.L. Rahul b Afridi 3 (8b), Rohit Sharma lbw b Afridi 0 (1b), Virat Kohli c Rizwan b Afridi 57 (49b, 5x4, 1x6), Suryakumar Yadav c Rizwan b Hasan 11 (8b, 1x4, 1x6), Rishabh Pant c & b Shadab 39 (30b, 2x4, 2x6), Ravindra Jadeja c sub (Nawaz) b Hasan 13 (13b, 1x4), Hardik Pandya c Babar b Rauf 11 (8b, 2x4), Bhuvneshwar Kumar (not out) 5 (4b), Mohammed Shami not out 0 (0b); Extras (b-6, lb-1, w-4, nb-1): 12; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 151.

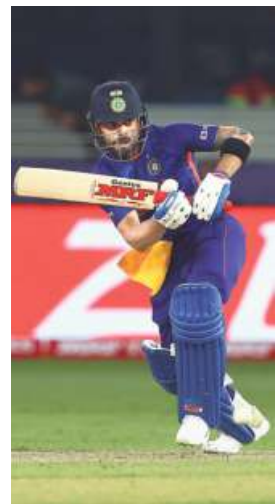
FALL OF WICKETS
1-1 (Rohit, 0.4 ov), 2-6 (Rahul, 2.1), 3-31 (Suryakumar, 5.4), 4-84 (Pant, 12.2), 5-125 (Jadeja, 17.5), 6-133 (Kohli, 18.4), 7-146 (Hardik, 19.3).

PAKISTAN BOWLING
Afridi 4-0-31-3, Imad 2-0-10-0, Hasan 4-0-44-2, Shadab 4-0-22-1, Hafeez 2-0-12-0, Rauf 4-0-25-1.
PAKISTAN
Mohammad Rizwan (not out) 79 (55b, 6x4, 3x6), Babar Azam (not out) 68 (52b, 6x4, 2x6); Extras (lb-1, w-4): 5; Total (for no loss in 17.5 overs): 152.
INDIA BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 3-0-25-0, Shami 3.5-0-43-0, Bumrah 3-0-22-0, Varun 4-0-33-0, Jadeja 4-0-28-0.
Toss: Pakistan; **MoM:** Afridi.
Pakistan won by 10 wickets with 13 balls to spare.

We were completely outplayed: Kohli

Says Afridi's spell put India on the back foot right from the start

AMOL KARHADKAR
DUBAI
India captain Virat Kohli admitted that India was "outplayed" by Pakistan in its opening ICC T20 World Cup encounter on Sunday.
"They definitely outplayed us, there is no doubt about that. You don't win by 10 wickets if you don't outplay the opposition. We did not even get any chances. They were very professional," Kohli said after India's first loss to Pakistan in the World Cup (50- and 20-over).
The India skipper heaped praise on Pakistan's left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi, who dismissed the top 3 (Rohit Sharma, K.L. Rahul and Kohli).
"He put our batsmen under pressure immediately with the new ball. He ran in with intensity and bowled consistently in the right areas. We were forced to be a bit watchful," Kohli said.
"That spell put us on



Kohli. ■GETTY IMAGES

Next assignment
Pakistan: Oct. 26 vs New Zealand, Sharjah, 7.30 p.m. IST
India: Oct. 31 vs New Zealand, Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST

the back foot immediately, and from there on to get those extra 20, 25 runs in the end seemed pretty difficult after losing three wickets for 20 runs."

Asalanka, Rajapaksa steer Sri Lanka home

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SHARJAH
Half-centuries by Charith Asalanka and Bhanuka Rajapaksa rallied former T20 World Cup champion Sri Lanka to a five-wicket victory over a sloppy Bangladesh side in its bad-tempered opening Super 12 match on Sunday.
Asalanka made a splendid unbeaten 80 from 49 balls and Rajapaksa smashed 53 from 31 to help carry Sri Lanka to 172 for five with seven

balls to spare.
Earlier, Bangladesh posted a challenging total of 171 for four after being put in to bat.
Bangladesh got off to a fiery start with opening batsman Liton Das getting involved in an altercation with Sri Lanka fast bowler Lahiru Kumara after the fast bowler dismissed him.
Both players came face to face before being separated by Sri Lanka players as Mohammad Naim also got in-

involved, shoving Kumara. Das and Kumara exchanged heated words before the Bangladesh opener left the field.
Sri Lanka was cruising at 71 for one when Shakib Al Hasan's twin strikes in his first over pulled back the 2014 World Cup winner.
Shakib became the T20 World Cup all-time leading wicket-taker with 41, two ahead of Pakistan's Shahid Afridi, when he clean bowled Pathum Nissanka and Avish-

ka Fernando.
His earlier on-field altercation seemed to affect Das, who dropped both Asalanka and Rajapaksa, which proved costly later.
Next assignment
Bangladesh: Oct. 27 vs England, Abu Dhabi, 3.30 p.m. IST
Sri Lanka: Oct. 28 vs Australia, Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST



Impressive: Asalanka made a splendid unbeaten 80. ■AP

SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH
Mohammad Naim c & b Binura 62 (52b, 6x4), Liton Das c Shanaka b Kumara 16 (16b, 2x4), Shakib Al Hasan b Karunaratne 10 (7b, 2x4), Mushfiqur Rahim (not out) 57 (37b, 5x4, 2x6), Afif Hossain run out 7 (6b, 1x4), Mahmudullah (not out) 10 (5b, 2x4); Extras (b-2, lb-3, w-1, nb-3): 9; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 171.
FALL OF WICKETS
1-40 (Liton, 5.5 overs), 2-56 (Shakib, 7.4), 3-129 (Naim, 16.1), 4-150 (Afif, 18.3).
SRI LANKA BOWLING
Karunaratne 3-0-12-1, Binura 3-0-27-1, Chameera 4-0-41-0, Kumara 4-0-29-1, Asalanka 1-0-14-0, Hasaranga 3-0-29-0, Shanaka 2-0-14-0.
SRI LANKA
Kusal Perera b Nasum 1 (3b), Pathum Nissanka b Shakib 24 (27b, 1x4, 1x6), Charith Asalanka (not out) 80 (49b, 5x4, 5x6), Avishka Fernando b Shakib 0 (3b), Wanindu Hasaranga c Naim b Saifuddin 6 (5b, 1x4), Bhanuka

Nabi's Afghanistan has a point to prove

Spirited Scotland high on confidence

PROSS TRUST OF INDIA
SHARJAH
The Afghanistan team will hope to provide some joy to its people going through tumultuous times back home as it begins its T20 World Cup campaign against a spirited Scotland here on Sunday.
Following last-minute changes, veteran all-rounder Mohammad Nabi returned to lead the team.
Batters Hazratullah Zazai, Mohammad Shahzad, Najibullah Zadran and Nabi and bowlers Rashid and Mujeeb Zadran carry the team's hopes.



Mohammad Nabi and Mujeeb Ur Rahman. ■AP

Scotland, meanwhile, is high on confidence after winning all its first-round matches.
The new-ball duo of Bradley Wheal and Josh Davey has been impressive while left-arm spinner Mark Watt has been effective in the middle overs.
The teams:
Afghanistan: Rashid Khan, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Hazratullah Zazai, Usman Ghani, Asghar Afghan, Mohammad Nabi (Capt.), Najibullah Zadran, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Mohammad Shahzad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Karim Janat, Gulbana Naib, Naveen-ul-Haq, Hamid Hassan and Faeed Ahmad.
Scotland: Kyle Coetzer (Capt.),

TODAY'S MATCH

Afghanistan vs Scotland

SHARJAH, 7.30 P.M. IST

H 2 H IN T20 IS

Played: 6

Afghanistan 6 | Scotland 0

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

Richie Berrington, Dylan Budge, Matthew Cross, Josh Davey, Alasdair Evans, Chris Greaves, Michael Leask, Calum MacLeod, George Munsey, Saifayan Sharif, Hamza Tahir, Craig Wallace, Mark Watt and Bradley Wheal.
Match starts at 7.30 p.m. IST.

Sohil, Vishnu share final day honours

Double for Anish in Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup

MOTORSPORTS
RAYAN ROZARIO
COIMBATORE
Vishnu Prasad (Chennai) and Sohil Shah (Bengaluru), both representing M Sport, signed off with a race win each in the premier LGB Formula 4 class in the first round of the JK Tyre FMSCI National racing championship at the Kari Motor Speedway circuit here on Sunday.
Starting third in the opening race, Vishnu jumped to a good lead. There were a few exchanges, midway through, with Amir Sayed of Ahura Racing, who had made a clean sweep of the Novice Cup least season.
The experienced Vishnu, winner of several titles year after year, managed to break free towards the end for a place atop the podium.
"I think we got a lucky break in the beginning when everyone else was fighting," said the 28-year-old, who mentored Amir last season.
"Amir is doing really well and I am a bit more happy than he is. The guys fighting it out in the middle and teaching are coming up the ranks," said Vishnu.

Sohil got a 10-second penalty and a 10th place finish.
But, he came back strongly to take the checkered flag in the second race ahead of Vishnu.
Meanwhile, Anish Damodara Shetty of Hubli completed a grand double, winning the JK Tyre presents Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup.
Ruhaan Alva of Bengaluru made it more memorable for team M Sport with yet another clinical finish in the JK Tyre Novice Cup.
The results (provisional):
FLGB4: Race 1: Vishnu Prasad (M Sport) 22:45.828; 2. Amir Sayed (Ahura Racing) 22:49.736; 3. Chirag Ghorpade (Momentum Motorsports) 22:53.650.
Race 2: 1. Sohil Shah 19:01.088; 2. Vishnu Prasad 19:02.222; 3. A. Sandeep Kumar 19:03.875.
JK Tyre Novice Cup: 1. Ruhaan Alva (M Sport) 21:48.110; 2. Chetan Surineni (Quest Motorsports) 21:48.714; 3. Jaden R. Pariat (M Sport) 21:48.985.
JK Tyre Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup: 1. Anish Damodara Shetty (Hubli) 13:57.731; 2. Allwin Xavier (Thrissur) 14:06.374; 3. Anfal Akhdar (Thrissur) 14:08.009.
Saturday results (revised):
FLGB4: 1. Arya Singh (Dark Don Racing) 23:27.088; 2. Raghul Rangaswamy (M Sport) 23:29.179; 3. Mohamed Ryan (M Sport) 23:29.308.



Over the moon: Anish Damodara Shetty celebrates his victory in the Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup.

Liverpool runs riot against an abject Man United

Salah at the forefront with a sublime hat-trick; Real Madrid heaps more misery on Barcelona

EURO LEAGUES
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MANCHESTER
Mohamed Salah hit a hat-trick as Liverpool humiliated Manchester United, romping to a stunning 5-0 victory at Old Trafford in the Premier League on Sunday.
Naby Keita got the visitors off to the ideal start in the fifth minute and then a dreadful mix-up between Luke Shaw and Harry Maguire led to Diogo Jota turning in a low cross from Trent Alexander-Arnold to make it 2-0 after 13 minutes.
United was in disarray at the back and Salah made it 3-0 – scoring for the tenth straight game in all competitions – converting a low ball from Keita and then added the fourth after being set up by Jota.
Trademark finish
It took just five minutes after the break for Salah to complete his hat-trick with a trademark clinical finish after a superb through ball from Jordan Henderson.
Real Madrid beat Barcelona 2-1 in the first Clasico of the season in front of 86,422



On a different plane: Mohamed Salah became the first away player to score a treble at Old Trafford since Brazilian Ronaldo in 2003. ■AP

fans at the Camp Nou on Sunday after a sensational strike from defender David Alaba and a late goal from Lucas Vazquez gave Carlo Ancelotti's side three points.
Real took the lead when Alaba started a flowing move with a tackle and finished it at the other end with a left-footed drive from the edge of the box.
With seven minutes of injury time added on, Real doubled its lead when Marc-

Andre ter Stegen saved a shot from Marco Asensio from another counter-attack but Vazquez pounced on the rebound to score.
Consolation
Barca got a goal back in the 97th minute when Sergino Dest crossed to substitute Sergio Aguero in the six-yard box and the Argentine tapped in but it proved to be a consolation goal as Real moved provisionally top of

La Liga with 20 points.
The results: Premier League: Brentford 1 (Jorgensen 60) lost to Leicester 2 (Tielemans 14, Maddison 73); West Ham 1 (Antonio 72) bt Tottenham 0; Manchester United 0 lost to Liverpool 5 (Keita 5, Jota 13, Salah 38, 45+4, 50).
La Liga: Barcelona 1 (Aguero 90+7) lost to Real Madrid 2 (Alaba 32, Vazquez 90+3); Sevilla 5 (Torres Munoz 8, Mir 24, Carlos 38, Munir 50, Fernando 64) bt Levante 3 (Morales 33, 55, Melero Manzanares 61); Real

Betis 3 (Moreno 22, Juanmi 24, Jose 75-pen) bt Rayo Vallecano 2 (Nteka 45+1, Alvaro Garcia 65).
Serie A: Atalanta 1 (Malinovskyi 56) drew with Udinese 1 (Beto 90+4); Fiorentina 3 (Biraghi 21-pen, Gonzalez 42, Vlahovic 49) bt Cagliari 0; Verona 4 (Simeone 30, 36, 62, 90+2) bt Lazio 1 (Immobile 46); Roma 0 drew with Napoli 0.
Bundesliga: Cologne 2 (Modeste 63, 82) drew with Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Schick 15, Bellarabi 17); Stuttgart 1 (Faghir 90+3) drew with Union Berlin 1 (Awoniyi 31).
Saturday: Premier League: Crystal Palace 1 (Benteke 56) drew with Newcastle 1 (Wilson 65).
La Liga: Cadix 0 lost to Alaves 2 (Joselu 6-pen, 90+1); Elche 2 (Boye 23, Benedetto 84) drew with Espanyol 2 (Morlanes 51, De Tomas 52); Athletic Bilbao 2 (Raul Garcia 14, Muniain 77-pen) bt Villarreal 1 (Coque 32).
Serie A: Bologna 2 (Ibrahimovic 49-og, Barrow 52) lost to AC Milan 4 (Leao 16, Calabria 35, Bennacer 84, Ibrahimovic 90); Salernitana 2 (Ranieri 48, Ismajli 55-og) lost to Empoli 4 (Pina-monti 2, 45-pen, Cutrone 11, Strandberg 13-og); Sassuolo 3 (Berardi 37, Henry 50-og, Fratreschi 67) bt Venezia 1 (Okereke 32).