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**IN BRIEF**



**Dengue cases continue to rise in Delhi**  
 NEW DELHI  
 The Capital continued to witness a surge in dengue cases, with 283 cases being reported over the past week, a civic report said on Monday. This takes the month's caseload to 665, while this season's total tally stands at 1,006, the highest since 2018.

CITY PAGE 2

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## SC tells panel to fix maximum water level at Mullaperiyar dam

Kerala wants it capped at 139 feet as per 2018 order

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on October 25 directed the Supervisory Committee to take an immediate and firm decision on the maximum water level that can be maintained at Mullaperiyar dam, amid torrential rain in Kerala.

Kerala said the water level should not go above 139 feet, the same as what the court had ordered on August 24, 2018, when the State was hit by floods.

Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, informed the court that the level in the dam was 137.2 ft at 9 a.m. on October 25. Tamil Nadu Additional



The Mullaperiyar dam in Idukki district of Kerala is operated by Tamil Nadu.

Advocate-General V. Krishnamurthy said officials of his State were interacting with those from Kerala on the ground situation. The Kerala Chief Minister has written to his Tamil Nadu counterpart. "He [Kerala CM] has only said that they should be informed early before the

opening of the shutters," Mr. Krishnamurthy submitted. He said the inflow into the reservoir was 2,220 cusecs, and the outflow was 2,200 cusecs. Mr. Krishnamurthy said heavy rainfall was not expected for the next five days.

As regards Kerala's contention not to raise the water level beyond 139 feet, he said the Supreme Court had, in judgments in 2006 and 2014, fixed the maximum water level at 142 feet.

The court asked officials of Kerala and Tamil Nadu to interact responsibly and avert any danger to lives.

The Supreme Court made it clear that this was not an issue to play politics about.

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 PINARAYI ALLAYS FEARS PAGE 7

## First tip-off on militants in Poonch came from a labourer

His phone was snatched by two men who entered a labour camp on October 10

VIJAITA SINGH  
 DINAKAR PERI  
 NEW DELHI

A day before five soldiers were killed by unidentified terrorists in Poonch on October 11, security agencies had intercepted phone chatter confirming their presence in the area.

The Poonch encounter, which has continued for 15 days, is one of the longest such operations in the dense forests south of the Pir Panjal range in more than a decade. The terrorists have so far killed nine Army soldiers and injured three others, including two J&K policemen in three separate incidents in the Poonch-Mendhar-Rajou-



Round-the-clock vigil: Security forces on patrol near the encounter site in Poonch, J&K, on Monday. PHOTO

ri region since October 11.

A senior official told *The Hindu* at least two armed men had entered a labour camp on October 10, and asked a worker for his

phone. The labourer, whose phone was taken away, had walked to the nearest Army post and alerted the officials.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## Shah rules out talks with Pak. on Kashmir

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
 SRINAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday ruled out any dialogue with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, and said he would prefer to "engage with the youth of the Valley".

The Minister was speaking at a function in Srinagar on the last day of his three-day visit to J&K.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## Script approval must before shooting in M.P.

ANUP DUTTA  
 BHOPAL

A day after members of the Bajrang Dal went on the rampage on the set of *Ashram 3*, a web series, in Bhopal, smearing ink on director Prakash Jha, the Madhya Pradesh Government on Monday said film production houses would now have to first get the script of the film approved by officials.

"Now prior to film shooting, the script is to be approved by the District Col-

lector. Only then can they apply to get a permit to start filming," Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra tweeted.

**Demand to change title**  
 On Sunday evening, Mr. Jha and members of his film unit were allegedly beaten up by the members of the Bajrang Dal on the old jail premises.

The Bajrang Dal said the web series starring Bobby Deol was an assault on Hinduism and they would not

allow its filming till the title was changed.

The Producers Guild of India and several celebrities have condemned the attack. "The Producers Guild of India strongly condemns the brazen acts of violence, harassment and vandalism faced by the crew involved in the production of the series *Ashram* in Bhopal," it said.

Action will be taken against those who disrupted the shooting, said Irshad Wali, DIG, Bhopal.

## Will postpone NEET-PG counselling, says Centre

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

The Centre assured the Supreme Court on Monday that counselling for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Postgraduate) (NEET-PG) would not commence till the court decided the challenge to the 27% reservation for OBC (Other Backward Classes) and 10% for EWS (Economically

Weaker Section) categories in the all-India quota seats for the current academic session.

A Bench, led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, drew the assurance from Additional Solicitor-General K.M. Nataraj. It observed that students would face problems if counselling was started.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## NCB plea in Aryan case rejected

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 MUMBAI

A special court on Monday rejected a plea from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) urging that it not take cognisance of an affidavit levelling bribery charges against an NCB official. The affidavit had been filed by a witness of the search operation on a cruise ship on October 1, after which actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan was arrested.

The court said, "No blanket orders can be passed." It disposed of the application filed by Sameer Wankhede, Zonal Director of the NCB, before the special court assigned under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act against the affidavit filed by Prabhakar Sail.

The NCB had sought directions that no action or cognisance be taken on Mr. Sail's notarised affidavit. Mr.

Wankhede said the only justification for the affidavit seems to be the arrest of "the leader's" (Cabinet Minister Nawab Malik's) son-in-law in an NDPS case and his subsequent release on bail.

On Sunday 24, Mr. Sail, in a statement to the media, alleged that ₹25 crore had been demanded by an NCB official to let go of Aryan Khan in the case.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



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## IN BRIEF

## Court stays order warning police chief of action

NEW DELHI  
A Delhi court on Monday set aside an order seeking explanation from the Delhi Police Commissioner on why legal action should not be taken against him for non-submission of a report in a February 2020 riots case. Principal District and Sessions Judge Ramesh Kumar passed the order while hearing a revision petition challenging the order passed on October 21 by CMM Arun Kumar Garg.

## 12-year-old boy crushed to death at Majnu ka Tilla

NEW DELHI  
A 12-year-old boy was crushed to death by a truck in north Delhi's Majnu ka Tilla on Monday. According to DCP (North) Sagar Singh Kalsi, around 6 p.m., they received a call regarding a fatal accident. After a team reached the spot, they found the body of a 12-year-old child, who was staying in a jhuggi. The driver has been identified as 35-year-old Shriram. He was caught by the public and got injured in the commotion.

## Dengue cases cross 1,000 mark in city

Figure highest since 2018; over 280 cases reported last week, taking the current month's tally to 665

MUNEER KHAN  
NEW DELHI

The Capital continued to witness a surge in dengue cases, with 283 cases being reported over the past week (till October 23), a civic report said on Monday. This takes the current month's case-load to 665, while this season's total stands at 1,006, the highest since 2018. Till October 16, the city had recorded 723 cases.

South Delhi reported the highest dengue cases in the last week at 98, followed by North Delhi with 71 cases. In the previous week (October 9 to 16), south Delhi had recorded 61 cases, followed by north Delhi with 52 cases.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) councillor Abhishek Dutt (Congress) alleged that the civic bodies are trying to "control" the number of dengue cases by "leaving cases untraced".

"How is it possible that



A municipal worker fumigating at New Seemapuri in Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

there are cases which still remain untraced in a time where everything is driven by technology? The idea is to present a wrong picture to the people; if you alarm the residents with a high case count, then they will take

more precautions. But they (the civic bodies and the Delhi Government) do not disclose this in order to maintain a good political image," Mr. Dutt said.

Responding to the allegations, SDMC Mayor Mukesh

for the month since 2018. Delhi had recorded 1,072 cases and one death in 2020, 2,036 cases and two deaths in 2019, and 2,798 cases and four deaths in 2018.

Dr. Ritu Saxena, deputy medical superintendent of the Delhi Government-run LNJP Hospital, said there "has been an increase in the number of dengue cases" at the hospital.

"We get around 100 dengue cases every day. Many of them are severe as we receive a lot of referrals from other hospitals. After 2018, this is the first time we are getting so many patients. A prolonged monsoon, leading to breeding of mosquitoes, and lack of cleanliness are among the reasons for the spike in cases," Dr. Saxena said.

She said that apart from the beds in the hospital, they have 500 beds in a facility set up in Ramliila Ground.

Suryan said an "intensive sanitation drive" to combat vector-borne diseases is in place and that the situation is "under control".

In September, the city had reported 217 dengue cases, which was also the highest

## One dead after SUV hits tempo

3 suffer injuries in accident in Sunlight Colony; driver arrested

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The driver of a three-wheeler was killed and three others sustained injuries after a speeding SUV that was allegedly being driven by a drunk youth hit the vehicle in south-east Delhi's Sunlight Colony in the early hours of Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-East) Esha Pandey said the deceased has been identified as Radhey Shyam (35), a resident of U.P., and the injured have been identified as Pankaj (21), Pankaj (15), and Neeraj Aggarwal (36).

According to the police, a PCR call was received at 1.52

a.m. about an accident near Bhairo Temple. The SUV rammed the tempo from behind and in the impact, the cabin of the three-wheeler got detached from the vehicle. Two people were sitting in the passenger seat while one was next to the driver. All four suffered serious injuries. They were taken to AIIMS trauma centre where Radhey Shyam was declared brought dead and others are undergoing treatment.

The accused SUV driver, Aaditya Khurana, who is a resident of Friends Colony, was arrested on the spot, the police said. A case under Sections 279 (rash driving), 337 (causing hurt) and 304A

(causing death by negligence) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered. Mr. Khurana was working as a marketing manager and is currently preparing for GMAT exam.

In another incident, a 40-year-old NDMC sanitation worker, Savita, was killed when an SUV collided with an autorickshaw in Connaught Place around 6 a.m. on Sunday. Savita and her husband Rakesh were on duty when the accident occurred. Mr. Rakesh told the police that after the collision, the auto toppled over Savita who was cleaning the road. The police have registered a case.

"The Kejriwal Government will encourage people to celebrate Diwali with diyas through the campaign just

## City's air quality likely to fall to 'poor' category tomorrow

Delhi Govt. to launch campaign against firecrackers

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The air quality in the city improved to the "satisfactory" category on Monday, but it is expected to deteriorate from Wednesday, as per official data. The effect of stubble burning is also expected to increase during the week.

The Delhi Government will launch 'Patakhe Nahi Diya Jhalo' campaign on Wednesday, to create awareness against burning of firecrackers.

"The Kejriwal Government will encourage people to celebrate Diwali with diyas through the campaign just

like those times when firecrackers did not exist at all. Fifteen teams will be formed in all the 15 districts of Delhi Police, which will have 157 members. Along with the police, teams have been formed under the leadership of 33 SDMs, who will take action under this campaign," Environment Minister Gopal Rai said.

There is a ban on sale and use of all types of firecrackers this Diwali in the city.

On Monday, the contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to PM2.5, a chief pollutant, in

Delhi was estimated at 6% and the number of active fires counts in the region was only 127.

However, as satellites highly underestimate the counts during cloudy and rainy periods, actual counts might be much higher, SAFAR said.

The AQI of Delhi was 82 on Monday, down from 160 on Sunday, as per the Central Pollution Control Board's 4 p.m. bulletin.

The air quality on Wednesday and Thursday is expected to be in the higher end of poor to lower end of very poor category.

## For Delhi's street vendors, it's not business as usual after HC order

Removal of 'illegal hawkers' at Connaught Place has pushed them into distress

MUNEER KHAN  
NEW DELHI

The removal of "illegal" hawkers and street vendors from Connaught Place market following an order from the Delhi High Court has left many worried for their future. While some attempt to carry out their businesses around CP, most say "it is for their daily earnings" and that they "have nowhere else to go".

According to the Delhi Street Hawkers Survey conducted by the government, 73,716 hawkers have been identified across the city from January 1 to September 30 and 54,599 have been approved. However, after multiple appeals by municipal councillors and street vendors' associations, the Delhi Government has extended the survey period till December 7 in order to identify more street vendors.

## In a dilemma

For Ashraf, a 30-year-old hawker from Bihar who sells apparels, the decision to bar "illegal" street vendors from operating in Connaught Place market has left him in a dilemma.

"During the lockdowns, I stayed back and struggled for survival. I do some tailoring on the side to support myself and selling apparels around the market helps boost my earnings. I earn up to ₹600 on a good day through street vending, but I earn nothing on a bad day. The authorities should think about the poor. When there is no system in place for us, then where will we go?" Mr. Ashraf asked.

Agreed Rajbeer Singh, a 55-year-old street vendor in Sarojini Nagar market, who said that he was under "constant fear" of being "chased away by civic authorities". Mr. Singh, a father of six, said that he was a farmer in Moradabad and had to sell his farmland to pay for his med-



Street vendors and hawkers at Lajpat Nagar market in Delhi. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

ical expenses.

Hawkers from the city's Lajpat Nagar market also expressed similar concerns with most stating that the recent Delhi High Court order had "instilled fear and uncertainty" among them and the authorities should provide them "with a designated space".

## Insufficient measures

Atul Bhargava, president of the New Delhi Traders' Association (NDTA), who had filed the plea in the Delhi High Court for the removal of illegal hawkers and street vendors, said that the NDTA was "not against the livelihood" of the hawkers.

"Corridors are meant for walking and not for hawkers to be sitting there. If the government wants it, then allot the hawkers a proper space and let them be over there. Cleanliness around the market is not being maintained by hawkers in the spaces they operate. Would anyone feel safe with them sitting there?" asked Mr. Bhargava.

However, shopkeepers at Connaught Place market said that they had "no qualms"

with the hawkers and their presence brought "increased footfall". "These hawkers hardly make enough for a day and now they have been chased away without any alternative. In fact, their presence helped our business and brought more customers to the market," a shopkeeper said.

Arbind Singh, president of the National Association of Street Vendors of India, said the Delhi High Court had ordered to remove "illegal hawkers" from Connaught Place market, but the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) "must decide who the illegal vendors are".

He referred to Section 3.3 - Chapter 2 - of the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, which states, "No street vendor shall be evicted or, as the case may be, relocated till the survey specified under sub-section (1) has been completed and the certificate of vending is issued to all street vendors."

"The NDMC has not done the survey even after seven years of the Act being

passed. After the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme was launched, only 135 vendors in NDMC areas were able to avail of the benefits under the scheme. The elite mindset is that the cities are not meant for these street vendors; they want the latter to come, serve and go back," Mr. Singh said, adding that the NDMC was using the High Court's order to interpret "all street vendors" as illegal.

The PM SVANidhi scheme was launched by the Central Government to help street vendors access affordable working capital loans for resuming livelihood activities post COVID-19 lockdown.

According to the data provided on the PM SVANidhi portal, until October 22, only 994 applications from NDMC areas for Letter of Recommendation (LOR) were approved out of the 3,579 applications that were received. As many as 2,575 applications were rejected. Across Delhi, 1,22,744 applications for LORs were received; 1,08,725 applications were approved, while 13,209 were rejected.

## Three inmates hurt in clash inside prison

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Three inmates sustained injuries in a clash with other prisoners at the Tihar Central Jail on Saturday, the police said, adding that a case has been registered.

According to the police, Pinku, 24, Sunil Sherawat, 32, and Sunny, 32, were injured after being attacked with sharp objects. While Sunny was undergoing treatment at DDU Hospital, Sunil and Pinku were referred to Safdarjung Hospital, said the police.

A complaint from Deputy Superintendent of Central Jail Number-1 was received regarding the incident and a case under Sections 307 (attempt to murder), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered at Hari Nagar police station, police added.

## Man booked under POCSO Act for 'harassing' teenager

He used to send indecent texts: police

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police have registered a case under POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act against a 40-year-old man for allegedly harassing a 15-year-old girl by sending her indecent text messages.

According to the police, the girl in her complaint alleged that she and her father used to visit a temple in Kalkaji to offer prayers on a daily basis. There she met the accused, Amit, a resident of Sarai Julena, who works as a sevadar (volunteer) at the temple. Both exchanged their phone numbers following the visits.

DCP (Southeast) Shweta

Pandey said the accused used to allegedly stare at the girl. "She ignored him many times but he persisted. He also sent indecent WhatsApp messages to her," the DCP said.

When her parents objected to his messages around one and a half years ago, "Amit apologised and the girl forgave him". But after some time, he again started harassing her in the same manner and also threatened her, the police said.

"The accused cropped her photo and uploaded it on his WhatsApp status..." the DCP further said. Amit is currently on the run and efforts are being made to nab him, Ms. Pandey said.

## COVID SOPs must be followed scrupulously during festivals: HC

BJP announces plan for Chhath Puja

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday told the Centre, the city government, the police and various authorities here that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), guidelines and protocols set for COVID-appropriate behaviour and managing crowds in market-places must be followed scrupulously in this festive season.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh made the observation while hearing a public interest litigation initiated by the High Court on violation of COVID-19 protocols in various markets in the Capital.

## DDMA meeting today

The court's order came on a day the BJP announced that it has begun preparations for the observance of Chhath Puja at public places across the city - along with vaccination camps for the devotees - even though the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) is yet to take a call on allowing the festivities. A meeting of the DDMA - to be chaired by Lieutenant-Governor Anil Bajjal and attended by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal - is scheduled for Wednesday to take a call on the issue.

"Your guidelines, SoP and protocol must be followed very scrupulously. See this is festive season. Strict compliance is required," the Bench remarked, adding that the authorities should focus on managing the crowd rather than collecting penalties for COVID-19 norms violations.

The Delhi government's counsel said they had issued



appropriate guidelines and had also shut down markets where protocols were not being followed properly.

The Central government had earlier informed the court that it had asked all States and Union Territories to ensure strict compliance with the national directives for COVID-19 management and take necessary measures under the Disaster Management Act.

The High Court posted the case for further hearing on November 30. The Bench said it was keeping the matter pending as it wanted to see how the authorities were controlling the situation.

North East Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari said the BJP has started preparations for Chhath celebrations with all precautions and safety measures "in the right earnest".

He said Union Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri will start a vaccination camp on October 26 from Kadipur so that all those taking part in the festivities are vaccinated. "I exhort all party councillors and workers to start cleanliness drives at Chhath ghats. When our workers will complete all this work, CM Arvind Kejriwal will suddenly jump in to put his stamp and take credit," Mr. Tiwari said.

## DU announces special cut-off for eligible students

Candidates can apply till October 27

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University released a special cut-off list on Monday for candidates applying to various merit-based undergraduate programmes. Eligible students who could not or did not take admission in the earlier three cut-off lists for any reason can do so now.

Under the special cut-off list, released between the third and fourth list, some courses in prominent colleges that were closed after previous rounds have reopened, thereby offering an opportunity to those who did not apply then to grab a seat now.

Giving an example, the university said, "If for College A, the first cut-off for BSc (Hons) mathematics for a specific category was 98% and the college did not declare second and third cut-off for the same, but later some seats got vacant, then



Those who have secured admission under earlier lists are not eligible. ■ FILE PHOTO

special cut-off for BSc (Hons) mathematics for the specific category will be 98%".

DU Registrar Vikas Gupta said applicants who have secured admission in any of the earlier three cut-off lists in any programme at the university will not be eligible to participate in the special cut-off. The last date for application on the list is 11.59 p.m. on October 27, and principals will approve the cut-off by October 28.

## E-Auto Mela commences at two venues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Monday inaugurated a seven-day-long 'E-Auto Mela' at the Institute of Driving, Training and Research (IDTR), Sarai Kale Khan.

The Mela commenced at two branches of IDTR - Sarai Kale Khan and Loni - and will continue till October 31 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. People visiting the two venues can test drive all the available models of e-autos and explore the loan offers available. Experts at the Mela will guide the applicants on how to register for e-autos and will brief them on the environmental benefits of the vehicle.

"With over 1,400 autos reserved for women, this is one of the biggest steps any city has taken in the direction of increasing the presence of women in public transport and overall women safety," said Mr. Gahlot.

## EDMC for bio-mining of legacy waste at Ghazipur

'We are trying to speed up the process'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

With an aim to "speed-up" the process of clearing the Ghazipur landfill site, the East Delhi Municipal Corporation on Monday passed a proposal to implement the bio-mining of "50 lakh tonnes" of legacy waste.

EDMC Commissioner Vikas Anand said that close to "8 lakh tonnes" of legacy waste had been "processed in the last two years" and that the civic body was looking to "increase the capacity of waste processed" by roping in a concessionaire.

## Concessionaire's role

"There is close to 140 lakh tonnes of legacy waste at the

Ghazipur landfill and it will take a long time if we continue to process the waste at the current speed. Through the concessionaire, we are trying to speed up the process and also address issues regarding disposal of the material that is processed. The concessionaire will hold the responsibility of disposing the processed waste," said Mr. Anand, adding that the time of completion for the project was 27 months.

The House also resolved that no challans will be issued to any resident of east Delhi for not segregating dry and wet waste until the EDMC comes up with a full system to collect and dispose of such waste.

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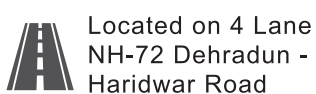


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Scuffle between students after India-Pakistan match

NC leader Omar Abdullah urges Punjab CM to look into the incident in Sangrur institute

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHANDIGARH

A scuffle broke out between a group of Kashmiri students and those from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar at an engineering institute in Punjab's Sangrur district following the T20 World Cup match between India and Pakistan, the police said on Monday.

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said he was distressed to hear about the alleged physical assault of some Kashmiri students and urged Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi to look into the matter.

The incident took place after some slogans were raised after the match on Sunday night, the police said.

The Kashmiri students and the students from U.P. and Bihar were watching the match on television in their respective rooms at the Bhai Gurdas Institute of Engineering and Technology in Sangrur.

The Kashmiri students allegedly cheered for Pakistan and raised some slogans, which did not go well with other students.

Heated exchanges took place between the two sides. A video clip surfaced on social media purportedly showing a Kashmiri student alleging that some students from U.P. barged into their room and assaulted them.

The police later said the issue has been resolved.

In a tweet, J&K former CM Abdullah said, "It is distressing to hear about the incidents of physical & verbal assault against some Kashmiri students in a college in Punjab last night. I request @CHARANJITCHANNI ji to direct @PunjabPoliceInd to look in to this & also to reassure the students studying in Punjab."

J&K Students' Association spokesperson Nasir Khuehami urged Mr. Channi to take action in the matter and ensure security to the Kashmiris studying and working in the State. He alleged that the Kashmiri students were

thrashed by the students from Bihar and U.P. Their rooms were vandalised, he alleged in a statement.

Youth Cong. support Meanwhile, some members of the Punjab Youth Congress met the Kashmiri students. "Important to give them a shoulder and assurance of safety, our DYC president Gobinder and DYC In-charge Deep Tiwana on direction of @IYCPunjab president @brinderhillon met them and assured them of all support as this is very much their home, even if away from native place," said the Punjab Youth Congress said in a tweet.

BSF jurisdiction: parties in Punjab oppose Centre's decision

Centre's move in the interest of country, says BJP which skipped all-party meet

VIKAS VASUDEVA CHANDIGARH

At an all-party meeting convened by Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Monday, the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal and the Aam Aadmi Party passed a resolution against the Centre's decision on enhancing the jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF).

The BJP, however, boycotted the meeting asserting the decision is in the interest of the country.

The meeting resolved to oppose the decision legally and politically and fight for the position which existed before the notification of October 11, 2021.

Special session Mr. Channi said the State Government would soon convene a special session of the Assembly on the issue. It would also file a petition in the Supreme Court against the Centre's unilateral decision which he said amounts to infringement on the States' constitutional rights and is against the spirit of federalism.

On the ongoing farmers' agitation against the



BSF personnel patrolling near the Zero Line at the India-Pakistan border, Ferozepur, in Punjab. FILE PHOTO

Centre's three farm laws, he said they would be outrightly rejected in the forthcoming session of the Assembly.

Will meet PM After detailed discussions, the political parties decided to seek an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi so that the Chief Minister could lead a delegation to urge him to review the decision on the BSF and with-

draw the contentious notification.

The SAD (Sanyukt), the SAD (Amritsar), the CPI(M), the CPI, the Trinamool Congress and the Lok Insaaf Party also took part in the meeting.

Senior BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia said here at a press conference that the NDA government has extended the area of operation of the BSF in the country's

interest. "The extension of the area of operation of the BSF is necessary due to the use of advanced technologies in illegal activities from across the border. In Punjab's border belt, drones with GPS coordinates from Pakistan are the new unseen enemy that keeps the security forces on their toes. Enhancement of the BSF's jurisdiction does not curtail the Punjab police jurisdiction," he said.

'No attack' "The sole aim of the notification is to improve the operational efficiency of the BSF. After a suspect has been detained or a consignment seized within the specified area, the BSF can only conduct "preliminary questioning" and must hand over the suspect to the Punjab police in 24 hours. The BSF does not have the powers to prosecute crime suspects. Thus, it is going to complement and supplement the efforts of the Punjab police. The local police can also act within the jurisdiction of the BSF. Hence, there is no attack on the federal structure," Mr. Kalia added.

MVA govt. faces flak over medical exam chaos

SHOUMAJIT BANERJEE PUNE

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in Maharashtra and State Health Minister Rajesh Tope came under fire from student bodies and the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party after chaos reigned for the second successive time in the Health Department's medical recruitment exams held on Sunday.

Irate students alleged confusion over hall tickets while at some exam centres in Pune and Nashik the questions papers were delivered late. At an exam centre in Mumbai's Andheri area, some students alleged that exam papers had been given out an hour earlier

and that the paper had been 'leaked'. At a number of centres, students complained that supervisors arrived after the scheduled 10 a.m. time.

Speaking to The Hindu, Kuldeep Ambekar, president, Student Helping Hand, said the government was behaving in an extremely insensitive manner.

He said students had completely lost faith in the government after the chaos and were now worried about the conduct of the MPSC exams to be held on January 2 next year.

Holding Mr. Tope responsible for the Sunday's confusion, senior BJP leader Madhav Bhandari demanded his resignation.

Plea seeks rescue from Afghanistan

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A PIL petition has been filed in the Delhi High Court seeking evacuation of over 200 Indian and Afghan nationals of Indian origin from Afghanistan.

Parmdinder Pal Singh, former spokesperson and media advisor of the Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee, has sought direction to issue visas to the "stranded persons" whose names are on the list and to facilitate their evacuation through chartered or special flights.

The petition is likely to come up for hearing this week.

Delhi Weather max min Delhi City 28 16 Safdarjang 28 16 Palam 28 18

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Delhi Palam Tomorrow 31°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm with mainly clear sky. Night remains cool and hazy.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 31°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm with mainly clear sky. Night remains cool and hazy.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE DEATH J.RUKMANI (67) Retd. SDE (MIS) BSNL. W/o N Jeganathan Retd AGM The Hindu. Passed away on 25/10/2021. Ph: 9444461564 / 9566979639 9941907046.

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**Charanjit Singh Channi**  
Chief Minister, Punjab



***INVEST IN THE BEST***

## Tripura Cong. deserters float new party

SYED SAJJAD ALI  
AGARTALA

A line-up of old and young leaders who recently quit the Congress formally announced the formation of a new regional party, the Tripura Democratic Front (TDF), on Monday. Former State Youth Congress president Pujan Biswas was introduced as the president of the TDF, while octogenarian Tapas Dey was appointed chairman of its advisory committee.

Mr. Pujan's father, Pijush Biswas, former president of the Tripura Congress who had also resigned after he was replaced by former Minister Birajit Sinha, did not hold any position in the new party. He was present when the deserters announced the decision to float a new party. The TDF has declared teams to represent OBCs, SCs, STs and minority communities. Wings for students, youth and women were also formed.

## Party high command will decide on Sasikala's inclusion: OPS

Recently, Palaniswami said she was no longer a part of the AIADMK

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MADURAI

AIADMK coordinator O. Panneerselvam on Monday said the high command would decide on the inclusion of V.K. Sasikala, close confidante of former Chief Minister Jayalalitha, in the party. Addressing the media, the former Chief Minister said anyone could enter politics, and it was for the people to take the final call.

However, when asked about Ms. Sasikala claiming to have good support among AIADMK cadre, Mr. Panneerselvam said the party high command would take a decision on her inclusion after a consultation. Interestingly, Mr. Panneerselvam broke off from the main unit of the AIADMK in 2017, levelling several allegations against Ms. Sasikala. This led to a split within the party.



**Making a comeback?** V.K. Sasikala was a close confidante of former Chief Minister Jayalalitha. ■ B. VELANKANNI RAJ

His statement has come as a surprise, as party co-coordinator Edappadi K. Palaniswami had stated recently that Ms. Sasikala was no longer a part of the AIADMK. He had dismissed her claim that she was the general secretary of the party.

When asked about the searches conducted by the

DVAC on the premises of former Ministers, Mr. Panneerselvam said the DMK government was "in a hurry".

"The DMK is acting with an ulterior motive to eliminate the Opposition. However, this will not happen," he said.

On the issue of the spike

**The DMK is acting with an ulterior motive to eliminate the Opposition. However, this will not happen**

O. PANNEERSELVAM  
AIADMK coordinator

in the prices of petrol and diesel, Mr. Panneerselvam said both the State government and the Centre were equally responsible.

"The spiralling price of diesel has raised the dangerous prospect of a spike in the cost of essential commodities, and it has badly affected the common man," he added.

"The party will mobilise people for protests if the DMK government tries to curtail the welfare schemes introduced by the previous AIADMK regime," Mr. Panneerselvam said.

## Local court seeks reply in Singhu border murder case

SC/ST Act dropped against 3 accused; more arrests likely

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

A local court in Sonapat on Monday directed the Haryana police to furnish a reply on invoking the Arms Act against the accused in the Singhu border murder case for wielding swords. All the four accused were remanded in judicial custody till November 8.

The police said more arrests were likely.

**'Reply in a week'** Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Arvind Kumar directed the police to file a reply within a week.

"Since the Nihang Sikhs are allowed to keep swords as per their religion, the court has directed the police to file a reply on the imposition of the Arms Act," said accused's counsel Yogesh.

The court also directed



The spot where the body was found. ■ FILE PHOTO

the police to drop charges under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against three of the four accused since they belong to Scheduled Caste. "Except Govind Preet, the court has directed to drop charges against the three accused under the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act," said Mr. Yogesh.

Virender Singh, DSP, Law and Order, Sonapat, said the

accused had identified more suspects during their police remand and more arrests could not be ruled out.

He clarified that charges under the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act were invoked in the FIR since the accused were not named.

**Tied to barricade**

Lakhbir Singh, a resident of Punjab's Tarn Taran, was found dead near the farmers' protest site at the Singhu border in Haryana's Sonapat on October 15, tied to a police barricade with his wrist and leg severed.

Of the four accused, Sarabjit Singh, was the first to surrender a few hours after the murder. A day after his arrest three more accused — Narain Singh, Bhagwant Singh and Govind Preet — had surrendered before the police.

## Maharashtra records its lowest single-day count since first wave

889 new infections on Monday; 14 districts report no cases

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

Maharashtra recorded its lowest single-day surge since the first wave of the pandemic, with the State reporting just 889 new COVID-19 cases on Monday as against 1,586 new recoveries as the active case tally dipped further to 23,184, said State Health Department authorities.

An equally low fatality of 12 deaths were reported, with no deaths being reported in 32 of the 36 districts. Pune, Mumbai, Thane and Ratnagiri were the only places where fatalities were re-

corded, said authorities.

State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate informed that 14 districts in the State had not reported a single case today while in 12 other districts, single-digit case surges were observed.

However, the low cases have to be seen in the context of a comparatively low number of samples being tested - less than one lakh in the last 24 hours as opposed to the average daily sample testing figure of over 1.75 lakh.

Maharashtra's cumulative fatalities now stand at 1,40,028. The case fatality

rate remains constant at 2.12%. The total cases now stand at 66,03,850 while the State's cumulative recoveries have risen to 64,37,025 with the recovery rate at 97.47%.

"Of a total 6,19,78,155 laboratory samples tested thus far, 66,03,850 (with the average case positivity falling to 10.66%) have returned positive with over 85,000 samples being tested in the last 24 hours," said Dr. Awate.

Pune reported just 179 new cases taking its total cases to 11,53,419 while two deaths pushed the total deaths over 19,080.

## Gujarat farmers upset over erratic power supply

Energy Minister admits to shortage of coal, assures situation will improve in next two weeks

MAHESH LANGA  
AHMEDABAD

Farmers in Gujarat are upset over erratic power cuts they are facing for the last three weeks as the power utilities have been curbing supplies for agriculture.

In several districts of North Gujarat and Saurashtra regions, farmers have taken out protests marches.

**Written to authorities**

Several Opposition MLAs and even the Bhartiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), a farmers' wing of the RSS, have written to the authorities demanding the power supply be restored for the farm sector.

The government has admitted that the power plants were facing shortage of coal and therefore the supply was curtailed but the energy companies apparently did not purchase power from private players to meet the growing demand from farmers.

"For the last 20 days, we have been getting power only for a few hours. We want uninterrupted supply for at least 8-9 hours to irrigate fields," said Laljibhai Chaudhary, a farmer from Banaskantha district.

He added that members of BKS have even submitted a memorandum to the local authorities seeking regular

supply till November end.

On Saturday, Gujarat's Energy Minister Kanubhai Desai admitted about shortage of coal and said the situation will improve in next two weeks.

**'Global scarcity'**

"There is a scarcity of coal across the globe because coal mines are facing issues of flooding due to excessive rain. It is also happening because of climate change. As a result, the supply of coal has been hampered. But, this is a temporary issue," he told reporters in Vapi town of south Gujarat when asked about the frequent power cuts.

However, local representatives and even legislators feel that the power shortage would affect farmers very badly if not addressed on urgent basis.

On Monday, Gujarat's Agriculture Minister Raghavji Patel also reportedly sought intervention from the top to ease the crisis.

Officials in the GUVNL have said that power demand from farmers has gone up suddenly and therefore is a shortage and power cuts in a few pockets.

**'Cotton crop destroyed'**

"Our cotton crop is getting destroyed as there is no power to irrigate the field.

We have water but no power to pump it to irrigate," said Jivan Gajera, a farmer from Amreli district.

**Protest marches**

So far, farmers have held protests in Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Mehsana, Rajkot, Jamnagar, Sabarkantha, Amreli and other districts.

"There is massive shortage and it appears that the government is not serious to help the farmers," said Congress leader Arjun Modhwadia, who has demanded that the State should purchase power and supply of its own plants are not working.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that a female (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Jyoti W/o Sushil kumar R/o H.No. SRS-143, Peeragarhi Village, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since 05.10.2021 from the area of P.S. Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No.70A dated 08.10.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

**Age:** 35 Years, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Golden Colour Suit & Salwar and Sandal in feet.

Any person having any information/ Clue about this missing/kidnapped female, may inform SHO, Paschim Vihar West, Delhi at E-mail [ld-cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:ld-cic@cbi.gov.in) or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

**SHO**  
**Phone:** 011-24368638, 24368641  
**Fax No.:** 011-24368639  
**DP/1238/OD/2021**

**P.S. Pachim Vihar West, Delhi**  
**Outer Distt., Delhi**  
**Ph. No. 011-25268394, 25280980**

## Odisha gearing up for civic body polls

District Collectors asked to finalise delimitation of wards

SATYASUNDAR BARIK  
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has directed all District Collectors to complete delimitation of wards and reservation of seats afresh in wake of the general elections to civic bodies which are likely to be conducted early next year.

The five-year term of councils of 101 urban local

bodies and six months period in case of newly constituted four Notified Area Councils have already been completed.

According to an order issued by Director of Municipal Administration, "The State Election Commission has desired that necessary immediate steps may be taken by the government for issue of schedule for delimitation of wards and reservation of seats at the earliest so as to enable the commission to take steps for preparation of electoral roll and conduct of election."

Collectors have been asked to divide municipal areas in wards and reserve seats for Scheduled Caste, Schedule Tribe, Backward Class category and women with equitable distribution of population as per 2011 Census.

The process of delimitation of wards and reservation of seats in respect of the municipal bodies are required to be completed by January 13, said the director of Municipal Administration.

The draft notification inviting objections and suggestions on delimitation of

wards is scheduled to be issued on November 11.

Out of 105 civic bodies which are going to polls early next year, highest 17 civic bodies fall in the jurisdiction of Ganjam - home district of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Similarly, Municipal Commissioners of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur have been asked to carry out delimitation and reservation in their respective jurisdiction and publish final notification relating to delimitation and reservation before January 20 of next year.

## '58 sugar mills sold at well below market prices'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PUNE

After Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and senior Nationalist Congress Party leader Ajit Pawar last week refuted the BJP allegations pertaining to the sale of sugar factories in the State, farmer leader and Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana chief Raju Shetti on Monday hit out at the NCP and the BJP alleging that 58 sugar mills were "fraudulently sold" well below their market prices between 2007

and 2017.

Mr. Shetti, a former two-time MP from Hatkanagale in Kolhapur district, has written to the RBI Governor and the Finance Secretary, seeking revaluation of the assets of these mills which were reportedly sold at knockdown prices by the Maharashtra Co-operative bank, which is mired in a multi-crore scam. He said the mills were sold during the tenures of the Congress-NCP and the Devendra Fadnis-led governments.

## SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one person (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Bittu, S/o: Harender R/o: Plot No. 19, KH No. 269 Gali No. 1, Uttarakhand Enclave Part 1, Burari, Delhi-110004. Aged: 21 years, has been missing since on 09.10.2021. In this regard a case DD No. 55A Dated 10.10.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Burari, Delhi.** His physical description is as under: **Height:** 5'2" feet, **Complexion:** Fair,



BITTU

**Face:** Round, **Built:** Strong, **Clothing:** Red Color T Shirt, Orange Colour Pajama and Green Colour Shoes in his feet.

Any person is having any information/clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Burari, Delhi at E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.nic.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.nic.in) or website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Tele No.: 011-23014046 (Direct), 23015229 & 23015218.

**S.H.O**  
**P.S. Burari, Delhi**  
**DP/1612/N/2021**  
**Ph. 011-27616844, 27616845**

## SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE



General public is here by informed that this female **Namely: Sangeeta (with her son Netik, Age: 5 Years), W/o: Anand Bhardwaj, R/o F-145, Sector B 2, Narela, Delhi, Age: 25 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Strong, Wearing: Unknown Clothes and Slippers in feet,** has been missing from her house since 16.09.2021.

In this regard a vide DD No.70A, dated 16.09.2021 has been Lodged at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this female but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this female kindly inform to the following.

**E-Mail:** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) **SHO**  
**Website:** <http://cbi.nic.in> **P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**  
**Fax:** 011-24368639 **Ph. 011-27787592, 27787593**  
**Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641** **DP/1327/ON/2021**

## SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON

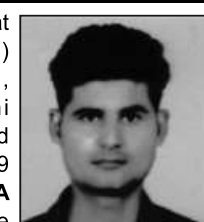
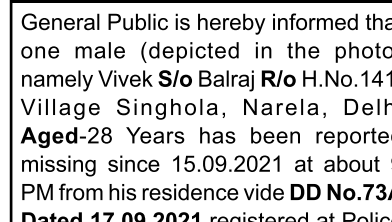


General public is hereby informed that this person namely **Haider Rija S/o Mohd. Rija R/o E-2740-2658, J.J. Colony Bawana, Delhi Aged: 27 years, Height: 5'5", Face: Long, Complexion: Fair, Build: Medium, wearing Yellow colour T-shirt and Nikker of jeans and blue colour chappal in feet, has been missing since 15.09.2021 from his house. In this regard DD No. 56-A dated 22.09.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.**

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped person may kindly inform to the following.

**E-mail:** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) **SHO : P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**  
**Website:** <http://cbi.nic.in> **Delhi**  
**Fax:** 24368639 **Ph. : 011-27787592, 27787593**  
**Tel.: 24368638/24368641** **DP/1347/ON/21**

## SEARCH FOR MISSING MALE



General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely **Vivek S/o Balraj R/o H.No. 141, Village Singhola, Narela, Delhi Aged-28 Years** has been reported missing since 15.09.2021 at about 9 PM from his residence vide **DD No.73A Dated 17.09.2021** registered at Police Station Narela, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

**Complexion:** Fair, **Height:** 5'10", **Face:** Long, **Built:** Medium, **Clothing:** White coloured T-shirt, Blue coloured jeans and Black & Yellow shoes.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing male, may inform SHO, Narela, Delhi at E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

**Tele No.:** 011-24368638 or 24368641 **Sd/-**  
**FAX No.:** 011-24368639 **SHO, Narela, Delhi**  
**DP/1330/ON/2021** **Tel.: 011-27280435, 27282350**

IN BRIEF



Impose President's Rule in A.P., Naidu tells Kovind

Submitting a memorandum on the "anarchy in Andhra Pradesh, constitutional breakdown, collusion of DGP and top police officials with the ruling party," Telugu Desam Party president N. Chandrababu Naidu urged President Ram Nath Kovind to impose President's Rule in Andhra Pradesh.

Charges against Swapna, others grave, says NIA

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Monday reserved its judgment on the appeals seeking bail filed by Swapna Suresh and other accused persons in the gold smuggling case registered against them by the National Investigation Agency. The NIA opposed the pleas and argued that the petitioners were "the frontliners" in the case.

# 'There is no threat to Mullaperiyar dam'

Kerala is working with T.N. to regulate water level: Pinarayi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told the Assembly that scaremongers were spreading rumours of an imminent threat to the Mullaperiyar dam on social media. Mr. Vijayan said no such threat existed. There was no immediate cause for worry. The alarmist propaganda would do the State immense harm, and it was not based on any scientific fact. The police would identify and prosecute such purveyors of false news.

Kerala would continue to lobby for a new dam at Mullaperiyar. The Centre and some States were opposed to the proposal. Kerala was in close coordi-



No cause for worry: A file photo of the Mullaperiyar Dam on Kerala-Tamil Nadu border at Kumily, near Idukki.

nation with Tamil Nadu to regulate water levels in Mullaperiyar.

The Tamil Nadu authorities were highly empathetic to Kerala's demands, and officials of both States were working to ensure water levels in the reservoir were well-regulated.

Earlier, Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan flagged the issue in the House. He said social media was awash with rumours of the dam's structural integrity. The State could not ignore people's anxiety, and should take concrete steps to mitigate their fear.

# 3 Maoists killed in shootout with police

Incident happened on Telangana border

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MULUGU

Efforts by the Maoists to expand their area of operations in the large swathes of forests along the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border suffered a crippling blow with the death of three Maoists in an "exchange of fire", with a special police party in a forest area of Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, adjoining Telangana's Mulugu district, on Monday.

The exchange of fire took place in the dense forest area near the inter-State border under the Elmidi police station limits in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, police said.

The identity of the three Maoists, who were killed in the "exchange of fire", could not be established.

Giving details of the incident, Superintendent of Pol-

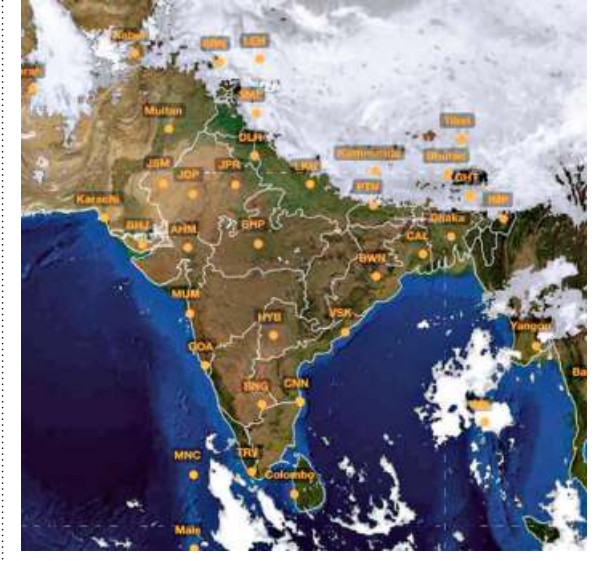
ice Sangram Singh Patil said a combing operation was jointly launched by the Mulugu police, the Greyhounds personnel and the Bijapur police of Chhattisgarh in the forest area straddling the inter-State border, based on specific information about the movement of Maoist squads in the border areas.

### Weapons recovered

After the exchange of fire, three bodies of Maoists with weapons were recovered. Four weapons including one light machine gun, one self-loading rifle (SLR), an AK-47 rifle with Bayonet and one firearm besides several rounds of ammunition, one hand grenade, one knife, pressure cooker, camera flash and explosive Cordex wire among other articles were recovered from the encounter site.

### WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, south interior Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, south interior Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	23.5	32.5	21.8	Kozhikode	0.4	33.4	25.0
Ahmedabad	33.4	22.2	34.1	Kurnool	31.6	20.0	23.5
Aizawl	27.4	17.9	31.1	Lucknow	11	31.8	23.2
Allahabad	33.1	20.5	31.0	Madurai	31.0	22.7	23.2
Bengaluru	28.1	20.9	30.6	Mangaluru	32.8	22.8	22.8
Bhopal	31.2	21.2	31.2	Mysuru	28.2	28.4	16.4
Bhubaneswar	30	27.5	13.2	New Delhi	30.8	22.6	25.6
Chandigarh	32.4	22.4	32.2	Port Blair	32.2	24.8	24.8
Chennai	32.4	22.4	31.7	Puducherry	31.3	17.4	21.0
Coimbatore	32.0	23.7	31.8	Raipur	30.0	17.6	13.4
Dehradun	19.7	13.5	31.0	Shillong	21.6	13.4	8.4
Gangtok	32.0	21.2	31.2	Shimla	14	20.4	6.5
Goa	31.0	21.0	27.5	Srinagar	32.9	23.8	23.6
Guwahati	31.2	18.6	31.4	Thiruvananthapuram	5	32.1	23.6
Hubballi	27.5	15.2	30.6	Tiruchi	32.4	26.0	24.8
Hyderabad	31.4	19.0	32.3	Vijayawada	32.8	26.0	24.8
Imphal	31.4	19.0	32.3	Visakhapatnam	32.8	26.0	24.8
Jaipur	30.6	24.4	24.6				
Kochi	24.6	13.4	32.3				
Kolkata	32.3	24.1					

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	50	43	36	114	125	■	In observation made at 4:00 p.m., Muzaffarpur, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 250 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution.
Bengaluru	5	26	67	...	...	■	In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQJ score of 18
Chennai	22	21	25	...	...	■	
Delhi	16	73	...	...	...	■	
Hyderabad	5	88	25	...	...	■	
Kolkata	12	48	34	...	...	■	
Lucknow	12	55	68	...	...	■	
Mumbai	13	4	49	...	...	■	
Pune	76	80	111	...	...	■	
Visakhapatnam	15	41	35	...	...	■	

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
SO<sub>2</sub>: 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.  
NO<sub>2</sub>: 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

# Family court in Kerala puts adoption procedure on hold

Child was put up for adoption against my will: mother

K.S. SUDHI  
KOCHI

The prospective adoptive parents of the infant of Anupama S. Chandran may have to return the baby to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Thiruvananthapuram, shortly even as the family court has put on hold the adoption procedures.



Anupama S. Chandran

K. Biju Menon, presiding officer of the family court, who was expected to pass the final orders in the adoption procedure on Monday, stayed the proceedings considering the plea of the mother and the CWC.

Ms. Anupama had come out in the open demanding her baby back. She contended that the child was put up for adoption against her will, and her consent was ob-

tained through illegal ways. In the case, the prospective adoptive parents, according to judicial sources, have no right over the child as the court has not issued the final order on adoption. The baby was handed over to them in foster care for familiarising it with the atmosphere in the prospective adoptive home. The couple from Andhra Pradesh are bound to return the baby on a directive from either the court or the CWC, the sources indicated. The court posted the case for November 1.

# Karnataka Government duped of ₹2.89 crore with fake bills

Complaint filed against auditor and two of his aides

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HUBBALLI

After an incident of siphoning off of ₹2.89 crore by presenting fake bills came to light, a complaint has been filed against an auditor of Karnataka Neeravari Nigam (KNN) and two of his aides.

Chief Auditor of KNN N.S. Varadraj has filed a complaint with the Dharwad Suburban police station against three persons, KNN auditor Deepak Mudalagi and two of his aides R.B. Sheikh and A.Y. Mulla. In his complaint, Mr. Varadraj said that the accused

had cheated KNN by creating fake bills under Hippargi Barrage works and had duped the State Government. All the three accused had forged the signatures of higher officials and withdrawn the money in two instalments - ₹1.44 crore and ₹1.45 crore, the complainant has said.

As per sources, Deepak Mudalagi had earlier worked as office superintendent under Hippargi Barrage for six months and now is working at CADA in Jamkhandi. During audit, it had come to light that Deepak Mudalagi

had created fake bills and two of his friends had supported him. Subsequently, a four-member committee was set up to look into the issue and the committee submitted its report after a detailed inquiry, in which it found that all the three were involved in creating fake bills.

In its report, the committee said that as Deepak Mudalagi could not transfer the amount to his bank account in view of some technical issues, he had transferred it to the bank accounts of his friends.

# Survey of churches: HC orders notice to Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday ordered issue of notice to the State Government on a PIL petition questioning the legality of the July 7, 2021, communication issued by the Directorate of Minorities Welfare to Deputy Commissioners to conduct a survey of churches in their districts for data collection purposes.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi and Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam passed the order on the petition filed by the People's Union for Civil Liberties-Karnataka.

The petitioner contended that the communication, issued based on a meeting of the Welfare Committee held on July 7, "is illegal, discriminatory, arbitrary and unconstitutional, being violative of the right to equality and privacy under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution of India."

Even the Karnataka Minorities Commission Act, 1994, has no provision that empowers the collection of such data about churches, the petitioner contended, pointing out that the communication was discriminatory as it singled out churches while not including other religious or religious minority institutions.

Pointing out that the directorate had sought details such as taluk, district, and Assembly constituency-wise location of churches, their names, addresses, property type and property khata details, and the names of the pastor/father, the petitioner claimed that the communication was silent on the purpose of the collection of the data, its storage, use and accessibility.

# Archbishop of Bengaluru opposes anti-conversion law

'Christian population has not gone up since Independence'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Disputing allegations of "mass conversion" by Christian religious organisations in the country, Archbishop of Bengaluru Peter Machado said that the population of Christians since Independence had remained the same. He opposed the anti-conversion legislation proposed by the Karnataka Government, and argued that it would be used as a tool to harass the minorities.

"Since independence, Christians constitute 1.8% of the population. The census data is with the Government. Taking a few stray incidents, it is not fair to blame the entire community and frame anti-conversion law," he told reporters, expressing his strong opposition to

the proposed law by the State Government. He said that it was a Constitutional right to practise and propagate religion in the country.

Expressing fear of attacks and harassment of the minority communities if the anti-conversion law comes into effect, he said there was no doubt that it will disrupt peace in society. "Christian institutions run thousands of educational institutions and health care centres.... But instances of moral policing has been on the rise ever since Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai stated that there will be 'reaction' to incidents. We fear such moral policing is going to increase and attacks on minorities will also increase by the proposed anti conversion legislation."

Taking exception to the direction issued by Backward Classes Welfare Department to conduct survey of Christian religious institutions, he asked what was the need for such a survey. "Government has the data and details of the Christian religious institutions with it. What is the objective of the survey? If survey is required why is the survey targeted only at Christian organisations?" he sought to know.

Archbishop Machado urged the Backward Classes Welfare Department to withdraw the circular ordering survey of Christian institutions.

Other community leaders, including former Minister K.J. George, Margaret Alva and MLA Vinisha Nero also spoke.

# It's raining gold for Yadadri gopuram work

Official says 125 kg will be required to plate the structure; work to start early

SERISH NANISETTI  
HYDERABAD

As donation of gold for the Lakshminarasimha Swamy temple in Yadadri is apace, officials decided to start the work early.

"We are planning to start the work earlier than planned, as people have started to donate gold in good quantities. We estimate that 125 kg of gold would be required to plate the Vimana Gopuram," said G. Kishen Rao of the Yadadri Temple Development Authority.

"We will start the work as an initial layer of copper has to be fixed to the gopuram before work on gold plating can begin," said Mr. Rao.

The Vimana Gopuram of the temple soars to a height of 47 feet and would be visible for miles around, including to passengers on trains passing on the Bhongir-Seunderabad route. From holy men to indus-



New sheen: A view of the Lakshminarasimha Swamy temple in Yadadri-Bhongir district. ■ FILE PHOTO

try. One of the first temples in India to get gold plating was the Harmadri Sahib in Amritsar for which Maharaja Ranjit Singh is reported to have donated ₹16.39 lakh as 'sone de sewa' nearly 200 years ago.

An earlier plan from 2018 involved gold plating the Dhvajastambam as well as Shayana Shala of the Lakshminarasimha Swamy Temple.

Some of the bigger donors for the temple have been: Megha Engineering which promised 6 kg of gold, Hetero Pharma owners with 5 kg, and Nagarkurnool MLA M. Janardhan Reddy with 2 kg.

A back of the envelope calculation shows that till now, about 40 kg of gold has been promised.

A special account has been created by the YTDA to streamline donations for gold plating work.

trialists, politicians, and corporate houses, the promise of gold donations has continued after Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao unveiled the plan on October 19.

The Chief Minister promised 1.16 kg of gold on his family's behalf, adding that people living in every corner of Telangana would get an opportunity to donate money for buying gold for the

temple. "We will reach out to 769 gram panchayats, 3,600 municipal wards and 142 municipalities in the State for collecting money for the temple," Mr. Rao had said.

While the announcements have been about the donation of gold, the Chief Minister's statement is clear about pooling money and buying the requisite quantity of gold from the Reserve Bank of India to ensure qual-

# Bengal schools, colleges to reopen on Nov. 16

Move comes amid rise in COVID-19 cases in State after unrestrained festivities

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Schools, colleges and universities in West Bengal will restart physical classes from November 16, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Monday.

Participating in an administrative review in North Bengal, Ms. Banerjee directed the State's Chief Secretary, H.K. Dvivedi, to complete arrangements for the reopening of educational institutions by November 15. Later, she said that educational institutions will reopen from November 16 since November 15 was a holiday.

Only students of Classes VIII to X will attend physical classes, while online classes will continue for junior-level students. The Education Department will come up



Makeshift arrangement: Children attend an open-air school set up by an NGO in Siliguri in July this year. ■ FILE PHOTO

with the standard operating procedure for holding physical classes and the functioning of educational institutions.

The West Bengal Government's decision to resume physical classes comes amid a rise in the number of

COVID-19 cases in the State after unrestrained Durga Puja festivities. The State reported 989 fresh cases and 10 deaths on Sunday, while Kolkata recorded 273 new infections. Ms. Banerjee has been urging people to follow COVID-19-appropriate

behaviour in public places. The State administration has also reimposed night curfew from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m.

### Deprived of education

Students from Class VIII will now be able to attend physical classes after a gap of almost 20 months. According to several studies, the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020 had an adverse impact on the education of students, particularly those studying in lower classes and with lesser economic means.

Experts and a section of guardians were advocating for the resumption of physical classes in educational institutions. Several other States have also reopened schools and resumed physical classes.

# AMU students demand physical classes, take out protest march

They submit memo to V-C for early commencement

ANUJ KUMAR  
GHAZIABAD

Hundreds of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) students took out a protest on Monday, demanding the opening of the campus for offline classes. In a memorandum addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, the students demanded immediate commencement of offline classes and alleged irregularities in the entrance tests.

They also urged that elections be held for the university bodies without delay. Students leaders said if demands were not met, they would start a sit-in protest after a week. University authorities said they were following the UGC norms regarding the pandemic.

"When other Central universities are functioning normally with offline classes why AMU has been held up with lockdown scenario. It is affecting the careers of thousands of students," the memorandum said.

The residential university, with more than 16,000 students, was shut down in December 2019 when the protests against Citizenship Amendment Act broke out. The university announced the winter vacation and before the normalcy could be restored, the pandemic struck.

Former vice president of AMU Students' Union Umar Qadri said it seemed the absence of students was providing the administration an

opportunity to hide its lapses. "The papers of entrance exams of at least two courses got leaked but the university brushed the issue under the carpet after a 'customary' inquiry by two ex-employees of the university. We demand an independent inquiry by a sitting judge," he said.

### 'Wifi not restored'

"While research scholars are residing on the campus, libraries are out of bound for them. The wifi has not been restored," said Memoona Ansari, former secretary of Abdullah Students Union.

Mr. Qadri said if there was a will, the university could have accommodated boys in the hostels as per the COVID protocol.



## Mixed messaging

The Centre seems unclear about the political process needed for normalcy in J&K

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's first visit to Jammu & Kashmir after August 5, 2019 when Parliament diluted Article 370 of the Constitution that granted it a "special status" and downgraded and bifurcated the State into two Union Territories, took place against the grim background of the killings of 11 civilians by terrorists in one month. J&K has been under central rule since June 2018 and the political and parliamentary subterfuge in reorganising the erstwhile State still rankles as a discordant chapter of India's experiments in federalism. Mr. Shah used the three-day visit to underscore the progress J&K has made since its reorganisation – the uptick in tourist inflow and the string of development and welfare projects. As for the stringent curbs that the people have had to endure meanwhile, Mr. Shah said those were bitter pills that helped save lives. Through a series of public engagements and official functions in Jammu and the Valley, the Home Minister's single-minded focus was on reiterating the Bharatiya Janata Party's political narrative on Kashmir. He said "three families" had held J&K to ransom until the party came to its rescue. Whether or not politics in J&K has been any more or less corrupt than other parts of the country is anyone's guess, but it is a matter of fact that the former State had a poverty rate of 10.35% against the national average of 21.92%.

The Centre has been successful in removing the question of independence or even autonomy from the conversation on Kashmir. But to pretend that there is no political question in Kashmir to be discussed or resolved is reckless. Besides trying to systematically delegitimise the mainstream parties, the BJP policy also sought to build an entirely new political apparatus in the Union Territory. Mr. Shah ruled out any talks with Pakistan, but said he was willing to talk to the youth of Kashmir. That promise can be meaningful only with immediate action. Now that the Centre has made the restoration of statehood as the endgame of an unclear political process, it must establish a mechanism for dialogue with the people. In June, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met political leaders from J&K in Delhi but there has been no follow up to that since then. On the contrary, Mr. Shah's messaging over three days emphasised the divisions between the people of the Valley and Jammu, and berated political leaders. True, he made the right gestures in terms of visiting victims of recent violence and interactions with locals but that is far from enough. More than 700 people had to be detained ahead of his visit, which is instructive of the continuing volatility in the Valley. Mr. Shah's trip is the latest in a series of visits by Union Ministers in recent weeks. While the Centre's outreach is indeed a welcome step, it needs to be more honest and open to be effective.

## End the impasse

A solution is needed for core issues concerning farmers, and not merely for road blocks

The time may have come for a more concerted effort by the Government and the protesting farmers to find a solution to the prolonged impasse over the three agriculture-related laws enacted last year. The Supreme Court has emphasised that public roads cannot be blocked indefinitely by protesters. In an observation in the context of more petitions from members of the public, complaining that their right of free movement has been curtailed by the ongoing protests by farmers, the Court has said a solution has to be found, that roads cannot be blocked for long and there is no reason for it to lay down the law again and again. The reference was to last year's judgment on the Shaheen Bagh protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, wherein it was held that public ways and public spaces cannot be blocked indefinitely even during a peaceful protest. The observation can be seen either as a disapproval of the tactic of holding interminable protests or as an implicit criticism of the Government for being unable to find a solution to the farmers' grievances. Even while denying that they are responsible for the hardship faced by the public, and blaming the police for the blockade, the farmers say they should be allowed to continue their agitation at the Ramlila Maidan. However, the Government will have none of it, recalling the unsavoury incidents that took place on Republic Day when the protest rolled into the Capital.

The conflict between the two competing rights – freedom to protest and the right to free movement of the public – is not the only aspect that requires immediate attention. There seems to be no attempt to break the deadlock on the core issue, with the farmers demanding an outright repeal of the laws and statutory validation for the claim that the MSP regime will not come to an end. Late last year, the protesting farmers and Union Ministers did come to a partial agreement on decriminalising stubble-burning and safeguarding power subsidies, but the two core demands have not seen any breakthrough. It is not out of place to recall that an expert committee constituted by the Court has submitted its report, but nothing has been heard about it after that. To an extent, the fact that the Court has not taken it up again or made the report public may be a factor in the continuing impasse. An expedited hearing that involves further review of the panel's recommendations, or any such similar initiative from the Government, is needed to arrive at a solution. The objective must not be merely to resolve the incidental issue of blocked roads, but to reconcile or eliminate the deep differences over what the Government sees as necessary reforms in the farm sector. Any reform that seeks to eliminate distortions in the sector must also win the confidence of farmers, the principal stakeholders.

# The Perils of an Unresolved Boundary

Nirupama Rao looks at the India-China relationship of the 1950s-60s, the border issue, and negotiations on Tibet



NIRUPAMA RAO

*The India-China relationship is in a difficult place, with the past shadowing the present. The period from 1949 to 1962 is crucial as Jawaharlal Nehru sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to establish a workable relationship with the Chinese. Nirupama Rao, former Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to China, traces the history of Tibet, the genesis of the McMahon Line, Communist China's military takeover and domination of Tibet, and the border row between India and China in her new book, The Fractured Himalaya. An excerpt from the book:*

It was to be over a year before negotiations between India and China on relations between India and Tibet opened in Beijing. These commenced on December 31, 1953. Jawaharlal Nehru's approach to frontier questions between India and China was already well-entrenched by then. Tibet had become more a 'psychological' buffer from a political one during British rule – psychological because Nehru was convinced that any military attack on India from Tibet was not feasible. For him, while the status of Tibet and Tibetan autonomy, as also Indian interests in Tibet inherited from the British were issues for discussion with China, the frontier, as his biographer S. Gopal noted, 'was firm, well-known and beyond dispute'.

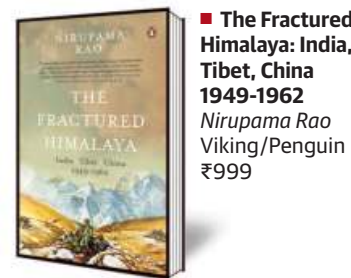
Loosely put, Nehru's attitude was that there was no room for controversy over the McMahon Line: 'Our maps show that the McMahon Line is our boundary and that is our boundary – map or no map. That fact remains and we stand by that boundary, and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary.' Gopal notes

that this assertion of rights was more definite regarding the eastern sector of the boundary.

### Flawed advice

The problem lay in the fact that, except for Sikkim, the border had not been demarcated – jointly with China – on the ground; the boundary in the western and middle sectors had not been defined in detail by treaty and only, as Nehru stated, by custom, usage and tradition. The McMahon Line was shown only on a map that the Chinese government had initialled in 1914 but not subsequently accepted. The Chinese would set their strategy in such a way subsequently, when the officials of the two sides met in 1960, to seek 'fresh acceptance of every stretch' of the boundary. K.M. Panikkar, without the benefit of hindsight, only had this advice to give Nehru: the issue would pose no difficulty. Could Panikkar [the first Indian Ambassador to China] have sensed the actual Chinese attitude? In retrospect, his advice to Nehru would have serious repercussions for India. As advice, it was fatally flawed.

Throughout his stay in China, Panikkar took the stand that the Tibetan issue was a simple one. Leaders like Zhou Enlai, in his view, recognised the 'legitimacy' of India's trade and cultural interests in Tibet and only suggested that the political office in Lhasa, 'an office of dubious legality' in Panikkar's words, should be regularised by its transformation into an Indian Consulate-General. Other posts and institutions like the telegraph lines set up in the British era, the military escort at Yadong in the Chumbi Valley, 'were to be abolished quietly in time', and the trade agents in Tibet and their subordinate agencies brought 'within the framework of normal consular relations'. In his seeming obsession with the big picture of two big Asian nations forging deeper understanding and cooperation, Panikkar was content to say that he left 'no outstanding issue' pending at the time of his depart-



■ **The Fractured Himalaya: Tibet, China 1949-1962**  
Nirupama Rao  
Viking/Penguin  
₹999

### EXTRACT

ture. It was a strategic miscalculation which would have serious consequences.

When Zhou Enlai told Panikkar in September 1951 in a 'shrouded sentence' that the question of the stabilisation of the Tibetan frontier – a matter of common interest to India, Nepal and China – could be settled by discussion between the three countries, it was assumed, in diplomatic guesswork, that stabilisation meant that there was no territorial dispute between India and China.

### 'Cunning' move

Many records indicate that the view of the officials in the Ministry of External Affairs was that while negotiations for an agreement between India and China on Tibet were necessary, they should also include a border settlement. There should be a *quid pro quo* for India's recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. A note by the Foreign Secretary, K.P.S. Menon on April 11, 1952 observed that the

Chinese government's attitude was far from straightforward, and could, in fact, be termed 'cunning'. A child could see through the game, said Menon. Zhou Enlai had suggested in September 1951 that India's position in Tibet should be regularised and the 'boundary with Tibet stabilised'. India had said immediately that 'we were ready for discussions' but there had been no response from the Chinese. The latter were saying that 'they [the Chinese] have been in Tibet only for a short while and want more time to study the problem.' Menon was suspicious of Chinese irredentism, and a whispering campaign was already doing the rounds in Lhasa that not only Tibet, but Sikkim and Bhutan, and even the Darjeeling-Kalimpong area 'would soon be liberated.' This would encourage the Tibetans to lay their hands on Tawang and other disputed areas to the south of the McMahon Line. 'The Chinese have long memories; irredentism has always played a part in the policy of the Chinese government whether imperial, Guomindang or Communist.' India was clearly inviting trouble when it was decided that the border issue would not figure in the negotiations on Tibet. Responding positively to the Chinese move for an agreement on Tibet was seen essentially as a means of reducing Chinese pressure on the border, and as 'helping' the Tibetans within a larger policy framework of coaxing the Chinese out of their isolation.

### Piecemeal solution

The 'knight-administrator' (called thus because of his British knight-hood and being a member of the Indian Civil Service) Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai was by now the Governor of Bombay. He continued to be in the picture regarding Tibet. He had noticed that the list of pending issues proposed for discussion with the Chinese did not include the question of the frontier with Tibet. His view, as expressed to the Foreign Secretary, was that 'This business of Sino-Indian relations over Tibet, would, in my judgement, be best handled comprehensively and not piecemeal', implying that the question of the border should not be left aside. Perhaps, as a result of Bajpai's letter, the Prime Minister in a note to the Foreign Secretary on 23 July, expressed his inclination that the frontier should be mentioned in the talks with the Chinese. Panikkar's reasons for not advancing this subject, be what they may, were appreciated but Nehru felt 'that our attempt at being clever might overreach itself' and that it was better to be absolutely straight and frank about the issue with the Chinese.

### Nehru's misgivings

This was not the first time that Nehru had expressed some misgivings on the issue. In June of the same year, he had in a message to Panikkar said it 'was odd' that Zhou Enlai had made no reference to the frontier in his discussions with the Ambassador. He did not like Zhou's silence in the matter, he added, since the Indian government had made it clear in Parliament that not only the direct frontier with Tibet, but also the frontiers of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, should remain unchanged. Panikkar's response was to state that the Chinese were aware of India's interest in the integrity of Nepal and had not raised any question about it. Neither had they objected to the PM's public statements on the issue. Panikkar said he did not want to make this a subject for further discussion. India should stick to the position that the frontier had been defined 'and there is nothing for us to discuss'. It would be legitimate 'to presume that Chou En Lai's silence on this point and his NOT having even once alluded to Sikkim or Bhutan at any time even indirectly during our conversation would mean acquiescence in, if NOT acceptance of our position.' The Prime Minister did not demur further.

Extracted with permission from Penguin Random House India

# A reminder that India still trails in the hunger fight

The Government's objection to the methodology of the Global Hunger Index is not based on facts



DIPA SINHA

The Global Hunger Report (GHR) has once again made headlines in India for the country's poor ranking in terms of the Global Hunger Index (GHI). The report ranks India at 101 out of 116 countries, with the country falling in the category of having a 'serious' hunger situation. The ranks are not comparable across years because of various methodological issues and so it is wrong to say that India's standing has fallen from 94 (out of 107) in 2020. However, it is true that year after year, India ranks at the lower end – below a number of other countries that are poorer in terms of per capita incomes. This in itself is cause for concern.

### The indicators

The Government of India, through a press release, refuted the GHI, claiming that it is 'devoid of ground reality' and based on 'unscientific' methodology. The GHI is 'based on four indicators – percentage of undernourished in the population (PoU); percentage of children under five years who suffer from wasting (low weight-for-height); percentage of children under five years who suffer from stunting (low height-for-age), and percentage of children who die before the age of five (child mortality)'. The first and the last indica-

tors have a weight of one-third each and the two child malnutrition indicators account for one-sixth weightage each in the final GHI, where each indicator is standardised based on thresholds set slightly above the highest country-level values. Looking at each of these indicators separately, India shows a worsening in PoU and childhood wasting in comparison with 2012. It is the PoU figure of 15.3% for 2018-20 that the Government is contesting.

### From official data sources

The Government's objection to the methodology, that "They have based their assessment on the results of a 'four question' opinion poll, which was conducted telephonically by Gallup", is not based on facts. The report is not based on the Gallup poll; rather, it is on the PoU data that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) puts out regularly (as has also been clarified by the publishing agencies). PoU, according to the FAO, 'is an estimate of the proportion of the population whose habitual food consumption is insufficient to provide the dietary energy levels that are required to maintain a normal active and healthy life'. PoU is estimated taking into account a number of factors such as food availability, food consumption patterns, income levels and distribution, population structure, etc. All the data used are from official data sources of respective national governments. In the absence of food consumption data in most countries, this indicator is an estimate based on a modelling exercise us-



ing available data; therefore, there is some margin of error. Most of the criticism of the FAO's PoU data has been about how it underestimates hunger rather than over. Therefore, while there is scope for a valid discussion on the GHI methodology and its limitations, this objection by the Government is not warranted.

### Slow rate of progress

The main message that the GHR gives is to once again remind us that India has not been very successful in tackling the issue of hunger and that the rate of progress is very slow. Comparable values of the index have been given in the report for four years, i.e., 2000, 2006, 2012 and 2021. While the GHI improved from 37.4 to 28.8 during 2006-12, the improvement is only from 28.8 to 27.5 between 2012-21. The PoU data show that the proportion of undernourished population showed a declining trend up to 2016-18 when it reached the lowest level of 13.8%, after which there is an increase to 14% for 2017-19 and 15.3% for 2018-20. Other data also broadly validate these findings. The partial results of the National Family Health

Survey-5 (2019-20) also show that stunting and wasting indicators have stagnated or declined for most States for which data is available. The leaked report of the consumption expenditure survey (2017-18) also showed that rural consumption had fallen between 2012-18 and urban consumption showed a very slight increase.

### A period before the pandemic

It must also be remembered that all the data are for the period before the COVID-19 pandemic. There were many indications based on nationally representative data – such as from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy and various field surveys conducted by research organisations, academics and civil society groups – that the situation of food insecurity at the end of the year 2020 was concerning, and things are most likely to have become worse after the second wave. Many of these surveys find that over 60% of the respondents say that they are eating less than before the national lockdown in 2020. Services such as the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and school mid-day meals continue to be disrupted in most areas, denying crores of children the one nutritious meal a day they earlier had access to. It would, therefore, not be surprising if national surveys (hopefully conducted soon) show a further slowdown in improvement in malnutrition.

The novel coronavirus pandemic has affected food security and nutrition across the world. In countries such as India – where the situation was also already poor to begin with – the impact is prob-

ably worse. The response cannot be one of denial; rather, what is needed are measures to ensure rapid recovery. It has been pointed out by many that the relief measures of the Government, so far, have been inadequate in comparison to the scale of the problem.

### Cuts for schemes

The only substantial measure has been the provision of additional free foodgrains through the Public Distribution System (PDS), and even this has been lacking. It leaves out about 40% of the population, many of whom are in need and includes only cereals. Also, as of now, it ends in November 2021. At the same time, inflation in other foods, especially edible oils, has also been very high affecting people's ability to afford healthy diets. On the one hand, while we need additional investments and greater priority for food, nutrition and social protection schemes, Budget 2021 saw cuts in real terms for schemes such as the ICDS and the mid-day meal.

The argument that the GHI is an indicator of undernutrition and not hunger, is only diverting attention away from more substantial issues. Of course, malnutrition is affected by a number of factors (such as health, sanitation, etc.) other than food consumption alone, but that in no way means that healthy diets are not central. There is no denying that diverse nutritious diets for all Indians still remain a distant dream.

Dipa Sinha is faculty at Ambedkar University Delhi. The views expressed are personal

## 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.

### State of the Congress

A number of articles and letters have been published on the subject of the Indian National Congress in this daily. It goes without saying that ever since Indira Gandhi established her supremacy in the Congress, it ceased to be a democratic outfit and virtually became her family's fiefdom except for the brief interregnum during the prime ministership of P.V. Narasimha Rao whom the party had virtually

'disowned and discarded'. It has become virtually impossible to bring out the party from such a predicament as Congresspersons are mentally incapable of accepting any leader other than anyone from the Nehru-Gandhi family. If the Congress led by great men like Mahatma Gandhi won freedom for the country, the same party cannot even dare to think of securing independence from the dynasty. The Congress is

unlikely to have a renaissance as long as the Gandhis consider that they are the party and the party is theirs.

C.G. KURIAKOSE,  
Malippara, Kothamangalam, Kerala

### On Sunday, at Dubai

There is not too much to debate on India's big loss to Pakistan in the ICC T20 World Cup opener. The match was a classic example of an overdue application of the law of averages. It was by all

means Pakistan's day and it is meaningless to erase the glitter of its victory by pointing one's finger to any inadequacy in India's bowling or batting departments. Virat Kohli did not move a wrong foot as captain either. The toss cannot be talked about as vital as Pakistan was ruthless in its goal to vanquish India. India lost just another match and it is as simple as that.

SANATH KUMAR T.S.,  
Thrissur, Kerala

The result is a great disappointment for fans in India but it is an undeniable fact that Babar Azam and team exhibited unparalleled professionalism in their approach to traumatise Virat Kohli and his men. It was a game of complete mastery on Sunday night.

S. SESHADRI,  
Chennai

Indian cricket fans would definitely like to forget the match but the fact is that the team that played better won.

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



It is unfortunate that instead of considering the game as just a match there has been much hype created around it. Added to this have been debates and data calculations of past matches as if Sunday was the last and final match ever to be played between the two teams. Miscalculations led India to lose. But there is always another chance!

M. PRAADYU,  
Thalikkavu, Kannur, Kerala



# A festering crisis in the Palk Strait

A moratorium on bottom trawling and support to the fishermen is a good first step towards a solution



MEERA SRINIVASAN

Rajkiran, 30, from Tamil Nadu's coastal Pudukkottai district, is the fifth Indian fisherman to lose his life in the Palk Strait this year, after Samson Darwin, A. Mesiya, V. Nagaraj and S. Senthil Kumar from Ramanaapuram, who died in January. The boat that Rajkiran was on, with two others, sank late on October 18 after reportedly colliding with a Sri Lankan Navy patrol vessel. The two other fishermen were remanded in Sri Lanka until November 1, while Rajkiran was reported "missing", until his body was recovered by the Navy a few days after the incident. Tamil Nadu fishermen's associations have accused the Sri Lankan Navy of brutally attacking Rajkiran, while Sri Lanka has denied the allegations.

In both instances this year, what we know is that the fishermen died while trying to earn a living. In both cases, they reportedly crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line, an invisible demarcation between India and Sri Lanka. They were intercepted in Sri Lankan waters by the Sri Lankan Navy for "illegal fishing", following which some of them returned dead.

New Delhi conveyed a "strong protest" to Colombo after the death of the four fishermen in January, allegedly at the hands of the Sri Lankan Navy. But there is no sign of a full inquiry since, let alone a credible one. The distressing incidents are neither peculiar to this year, nor inevitable.

## Unresolved conflict

The fishermen's deaths serve as a stark reminder of the unresolved fisheries conflict festering in the barely 30-mile-wide (at its narrowest point) Palk Strait. The problem has existed for more than a decade now, from the time Sri Lanka's 30 year-long civil war ended in 2009. That was when the island's northern Tamil fishermen, who were displaced and barred access to the sea, began returning to their old homes, with hopes of reviving their livelihoods and resurrecting their lives. Their re-



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

turn, however, marked the beginning of a new tension with Tamil fishermen on the other side of the sea. This has posed a serious threat to their livelihoods, fishing gear, and the marine resources they rely on.

In Tamil Nadu, daily wage fishermen are only too aware of the risks that come with working on mechanised fishing vessels used for 'bottom trawling'. Their wage depends on the catch they bring back. Using the bottom trawling fishing method, they drag large fishing nets along the seabed, scooping out a huge quantity of prawns, small fishes and virtually everything else at one go. The practice, deemed destructive the world over, has ensured sizeable profits for their employers – the vessel owners – and a small income for the fishermen taking the highest risk.

Incessant bottom trawling along the coast of Tamil Nadu over the years has meant that the fishermen are drawn to the relatively resource-rich Sri Lankan waters. This pushes them into a cycle of arrest, remand, release, or in some unfortunate cases, violence or death at sea.

The Sri Lankan state's response to the problem has been largely a military and legal one, tasking its Navy with patrolling the seas and arresting "encroachers", banning trawling, and levying stiff fines on foreign vessels engaged in illegal fishing in its territorial waters. Little support has been extended to war-affected, artisanal fishermen in the Northern Province by way of infrastructure or equipment. Despite accumulating big losses, the fishermen received no assistance even during pandemic-induced lockdown months.

The hefty penalty on foreign vessels proved a deterrent, at least temporarily. But over the last few

months, northern fishermen have sighted Indian trawlers frequently, especially when the Sri Lankan Navy relaxed its patrol, fearing import of COVID-19 infections.

## Urgent solution

India and Sri Lanka have held many rounds of bilateral talks in the last decade between government officials as well as fisher leaders. The outcomes have mostly ranged from deadlocks, with Tamil Nadu refusing to give up bottom trawling, to template responses from the governments, with India seeking a "humanitarian response" from Sri Lanka. The closest that the two countries came to reaching a solution was in November 2016, following a meeting in New Delhi led by the Foreign and Fisheries Ministers from both sides, with other key interlocutors. A Joint Working Group was constituted to first and foremost, expedite "the transition towards ending the practice of bottom trawling at the earliest".

The Indian government's attempt to divert fishermen to deep sea fishing has not taken off as was envisaged, even as profit-hungry boat owners in Tamil Nadu stubbornly defend their trawler trade. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu fishermen continue to allege that the Sri Lankan Navy is unleashing violence on them; Sri Lanka denies this. Five years since, we are at a rather low point in the fisheries conflict, with a rising human cost.

Meanwhile, this could be the biggest test yet to the solidarity that Tamil Nadu continues to express with Sri Lankan Tamils who bore the brunt of the civil war and still await justice and a political solution.

By now, it is evident that bottom trawling has maximised not only the profits made by vessel owners in Ta-

mil Nadu, but also the risk faced by poor, daily wage fishermen employed from the coastal districts. The rich owners and those employed by them for a meagre wage ought not to be clumped together simply as "Tamil Nadu fishermen", without recognising that their interests and risks differ enormously.

It is equally well known that the relentless trawling by Indian vessels has caused huge losses to northern Sri Lankan fishermen. Their catch has fallen drastically and they count vanishing varieties of fish. They are dejected as their persisting calls to end bottom trawling have not been heeded by their counterparts in Tamil Nadu, or "brothers" as they repeatedly call them.

For politicians and activists in Tamil Nadu, the death of fishermen is understandably the most outrageous, emotive dimension of this complex problem – especially since no past case has been probed or perpetrator held accountable. All the same, seeing the conflict merely through the prism of Tamil Nadu fishermen and the Sri Lankan Navy may not yield a solution to the problem, although that might keep its most deplorable symptom in focus.

At the heart of the conflict is a tale of competing livelihoods in a narrow stretch of the sea, amid a looming environmental threat, and a glaring asymmetry of power – be it in numbers, equipment, or political backing – between two Tamil-speaking fishing communities. The growing trust deficit between them does not augur well for the prospect of a solution.

India and Sri Lanka must urgently refocus their energies to address this crisis. As the first step, Tamil Nadu must consider a moratorium on bottom trawling in the Palk Strait. Such a move must be accompanied by both New Delhi and Colombo substantially supporting their respective fishing communities to cope with the suspension of trawling on the Tamil Nadu side and the devastating impact of the pandemic on both sides. The time must be used for evolving a lasting solution. Strong bilateral ties are not only about shared religious or cultural heritage, but also about sharing resources responsibly, in ways that the lives and livelihoods of our peoples can be protected.

meera.srinivasan@thehindu.co.in

# A region of rising intolerance

It is time for South Asia's political leadership to form a united front against all forms of religious extremism



SYED MUNIR KHASRU

This month, Durga Puja pavilions, Hindu temples and homes were attacked in Bangladesh. These attacks followed rumours that the Koran had been desecrated at a pandal. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's administration assured the Hindus of security and deployed additional security forces in districts which had witnessed attacks. A few hours after the Prime Minister's assurance, an ISKCON temple was attacked. At least five people have been killed in these attacks.

## A legacy of conflict

Religious tension is not new in the Indian subcontinent. Conflicts often break out among different religious groups, and minorities are targeted. The 1992 Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya caused riots which led to the deaths of about 2,000 people. The 1993 Bombay bombings, the 2019 Easter attacks in Colombo, and the frequent terror attacks in Pakistan over the past decade are other examples. In the case of Bangladesh, where Hindus make up about 9% of the population and Muslims 90%, attacks against the Hindu minority are either retaliations to acts committed in the name of religion within the country or neighbouring India, or due to the extremist views of some Muslims. For instance, the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya instigated a violent response in Bangladesh and mobs started demolishing multiple Hindu temples.

Faith-based conflicts take place both within and among countries. The India-Pakistan rivalry extends from the religious and political fields to sports – cricket matches between the two teams see a bigger audience than usual. The separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971 was an example of how culture too plays a pivotal role in separating or uniting a country.

In the recent past, right-wing parties have been ruling the subcontinent, gaining the support of the dominant religious population and undermining religious minorities. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India and Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) in Pakistan are examples. The controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act passed in Indian Parliament in 2019 was a faith-based test of citizenship and instigated rallies and protests across the subcontinent. Ms. Hasina called the law "unnecessary". The rise of the Taliban in Afghanis-

tan was supported by PTI leader and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. The subcontinent is evolving towards a polarisation of Hindus and Muslims.

## Varying responses

In Bangladesh, what is appreciable is that the government takes strict action against religious extremist groups and also promotes the celebration of festivals of all religions by ensuring security at religious sites on festival days. Muslims visit Hindu temples on Durga Puja or celebrate Holi and invite Hindus on Eid. Bangladesh has developed a strong anti-terrorism wing from its security forces to tackle religious extremist attacks. The anti-terrorism unit has prevented countless planned attacks and jailed numerous extremist groups. Some have been sentenced to death, including those involved in the attack of the local café Holey Artisan in July 2016. Bangladesh has not only cracked down on terror groups since the café attack but also prevented gatherings of religious protesters to prevent violence. For example, a recent gathering of Muslim extremist groups in protest against France's anti-Islamic laws was disrupted by law enforcers.

In India, on the other hand, the government came under criticism first for not taking prompt action against cow vigilantes who were attacking poor Muslims and then for enacting the CAA. Protests against the law broke out across the nation and the administration responded to them with divisive rhetoric and heavy-handedness.

Unfortunately, the South Asian political leadership is bereft of a vision and the courage needed to rise to the occasion and stand together to send an unequivocal message of zero tolerance against all forms of religious extremism and bigotry. When religion becomes a tool for achieving political mileage, the resulting flames of hatred and intolerance quickly spread. This has the potential of becoming a wildfire that devours everything that comes along the way. Such fire and fury can only hurt this region's socioeconomic aspirations. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan is a wake-up call to South Asia's political leadership to form a united front against all forms of religious dogma and extremism. Seventy-five years after Partition, harmony, religious coexistence and tolerance are all under threat. Can the region afford such myopia when there are so many burning issues to resolve such as poverty alleviation, climate change and food security?

Syed Munir Khasru is Chairman of The Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance, New Delhi, India, which also has a presence in Dhaka, Melbourne, Vienna and Dubai. Email: munir.khasru@ipag.org

# A 'bubbles of trust' approach

This offers a middle path between the extremes of technological sovereignty and laissez-faire globalisation

NITIN PAI

An asymmetric globalisation favouring China allowed Beijing to attain power. It is now using that power to undermine liberal democratic values around the world. The Chinese market was never open to foreign companies in the way foreign markets are to Chinese firms. This is particularly true in the information and communications technology sector. Meanwhile, Chinese firms rode on the globalisation bandwagon to secure significant market shares in open economies. President Xi Jinping now formally requires Chinese firms to follow the political agenda of the Chinese Communist Party. But even before this, it was not possible to tell where private ownership ended and the party-state began.

We are currently witnessing a global retreat from the free movement of goods, services, capital, people and ideas. But this should not be understood as a reaction to globalisation itself, but of its skewed pattern over the past four decades.

## Quad's advantage

The Quad countries – Japan, India, Australia and the U.S. – have an opportunity to stop seeing engagement with China through the misleading prism of free trade and globalisation. The roots of every member's prosperity and power lie in international trade. It will be to their advantage to create a new form of economic cooperation consistent with their geopolitical interests. Indeed, without an economic programme, the Quad's geopolitical and security agenda stand on tenuous foundations.

The popular backlash against China is pushing Quad governments towards policies of self-reliance. But while reorienting and de-risking global supply chains is one thing, pursuing technological sovereignty is inherently self-defeating. When it comes to critical and emerging technologies, no single country can replicate the combined genius of the world. Worse, inward-looking policies often acquire a life of their own and contribute to geopolitical marginalisation.

There is a better way. A convergence of values and geopolitical interests means Quad countries are un-

iquely placed to envelop their economies inside bubbles of trust, starting with the technology sector. Complementarities in capabilities can power innovation and growth.

The U.S. is a global leader in intellectual property, Japan in high-value manufacturing, Australia in advanced niches such as quantum computing and cyber security, and India in human capital. This configuration of values, interests and complementary capabilities offers unrivalled opportunities.

The idea of 'bubbles of trust' offers a cautious middle path between the extremes of technological sovereignty and laissez-faire globalisation. Unlike trading blocs, which tend to be insular, bubbles tend to expand organically, attracting new partners that share values, interests and economic complementarities. Such expansion will be necessary, as the Quad cannot fulfil its strategic ambitions merely by holding a defensive line against authoritarian power.

The Quad's Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group is well placed to develop the necessary 'bubbles of trust' framework, which could be adopted at the next Quad summit. Such a framework would allow the scope of the cooperation to be limited to information industries avoiding the long and complex negotiations typical of trade agreements.

To be successful the Working Group must seek to strengthen geopolitical convergences, increase faith in each member state's judicial systems, deepen economic ties and boost trust in one another's citizens.

There are fundamental differences between authoritarian and liberal-democratic approaches to the information age. But there is no consensus among the latter. The Quad cannot allow differences of approach on privacy, data governance and the digital economy to widen.

This agenda cannot be about substituting China. Rather, the approach would allow Quad countries to manage their dependencies on China while simultaneously developing a new vision for the global economy.

Nitin Pai is the Director of the Takshashila Institution. This is an excerpt of his upcoming contribution to The Sydney Dialogue

## DATA POINT



### Illegal entries peak at U.S. border

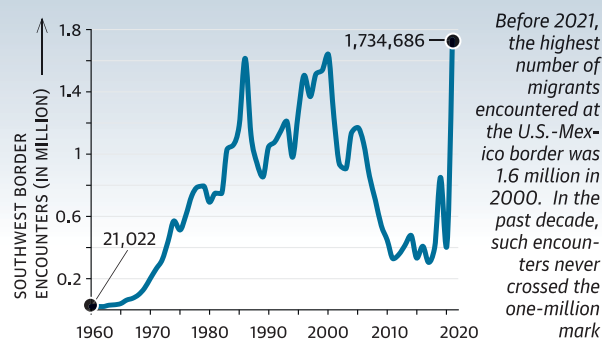
Close to 1.7 million migrants tried to illegally enter the U.S. between October 2020 and September 2021, the highest recorded figure for any 12-month period since 1960. Close to 0.15 million of them were unaccompanied minors, the highest since 2010. Close to 27% of the individuals who were caught trying to illegally enter the U.S. were apprehended more than once this year. About 2,500 of the 1.7 million were Indians. By Jasmin Nihalani and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

1 64% of those who tried to enter illegally in 2021 were single adults

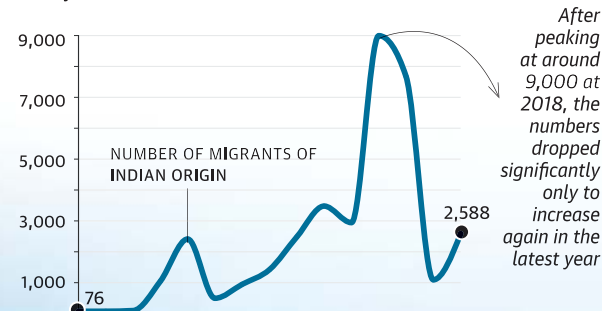
2 Over 38% of those who tried to enter in 2021 were of Mexican origin

3 In 2018, the share of Indians in the number of illegal entries peaked at 2.2% (around 9,000 migrants)

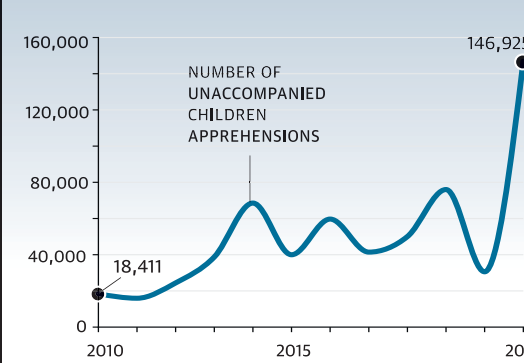
**1. ILLEGAL ENTRY ATTEMPTS** | The graph shows the number of migrants encountered by the U.S. Border Patrol each year across the U.S.-Mexico border. The 1.7 million migrants encountered in FY21 (October 2020-September 2021) was the highest-ever for any year since at least 1960, when the government started collecting such data



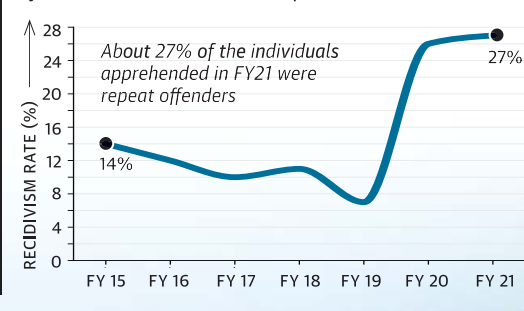
**2. INDIANS AMONG MIGRANTS** | The graph shows the number of migrants of Indian origin encountered by the U.S. Border Patrol each year across the U.S.-Mexico border



**3. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN** | The graph shows the number of unaccompanied children apprehended by the U.S. Border Patrol at the Mexican border. Close to 0.15 million children were apprehended in FY21, the highest since 2010



**4. RECIDIVISM RATE PEAKS** | The share of individuals who were apprehended more than once (recidivism rate) by the Border Patrol reached a peak in FY21



SOURCE: "UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL SOUTHWEST BORDER SECTORS TOTAL ENCOUNTERS BY FISCAL YEAR (OCT. 1ST THROUGH SEPT. 30TH)"



## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 26, 1971

### 'India will strike back if attacked'

The Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, today [New Delhi, Oct. 25] spelt out in greater detail India's new philosophy of defence and stipulated the conditions for the withdrawal of the Indian forces from the borders in the present Indo-Pakistan situation. In a policy speech he made at the National Defence College, Mr. Jagjivan Ram said that India would not be satisfied with merely defending its territorial integrity in the event of a Pakistani attack, but would carry the fight into the enemy territory so that the war was not fought on Indian soil as far as possible. This offensive-defensive posture of the Indian armed forces was not aimed at provoking Pakistan, but ensuring that any attack by the enemy would be resisted with full force for inflicting the maximum punishment. While it had no intention of taking any step which could be regarded as aggression, India was fully prepared to strike back with devastating effect if Pakistan dared to attack it. The Defence Minister repeated the earlier warning that Indian troops would remain in their forward positions as long as the Pakistani threat was there. If the international community wanted the two sides to withdraw their forces, India would insist that the Big Powers should assume responsibility for the return of the ten million refugees.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 26, 1921

### Notes from Young India

Mr. M.K. Gandhi writes: I have seen criticism in the press regarding the collection and the administration of the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. The public have certainly the right to know all about the Fund and other Congress collections. In my opinion the Congress finance has never been in a more satisfactory condition. It will be possible to speak with greater definiteness, when Mr. Sopariwala who has been appointed All India auditor has inspected all the Congress branches and reported upon their condition. The announcement made on the 1st of July as to the collections stands. There was a mistake made by me in reading Mr. Das's wire. My reading was that fifteen lacs were collected and ten more were as good as collected. I learnt on meeting him, that fifteen lacs were definitely promised, and he expected to bring up the figure to twenty five lacs. When I was last in Calcutta, Mr. Das had not succeeded in collecting fifteen lacs that were definitely promised, but he certainly expected to collect that and the additional ten lacs. In any case the crore was assured without the ten lacs.

FROM PAGE ONE

## First tip-off on militants came from labourer

It was after this that the phone was placed under surveillance, following which the entire area along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch-Rajouri with Pakistan was put on high alert.

"A small group is believed to be behind the attack, though there is no clarity on the number of terrorists," a Defence official said.

A search is on in the jungle, the official stated.

Five soldiers - Vaisakh H., Jaswinder Singh, Mandep Singh, Gajjan Singh and Saraj Singh, who were among the first to be killed on October 11 - were part of a cordon-and-search team. The cordon had been placed near Surankote, at least 10 km from the LoC after the phone chatter was intercepted.

On October 15, the Army said that in a counter-terrorist operation in progress in the area of Nar Khas forest in Mendhar, "there was heavy exchange of fire", and in

the ensuing gun fight Rifleman Vikram Singh Negi and Rifleman Yogambar Singh were critically injured and later succumbed to their injuries.

On October 16, Army said in a statement that Subedar Ajay Singh and Naik Harendra Singh were also killed in action during search operations in Nar Khas forest in Mendhar. Communication with the two was disrupted and their bodies were recovered on October 16.

On Sunday, Zia Mustafa, a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) convict who has been in jail for the past 14 years was killed when a joint search party of the police and Army took him to the Bhatta Durian forest in Poonch's Mendhar area to trace the terrorist's hideout. *The Hindu* reported on October 18 that a new terror group called PAFF (People's Anti Fascists Front), a front of LeT, had claimed responsibility for the ongoing attack.

## Shah rules out dialogue with Pak. on Kashmir

Referring to National Conference (NC) president and MP Farooq Abdullah's recent suggestion to engage with Pakistan on Kashmir, Mr. Shah said, "Dr. Farooq Sahib has suggested that I talk to Pakistan. If I will talk, I will talk only to the people of J&K and its youth, no one else."

Reiterating his outreach to the youth of Kashmir, at a function in Srinagar's Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre, Mr. Shah said, "I have come with an open mind and am speaking my heart without a bullet-proof shield. I extended my

hand of friendship to the youth." He said Kashmir was close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's heart, and he keeps asking about the pace of development in J&K.

The Minister, who concluded his three-day tour of the Union Territory on Monday, did not engage with any mainstream regional parties during his stay.

Mr. Shah targeted the regional parties, like the NC and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and "family rule". He also criticised the regional parties for "never condemning those who killed civilians".

## 'Set maximum water level at Mullaperiyar'

The court directed the Supervisory Committee to get to work as there was "an immediate need to specify the maximum water level in the dam" because of the rain.

The order came in a petition filed by Idukki resident Joe Joseph and office-bearers of the Kothamangalam block panchayat in Kerala, who had expressed their apprehensions about the supervision of water levels in the Mullaperiyar dam located along the Periyar tiger reserve, especially during the rainy season.

"For the last one week, it has been raining heavily in Kerala. The lives of 50 lakh people would be in danger if the water level in the dam is raised," advocate Wills Mathews, for Mr. Joseph, submit-

ted. "Please understand the anxieties of the parties involved. You take stock of the situation, decide and tell us what to do... We cannot decide the level sitting here," Justice Khanwilkar addressed Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the committee.

Kerala, represented by senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, repeatedly insisted that the court should ask Tamil Nadu to maintain the level at 137.2 feet as per the 2018 order.

Justice Khanwilkar said States should have seriously interacted with each other and approached the Supervisory Committee, considering the seriousness of the issue involved.

## Will postpone NEET-PG counselling, says Centre

The assurance was given after senior advocate Arvind Datar, appearing for some NEET candidates, mentioned that the counselling process was scheduled from October 25. He said that by the time the court decided the pending batch of petitions challenging the July 29 notification introducing reservation from this academ-

ic year, the entire process of admissions would be over and serious prejudice caused to students.

Mr. Nataraj, however, clarified that the communication referred to by Mr. Datar was sent to medical colleges only for verification of seats, and that another notification was issued on Monday.

## NCB plea in Aryan case rejected

Mr. Sail said he overheard K.P. Gosavi (an absconding witness) telling one Sam D'Souza over the phone - after Aryan Khan was brought to the NCB office after the October 1 raid - about "a demand of ₹25 crore and to settle at ₹18 crore as they have to give ₹8 crore to Mr. Wankhede".

Mr. Sail said he would soon release evidence to support his claim.

On the same day, Mr. Wankhede wrote to Mumbai Police Commissioner Hemant Nagrale, seeking protection from likely legal action by unknown persons to falsely frame him in a vigilance-related issue.

## 'Shopian youth killed in CRPF retaliatory fire'

He was shot after terrorists' associate snatched rifle: police

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

A youth, who was found dead with bullet injuries near a CRPF camp in south Kashmir on Sunday morning, was killed in "retaliatory fire after an associate of terrorists snatched a weapon from a CRPF personnel", the police said.

"Around 10.30 a.m. (on Sunday), the Shopian Police received information about an attack by terrorists upon an area domination patrol party of 178 Battalion of CRPF at Babapora Shopian and killing of an unidentified person during the retaliation or cross-firing by the CRPF party," a police spokesman said.

The police said the preliminary investigation, including statements of eye-witnesses, suggested that terrorists fired upon the area domination party of CRPF, which returned fire.

"During the cross firing, a service rifle (AK-47) of one of the personnel, who was at the rear end, was snatched by one of the associates of terrorists. He was challenged and ordered to stop.



**New normal:** Bunkers have been erected in parts of Srinagar in the wake of the recent civilian killings. • THE HINDU

However, he kept running towards the direction from where the party was being fired and, in the meanwhile, he received bullet injuries in the cross firing. One personnel of the ADP party also received injuries," the police said.

The police said it had lodged an FIR under relevant sections of law.

The victim was identified as Shahid Aijaz, an apple seller in his early twenties from Anantnag. His family, however, has contested the police claim and demanded a probe into the incident. It said Aijaz was travelling in car when he was "shot dead without any provocation".

"Such killings often go unaccounted. The version of the forces and the victim's family are conflicting. We demand a time-bound probe," National Conference spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar and District President, Kulgam, Abdul Majeed Bhat Larmi said.

The Hurriyat condemned the killing. "Peace cannot be forcibly implemented but favourably created. We appeal to the world community and to the people of India to support the people of Kashmir in seeking the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with their aspirations," a Hurriyat spokesman said.

## FAA starts five-day audit of DGCA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The United States' aviation watchdog, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), on Monday started its five-day audit of India's safety regulator, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"This is a routine-check that is carried out every two to three years. This time it was delayed due to COVID-19," a DGCA official said.

Under its International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) program, the FAA determines whether another country's oversight of its airlines that operate in the U.S. or have a codeshare agreement with a U.S. airline comply with safety standards laid down by the global aviation watchdog International Civil Aviation Organisation.

The FAA will look into India's ability to adhere to international aviation safety standards.

## Commanders conference begins

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The four-day Army Commanders Conference of 2021, which began on Monday, reviewed issues related to military operations as well as the promotion board of Major Generals to Lieutenant Generals and nomination of officers to the National Defence College (NDC), a defence official said.

The conference is happening amid increasing violence in Kashmir, continuing stand-off in eastern Ladakh and transgressions by the Chinese Army in the central and eastern sectors. With disengagement and de-escalation in eastern Ladakh still incomplete, the Army is gearing to remain deployed in the high-altitude areas in the sector for the second year in a row.

"The apex leadership will brainstorm on current and emerging security and administrative aspects to chart the future course in the backdrop of the situation along the borders and challenges imposed by COVID-19 pandemic," the Army had said on the conference. The Army Commanders' Conference is an apex-level event held in April and October.

## CPI(M) consensus on stand on Cong.

Sitaram Yechury says the alternative to BJP has to come from the people

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

A larger consensus has emerged at the three-day Central Committee (CC) meeting of the CPI(M) to continue with the 2018 political line of the party - cooperating with the Congress and other secular parties to counter the "exponential increase in danger" posed by the BJP, especially after its second consecutive victory in the Lok Sabha election in 2019.

And for the first time, the Kerala unit of the party, which is usually strident about not cooperating with the Congress, has also appeared as a "mixed bag" instead of a monolith. Informed sources said that a few of the Kerala delegates contended that the CPI(M)'s cooperation with the Congress in West Bengal only enhanced the party's image, underlining its sincerity in contesting the BJP. "There has been a significant shift of



**Party stand:** CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury at a press conference in New Delhi on Monday. • PTI

minority voters in favour of the CPI(M) in Kerala. Many of them felt greater confidence in the party because even though it was fighting the Congress in the State, it readily cooperated with them in West Bengal in a bid to stall the BJP," one of the CC members said.

The draft outline debated at the CC will be sent to each of the party members and put in public domain by January, ahead of the party congress in April next year in

## Thespian Rajinikanth given Dadasaheb Phalke Award

Dhanush and Manoj Bajpayee share best actor award

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Actor Rajinikanth was presented the Dadasaheb Phalke Award by Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu at the National Film Awards ceremony in Delhi. He dedicated the award to his family and associates.

Dhanush, for his lead role in *Asuran*, and Manoj Bajpayee, for *Bhonsle*, received the best actor award. Kangana Ranaut was awarded the best actor (female) award for her role in *Manikarnika-The Queen of Jhansi* (Hindi) and *Panga* (Hindi). Malayalam movie *Marakkar Arabikkadalinte Simham* received the best film award.

Speaking to presspersons after the ceremony, Mr. Rajinikanth said, "I am extremely happy to receive this award, and I am grateful to the Government for this prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award. I dedicate this award to my guru, my mentor K. Balachander sir, I thank my brother Sathyanaarayana Rao, who is a father figure in my life, for giving me great values."

He also thanked his friend, Raj Bahadur, who



**In august company:** Rajinikanth with Dhanush and Manoj Bajpayee at Vigyan Bhavan on Monday. • R.V. MOORTHY

was his colleague from his days in the Bangalore Transport Service. "He spotted the acting talent in me and encouraged me to join cinema. I also dedicate this award to all my producers and directors, technicians, artists, distributors, media and all my fans, and more importantly the Tamil people..." the 70-year-old "Superstar" stated.

Lauding Mr. Rajinikanth, a matinee idol, Mr. Naidu observed that the former was "one of the great sons of this great country". "The iconic thespian's unmatched acting skills have given a new dimension to the Indian film industry... He has shown how to maintain a perfect

balance between artistic expression and mass appeal."

Actors Pallavi Joshi and Vijay Sethupathi were given the best supporting actress and best supporting actor awards for their performances in *The Tashkent Files* and *Super Deluxe* respectively. The Nargis Dutt Award for best feature film on national integration was received by the makers of *Tajmahal* (Marathi), while the best movie on social issues' trophy went to *Anandi Gopal* (Marathi).

The Indira Gandhi Award for best debut film of a director was given to Mathukutty Xavier for *Helen* (Malayalam).

(With inputs from PTI)

## 'NCB official used fake certificate'

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

In a series of new allegations against the zonal director of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Sameer Wankhede, NCP leader and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on Monday accused him of using a fake Scheduled Caste certificate to become an IRS officer. The Minister released a set of documents, including the officer's birth certificate, claiming the latter is Muslim by birth.

In the latest allegations against the officer, Mr. Malik said: "Sameer Dawood Wankhede is a Muslim by birth. He forged a caste certificate claiming to be Scheduled Caste. I have given his birth certificate which mentions his father's name was Dawood Wankhede, who had converted to Islam. He used fake caste certificate and denied a true Dalit the opportunity to become the officer."

## EC notice to Assam CM for code violation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Monday issued a show-cause notice to Assam Chief Minister and BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma for violating the model code by promising roads and other development projects while campaigning for Assembly bypolls in the State.

He has been given time till 5 p.m. on Tuesday to respond to the notice. "If no explanation is submitted within the said time limit, the Commission shall take a decision without any further reference to you," the notice read.

The EC said it had received two complaints that Mr. Sarma, in the capacity of Chief Minister and the designated star campaigner for BJP, Assam, made announcements at various poll meetings in Bhowanipur, Thawrah and Mariani Assembly seats for establishing medical college, bridges, roads, stadium and sports complex. He also announced giving financial assistance to self-help groups of tea garden workers.

Going through the English transcripts of his speeches, "It is confirmed that you have made promises and announcements..." the notice read.

## Defence exports up by 334% in 5 years: Rajnath

'Strong indicator of product quality'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

With collaborative efforts of entities from all over the world, the defence exports have grown by 334% in the past five years and India now is exporting to more than 75 countries, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday appreciating the efforts of the defence industry and thanking the foreign aerospace and defence companies for investing in the sector.

"Our export performance is a strong indicator of the quality and competitiveness of our defence products," Mr. Singh said at the Ambassadors' Round Table for DeExpo 2022 which saw the participation of more than 200 delegates, including



Rajnath Singh

Ambassadors, Heads of Missions and also Defence Attaches.

The Round Table was aimed at briefing the Ambassadors about the planning, arrangements and other details of DeExpo 2022, to be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, between March 10 and 13, 2022, a Defence Ministry statement said.

**APPEAL**

I am Mahalingam, 17 years old, suffering from B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. My family is extremely poor and cannot afford the huge expenditure of Rs. 8,00,000/- to undergo Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. I need your blessings and support. Donations sent by Ch / D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations sent through Ch / D.D. / NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No: 6019201066310, IFSC No: CNRB06018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT.

All Correspondence is done through WWS, Regd Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. GF 1, Cordell Apartments, O.No. 13, N.No. 29, Picrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401 / 28235324 / 7338978027. E-mail ID: womenswelfare syndicate@gmail.com

Website: www.womenswelfare syndicate.org

Mahalingam

# A cycle of corruption used to run in U.P.: PM

## Modi launches series of medical projects in Purvanchal

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

In an apparent dig at the Samajwadi Party (SP), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said a “cycle of corruption” used to run all day to rob the poor of their money during its rule in Uttar Pradesh, as he accused the previous Governments of neglecting Purvanchal, especially its health infrastructure.



Development first: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at a rally in Varanasi. ■ AFP

He said there used to be corruption in medicines and ambulance services as well as in appointments, transfers and posting. “In the entire game, some *parivarvadi* [family-oriented people] benefited. The cycle of corruption ran free and the ordinary family of Purvanchal and Uttar Pradesh were crushed under it,” Mr. Modi said. The cycle is the election symbol of the SP.

The Prime Minister was speaking in Siddharthnagar at an event to inaugurate nine medical colleges across the State. Later, Mr. Modi launched the PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission in Varanasi, his Lok Sabha constituency. Mr. Modi said while previous Governments had left eastern

## ‘Lies blossomed under BJP’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday said “a flower of lies had blossomed in a swamp” over the last four years under the BJP Government in Uttar Pradesh through its

“betrayal” of the people. The phrase used by Mr. Yadav in Hindi “*Daldal mein khila hai jhooth ka phool*” was a veiled attack on the BJP’s symbol, the lotus, soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had attacked the SP symbol, the cycle.

Uttar Pradesh to fight with illnesses on their own, Purvanchal was set to become the “medical hub of eastern India”, with the nine medical colleges and other initiatives of his Government.

As Uttar Pradesh heads towards the Assembly election in early 2022, Mr. Modi also targeted the previous

Governments of Akhilesh Yadav, without naming the Opposition leader. The previous Government did not cooperate with the Centre, Mr. Modi said.

The Prime Minister also praised the tenure of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for revving up the medical infrastructure in the State.

## INTERVIEW | ALEXANDER ELLIS

# ‘Indo-Pacific will become centre of the world’

## Every country has to adapt to a more powerful and assertive China: U.K.’s High Commissioner to India

DENNIS S. JESUDASAN  
CHENNAI

Last week, British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said India was “essential” in ensuring a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific. On Monday, British High Commissioner Alexander Ellis elaborated on the U.K.’s interest in the region, and underlined India’s role as a trusted supplier in the global supply chain. Excerpts from the interview:

activities in the Indo-Pacific are primarily aimed against China?

■ They are aimed for something, which is having an open and secure Indo-Pacific. And you are right to refer to the fact that the Carrier Strike Group itself has more than one country. It has a Dutch destroyer. It has some American marines. So, this is working with a lot of countries – some old friends, some new partners. And we have all realised that a lot more of the future of the world sits here.

Is it possible to isolate China, which the global supply chains are heavily dependent on?

■ It is about working for something – which is having an open and secure Indo-Pacific. And a lot of this has a brand trust, building relationships with trust with India and with other partners – Japan, Australia and with others in the region. With China, we will always have a mix. Sometimes we will cooperate in what we are trying to do on climate change. Sometimes we will compete, and occasionally we may have to contest.

The port stop of HMS Queen Elizabeth in Mumbai was termed the U.K.’s Indo-Pacific tilt in action. Could you elaborate on the need for ensuring an open Indo-Pacific?

■ The U.K. has significant interests in this part of the world. The Indo-Pacific will become ever more the centre of the world. That is why we have invested so much in the region in different ways. There are a few countries in the world that essentially determine the world’s climate. India is one of them, China is another – both in this region.

What is your response to the contention that multinational military



This is not the Cold War. This is a different kind of world. But every country, I think, has to adapt to the consequences of both a powerful China and also a more assertive China. And we have had to adapt ourselves to this as well. And that is usually the result of Chinese behaviour. The facts change and we have to change with them.

But that is not just true for the U.K. India is going through exactly the same phenomena. So, we are always finding this blend of different approaches, according to the issue.

It requires an adaptation of our structures, which we’ve done in the U.K. And we’ve seen that over 5G,

which the COP in Glasgow hopes to achieve?

■ We have a good agreement of Paris and we have to take a further step down that path. One important thing about this COP is that it is about everyone’s contribution. India has an incredibly important role to play. I think that India’s scale obviously makes it a huge actor in this area. But one great advantage India has is [that] to an extent it has the solutions in its own hands.

Certain decisions were made by the British and Indian Governments, which affected travellers and businessmen of these countries. They are resolved now. Do you think everything is back to normal now?

■ There are still restraints on the number of flights between U.K. and India, which we want to change. The demand is enormous with people wanting to travel between the two countries, which is a good sign. We would like to have electronic visas available for tourists and for business people going from U.K. to India.

Full interview at <https://bit.ly/3GdCijU>

We would like to have electronic visas available for tourists and business people going from U.K. to India.

where, we’ve never ended at any one country. But you know, you have to have a degree of trust in your technology, suppliers, and avoid high-risk vendors. I will see terrific opportunities for India in that area as a trusted supplier, which is why I come back to where trust is so important between countries like the U.K. and India, because a lot flows from that trust.

What are the major issues

## Facebook undermining India’s democracy: Cong.

### It demands parliamentary panel probe

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday said Facebook was “compromising” India’s democracy and influencing elections, and demanded a probe by a joint parliamentary committee.



The Congress said the social media company was influencing elections.

“@Washingtonpost investigation shows BJP, RSS and its acolytes deploy hate speech on Facebook and WhatsApp. While it’s obvious Govt of India won’t do anything about it, it’s unacceptable that @Facebook has one set of standards for USA and another for India,” former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh said in a tweet.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal tweeted, “Facebook has become a tool for BJP to spread misinformation & hate speech. Millions of Indians are active on the platform & are regularly being subjected to hateful content.”

Raising media reports on Facebook’s leaked internal documents, which claimed that the social media company did not filter hate speech posts in India, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said, “Facebook has reduced itself to a Fakebook”. He accused Facebook of acting as an ally of the ruling BJP and pushing its agenda. He cited documents released by whistleblower Frances Haugen,

who worked at Facebook, to argue that the company took no decisive action against the perpetrators of hate posts in Hindi and Bengali.

Facebook’s role in the Delhi riots and the West Bengal election were under the scanner, he said. “The role of Facebook can no longer be dismissed as an error of omission as they are knowingly furthering the agenda of the ruling party and its ideology... We demand a joint parliamentary committee probe to look into the role of Facebook in influencing our elections.”

Mr. Khera said BJP workers and those of its affiliates had “infiltrated into the structure and functioning of Facebook” and it reflected in the fact that though internal reports identified fake accounts with over a million impressions, no action was taken.

## Assembly polls: Sonia to meet State Cong. chiefs

### Protests against price rise, membership drives on the agenda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi will be presiding over a meeting of the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) presidents at the party headquarters to discuss the upcoming Assembly elections in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa and other issues.

The elections in the five States are likely to take place around February next year, and the Congress is hoping to retain Punjab and regain Goa, Uttarakhand and Manipur.

### Frosty relationship

However, with the party going through turmoil in Punjab, and PCC president Navjot Singh Sidhu and Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi sharing a frosty relationship, Mr. Sidhu’s presence would be followed with interest.

After the October 16 physical meeting of the Congress



Congress president Sonia Gandhi will physically interact with the PCCs.

Working Committee (CWC), this will be another occasion where Ms. Gandhi would physically interact with the PCCs.

Apart from the Assembly elections, other issues on the agenda include membership drives in the States ahead of the organisational elections as well as Jan Jagran Abhiyans to carry out a mass agitation and awareness programmes across the country on the rise in prices between November 14 and 29.

During the two week-long campaign, senior office-bearers of the PCCs, District Congress Committees and Block Committees will undertake padayatras to cover every polling booth in the States.

### Set up control rooms

The PCCs will set up control rooms in each State and State-level trainers will be given two-three days training in the All India Congress Committee (AICC), so that they train designated people at the district and booth level.

The timing of the meeting is significant as it just comes days after Ms. Gandhi had asserted that she was a “full-time, hands-on” party president.

The assertion came just days after senior party leader Kapil Sibal – one of the group of 23 (G-23) dissident letter writers – had stated that the party did not have a full-time president.

## Over 500 illegal structures identified in Bengaluru

SUCHITH KIDIVLOOR  
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has identified over 500 structures, which have come up “illegally” on the land notified for the Dr. K Shivaram Karanth Layout after 2018.

Several structures have already been removed by the BDA and on Monday, during one such drive at Somashettihalli, officials faced resistance from residents as seven structures were razed.

Pradeep Kumar, a property owner, said, “We had built a structure on our own property. Several structures were demolished on Monday and owners lost structures worth over ₹2 crore. For the formation of the layout, 3 acres of our family land was notified. At least these structures could have been spared.”

BDA officials claim that illegal constructions that came up have been identified using satellite imagery and drone surveys.

## Will ensure solatium for Lakhbir’s family: Sampla

### ‘Case under SC/ST Act will be filed’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) will make sure that the family of Lakhbir Singh, a Dalit man who was killed at the farmers’ protest site at Singhu border, received compensation, NCSC Chairman Vijay Sampla said on Monday.

Lakhbir’s family members met Mr. Sampla demanding justice in the case. Mr. Sampla said a case under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 would be lodged.

### At protest site

Lakhbir, who was from Tarn Taran in Punjab, was found tied to a police barricade, with his hand cut off at the site of the farmers’ ongoing protest at the Delhi-Haryana border at Singhu on October 15. He was allegedly killed by the Nihangs on the charges of desecrating the Sikh holy book.

Last week, Mr. Sampla had written to the chief



NCSC will make sure that the family of Lakhbir Singh received compensation

VIJAY SAMPLA  
NCSC Chairman

priest of the Akal Takht asking him to ensure that Lakhbir’s “bhog” ceremony was conducted as per the Sikh code of living, after reports of his family not being allowed to follow traditions during his last rites.

Mr. Sampla had said while there was a video that went viral of Lakhbir pleading for his life, there was no such recording of him actually desecrating the holy book.

## No plan to deport Rohingya: Karnataka

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka Government has objected to a petition in the Supreme Court to “identify, detain and deport” Rohingya within a year, stating that there is no reason to take coercive action against or immediately deport them.

The State was responding to the petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay against the presence of illegal immigrants and infiltrators, including Rohingya, in the country. Mr. Upadhyay recommended that “infiltration” should be made a cognisable, non-bailable and non-compoundable offence.

Karnataka stated that there were 72 Rohingya “refugees” living in Bengaluru city. It gave a list of their names. Several were seen to be less than 12-years-old.

The State said the Rohingya people “work in various fields”. “Bengaluru City Police have not taken any coercive action against them as of now. There is no immediate plan of deporting them now,” the short affidavit noted.

**Kerala State Film Development Corporation Ltd.**  
Chalathilthra Kalabhavan, Vazhuthacaud, Thiruvananthapuram - 695014  
Phone: 0471-2325325, E-mail: ksfidc@kfdcl.com Website: www.ksfidc.in  
4309/P1/2021/KSFDC/PMC-PHASE 2 25.10.2021

**RFP NOTICE (RE-TENDER-1)**  
CANCELLED TENDER ID: 2021\_KSFDC\_439727\_1 TENDER ID: 2021\_KSFDC\_447908\_1  
Request for proposals (RFP) are invited from Project Management Consultants for the following works for KSFDC.

- 1.Modernization of Chitrangali Studio at Thiruvallom, Thiruvananthapuram.
- 2.Construction of Multiplex Cinema Theatres at Vaikom and Tanur.
- 3.Construction of Cultural Complexes at Malappuram.

Last date of receipt of e-tenders will be 08/11/2021 at 11.00 am.  
For more details visit website [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in)

Sd/-  
Managing Director

**TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS:TIRUPATI**  
MARKETING DEPARTMENT Dated:25-10-2021

**e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
e-tenders are invited for procurement of 2826 Nos of Woolen Shawls and 2650 Nos of Woolen Rugs / Blanket (for one time supply or as per schedule issued) from reputed manufacturers/ authorized dealers / Traders viz., Ramsons, Bombay Dyeing, Digam, Gwalior, Ashnoor and Ozwal by the Marketing Department, T.T.D. Tirupati. For Tender Notice and Tender details log on to the web site <http://www.tirumala.org> and <http://tenders.approccurement.gov.in> Click on current Tenders and select “more” and Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams- Marketing. For further details contact phone numbers: 0877-2264079, 2264555, Fax No.0877-2264554.

Sl. No.	Name of the Item	E.M.D.	Tender Period	Date of tender	
		(Rupees One Lakh only)		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2826 Nos., Woolen Shawls	1,00,000.00	One time supply or as per schedule	09-11-2021	09-11-2021
2	2650 Nos., Woolen Rugs / Blanket	75,000.00	One time supply or as per schedule	09-11-2021	09-11-2021

Roll.No.PR4/13935/Adv.No.208/PRO/2021/Dated:25-10-2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD**  
Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003  
Phone: 0471-2314288, E-Mail: dcotdb@gmail.com  
Website: [www.travancoredevaswomboard.org](http://www.travancoredevaswomboard.org)

**TRAVANCORE DEVASWOM BOARD INVITES RE E-TENDERS FOR THE SUPPLY OF:**  
Jaggery Powder, Cardamom in connection with the festival period 1197 ME (2021-2022) of Sree Dharmasastha Temple, Sabarimala.

E-Tender Closing Date : 01-11-2021 - 11.00 AM  
E-Tender Opening Date : 02-11-2021 - 11.00 AM

Venue : Sumangali Kalyana Mandapam, Travancore Devaswom Board Compound, Nanthancode, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003

Detailed e-tender notifications and special instructions to the bidders are available on [www.travancoredevaswomboard.org](http://www.travancoredevaswomboard.org)  
For the submission of tender visit the website : [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in)

ROC NO : 4/21/Sab. Sd/- DEVASWOM COMMISSIONER  
Dated : 23-10-2021 (For and behalf of Travancore Devaswom Board)

**KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(RAICHUR THERMAL POWER STATION)  
CIN: U85110KA1970SGC001919

**BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
(Two Cover System) (Through e-Procurement Portal only)  
Tender through e-procurement portal mode are invited from the contractors/ agencies that are required individuals/ Company and having experience for the following works.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Name of the Work
1.	KPCCL/2021-22/PM WORK_INDENT 11760 Date: 12.10.2021	Annual contract for picking up of stones/ shales extraneous materials from coal in running conveyors at strategic points in CHP 1 & 2 of RTPS. EMD: NIL
2.	KPCCL/2021-22/PM WORK_INDENT 11756 Date: 12.10.2021	Routine Mechanical Maintenance, Electrical Maintenance and AOH works of Wagon Tippler, Primary Crusher, Secondary Crusher, Shuttle conveyor, Traveling Tripper, Stackler/ Reclaimer, Doler Operation & Maintenance works of complete CHP-2 in RTPS. EMD: NIL

The detailed notification can be obtained by logging on to GoK e-procurement website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> Interested bidders may submit the bids through e-proc. portal. Last date for submission of completed bids: 30.10.2021, 17.30 Hrs. Opening of Technical Bid: (Part 1): 02.11.2021, 9.00 Hrs. Opening of Financial Bid (Part 2): 04.11.2021, 9.00 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office the Executive Engineer (CHP)M-2, KPCL, RTPS, Shaktinagar - 584 170. Mobile No.: 82775 02856.

**ANNA UNIVERSITY**  
CHENNAI - 600 025

**TENDER NOTICE**  
On-line Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for Supply and Installation of following equipment for The Department of Pharmaceutical Technology, BIT Campus, Anna University, Tiruchirappalli - 620 024.

Sl. No.	Tender Ref. No.	Name of the equipment	Qty.	Approx. cost Rs.
1.	95/CPO/SEM/PHAR/BI/TY/2021	Scanning Electron Microscope with Accessories	1	₹95,00,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> from 11.00 am on 26.10.2021. The filled-in tender documents can be submitted by uploading in the website upto 03.00 pm on 13.11.2021 and will be opened at 03.00 pm on 15.11.2021. Other detailed tender conditions, future corrigenda etc., please visit the website (<https://tntenders.gov.in>).

DIPR/3093/Tender/2021 REGISTRAR /ic  
“சேர்தனை வடநடு கருத்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சரதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்.”

**ANNA UNIVERSITY**  
CHENNAI - 600 025

**TENDER NOTICE**  
On-line Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for Supply and Installation of following equipment for The Department of Mechanical Engineering, Anna University, Chennai - 600 025.

Sl. No.	Tender Ref. No.	Name of the equipment	Qty.	Approx. cost Rs.
1.	178/CPO/CNMC/DME/2021	CNC Machining Center with Accessories	1	₹1,10,00,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> from 11.00 am on 26.10.2021. The filled-in tender documents can be submitted by uploading in the website upto 03.30 pm on 13.11.2021 and will be opened at 03.30 pm on 15.11.2021. Other detailed tender conditions, future corrigenda etc., please visit the website (<https://tntenders.gov.in>).

DIPR/3093/Tender/2021 REGISTRAR /ic  
“சேர்தனை வடநடு கருத்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சரதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்.”

**Government of Tamil Nadu**  
**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT**  
**Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA)**

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Online tenders are invited by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency (TNeGA), towards for Selection of Agency(s) for providing human resources on Outsourcing basis to various needs of Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency for a period of 2 years.

The tender document (RFP) can be downloaded at free of cost from <https://tntenders.gov.in/>, <https://tnega.tn.gov.in/> and <https://tenders.tn.gov.in/> from 26.10.2021, 14.00 hrs.

Pre-bid meeting is scheduled online on 01.11.2021 at 15:30 hrs. through video conference (VC) by TNeGA and the link for the VC can be referred in the RFP.

EMD for an amount of Rs.5,00,000/- has to be paid through online mode. Last date and time for online submission of bids through <https://tenders.gov.in/> (e-Tender) is 25.11.2021 till 11:30 hrs. Technical Bid shall be opened online on 25.11.2021 at 11:45 hrs. Bidders are advised to participate in the pre-bid meeting scheduled by TNeGA.

DIPR/3093/TENDER/2021 Chief Executive Officer, Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency  
“சேர்தனை வடநடு கருத்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சரதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்.”



**IN BRIEF**

**BE hopes to roll out COVID vaccine by Nov.**  
HYDERABAD  
Biological E. (BE) is expecting its COVID-19 vaccine Corbevax to be rolled out by the end of November even as the Hyderabad-based firm is getting ready with 100 million doses for the launch, Mahima Datla, managing director, BE, said. Speaking on the sidelines after signing a financing agreement with the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, she said currently the doses were being sent to the Central Drugs Laboratory, Kasauli, for regulatory testing. PTI

**Podcast on freedom movement launched**

NEW DELHI  
Culture Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Monday launched a podcast series on the freedom struggle as a part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations of the 75th year of Independence next year. The series, 'Zara Yaad Karo Qurbani', would focus on the people and movements that contributed to the freedom struggle, "some of which have not found a place in the conventional freedom movement storyline", the description of the podcast read. The series will be available on [amritmahotsav.in](http://amritmahotsav.in), Spotify, Soundcloud, and other platforms for podcasts.

**BSF constable held on charge of spying**

AHMEDABAD  
A BSF constable posted in Kutch, Gujarat, was arrested on Monday by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) for allegedly "spying for Pakistan". Sajjad, the accused, is a resident of Rajauri district of Jammu and Kashmir, and is posted in the 'A' company of the 74th battalion of the BSF in Kutch Gandhidham. As per the ATS, Sajjad had joined as a constable in 2012. On Monday, a Gujarat ATS team arrested him from the BSF headquarters in Kutch Bhuj on charges of spying and sending secret information to a Pakistan-based handler through WhatsApp messages in return for money.

**ED attaches assets of former ADM in Bihar**

NEW DELHI  
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached the assets belonging to a former Additional District Magistrate (ADM) of Bihar's Bhagalpur and her family members in a disproportionate assets case. The case, registered under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, involves Jayshree Thakur and others. The attached assets are in the form of the balance in 42 bank accounts, 15 plots, one flat, and 15 insurance policies. According to the agency, the total value of the attached properties is about ₹6.85 crore.

# 'CO2 emissions in 2020 above decadal average'

Pandemic had little impact on overall figures: WMO

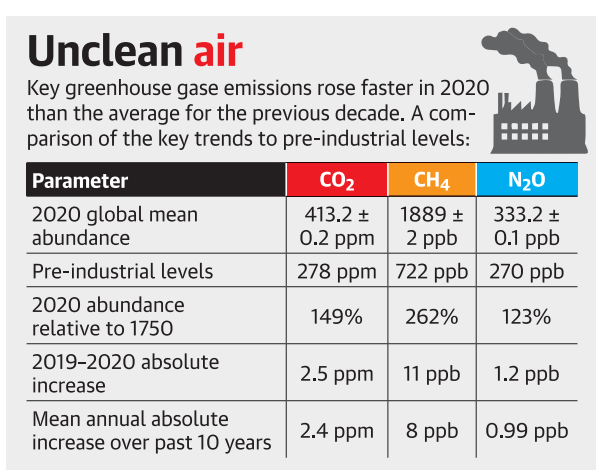
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A report from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) on Monday said the increase in CO2 from 2019 to 2020 was slightly lower than that observed from 2018 to 2019 but higher than the average annual growth rate over the past decade. This is despite the approximately 5.6% drop in fossil fuel CO2 emissions in 2020 due to restrictions related to the pandemic.

Ahead of the crucial talks in Glasgow next week, where the countries will attempt to negotiate ways to stem global greenhouse gas emissions, updated data shows that the pandemic disruption in 2020 didn't significantly dent overall greenhouse gas emissions.

**Emissions on the rise**  
For methane, the increase from 2019 to 2020 was higher than that observed from 2018 to 2019 and also higher than the average annual growth rate over the past decade.

For nitrous oxides also, the increase was higher and also than the average annual growth rate over the past 10 years. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Annual Greenhouse Gas Index (AGGI) shows that from 1990 to 2020, radiative forcing by



ppm: parts per million | ppb: parts per billion

long-lived greenhouse gases (LLGHGs) increased by 47%, with CO2 accounting for about 80% of this increase.

Concentration of carbon dioxide (CO2), the most significant greenhouse gas, reached 413.2 parts per million in 2020 and is 149% of the pre-industrial level. Methane (CH4) is 262% and nitrous oxide (N2O) is 123% of the levels in 1,750 when human activities started disrupting earth's natural equilibrium.

Roughly half of the CO2 emitted by human activities today remains in the atmosphere. The other half is taken up by oceans and land ecosystems. The Bulletin, as the WMO report is called, flagged concern that the ability of land ecosystems and oceans to act as 'sinks'

may become less effective in future, thus reducing their ability to absorb CO2 and act as a buffer against larger temperature increase.

The Bulletin shows that from 1990 to 2020, radiative forcing – the warming effect on our climate – by long-lived greenhouse gases increased by 47%, with CO2 accounting for about 80% of this increase. The numbers are based on monitoring by WMO's Global Atmosphere Watch network.

"At the current rate of increase in greenhouse gas concentrations, we will see a temperature increase by the end of this century far in excess of the Paris Agreement targets of 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels," said WMO Secretary-General Prof. Petteri Taalas.

# India's expectations from COP26

Consensus on Paris Agreement, long-term climate finance are part of agenda

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the 26th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP) next month in Glasgow, there have been several bilateral meetings between India and other countries including the U.S. and the European Union. The big push at the COP will be to have more countries commit to a "net zero" deadline by mid-century. This would mean ensuring that a country's emissions are balanced out by absorbing an equivalent amount either by carbon sinks (such as forests) or carbon capture and storage technologies. India, the world's third largest emitter, has not agreed to a net zero deadline.



Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav has said COP should be about action and implementation.

**Why has India not agreed to a net zero target?**

■ India sees a mid-century target upon itself as opposed to the principle of "common but differentiated" responsibility that allows countries to eschew fossil fuel without compromising equitable development. Net zero means that a country must commit to a year beyond which its emissions won't peak and a point at which it will balance out its emissions by taking out an equivalent amount of greenhouse gas from the air. Even theoretically committing to a net zero by 2050 would require India to retire its coal plants and fossil fuel use overnight and even this will not guarantee that tem-

perature-rise stays below 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. India avers most of the countries clamouring for a net zero target for India will continue to pollute on a per capita basis way beyond their fair share. India says countries responsible for the climate crisis have not made good on previous promises to fund mitigation and adaptation projects and so future net zero promises are therefore hollow.

**What are India's core demands?**

■ India has said it is "open to all options" provided it gets assurances that commitments in previous COPs such as developing countries getting compensated to the tune of \$100 billion annually, the carbon-credit markets be reinvented and the countries historically affected by the climate crisis be compensated by way of "Loss and Damages," and clean development technologies be made available in ways that its industries can painlessly adapt to.

**What do independent experts have to say about India's approach to COP26?**

■ Analyst Vaibhav Chaturvedi of the Council for Energy Environment and Water opines that India needs to focus on three points for success at COP. First, if India should introduce equity in the net zero targets or at least present it as a proposal for discussion. India needs to go beyond the \$100-billion demand and focus on tangible deliverables. For the power, mobility and hydrogen sectors, India may only need \$12-15 billion per annum which should be given at 4% interest rate subvention. And lastly, India should focus on the development of technology, how to reduce the cost of technology for mitigation and co-development of technology.

Dhruva Purkayastha, Director, Climate Policy Initiative, said there has to be a mechanism by which CO2 is extracted. The world needs to set the price of carbon and it should not be a bilateral discussion point. Private market would put in money only if backed by public money. Only \$800 billion finance flows from the trillions of dollars which are talked about is highly inadequate. "If India is pushed to shut down a coal capacity there is a cost to it. Financial and social costs to it which cannot be solved not just with finance but price of carbon has to be linked with it."

**EXPLAINER**

Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav, following a meeting last week with U.K. Foreign Minister Elizabeth Truss, said the upcoming COP should be "the COP of action and implementation". He said the "huge expectations" in COP 26 include arriving at a consensus on unresolved issues of the Paris Agreement Rule

# Only U.P. has issued oil stock limits

Centre had planned to check price rise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Over two weeks after the Centre directed the imposition of stock limits on edible oils to tame soaring prices, Uttar Pradesh is the only State which has actually followed through and issued a stock limit order. After a meeting with State government representatives on Monday, the Food Ministry said three other States have submitted a stock limit proposal and eight others have initiated the process to fix limits.

Nationwide average retail prices for mustard and palm oil are around 45% higher than last year, while soya oil prices have shot up 53%, according to Ministry data.

Festive season demand and international price surges are likely to keep retail rates high, spurring the Centre to issue the Removal of Licensing Requirements, Stock Limits and Movement Restrictions on Specified Foodstuffs (Amendment) Or-



Retail prices for mustard and palm oil are around 45% higher than last year.

der, 2021 on October 8.

Uttar Pradesh issued the order within four days.

In Monday's meeting, Food and Public Distribution Joint Secretary Partha S. Das urged States to speed up the process to ensure consumers get the benefits of stock limits before the festive season. Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana Governments informed the Centre that their stock limit proposals have already been submitted, according to a Ministry statement.

# SC seeks affidavit on Central Vista

Court questions change in land use to house residences of PM, Vice-President

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Government to explain in an affidavit the necessity of a proposed change in land use from bus terminal and neighbourhood park to house the new official residences of the Vice-President and the Prime Minister as part of the ambitious Central Vista redevelopment plan.

A Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and C.T. Ravikumar asked the Government, represented by Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, to file a short affidavit with its response on the necessity for the modification in the plan.

The hearing was based on a petition filed by Rajiv Suri, represented by advocate Shikhil Suri, who said his plea was restricted to the proposed modification of land use in plot number one.

The petition has questioned the validity of a notification issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on October 28, 2020, notifying the change in land use by



**Work apace:** The Government sought to change the land use from bus terminal and neighbourhood park. •THE HINDU

proposing modification to Zonal Development Plan of Zone 'D' for plot number one in the Central Vista area of Lutyens Delhi.

"Recreational area is proposed to be modified to residential area... It has not demonstrated any public interest in the proposed change in land use here," Mr. Suri contended.

Mr. Mehta confirmed orally to the court that the official residences of the Vice-President and the Prime Minister were stipulated for

this plot. "So, the public recreational area is not available now? Is the recreational area going to be transposed to some other area," Justice Khanwilkar asked the Solicitor-General.

**Security reasons**  
Mr. Mehta said the play area could be shifted to some other area. But he cited security reasons too.

"The Parliament, etc, is coming up nearby... It may not be possible to have a recreational area there," the

**Anti-diabetic medicines get price caps**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Drug price regulator National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) on Monday said it has fixed the ceiling prices for 12 anti-diabetic generic medicines, including glimepiride tablets, glucose injection and intermediate acting insulin solution.

In a tweet, the drug price regulator said, "To make it possible for every Indian to afford medical treatment, NPPA has fixed the ceiling prices of 12 anti-diabetic generic medicines." These include glimepiride tablet of strength 1 mg, with ceiling price at ₹3.6 per tablet, while that for 2 mg is ₹5.72 per tablet.

The ceiling price of 1 ml glucose injection of 25% strength has been fixed at 17 paise, while that of 1ml of insulin (soluble) injection of strength 40IU/ml is ₹15.09. Similarly, 1 ml of intermediate acting (NPH) solution insulin injection of strength 40 IU/ml has a ceiling price of ₹15.09.

**TH CROSSWORD + 13386** Display keystrokes of gwenius. Type your answers in our online grids: @ <https://qrqo.page.link/jjptn> SCAN TO PLAY

**TH CROSSWORD + 13386** (set by Avtaar)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9			10				
	11			12			
							14
13							15
16	17		18				19
				20			
21							22
23						24	
25							26

- 13 Carol sang, accompanied by one playing a horn (3,7)
- 14 Order with respect to arresting Avtaar (4)
- 16 Chief of the private urban community (4)
- 18 Time when nothing works in Riyad? Ah! (3,4,3)
- 21 "The Art of Cooking" – books with novel designs in Word (6,8)
- 23 One surviving, perhaps with pain? That's shocking! (4,4)
- 24 I read about the ultimate in white sugar (6)
- 25 In the past, stop a rescue at sea after onset of storm (8)
- 26 Jealous fellow – drunk in every party's conclusion – goes missing (6)

- **DOWN**
- 1 Tennis legend has trained England's #1 (4)
  - 2 Peppier African city (7)
  - 3 They were seen wandering in USSR and Siberia, chiefly (8)
  - 5 Web media broadcast featuring runaway hit devotional number (5,4,2)
  - 6 Story about Count's boy (6)
  - 7 Harry turned florid, drinking hot stew (7)
  - 8 Essay describing book by one European in a prominent manner (9)
  - 12 India stalls spreading plants like the Spanish moss (11)
  - 13 Beds with hollow wheels seen around ancient part of England (9)
  - 15 One in Cologne street – a German scientist (8)
  - 17 Convinced now? (7)
  - 19 Pennies, surprisingly, are about 67% Indian (7)
  - 20 Android – for the people, ultimately a source of enlightenment (6)
  - 22 Does fine, giving up yield (4)

**SUDOKU**

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

**Solution to puzzle 13385**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

# Sudan's military seizes power in coup

Troops dissolve transitional government, arrest PM Hamdok; two killed in pro-democracy protests

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
CAIRO

Sudan's military seized power on Monday, dissolving the transitional government hours after troops arrested the Prime Minister. Thousands of people flooded into the streets to protest the coup that threatens the country's shaky progress toward democracy.

Security forces opened fire on some of the crowds, and two protesters were killed, according to the Sudan Doctors' Committee, which said 80 people were wounded.

The takeover comes more than two years after protesters forced the ouster of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir and just weeks before the military was supposed to hand the leadership of the council that runs the country over to civilians.

After the early morning arrests of Prime Minister Ab-



**On the boil:** Thousands of protesters took to the streets to condemn a takeover by military officials in Khartoum. ■AFP

tary forces chased protesters through some neighbourhoods of Khartoum. She said the sporadic sound of gunshots could be heard in many parts of the capital.

In the afternoon, the head of the military, Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, announced on national TV that he was dissolving the government and the Sovereign Council, a joint military and civilian body created soon after Mr. al-Bashir's ouster.

## State of emergency

General Burhan said quarrels among political factions prompted the military to intervene. Tensions have been rising for weeks over the course and the pace of the transition to democracy.

The General declared a state of emergency and said the military will appoint a technocratic government to lead the country to elections, set for July 2023. But

he made clear the military will remain in charge.

"The Armed Forces will continue completing the democratic transition until the handover of the country's leadership to a civilian, elected government," he said. He added that the country's Constitution would be rewritten and a legislative body would be formed with the participation of "young men and women who made this revolution."

White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said the U.S. was "deeply alarmed at reports of a military takeover" and called for the release of the PM and officials, as did the African Union.

The UN political mission to Sudan called the detentions of government officials "unacceptable," and EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell tweeted that he was following the events with the "utmost concern."

# China is a builder of peace and protector of global order: Xi

'We oppose all forms of hegemony and power politics'

REUTERS  
BEIJING

President Xi Jinping vowed on Monday that China would always uphold world peace and international rules, amid concerns expressed by the United States and other countries over its increasing assertiveness globally.

The comments come after Taiwan said this month that military tension with China was at its worst in more than 40 years, amid mounting worries that the giant neighbour might try to take back by military force the self-ruled island it claims as its own.

In a speech marking the 50th anniversary of China's return to the United Nations, Mr. Xi said it would always be the "builder of world peace" and a "protector of international order", state



Xi Jinping

news agency Xinhua reported.

"China resolutely opposes all forms of hegemony and power politics, unilateralism and protectionism," Mr. Xi said, calling for greater global cooperation on issues such as regional conflicts, terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity and biosecurity.

Mr. Xi urged all countries

to promote the values of peace, democracy, freedom, making use of a phrase the "common values of all mankind" that he coined and first mentioned in a July speech for the 100th anniversary of the ruling Chinese Communist Party.

In 1971, the United Nations voted to recognise the People's Republic of China as the sole representative of China, expelling Taiwan, which had held the UN seat in the name of the Republic of China, its official title.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry reiterated a call for the UN to allow its "meaningful participation", adding that the island had never been part of the People's Republic and its government had no right to represent the island's people.

# Uzbekistan leader secures second term in landslide win

'Polls were not competitive, significant irregularities noted'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
TASHKENT

Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev cruised to victory for a second term on Monday in an election that monitors said was "not truly competitive" despite some reforms in the authoritarian Central Asian state.

Uzbekistan's Central Election Commission said Mr. Mirziyoyev had taken 80.1% of the vote against four token opponents, according to a preliminary count.

The vote was held on Sunday with no real opposition facing Mr. Mirziyoyev, who

came to power in 2016 after the death of his mentor, dictator Islam Karimov, who ruled Uzbekistan for 27 years.

**'Reforms sidestepped'** Mr. Mirziyoyev has been credited with launching what he calls a "New Uzbekistan" programme, ending a decades-old system of forced labour with roots in the former Soviet Union and introducing limited media freedoms.

But like Karimov, the new leader has sidestepped political reforms that would al-

low any alternative to his rule.

A mission led by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe said Sunday's polls were "not truly competitive" and pointed to "the exclusion of opposition parties".

"Significant procedural irregularities were noted on election day," the mission added in a statement.

"Election legislation still has a number of deficiencies and does not yet fully comply with international standards for democratic elections."

# Iran to host meet on Afghanistan

India is not included in the talks aimed at helping Kabul form an inclusive Government

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

Iran will hold the next round of regional discussion on the future of Afghanistan on Wednesday. Announcing the meeting, Iranian authorities on Monday affirmed that Afghanistan's sovereignty should be respected and its territory should not be used to export terrorism to other countries.

The meeting will be attended by the Foreign Ministers of China, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Russia, and is aimed at helping Afghanistan form an inclusive government with participation of

"all ethnic groups".

"This meeting will take place in continuation and as second round of the discussions which was virtually hosted by Pakistan on 8th September 2021... Iran strongly believes that a stable, secure and developed Afghanistan, with a flourishing and sustainable economy, will ensure the interests of all of its neighbours, in particular the Islamic Republic of Iran," said the press release from Iran.

The consultation is the biggest regional meet after the 10-nation Moscow dialogue of last week, which saw India's participation. The meeting in Tehran, ho-

wever, will not include India. Speculations have begun over this indicating that by excluding New Delhi, Iran is probably expressing its unhappiness over India's recent quadrilateral meet with Israel, UAE and the U.S. The Ministry of External Affairs refused to comment on the issue. Officials, however, dismissed any link between the timing of the Iran conference and Mr. Jaishankar's participation in the quadrilateral meet last Monday.

A senior official told *The Hindu* that the Tehran meeting had been planned prior to the quadrilateral meeting and India had been informed of the meeting "in advance".

The meeting is likely to seek further engagement with the Taliban. Special Russian Presidential Representative for Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, said on Monday that the Moscow dialogue will have a "positive effect" for building working relationship with the Taliban. The Tehran meeting is expected to bolster global demand on the Taliban to ensure that terrorism does not emanate from Afghanistan.

"The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan should be respected, and its territory should not be used for any threat or terror against other countries," it said.

# Afghans facing an acute food crisis, says UN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL

Afghanistan is on the brink of one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, UN agencies warned on Monday, with more than half the country facing "acute" food shortages.

Over 22 million Afghans will suffer food insecurity this winter, they said, as a drought driven by climate change adds to their woes. "This winter, millions will be forced to choose between migration and starvation unless we can step up our life-saving assistance," said David Beasley, executive director of the World Food Programme.

# MBS sent death squad to kill me: ex-spy

Aljabri claims a friend warned him he could face a fate similar to that of Khashoggi

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

A former top Saudi Arabian spy has said the country's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman dispatched a feared team of mercenaries to kill him while in exile in Canada.

In an interview with U.S. broadcaster CBS News' "60 Minutes", Saad Aljabri — formerly a top spy and interlocutor between the kingdom's intelligence services and Western governments — alleged he was targeted after he fled the country following a 2017 power grab by the crown prince.

A friend at a West Asian intelligence service, he said, warned that he could face a fate similar to that of Saudi

dissident and journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who investigations have alleged was murdered by a Riyadh-linked death squad after visiting the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in 2018.

"The warning I received, don't be in a proximity of any Saudi mission in Canada. Don't go to the consulate. Don't go to the Embassy... You are on the top of the list," Mr. Aljabri told "60 Minutes".

He said the team arrived in Canada in October 2018 — only to be deported when they lied to customs officials and were found to be carrying suspicious items.

AFP was unable to independently verify Mr. Aljabri's claims, and requests for



Saad Aljabri

comment to the Canadian Foreign Ministry went unanswered.

But Canadian officials told "60 Minutes" they were "aware of incidents in which foreign actors have attempted to... threaten... those living in Canada," describing the threats as "completely

unacceptable."

Mr. Aljabri said the group was made up of members of a group named in investigations as the "Tiger Squad" — a shadow team of paid killers set up by Prince Mohammed, specialising in "extrajudicial killings, rape, and torture," according to a 2019 legal complaint filed by the former spy.

Mr. Aljabri also said two of his eight children had been detained by Saudi authorities in retaliation for his fleeing the kingdom.

"I am here to sound the alarm about a psychopath, killer, in the Middle East with infinite resources, who poses threat to his people, to the Americans and to the planet," he said.

## ELSEWHERE



### German court sentences IS woman to 10 years jail

BERLIN  
A German convert to Islam was sentenced to 10 years in prison on Monday on charges that, as a member of the extremist IS group in Iraq, she allowed a 5-year-old Yazidi girl and her husband kept as a slave to die of thirst in the hot sun. The child was "defenseless and helplessly exposed to the situation," judge Joachim Baier said. ■AP

### China to start vaccinating children as young as 3

TAIPEI  
Children as young as three will start receiving COVID-19 vaccines in China, where 76% of the population has been fully vaccinated amid a spike in new cases. The National Health Commission reported that 35 new cases of local transmission had been detected over the past 24 hours. ■AP

# Israeli approval to settlement homes tests fragile coalition

Minister opposes clearance given to build 1,300 houses

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
JERUSALEM

A senior Israeli Minister said on Monday he opposes the government's approval of more than 1,300 new settlement housing units in the occupied West Bank, highlighting stark disagreements between the country's ideologically divided coalition members.

The Israeli government on Sunday announced construction tenders for 1,355 housing units in the West Bank, the first such announcement of expansion of settlements in the territory during U.S. President Joe Biden's administration. The move appears to run contrary to the new government's pledge to put ideological considerations aside and reduce tensions with the Palestinians.

But Health Minister Nitza Horowitz, leader of the dovish Meretz party, said on Monday in an interview with Israeli public radio broad-

caster Kan that his faction "will explicitly not agree to actions that will harm the chances of reaching a solution" with the Palestinians and called on his government to refrain from them.

"I understand that this government, in the existing situation, won't sign a peace treaty with the Palestinians right now, but still, we must avoid actions that worsen the situation," he said.

Sunday's announcement came a few days before the expected authorisation for some 3,000 new settler housing units in the West Bank later this week, which has already drawn calls for restraint from the U.S. That is in addition to another 1,600 units for Palestinians residing in areas of the territory under Israeli civil administration.

Minister said the government's approval of more than 1,300 new settlement housing units in the occupied West Bank, highlighting stark disagreements between the country's ideologically divided coalition members.

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But Health Minister Nitza Horowitz, leader of the dovish Meretz party, said on Monday in an interview with Israeli public radio broad-

# Facebook's language gaps weaken screening of hate and terrorism

Documents show 'problems are far more systemic than just a few innocent mistakes'

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DUBAI

As the Gaza war raged and tensions surged across the West Asia last May, Instagram briefly banned the hashtag #AlAqsa, a reference to the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem's Old City, a flash point in the conflict.

Facebook, which owns Instagram, later apologised, explaining its algorithms had mistaken the third-holiest site in Islam for the militant group Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, an armed offshoot of the secular Fatah party.

For many Arabic-speaking users, it was just the latest potent example of how the social media giant muzzles political speech in the region. Arabic is among the most common languages on Facebook's platforms, and the company issues frequent public apologies after similar botched content removals.

Now, internal company documents from the former Facebook product manager-



Frances Haugen, ex-FB employee-turned whistleblower. ■AFP

turned-whistleblower Frances Haugen show the problems are far more systemic than just a few innocent mistakes, and that Facebook has understood the depth of these failings for years while doing little about it.

Such errors are not limited to Arabic. An examination of the files reveals that in some of the world's most volatile regions, terrorist content and hate speech proliferate because the company remains short on mod-

erators who speak local languages and understand cultural contexts. And its platforms have failed to develop artificial-intelligence solutions that can catch harmful content in different languages.

## Not enough moderation

In countries like Afghanistan and Myanmar, these loopholes have allowed inflammatory language to flourish on the platform, while in Syria and the Palestinian terri-

tories, Facebook suppresses ordinary speech, imposing blanket bans on common words.

"The root problem is that the platform was never built with the intention it would one day mediate the political speech of everyone in the world," said Eliza Campbell, director of the Middle East Institute's Cyber Program. "But for the amount of political importance and resources that Facebook has, moderation is a bafflingly under-resourced project."

In Myanmar, the company acknowledged in its internal reports that it had failed to stop the spread of hate speech targeting the Rohingya Muslim population.

In India, the documents show Facebook employees debating last March whether it could clamp down on the "fear mongering, anti-Muslim narratives" that a far-right Hindu nationalist group broadcasts on its platform.

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE  
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ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

(1) क्र.सं. / S.No.	(2) कार्य का शीर्षक तथा ई-निविदा सूचना नं. / Title of work & E-Tender Notice No.	(3) कार्य पूरा होने का तिथि / Period of completion	(4) निविदा में दई अनुमानित लागत / Estimate cost put to tender	(5) ग्यारंती जमा राशि (ईएमडी) / Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)
1.	दरलस/आरपीपी, वीएसएससी, नुंबा में स्पाक सुविधा के लिए प्रवेश मार्ग का एफजीएम एवं प्रीमिस कार्य (फेज-II) / Providing F&M & Premis Carpet (Phase-II) of Approach Road for SPARC Facilities at TERLS/IRFP, VSSC, Thumba (Road works) NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/01/2021-22 Dated 25.10.2021	02 (दो / Two) महीने / months	₹ 65.90 लाख / Lakhs	शून्य (ईएमडी घोषणा के हस्ताक्षरित प्रति प्रस्तुत करना है) / NIL (Signed copy of EMD Declaration shall be submitted)
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6.	डॉउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 26.10.2021 को 10.00 बजे से 10.11.2021 को 12.00 बजे तक / From 10.00 Hrs. on 26.10.2021 to 12.00 Hrs. on 10.11.2021	7. बोली स्वीकृत / Bid Clarifications: दिनांक 27.10.2021 को 09.00 बजे से 11.11.2021 को 23.00 बजे तक / From 09.00 Hrs. on 27.10.2021 to 23.00 Hrs. on 11.11.2021	8. निविदाओं की प्राप्ति / Receipt of tenders: दिनांक 16.11.2021 को 23.00 बजे तक / Up to 23.00 Hrs. on 16.11.2021	
9. निविदाओं को खोलना / Opening of tenders: दिनांक 18.11.2021 को 15.00 बजे तक / At 15.00 Hrs. on 18.11.2021				

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MARKET WATCH

	25-10-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	60,967	0.24
US Dollar	75.08	-0.24
Gold	47,023	0.74
Brent oil	86.55	----

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	752.05	-9.75
Asian Paints	2918.05	-64.35
Axis Bank	845.10	-28.40
Bajaj Auto	3763.75	-102.75
Bajaj Finserv	18087.15	-571.00
Bajaj Finance	7646.65	-63.55
Bharti Airtel	691.10	-3.40
BPL	431.70	-15.55
Britannia Ind	3631.05	-58.95
Cipla	901.85	5.50
Coal India	174.10	-1.80
Divis Lab	4995.95	-77.45
Dr Reddys Lab	4676.15	-38.70
Eicher Motors	2561.75	-50.80
Grasim Ind	1710.65	-3.15
HCL Tech	1165.40	-28.60
HDFC	2896.15	-7.80
HDFC Bank	1657.00	-23.75
HDFC Life	683.25	-7.50
Hero MotoCorp	2686.80	-57.35
Hindalco	473.25	2.80
Hind Unilever	2455.85	1.75
ICICI Bank	841.70	82.40
IndusInd Bank	1177.75	-18.65
Infosys	1707.55	-12.25
Indian Oil Corp	130.45	-0.25
ITC	233.40	-3.20
JSW Steel	674.25	6.45
Kotak Bank	2154.50	-16.90
L&T	1784.15	-8.10
M&M	890.70	2.85
Maruti Suzuki	7260.60	-148.30
Nestle India Ltd.	18696.25	-310.45
NTPC	143.90	-1.00
ONGC	161.40	4.35
PowerGrid Corp	192.65	-1.80
Reliance Ind	2601.80	-25.60
SBI Life	1129.70	-37.50
State Bank	506.50	3.55
Shree Cement	27275.00	-463.20
Sun Pharma	813.20	0.65
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	788.95	-6.30
Tata Motors	479.90	-11.00
Tata Steel	1293.30	-2.95
TCS	3492.95	-5.90
Tech Mahindra	1524.10	6.65
Titan	2379.15	-32.85
UltraTech Cement	7149.80	0.20
UPL	695.30	-9.05
Wipro	667.70	-14.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on October 25

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.88	75.20
Euro	87.02	87.40
British Pound	103.10	103.55
Japanese Yen (100)	65.86	66.14
Chinese Yuan	11.72	11.78
Swiss Franc	81.49	81.84
Singapore Dollar	55.62	55.88
Canadian Dollar	60.60	60.86
Malaysian Ringgit	18.04	18.13

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Cash management firm CMS eyes ₹2,000-cr. IPO

MUMBAI Cash management company CMS Info Systems Ltd is planning to tap the capital market with an IPO to raise ₹2,000 crore for its promoter-selling shareholder through an offer-for-sale. The company has already filed a draft red herring prospectus with SEBI. All proceeds will be received by Sion Investment Holdings Pte. Ltd., an affiliate of Baring Private Equity Asia.

TVS Motor to boost Iraqi presence with Bahwan

NEW DELHI TVS Motor Company on Monday said it has tied up with Bahwan International Group to strengthen its presence in Iraq. As per the deal, ARATA International FZC, a subsidiary of Bahwan International Group (BIG), will be the new distributor of TVS in Iraq. Building on this partnership, both the groups will also explore other avenues of cooperation in Oman and India. PTI

Eicher shareholders reappoint Lal as MD

NEW DELHI Eicher Motor shareholders have approved a proposal to reappoint Siddhartha Lal as the company's managing director for a period of five years with effect from May 1 this year. The members also cleared the proposal to increase Mr. Siddhartha Lal's remuneration. In the latest round of voting, 93.75% votes favoured the reappointment, while 6.25% opposed the proposal. PTI

RupeRedee eyes ₹250-crore loan book

MUMBAI Digital lending app RupeRedee, which is registered as MoneyMitra IT Solutions Pvt. Ltd., is eyeing a loan book of more than ₹250 crore by end FY22, said country head Artem Andreev. "Our target is to cross ₹250 crore in loan book by end FY22. We are in talks with many NBFCs and banks for debt funding to increase our portfolio and serve more customers," he said.

# 'Auditors must report to RBI on deviations in regulated entities'

Market confidence is key, relevant for banks that hold public deposits, says Das

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Auditors have a duty to report directly to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on matters of material significance arising from the audit of banks and other regulated entities, central bank governor Shaktikanta Das said.

Highlighting that statutory auditors played a vital role in maintaining market confidence on audited financial statements, he said that in the banking industry, such a public role was particularly relevant for financial stability, given that banks hold public deposits.

He said in a globally integrated economy, fair and impartial audit was not just a



Wrong basis: Inaccurate information may lead to sub-optimal decisions or poor resource allocation, according to Das. •AFP

domestic concern, but also an instrument to enhance the country's reputation and credibility on a global stage.

He was addressing probations and other Indian Audit & Accounts Service officers at a conference

organised by the National Academy of Audit and Accounts at Shimla on Monday.

"It assumes greater significance during difficult times such as the one we are going through now due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With in-

creasing complexity of financial markets and higher expectations from the public about efficient resource allocation, the role of audit has become even more important," the governor said.

Mr. Das added that inaccurate information might lead to sub-optimal decisions or excess resource allocation, which would be neither in public interest, nor in the interest of individual stakeholders.

"To overcome the problem of unreliable information, an assurance mechanism is required... Such mechanism is provided through the audit mechanism, both internal and external," he said.

## Centre signs share sale pact for Air India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The government on Monday signed the share purchase agreement for Air India's sale with Tata Sons.

Earlier this month, Tata Sons subsidiary Talace Pvt. Ltd. emerged as the highest bidder for Air India for ₹18,000 crore. Of this, the cash consideration to be paid to the government is ₹2,700 crore, and the remaining ₹15,300 crore is the debt to be taken on by Talace.

Next, there are certain conditions that need to be satisfied by the successful bidder, Air India and the government. It is expected that the transaction would be completed by December, when the government plans to hand over the airline to Talace.

## Rains dent rubber output, imports to rise

'NE monsoon to hit Nov. production'

REUTERS MUMBAI

India's natural rubber production is likely to fall sharply in October and November, as heavy rains have been disrupting tapping activity in Kerala, the country's top-producing State, industry officials said on Monday.

Lower production could force India to increase imports in the coming months, from Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. "In October, we are expecting sharp drop in the production compared to September," George Vally, president, Indian Rubber Dealers' Federation, told Reuters.

India produced 67,000 tonnes of natural rubber in September, the Association of Natural Rubber Produc-

ing Countries estimated. Production is likely to be lower in November too, as the onset of northeast monsoon will bring heavy rainfall, but output will recover from December onwards, he said.

Kerala has received 117% more rainfall than normal so far in October, according to the weather department.

Supplies are constrained by labour shortage and heavy rainfall has made tapping even rain-guarded trees difficult, said a rubber dealer N. Radhakrishnan.

Rain guards are typically pieces of plastic that surround a tree's trunk above the tapping panel. The slowdown in output has been forcing tyre makers to raise imports, which are cheaper than local supplies, he said.

## Bharti opts for four-year moratorium on dues

Follows Vodafone in taking govt. offer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel will opt for the four-year moratorium on adjusted gross revenue (AGR) and spectrum payments, making it the second telco after Vodafone Idea to accept the offer, which was part of the recently announced telecom relief package, sources said.

The telco communicated the decision to the Department of Telecom on Friday, the sources added.

The Union Cabinet had in September approved several measures to extend life-line to the cash-strapped telecom sector, including a four-year moratorium on payment of dues to the government arising out of the



AGR judgment as well as payments of spectrum purchased in past auctions.

The government had asked the telco companies to convey their decision on opting for the four-year dues moratorium by October 29, while also giving 90 days' time to indicate if they wanted to opt for converting the interest amount pertaining to the moratorium period into equity.

## TechM Sept. quarter net jumps 26%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

IT firm Tech Mahindra on Monday said its consolidated net profit has increased by 25.7% to ₹1,338.7 crore for the quarter ended September 30, 2021.

This is against a net profit of ₹1,064.6 crore in the July-September 2020 quarter, Tech Mahindra said in a statement.

TechM announced the acquisition of Lodestone, a digital engineering quality assurance provider for new age digital companies, for up to \$105 million (about ₹789 crore). The company also said it had acquired WMW by Born London Limited, U.K. for ₹9.4 million pounds (about ₹97 crore), as per a regulatory filing.

## September engineering goods exports cross \$9 billion: EEPC

'FTAs welcome, but guard against spurring imports'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KOLKATA

Exports of engineering goods have crossed \$9 billion in September 2021, even 22 out of 25 top export destinations such as China, the U.K. and the UAE have recorded growth, EEPC said.

The share of engineering goods in overall merchandise exports stood at 26.7% in September, the export promotion body said.

Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) chairman Mahesh Desai said that India's cumulative engineering exports rose from \$32.4 billion in April-September, 2020 to \$52.3 billion in the same period this year.



Mahesh Desai

Italy, U.K., Mexico, Vietnam and Singapore, EEPC said.

### 'Lessons from earlier'

Welcoming the move to fast-track free trade agreements (FTAs) with as many as six countries and trading blocs, Mr. Desai said the government should take lessons from earlier such agreements.

"The FTAs signed earlier led to increased imports for some items in ferrous and non-ferrous sectors from countries like Korea and Japan," the chairman said.

"Hence there is a need to take a cautious stance while signing new FTAs," Mr. Desai added.

## DoT tweaks AGR to ease levy on telcos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The government amended the telecom licence norms to reduce the tax burden on telecom operators by exempting all non-telecom revenue, income from dividends and rent, among others, for calculation of levies like licence fees.

The amendment forms part of the telecom package announced by the Centre. The old definition of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) had led to a burden of about ₹1.47 lakh crore on the telcos. The exempted sources of revenue will be deducted from the their gross revenue to calculate AGR. "This amendment comes into effect from October 1," the DoT said.

## 'Non-power sectors seek coal supply'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Coal Consumers' Association of India has urged the government to resume at least some amount of coal supply to the non-power sector.

Non-power sector consumers, including captive power plants, aluminium, steel, cement and sponge iron had long been facing an acute shortage of coal as supply via rail mode had been halted from most of the subsidiaries of Coal India Ltd., the association said in a letter to Coal Secretary A.K. Jain. "The Ministry is requested to look into the matter empathetically as resumption of at least some amount of coal supply to the non-power sector would be pivotal for the sustenance of the industries at present," it added.

## 'VC deals in India more than double to \$14.4 bn'

Edtech seen as active sector: KPMG

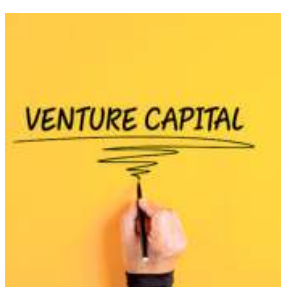
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

Venture capital (VC) investments in India more than doubled from its previous quarterly high of \$6.7 billion in Q2 of calendar 2021 to \$14.4 billion in Q3, according to KPMG's Private Enterprise's Venture Pulse report.

The country saw 498 VC deals in the quarter, up from 376 in the previous quarter. Also, India accounted for four of the largest deals in the Asia-Pacific in the July-September period.

Q3 witnessed strong IPO activity, which would be stronger in the current quarter, the report indicated.

Edtech was seen as an active sector, while Fintech continued to attract significant investments and attention from investors. VCs have also shown strong in-



terest in the insurtech space, KPMG said.

"Money is pouring into consumer tech companies, D2C companies, fintech companies and others here in India, and it is only going to get stronger. Looking forward, there are a few big IPOs coming down the pipe and, assuming they go well, that is only going to strengthen investor confidence here even further," said Nitish Poddar, Partner and National Leader, Private Equity, KPMG in India.

## Telcos want six-month extension of 5G trials

Current period set to end next month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Telecom operators, including Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, have asked the Department of Telecom to extend the 5G trial period by six months.

In May, the government allocated spectrum to the telecom firms in the 700 Mhz band, 3.3-3.6 Gigahertz (Ghz) band and 24.25-28.5 Ghz band for trials for six months. "All telecom companies have asked for extension of 5G trials by another 6 months," a senior government official told PTI.

The current trial period ends in November.

The Department of Telecom (DoT) has started the process for commercial roll out of 5G by seeking tele-



com regulator TRAI's view on the pricing and methodology for spectrum auction. While there is no clarity on the timeline of the auction, industry sources expect it to take place in the April-June 2022 period.

On May 4, DoT cleared applications from Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and MTNL for conducting 5G trials without using technologies from Chinese companies.

## Nykaa's public offer to open on October 28

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

FSN E-Commerce Ventures, which owns Nykaa and Nykaa Fashion, has fixed a price band of ₹1,085-1,125 per share for its initial public offer (IPO) that opens for subscription on October 28, and which is set to raise more than ₹5,000 crore.

The offer comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹630 crore and an offer for sale of up to 41,972,660 equity shares being offered by the selling shareholders. The offer will close on November 1, 2021.

Existing investors TPG Growth IV SF Pte, Lighthouse India Fund and others are expected to offload their shares in the IPO.

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# The Mujeeb-Rashid show

Combine to skittle out Scotland for 60 after Afghanistan scores 190



**That's middle!** Coetzer is cleaned up by Mujeeb, who joined hands with Rashid to decimate the Scots. • GETTY IMAGES

## ICC T20 WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SHARJAH

Afghanistan produced a dominating display of power-hitting before Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Rashid Khan spun out the Scotland line-up with five- and four-wicket hauls as the team routed Scotland by 130 runs in a Super 12 match of the T20 World Cup here on Monday.

Afghanistan posted a challenging 190 for four after opting to bat and bundled out Scotland for 60 in just 10.2 overs to register a mammoth win in Group 2.

Scotland scored 27 in the first three overs before Mujeeb scalped Scotland skipper Kyle Coetzer and Calum MacLeod off successive balls.

Mujeeb couldn't get a hat-trick but two balls later, he trapped Richie Berrington to reduce Scotland to 28 for three in four overs. Wickets continued to tumble as Matthew Cross and George Munsey (25) departed in the next two overs.

The trend continued as

Michael Leask, Chris Greaves and Mark Watt fell to guile of Mujeeb (five for 20) and Rashid (four for nine). After Mujeeb's heroics, Rashid polished off the Scotland tail.

Scotland's struggle against spin was reflected in the fact that five of its batters failed to open their accounts.

### Dominating display

Earlier, Nazibullah Zadran struck a blistering half-century in a dominating batting display of power-hitting as Afghanistan posted a commanding 190 for four.

Zadran scored 59 off 34 balls with five fours and three sixes while Hazratullah Zazai (44) and Rahmanullah Gurbaz (46) also produced solid knocks.

Opting to bat, Zazai and Mohammad Shahzad (22) got Afghanistan off to a flier, making 54 off just 35 balls, before the latter holed out to deep midwicket. Zazai played aggressively right from the start, punishing the loose deliveries for fours and sixes.

## SCOREBOARD

AFGHANISTAN		FALL OF WICKETS	
Hazratullah Zazai b Watt 44 (30b, 3x4, 3x6), Mohammad Shahzad c Greaves b Sharif 22 (15b, 2x4, 1x6), Rahmanullah Gurbaz c Coetzer b Davey 46 (37b, 1x4, 4x6), Najibullah Zadran c Wheel b Sharif 59 (34b, 5x4, 3x6), Mohammad Nabi (not out) 11 (4b, 2x4); Extras (lb-3, w-5): 8; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 190.	1-28 (Coetzer, 3.2), 2-28 (MacLeod, 3.3), 3-28 (Berrington, 3.6), 4-30 (Cross, 4.3), 5-36 (Munsey, 5.3), 6-38 (Leask, 6.3), 7-45 (Watt, 7.5), 8-53 (Greaves, 8.5), 9-60 (Davey, 10.1).	<b>AFGHANISTAN BOWLING</b> Nabi 1-0-11-0, Mujeeb 4-0-20-5, Naveen 2-0-12-1, Rashid 2-2-0-9-4, Janat 1-0-6-0.	
<b>FALL OF WICKETS</b> 1-54 (Shahzad, 5.5 overs), 2-82 (Zazai, 9.5), 3-169 (Gurbaz, 18.3), 4-190 (Zadran, 19.6).		<b>Toss:</b> Afghanistan.	
<b>SCOTLAND BOWLING</b> Wheel 4-0-42-0, Leask 1-0-18-0, Sharif 4-0-33-2, Davey 4-0-41-1, Watt 4-0-23-1, Greaves 3-0-30-0.		<b>Man-of-the-Match:</b> Mujeeb. Afghanistan won by 130 runs.	

Innings scan			
Afghanistan	Scotland	Dots	Fours
43	38	13	5
11	2	55/1	37/5
9.50	5.80	RR	RR

### Next assignment

**Scotland:** Oct. 27 vs Namibia, Abu Dhabi, 7.30 p.m. IST  
**Afghanistan:** Oct. 29 vs Pakistan, Dubai, 7.30 p.m. IST

# Welcome Lucknow and Ahmedabad

RPSG wins bid for the former, CVC Capital pips Adani Group to bag the latter

## IPL

AMOL KARHADKAR  
DUBAI

Lucknow and Ahmedabad formally joined the Indian Premier League (IPL) bandwagon after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) awarded them the franchise rights on Monday. While the choice of cities by the nine bidders who entered the fray was along expected lines, there was a huge surprise with regard to owners for the respective franchises.

While the RPSG Group, the Kolkata-based business conglomerate, paid a whopping ₹7,090 crore for Lucknow, CVC Capital Partners, a European equity firm with diverse interest in sports, pipped favourite Adani Group in the race for Ahmedabad.

The Adani Group submitted identical bids of ₹5,100 crore for Ahmedabad and Lucknow while CVC Capital came up with bids of ₹5,625 cr. and ₹5,166 cr. for Ahmedabad and Lucknow respectively.

The show-stopper, however, was the Sanjiv Goenka-promoted group that was desperate to return to the IPL fold. As a result, it went with a bid of ₹7,090 each for

Lucknow and Ahmedabad, it also submitted a ₹4,790 crore bid for Indore.

Being the highest bidder, RPSG Group was given the choice of preferred base. Once it went ahead with Lucknow, CVC Capital, which had submitted the bid through its subsidiary Irelia Company Pte. Ltd., was awarded Ahmedabad as it was the second-highest bidder.

### Only other bid

RPSG's bid for Indore was the only other bid received for the other four cities — Dharamshala, Cuttack and

Guwahati the others — that were also made available as a base to the prospective bidders.

With the addition of two teams, the BCCI announced that the IPL will become a 10-team affair with a total of 74 matches to be played in each edition.

The bids were opened in the presence of the IPL governing council members, chaired by Brijesh Patel, and the BCCI office-bearers after the technical proceedings were overseen by BCCI's interim chief executive Hemang Amin.

BCCI president Sourav

Ganguly told reporters after the proceedings were completed at Taj Dubai that the BCCI was "not surprised" at being assured of an additional revenue of more than ₹12,500 crore over the next 10 years. He informed that "the money will go back to Indian cricket for improvement across levels."

### Ownership rights

The two IPL franchises, just like the original eight in 2008, have been awarded ownership rights in perpetuity with franchise fees to be paid in 10 equal annual instalments.

## The bids

Bidder	Ahmedabad	Lucknow
Adani Sports Line	₹5,100 cr.	₹5,100 cr.
Amrut Lila Ent. Pvt. Ltd. (Kotak Group)	₹4,513 cr.	₹4,512 cr.
Avashya Enterprises Ltd. (All Cargo Logistics)	₹4,140 cr.	₹4,304 cr.
Capri Global	₹4,204 cr.	₹4,204 cr.
HT Media Ventures Ltd.	₹4,275 cr.	₹4,510 cr.
<b>Irelia Company Pte. Ltd. (CVC Capital Partners)</b>	<b>₹5,625 cr.</b>	<b>₹5,166 cr.</b>
<b>RPSG Group Ventures*</b>	<b>₹7,090 cr.</b>	<b>₹7,090 cr.</b>
Torrent Sports Ventures	₹4,653 cr.	₹4,356 cr.
Championship Cricket LLC	₹4,128 cr.	₹4,023 cr.

\* RPSG Group also submitted a bid of ₹4,790 cr. for Indore

\* The Pune and Rajkot franchises for 2016 and 17 have not been considered since they followed a two-year revenue model

## COST OF FRANCHISES AT THE TIME OF BUYING

In 2008	In 2013	In 2021
Jaipur 268 cr.	Hyderabad 425.25 cr.	Ahmedabad 5,625 cr.
Mohali 304 cr.	Hyderabad 428 cr.	Lucknow 7,090 cr.
Delhi 336 cr.	Chennai 364 cr.	
Bangalore 446.4 cr.	Mumbai 447.6 cr.	
Kolkata 300.4 cr.	Kolkata 300.4 cr.	
In 2011	Kochi 1,533 cr.	
Pune 1,702 cr.		

## Meet the new owners

### RPSG GROUP VENTURES

■ Headquartered in Kolkata, the group has business ventures across industries

■ Besides cricket, the group runs successful teams across other domestic sports leagues, including football, kabaddi and table tennis

■ In 2016, RPSG entered the IPL fray, buying the Pune franchise for two years as a replacement for one of the two suspended teams

■ In 2018, negotiations between the previous Delhi

franchise owners reportedly fell apart since the RPSG group insisted on buying out the franchise and not share the ownership

### CVC CAPITAL PARTNERS, AHMEDABAD

■ A Luxembourg-based private equity firm with interest and investment in various sports properties

■ Despite selling its stake in Formula One in 2017, CVC has invested heavily in various rugby properties in Europe and LaLiga, the Spanish football league

■ The IPL team will be its maiden entry into cricket



**Let's play:** The IPL's ever-growing popularity was reflected in the whopping bids. • SPORTSPICS/IPL

# SA and WI look to bounce back

AYAN ACHARYA  
DUBAI

South Africa and West Indies, having lost their opening match of the Super 12s, will look to bounce back when they meet in the ICC T20 World Cup here on Tuesday.

Both teams have fragile batting to address. Against England, on a pitch where shot-making wasn't easy, the West Indies batters kept going after the bowling despite losing wickets. The side was eventually bowled out for 55.

If the pitch keeps low and slow, West Indies might start thinking about tweaking its batting line-up. Roston Chase, who could replace Chris Gayle at No. 3, can be the anchor and also provide an off-spin option.

South Africa, on the other hand, is light on experience with seven players featuring



Shamsi. • AFP

in their maiden World Cup. Kagiso Rabada wants the batters to play according to the situation. "In these conditions, the ball is moving around a bit. It's not going to be free-flowing play. The wickets aren't that particularly flat. We just have to bat

well, assess and adapt to the conditions," he said.

Despite the losses, there were a few positives for both teams, notably their bowling. Defending a paltry 55, West Indies had England four down with left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein picking up two for 24.

Meanwhile, West Indies will be wary of Tabraiz Shamsi, who starred during the recent T20I series in the Caribbean. He took seven wickets in five matches, going for just four runs an over as South Africa won the series 3-2.

"Yeah, we've been looking back at that [T20I series in the West Indies] and seeing how in the games so far here [in the UAE], the batters are going to find a way to score off it," West Indies head coach Phil Simmons said on Monday.

# On a high, Pakistan has another score to settle

Will seek revenge for off-field snub; New Zealand batters have their task cut out against Afridi & Co.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SHARJAH

Pakistan will have "revenge" on its mind for a recent off-field snub when it takes on New Zealand here on Tuesday.

By beating India, the Babar Azam-led team has shown the hunger to "go all the way".

"We are not here just to win against India, we have come here to win the World Cup, always remember that," Babar said after the match.

His team will be eyeing another big scalp in New Zealand, which recently withdrew from a scheduled series after landing in Pakistan, citing security threat.

The pull-out hampered Pakistan's World Cup preparations, which took a further



**In it to win it:** Babar Azam's Pakistan has shown the hunger to 'go all the way'. • AFP

hit with England too withdrawing from a tour. Tuesday's game is being seen by Pakistan's cricket community as an opportunity to extract

revenge. Pakistan's batting, though not yet tested fully, seems to have the firepower. With seasoned pros like Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Ha-

feeze and Shoaib Malik forming the middle-order, it is safe to assume that New Zealand's bowlers have a task on hand.

Pakistan used seven bowlers against India and veteran Malik wasn't even one of them. Shaheen Shah Afridi was sensational with the new ball and the New Zealand openers will have to watch out for his fast in-swinging yorkers.

The Kiwis have not had the best of build-ups, having lost to Australia and England in the warm-ups. One of their main concerns is the fitness of skipper Kane Williamson, who has been battling elbow pain.

The Black Caps have a world-class bowling attack but their batters need to step up.

## TODAY'S MATCHES

South Africa	vs.	West Indies
DUBAI, 3.30 P.M. IST		
H 2 H IN T20 IS		
Played: 15		
South Africa	9	West Indies
6		
Pakistan	vs.	New Zealand
SHARJAH, 7.30 P.M. IST		
H 2 H IN T20 IS		
Played: 24		
Pakistan	14	New Zealand
10		

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD)

# India needs to put its thinking cap on after big loss

AMOL KARHADKAR  
DUBAI

Some things never change, especially for Indian cricket fans whenever its men's team suffers a crucial defeat. Just that the mode of expressing wrath has altered over the years.

From pelting stones and burning effigies till not so long ago to racially trolling certain players in the digital media age, the fans have persisted with their exaggerated emotional outburst.

### All is not lost

The fans may feel that the big battle on Sunday night against Pakistan in the ICC T20 World Cup opener has been lost. But, for the Indian team, the contest has just started. After all, India has four more group games left in order to finish in the top two and make it to the semifinals.

For that to happen, ho-

wever, the team management has a lot to ponder, especially with regard to team combination.

The XI that took the field on Sunday — six specialist batters, Ravindra Jadeja the all-rounder and four specialist bowlers — could have appeared to be tailor-made for T20 cricket a decade ago. But to consistently succeed in a rapidly-evolving T20 scenario, it appeared to be missing the much-needed zing.

### Hardik and injuries

Hardik Pandya was missing from the field in the latter half, having hurt his right shoulder while batting.

With the injuries having taken a toll on his body and being unable to bowl, India may have been served better with Ishan Kishan in place of Hardik.

Ishan's inclusion would not only enable India to keep the left- and right-hand com-



**Ideal fit:** India missed a trick by not including Ishan, known for his aggressive play, for the match against Pakistan. • AP

ination for most of the innings but also avoid letting things stagnate in the middle overs if Rohit Sharma and/or K.L. Rahul depart early, as it happened on Sunday.

If Ishan and Rishabh Pant are in the XI, one of them can be slotted in at No. 3 in case of an early wicket to en-

sure India keeps pressing the accelerator.

As for the bowling group, Bhuvneshwar Kumar should make way for Shardul Thakur to give a better option in the middle overs and down the order with the willow, if required.

With India having a six-

day break ahead of Sunday's must-win clash against New Zealand, the management will have to get the combination right.

Captain Virat Kohli asserted after the loss that the long gap will serve the team well to regroup. "It works really well for us from all points of view, knowing that we have played a full-fledged season already, we played the IPL, which is very high-octane by itself in testing conditions here in the UAE, and then we come into the World Cup," Kohli said on Sunday.

"These big breaks are definitely something that's going to help us as a team to be in the prime physical condition that we need to be in to play this high intensity tournament."

Besides physical recovery, India will have to utilise the week for tactical purposes in order to bounce back after a demoralising loss.

# Suarez to Atletico's rescue

Dybala helps Juventus split points with Inter Milan

## EURO LEAGUES

REUTERS  
MADRID

Luis Suarez scored a second half brace as Atletico Madrid came from two goals down to draw 2-2 at home against Spanish LaLiga leader Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Sociedad took an early lead when Swedish striker Alexander Isak set up Alexander Sorloth.

Isak got on the scoresheet three minutes after half-time with a clinical finish from a set piece.

However, Suarez rose to meet a pinpoint cross from Joao Felix around the hour mark to inspire the home fans. The Uruguayan completed the comeback for the champion when he was fouled in the area 13 minutes from time and once the penalty was ratified by VAR,



**Firing away:** Luis Suarez, second from right, rises high to score Atletico's first goal against Real Sociedad. • AP

converted it with ease.

In Serie A, Juventus snatched a last-gasp draw at champion Inter Milan on Sunday after Argentine forward Paulo Dybala scored a penalty following a VAR intervention.

In Ligue 1, Lionel Messi's first Le Classique ended in a 0-0 draw between Paris St.

Germain and Marseille.

### The results:

**LaLiga:** Atletico Madrid 2 (Suarez 61, 77-pen) drew with Real Sociedad 2 (Sorloth 7, Isak 48).  
**Serie A:** Inter Milan 1 (Dzeko 17) drew with Juventus 1 (Dybala 89-pen).

**Bundesliga:** Bochum 2 (Blum 3, Polter 90) bt Eintracht Frankfurt 0.

TV PICKS

**Men's T20 World Cup:** Super 12s: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



**Hornets beat Nets for third straight win**

**LOS ANGELES**  
Miles Bridges scored a team-high 32 points as Charlotte Hornets spoiled Brooklyn Nets' home debut with a 111-95 win on Sunday, its third straight victory.  
**The results:** Nets 95 lost to Hornets 111; Rockets 97 lost to Celtics 107; Knicks 104 lost to Magic 110; Thunder 103 lost to Warriors 119; Lakers 121 bt Grizzlies 118. AFP

**Michael Jordan sneakers sell for nearly \$1.5m**

**NEW YORK**  
A pair of sneakers worn by NBA superstar Michael Jordan sold for \$1,472,000 on Sunday, setting a record at auction for game-worn footwear, Sotheby's said. Jordan wore the Nike pair in the fifth game of his rookie season (1984) with Chicago Bulls. Sunday's sale easily beat the \$615,000-record fetched by the Nike Air Jordans at a Christie's auction in August 2020. AFP



**Karatsev too hot for Cilic; Kontaveit triumphs**

**MOSCOW**  
Aslan Karatsev cruised past Marin Cilic 6-2, 6-4 to win the Kremlin Cup final here on Sunday, while Estonian Anett Kontaveit took the women's title rallying to beat Ekaterina Alexandrova 4-6, 6-4, 7-5. AFP

**RSPB posts another win**

**KOLKATA**  
Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) maintained its winning streak as it beat Steel Plants Sports Board (SPSB) 7-2 in a Pool A match of the National women's inter-department hockey championship here on Monday.  
**The results: Pool A:** RSPB bt SPSB 7-2; **Pool B:** Sashtara Seema Bal bt Tamil Nadu Police 18-0.



**Li claims wins in Tenerife for maiden WTA crown**

**MADRID**  
American Ann Li beat Colombia's Camila Osorio 6-1, 6-4 on Sunday to claim her first WTA singles title at the Tenerife Open. World No. 60 Li, 21, secured victory in 70 minutes over teenager Osorio in the pair's first meeting. AFP

**India defeats Oman**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DUBAI**

The Indian football team defeated Oman 2-1 in the qualifiers of the AFC U-23 Asian Cup here on Sunday. Rahim Ali put India ahead as early as the seventh minute when he successfully converted from the spot.

Vikram doubled the lead in the 38th minute when he received the ball from Rahim and placed his shot past the goalkeeper.

Waleed halved India's lead when he scored in the 89th minute after receiving a cross from Abdullah.

"It was an exciting game. We (India) were trying for an early goal and we got that."

"After that, we changed tactics," India head coach Igor Stimac said after the match.

**Verstappen holds off Hamilton to win thriller**

Red Bull's Dutchman extends championship lead to 12 points; Perez finishes third

**US GRAND PRIX**

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE AUSTIN**

Max Verstappen held off a charging Lewis Hamilton to win the United States Grand Prix on Sunday and extend his lead to 12 points.

Verstappen, in a Red Bull, claimed his first victory at the Circuit of the Americas in front of 140,000 fans.

Mercedes' Hamilton had cut the deficit in the race to under a second on the penultimate lap but could not find a way through the Dutchman's impressive defence.

Sergio Perez completed the podium for Red Bull ahead of Charles Leclerc in a Ferrari and McLaren's Daniel Ricciardo. The victory, by 1.33 seconds, was Verstappen's eighth of the season at a track where Hamilton had won five times.

**The results:** 1. Max Verstappen (Red Bull) 1:34:36.552s; 2. Le-



**Riding high:** Verstappen claimed his first win on a track where Hamilton triumphed five times.

wis Hamilton (Mercedes) 1.333; 3. Sergio Perez (Red Bull) 42.223; 4. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari) 52.246; 5. Daniel Ricciardo (McLaren) 1:16.854; 6. Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes) 1:20.128; 7. Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari) 1:23.545; 8. Lando Norris (McLaren) 1:24.395; 9. Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) 1 lap; 10. Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin) 1 lap; 11. Antonio Giovinazzi (Alfa Romeo) 1 lap; 12. Lance Stroll (Aston Martin) 1 lap; 13. Kimi Raikkonen (Alfa Romeo) 1 lap;

14. George Russell (Williams) 1 lap; 15. Nicholas Latifi (Williams) 1 lap; 16. Mick Schumacher (Haas) 2 laps; 17. Nikita Mazepin (Haas) 2 laps.

**Did not finish:** Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri), Esteban Ocon (Alpine), Fernando Alonso (Alpine); **Fastest lap:** Hamilton 1:38.485 (42nd lap).

**Standings: Drivers:** 1. Verstappen (Ned) 287.5pts, 2. Hamilton (GBR) 275.5, 3. Bottas (Fin) 185, 4. Perez (Mex) 150, 5. Norris (GBR) 149, 6. Leclerc (Mon) 128, 7. Sainz Jr. (Esp) 122.5, 8. Ricciardo (Aus) 105, 9. Gasly (Fra) 74, 10. Alonso (Esp) 58, 11. Ocon (Fra) 46, 12. Vettel (Ger) 36, 13. Stroll (Can) 26, 14. Tsunoda (Jpn) 20, 15. Russell (GBR) 16, 16. Latifi (Can) 7, 17. Raikkonen (Fin) 6, 18. Giovinazzi (Ita) 1, 19. Schumacher (Ger) 0, 20. Mazepin (Rus) 0, 21. Robert Kubica (Pol) 0.

**Constructors:** 1. Mercedes 460.5, 2. Red Bull 437.5, 3. McLaren 254, 4. Ferrari 250.5, 5. Alpine 104, 6. AlphaTauri 94, 7. Aston Martin 62, 8. Williams 23, 9. Alfa Romeo 7, 10. Haas 0.

**Top swimmers to kick-start preparations for major events**

Srihari targeting 10 medals in the senior Nationals starting on Tuesday

**AQUATICS**

**N. SUDARSHAN BENGALURU**

India's top swimmers will return to the pool for a home competition after two long years when the 74th senior National aquatic championship gets underway here on Tuesday.

Though quite early in the fresh Olympic cycle leading up to Paris 2024, the meet assumes significance as it is a qualifying event for the FINA World Short Course Championship (Abu Dhabi, December 2022) and the FINA World Championships (Fu-

kuoka, May 2022).

With the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games also a part of the 2022 calendar, swimmers would want to kick-start their preparations in earnest.

"It is an important meet. We will get a good idea as to where we are and what we need to work on moving into the next season," said ace backstroker Srihari Nataraj, who will look to further Karnataka's dominance after its stellar show in the sub-junior and junior Nationals last week. There are few events where I will be putting in more than the others. I have been enjoying training for

100m and 200m freestyle. In backstroke, I just want to check where I am. We have a very good relay team too. Let's see if I can come out of this Nationals with a perfect 10. Last edition, I won eight golds."

Fellow Olympian Maana Patel, from Gujarat, will brace for a challenge from the fast-rising Karnataka swimmer Ridhima Veerendrakumar, who has been in outstanding form.

"I was winning quite comfortably in the Nationals before. So, it's good to have competition," said Maana. "Ridhima broke two of my records in the junior meet.

Earlier, I was the one challenging and breaking records. So, this is something different I'll be experiencing," the 21-year-old added.

**Focus on water polo**  
There will be special focus on men's water polo, with the Swimming Federation of India prioritising it for the Asian Games.

Slobodan Soro, a coach from Tokyo 2020 men's gold medalist Serbia, is set to travel to Bengaluru during the Nationals and help select 25 players for a 45-day camp in November-December and 17 core probabilities for a 30-day camp next year.



**Maana Patel.**  
\*FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

**Juliette lives up to her billing in feature**

**HYDERABAD:** Champion mare Juliette, piloted by A. Sandesh, won the Golconda St. Leger, the last Classic of the Hyderabad Monsoon season, at the concluding day's races here on Monday (Oct. 25). The winner is owned by M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar of Chennidand Charitable Trust rep. by Mr. A.C. Muthiah. Karthik Ganapathy trains the winner. Sandesh calmly kept this Musketter's daughter third, almost a distance behind the front running pair, till 1200m. She accelerated well to cover the leeway near 600m and in the home-stretch sped away to score a resounding victory.

**LEADING OWNER:** M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar of Chennidand Charitable Trust rep. by Mr. A.C. Muthiah.

**LEADING TRAINER:** R.H. Sequeira and D. Netto (19 winners each).

**LEADING JOCKEY:** Akshay Kumar (35 winners).

**LEADING APPRENTICE JOCKEY:** Gaurav Singh (7 winners).

**1. MIDNIGHT COWBOY PLATE (DIV. I)** (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III); **RYTHM SELECTION (Md. Ismail)** 1, Explosive (B.R. Kumar) 2, City Of Blessing (Mukesh Kumar) 3 and Star Babe (Akshay Kumar) 4, 1-3/4 and Nk. Im. 26.21s. \$495 (w), 126, 25 and 14 (p). SHP: 91, THP: 58, SHW: 317 and 63, FP: 17, 216, Q: 4.693, Tanala: 61, 252. Favourite: Able Love. Owner: Mr. Syed Abdul Subhan. Trainer: Mir Faiyaz Ali Khan.

**2. MIDNIGHT COWBOY PLATE (DIV. II)** (1,200m) Maiden, 3-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III); **THANKS (Nakhat Singh)** 1, Gregor Clegane (Mukesh Kumar) 2, Total Darc (Afroz Khan) 3 and Hot Set (Akshay Kumar) 4, 3/4, 2-1/4 and



**Recognising a champion:** Juliette's trainer Karthik Ganapathy, left, receiving the Golconda St. Leger trophy from HRC steward Hari Kishen Gupta, right, as stewards N.V.R. Narasimha Reddy and K. Bhupal Reddy look on.

**3/4. Im.** 14.68s. \$31 (w), 13, 14 and 15 (p). SHP: 41, THP: 34, SHW: 17 and 18, FP: 103, Q: 42, Tanala: 253. Favourite: Gregor Clegane. Owner: Mrs. Lingala Aarti Reddy. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

**4. NEON PLATE (DIV. I)** (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III); **BEDAZZLED (Ajjeeth Kumar)** 1, Win Vision (Santosh Raj) 2, Dillon (Gaurav Singh) 3 and Lorena (Deepak Singh) 4, 1-1/4, 1-1/4 and Nose. Im. 28.35s. \$142 (w), 24, 15 and 18 (p). SHP: 36, THP: 54, SHW: 39 and 12 (p), FP: 460, Q: 89, Tanala: 2.220. Favourite: Win Vision. Owner: Mr. Syed Abdul Subhan. Trainer: Mir Faiyaz Ali Khan.

**5. BOLD VENTURE PLATE (1,200m)**, 4-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II); **LAGOS (Deepak Singh)** 1, Green Turf (Abhay Singh) 2, Mirana (Akshay Kumar) 3 and Different (Md. Ismail) 4, 2, 2-3/4 and 1/2. Im. 12.79s. \$16 (w), 15, 22 and 17 (p). SHP: 88, THP: 54, SHW: 12 and 88 (p). FP: 128, Q: 122, Tanala: 642. Favourite: Lagos. Owners: Mr. S. Pathy & Mr. B.E. Vasanth Kumar. Trainer: D. Netto.

**6. GOLCONDA ST. LEGER (GR. 2)** (2,800m) (TERMS), 4-y-o & 5-y-o & UPWARD: **JULIETTE (MUSKETTIER-**

**GIMMESUMSUGAR)** 1, BISATE (Western Aristocrat-Verbier) (Akshay Kumar) 2, POINT TO PROVE (Multidimensional-Buroo) (Antony Raj) 3 and LOMBARDY (Leitir Mor-Lombardia) (Ashad Asbar) 4, 3-1/2, 3-1/2 and Dist. 3m, 0.31s. \$11 (w), 10 and 13 (p). SHP: 20, THP: 26, SHW: 10 and 24, FP: 23, Q: 20. Favourite: Juliette. Owner: M.A.M. Ramaswamy Chettiar of Chennidand Charitable Trust rep. by A.C. Muthiah. Trainer: Karthik Ganapathy.

**7. NEON PLATE (DIV. II)** (1,400m), 4-y-o & upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III); **THEO'S CHOICE (Santosh Raj)** 1, Lightening Fairy (Ajjeeth Kumar) 2, Winning Player (Gaurav Singh) 3 and Ice Berry (C.P. Bopanna) 4. Not run: Royal Avenger. Nk, 1 and Nk. Im. 29.07s. \$93 (w), 21, 30 and 15 (p). SHP: 73, THP: 42, SHW: 43 and 104, FP: 2.455, Q: 639, Tanala: 18, 173. Favourite: Turning Wheel. Owner: Mr. Maddali Sai Kumar. Trainer: G. Shashikanth. Jackpot: 70%; ₹2,42,161 (c/o) & 30%; 1,03, 783 (1 tkt.). Treble: (i) 1,379 (40 tmts.), (ii) 262 (255 tmts.). Mini jackpot: (i) 48, 916 (c/o), (ii) 7, 333 (15 tmts.).

**Simranjit dethrones Pwilao**

Shiksha and Manisha run up impressive wins

**BOXING**

**Y.B. SARANGI HISAR**

Olympian Simranjit Kaur gave a clinical performance to beat defending champion Pwilao Basumatary by a split decision in a 60kg quarterfinal bout in the National women's boxing championships at the St. Joseph International School here on Monday.

A World championship bronze medallist, Simranjit used her long reach and accurate combinations against her hard-hitting opponent to record a 4-1 victory and assure herself of a berth in the semifinals.

**Fascinating contest**

In another fascinating contest, Shiksha of Railways staved off a strong challenge from World youth champion Babyrojisana Chanu to post a 5-0 win in a 54kg bout.

Shiksha, who got a warning in the third round, boxed from a distance and relied on her counter-attacks against Babyrojisana's explosive attacks.

Former Asian Bronze medalist Manisha Moun executed her plans well to beat



**In control:** Manisha Moun, left, proved too good for Radha Patidar. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Radha Patidar of Madhya Pradesh 5-0 in a 57kg quarterfinal duel.

**Important results (quarterfinals):** **48kg:** Manju Rani (RSPB) bt Simran (Chd) 5-0, **50kg:** Srisha Jampuu (TN) bt Jyotika Bisht (HP) 5-0, **57kg:** Nikhat Zareen (Har) bt Amisha Bharti (Asm) 5-0, **60kg:** Ramya Guduru (AP) bt Neha Bai (Jha) 5-0, **66kg:** Anushita Boro (Asm) bt Laubutsishi (AIP) 5-0, **70kg:** Anamika (RSPB) bt Sanjjeeta (Har) 5-0, **75kg:** Nikhat Zareen (Tel) bt Manju Basumatary (Asm) 5-0, **81kg:** Jyoti Gulia (RSPB) bt Vanlalduati (AIP) 5-0, **54kg:** Jamuna Boro (Asm) bt Gayatri Kasnyal (Utk) 5-0, **Shiksha** (RSPB) bt Babyrojisana Chanu (Man) 5-0, **57kg:** Poonam (Har) bt Mandeep Kaur (Pun) 4-1, **Manisha Moun** (AIP) bt Radha

Patidar (MP) 5-0, **Sonia Lather** (RSPB) bt Vinakshi Dhota (HP) 5-0; **60kg:** Simranjit Kaur (Pun) bt Pwilao Basumatary (Asm) 4-1, **Jaismine** (Har) bt Ritu (Chd) 5-0; **63kg:** Parveen (Har) bt Manju Baborria (MP) 5-0.

**66kg:** Ankushita Boro (Asm) bt Laubutsishi (AIP) 5-0, **Niharika** Gonella (Tel) bt Babita Bisht (Utk) 5-0; **70kg:** Srisha Jampuu (Goa) bt Shivani Bharti (Bih) 3-2, **Arunadhathi** Choudhary (Raj) bt Shretima Thakur (HP) 5-0.

**75kg:** Saweety (Har) bt Kavita (Utk) 5-0.

**81kg:** Pooja Rani (Har) bt Sakshi Gaidhani (Mah) 5-0, **Kavita** Goyat (AIP) bt Anaswara P.M. (Ker) 5-0; **81kg:** Kanwaljit Kaur (Pun) bt Lipakshi (Raj) 4-1.

**Manish keen to shine in CWG, Asian Games**

"The Olympics was a good experience and I gave my best"

**Y.B. SARANGI HISAR**

After his Olympics debut in Tokyo, Manish Kaushik has returned to training at the Army Sports Institute in Pune with an aim to perform well in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games next year.

Manish missed the Services selection trials for the National championships due to his post-Olympic Games engagements and could not make it to the World championships. However, he wasted no time in getting back to training. "The Olympics was a



**Manish Kaushik.** \*FILE PHOTO

good experience and I gave my best. My training was affected as I had COVID-19 two months before the Games. "After the meeting with

**Reshma knocks out Arthi**

Ranjeet bounces back to win



**Superior:** Digvijay Pratap Singh knocked out the National junior champion Chirag Duhan. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

**TENNIS**

**KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI**

Reshma Maruri played a sharp and steady game to knock out the seventh seed Arthi Muniyan 6-2, 6-1 in the women's first round of the Fenesta National tennis championship at the DLTA Complex here on Monday.

Arthi played well, but lacked the match experience in recent weeks, against an opponent who has been regularly playing matches at the national level, including the junior Nationals at the same venue.

Fourth seed Sai Samhitha overcame a late surge from Kashish Bhatia to pull through in straight sets. Top seed Zeel Desai had to work her way past the gritty Yubrani Banerjee, despite dropping only three games.

**Smart play**

In the men's section, Fardeen Qamar was quite smart in blunting the power play of Chinmay Dev Chauhan 6-4, 7-6(6).

Former national champion V.M. Ranjeet recovered from losing the first set to fluently stroke his way past Yugal Bansal. Another former national champion Daliwinder Singh beat Bharath Kumaran to set up a pre-

quarterfinal against Digvijay Pratap Singh.

Digvijay outplayed the young Chirag Duhan for the loss of two games, even though the latter showed glimpses of his strong game. It looked a sheer lack of match exposure that stopped Chirag from playing his best.

Once the final qualifying match in the men's event was finished in the morning, one of the qualifiers, national junior champion Karan Singh was drawn to play the fourth seed Paras Dahiya.

Vishnu Vardhan, who won three rounds in the qualifying event, will play Adil Kalyanpur.

**The results (first round): Men:** Prithvi Sekhar bt Kunal Anand 6-3, 6-2; Fardeen Qamar bt Chinmay Dev Chauhan 6-4, 7-6(6); Rishi Reddy bt Raghav Jaisinghani 6-2, 6-1; Prajwal Dev bt Lakshya Gupta 6-4, 6-2; VM Ranjeet bt Yugal Bansal 5-7, 6-3, 6-1; Dalwinder Singh bt Bharath Kumaran 6-2, 6-2; Digvijay Pratap Singh bt Chirag Duhan 6-1, 6-1. **Women:** Zeel Desai bt Yubrani Banerjee 6-1, 6-2; Shreya Tatavarthy bt Pratibha Narayan 6-2, 6-3; Nidhi Chilumula bt Sai Dedeppya 6-3, 6-2; Shrivalli Bhamidipaty bt Ayushi Singh 6-1, 6-0; Sai Samhitha bt Kashish Bhatia 6-1, 7-5; Jagmeet Kaur bt Veda Varshita Ranabothu 6-2, 6-1; Reshma Maruri bt Arthi Muniyan 6-2, 6-1; Akanksha Nitteur bt Ishwari Akera 6-2, 6-0.

**Stokes in Ashes squad**

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON**

All-rounder Ben Stokes has been added to the England squad for the tour of Australia later this year, delivering a huge boost to its bid to reclaim the Ashes.

The 30-year-old said he is refreshed after having taken time out for his mental health as well as to undergo two operations on a fractured left index finger.

"I had a break to prioritise my mental well-being and I got my finger sorted out," said Stokes in an ECB statement on Monday.

Ashley Giles, ECB managing director of men's cricket, said Stokes' return to the squad was terrific news, but, due to lack of game time, they needed to move cautiously.

"I had a break to prioritise my mental well-being and I got my finger sorted out," said Stokes in an ECB statement on Monday.

Ashley Giles, ECB managing director of men's cricket, said Stokes' return to the squad was terrific news, but, due to lack of game time, they needed to move cautiously.



**Ben Stokes.** \*FILE PHOTO

would like to participate in both if I don't have any injury issues.

"There is enough time to prepare for the events. When the National camp starts, we will get to know whether we can get any exposure trips in the run-up."

**Short break**

Manish is on a short break to attend a special function where Arjuna awardees of last year would be presented the trophies in Delhi on November 1.

The event was held virtually due to COVID-19 last year.