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**IN BRIEF**



**Chinese patrolling slightly up in east: Army**  
 TENGGA (ARUNACHAL PRADESH)  
 There has been a marginal increase in Chinese patrols in the eastern sector along the Line of Actual Control, said Lt. Gen. Manoj Pande, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Army Command.  
**NEWS** ▶ PAGE 8

**Customer flags Zomato support staff's behaviour**

CHENNAI  
 Online food aggregator Zomato was widely criticised on Tuesday after a support staff told a customer from Tamil Nadu that everyone should speak a little Hindi.  
**STATES** ▶ PAGE 3

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**OPPORTUNITIES** ▶ PAGE 3

## Uttarakhand rain toll touches 47

Most rivers in spate, Kumaon worst hit; access to battered Nainital restored

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DEHRADUN/NAINITAL**  
 Forty-two more people were reported killed in Uttarakhand's Kumaon region on Tuesday as several houses collapsed following the incessant downpour, taking the toll due to rain-related incidents to 47.

The connectivity to Nainital was restored in the evening after hours of struggle amid inclement weather, officials said.

"The number of casualties in the Kumaon region alone has crossed 40," DIG Nilesh Anand Bhanu said.

Twenty-eight people were killed in Nainital district, six each in Almora and Champawat, and one each in Pithoragarh and Udham Singh Nagar districts, the official said.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami undertook an aerial survey of the rain-hit areas and also interacted with the affected people. Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Mr. Dhami on



**Rattled hills:** An under-construction bridge over a river at Chalthi in Almora district of Uttarakhand, which collapsed on Tuesday. •AFP

the phone and assured him of all help.

Interacting with the disaster-affected people in Rudrapur, Nainital and Udham Singh Nagar districts, Mr. Dhami said people need to have patience in this hour of

crisis. The Chief Minister announced compensation of ₹4 lakh each to the next of kin of those killed in rain-related incidents.

DIG Bhanu said that despite bad weather and continuing showers, the blocked

roads in Nainital were cleared. With connectivity restored, stranded tourists began to leave for their destinations through Kaladhungi and Haldwani, he said.

**CONTINUED ON** ▶ PAGE 8

## Many people yet to get second dose, says Centre

'Govt. ready to give more doses to States to step up drive'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

A sizeable number of eligible COVID-19 vaccination beneficiaries have not received their second dose, and the States have been asked to focus on this, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has said.

He reviewed the progress of vaccination with senior health officials of the States and the Union Territories (UTs) earlier this week.

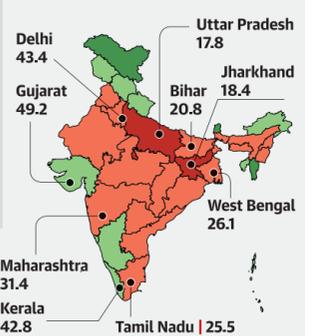
The country launched the vaccination programme on January 16.

Mr. Bhushan noted that the nation was close to administering a billion doses. Many States had adequate doses to vaccinate those awaiting the second dose. "The Central Government is in a position to provide additional vaccine doses to the States/UTs so that they can

**Full coverage, not yet**

Only about 30.4% of India's adult population has received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine until October 18

% of fully vaccinated adults



complete the second dose vaccination. We also need to improve the momentum of the vaccination drive."

The Health Ministry said the Government had advised the States and the UTs to identify and prioritise districts having low coverage for focused action.

The Ministry pointed out that it was in the process of reviewing international travel guidelines in consultation with all stakeholders, including the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Bureau of Immigration, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and the Ministry of External Affairs.

## Amarinder to launch own party

'Open to seat arrangement with BJP if farmers' issue resolved'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH**

Former Punjab Chief Minister and Congress leader Amarinder Singh on Tuesday announced that he would launch his political party, saying that an alliance with the BJP was on the cards if the farmers' concerns were resolved.



Captain Amarinder Singh

**Like-minded parties**

Capt. Singh (retd.), who had quit as CM saying that he had been "humiliated", said he was willing to work with like-minded parties, including breakaway Akali Dal groups. "The battle for Punjab's future is on. Will soon announce

the launch of my own political party to serve the interests of Punjab & its people, including our farmers who've been fighting for their survival for over a year," said Capt. Singh, as quoted by his media adviser Raveen Thukral on Twitter.

## T.N. man drowns after boat rams Lankan vessel

**C. JAISANKAR MEERA SRINIVASAN PUDUKOTTAI/COLOMBO**

A fisherman from Kottaipattinam in Pudukkottai district reportedly died after falling into the sea when his boat collided with a Sri Lankan naval vessel on Monday. Two other fishermen on the boat were detained by Sri Lankan naval personnel on the charge of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

Rajkiran, 30, Suganthan, 23, and Arockia Xavier, 32, of Kottaipattinam, had ventured into the sea on Monday, said sources.

**CONTINUED ON** ▶ PAGE 8

## Killings spark migrant flight from J&K

Security tightened around railway stations, bus stops

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA JAMMU**

Thousands of migrant workers fleeing Kashmir along with their families queued up outside ticket counters of railway stations and bus stops here on Tuesday, with the targeted killing of minorities and non-locals by terrorists triggering an exodus.

Security in and around railway stations and bus stands in Jammu and Udhampur had been tightened as a precautionary measure as people had been arriving in large numbers, desperate



**Panic mode:** Migrant labourers arriving at a bus stand in Jammu on Tuesday to return home. •PTI

to leave, and more were on the way, officials said.

According to rough estimates, three lakh to four lakh migrant labourers -

most of them Hindus from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand - come to the Valley every year in early March

and return before the onset of winter in November. But the selective killings over the last fortnight have triggered panic, forcing them to leave earlier.

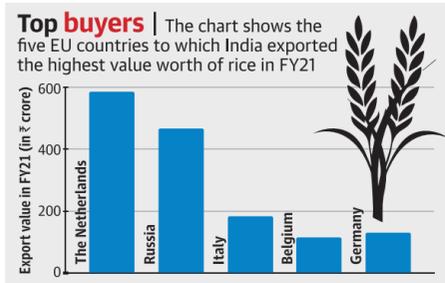
**Poonch operation**

Meanwhile, as the counter-insurgency operation in the forest belt of Jammu and Kashmir's twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri entered the ninth day, public announcements were made from local mosques in the Mendhar area asking residents to stay indoors, officials said, as the security forces were preparing a final assault.

**CONTINUED ON** ▶ PAGE 8

## EU food recall linked to GM rice from India

No GM rice grown in India: Ministry



**PRISCILLA JEBARAJ NEW DELHI**

When candy giant Mars Wrigley carried out a mass recall of several batches of its Crispy M&Ms across Europe this August, it was due to the use of one ingredient: rice flour with genetically modified (GM) contamination that allegedly originated in India, according to notifications on the European Commission's rapid alert system.

However, the Commerce Ministry pointed out that GM rice is not grown commercially in India, let alone exported, and promised a thorough enquiry by its agricultural exports authority.

The Ministry alleged that the case was a "futile conspiracy to malign the image of India as a reliable food security provider".

Worried farmers' groups and environmental activists, however, noted that multiple GM rice varieties had been approved for confined field trials, and warned that any cross-con-

tamination could dampen the country's agricultural export ambitions.

India's annual rice exports amount to 18 million tonnes worth ₹65,000 crore, and reach more than 75 countries, according to the Ministry.

According to the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, 500 tonnes of broken rice imported from India and converted into rice flour by a French company named Westhove was flagged during a regular check.

On June 21, France issued a notification for unauthorised genetically modified rice flour, identifying India as the point of origin and alerted Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and the U.S. as possible destinations of products made with the flour.

**CONTINUED ON** ▶ PAGE 8

## '40% Cong. candidates in U.P. will be women'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LUCKNOW**

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday announced that 40% of the candidates fielded by the party for the 2022

Uttar Pradesh Assembly election would be women.

However, she was non-committal on whether she would contest.

"I have not taken this decision yet. There is still some

time for the election. I will think about this and take a decision," Ms. Vadra said at a press conference in the State capital.

**DETAILS** ▶ PAGE 9

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## Capital's air quality deteriorates

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The air quality of the city slightly deteriorated to "satisfactory" level on Tuesday, from "good" category on Monday and is expected to remain in the same level for a day, as per official data.

"Local land surfaces are wet and so dust re-suspension is the minimum, which leads to low PM10 [one of the major pollutants]. Presence of western disturbance has led to scattered rainfall over north India and related low biomass burning. This condition improved AQI with low PM2.5 [another pollutant]," government-run monitoring agency SAFAR said.

The AQI of Delhi was 69 on Tuesday, up from 46 on Monday, as per the Central Pollution Control Board's 4 p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours and considered the day's AQI. Air pollution spikes during the winter chiefly due to a combined effect of stubble burning and climatic conditions.

## DPCC imposes ₹90L fine on 286 construction sites

Penalty for violating dust control norms

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) has imposed ₹90 lakh penalty on 286 construction sites, which were found violating dust control norms since October 7, according to authorities. The government has also warned of serious repercussions if rules to control dust are not followed.

"DPCC teams have visited 1,105 construction sites so far and norms are being followed at most sites. Citizens are actively bolstering our efforts," said Environment Minister Gopal Rai, adding that all teams have been instructed to submit daily reports. "Instructions have also been given that strict action should be taken against every single agency causing dust pollution, so that it can be controlled," he added.

The Delhi government has been running an anti-dust campaign since October 7. Thirty-one teams have been formed and they are working in different areas to monitor whether construc-



**Instructions have also been given that strict action should be taken against every single agency causing dust pollution**

GOPAL RAI  
Environment Minister

tion agencies are following guidelines issued by the government.

"The Delhi government has also launched the Green Delhi app so that if people see any kind of pollution, then they can complain to the government through it. Immediate action is taken on the complaints received. It is an appeal to all the people to download the app on their mobile phones," Mr. Rai said.

## Aspiring model stabbed to death

Police suspect it to be a case of unrequited love; victim was attacked near her house

HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI

The dreams of a 24-year-old woman aspiring to become a make-up artist and model were shattered when she was stabbed to death allegedly by a man suspected to be in unrequited love with her. The incident occurred late on Monday night in Dwarka's Bindapur area.

Dolly Babbar, who was fondly called Kishu by her family and friends, was stabbed at least three times, barely a few metres away from her house.

At Om Vihar crematorium, recalling the events of Monday night, Dolly's father Sudarshan Kumar Babbar, an auto driver, said that around 11.30 p.m., Dolly told her grandmother that she was leaving for her friend's cake-cutting function in Uttam Nagar's Om Vihar and would be back in an hour.

However, the police woke the family up around 2.30



Dolly Babbar

a.m. and took them to the spot. "I saw my daughter bleeding and sitting on the road face down. I don't know whether she was alive or dead but the police called for an ambulance, which came an hour late and we just kept sitting there looking at her body from a distance," said Mr. Babbar, criticising the police for keeping them in the dark. "What if she was alive and the police didn't call the ambulance on time?" he asked.

Later, neighbours narrated the incident to the family, which the CCTV corroborated. "In the CCTV footage,

three men are visible. We know all of them as they stay in the same area and have been friends with Kishu. One of them attacked her with a knife after which she ran towards our street, bleeding from her arm. She then called her friend for help. Within minutes, this man returned and struck her again. The three of them then fled," Mr. Babbar said.

According to the family, the two men, who were seen with the prime suspect, were close to Dolly and she used to tie rakhis on their wrists. When the man attacked her, she was hiding behind the other two, the family said. Neighbours have also told them that she was fighting with someone over the phone. "When people saw her crying for help, no one came out of their house," her father said.

"She called her friend for help, who then immediately alerted us. But my wife was

half asleep and didn't take it seriously," Mr. Babbar said, crying. "Now, she [mother] will not be able to forgive herself," he said. Dolly was declared brought dead at the hospital.

### Motive unclear

DCP (Dwarka) Shankar Chaudhary said the motive remained unclear and they could ascertain it only after the three suspects are in their custody. However, it is suspected that the victim and the prime accused were in a relationship and he was upset that she wasn't with him anymore. The police said they are yet to ascertain whether the murder was planned or happened on the spur of the moment.

Dolly's family said they had planned to get her married to the man she liked, in less than a year. "He was the one she had called for help. He has also given his statement," Mr. Babbar said.

## Five held for siphoning off ₹1.35 cr. from NRI's account

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Five people, including a bank employee, have been arrested for allegedly siphoning off ₹1.35 crore from the account of a German-based NRI, the police said on Tuesday. The accused have been identified as Sumit Pandey (24), Shailendra Pratap Singh (42), Neelam (32), Jagdamba Prasad Pandey (22), and Adarsh Jaiswal (23).

According to the police, in November last year, Kanika Girdhar, an NRI residing in Germany, approached them saying that ₹1.35 crore had been siphoned off from her account with a private bank in Rajindar Nagar. When she approached the bank, she was told that a person who introduced himself as Vishal, her brother, had collected her fresh cheque book and ATM card, but she had never requested the bank to issue anything.

During investigation, the involvement of Mr. Sumit Pandey, an employee of the bank, was revealed following which he was arrested. He told the police that after he got to know about the amount in Ms. Girdhar's account, he shared this with Mr. Singh.

Mr. Singh set up a fake construction company in Faridabad and hired 10 labourers, and got their accounts opened in different banks. "He got the mobile number registered with Ms. Girdhar's account reissued in that of a labourer and installed the internet banking app on this SIM," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Shweta Chauhan said. Ms. Neelam, posing as Ms. Girdhar, then requested the bank's customer care to reissue the cheque book and ATM card.

## After 8 days, city sees first virus death

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The city reported one new COVID-19 death in 24 hours – first death in nine days – and the total number of deaths stood at 25,090, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday.

Thirty-six new cases were reported, taking the total cases to 14,39,441. A total of 58,729 tests were done in a day and the test positivity rate was 0.06%.

Of the total cases, 14,14,029 people have recovered and there are 322 active cases. The number of people under home isolation stands at 103.

## AAP blames corporations' 'criminal negligence' for rising dengue cases

CM should stop spending on advertising, help civic bodies: BJP

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday alleged that the criminal negligence of the BJP-ruled municipal corporations was responsible for the rising dengue cases in the city. It also accused BJP leaders of pocketing the money meant for purchasing medicines and machines to fight the vector-borne disease.

"The BJP-ruled corporations have the responsibility to prevent malaria and dengue under the DMC Act. But they have washed their hands of that responsibility. Not a single step has been ta-

ken in time to arrest the spread of dengue, and as a result, cases are on the rise in Delhi," AAP MLA Atishi said.

The AAP leader said it is mandatory to have 10-15 breeding checkers for every ward. "More than 70% posts are vacant in the anti-malaria department of the corporations due to misgovernance and corruption by the BJP," she said.

Ms. Atishi further said that at least one fogging machine is required in every ward, but the corporations do not have adequate machines. "Where did the money allocated for the machines in the budget

go? The South Delhi civic body has 104 wards, but there are only 16 fogging machines" she said.

Reacting to the allegations, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said "nothing can be more shameful" than Ms. Atishi's statement that the corporations are not doing anything to check the spread of dengue and malaria in the city.

Mr. Kapoor urged the AAP leader to ask the CM to "stop wasting money on advertising" and instead help the corporations financially to better control the spread of dengue and malaria.

We are taking all necessary COVID-19 Precautionary Measures

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आप की सरकार

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**DELHI**

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RISE 17:51 SET 05:55

THURSDAY, OCT. 21  
RISE 06:26 SET 17:46  
RISE 18:21 SET 06:50

FRIDAY, OCT. 22  
RISE 06:26 SET 17:45  
RISE 18:54 SET 07:45

**Delhi Weather** max min  
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Palam 30 21

**Delhi Palam Today**  
33°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be hazy and slight cool. Day will be warm. Night also will be slight cool.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
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# A.P. govt. likely to hire Central Vista architect

'Company's experience in public buildings commendable'

NISTULA HEBBAR  
MAHESH LANGA  
NEW DELHI/AHMEDABAD

The Andhra Pradesh Government is likely to rope in Bimal Patel, the architect of the Central Vista in New Delhi, for its tri-city spread of government offices and Assembly buildings, with the executive branch in the port city of Visakhapatnam.

"The Andhra Pradesh Government plans to shift its executive wing, including the Chief Minister's Office, to Visakhapatnam. There is a court case with regard to some plans that need to be sorted out, but the tri-city plans are still on," said a senior State official.

The land acquired in Amaravati would be used to set up Assembly build-



Bimal Patel

ings, and the Andhra Pradesh High Court would come up in Kurnool.

"The Andhra Pradesh Government has shortlisted Patel's firm for the project as the company's experience in public buildings is commendable," said the source.

Speaking to *The Hindu*,

Mr. Patel said, "As of now, we are doing a guest house project for Andhra Pradesh. Government officials said court cases needed to be settled before anything could go ahead formally."

Mr. Patel is the man behind the Central Vista project redrawing the Parliament building and much of the office space of the Central Ministries. He designed the Ahmedabad riverfront project, and is currently involved in the redevelopment of Sabar-mati Ashram, established by Mahatma Gandhi.

Amaravati was earlier finalised as the capital of Andhra Pradesh, and extensive land acquisition was done. The election of Jagan Mohan Reddy as CM in 2019, however, led to a change of plans.

# BSF issue yet another jolt to Punjab: Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Union Government's decision to enhance the powers of the Border Security Force (BSF) in Punjab is yet another jolt to the State, according to the State's Technical Education Minister, Rana Gurjeet Singh.

## 'Pass a resolution'

Mr. Singh on Tuesday said he would request Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi to convene a one-day session of the Assembly to pass a resolution and to take up the matter with the Centre to reconsider the BSF jurisdiction extension and also lead a delegation of all stakeholders for a meeting with the Prime Minister. The State's agriculture sector, especially in the border area, was already under stress and extension of the BSF jurisdiction would further add to their difficulties, he stated.

"There is a dire need to reconsider the jurisdiction issue in concurrence with the State and grant special incentives on a par with the northeastern States," Rana Gurjeet Singh remarked.

On Monday, Chief Minister Channi declared that his government would not accept the Centre's decision on the BSF's jurisdiction, which he termed was "against the spirit of federalism."

# NH-9 to remain shut till Nov. 10

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GHAZIABAD

The police have announced traffic diversions on NH 9 that will remain closed till November 10 in the wake of Ganga water pipeline repair works. The vehicles would be per-

mitted to ply from Tigri round about to Noida and Ghaziabad and vice versa.

The repair work would be carried out by the NHAI between Tigri cut under pass and Rahul Vihar underpass.

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, GENERATION DIVISION LJHP BARAMULLA**  
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1	Date of issue of Tender Notice	13-10-2021
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	14-10-2021 to 28-10-2021
3	Bid submission start date	14-10-2021
4	Bid Submission end date	28-10-2021
5	Deadline for receiving the hard copies (CDR & EMD).	29-10-2021
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bid (Online).	30-10-2021

- The complete bidding process will be online. The hard copy of bids must be submitted in two separate covers. Cover one shall distinctly marked as "COVER-I" and shall contain techno commercial bid. Cover II shall contain 5% Bid security to be submitted by successful bidder before placement of LOA and Cost of tender document in the form of Bank Draft.
- Bid documents can be downloaded from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). The bid documents contain Qualifying criteria for the bidders, specifications, Bill of Quantities, terms & conditions and other details. The following authenticated documents are to be submitted along with the tender; otherwise the tender will be liable to rejection.
  - Proof of purchase of tender document.
  - Prescribed EMD (i.e 5% Bid security to be submitted by successful bidder before placement of LOA)
  - Copy of Registration certificate
  - Copy of valid GST Registration Certificate.
  - Copy of IT PAN card.
  - Copy of LOAs/ Documentary evidence of having executed similar jobs as per technical criteria
  - Documentary evidence of financial capability/ly authenticated by the Chartered Accountant Registered with Indian Institute of Accountant with FRN No.
  - Manpower details, workshop equipments & testing lab information including details of tests being carried out.
  - Affidavit indicating therein that there is no pending litigation pending against the firm.
  - Affidavit indicating therein that the firm has not been debarred by any Govt. of India / State Govt. / PSU.

**The bidder shall satisfactorily meet the following Qualifying Criteria as per CVC guidelines:-**

**Technical Criteria:** Experience of having successfully completed similar works during last 7 years ending last day of month previous to the one in which applications are invited should be either of the following -

- Three similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of the estimated cost.
- Two similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 50% of the estimated cost.
- One similar completed work costing not less than the amount equal to 80% of the estimated cost.

**Definition of similar Work means 'Repair / Reclamation of 14 MVA Power Transformer or above**

**Financial Criteria**

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- Authority reserves the right to: -
  - Increase / Decrease the quantity of work.
  - Reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.
  - A Joint Venture can also participate in tendering process.

"A joint venture/Subsidiary Company" can also participate in this tender on the basis of technical and financial capability of their 'Parent Company' provided the joint venture/Subsidiary Company encloses the documentary evidence of having the support of 'Parent Company' for this work package to the satisfaction of the Employer. Past experience and financial capability of such 'Parent Company' shall be considered for per-qualification of such Applicant joint venture/Subsidiary Company".

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Generation Division LJHP  
Gantamulla Baramulla

No GD /LJHP/Tech/401-13  
Dated: 13.10.2021  
DIPK-NB-4275/21

# Kerala braces for more rainfall from today

Residents along river banks cautioned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With the India Meteorology Department (IMD) warning of another bout of heavy rainfall in the run-up to the northeast monsoon, the Kerala Government sounded an alert on Tuesday on landslips and flooding. It mobilised the administration for emergency response and disaster relief.

A press note from the Chief Minister's Office directed people residing in high ranges and riverbanks to be extremely cautious, considering the possibility of heavy rain from October 20 to 23.

Noting that many parts of the State were especially prone to landslips, mudslides and overflowing rivers during the last phase of the southwest monsoon, it said intense spells of rain could unleash havoc.

As many as 11 National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams have been deployed in various districts to assist the administration, along with two teams each of the Indian Army and the Defence Security Corps. Be-



**Helping hands:** Fishermen arriving at Aluva to help out with rescue operations on Tuesday. ■ THULASI KAKKAT

sides, two helicopters of the Indian Air Force and one of the Navy are on standby.

The Civil Defence Force and volunteer corps have also been alerted.

An official press note said the State Emergency Operations Centre had been augmented, with representatives of the Kerala State Electricity Board, Irrigation and Motor Vehicles Departments and the Army functioning round the clock. Taluk control rooms had been opened in all districts. As many as 3,071 buildings had been identified for setting up relief camps to accommodate over 4 lakh people.

# Zomato comes under fire after customer flags staff's behaviour

He says he was told that being an Indian, he must know Hindi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Online food aggregator Zomato was widely criticised on Tuesday after a support staff told a customer from Tamil Nadu that everyone should speak a little Hindi since it was the national language.

Vikash, a customer, did not receive a food item he had ordered on the Zomato app, and wanted a refund. The customer care executive with whom he got in touch told him on chat that it was taking some time, and that language was a barrier in getting across to the restaurant that had left out the

order. Mr. Vikash took to Twitter asking for a change in the attitude of the food aggregator and its staff. "Ordered food in Zomato and an item was missed. Customer care says amount can't be refunded as I didn't know Hindi. Also takes lesson that being an Indian I should know Hindi. Tagged me a liar as he didn't know Tamil. @zomato not the way you talk to a customer. @zomatocare."

"Reject Zomato", and "Hindi is not our National Language" trended for a few hours.

A company spokesperson said the refund had been made, and

the customer care agent had apologised to the customer. The company too issued an official apology. Responding on Twitter, Zomato said it had terminated the services of the agent, who was however reinstated after Mr. Vikash said training must be provided to customer care agents, and Tamils were not out for vengeance.

Zomato also said it was building a Tamil version of its app. "We have already localised marketing communication in Tamil for the State, and we are in the process of building a local Tamil call/support centre in Coimbatore," it said.

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Payment of Application Fees/ Intimation Charges (Online)	20.10.2021 to 10.11.2021
Download of call letters for Pre-Exam Training*	November, 2021
Conduct of Pre-Exam Training*	November / December 2021
Download of call letters for Online examination - Preliminary	November / December 2021
Online Examination - Preliminary	04.12.2021 and 11.12.2021 Tentative
Result of Online exam - Preliminary	December 2021 / January 2022
Download of Call letter for Online exam - Main	December 2021 / January 2022
Online Examination - Main	January 2022
Declaration of Result - Main	January / February 2022
Download of call letters for interview	February 2022
Conduct of interview	February / March 2022
Provisional Allotment	April 2022

\*In case it is possible and safe to hold PET

Candidates are advised to regularly keep in touch with the authorised IBPS website [www.ibps.in](http://www.ibps.in) for details and updates.

Before registering online candidates are advised to read the detailed notification and follow the instructions mentioned therein.

Mumbai  
Date: 19.10.2021 Director

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Education: Govt. Polytechnic College, (Kancharapalem)  
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Next Date purpose of case, Orders and Judgments as well as other case information is available on http://ecourts.gov.in  
NOTICE TO THE ACCUSED THROUGH PUBLIC NOTICE  
Case No. 138 NI Act/24343/2019  
CNR No:HRGR03-049451-2019  
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VERSUS  
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Whereas it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the accused namely  
ACQUSED  
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2. Reshu Gupta Director  
3. Chitendra Gupta Director  
All Director of M/s. Nivesh Bazaar Realtors Pvt Ltd R/o Plot No. 241 Sector, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad UP-201012  
Above named cannot be served in the ordinary way of service. Hence, this NOTICE under Section 138 NACT is hereby issued against him and he should appear personally or through his counsel on 17.11.2021 at 10.00 a.m.  
Take notice that in default of his appearance on the day above mentioned further proceedings against you will be initiated.  
Given under my hand and seal of the Court, this 13.10.2021  
(Girraj Singh) Civil Judge-Cum-JMIC, (Junior Division), Gurugram

**Baby elephant dies after falling into nullah**

KORBA  
A three-year-old elephant died on Tuesday morning after it fell into a nullah while trying to cross it in Chhattisgarh's Surajpur district, an official said. P71

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**Christian leaders hold meeting after man is held for conversion**

Arrest comes after members of Hindutva groups stage stir

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HUBBALLI**  
Consequent to the high drama over what is alleged to be a case of forced conversion and the subsequent arrest on Monday of a man accused by right wing groups of carrying out forcible conversions, members of Christian organisations held a meeting on Tuesday to decide on their next course of action.  
Members of Hindutva outfits during their protest on Sunday night said the accused, Somu Avaradi, was carrying out forcible conversions by offering money. They also said he had abused the complainant, Vishwanath, on caste lines. Mr. Avaradi was arrested under provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.  
However, members of the Christian community said the victims were actually members of the Chris-

tian community and the pastor, and the police had taken action against the victims, while sparing the members of the Hindutva outfits that had manhandled members of the Christian community. When contacted, executive a member of the Hubballi Taluk Pastors Association, Reverend Cedric Jacob, said the members of the association and community leaders held a meeting on Tuesday to decide their next course of action. "Our community members are the victims in this case. We have not yet approached the Police Commissioner. We plan to meet him along with our counsel," he added. Meanwhile, in a viral video, Mr. Avaradi, who the Christian community recognises as the pastor of the Prayer House of All People's Church at Bhairidevarakoppa, is seen clarifying that he had met the complainant for the first time and that no such conversion attempts had taken place in the prayer hall.  
Police Commissioner Labhu Ram said the police had not received any complaint from the Christian community so far.

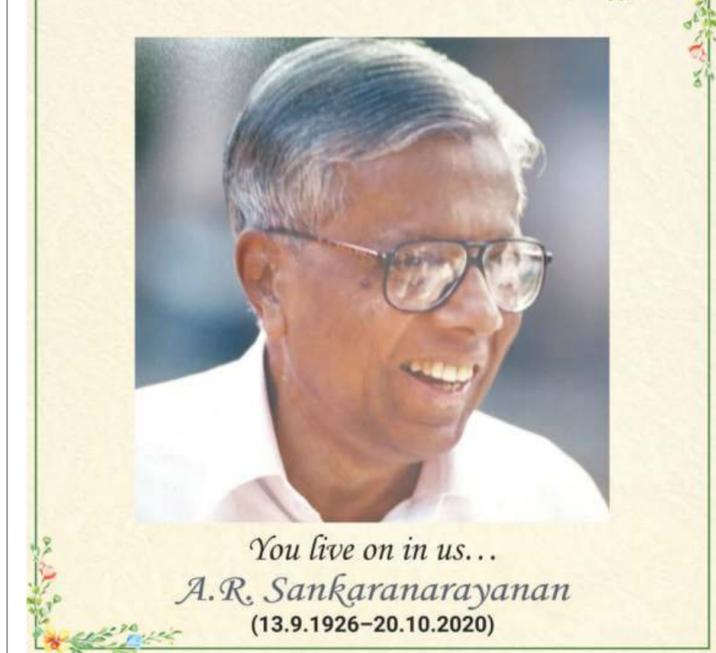
**Ahead of Deepavali, Maharashtra relaxes timings for restaurants**

**STAFF REPORTER MUMBAI**  
Amid festive season, the Maharashtra government announced on Tuesday that restaurants and eateries can now remain open till midnight.  
The deadline relaxation came a day after Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray held a meeting with State task force on COVID-19, also attended by senior Ministers, in which a decision was made to further ease the restrictions imposed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.  
According to the notification,

other establishments such as shops can also remain open till 11 p.m. Local district administrations are being given authority to restrict timings further in accordance with local requirements.  
The State's Agriculture department too on Tuesday issued directions to reopen all agriculture universities and government as well as private unaided agriculture colleges under its aegis from October 20. Agriculture Minister Dadaji Bhuse said that the decision to reopen all non-agriculture universities and colleges from October 20 had already been announced.

**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**REMEMBRANCE**



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Prof Raghupathy Sivakumar, Dr Kalpana Ragupathy  
N K Raghupathy, IAS (Retd)  
**DEATH**  
**S.VISWANATHAN** (82Yrs), Retd. D.E., BSNL, Famous Coffee, R.S.Puram, Coimbatore passed away on 14.10.2021. Ct. 0422-2555500, 973867781.  
**P.S.VENKATADRI** Retd. Central Excise Customs 28th Jun 1932 - 18th Oct 2021  
Deeply mourned by FAMILY and FRIENDS 9445391098  
**DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**  
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**LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS IS 05.11.2021 UPTO 05:00 P.M.**  
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The aforesaid public notice has been uploaded on the official website of GMCH i.e. www.gmch.gov.in including the eligibility criteria i.e. age, pay and other terms and conditions. The last date of receipt of application on prescribed proforma is on or before 05.11.2021 upto 05:00 P.M. alongwith all supporting documents. After due date, no further applications will be entertained.  
Director Principal, Chandigarh  
Dated, 19th Oct. 2021  
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**Bhupesh Baghel**  
Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh



## Trouble in Bangladesh

While India voices concern on attacks, it should not appear religiously partisan

The UN, the U.S. and India have condemned incidents of majoritarian violence against Bangladesh's Hindu minority community during Durga Puja in the past few days. What is particularly worrying is that the attacks which have left at least six people dead and dozens injured, have followed, according to the Government, fake news reports shared over social media, indicating a conspiracy to instigate the violence. The mob violence appears to have begun in Comilla, in Chittagong district, where an image allegedly showing disrespect to the Koran was circulated, and resulted in several major mob attacks on Hindu temples and homes belonging to the minority community. The Narendra Modi government, which has sought to preserve good relations with Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina government, has also praised the authorities for moving quickly to take control of the situation. According to the police, more than 450 people have been arrested over the past week of violence and more than 70 cases filed in different parts of Bangladesh. Prime Minister Hasina has promised strict action and sought to reassure minorities during an address via videoconference to Hindu devotees at the Dhakeshwari national temple. In a message for New Delhi, she also said that Bangladesh's big neighbour must be sensitive to the situation, and alluding to violence against minorities in India, asked that "nothing is done there [India] that affects our country [Bangladesh]". The Indian High Commission in Dhaka, which was in touch with law and order officials at the Centre, also stepped in to meet with members of the Bangladeshi Hindu community, including representatives from the ISKCON group that was attacked. The ISKCON headquarters in West Bengal as well as BJP leaders also called on Mr. Modi to personally intervene.

Given the seriousness of the attacks and the fear that has gripped the Hindu minority in Bangladesh, the international and Indian concern is not surprising. However, New Delhi will have to act cautiously in light of all the various links between India and Bangladesh. While the Indian High Commission's act of meeting local minorities comes from a sense of compassion, it could be read as an act of interference. The impact of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in 2019 had a widespread effect in Bangladesh, and at least 12 people were killed in protests against Mr. Modi's visit to Dhaka earlier this year. As a regional leader, India has every right to be concerned about the plight of communities in the subcontinent. However, it must ensure that its domestic drivers do not upset carefully built foreign relations. And any act that is seen as religiously partisan is bound to destabilise the otherwise close and productive relations between the two countries, which have a shared history of cooperation over much of the past 50 years.

## The other Quad

India must retain strong ties with Iran as it seeks partnership with the U.S.-Israel-UAE bloc

The virtual meet of the Foreign Ministers of India, the U.S., Israel and the UAE is a strong manifestation of the changes in West Asian geopolitics. If Israel and the UAE did not even have formal diplomatic relations a year ago, their growing economic and strategic cooperation is opening up opportunities for other powers, including India. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, now in Israel, joined the quadrilateral conference after meeting his Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid, where they had agreed to launch talks for a free trade agreement. The four-nation meeting also points to India's strategic desire to adopt a regional foreign policy strategy towards West Asia, transcending its bilateralism. Over the years, India has built vibrant bilateral ties with all the countries in the grouping. It is a member of the Quad with the U.S., Australia and Japan, which have common concerns and shared interests on East Asia. Israel is one of India's top defence suppliers. The UAE is vital for India's energy security. The Gulf country, which hosts millions of Indian workers, has also shown interest to mediate between India and Pakistan.

In the past, there were three pillars to India's West Asia policy – the Sunni Gulf monarchies, Israel and Iran. Now that the gulf between the Sunni kingdoms and Israel is being narrowed, especially after the Abraham Accords, the normalisation agreements signed between Israel and the UAE and Bahrain under the tutelage of the Trump administration, India faces fewer challenges to a regionalist approach. Mr. Jaishankar has hinted that there would be more meetings among the four countries. While it is too early to speak of the strategic significance of such a grouping, there are areas where it can deepen its engagement – trade, energy ties, fighting climate change and enhancing maritime security. But India should also be mindful of the challenges in the region. The U.S. is clearly seeking to lessen its footprint here as part of its pivot to East Asia to tackle China's rise, which is redrawing West Asia's traditional equations. India should be careful not to get sucked into the many conflicts of West Asia that could intensify amid growing regional rivalries. While the Abraham Accords made it easier for India to find common ground with the Israelis and the Emiratis, the contradiction between this emerging bloc and Iran remains as intense as ever. India, which sees itself aligned with the U.S. in the Indo-Pacific, faces deepening insecurities in continental Asia after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan. And it will have to work closely with countries such as Iran to deal with the challenges emanating from a post-American Afghanistan. So the challenge before New Delhi is to retain a healthy relationship with Iran even as it seeks to build a stronger regional partnership with the U.S.-Israel-UAE bloc.

# In the cross hairs, civilians and Kashmiri harmony

As a compounded tragedy, there needs to be a range of actions as solutions – from security to justice to reconciliation



RADHA KUMAR

Over the past two weeks, more than 11 civilians and nine Army troops have been killed by militants in the Kashmir Valley. Most of the targeted civilians have been Hindus, though there have also been Muslims, and a Sikh. The Hindus killed include Kashmiri Pandits and migrant labour.

### Wave of fear, insecurity

The immediate reaction to these killings has been a flight of Pandits who had returned to the Valley under the 2006 Prime Minister's programme for the return and rehabilitation of migrants, which offered jobs in the Valley to Pandit teachers. Pandit organisations say that as many as a third of the returnees have left; even those of the 800 families that stayed through the insurgency years have begun to leave. Though Kashmiri political parties and civil society, as well as Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha's administration, have pleaded with them to stay, their pleas are unconvincing given the very real insecurity created by the killings.

The plight of migrant labour is equally grave. Most are attempting to leave the Valley and return to their home States. The administration has ordered that those who are not able to immediately return be sheltered in police stations and guarded camps. In other words, like refugees. Whether they will then be aided to return to their homes remains to be seen; likely they will.

These two groups are not alone in wishing to flee. A fresh wave of fear has gripped the Valley, with

most residents fearing they may be caught between the militants and the administration. Allegedly, over 700 people have been taken into detention by the police, under suspicion of supporting militancy. Meantime, according to intelligence agencies, potential militant targets include religious leaders, *panches* and the media.

It was widely anticipated that Pakistani armed groups would be emboldened to revive cross-border infiltration following the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan. Now it seems that their strategy repeats elements of the insurgency of the 1990s. As happened then, the insurgency was prefigured by attacks on Pandits who were seen by Islamist militants as an arm of India because they were Hindus, and Muslims who worked in the State administration or central Indian agencies such as Doordarshan.

### Attacks and the aim

The attacks were intended to both communalise the Valley and paralyse its administration, and over time succeeded in doing so, albeit only partially. The Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's ceasefire negotiations with cross-border armed groups in 2000 were shattered by the killing of over 100 Bihar labourers, but the years of peace building that followed, from 2002-2014, restored a large degree of administration and created conditions for the return of Pandits – sadly at far too gradual a pace – and of migrant labour.

Whether cross-border and local militant groups succeed in once again communalising the Valley is debatable. Much depends on the policy the Union administration adopts in response.

There are two quite separate issues involved: one, reassuring the minorities in Kashmir as well as the wider public of the Valley; two, a rethink on counter-insurgency strategy, including its cross-border



tentacles.

### Some reassurance

Hearteningly, every single opinion group in Kashmir has condemned the killings. Mosques have broadcast their criticism. Kashmiri political parties have voiced their opposition to such militancy, as have political leaders, including the Hurriyat and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. Civil society groups have issued statements of protest. Local community leaders and neighbours have visited Pandit homes to offer aid and support. This wave at the ground level can provide a strong base for reassurance, if encouraged.

Encouragement can begin with the Lieutenant-Governor. Thus far, Mr. Sinha's administration does not appear to have consulted either the Kashmiri Pandit organisations, or the various groups that have condemned the killings, on which steps can be taken to restore a degree of confidence. This is surprising, given that these groups, added together, comprise a formidable cross-section of public opinion, and with their support, militancy can once again be socially marginalised, as it was during the peace-building years.

From available information, it appears that the bulk of the recent civilian killings have been carried out by what the Army calls 'hybrid militants', because they are locally recruited and trained, have regular jobs and are part-time militants using basic weapons such as county pistols. The implications are

that the field of militancy has grown more dispersed, with wider public support, despite counter-insurgency successes in degrading large armed groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohamed. In this context, any opportunity to marginalise militancy is vital.

### Setback for Kashmiri Pandits

Many have begun asking whether Kashmiri Pandits will ever be able to return to the Valley, as the Narendra Modi administration had promised in August 2019. There is no doubt that the recent civilian killings have been a major setback to prospects of return. It is also the case that Kashmiri Pandit organisations have increasingly complained of administrative neglect on returns over the past year. A recurring point that is made by some of them is that the administration, while focusing on returns, needs to simultaneously pay attention to securing Pandit families that never left. Their condition has worsened as their numbers have shrunk; though less covered by the media, the same problem has begun to affect the Sikh minority too, whose numbers have shrunk over the past decade-plus.

The Kashmiri Pandit tragedy has continued for 30 years now, and like all compounded tragedies requires a range of actions, from security to justice to reconciliation. Beginning with security, which is the first requirement to enable justice and reconciliation to follow, it is a mistake to imagine that gated enclaves alone will provide it, or even that stepped up counter-insurgency operations will minimise the risk. Each measure is useful if accompanied by community support, but neither is a solution to the security dilemma by itself. True, targeted killings will only cease when insurgency does. But peace-making combined with counter-insurgency has proved more efficient in ending in-

surgency in democratic countries than counter-insurgency alone, in our own experience as well as across the world. Thus far, the Union administration has not held out any olive branches; on the contrary, its implementation of the August 2019 decisions has added one cause for resentment after another, the latest being the multiple use of Article 311(2) to dismiss government employees without an enquiry or hearing. A policy for Pandit property recovery that had not been thought through did not help either; apparently it has now been corrected.

Political science and sociology both tell us that an insecure majority is unlikely to protect vulnerable minorities; it is focused on its own survival. The arrest of over 700 people in the aftermath of the recent civilian killings has added to the majority's sense of insecurity, because it raises questions about why police intelligence has not narrowed the field of suspects as should, surely, be professionally required.

### Approach to Pakistan

The Narendra Modi administration appears to have adopted a multi-pronged approach to Pakistan recently, beginning with a ceasefire and extending to an invitation to the Pakistani National Security Adviser for a regional meeting on Afghanistan, while giving the Army a free hand on cross-border infiltration. Why then is it not adopting a similarly multi-pronged approach in the Valley, where civil and human rights remain severely restricted and the administration lacks the transparency that oversight and grievance-redress commissions provided? Without overall civil and human rights, how can minority rights be protected or minority returns be encouraged?

Radha Kumar is a writer and policy analyst

# No excuses please, India awaits a full caste headcount

The central government's logistical or legal justifications to not disclose caste census data do not stand scrutiny



PRASENJIT BOSE

The Narendra Modi government has finally elaborated on its reasons for not disclosing the caste data collated in the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011. The Government's affidavit filed in the Supreme Court of India last month by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment – in response to a writ petition by the Maharashtra government – has also tried to explain away the exclusion of full caste enumeration in the forthcoming Census exercise, which is expected to resume in 2022 after the COVID-19 pandemic-induced interruption. The official arguments focus on the impracticability of full caste enumeration, suggesting that operational difficulties are simply too overwhelming.

### Overstating 'mistakes', 'flaws'

As detailed in the affidavit, while the total number of castes counted in the 1931 Census was 4,147, the SECC of 2011 returned over 46 lakh caste names. Such a humongous number of castes were returned partly because Indian people use the names of their caste, sub-caste, clan, *gotra* and surnames interchangeably. Moreover, the enumerators also got confused over the spellings and classification of the castes. The question is, if the 46 lakh caste names that were returned in the SECC 2011 were the

results of "mistakes by the enumerators" or "inherent flaws in the manner of conducting census" as alleged in the official affidavit, why could not those mistakes and flaws be rectified in a decade?

The Union Cabinet had appointed an Expert Committee headed by the then NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya in July 2015, charging it with the classification of caste names returned in SECC 2011. The Government's affidavit admits that no other member was appointed to the committee. Therefore, neither did the committee ever meet nor did it fulfil its mandate in six years. Who is responsible for this negligence?

The extent of errors in caste enumeration is also being exaggerated. The affidavit cites the example of Maharashtra to show that while the aggregate number of castes enlisted in the central lists of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the State list of Other Backward Classes (OBC) is 494, the caste names returned by the SECC 2011 for the State stood at 4.28 lakh. But the affidavit also states that "99% of the castes enumerated had [a] population of less than 100 persons". Out of the total population of 10.3 crore in the State, 8.8 crore people could be classified under 2,440 castes, each having a population of over 1,000. Therefore, the proliferation of caste names and the consequent difficulty in their classification have arisen not because of the majority, but a tiny proportion of the total population.

This is further corroborated by an action taken report on the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Rural Development



on "BPL Survey (currently Socio Economic & Caste Census, 2011)". In this report dated August 31, 2016, the Union government is quoted as categorically stating that the data errors on caste and religion in SECC 2011 accounted for 1.34 crore out of 118.64 crore people, i.e., only around 1% of the total enumerated population. How can the same government now characterise the entire findings of the caste census as "fraught with mistakes and inaccuracies"?

### Complex, yet feasible

Population census in a vast and uniquely diverse country such as India cannot but be a complex exercise. Over the decades, the census machinery has moved on a learning curve, credibly enumerating complicated categories such as language and religion, which also display considerable diversity. For instance, as per Paper 1 of 2018 on the Language Census of 2011, the number of initial raw returns of mother tongues had totalled 19,569 for the entire country. Following scrutiny, editing and linguistic grouping, these raw returns were first rationalised into 1,369 mother tongues and subsequently classified on the basis of at least 10,000 or more speakers for 22 scheduled and 99 non-sche-

duled languages, i.e., 121 languages at the all-India level.

While caste appears to be an even more complex category than language in the Indian context, technologies to enumerate and analyse complex big data have become easily accessible today. Yet, the affidavit cites the absence of an all-India Registry of Castes to rule out the conduct of full caste enumeration in the forthcoming census. Why could such a registry of castes and tribes not be created till date by the Union and State governments, acting together, by combining the central lists of SCs and STs and the State lists of OBCs?

The aggregate number of castes and tribes included in those lists would currently be around 5,000 at the all-India level. For any individual State, the maximum number of castes cannot be above 500. Rationalisation and classification of the numerous raw caste returns into a maximum of 500 castes at the State level or around 5,000 castes at the all-India level, is eminently feasible. Training manuals for the enumerators can also be drawn up on the basis of a single, consolidated caste list for each State.

This could have been attained by the expert committee appointed by the Union cabinet by now, but for its innate dysfunctionality. Rather than rectifying its administrative failings, the Union government is now citing it as evidence to construct a theorem of logistical impossibility.

### Within the framework

The Government's affidavit also cites the absence of categorical constitutional or statutory re-

quirements to count castes other than SCs and STs in the Census. However, Articles 15(4) and 15(5) of the Indian Constitution have explicitly recognised "socially and educationally backward classes of citizens" as a category distinct from SCs and STs and enabled the State to make special provisions for their advancement. Counting the population of these Backward Classes would therefore be very much within the constitutional framework.

Yet, the official affidavit alleges that full caste enumeration may compromise the basic integrity of the Census exercise, distorting the fundamental population count itself. If enumeration of individual castes under the "SC", "ST" and "Other" categories in all censuses since 1951 have not led to such perverse outcomes, why should the additional enumeration under another "OBC" category cause such a catastrophe? Such deliberate scaremongering has no basis in the laws or the Constitution.

The logistical or legal justifications of the Union government to not disclose caste census data and refuse to conduct a full caste enumeration in the forthcoming Census do not stand scrutiny. Rather, it creates ground for suspicion whether the establishment has vested interests in concealing the real numbers and proportions of various castes in the Indian population. Such subterfuge would not be acceptable to a wide spectrum of social movements and political parties, who are demanding full caste enumeration.

Prasenjit Bose is an economist and activist based in Kolkata

## 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.

### Kashmir today

A country with a great democratic set-up is now reeling under the weight of the immense pressure of restoring peace and harmony in the Kashmir Valley. India has been a safe abode for people of myriad regional, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Unfortunately, this is fading due to the gradual emergence of the fundamentalists. We cannot give up. We have to fight tooth and nail against religious fundamentalism and terror. The central government should go the

extra mile to oust militants from the Valley and prevent the massive exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits.

PRABHAKARAN VALLATH,  
Vatakara, Kozhikode, Kerala

The Government had claimed that terrorism in Kashmir would end with the dilution of Article 370. Unfortunately, terror has once again raised its ugly head in Kashmir. The political leadership in Kashmir must be involved in the peace process. The Centre has so far treated them as accomplices of inimical elements. While

there are no easy solutions to the problem, the Government has to take all stakeholders into confidence.

ANTHONY HENRIQUES,  
Mumbai

### A defence of Bollywood

Shashi Tharoor's article on Bollywood and Hindutva (Editorial page, October 16), left a reader wondering what his message was. If at all there is a connection in the matters he has discussed, it is probably in the realm which Mr. Tharoor alone understands. There is a pure and simple case of a drug

seizure on board a luxury cruise ship which is under investigation. Some well known persons are involved and Mr. Tharoor would have been correct had he said that one should not be hasty in condemning people before knowing the truth. But he appears to have gone overboard and implied that the episode is a smear campaign against Bollywood. Bollywood is not about individuals and families. To link a drug case (at least until a clear verdict emerges) with a smear campaign is odd.

YOGANANDH T.,  
Salem, Tamil Nadu

### Kerala floods

God's own country is now being battered by nature's fury. Long-term measures such as monitoring the Western Ghats for deforestation and enabling reforestation and also keeping the State's river banks free of encroachments may be needed.

N.J. RAVI CHANDER,  
Bengaluru

### Invalid notes

The report on the plight of a blind destitute man in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, who has demonetised notes worth ₹65,000 is saddening.

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Demonetisation played havoc with the lives of many, particularly the poor and the elderly who were ignorant of the implications of the sudden implementation of demonetisation. The last line, "... that the currency exchange was unlikely", sounds cold. The authorities must try and help him live in peace. There are sure to be corporate organisations, banks or the wealthy who can treat this as a CSR gesture.

ANNA MARY YVONNE,  
Chennai

# Getting to the heart of causality

The Economics Nobel Laureates have successfully upturned received wisdom in mainstream economics



ASHWINI DESHPANDE

Does the entry of immigrants reduce employment and lower the wages of native workers? Does the introduction of minimum wage, designed to protect workers, end up harming them by reducing employment? Does compulsory schooling affect schooling and earnings? If people got a basic income, would they stop working for a living? Graduates of private universities earn more than graduates of public universities in the U.S. Does this mean that attending private universities bestows a wage premium?

## Drawing causal inference

These are among the many significant and deep questions that the three Economics Nobel Laureates for 2021 – David Card, Joshua Angrist and Guido Imbens – have investigated. Answering such questions involves establishing causality accurately. One way to draw causal inference is through experiments or randomised controlled trials (RCTs), the predominance of which in the field of empirical economics was recognised by the Nobel Committee in 2019. However, several big-picture and urgent questions cannot be evaluated through RCTs because of ethical, logistical or financial reasons.

Outside of experiments, researchers have to rely on real-world data which is messy. Drawing the correct causal inference entails comparisons between groups (those who stayed longer in school compared to those who did not, or States where the minimum wage increased compared to States where it did not increase, and so forth). But since individuals or States differ along many dimensions, comparison needs to be done carefully to avoid comparing apples with oranges. Additionally, adjustments need to be made for self-selection and omitted variables that might confound causal inference. The 2021 Nobel Laureates have been justly recognised for their pioneering contribution to the methodologies to uncover causality using real-world



A press conference at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Sweden, where the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences was announced. •AP/PTI

observational data. In doing so, their path-breaking studies have successfully questioned established orthodoxy and upturned received wisdom in mainstream economics.

Professor Card and Alan Krueger's most influential 1992 study estimated the effect of minimum wage increases. The two economists utilised a 'natural experiment' (in which individuals are randomly exposed to a change caused by nature, institutions, or policy changes): in this case, a policy change in New Jersey that raised minimum wages for its low-skilled workers. Instead of comparing change in employment in New Jersey before and after the wage increase, as that could be affected by several other factors, they compared a double difference ('difference-in-differences'): employment in New Jersey before and after the policy change compared to neighbouring Pennsylvania, where wages did not change, over the same period. Contrary to established wisdom, they found that an increase in minimum wages did not lead to a reduction in employment. This study has been replicated since by other researchers across several rounds of minimum wage increase and each time, the result has been the same, viz., no adverse impact on employment.

Why is the textbook prediction not borne out by data? There are many reasons: one is that the mythical perfectly competitive labour market, where firms are price-takers, i.e. they have no autonomy in wage setting, does not exist in reality. It turns out that monopsonistic firms (very large

employers with market power) can set wages lower than the competitive wage and earn a surplus. Therefore, when the government imposes a minimum wage, the number of workers employed does not necessarily decrease but a part of the surplus now gets transferred to the workers.

A source of great anxiety in the contemporary world is the apprehension that entry of immigrants will adversely affect employment and wages of non-immigrant residents. Prof. Card's analysis of another natural experiment – the Mariel boat lift that brought 1,25,000 Cubans to the U.S. in 1980, half of whom settled in Miami – showed this anxiety to be invalid. As a result of the boat lift, the Miami workforce increased by 7% but this had no adverse impact on the wages or employment of the non-Cuban native workforce.

Both Prof. Imbens and Prof. Angrist have made innovative methodological contributions to causal inference that have enabled explorations of big-picture questions. For example, in the U.S., private university graduates earn 14% higher wages than public university graduates. Does that mean private universities cause wages to go up? Prof. Angrist's research corrected for 'selection bias', i.e. adjusted for the fact that SAT scores and family incomes are higher for private university entrants. Comparing like with like, the study finds that attending private universities does not confer a wage premium.

These causal techniques are based on a comparison of observed out-

comes with counterfactuals: the 'what if' scenarios or 'potential outcomes' that are not observed. Such comparisons are logically compelling, and these methods have been replicated by hundreds of researchers across a variety of contexts, validating their effectiveness in disentangling causal effects from messy observational data.

## Making metrics fun, relevant

The Nobel Laureates have also contributed to transforming pedagogy. Learning econometric techniques through the body of their work has made econometrics less abstract, more relatable and interesting. Prof. Angrist, through his immensely popular textbooks (co-authored with Steve Pischke) and short videos in the Marginal Revolution University series on 'Mastering Econometrics' (as Master Joshway), is an excellent communicator. He starts with a real-world problem and takes us through techniques of analysis, thereby inverting the approach of the standard econometrics textbooks that begin with dry, math-heavy abstract proofs, losing students along the way by the time the chapters end with examples.

In the age of big data and machine learning, are econometric techniques of causal inference increasingly redundant? Prof. Angrist argues that while data science helps 'curve fitting', i.e. it illustrates a pattern, it does not provide insights into causation. In other words, it neither enables an understanding of why we see a particular pattern, nor does it allow us to evaluate counterfactual scenarios. For that, we need econometrics, which does not rely on big data but on innovative ways of analysing data. Prof. Angrist believes that econometrics will continue to be relevant regardless of any advances in data sciences.

The work of the three Nobel Laureates demonstrates the immense power of good, rigorous empirical work and reminds us that rigour need not be seen in opposition to relevance, and that careful analysis can successfully challenge existing orthodoxy.

Ashwini Deshpande is Professor of Economics and Director, Centre for Economic Data and Analysis, Ashoka University

# A global player in solar power

By embracing advances in solar technologies, Tamil Nadu can continue to lead in this sector



VAISAKH SURESH KUMAR & KAJOL

Large-scale solar projects in Tamil Nadu have seen rapid growth in recent years. In the past five years, the cumulative installed capacity witnessed a four-fold increase to 4.4 GW, as of March 2021. Aiding this capacity addition is the State's reasonably high insolation levels and matching solar potential, estimated at 279GW. The sharp decline in the prices for solar and resulting cost competitiveness is another factor.

## Types of technologies

Tamil Nadu released the Solar Policy of 2019, aiming for 9GW of solar installations by 2023. To meet this target, the current capacity would need to be more than doubled. To do this, Tamil Nadu must keep up with market trends and incorporate innovations in the sector. 'First-generation' solar cells use mono-crystalline and multi-crystalline silicon wafers. While the former is made from a single crystal of silicon (of higher purity), the latter is made by combining several fragments. The efficiency of mono-crystalline panels is about 24%, while for multi-crystalline panels it is about 20%. Crystalline silicon technologies are one of the oldest in the market and occupy 95% of the global photovoltaic (PV) market. Mono-crystalline cells are dominant today. Although mono-crystalline panels are priced higher than multi-crystalline ones, the difference is diminishing and will soon attain parity. This would result in mono panels being preferred over multi due to their higher efficiency, greater energy yield and lower cost of energy.

Newer technologies incorporating crystalline silicon focus on bifacial solar cells, capable of harvesting energy from both sides of the panel. Bifacials can augment the power output by 10-20%. Within this, the Passive Emitter and Rear Contact technology is predicted to gain popularity. However, it is yet to achieve price parity for large-scale deployment. The thin film technologies developed later are classified as the 'second generation' of solar PVs. They are manufactured by depositing single or multiple layers of PV material on a substrate, typically plastic or glass. In addition to being used in solar farms and rooftops, thin films with their low thickness, light weight and flexibility are also placed on electronic devices and vehicles. Mainstream thin films utilise semiconductor

chemistries like Cadmium Telluride. However, the efficiency of thin films is lower than that of crystalline silicon. This has affected their popularity and market share.

New and upcoming solar cells are grouped as 'third generation' and contain technologies such as perovskite, nanocrystal and dye-sensitised solar cells. Perovskites have seen rapid advances in recent years, achieving cell efficiency of 18%. They have the highest potential to replace silicon and disrupt the solar PV market, due to factors such as ease of manufacture, low production costs and potential for higher efficiencies. Nanocrystal and dye-sensitised solar cells are variants of the thin film technology. These are in early stages for large-scale commercial deployment.

There is also interest in the use of Graphene Quantum-dots for solar PVs. Graphene is made of a single layer of carbon atoms bonded together as hexagons. Solar cells made of graphene are of interest due to high theoretical efficiency of 60% and its super capacitating nature. Quantum-dot PVs use semiconductor nano crystals exhibiting quantum mechanical properties capable of high efficiency of about 66%. However, both these are in the early stages of research.

Considerable advances have also been made in developing solutions that better integrate solar PVs into the grid. These include weather forecasting and power output prediction systems; operation monitoring and control systems; and scheduling and optimisation systems. Additionally, automatic systems have been developed for the smooth resolution of output fluctuations. These technologies must be considered.

## Policy support

Policy support is essential to fast-track adoption of new technologies. A portion of the budget for renewable energy targets should be set aside exclusively for new technologies. Grants and subsidies can also be provided for their adoption. This can mitigate the higher initial costs of such technologies and help establish the market. Efforts must be taken to address gaps in research, development, and manufacturing capabilities in the solar sector through sector-specific investment and incentives. There must also be greater industry-academia collaborations and funding opportunities for startups. A comprehensive sector-specific skilling programme is also required for workers. All these efforts would help Tamil Nadu become a global player in the solar power sector.

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# The many burdens of U.S. Congress

Democratic Socialists insist on fixing several issues at once, which will not happen

JAMES MCDERMOTT

People say getting a Bill through U.S. Congress is like herding cats. It is not. It is like loading a herd of camels. I have visited India 29 times, but the most interesting of those trips was to the annual camel fair in Pushkar.

## Finding the right balance

Members of Congress are much like camels. They will not move if they feel the weight they are being asked to carry is too much. A good leader in a congressional setting knows how much the members are willing to carry and shifts the workload from camel to camel in order to find the right balance so the caravan can leave for its destination.

The present Congress is precariously balanced. The Senate is split 50-50 between Democrats and Republicans. The House of Representatives has 212 Republicans and 220 Democrats. So, Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, has a delicate job to do, only somewhat less difficult than that of Democratic (majority) leader, Chuck Schumer.

Congress is trying to pass three important bills now: one on infrastructure, one related to climate change and the one related to voting rights. Democratic Socialists insist on fixing all the ills of the social safety net at once. This will not happen.

In 1935, the President was Franklin D. Roosevelt and his camel driver was Frances Perkins. Roosevelt charged the Committee on Economic Security, chaired by Perkins, who was Secretary of Labour, to develop a pension programme, a national health programme, and an unemployment insurance programme. But the camels would not move and so Roosevelt decided that the law would provide unemployment insurance; aid for dependent mothers and children, the blind and the physically handicapped; and old-age benefits for workers. He left the national health programme on the table. Roosevelt, passionate about mandatory health insurance, still intended to have the national health programme passed. But when World War II loomed ahead, national health was placed at the sidelines. Roosevelt died at the end of the war. In 1945, President

Harry Truman proposed a 'universal' national health insurance programme to Congress. His plan that all Americans would pay a certain amount in fees and taxes each month to cover the healthcare programme's costs was shot down in Congress.

President Bill Clinton delivered an ambitious and complex proposal for universal health insurance for all Americans. Unfortunately, it had been designed by someone who had never been near a camel-loading yard. He had no experience in dealing with the camels of Congress. The effort to get the plan passed was spearheaded by Hillary Clinton. The plan was perfect but it failed.

When Barack Obama came on the scene, he announced that he was going to try to bring healthcare coverage for everyone. He got the camels moving again. But after him came a leader who knew nothing or just didn't care about social benefits for the ordinary working people.

## Crucial days ahead

The 2020 presidential election created the situation which we are now facing. President Joe Biden knows about camels. His climate change bill, which includes an expansion in tax credits for clean energy, restrictions on methane, etc., is hanging by a thread. The Senate is set to vote on the voting rights bill. The bill is backed by the whole Democratic caucus but doesn't have the 60 votes it needs to overcome a Republican filibuster. Ms. Pelosi has said "it's about time" the Democrats, who are divided on the infrastructure bill, pass it. It is getting delayed as progressives first want the full \$3.5 trillion that Mr. Biden promised for new and expanded social programmes and other initiatives. All these bills face the possibility of being left on the table.

Some of my old colleagues believe that they can load the camel and if they beat it enough, it will finally get up and move. I hope they don't lose the opportunity to move forward this time. They will get no credit for wanting everything and getting nothing.

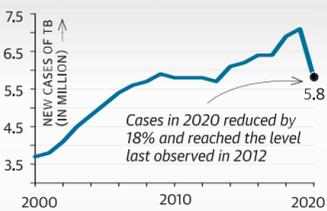
James McDermott served in the U.S. Congress in the House of Representatives between 1989 and 2017 for Washington's 7th Congressional District

## DATA POINT

# The overlooked epidemic

As many as 1.3 million fewer cases of Tuberculosis were detected in 2020 compared to 2019, according to the WHO. The drop in cases can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic as there was reduced access to disease diagnosis and treatment as well as curtailed spending since the infection outbreak. This reversed the gains made over the past few years in detection of TB cases. Following a drop in detection of new cases, deaths attributed to TB rose for the first time in the last 16 years in the world. The estimated TB deaths in India were the highest in seven years in 2020. Visits for treatment also fell sharply. Worryingly, among high-burden nations, India spent the least on TB drugs per patient despite accounting for an estimated 28% of the new cases last year. By Jasmin Nihalani and Sumant Sen

**1. SHARP DROP** | The chart depicts the year-wise number of new TB cases reported globally. The pandemic year saw a sharp decline in new diagnosed cases, which were otherwise following an increasing trend till 2019



**2. COUNTRY-WISE DROP** | The chart shows the new cases of TB detected (in million) in select nations between 2000 and 2020



These nations shown in the chart accounted for over 75% of the global drop in new cases in 2020 compared to 2019. An estimated 1.63 million new cases were registered in India in 2020, which is 0.5 million cases lower than 2019

**Fighting TB:** A doctor examining a TB patient in Guwahati, Assam. • AP



An estimated 5.8 million cases of TB were detected in 2020

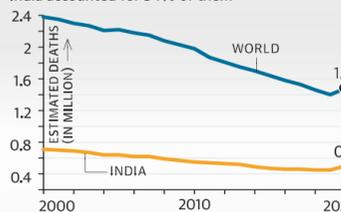


India contributed to 41% of the global drop in cases in 2020, the highest among all nations

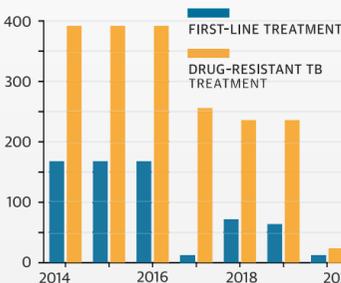


Deaths due to TB in the country also rose by 13% compared to 2019

**3. FATALITY COUNT** | An estimated 1.48 million people died due to TB globally in 2020. India accounted for 34% of them



**4. TREATMENT NEGLECTED** | Outpatient care visits for first-line and drug-resistant TB treatment fell sharply in 2020 in India. In first-line treatment, drugs which are used to treat the most common form of the disease are given. Patients who do not respond to such drugs are given drug-resistant treatment



**5. TREATMENT COST** | The table shows the average spending on drugs per patient for both forms of treatment in the 10 high TB-burden countries in 2020. India's spending on TB medication for both forms is among the lowest despite high disease prevalence

Country	First-line treatment (\$)	Drug-resistant TB treatment (\$)
China	93	20,287
Indonesia	46	2,188
Pakistan	24	1,723
Ethiopia	45	1,600
Myanmar	47	1,352
Philippines	67	1,339
Democratic Republic of the Congo	45	913
Bangladesh	26	864
Vietnam	63	713
India	33	700

SOURCE: WHO'S GLOBAL TUBERCULOSIS REPORT 2021

## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 20, 1971

## P.M. rules out dialogue with Pak.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said here to-day [New Delhi, Oct. 19] that India did not want to provoke a war or create a war-like situation, but it could not shake hands with the clenched fist of Pakistan. Though it was impossible to prophesy whether there would be a war between India and Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi said India would continue to exercise the utmost restraint while taking all precautions to safeguard its interests. Addressing a crowded press conference, the Prime Minister said that as a first step towards any purposeful dialogue with India, the Yahya regime should stop the terrible atrocities in East Bengal and enter into substantive negotiations with its elected representatives to find a speedy solution to the Bangla Desh problem. She warned that the massing of Pakistani troops all along the borders had created a grave situation and the sooner the Bangla Desh problem was solved the better the chances of averting an Indo-Pakistan conflagration. The Pakistani war threats and the hysterical "Hate India" campaign in Pakistan were intended to cloud the Bangla Desh issue by projecting it as an Indo-Pakistan problem.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 20, 1921

## A mathematical prodigy

Another Indian mathematical prodigy who has not yet reached his teens is now before the public. Rajanarayanan, son of Mr. Srinivasachari, Revenue Inspector, Saminullur, Madurai District, was in the midst of mathematicians in Madras a few days ago, who put to him all sorts of intricate questions of the B.A. standard and received ready and satisfactory answers and who admired the genius of the precocious boy. He was born on the 10th January 1911, and is studying in the Madras College nominally in the fourth form. But he is allowed full freedom to attend even the Intermediate classes. He was examined by Professors P.V. Seshu Iyer, S.R.U. Savor, K. Ananda Rao and others. He is found to be well up in Elementary Euclid, and knows Algebra almost to the end. He is able to solve riders with very great facility. He knows all about Continued Fractions, Intermediate Equations and Binomial series. He is fairly conversant with Trigonometry and knows up to De Moivre's theorems and also the application and expansion of Trinomials and infinite products.

FROM PAGE ONE

## Uttarakhand rain toll touches 47

Director General of Police Ashok Kumar, who accompanied the Chief Minister on his visit to Kumaon, said roads, bridges and railway tracks have been damaged in Kathgodam and Lalkuan in Nainital and Rudrapur in Udham Singh Nagar district. Around 100 people stranded at the Lemon Tree resort on the Ramnagar-Ranikhet route after water from the swollen Kosi river entered the resort were later evacuated to safety.

While Mr. Dhama reiterated his appeal to Chardham Yatra pilgrims to stay where they are and not to resume their journeys before the weather improves, a Devasthanam Board official said the yatra to Yamunotri in Uttarakashi has resumed with a

record 2,381 pilgrims visiting the Himalayan temple on Tuesday.

The State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) said most rivers in the State were in spate. The water level in the Ganga in Haridwar has reached 293.90 metres, just a notch below the danger mark of 294 metres. Kali and Saryu rivers in Pithoragarh have reached the danger marks of 890 metres and 453 metres respectively.

The Gori river is flowing close to the danger mark at 606.75 metres, the SEOC said.

Nainital received 90 mm rainfall, Haldwani 128 mm, Koshiyaktoli 86.6 mm, Almorah 216.6 mm, Dwarahat 184 mm and Jageshwar 176 mm, the SEOC said.

## EU food recall linked to GM rice from India

In a statement on August 4, Mars Wrigley announced that it was recalling four packaging sizes of its Crispy M&Ms product with two affected best-before dates. According to German NGO site Informationdienst Gentechnik, the European Commission announced that 144 tonnes of the contaminated rice flour had been processed by Mars, while more flour went into 11 types of baked goods manufactured in Italy and further distributed to other countries, all of which were recalled.

Commerce Ministry spokesperson D.J. Narain said that the whole issue appeared to be "infructuous". He pointed out that "the GM ingredient may have been added in Europe to cut costs, not in India where commercial GM cultivation is banned. The quantity involved is too big to have come from leaked output from controlled trial cultivation."

However, he also added that "APEDA is collecting all the details and will enquire every aspect of it thoroughly with the technical and scientific institutions like GEAC and strictest form of action will be taken accordingly."

Farmers groups say the issue of cross contamination from field trials has been raised previously. "The issue with GM field trials is that once they take place, they

can contaminate crops long after the actual trials either directly or through seed leakages," said a letter from the Coalition for GM-Free India, sent on Tuesday to authorities at the Environment, Agriculture and Commerce Ministries. It pointed to a 2006 case, where a Bayer food trial contaminated rice and seeds in the U.S., leading to a plunge in exports from that country.

**Basmati belt**

"Back in 2007, when there was widespread concern about GM rice trials and the possibility of cross contamination, the All India Rice Exporters Association took up the issue with the Department of Biotechnology and the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee. A policy decision was taken that field trials would not be allowed in the basmati belt, because of worries that the export crop could be affected," said Rajesh Krishnan, a Kerala paddy farmer who is a member of the Coalition.

Commerce Ministry spokesperson Mr. Narain emphasised that there was little danger to India's agricultural export image.

"It may be noted that India's export orders remain globally growing. India is fast emerging as the world's most trusted business partner and investment destination," he said.

## Killings spark migrant flight from Kashmir

On Sunday, two labourers from Bihar were gunned down when terrorists barged into their accommodation in Kulgam district, taking the number of civilians killed in targeted attacks in Jammu and Kashmir this month to 11. Another labourer sustained bullet injuries.

"There is grave fear and terror after the killings of labourers. This has never happened in the past. So we fled the Valley to save our lives and also our children," Santosh Kumar of Bihar's Sitamarhi district said. He is a brick kiln worker in Pulwama district.

Army chief General M.M. Naravane visited forward areas along the LoC in Jammu region on Tuesday and was briefed on the ground situation in the region and ongoing counter-infiltration operations, officials said here.

**Eight detained**

Eight suspected persons, including a mother-son duo, were detained for questioning from Bhatta Durrian in connection with providing a logistic support to the terrorists. However, it is to be seen whether the support was given voluntarily or under duress, the officials said.

## T.N. fisherman drowns after boat rams Sri Lankan vessel

When they were fishing in waters close to the IMLB near Katchatheevu, a Sri Lankan patrol vessel intercepted their boat.

On noticing the authorities, the fishermen reportedly tried to escape. But the Sri Lankan personnel managed to detain Suganthan and Arockia Xavier. In the melee, Rajkiran fell into the sea.

M. Chinnakuppan, Assistant Director of Fisheries, Pudukottai, told *The Hindu* that he had received com-

munication that Rajkiran's body had been recovered from the sea, and it had been taken to Kankesanthurai for post-mortem examination.

"The information has been conveyed to his family. Steps are under way to bring back his body as early as possible," he said.

However, the Sri Lankan Navy on Tuesday evening said the body had not been found, and the search operation was still on.

# 'Chinese patrolling slightly up in east'

India, China are attempting to develop infrastructure close to the LAC, says Eastern Command chief

DINAKAR PERI  
TENGA (ARUNACHAL PRADESH)

There has been a marginal increase in Chinese patrols in the eastern sector along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), while the scale and durations of its exercises has increased in their depth areas since the stand-off in eastern Ladakh last year, said Eastern Army Commander Lt. Gen. Manoj Pande on Tuesday. He noted that both India and China were attempting to develop infrastructure close to the LAC.

The Army is countering the Chinese presence by incorporating technological advancements with specific focus on expanding surveillance capabilities like long range Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and radars, Lt. Gen. Pande said while also stating that the Army's 17 Mountain Strike Corps, meant for the border with China, had been fully operationalised.

Giving an overview on the situation along the LAC in



On the watch: The Army's 17 Mountain Strike Corps meant for the border with China is fully operational now. ■FILE PHOTO

the eastern sector in an interaction with a group of journalists from Delhi, Lt. Gen. Pande said, "Some of the PLA [People's Liberation Army] reserve formations which were mobilised continue to remain in their training areas, that again is in the operational depth. Both sides are attempting to develop infrastructure closer to the LAC and that leads to certain issues at times."

Since this infrastructure

had come up close to the LAC, there had been a marginal increase in the number of border defence troops already deployed there, he pointed out.

**Enhanced surveillance**

Speaking of the measures taken, he observed that the first step was enhancing surveillance both close to the LAC and in the depth areas. This was being done by synergising resources right

from satellites at strategic level to troops on the ground and "we have adequate forces in each sector for any need that may arise".

They were also looking at maximising technology, especially in terms of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, communications and likewise, he reiterated.

Of the 3,488 km-long LAC, 1,346 km fall in the eastern sector.

The raising of the new 17 Mountain Strike Corps commenced in 2014. By now it was fully operationalised and all its units, including combat, combat support and support, had been fully equipped, the Army Commander asserted.

"Its employment philosophy is stabilised. The formations of the corps have been carrying our validation and integrated training with other formations," he said.

To further enhance the operational efficiency, they were looking at Integrated Battle Group (IBG)

model for the mountain strike corps so that "we have better options for its employment and its areas of application", he remarked.

**Equipment deployed**

IBGs are brigade-sized agile self-sufficient combat formations meant to swiftly launch strikes against adversary in case of hostilities. The concept had been tested in exercises and fine-tuned.

There had been a major push for development of infrastructure in the region. The induction of equipment such as Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, which enabled faster movement, and deployment of M777 Ultra Light Howitzers have strengthened their position.

In addition, there is major expansion of roads in the region which will facilitate faster mobilisation of men, resources and equipment. Several tunnels are under construction while a railway line is also planned to Tawang.

## Niira Radia served notice in loan fraud case

She has been asked to appear before police

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing has served notice on Niira Radia and other promoters and directors of Nayati Healthcare and Research NCR Pvt Ltd to join investigation in connection with the alleged embezzlement of over ₹300 crore of bank loans, the police said on Tuesday.

Ms. Radia and others have been asked to appear before the police next week. Three persons, identified as Yateesh Wahaal, Satish Kumar Narula and Rahul Singh Yadav, have been arrested for misappropriation of crores of rupees.

According to the police, a complaint was filed by orthopaedic surgeon Rajeev Kumar Sharma against M/s Naarayani Investment Pvt Ltd., holding company of M/s Nayati Healthcare and Research NCR Pvt Ltd. and its promoters and directors Niira Radia, her sister Karuna Menon, Satish Narula and Yateesh Wahaal and others.

Dr. Sharma alleged that



Niira Radia

Naarayani had borrowed more than ₹600 crore from various sources, including DHFL, and invested ₹311 crore for acquiring a majority stake in Nayati Healthcare NCR.

After taking over management of the new entity, Naarayani and the four individuals got a loan of over ₹300 crore from Yes Bank for the development of a Gurgaon hospital, but they siphoned off and embezzled the loan amount using fictitious transactions, Dr Sharma alleged. He added that the accused also borrowed ₹60 crore from Yes Bank for another hospital project, but embezzled that as well.

## Fight club: a debt of ₹3,000 and half a century of litigation

Supreme Court signs off a hard-fought, five-rounder battle

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has signed off a hard-fought, five-rounder litigation which dates back half a century regarding a debt of ₹3,000.

"We wish this will be the knock-out round," Justice V. Ramasubramanian, who authored the judgment for a Bench led by Justice Hemant Gupta, conveyed the top court's fervent hope in the very first paragraph of the 22-page verdict.

The court compared the habit of the litigants to bounce back after every failed round to King Vikramaditya's relentless pursuit to capture the ghost, Betal.

**The tireless king**

"Not to be put off by repeated failures, the appellants herein, like the tireless Vikramaditya, who made repeated attempts to capture Betal, started the present round and hopefully the final round," Justice Ramasubramanian observed while tracing the labyrinthine history of the case.

The dispute dates back to 1971 between Rama Rani Devi and Sasadhar Biswas before the munsif court in West Bengal. The subject of



their dispute was the ₹3,000 Biswas owed Devi. In 1974, the munsif directed Mr. Biswas to pay Ms. Devi the amount in six equal instalments.

However, the munsif's decree was not honoured. Ms. Devi moved the court for execution of the decree through attachment and sale of 7,450 sq ft belonging to Mr. Biswas to realise her debt. The civil court agreed. However, Mr. Biswas challenged the sale, which was dismissed in 1975.

An auction was held in 1979. Two brothers, Sachindra Nath Mukherjee and Dulal Kanti Mukherjee, became the highest bidders. They deposited ₹5,500 in court.

Mr. Biswas, in July 1980, reached a compromise with the brothers who agreed to revoke their bid provided he paid them their "entire mo-

ney" by December 1980. Mr. Biswas deposited ₹3,700 but the brothers had paid more. The brothers and Mr. Biswas had a falling out. The former went to court against Mr. Biswas. The dispute reached the Supreme Court in 1992 and the case against Mr. Biswas was dismissed.

**Years pass**

The second round was kick-started with a suit to declare the auction sale void. However, this effort was aborted. The third round concerned the issuance of the sale certificate. This came to an end in 2001. The fourth round followed when the purchasers moved the civil court for delivery of possession of the land.

This round went on till 2006 until the Supreme Court dismissed a review petition challenging the delivery of the property.

In the fifth and present round, the Biswas family members raised the "bogey" of "jurisdictional error" to avoid delivery of the property to the Mukherjees.

Rejecting the Biswas family's appeal, the court observed that they have "now exhausted almost all provisions available" to stall the delivery of the property.

## Strategy meet discusses Chinese cyberattacks

'Hackers from neighbouring country can strike at will'

VIJAITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The rising cyberattacks from China on critical installations was discussed at the National Security Strategies Conference chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday.

The Madhya Pradesh police gave a presentation on various lacunae in the legal and administrative sphere that were an impediment in investigating such cases.

The participants were told that while the Pakistani cyberattacks focused on stealing identity and personal data, the Chinese hackers were more sophisticated and they settled down in any network, striking at will.

"There are several choke points that deter investigation, such as the origin of the message and from where the data packet was uploaded. The Minister agreed to expedite any legal framework required to plug the gaps," said an official who attended the conference.



Taking stock: Home Minister Amit Shah at the National Security Strategies Conference in New Delhi on Monday. ■PTI

On March 1, the Union Power Ministry said the government thwarted "state-sponsored" Chinese hacker groups targeting various Indian power centres in November 2020 and February 2021.

**Malware suspected**

The U.S. cybersecurity and intelligence firm Recorded Future discovered that Chinese state-sponsored actors may have deployed malware into Indian power grids and seaports after border ten-

sions between India-China began escalating in May 2020.

The conference, an annual event held at the Intelligence Bureau headquarters, was attended by Director General of Police of all States and Directors-General of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

The nine-hour conference was divided into separate sessions. A detailed discussion was also held on illegal migration and counter-terrorism measures.

## 'India, Russia face common threats from Afghanistan'

Ambassador to Russia confirms NSA meeting

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

India and Russia face "common threats" emanating from Afghanistan, said India's outgoing Ambassador to Russia, confirming India's presence at the "Moscow format" meeting, which will include the Taliban Deputy Prime Minister, on Wednesday, and a meeting of National Security Advisers in Delhi in November, where NSAs of China and Pakistan are also invited.

"The situation in Afghanistan poses similar problems in terms of instability, drug trafficking, terrorism threat, and also the instability that may radiate towards Central Asia," Ambassador Venkatesh Varma, who is set to return to Delhi shortly, said in a "farewell interview" to the *Kommersant* daily.

"Both sides recognise common threats emanating from Afghanistan affect India and Russia - probably more than any other set of countries," he added.

The Moscow format meet will see an official Indian delegation led by Joint Secretary for Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran J.P. Singh, and Joint Secretary for Eurasia Adarsh Swaika participate for the first time. Officials from 10



Venkatesh Varma

countries, including Taliban Deputy PM Abdul Salam Hanafi, will attend the meeting, though the US, whose special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad resigned on Monday, has announced that it will not participate due to "logistical difficulties".

**Military situation**

During the meeting, which will be addressed by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Ministry said the participants would "discuss prospects for development of the military-political situation in Afghanistan and the formation of an inclusive government", adding that a separate meeting of Russia, China and Pakistan took place in Moscow on Tuesday.

Ambassador Varma also confirmed an upcoming

## UN urged to stop attacks in Bangladesh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Tuesday called for the United Nations to send a peacekeeping force to Bangladesh in the wake of attacks on Hindus in that country.

Addressing a press conference here, VHP joint general secretary Surendra Jain compared the attacks to the "brutality of the Nazis".

"It is the clear view of the VHP that due to the Islamic character of Bangladesh, the governments there have not only been looking the other way when Hindus are attacked, but also proving to be the motivators and patrons of the radical Islamists. They cannot get out of the clutches of fundamentalists without declaring Bangladesh a secular country instead of an Islamic country," the VHP said. It added that a demonstration would be held outside the Bangladesh High Commission here on Wednesday.

## SC bats for eyewitness testimony

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Delay on the part of terrified eyewitnesses to record their statements about crimes cannot be a reason for rejecting their testimonies, the Supreme Court has said in a judgment.

The case concerns the brutal murder of a fish-seller at Malda in West Bengal a decade ago. The accused were sentenced to life in prison. The Calcutta High Court confirmed their guilt in 2019. They, in turn, appealed the decision in the Supreme Court.

They argued that the case hinged on the testimonies of two eyewitnesses whose statements were recorded late and, thus, cannot be trusted.

However, a three-judge Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit dismissed their appeal. The court, instead, agreed with the submissions made by the State of West Bengal, represented by advocate Liz Mathew, that the accused had spread terror in the locality of the murder.

IN BRIEF



**Sena leader moves SC against NCB official**

**MUMBAI** Shiv Sena leader Kishore Tiwari has approached the Supreme Court seeking a judicial investigation against an official at the Narcotics Control Bureau in Mumbai for allegedly targeting select film celebrities and a few models for the past two years. Mr. Tiwari termed the arrest of actor Shahrukh Khan's son Aryan on a cruise ship a violation of his fundamental right.

**Bihar MLA seeks arms licences for J&K migrants**

**PATNA** In the wake of the attacks on Bihari migrants in Kashmir, BJP MLA from Barh Gyanendra Singh Gyanu on Tuesday said the Centre should provide arms licences to non-local residents in Jammu and Kashmir so that they could defend themselves. Mr. Gyanu said, "When terrorism was peaking in Punjab, people were given licences to own AK-47 rifles, and the same can be done in J&K as well."

**CBI books 2 for child sexual abuse material**

**NEW DELHI** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked two persons for circulating child sexual abuse material through social media. The first accused, Dharani P., of Vellore in Tamil Nadu, was creating or downloading digital images and sharing them via two phone numbers and three email IDs since June 2020. In the second case, Krathar Kanungo, from Ghaziabad, created an Instagram account and circulated sexually explicit images of children since April last year.

# '40% Cong. candidates in U.P. will be women'

No decision yet on contesting, says Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday announced that 40% of the candidates fielded by the party for the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election would be women.

However, she was non-committal on whether she would contest.

"I have not taken this decision yet. There is still some time for the election. I will think about this and take a decision," Ms. Vadra said at a press conference in the State capital.

**Ambiguous on CM face** She was also yet to decide if the Congress would announce chief ministerial face ahead of the polls.

Ms. Vadra said the decision to provide 40% of party ticket to women was to provide them better representation in State politics.

The Uttar Pradesh Assembly has 403 seats.



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

She lamented that women were not emerging as a united force as they were also being divided into castes and religions.

If women wanted to pull the country out from "politics of casteism and religion" and take it towards politics of development and representation, they would have to step forward, the Congress leader said.

While Ms. Vadra's move could be seen as a step to win over women voters cutting across sections, it is bound to encounter ques-

tions on representation of various communities in a State where caste dynamics dictate politics.

Asked by a reporter if the selection of women candidates would be on the basis of caste, Ms. Vadra said ticket would be distributed to women on "merit".

This would be determined by the work of the candidate and how much the people in her Assembly constituency recognised her, Ms. Vadra added.

The Congress' announcement drew sharp criticism from other parties.

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati dismissed it as "election drama".

When the Congress is in power and enjoys *ache din* (good days), it does not remember Dalits, OBC and women but when its *bure din* (bad days) refuse to go away," it remembers women in U.P. just like it is wooing Dalits in Punjab, Ms. Mayawati said.

# RJD, Congress divided over bypolls

Each has been sniping at the other after deciding to go it alone in Bihar

SOBHANA K. NAIR NEW DELHI

The coming bypolls to two Assembly seats in Bihar have deeply divided allies Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the Congress, with each sniping at the other after they decided to contest the elections on their own.

The Kusheshwar Asthan and Tarapur Assembly seats fell vacant due to the death of the incumbent legislators.

The Congress' State in-charge Bhakta Charan Das even went to the extent of accusing the RJD of colluding with "communal forces", without specifically naming the BJP.

The RJD retorted that Mr. Das was completely unaware of the State's political history and "drawing room politics" would not pay dividends.

The RJD refused to concede Kusheshwar Asthan to the Congress, though the latter contested the seat in 2020.

The Congress candidate, Ashok Kumar, lost by a little over 7,000 votes to the JD (U).

"The alliance among the



Foregoing ties: RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav addressing an election campaign in Tarapur on Tuesday. ■PTI

Congress, the RJD and the Left happened on the basis of secular, democratic and socialist ideals. The alliance was specifically to fight the communal forces. The obvious question that comes to mind is that if the RJD has broken the alliance, are they now with the communal forces," Mr. Das asked, speaking to *The Hindu*.

**'An insult'** By refusing the Congress' demand, Mr. Das noted that the RJD was insulting the other 19 Congress legislators who had been supporting them. "They are denying our

very existence," he added.

In a sharp riposte, senior RJD leader and Raja Sabha member Manoj K. Jha said Mr. Das's comments were both unfortunate and tragically funny. The latter was betraying his lack of knowledge of Bihar's political history, he said.

"He obviously does not know about the sacrifices that Lalaji and the RJD have made to fight communal forces. Lalaji was the only Chief Minister in the country to stop the BJP's rath yatra and arrest L.K. Advani. It's unfortunate that no one even briefed him after he

took charge of the State," Mr. Jha observed.

The Congress is hoping to utilise the opportunity to re-energise its cadre, who for long have played only a supporting role in the RJD-led alliance. To assert its seriousness about the task at hand, it appointed its secretaries Chandan Yadav and Ranjeet Ranjan as observers for the two seats.

**Made scapegoat**

Mr. Das said the Congress was wrongly blamed for not delivering in the 2020 Assembly polls. The RJD spared 70 seats for the Congress but the latter could only win 19 seats. "There were 26 seats, which the RJD had traditionally contested but palmed off to us just before the polls and obviously we couldn't recover the seats. And there are 16 other seats where the RJD votes did not transfer to us. So, it is wrong to blame us for the *Mahagat-bandhan's* defeat," Mr. Das stressed. So far, both sides have been careful not to brand the tensions as a divorce.

# Tomar met Nihang leader: Cong.

Photographs of Agriculture Minister with Baba Aman Singh have gone viral

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

Photographs of a meeting between Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar and Baba Aman Singh, leader of the Nihang sect, whose members have confessed to killing a young man at the Singhu border in Haryana's Sonapat, have created a flutter in political circles.

The Agriculture Ministry, however, made it clear that the meeting, held in July this year, was not an official meeting and took place at the residence of Minister of State for Agriculture Kailash Choudhary.

The photographs of the meeting show Mr. Tomar, Mr. Choudhary, Gurmeet Singh Pinki – a Punjab police officer who was dismissed from service and convicted

for murder – and Baba Aman Singh together.

"It was a courtesy meeting... As a politician, Mr. Tomar meets with a lot of people and his doors are always open to religious leaders," a senior official told *The Hindu*. Asked whether the meeting was in relation to the farmers' protests, the official denied any connection.

With the photographs go-

ing viral on social media, the Congress hit out at the BJP, demanding an explanation.

Punjab's Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa said there appeared to be a conspiracy to defame the ongoing farmers' agitation. Mr. Randhawa said the government will get to the bottom of the case and expose the conspirators behind the incident.

# Singhu Dalit murder: ensure 'bhog' rituals, Akal Takht told

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) Chairman Vijay Sampla has asked Giani Harpreet Singh, chief priest of the Akal Takht – the highest Sikh temporal seat – to ensure that the 'bhog' ceremony of Lakhbir Singh, who was allegedly murdered in Haryana's Sonapat, is performed as per the

Sikh code of living.

Mr. Sampla, in a letter to Mr. Singh, said, "You must be aware of the brutal murder of Lakhbir Singh. You must have also got the information that some people, especially the members of Sankar committee, objected to the victim's cremation as per Sikh rituals, citing sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. However, in the viral video,

the culprits and other people can be seen saying Lakhbir Singh had disrespected the Sikh holy book but in reality, no video has surfaced on the social media or news organisations which can prove that Lakhbir Singh did the sacrilege."

Mr. Sampla said Lakhbir Singh should not be stated as 'guilty' until the police investigation proved the same.

# PM orders drive to cut red tape

Officials must weed out old files, clear all pending references from MPs

VIKAS DHOTI NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has directed all government departments to have a fresh look at all existing processes and scrap unnecessary paperwork and compliances, as part of a special spring-cleaning exercise this month.

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, in a recent missive to all Secretaries, has asked each department to weed out old files, clear all pending public grievances and references from MPs and States, while endeavouring to meet any assurances made to Parliament as part of a special campaign.

In the course of disposing of such pending matters and references, "the existing processes may be reviewed with a view to reducing compliance burden, and unnecessary



cessary paperwork done away with, wherever feasible". Mr. Gauba invoked the PM's Independence Day address this year where Mr. Modi had emphasised the need to review rules and procedures on a continuing basis.

To be monitored by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, this special campaign to run till the end of October is based on the directions of the PM, the Cabinet Secre-

tary conveyed. Secretaries have now been asked to monitor the progress on resolving pending issues on a daily basis and send a weekly report to the DARPG.

"As you are well aware, timely and effective disposal of public grievances, references from MPs and State Governments, inter-ministerial consultations, parliamentary assurances, etc. is an important part of the work of Ministries and Departments. However, these issues sometimes do not receive the desired attention," he noted.

"During the special campaign, all our efforts may be made to dispose of the identified pending references, and do so in a meaningful manner," Mr. Gauba emphasised, before reiterating instructions to ensure that offices are clean with a "good work environment".

**'Temporary files'** Asking Departments to weed out files of "temporary nature", the Cabinet Secretary has also urged them to review the period for which different records are retained. Files must neither be prematurely destroyed nor kept for periods longer than necessary.

"Further, redundant scrap material and obsolete items may be discarded during this campaign to improve cleanliness at work places," Mr. Gauba said.

# Central trade unions ask PM to roll back AI sale

'No clarity on future of employees'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Ten Central trade unions on Tuesday wrote a joint letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to stop the sale of Air India to the Tatas and roll back what they termed the "policy of selling national assets".

They said the people of the country and the employees of Air India, in particular, were unhappy with the recently announced sale of the national carrier.

"By selling Air India by hook or by crook (because it is slowly emerging that it has been sold for a song), the Government has tried to cover up its misdeeds," the letter stated, while listing out decisions in the past that had left Air India in a precarious financial position.

"This sale of Air India to Tatas facilitates an oligopo-



Narendra Modi

ly. The combined revenues of the three airlines – Air India, Vistara and Air Asia – amounted to ₹40,500 crore in 2020, out of the total revenues of the entire industry amounting to ₹95,700 crore, i.e. 42.32%, the letter noted.

There was no clarity on the future of the 14,000 employees of the airline, who were praised for their service during the COVID-19 lockdown, it added.

# Rajasthan reels under DAP fertilizer shortage

Sowing hit on 50 lakh hectares

MOHAMMED IQBAL JAIPUR

Rajasthan continues to reel under an acute shortage of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizer, which has adversely affected the sowing of rabi crops, especially mustard and gram, in an estimated 50 lakh hectare area.

The State Government has made a request to the Centre to make available 1.1 lakh tonnes of DAP during October.

Chief Minister Ashok Geh-

lot, who reviewed the availability of fertilizers here on Tuesday, said he had drawn Prime Minister Narendra Modi's attention in a letter about the difficulties being faced by farmers.

Mr. Gehlot said DAP was supplied only by the Union Government.

Against the demand for 1.5 lakh tonnes in the State in October, 68,000 tonnes has been approved by the Centre. Of that, only 60,000 tonnes have been received so far.

**National Centre for Radio Astrophysics**  
TATA INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH  
Savitribai Phule Pune University Campus, Ganeshkhind, Pune - 411 007.

**TENDER NOTICE NO. 08/2021-2022**

Sealed bids are invited in Two Part for Supply of Electric Winch Machine; For details visit website:  
<http://www.ncra.tifr.res.in/ncra/ncra1/public-tenders-1>

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala- 147001  
Contact Number: 96461-01251, Email Id:- se-11@pspcLIn  
Corporate Identity No. U40109PB2010SGC033813  
Website: www.pspcl.in

Tender Enquiry No. 259/DIT-937/Vol-2 Dated 19.10.2021

Deputy Chief Engineer/IT (A&M), Ground Floor, 7-Story Building, PSPCL Head Office, The Mall, Patiala invites e-tender for Procurement of Microsoft software licenses under RAPDRP project. For detailed NIT & Tender specifications please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 19.10.2021, 5:00 pm onwards.

Note:- Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.

C - 380/21 PSPCL 76155/12/501/2021/9084

**ओएनजीसी ONGC**

**EASTERN OFFSHORE ASSET, KAKINADA (A.P.)**

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

ONGC, EOA, Kakinada invites Pre-Qualification documents from reputed and interested Vendors for providing Consultancy Services for undertaking pre-FEED studies for Cluster III of KG-DWN-96-2 Block. Last Date for Submission of experience documents for Pre-Qualification: 10-11-2021. POC meet: 25-10-2021 through Microsoft Teams. For further details, please logon to our website: <https://tenders.ongc.co.in>

**HAR EK KAAM DESH KE NAMM**

**KMML The Kerala Minerals & Metals Ltd.**  
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking)  
(An ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001 & SA 8000 Certified Company)  
Sankaramangalam, Chavara-691 583, Kollam, Kerala, India  
Phone: +91-476-2651215 to 2651217  
Fax: +91-476-2680101, 2686721  
E-mail: contact@kmmll.com, URL: www.kmmll.com CN-14109KL1972SGC002399

Competitive Tenders are invited for following. For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal, <https://tenders.kerala.gov.in> or [www.kmmll.com](http://www.kmmll.com)

No	Tender ID	Items
1.	2021_KMML_445487_1	For the supply of 8600 MT of Petroleum Coke- NPF Grade
		Sd/ DGM(Mts)
		For The Kerala Minerals And Metals Ltd
2.	2021_KMML_444779_1	For Design, Engineering, Procurement, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of one new Booster Compressor for nitrogen gas at TP Unit of KMML
		Sd/ HOU(T)
		For The Kerala Minerals And Metals Ltd
		Our Products: Titanium Dioxide, Titanium Teta Chloride, Nano Titanium, Titanium Sponge, Rutile, Zircon & Silica

Name and Address of the entity seeking Proposal:  
**BANGALORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED**  
Administration Block,  
Bangalore International Airport, Devanahalli  
BANGALORE 560 300  
Web: [www.bangaluruairport.com](http://www.bangaluruairport.com)

**NOTICE TO EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

S. No.	Title of package	Short description of scope of work
1	Cargo Terminal Operation Reference No.: BIAL/EOI/12	"Pre-qualification of Service Providers to Carry Out Development, Operation, Management, Maintenance and Transfer of Cargo Terminals for Domestic Cargo Operations, International Export and Import Cargo Operations and On-Airport Perishable Cargo Handling Services Operations" at Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru.

Information on the EOI can be obtained from BIAL website [www.bangaluruairport.com](http://www.bangaluruairport.com) (<https://www.bangaluruairport.com/corporate/engage-with-us/tenders.html>). Bidding for this Project is through e-tendering. Applicants shall register on <https://www.bialtenders.in/> as per the e-Tendering instructions provided with the information document. Applicants shall view / download the EOI document from <https://www.bialtenders.in/> (event id: 1688) from 0900 hrs IST on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to 2000 hrs IST on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2021. Response to EOI must be submitted by uploading supporting documents online at <https://www.bialtenders.in/> on or before 2359 hrs IST on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2021. Note: Any Further Addendums to this EOI shall be made available in <https://www.bialtenders.in/> (event id: 1688)

For further information / clarification, write back to us addressing to:  
Head - Procurement & Contracts  
BANGALORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LTD.  
Administrative Office: Kempegowda International Airport, Devanahalli, Bengaluru - 560 300  
Contact person email: [corpbid@bialairport.com](mailto:corpbid@bialairport.com)  
Phone No: 95388 00792 | [www.bangaluruairport.com](http://www.bangaluruairport.com)

**TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS:TIRUPATI**  
**RE-NOTIFICATION** Roc.No.CM4/264/CMO/TTD/TPT/2020.

Applications are invited from the eligible, Hindu Religion Candidates for the **SPECIALIST DOCTOR Posts of S.P. Children Heart Centre, S.V. Pranadana Trust, TTD, Tirupati**. For details of posts Category, Application form and Instructions, please visit website <http://td.tirumala.org>. The Applications can be down loaded from the website. The Last Date to receive filled in applications along with all necessary documents is **29-10-2021** and shall reach the **Chief Medical Officer, TTD, Central Hospital, K.T.Road, Tirupati - 517 501, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh State**.

Contact Phone Numbers: **0877-2264371, 0877-2264681**.

Roc.No.PR4/13935/Adv.No.201/PRO/2021/Dated:19-10-2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY**  
MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
ADDENDUM TO AUCTION PROGRAM FOR OCTOBER'21  
NOTICE NO.11/2021

e-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous scrap, Non-Ferrous scrap, other Misc Scrap, condemned Wagon, Coaches & Locos, Scrap Rails and other Permanent Wagon scrap material.

Sl. No	e-auction conducted by	Date of auction for the Month of October 2021	Materials for auction
1.	Sr.DMM/TVC	30.10.21	The details of item to be sold in e-auction will be available in catalogue in <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> website.
2.	Sr.DMM/PGT	30.10.21	
3.	Sr.DMM/SA	30.10.21	

All other Auctions scheduled for October 21 remains unaltered

For detailed terms and conditions and downloading of catalogue please visit our web-site <http://www.ireps.gov.in> -> E-Auction -> Sale -> Live Auctions.  
Principal Chief Materials Manager

Follow us on: [twitter.com/GMSRailway](https://twitter.com/GMSRailway)

**कार्यालय मुख्य अभियन्ता, जल संसाधन संभाग, कोटा (राज)**  
क्रमांक- मुख्यस/ निविदा- 1/2020-21/ 11181 दि- 08.10.2021

**तृतीय सर्पोथन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 01 वर्ष 2021-22**

इस कार्यलय के पत्रांक 8543 दि. 11.08.2021 से ई-निविदा सूचना सं 01 वर्ष 2021-22, जो 3 निर्माण कार्यों के लिये आवान्त्रित की गई है। निविदा दि. 12.08.2021 से दि. 11.10.2021 को समय 18:00 बजे तक डाउनलोड/ अपलोड करने व दि. 12.10.2021 को सायं 3:00 बजे तक नीली छिद्र खोली जाने निर्धारित थी। अब इन दोनों कार्यों को निविदा दि. 12.08.2021 से दि. 21.10.2021 तक समय 18:00 बजे तक डाउनलोड/ अपलोड की जा सकेगी एवं ई-ग्रास चालान आदि समस्त दस्तावेज दि. 22.10.2021 को समय 12.30 बजे तक इस कार्यालय, अभियन्ता कार्यालय, रा.प्र.सा.ज.सा. बांध वृत्त, कोटा व अधि.अभि.ज.सं.खं. बूटी कार्यालय में जमा करने जायेंगे। तकनीकी छिद्र दि. 22.10.2021 को समय 15:00 बजे से ऑनलाइन खोली जायेंगी।

निविदा की शर्त सं. 18 एवं जनरल कण्डिशन ऑफ कोन्ट्रैक्ट 5(5) अनुसार कार्य में अतिरिक्त सम्पादन प्रतिभूति से सम्बन्धित केस माननीय उच्च न्यायालय जोधपुर में विचारार्थ है, माननीय उच्च न्यायालय का जो भी अंतिम निर्णय होगा, वह विचार व सफल निविदादाता/ कोर्तीदाता पर लागू एवं बाध्यकारी रहेगा। शेष शर्तें यथवत रहेंगी।

DIPR RO No 8084  
UBN (1) WRD2122WLOB00695  
UBN (2) WRD2122WLOB00696  
UBN (3) WRD2122WLOB00697

(राजीव चौधरी),  
मुख्य अभियन्ता,  
जल संसाधन संभाग कोटा

DIPR/C/10445/2021

**CHENNAI METRO RAIL LIMITED**  
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Koyambedu, Chennai - 600 107, India.

IFB No: **CMRL/PHASE-II/SYS/C3&5-PS&OHE-10/2021**

E-procurement Tender-Funding Agency-Asian Development Bank

**International Competitive Bidding**

**e-TENDER NO : CMRL/PHASE-II/SYS/C3&5-PS&OHE-10/2021**

CMRL invites online tender through e-procurement bids under the Tender No: **CMRL/PHASE-II/SYS/C3&5-PS&OHE-10/2021** (Lumpsum tender)

"Design, manufacturing, supply, installation, testing, training and commissioning of RSS, ASS, SCADA, OHE & Switching Stations for CMRL Phase II - Corridor 3 (Sholinganallur to SIPCOT 2) & Corridor 5 (From CMBT to Sholinganallur)- Tender Documents can be downloaded from E-procurement website.

For further details, please visit e-procurement website:  
<http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>  
[www.chennaimetrorail.org](http://www.chennaimetrorail.org) Director (System & Operations)  
DIPR/2994/Tender/2021

"தேசநடை கட்டுத் தந்திரம் அடைந்ததும், எடுத்துப் புரிந்த எதிர்க்கட்சியும்"

# India, Israel, UAE and U.S. launch quad forum

S. Jaishankar says it was a fruitful first meeting

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States have decided to launch a new quadrilateral economic forum, as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar joined his counterparts at a videoconference from Jerusalem, where he is on a five-day visit.

The quadrilateral, which followed his bilateral meeting with Israeli Alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, builds on ongoing cooperation between the U.S., Israel and the UAE after the Abraham Accords last year, and the India, Israel and UAE cooperation that was launched since.

Mr. Jaishankar said it was a fruitful first meeting with Mr. Lapid, UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, "on economic growth and global issues".

In an interesting aside, Mr. Jaishankar's travel to Israel is also routed via the UAE, on flights that started as a consequence of the Abraham Accords and the opening of diplomatic missions and flights between them.

## Infrastructure projects

Mr. Lapid added that the grouping had decided to establish an international forum for economic cooperation, and specifically discussed "possibilities for joint infrastructure projects".

The U.S. State Department said that during the meeting on Monday, the



**Biennial exercise:** S. Jaishankar with the IAF contingent at the Ovda airbase in Israel on Tuesday. ■PTI

four Ministers discussed "expanding economic and political cooperation in the Middle East and Asia, including through trade, combating climate change, energy cooperation, and increasing maritime security," as well as ways to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

Foreign Ministers of the U.S., Israel and the UAE had met in Washington on October 13 to discuss modalities of trilateral cooperation, and set up two working groups: on religious coexistence and the other on water and energy.

Business groups in India, the UAE and Israel have also been in talks for trilateral cooperation since diplomatic ties were established, and the International Federation of Indo-Israel Chambers of Commerce (IFICC) has predicted that the potential for agreements backed by Israeli innovation, UAE funding and Indian manufacturing, given India's close ties and strategic partnership with the two other countries

could cross \$100 billion by 2030. In the first such venture, a UAE project for robotic solar panel cleaning technology was signed by Israeli company Ecoppia that has a manufacturing base in India.

Significantly, neither the quadrilateral meeting, nor the trilateral meeting discussed the issue of Palestine and resuming the "Middle East peace process", although the Joe Biden administration has expressed support for a "two-state solution", that is in line with India's broader position.

## Bilateral talks

On Monday, Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Lapid held bilateral talks, agreeing to resume long-pending negotiations for a free trade agreement, a mutual recognition agreement for COVID-19 vaccine certificates, beginning with Israeli acceptance of Indian travellers vaccinated with Covishield, and Israel's joining the International Solar Alliance.

## INTERVIEW | RONY YEDIDIA-CLEIN

# 'The focus will be on economic cooperation'

Newly formed group to focus on trade rather than strategic ties, says Israel's acting Ambassador

SUHASINI HAIDAR

The newly announced quadrilateral meeting between India, Israel, the UAE and the U.S. is a forum for economic cooperation for the moment, said Israel's Deputy Chief of Mission Rony Yedidia-Clein, adding that more cooperation and high-level visits would follow as Israel and India mark 30 years of full diplomatic ties in 2022.

The big announcement after the bilateral meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Israel Foreign Minister Yair Lapid was the decision to resume negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement. There have been several attempts to do this since 2007; where do the blocks to the agreement lie?

■ The struggle on both sides is on bureaucratic issues. Former Ambassador Ron Malka has gone from being

Ambassador here to Director-General at the Ministry of the Economy, and maybe he'll be able to push things forward since he has a personal interest in India. I think his counterparts here on the Indian side will also have an interest in pushing things forward.

Will it be essentially an agreement on goods? Or will services be included in the FTA negotiations?

■ We will have to see how that's resolved. Israel is more interested in seeing it purely on goods. We have to see how the negotiations work out. I think [the deadline in 2022] will put a little bit more pressure on the two sides to, you know, make it work.

Where did the idea for the India-Israel-UAE-U.S. quadrilateral come from and where is this headed?

■ We understand that Minister Lapid was in the United States, and he had talks with



**We're talking about water, we're talking about agricultural opportunities, we're talking about health opportunities**

his counterparts there. And the UAE Minister was also there at the time. So it came up in a conversation and they agreed on having some sort of a structure like that. Since India is such a close and important strategic partner and Dr. Jaishankar planned to visit the week after Mr. Lapid was in the U.S.

I think it holds a lot of promise. India has a very constructive relationship with the UAE, it has a wonderful

relationship with Israel. I think it also has a very, very good relationship with the United States as well. So, why not bring everything together, for the good of the citizens of four countries? And especially speaking of economics, here, I mean, we're talking about very huge opportunities in trade and all the different fronts.

Does a quadrilateral like this also have a strategic purpose when it comes to West Asia? ■ I think right now we're talking more about the economic opportunities here and less about the strategic ones.

The U.S. State Department spokesperson spoke about the quadrilateral being an area for economic and political coordination. Now UAE by its own admission already plays a role in mediating talks between India and Pakistan. Do you see a role for India in the

Middle East [Israel-Palestine] peace process? ■ I wouldn't rule it out, but I don't know if there is any specific role right now.

Israel will participate at the Dubai Expo, where India has a pavilion as well. Will there be discussions on avenues for India-Israel-UAE trilateral cooperation, and in what fields?

■ Well, I think we can see [trilateral cooperation] in a number of different fields. We're talking about water, we're talking about agricultural opportunities, we're talking about health opportunities. The fact that India and Israel have neighbouring pavilions at Dubai at the Expo, and we already have joint events there with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), will help to organise these events. So the opportunities are there, and we [will] leave it to the private sector to develop these.

# 'Ride triples when petrol hits ₹200 a litre'

Assam BJP chief suggests 3 riders on a two-wheeler

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Assam BJP unit president Bhabesh Kalita has reportedly said the State Government will consider allowing three persons to ride a two-wheeler after the petrol price touches ₹200 a litre.

He also predicted that the price of edible oil, now about ₹250 a litre, will fall after the harvesting of mustard

in the State.

A former Minister who was appointed party State chief in June, Mr. Kalita said fuel price rise was inevitable because of an increase in crude oil prices in the international market. However, during an event in northern Assam's Tamulpur on October 18, he advised the people to avoid using luxury cars to save fuel and use two-wheelers to commute.

"I suggest tripling on two-wheelers when petrol sells at ₹200 a litre. When that happens, we can take the Government's permission to allow three people on one motorcycle or even manufacture two-wheelers with three seats," Mr. Kalita said.

Petrol and diesel prices stood at ₹101.97 and ₹94.43 in Assam on Tuesday.

The Congress ridiculed Mr. Kalita's "insensitivity" to the difficulties being faced by the people because of the domino effect of the fuel prices on essential goods.

"Whether he meant to be funny or was serious, his comment conveys the deep disrespect the BJP has to the

issues being faced by the common people," said Bobbeeta Sharma, media chairperson of the Congress in Assam. She reminded Mr. Kalita of the protests the BJP staged in 2013 when the prices were much cheaper.

The Assam BJP president also said he was hopeful of mustard oil becoming cheaper. "It is a matter of time."

In Meghalaya, several organisations demanded the slashing of the value-added tax and other levies on fuel to bring down prices.

# M.P. to launch probe into Ramleela skit

ANUP DUTTA  
BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh Government is planning to conduct a legal enquiry into a video clip of a Ramleela skit, staged by some students of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi, which it found offensive. The skit, performed on the occasion of Dasara, sparked criticism after which the institute's student body issued an apology.

"The video clip of Delhi AIIMS Ramleela skit is very offensive. I will tell the officers to conduct legal inquiry," Madhya Pradesh Minister for Home, Jail and Parliamentary Affairs and Law Narottam Mishra tweeted in Hindi.

The AIIMS administration had a discussion with the students on the matter and clarified that the skit was not part of any official activity or event and the students had organised it on their own.

The AIIMS Student Association tweeted an apology.

According to media reports, the skit was performed by some first-year MBBS students near the hostel quadrangle on the AIIMS campus on the occasion of Dasara. A video clip of the event shared on social media later sparked criticism and with demands for action against the students for "disrespectful portrayal" of religious figures.

# INSACOG to track SARS-CoV-2 in sewage

Finding large proportions in public drains can indicate a precursor to outbreak

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The decline in daily new infections across India has prompted INSACOG, the consortium of labs focused on sequencing coronavirus variants, to "prioritise" new surveillance approaches.

In a bulletin dated October 11, but made public on Monday, INSACOG (India SARS-CoV-2 Genome Consortium) notes: "In view of currently declining cases and importance of early detection of increased transmission in the future, INSACOG will prioritise developing and expanding a SARS-CoV-2 sewage surveillance program."

The CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, which is also part of the INSACOG network, has since



**New normal:** States continue COVID-19 surveillance by taking nasal and oral swabs for testing. ■SUDHAKARA JAIN

early 2020 been collecting sewage from large drains in cities to check for the presence of the virus. Because a large fraction of those afflicted by the virus are asymptomatic but are carriers of infection, their body fluids and stool often contain traces of the virus. Finding large pro-

portions of it in public drains can often be a precursor to a fresh outbreak, with a rise in symptomatic infections.

A study on these lines in Hyderabad had estimated that nearly 6% of the city may have been exposed to the virus from March to August 2020.

India has been observing a steady decline in new infections with a seven-day average of 16,000 cases a day. The all-time low, since the first wave abated in February, was around 11,000 daily. It was after this decline that the second wave started, primarily led by the emergence of new variants such as Alpha, Kappa and Delta.

"Delta (B.1.617.2 and AY.x) continues to be the main VOC (Variant of Concern) in India. No new VOI (Variant of Interest) or VOC are noted in India," the communique noted.

As of last week, 1,04,441 coronavirus samples have been sequenced for their genetic structure, though the bulk of these are from two States: Maharashtra and Kerala.

# Bhaskarabda to be added to official calendar of Assam

It uses a lunisolar system based on moon phases, solar year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Bhaskarabda, an era counted from the date of the ascension of a seventh century local ruler, will be added to Saka and Gregorian eras in the official calendar of the Assam Government.

This was decided at a meeting that Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma held with officials of the General Administration Department on October 18.

Bhaskarabda began when Bhaskaravarman was crowned ruler of the Kamarupa kingdom. He was a contemporary and political ally of northern Indian ruler



Himanta Biswa Sarma

Harshavardhana.

"We have decided that in addition to Saka and Gregorian, Bhaskarabda will be used in the official calendar by the Assam Government.

We have also decided to have a theme-based calendar every year," Mr. Sarma said.

The themes, he said, could be wildlife, plants, culture, cuisine and other aspects of Assam.

Unlike Gregorian, where a day starts at midnight, the Assamese calendar begins and ends at sunrise over 24 hours. While the Gregorian goes by the solar cycle, the Saka and Bhaskarabda eras use a lunisolar system based on both the phases of the moon and the solar year.

The gap between Bhaskarabda and Gregorian is 593 years.

THE CROSSWORD

13381

Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids. @ <https://qr.go.page.link/jjpTn>

SCAN TO PLAY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			9				
10						11	
12				13			
14			15		16		
							17
							18
			19		20		21
22		23					
24						25	
26							27
28							29

14 Exotic chanter's part (7)

16 Store in second step (4)

19 Dull poet is sent back (4)

21 Author is the devil (7)

24 One accustomed to covering society without a policy? (9)

25 Trustee's deed for plot (5)

26 Nearly fool me at first with peculiar expression (5)

27 To prevent reproduction doctor/sister lie (9)

28 Mobile atlases to attract unknown levy (5,3)

29 Run a little way to get a large quantity of paper (6)

■ DOWN

1 Give Australian money to a metro enterprise (8)

2 Gingerly ate crack in rest period (3,5)

3 Before seen in the hunt I loved (5)

5 Settle scores with some traitorous partners (7)

6 Expert to cross one fragment of chromosome of basic life form (9)

7 Charge like captain (6)

8 Papers point to sassy broadcast (6)

9 Stereotype of communist picketing insurance company (6)

15 Charles gets new trims for Noel (9)

17 Gloomy local has half the eggs (8)

18 Geographical line that is more in theory (8)

20 Coffee dispenser in taproom is beginning to tilt? Ay! (7)

21 Reformed odd German trickster (6)

22 Shakes birds (6)

23 Loyal crowd around the shores of India (6)

25 Time to join a card game after missing husband's turn (5)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Solution to puzzle 13380**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

FAITH

## Different angles

It is said that the Vedas took an avatara as Valmiki's Ramayana. Vedanta Desika says that Ramayana is superior to the Vedas. This is because it highlights the Lord's qualities much better than the Vedas do. In fact, the purpose of the Ramayana itself is to throw light on His qualities.

Vashnava Acharyas have looked at the Ramayana from a Vedantic angle, said Navalpakkam Vasudevachariar in a discourse. We understand saranagati, Para Tatva, Parama purushartha etc by reading the Ramayana. The Ramayana can also be looked at from other angles. It tells us the dharma to be followed by each one of us. It is of use to us as we carry out our day-to-day activities. It is like reading the purva bhaga of the Vedas. And of course, it can be looked at as literature, and enjoyed by everyone. It is a pleasing kavya, and we can admire the choice of words, and Valmiki's presentation.

Vedanta Desika says that no poet was born to equal Valmiki. As a story too, the Ramayana has something for everyone, from child to adult. Valmiki gives us nothing but the truth. That is because every conversation in the Ramayana is an accurate reporting by Valmiki. Brahma gave him the boon of being able to see and hear all that happened during the Rama avatara. So his work is a truthful account of what happened. And the entire work of 24,000 slokas has come down to us intact. It is seldom that a work is handed down from generation to generation, without even a small portion being lost.

The Ramayana is an ocean, which contains many gems. In the case of an ocean, one must get to the depths to obtain the gems. In the same way, one must study the Ramayana deeply to get to the gems it holds inside it.

# N. Korea fired 'ballistic missile': Seoul

The launch comes as the intelligence chiefs of the U.S., South Korea, and Japan meet in Seoul

REUTERS  
SEOUL

North Korea fired a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) from off its East Coast on Tuesday, South Korea's military said, pulling Japan's new Prime Minister off the campaign trail and overshadowing the opening of a major arms fair in Seoul.

The launch, reported by officials in South Korea and Japan, came after U.S. and South Korean envoys met in Washington to discuss the nuclear standoff with North Korea on Monday. Meanwhile, the intelligence chiefs of the U.S., South Korea, and Japan were reported to be meeting in Seoul on Tuesday as well.

The North Korean launch would be the latest weapons test by the country, which has pressed ahead with military development in the face of international sanctions imposed over its nuclear



Show of strength: North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un interacting with officials at the Defence Development Exhibition in Pyongyang on October 12. • REUTERS/KCNA

weapons and missile programmes.

The missile was launched about 10:17 a.m. local time from the sea in the vicinity of Sinpo, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said.

It was not immediately clear whether the missile was fired from a submarine

or from a submersible test barge, as in most previous tests. "Our military is closely monitoring the situation and maintaining readiness posture in close cooperation with the U.S., to prepare for possible additional launches," JCS said in a statement.

The missile flew about

430-450 km to a maximum altitude of 60 km, Yonhap news agency reported.

Kim Dong-yup, a professor at Kyungnam University's Far East Institute in Seoul, said the latest test likely involved one of the SLBMs recently unveiled by North Korea.

The North displayed new missiles during its military parades in October and January, and a previously unseen, smaller missile was spotted at last week's defence fair in Pyongyang.

North Korea has also been working on what would be its first operational submarine capable of launching an SLBM, according to South Korean officials. It currently has an experimental ballistic missile submarine it claims was used in a 2016 test, though some analysts say that may have used a barge.

Japanese PM Fumio Kishida cancelled his campaign schedule and was planning to return to Tokyo to deal with the missile situation.

The White House urged North Korea to refrain from further "provocations" on Tuesday, saying the U.S. remained "open to engaging diplomatically with North Korea."

# Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. envoy for Afghanistan, steps down

He will be replaced by deputy Thomas West: Blinken

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON

Some two months after the U.S.'s chaotic troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, America's chief negotiator in what was meant to be an Afghan peace settlement, has resigned. Mr. Khalilzad, an Afghan American, was appointed in 2018 by former U.S. President Donald Trump and continued to hold the position in the Biden administration.

Thomas West, who has been Deputy Special Representative for Afghan Reconciliation since January this year, will replace Mr Khalilzad, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said via a statement. In his role as deputy, Mr. West had already met Taliban representatives in Doha after the American departure. He also made a trip to Kabul with CIA Director William Burns, as per a CNN report.

"Thank you to Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for decades of tireless service to the United States," Mr. Blinken said on Twitter, shortly after the official announcement went out. Mr. Khalilzad, a former diplomat, was Ambassador to Afghanistan during the Bush administration. He had also served as Ambassador to Iraq and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN.

## Taliban deal

Mr. Khalilzad has been criticised for orchestrating a February 2020 deal with the Taliban, details of which were mostly hammered out in Doha, cutting out the former Afghan government. The U.S. agreed to withdraw



Zalmay Khalilzad

its troops by May 2021 (originally) with the Taliban refraining from attacking the troops in return. Mr. Biden extended the withdrawal deadline to August 31.

After the U.S. departure, Mr. Khalilzad had helped get Americans and vulnerable Afghans out of the country, the *New York Times* reported. As the U.S. was entering a new phase in its Afghanistan policy, this was the right time to resign, Mr. Khalilzad says in his resignation letter, a copy of which *The Hindu* was able to access.

"The political arrangement between the Afghan government and the Taliban did not go forward as envisaged. The reasons for this are too complex and I will share my thoughts in the coming day and weeks," Mr. Khalilzad writes. Earlier, he had dismissed the notion that the Afghan forces would surrender to the Taliban.

"I personally believe that the statements that their forces will disintegrate and the Talibs will take over in short order are mistaken," Mr. Khalilzad had told the House of Representatives in May this year.

Mr. Khalilzad had said in

May last year, in an interview to *The Hindu*, that the U.S. could not see a "better alternative" to the deal it had struck with the Taliban and that India should directly engage with the outfit.

In his resignation letter, he says, "We also engaged our allies and other major players, including China, Russia, India and Pakistan." However, India was left out of the "extended troika" talks (Russia, China, the U.S. and Pakistan) on Afghanistan and was not privy, as per recent remarks by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, to the details of what was negotiated between the U.S. and the Taliban in Doha.

## Host of challenges

The U.S., along with the international community, is now faced with challenges of negotiating with the Taliban on human rights, especially the rights of women, while getting assistance to Afghanistan, which is fast descending into a humanitarian crisis. These issues are likely to occupy Mr West's agenda.

"At the top of the list of the challenges he will face include how to support the humanitarian and development needs of the Afghan people while the Taliban government is in power; what the future of human rights in Afghanistan will be; and whether and how the international community can make a difference to regional security," Alyssa Ayres, Dean of the Elliot School of International Affairs at George Washington University and a former high ranking diplomat, told *The Hindu*. (With inputs from Suhassini Haidar in New Delhi)

# Steve Bannon faces criminal contempt vote

Select Committee looking into the Capitol attack is to vote over his refusal to comply with a subpoena

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON

Far-right Trump ally and former senior adviser Steve Bannon is likely to be held in criminal contempt of the House of Representatives for defying a subpoena, as a Democrat-led 'Select Committee' looking into the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol is expected, on Tuesday, to vote to send the matter to the full House. The Democrat-controlled legislative chamber is highly likely to approve sending the contempt charges to the Justice Department as early as this week.

Mr. Bannon has refused to comply with a subpoena seeking documents and his presence for a deposition, on the grounds that former President Donald Trump has said information sought is protected by 'executive privilege' and that former staffers need not therefore comply with subpoenas. Mr. Trump filed a suit against the Committee and the National Archives in a District Court in Washington DC on Monday. The lawsuit called the Committee's request a "vexatious, illegal fishing expedition".

The House is investigating Mr. Bannon's role in the January 6 attack, when a far-right mob stormed the Capitol in order to disrupt the certification of the 2020 election, which Mr. Biden won. In his *War Room* podcast episode of January 5, Mr. Bannon had said, "All hell is going to break loose tomorrow."

He also spoke with Mr. Trump on December 30, the Committee said, suggesting that Mr. Trump focus his efforts on January 6, the *New York Times* had reported.

Other Trump administration officials who were sub-

poenaed by the Select Committee are Indian American Kash Patel, a former Chief of Staff to the Acting Defense Secretary, and White House officials Mark Meadows and Dan Scavino.

The Biden administration has declined to apply 'executive privilege' as sought by Mr. Trump, over the White House documents in question and has approved an initial 125 pages for release. Mr. Bannon left the White House in 2017, after which he became a private citizen - it is therefore not clear if Mr. Trump's conversations with

Mr. Bannon are covered by executive privilege.

"The Select Committee believes that this willful refusal to comply with the Subpoena constitutes a violation of federal law," Chairman of the Select Committee, Bennie Thompson, reportedly said in a letter to Mr. Bannon's lawyer, Robert Costello.

Mr. Costello has told the Committee that Mr. Bannon will not produce documents until a court orders him to do so or an arrangement is reached with Mr. Trump, as per reports.

# Israel clears residency for Palestinians

Gantz says registrations for 4,000 on 'humanitarian' grounds, a first since 2009

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JERUSALEM

Israel granted approval on Tuesday for 4,000 Palestinians to register as residents of the West Bank, the first such move in the Israeli-occupied territory in 12 years.

The newly regularised residents had already been living in the West Bank, including 1,200 people considered "undocumented" because they had not been registered with the Palestinian Population Registry and another 2,800 who had previously been identified as residents of the blockaded Gaza Strip.

## Boosting ties

Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz said he had approved the new registrations on "humanitarian" grounds as part of his "policy to strengthen the economy and improve the lives of Palestinians in Judea and Samaria,"



Access granted: Palestinians walk in front of a currency exchange counter in West Bank, in this file photo. • AFP

using the biblical terms for the southern and northern West Bank.

Mr. Gantz in August made the first visit in several years by an Israeli Cabinet member to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for talks aimed at boosting ties with the Palestinian Authority, which suffered during former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's 2009-2021

tenure.

Senior PA official Hussein Al Sheikh tweeted on Tuesday that 4,000 people had "obtained their right to citizenship", will be granted Palestinian identity documents and changes to their residential address.

Israel has occupied the West Bank since the Six Day War of 1967 and exercises full administrative control

across much of the territory.

The branch of the Israeli military responsible for civil affairs in the occupied Palestinian territories, COGAT, said that Israel had not approved a new batch of Palestinian registrations in the West Bank since 2009.

Israel's governing coalition, which ended Mr. Netanyahu's 12 straight years in office in June, has said it is committed to boosting livelihoods in the West Bank.

Some 4.75,000 Israeli Jews live in settlements in the West Bank considered illegal under international law on land Palestinians claim as part of their future state.

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett opposes Palestinian statehood and has ruled out formal peace talks with the Palestinian Authority during his tenure, saying he prefers to focus on economic improvements.

# Polish PM clashes with EU chief over supremacy of bloc's laws

'Poles don't believe in blackmail or paternalistic attitudes'

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
STRASBOURG

The European Union's top official locked horns on Tuesday with Poland's Prime Minister, arguing that a recent ruling from the country's constitutional court challenging the supremacy of EU laws is a threat to the bloc's foundations and won't be left unanswered.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and Mateusz Morawiecki laid bare their differences of opinion on rule-of-law principles during a heated debate with EU lawmakers.

Ms. Von der Leyen accused Mr. Morawiecki of trying to run away and escape the debate on the primacy of European law. He, in turn, insisted that Poles are in fa-



Mateusz Morawiecki

calating lingering tensions over democratic standards between the country's right-wing nationalist government and EU institutions.

In her introduction, Ms. Von der Leyen said the Polish ruling challenges "the unity of the European legal order" and undermines the protection of judicial independence.

At the heart of the dispute is the question of who should have the most power within the 27-nation bloc - each individual nation over its citizens or the EU institutions over the member nations. It was the prime mover behind the exit of Britain from the EU, and it has stirred passions in several eastern and central European nations like Poland and Hungary.

# Taliban offers cash, land to kin of suicide bombers

Minister calls them country's heroes

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KABUL

The Taliban have promised plots of land to relatives of suicide bombers who attacked U.S. and Afghan soldiers, in a provocative gesture that seems to run counter to their efforts to court international support.

The Taliban's acting Interior Minister, Sirajuddin Haqqani, offered the reward to dozens of family members of bombers gathered at a Kabul hotel, Interior Ministry spokesman Saed Khosty tweeted on Tuesday.

Addressing the gathering on Monday evening, Haqqani praised the sacrifices of "martyrs and fidayeen," referring to fighters killed in suicide attacks, Khosty tweeted. Haqqani called them "heroes of Islam and the country," according to the spokesman. At the end

of the meeting, he distributed 10,000 afghanis (\$12) per family and promised each a plot of land.

Khosty posted photos of Haqqani, his face blurred, embracing the relatives in a packed auditorium.

The event comes as the Taliban attempt to open diplomatic channels with an international community largely reluctant to formally recognise their rule in Afghanistan.

The event signals conflicting approaches within the Taliban leadership. They are trying to position themselves as responsible rulers, who promise security for all and have condemned suicide attacks by their rivals, the militant Islamic State group. On the other hand, they praise such tactics when it comes to their followers.

# U.S. may allow mix and match of booster jabs

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is preparing to allow "mix and match" coronavirus vaccine boosting, in which people get a different additional shot to the dose they initially received, U.S. media reported.

Citing sources familiar with the situation, the *New York Times* said the FDA might make the announcement on Wednesday when it is also expected to authorise boosters for the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

A preliminary study showed that people who have received the J&J vaccine may benefit from a booster dose of a different, messenger-RNA vaccine such as Pfizer or Moderna.

But multiple reports quoted people familiar with the discussions as saying one shot may not be recommended over another. "People should generally get the same vaccine as their initial series," a federal official told the *Washington Post*.

Proponents of mixing and matching point to its benefits in terms of simplifying vaccine rollout, and ensuring those who need boosters can get them regardless of which jab they initially had. "From a public health perspective, there's a clear need in some situations for individuals to receive a different vaccine," Amanda Cohn, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official, told the *New York Times*.

In July, the World Health Organization's chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan said mixing and matching vaccines was "a bit of a data-free, evidence-free zone."

The U.S. study on boosters has several limitations. The number of participants was small, and the immune response could evolve beyond the 15 days observed during the study.

# '10,000 children killed, maimed in Yemen'

Conflict hits shameful milestone: UNICEF

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
GENEVA

Seven years of conflict in Yemen has killed or injured at least 10,000 children, UNICEF said on Tuesday after a mission to the country.

"The Yemen conflict has just hit another shameful milestone: 10,000 children have been killed or maimed since fighting started in March 2015. That's the equivalent of four children every day," spokesman James Elder told a UN briefing in Geneva.

The figure only included child victims whose fates were known to the organisation and there were countless others, he said.

"UNICEF urgently needs more than \$235 million to continue its life-saving work in Yemen till mid-2022," Mr. Elder said. "Otherwise the agency will be forced to

scale down or stop its vital assistance for vulnerable children. Funding is critical. We can draw a clear line between donor support and lives saved. But even with increased support, the war must come to an end."

"At the current funding levels, and without an end to fighting, UNICEF cannot reach all these children. There is no other way to say this - without more international support, more children will die," he warned.

"Four out of every five children need humanitarian assistance. That's more than 11 million children."

In addition, "4,000,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition. More than two million children are out-of-school. Another four million are at risk of dropping out," said Mr. Elder.

# Turkish President promises 'win-win' pacts with Africa

He slams the West for ignoring calls for change on the continent

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JOHANNESBURG

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday wound up a visit to Angola, the first leg of a three-nation African tour, where he accused the West of ignoring calls for change on the continent.

Since taking office nearly two decades ago, first as Prime Minister, Mr. Erdogan has been fostering ties with Africa, presenting Turkey as a fairer player than the continent's former colonial powers and China.

"We as Turkey attach great importance and value to our close cooperation with the continent of Africa," he told business leaders in Luanda on Monday evening, according to a statement from his AK party.

"We desire to advance our



Recep Tayyip Erdogan

relations on the basis of win-win and equal partnership while observing mutual respect".

In an earlier address to the Angolan Parliament posted on the Turkish presidency website, he said "the fate of the humanity cannot and should not be left to the mercy of a handful of countries that were the victors of the Second World War".

"Ignoring the demands

for change is an injustice to Africa," he added.

He noted that Turkey bore "no stain" of imperialism or colonialism and rejected "Western-centric Orientalist approaches" to the continent.

In talks with his Angolan counterpart Joao Lourenco, he touted Turkey's natural gas reserves and distribution network, which he said "would be pleased to share our experiences".

His next stop is Togo, followed by Africa's economic powerhouse Nigeria. Before travelling to Angola, Mr. Erdogan boasted 38 visits to 28 countries since he became Prime Minister in 2003 and later as President.

Turkey has 43 Embassies on the continent and its national airline is now serving more than 60 African cities.

MARKET WATCH

	19-10-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	61,716	-0.08
Gold	46,580	0.59
Brent oil	84.92	0.25

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	792.25	-18.30
Asian Paints	3183.75	-57.75
Axis Bank	801.65	-11.65
Bajaj Auto	3911.55	-4.40
Bajaj Finserv	19076.55	398.60
Bajaj Finance	7739.30	-126.25
Bharti Airtel	681.10	0.50
BPCIL	453.05	-9.45
Britannia Ind	3795.90	-41.45
Cipla	906.20	2.45
Coal India	184.50	-0.80
Divis Lab	5192.10	-150.95
Dr Reddys Lab	4801.80	-75.70
Eicher Motors	2703.70	-122.65
Grasim Ind	1717.90	-36.05
HCL Tech	1232.10	10.70
HDFC	2822.90	11.40
HDFC Bank	1688.70	18.40
HDFC Life	702.80	-0.80
Hero MotoCorp	2876.05	-28.05
Hindalco	533.75	-9.05
Hind Unilever	2546.80	-107.20
ICI Bank	747.45	2.00
IndusInd Bank	1194.00	-25.60
Infosys	1822.15	30.00
IndianOilCorp	133.80	-2.55
ITC	245.95	-16.60
JSW Steel	691.55	-24.25
Kotak Bank	2035.35	23.75
L&T	1846.05	57.60
M&M	917.50	6.55
Maruti Suzuki	7655.65	-1.35
Nestle India Ltd.	19368.45	-70.00
NTPC	149.65	0.10
ONGC	158.60	-3.50
PowerGrid Corp	198.65	-5.15
Reliance Ind	2731.85	24.25
SBI Life	1193.45	0.95
State Bank	488.20	-9.75
Shree Cement	27696.80	-494.50
Sun Pharma	827.35	-8.55
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	843.30	-0.65
Tata Motors	481.90	-27.70
Tata Steel	1366.90	-44.15
TCS	3634.15	-13.00
Tech Mahindra	1539.10	59.45
Titan	2484.90	-103.90
UltraTech Cement	7170.10	-229.20
UPL	733.70	-17.40
Wipro	711.55	1.80

IN BRIEF



'Power sector given priority in coal supply'

NEW DELHI State-owned CIL said the supply of coal will be prioritised temporarily to power producers to replenish their dwindling stock of the dry fuel. The statement assumes significance in the wake of the country's power plants grappling with fuel shortages. "This was a highly transitory measure and normalcy will be restored soon," CIL said in a filing. PTI

2 top Ola executives to quit ahead of IPO

BENGALURU SoftBank Group-backed ride-hailing firm Ola is set to lose two top executives, as per an internal memo seen by Reuters, ahead of a likely \$1 billion IPO. CFO Swayam Saurabh and COO Gaurav Porwal are leaving, as per the memo sent to staff by CEO Bhavish Aggarwal. Ola did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. REUTERS

P&G unveils ₹500-crore rural growth fund

MUMBAI Procter & Gamble (P&G) India has announced a ₹500-crore 'P&G Rural Growth Fund' to accelerate inclusive growth in rural market. "This fund will provide external partners an opportunity to collaborate with P&G on business solutions customised for meeting the needs of rural consumers. This will include solutions like tech-enabled selling," the firm said.

Policybazaar parent gets nod for ₹6,018-cr. IPO

NEW DELHI PB Fintech Ltd., that operates online insurance platform Policybazaar and credit-comparison portal Paisabazaar, has received SEBI's approval to raise ₹6,017.50 crore through an initial share-sale. The initial public offer (IPO) comprises a fresh issue of ₹3,750 crore worth of equity shares and an offer for sale of ₹2,267.50 crore, as per DRHP. PTI

'Gold demand likely to stay robust in 2022'

MUMBAI The demand for gold is likely to remain subdued this year following COVID-related disruptions that continues in India, the World Gold Council (WGC) said in a report. However, in 2022, the impact of pent-up demand for the precious metal is likely to herald a period of robust demand, the council said in the report titled 'The Drivers of Indian Gold.' PTI

# Domestic air traffic rebounds to highest since second wave

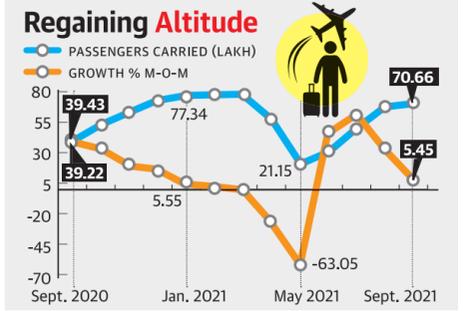
Carriers flew over 70 lakh passengers in Sept., still only at 57% of pre-COVID level

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Domestic aviation has been making a steady recovery from the brutal impact of the second wave of COVID-19. Indian airlines together ferried a little more than 70 lakh passengers in September, registering a growth of 5.4% over the previous month, according to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's monthly report.

Second wave impact

The last time passenger traffic figures exceeded 70 lakh was in March, following which they saw a sharp drop - 57.25 lakh in April, 21.15 lakh in May - before starting to recover to 31.13 lakh in



June, 50.07 lakh in July and 67.01 lakh in August. However, domestic passenger traffic still continues to lag behind levels seen prior to the second wave. During the best months so far since the outbreak of COVID-19, these numbers hovered between 73 lakh and 78 lakh between December 2020 and March 2021.

In February 2020, before the pandemic hit air travel, India's monthly domestic passenger traffic was at 1.23 crore, indicating that last month's figures were only at 57% of pre-COVID levels. The recently-improved passenger numbers mean that most airlines witnessed flights with about two-thirds of the seats sold.

'More seats filled'

SpiceJet had the highest passenger load factor (or seat occupancy) at 78.8%, followed by GoAir at 74.1%, IndiGo at 73.6%, Vistara at 72.4% and AirAsia at 68%. Air India, set to be acquired by the Tata group, had a load factor of 63.7%.

## Moody's raises banking system outlook to 'stable'

Cites likely pick-up in credit growth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service on Tuesday raised the outlook for the Indian banking system to 'stable' from 'negative' citing moderate deterioration of asset quality since the onset of the pandemic and a likely pick-up in credit growth with economic recovery.

Moody's expects India's economy to continue to recover in the next 12-18 months, with GDP growing 9.3% in the fiscal year ending March 2022 and 7.9% in the following year.

"The pick-up in economic activity will drive credit growth, which we expect to be 10-13% annually. Weak corporate financials and



funding constraints at finance companies have been key negative factors for banks but these risks have receded," Moody's said in its 'Banking system outlook - India' report. The quality of corporate loans has improved, indicating that banks have provisioned for all legacy problem loans in this segment. The quality of retail loans has deteriorated, but to a limited degree because large-scale job losses have not occurred, it said.

## CAD to hit 1.3% on commodity price rise: BofA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

Rising global commodity prices will shave a lot off the current account leading to higher imports and a rise in current account deficit, which is likely to print at 1.3% of the GDP, according to a report by Bank of America Securities (BofA).

Given the sharp increase in global commodity prices, particularly oil, concerns about current account deficit (CAD) and its serviceability have resurfaced, the report said.

"But, we see FY22 CAD at 1.3% of GDP or \$40 billion, up from a 0.9% surplus in FY21, but still well-contained under the threshold of 2.5% of GDP," BofA said on Tuesday.

## HUL Q2 net profit rises 9% to ₹2,187 cr. as sales increases 11%

Cautiously optimistic about demand recovery, says Mehta

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Hindustan Unilever Ltd. (HUL) reported net profit for the second quarter ended September 30 grew 9% to ₹2,187 crore, compared with the year-earlier period, on the back of a 'robust broad-based performance in a challenging environment'.

HUL also reported a domestic consumer growth of 11% during the quarter. "The performance was broad-based, with all three divisions - home care, beauty and personal care, and foods and refreshment - growing competitively," it said in a filing. "Business fundamentals remained



Sanjiv Mehta

strong with more than three-fourths of the business gaining market share," it added.

'Input cost inflation'

"September quarter witnessed a sequential improvement in trading conditions, albeit remained challenging with unprece-

## Gross NPAs of banks to rise to 8-9% from 7.5%: Crisil

'Retail, MSMEs to contribute more to stressed assets, NPAs'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of banks are expected to rise to 8-9% this fiscal from 7.5% as on March 31, but they would still remain below the peak of 11.2% seen at the end of fiscal 2018, Crisil Ratings said in a report.

COVID-19 relief measures, such as the restructuring dispensation and the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), would help limit the rise, it said. "With 2% of bank credit expected under restructuring by the end of this fiscal, stressed assets - comprising gross NPAs and loan book under restructuring - should touch 10-11%," the ratings agency said.

marily in the unsecured segment," he added.

The rural segment, which was hit harder during the second wave of the pandemic, has also seen a strong recovery. Therefore, stressed assets in the agriculture segment are expected to remain relatively stable, the ratings agency pointed out.

'Base-case scenario'

It said the estimates were predicated on a base-case scenario of 9.5% GDP growth this fiscal and continued improvement in corporate credit quality.

A virulent third wave and significant deceleration in demand growth could pose significant downside risks to these estimates, it added.

## Nestle India Q3 net rises 5% to ₹617 cr.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

FMCG major Nestle India Ltd on Tuesday reported a 5.15% rise in net profit to ₹617.37 crore for the third quarter ended September, driven largely by a high single-digit volume and mix growth in the domestic market across brands.

Net sales rose 9.63% to ₹3,864.97, Nestle India said in a BSE filing.

In a separate filing, Nestle India said its board on Tuesday approved a second interim dividend of ₹10 per equity share of ₹10 each for the year 2021.

The company said the e-commerce channel is expected to continue its growth journey and is gaining increasing traction.

## Gati boosts network capacity, staff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

Express distribution firm Gati has ramped up its network capacity by 20-25% by adding 100 line haul trucks to its flexi network to connect locations besides scaling up workforce by at least 15%, a release said on Tuesday

The move is aimed at cutting down the dwell time further in view of the huge spike in demand during the festival season, which is considered a stress-test time for supply-chain players, it said.

Moreover, to cater to the festive demand more efficiently, Gati Air has bolstered its network by partnering leading airlines, providing direct connections to 28 commercial airports in India.

This is the third direct airline engagement this year, the company said.

## 'Services exports may cross \$240 bn in 2021-22'

Tourism to give impetus: SEPC chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Seeking incentives from the government, SEPC on Tuesday said the country's services exports are expected to reach over \$240 billion during 2021-22 on account of healthy performance by segments such as professional and management consulting services, audio-visual, freight-transport services, and telecommunications.

Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) chairman Maneck Davar said during the first five months of the current fiscal year, exports from the sector increased 14% to \$95 billion.

"Total services exports for 2021-22 are expected to touch over \$240 billion and may increase even further when the tourism sector is opened up later in the year," Mr. Davar said.



SEPC chief

In 2020-21, services exports dipped by 3% to \$206 billion. He added that the recovery of services is largely based on the performance of sectors such as professional and management consulting services.

He also said the target of \$1 trillion in services exports by 2030 set by the government is feasible but there is a need to look at sectors other than IT and ITes for growth. The need of the hour is to provide a level-playing field with manufacturing and incentives to tide over the pandemic.

## Bharti offers 'IQ Video' as service to tap OTT players

'Indian OTT market to touch \$12.5 bn'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel on Tuesday unveiled its video platform as a service offering as the telco looks to cash in on the over-the-top (OTT) video market in the country.

The solution 'Airtel IQ Video' already has three customers - Raj TV, Eros Now and CG Telecom of Nepal - and will allow businesses to build world-class video streaming products for large and small screens with minimal investment in infrastructure and technology, the company said.

Bharti expects to onboard more than 50 brands on the platform in the coming year. "Airtel IQ Video is an end-



to-end managed solution that brings convenience along with cost benefits," Bharti said.

According to RBSA Advisors, India's video OTT market is expected to touch \$12.5 billion by 2030, from \$1.5 billion, currently.

The report also highlighted that the next wave of growth in the OTT landscape would come from tier II, III and IV cities.

## Godrej urges firms to step up ESG efforts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The industry should do much more than compliance towards meeting Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals, said Jamshyd N. Godrej, CMD, Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd.

He said this while reiterating the firm's commitment towards ESG for larger benefit of the all stakeholders.

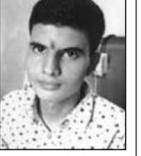
The firm had announced ESG goals with specific targets to achieve in 10 years. He said the entire transportation system should be electrified to achieve the goals. In the last 10 years, the firm had invested more than ₹500 crore in ESG initiatives.

### SEARCH OF MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one person (depicted in the photo), **Namely:** Adarsh@Kamal, S/o: Laxmikant Shukla, R/o: H.No. D-164, 4th Floor, East Vinod Nagar, Delhi **Aged:** 18 years, has been missing since 02.10.2021 at 5.30 PM from his House. **Vide DD No. 94A, Dated 03.10.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Kalyan Puri, Delhi.** His physical description is as under: **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Medium, **Clothing:** Grey Colour T-Shirt and Half Black Pant & Sleeper in feet. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Kalyan Puri, Delhi at E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or **website :** <http://cbi.nic.in> **Tel No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641**

S.H.O  
P.S. Kalyan Puri, Delhi  
Ph: 011-22772287, 22772251

DP/749/ED/2021.



Adarsh@Kamal

### SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a boy (depicted in the photo), **Namely:** MD. Skil S/o MD Saleem R/o H.No. BB-369, Nabi Karim, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi has been missing since 29.08.2021 from Idgah Ground, Sadar Bazar, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No. 55A dated 15.09.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Sadar Bazar, Delhi. His physical description is as under:- **Age:** 22 Years, **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Strong, **Identification:** Mentally Weak, **Wearing:** White Colour T-Shirt & Light Brown Colour Pant and Blue Colour Hawai Chappal in feet. Any person having any information/ Clue about this missing boy, may inform SHO, Sadar Bazar, Delhi at E-mail [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or **website:** <http://cbi.nic.in>

SHO  
011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax No. 011-24368639  
DP/1573/N/2021

P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi  
North Dist., Delhi  
Ph. No. 011-23512411, 23512412



MD. Skil

### SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **M. Shalini, D/o: P. Maha Ligam, R/o: 22/75, Trilok Puri, Delhi-110091 has been missing since 05.10.2021 at 8:30 AM from the area of P.S. Mayur Vihar, Delhi.** In this regard **FIR No. 614/21 dated 06.10.2021 U/s 363 IPC** has been lodged at Police Station Mayur Vihar, Delhi. The description of missing girl is as under: **Name:** M. Shalini, **Age:** 17 Years, **Height:** 5', **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Fair, **Wearing:** Light Blue Suit & Dark Blue Pant & Black Colour Shoes in Feet. If anyone has any information about this missing girl please inform P.S. Mayur Vihar, Delhi. **Web:** <http://cbi.nic.in>, **Email:** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) **Ph.:** 011-24368638/24368641, **Fax:** 011-24368639

SHO  
Police Station, Mayur Vihar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-22711048, 8750870627

DP/746/ED/2021



M. Shalini

### MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI CHIEF ENGINEER (BM) DEPARTMENT Ch.E./B.M./13227/HIC Date. 14.10.2021

**Short e-Tender Notice**

Department	Chief Engineer (BM)
Sub Department	Dy.Ch. E (HIC)
Tender No	Bid No. 7200014170
Subject	Structural repair of lift shaft, water proofing of OH tank and other minor works at Savinbhai Phule Maternity Home at Bhandup in S Ward.
Tender- Sale	20.10.2021 from 11:00 am to 27.10.2021 up to 11:00 pm
website	<a href="https://portal.mcgm.gov.in">https://portal.mcgm.gov.in</a>
Concern Person	A.E.(HIC)S ward / S.E.(HIC)ES
Name	Shri. N.M.Luman / Smt. Minu Ansari
Telephone.No	022-24901936, 9987903906
E-mail ID	<a href="mailto:dyche01hlc.pd@mcgm.gov.in">dyche01hlc.pd@mcgm.gov.in</a>

PRO/1312/ADV/2021-22  
AVOID SELF MEDICATION

Sd/-  
Dy.Ch.E.(HIC)

### MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI (Chief Engineer, Building Maintenance) Ch.E./B.M./12959/II dtd. 18/10/2021

**Short e-Tender Notice**

Department	Ch.E. (Building Maintenance)
Sub Department	Dy.Ch.E. (Building Maintenance)City
BID No.	72000145571
Subject	Major structural repairs to Italian Building, Ghassully in 'E' Ward.
Total Estimated Cost	Rs. 82,14,400/-
E.M.D.	Rs. 82,200/-
Tender- Sale	20.10.2021 from 11.00 am to 26.10.2021 upto 12.00 pm
Website	<a href="http://portal.mcgm.gov.in">http://portal.mcgm.gov.in</a>
Concern person	Sub- Engineer- (B.M.) City
Name	Shri. S. B. Adsul
Telephone No	+91-9820907599
E-mail ID	<a href="mailto:Se01city.bc@mcgm.gov.in">Se01city.bc@mcgm.gov.in</a>

PRO/1316/ADV/2021-22  
AVOID SELF MEDICATION

Sd/-  
Dy.Ch.E. (B.M.) City

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unidentified dead body of male **Namely:** Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, **Age:** 48 years (Approx), **Complexion:** Shallow, **Height:** 5'6", **Face:** Long, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** White Shirt and blue colour lungi, who was near Nili Chatri Mandir under flyover Jamna Bazar, Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard a case **GD No. 35-A U/s 174 CrPc dt. 27.09.2021 has been registered at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi**</

# India will look to freeze its batting order

Ishan Kishan has staked his claim with a good knock against England

## T20 WC WARM-UPS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DUBAI

With its preparations for the T20 World Cup off to a smooth start, India would look to finalise its batting order for the tournament proper when it takes on Australia in its second and final warm-up game here on Wednesday.

As pointed out by skipper Virat Kohli before the warm-up game against England on Monday, India's top three is settled with K.L. Rahul and Rohit Sharma opening the batting and he coming in at No. 3.

Rohit didn't bat against England and come Wednesday, the right-hander is expected to get a go against the Australians.

Having made a stroke-filled 70, before retiring in the seven-wicket win over England, Ishan Kishan has staked his claim for a place in the playing eleven.

## Fitting in Suryakumar

Rishabh Pant (29 not out) was promoted ahead of Surya Kumar Yadav and it remains to be seen where the latter bats on Wednesday.

It remains to be seen if Hardik Pandya, who is not bowling and didn't look comfortable in his brief stay against England, will play purely as a batter.

Sans his bowling, India will also miss the sixth bowling option in case one of the five-strong attack has an off



**Fine tuning:** Rohit Sharma, set to open along with K.L. Rahul in the Super 12s, would look to get into the groove in the second warm-up game on Wednesday. • FILE PHOTO: K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

day. Bhuvneshwar Kumar had one against England, but Jasprit Bumrah was at his best.

Mohammed Shami claimed three wickets but went for runs, while Rahul Chahar was taken to task by the English batters. Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur and Varun Chakravarthy are expected to get a look in.

On recent form, since losing the home series against Australia 2-0 before the 2019

ODI World Cup, India was unbeaten in eight series in a row.

## Australia's batting blues

There was mixed news for Australia in its first warm-up as David Warner's horror run continued after he was dismissed for a first-ball duck. Adam Zampa and Kane Richardson impressed with the ball, but a middle-order collapse meant the Australians needed late ca-

meos to secure a win over New Zealand.

All-rounder Marcus Stoinis has said his hamstring is on the mend and he may be ready to bowl in the match.

Stoinis, who was sidelined with the strain in the IPL, has only batted since returning to competition. He scored 28 against New Zealand.

## The teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (capt.), Rohit Sharma, K.L. Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Ishan

Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Rahul Chahar, R. Ashwin, Varun Chakravarthy, Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, and Shardul Thakur.

Australia: Aaron Finch (capt.), Ashton Agar, Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Mitchell Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Kane Richardson, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Mitchell Swebson, Matthew Wade, David Warner, and Adam Zampa.

Match starts at 7.30 p.m.

# Berrington stars for Scotland

## T20 WORLD CUP

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
AL AMERAT (OMAN)

Richie Berrington smashed 70 to set up Scotland's second successive victory at the T20 World Cup as it defeated Papua New Guinea by 17 runs on Tuesday.

Scotland is now on the verge of making the Super 12 stage. It rode on a crucial 92-run third-wicket stand between Berrington and Matthew Cross, who hit 45, to post 165 for nine after electing to bat.

Past bowler Josh Davey returned career-best figures of four for 18 to help bowl out Papua New Guinea for 148 in 19.3 overs.

Berrington hit three sixes and six fours in his 49-ball knock.

**The scores:** Scotland 165/9 in 20 overs (Matthew Cross 45, Richie Berrington 70, Kabua Morea 4/31, Chad Soper 3/24) bt Papua New Guinea 148 in 19.3 overs (Norman Vanua 47, Sese Bau 24, Josh Davey 4/18). **Toss:** Scotland.

Scotland won by 17 runs.



Richie Berrington. • AFP

# Shakib's all-round show takes Bangladesh home

Claims three wickets and scores 42



**Useful partnership:** Shakib and Mohd. Naim put on 80 for the third wicket. • AFP

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
AL AMERAT

Star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan took three wickets and scored 42 as Bangladesh hammered host Oman by 26 runs on Tuesday to win its first match of the Twenty20 World Cup and stay alive in the competition.

World No. 6 Bangladesh came into the contest needing a win to stay in the hunt for the Super 12 stage and was bowled out for 153 after electing to bat.

## Bouncing back

Mustafizur Rahman, who returned figures of four for 36, and Shakib then shared seven wickets between them to keep down Oman to 127 for nine and help Bangladesh bounce back from the opening Group B loss to Scotland.

Oman opener Jatinder Singh smashed 40 off 33

balls before falling to Shakib's left-arm spin.

Left-handed opener Mohammad Naim, who smashed 64 off 50 balls, and Shakib set up the victory for Bangladesh with a key third-wicket stand of 80 after the Tigers lost two early wickets. Oman fast bowlers Bilal Khan and Fayyaz Butt took three wickets each to peg back Bangladesh after the big partnership.

Naim, who replaced Soumya Sarkar for the key match, survived two dropped catches on 18 and 26 to go on and raise his third T20 half-century.

## The scores:

Bangladesh 153 in 20 overs (Mohd. Naim 64, Shakib Al Hasan 42, Bilal Khan 3/18, Fayyaz Butt 3/30) bt Oman 127/9 in 20 overs (Jatinder Singh 40, Mustafizur Rahman 4/36, Shakib Al Hasan 3/28).

**Toss:** Bangladesh. Bangladesh won by 26 runs.

# Livingstone doubtful after finger injury

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON

England all-rounder Liam Livingstone is doubtful for the T20 World Cup after suffering a finger injury in his side's first practice game against India in Dubai.

According to a report in Sky Sports, England will assess Livingstone's injury in the next 24 hours and take a call on his availability.

# MCC honour for Srinath, Harbhajan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON

Harbhajan Singh and Javagal Srinath were among 18 cricketers who were awarded honorary life memberships by the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) here on Tuesday.

Harbhajan has 417 Test wickets and more than 700 international wickets. Srinath took 315 and 236 ODI and Test wickets respectively.

# Ireland test for Sri Lanka

Both teams are high on confidence after winning starts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ABU DHABI

Former champion Sri Lanka takes on a confident Ireland in a tricky first round group match of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday, with the winning side moving closer to a Super 12 spot.

Both Sri Lanka and Ireland have come into the match high on confidence after convincing seven-wicket wins against Namibia and the Netherlands respectively in their lung openers.

Sri Lanka brushed aside Namibia's challenge with the bowlers rising to the occasion while Ireland was far superior to the Netherlands as seamer Curtis Campher set up victory by sensationally picking up four wickets off four balls.

Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka will be aware that a stiffer test awaits it when it squares off against Ireland and it can't afford any slip-ups.

The team will be expecting more from the openers - Kusal Perera and Pathum Nissanka - as well as from the experienced Dinesh Chandimal. The spinners, Maheesh Theekshana and



**Need to fire:** Sri Lanka will bank on opener Kusal Perera giving the team a good start. • AFP

Wanindu Hasaranga in particular, proved more than a handful for the Namibia batters and will be vital to Sri Lanka's performance as the tournament goes on.

Ireland, on the other hand, will be wary of the Sri Lankan threat after having made short work of the Dutch, riding on Campher's heroics.

It is the batting which faces a stiffer test against a varied Sri Lankan attack, especially the spinners.

## Today's matches

- Netherlands vs Namibia, 3.30 p.m. (IST)
- Sri Lanka vs Ireland, 7.30 p.m. (IST)

# The Dutch will look to bounce back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ABU DHABI

The Netherlands would look to regroup after a comprehensive loss to Ireland and open its account when it takes on tournament debutants Namibia in a must-win match of the T20 World Cup's first round here on Wednesday.

## Blown away

The Dutch were simply blown away by the stunning four wickets in four balls by Ireland pacer Curtis Campher and they would hope to quickly forget the loss and post a win against Namibia in the Group-A game.

The likes of Ryan ten Doeschate, best remembered for his incredible century against England in the 2011 World Cup, would look to score big against the Namibian bowlers and help the side win its first match.

For the inexperienced Namibians, skipper Gerhard Erasmus and all-rounder David Wiese, who has earlier played 24 T20Is for South Africa, hold the key.

# Manchester City crushes Brugge

Barcelona and Manchester United face the heat

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BRUGES (FRANCE)

Manchester City delivered a dominant Champions League performance to sweep past Club Brugge 5-1 on Tuesday.

Joao Cancelo gave City a deserved lead on the half-hour and Riyad Mahrez converted a penalty just before the break.

Kyle Walker added a third early in the second half and 19-year-old Cole Palmer bagged his first Champions

League goal minutes after coming on as a substitute.

Hans Vanaken pulled a goal back to great delight from the home supporters but Mahrez capped a thumping City victory with his second of the night.

Meanwhile, Barcelona and Manchester United face daunting times ahead as they restart their continental campaign on Wednesday after the international break.

Losing at Young Boys last month created new doubts over Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's suitability to manage United.



**Star performer:** Riyad Mahrez scored two and set up another two as Manchester City ran riot. • GETTY IMAGES

Things do not get any easier for United, which hasn't won a trophy since the Europa League in 2017, as Atalanta arrives at Old Trafford for the Group F game.

## Needing a win

Sitting in last place in Group E, Barcelona needs a home win against Dynamo Kyiv to have a realistic chance of advancing to the knockout stage. The Catalan club has made it past the group stage every season since 2001-02.

Barcelona opened with 3-0 losses to both Bayern Munich and Benfica. It is a point behind third-place Dynamo and four behind second-place Benfica.

**The results:** Besiktas 1 (Larin 24) lost to Sporting CP 4 (Coates 15, 27, Pablo Sarabia 44-pen, Paulinho 89); Club Brugge 1 (Vanaken 81) lost to Manchester City 5 (Cancelo 30, R. Mahrez 43-pen, 84, Walker 53, Palmer 67).

**Wednesday's fixtures:** RB Salzburg vs Wolfsburg, Barcelona vs Dynamo Kyiv (10.15 p.m.); Lille vs Sevilla, Manchester United vs Atalanta, Zenit vs Juventus, Benfica vs Bayern Munich, Chelsea vs Malmö, Young Boys vs Villarreal (12.30 a.m. Thursday).

# Doing it for Virat Kohli might involve some serious six-hitting



## BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

Why haven't India won the World T20 since their first, unexpected, win in 2007? Fourteen years is a long time. In 2011, they won the 50-over World Cup at home, "doing it for Sachin." It was Sachin Tendulkar's sixth and last tournament, and the team was determined to give him a memorable send-off.

Already, in an echo of that, there is talk of doing this one "for Virat". Virat Kohli is stepping down from captaincy in the format after this.

That year, 2007, was a strange one for Indian cricket. In March, they bowed out of the 50-over World Cup in the early stages. The photograph following that defeat, of the senior cricketers with eyes swollen, emotions on every muscle was a moving one. Six months later came the World T20, a new World Cup in a new format and the seniors withdrew from the team.



**Game-changers:** Chris Gayle and M.S. Dhoni, catching up in Dubai on Monday, have shown that scoring sixes matters a lot in the shortest format. • TWITTER/CCI

There were two reasons for this. India didn't then think much of T20, echoing the historical lack of initial interest in the 50-over format. No one gave India

a chance and although the seniors didn't think it might be emotionally draining, they figured it was a young man's game. So India went in with a

team whose average age was 23, and whose new captain, Mahendra Singh Dhoni was 26.

And it worked. In the final, with Pakistan needing 13 in the last over, Dhoni called up the inexperienced Joginder Sharma to bowl. Misbah-ul-Haq hit a six and then overreached himself in trying to scoop to leg. A nation held its breath while the ball descended into the hands of S. Sreesanth.

Watching India's progress was an 18-year-old boy named Virat Kohli. "It had a huge impact on my career," he said recently, echoing the sentiment expressed by the previous generation of Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, Anil Kumble and V.V.S. Laxman who had been inspired by India's win in the 1983 World Cup.

## IPL was established

India's win changed the face of cricket. The IPL was established the following year, further consolidating India's position as the centre of the cricketing universe. At the time, the promoter expressed as many positives of the IPL as he could dream up.

And one of them was the way it would train Indian teams for the World T20, providing players ready made for the world stage. It sounded plausible

then, but where have India fallen short?

The first and obvious answer is that with domestic T20 series being played around the world, every country now has both the players and the experience.

The fact that the first six tournaments were won by five different countries seems to suggest that there has been a levelling off of relative strengths. The fewer the overs, the more open the tournament.

In 2016, India tried to upend the fundamental theory of batting in T20 - that hitting sixes matters. They lost to the West Indies in the semifinals despite Kohli's unbeaten 89 off 47 balls (one six) because the West Indies hit nearly three times as many sixes. India's bowlers bowled crucial no-balls (twice taking wickets off them) and the West Indies needing 109 in the last 10 overs made it comfortably.

Carlos Brathwaite's four successive sixes in the final over (off Ben Stokes) that gave the West Indies their second title was further confirmation of the theory. In T20 cricket, sixes win matches.

In the last World Cup, the West Indies hit a six every 16.3 balls against the Top 7 teams; the rate for the other teams in the top seven was a six every 22.5 balls. Increasingly, boundaries, and particu-

larly sixes decide the result. This is an area India need to work on. Since the 2016 T20 World Cup, India have been striking a six every 17.4 balls, the West Indies at the rate of 13.5.

The story of T20 cricket is the story of the steady drop in balls-per-sixes, from 28 in 2009 to 20 in 2018.

## Not a chancy shot

The six is no longer viewed as a chancy shot, but fundamental to success in the format.

It is a great percentage shot, something that Chris Gayle was probably the first to realise and act upon. Training in power-hitting is routine in T20 cricket now.

As statistics show, India have realised the importance of six-hitting, but need to work on the frequency. A three-ball 18 can often be the difference between teams, often superior even to a 35-ball 50. T20 is the game for 'sixialists', the specialists whose job it is to only hit sixes.

India go into the tournament as favourites. It is not a position they are unaccustomed to. And they have in their corner the man who took them to victory in 2007, Dhoni, now in the team as 'mentor'. All bases are probably covered.

TV PICKS

**Badminton:** Denmark Open, Star Sports 3, 12.30 p.m.  
**Men's T20 World Cup:** Warm-up: India vs Australia, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.; **first-round:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.  
**Champions League:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 10.15 p.m.; Sony Ten 1, 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)

IN BRIEF

Natl. shooting at three centres

**NEW DELHI** The 64th National shooting championship will be staged in Delhi, Bhopal and Patiala over the next two months. **The schedule:** Pistol: Nov. 18 to Dec. 6 (Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad); Rifle: Nov. 25 to Dec. 10 (M.P. State shooting academy, Goregaon, Bhopal); **Shotgun (trap, double trap and skeet):** Nov. 22 to Dec. 14 (New Moti Bagh Gun Cub, Patiala).

Ramkumar falters

**SPORTS BUREAU MOSCOW** Ramkumar Ramanathan was beaten 6-3, 6-4 by top seed Egor Gerasimov of Russia in the first qualifying round of the \$779,515 ATP tennis tournament here.

**Other results:** **\$15,000 ITF men, Monastir, Tunisia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Niki Poonacha & Sidharth Rawat bt Zakai Stone (US) & Matas Vasiliauskas (Ltu) 6-4, 6-3.

**\$25,000 ITF women, Seville, Spain: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Sapfo Sakellari (Gre) & Sathwika Sama bt Beatrice Laura Pirtac (Irl) & Sowjanya Bavisetti 6-0, 6-3.

**\$15,000 ITF women, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Divine Dasam Nweke (Den) & Shreya Tatavarthy bt Sumin Kim (Kor) & Tatiana Zelenko (Rus) 6-2, 6-1.

**\$15,000 ITF women, Monastir, Tunisia: Singles (first round):** Jennifer Luikham bt Naoko Eto (Jpn) 6-3, 6-4.

Sindhu makes winning return

Srikanth and Sameer advance



**A breeze:** P.V. Sindhu got past Turkey's Neslihan Yigit in straight games. ■ FILE PHOTO

BADMINTON

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ODENSE**

Returning to action after a break, double Olympic medalist P.V. Sindhu saw off Turkey's Neslihan Yigit in straight games to join compatriots K. Srikanth and Sameer Verma in the second round of the Denmark Open here on Tuesday.

Sindhu, the reigning world champion, took 30 minutes to get across Yigit, ranked 29th, 21-12, 21-10 in her women's singles opener of the BWF World Tour Super 1000 tournament.

She will next face Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan.

Former champion Srikanth and Sameer also made winning starts to their men's singles campaigns at the \$850,000 event.

Short work

While Srikanth outsmarted compatriot B. Sai Praneeth 21-14, 21-11 in 30 minutes, Sameer, ranked 28th, prevailed over Thailand's World No. 21 Kunlavut Vitidsarn 21-17, 21-14 in a 42-minute clash.

World No. 14 Srikanth will meet World No. 1 and top seeded Japanese Kento Momota in the second round,

while Sameer is likely to face Denmark's third seed Anders Antonsen in the next round.

Indian men's doubles players, however, had a mixed day in office. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty defeated English pair of Callum Hemming and Steven Stallwood 23-21, 21-15 in their opener and M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila stunned England's World No. 17 pair of Ben Lane and Sean Vandy 21-19, 21-15 to make a positive start to their campaign.

However, Manu Attri and B. Sumeeth Reddy lost 21-18, 21-11 to Malaysia's Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin in the opening round to bow out of the competition.

**The results: First round: Men:** K. Srikanth bt B. Sai Praneeth 21-14, 21-11; Sameer Verma bt Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Tha) 21-17, 21-14.

**Doubles:** Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Callum Hemming & Steven Stallwood (Eng) 23-21, 21-15; M.R. Arjun & Dhruv Kapila bt Ben Lane & Sean Vandy (Eng) 21-19, 21-15; Manu Attri & B. Sumeeth Reddy lost to Goh Sze Fei & Nur Izzuddin (Mas) 21-18, 21-11.

**Women:** P.V. Sindhu bt Neslihan Yigit (Tur) 21-12, 21-10

**Mixed Doubles:** Dhruv & Sikki bt Pang Ron Hoo & Yee See Cheah (Kor) 14-21, 21-17, 21-18.

Sharath eases into the third round

TABLE TENNIS

**RAKESH RAO CHANDIGARH**

Within a few hours of landing here, favourite Sharath Kamal warmed up with an expected victory over one of his practice-partners, S. Karthikeyan, for a place in the men's third round of National ranking table tennis championship on Tuesday.

Looking keen to gain some extra on-court time, Sharath was in no hurry to neither finish a point nor the match. As is his wont, Sharath was considerate to his younger rival before posting a 12-10, 12-10, 11-8, 11-4 result at Panchkula's Devi Lal Stadium.

"Since the table was playing too fast, I had to find a way to keep the ball in play. You keep finding ways to adjust to the faster pace of

these tables. I will have to find practice time to get better for the matches ahead," revealed the nine-time National champion who next plays qualifier Shivam Das.

On a day when the qualifying phase sent 64 men and 40 women into the main draws, Payas Jain celebrated the news of becoming World No. 1 spot in the under-17 section by posting a confidence-boosting 13-11, 11-7, 11-8, 12-10 triumph over 23-year-old Sarthak Gandhi. He will take on left-handed 13th seed Jubin Kumar in the third round.

Rosario stuns Nandi

Though most matches produced expected winners, Haryana's Wesley Do Rosario knocked out seasoned Railway campaigner Anirban Nandi 9-11, 2-11, 11-8, 12-10, 11-9.

Second seed Manav Thakkar, former National champions Soumyajit Ghosh and Sanil Shetty, seeded three and four, along with lower seeds Jeet Chandra, Sudhan-shu Grover, Abhishek Yadav, Arjun Ghosh, defending champion Anthony Amalraj, Ronit Bhanja, Sourav Saha and F.R. Snehit advanced as anticipated.

Mudit Dani, who got a walkover against Parth Virmani to reach the main draw, won against Uttarakhand's Gautam Dhruvansh in five sets and set up a third-round clash against 14th seed Manush Shah.

In the women's section, where the seeded players join the action on Wednesday morning, young Yashaswini Ghorpade took out Bengal's Munmun Ghosh for a place against Lakshita Narang in the second round.

Paddler Payas becomes u-17 World No. 1

**SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH**

Payas Jain became the World No. 1 in boys' under-17 rankings released by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) on Tuesday.

The reigning National youth and junior champion surpassed his previous best of World No. 2 after winning three titles – in Otocec, Tunis and Muscat – this season. Even in the u-19 section, Payas climbed to seventh spot – a jump of five places from last week.

Among the girls, there were quite a few Indians in single-digit world rankings. **World youth rankings (top-two Indians):** Boys, u-19: 7. Payas Jain, 36. Yashansh Malik; U-17: 1. Payas Jain, 30. Preyash Raj; U-15: 8. Preyash Raj, 27.



Payas Jain.

**Ankur Bhattacharya; U-13:** 11. P.B. Abhinandhi, 15. Atherva Gupta; **U-11:** 6. Vishruth Ramakrishnan, 19. Aarnav Chandra. **Girls, u-19:** 7. Swastika Ghosh, 8. Yashaswini Ghorpade; **U-17:** 5. Yashaswini Ghorpade, 12. Suhana Saini; **U-15:** 4. Suhana Saini, 21. Hansini Mathan Rajan; **U-13:** 3. Hansini Mathan Rajan, 11. Dhaani Jain; **U-11:** 2. Dhaani Jain, 9. Ananya Muralidharan.

Mondal sets two new records

AQUATICS

**SPORTS REPORTER BENGALURU**

Bengal's Swadesh Mondal set two new junior National records in Group I boys' category (100m breaststroke and 200m IM) on the opening day of the sub-junior and junior National Aquatic Championships on Tuesday.

**The results (winners all): Boys: Group I: 200m freestyle:** R. Sambhav (Kar), 1:53.41s (NMR; OR: 1:53.54, Srihari Nataraj (Kar), 2018); **100m breaststroke:** Swadesh Mondal (WB), 1:05.47 (NMR; OR: 1:05.75, S.P. Likhith (Kar), Pune 2015); **200m IM:** Mondal, 2:08.88 (NMR; OR: 2:10.26, Neel Roy (Mah), 2018).

**Group II: 200m freestyle:** Pranjali Pandey (MP), 2:04.82; **200m IM:** Pavan Dhananjaya (Kar), 2:19.30. **Group III: 200m freestyle:** M. Yagna Sai (AP), 2:20.71; **100m breaststroke:** M.S. Niithesh (TN), 1:17.46.

**Group IV: 200m freestyle:** Sharan Sridhara (Kar), 2:24.39; **100m breaststroke:** Shabarish Vishwanathan (TN), 1:29.68.

**Group V: 100m breaststroke:**



Swadesh Mondal. ■ FILE PHOTO

Jas Singh (Kar), 1:33.78; **200m IM:** Jas, 2:52.65.

**Girls: Group I: 200m freestyle:** Aanya Wala (Mah), 2:09.86s; **200m IM:** Apeksha Fernandes (Mah), 2:26.57 (NMR; OR: 2:27.34, A.V. Jayaveena (TN), 2014).

**Group II: 200m freestyle:** Hashika Ramachandra (Kar), 2:11.37; **200m IM:** Manavi Varma (Kar), 2:29.77. **Group III: 200m freestyle:** Dhinidhi Desinghu (Kar), 2:14.94 (NMR; OR: 2:17.52, Monique Gandhi (Mah), 2010); **100m breaststroke:** Tisya Sonar (Kar), 1:27.14.

**Group IV: 200m freestyle:** Alyssa Sweedal Rego (Kar), 2:33.65; **100m breaststroke:** Zeal Malani (Mah), 1:32.34.

**Group V: 100m breaststroke:** Adriza Chetia (Asm), 1:33.87; **200m IM:** Adriza, 3:05.04.

Arsenal escapes with a draw

Fiorentina stumbles at Venezia; Espanyol gets the better of Cadiz

EURO LEAGUES

**AGENCIES LONDON**

Patrick Vieira nearly enjoyed a dream return to Arsenal but Alexandre Lacazette's 96th minute equaliser salvaged a 2-2 draw for the Gunners against Crystal Palace on Monday.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's seventh-minute strike gave the hosts the perfect start.

But a five-game unbeaten stretch that had lifted the mood around the Emirates looked set to be punctured as Christian Benteke and Odsonne Edouard struck in the second-half to give the Eagles a deserved lead.

Vieira's men failed to hold out, though, as with seconds to spare Lacazette scrambled home from a corner.

A share of the spoils moves Arsenal up to 12th, but the performance did lit-



**Scrambled goal:** Alexandre Lacazette's, right, last-gasp goal saved Arsenal's blushes against Crystal Palace. ■ GETTY IMAGES

tle to suggest it will trouble the contenders for places in next season's Champions League.

Promoted Venezia earned its first Serie A home win in nearly two decades after beating Fiorentina 1-0 on Monday. Espanyol followed up its shock win against Spanish league leader Real Madrid with a 2-0 victory over Cadiz on Monday. Borja Iglesias scored in the 89th to

give Real Betis a 1-0 win over Alaves for its fourth victory in five matches in all competitions.

**The results: Premier League:** Arsenal 2 (Aubameyang 7, Lacazette 90+5) drew with Crystal Palace 2 (Benteke 50, Edouard 73).

**La Liga:** Alaves 0 lost to Real Betis 1 (Iglesias 89); Espanyol 2 (de Tomas 45+2, Melamed 65) bt Cadiz 0.

**Serie A:** Venezia 1 (Aramu 36) bt Fiorentina 0.

MARUTI SUZUKI

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