



on Sunday



More water released from Mullaperiyar dam into Periyar river  
page 6



Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan released from jail in Mumbai  
page 7



Trump wants call logs, aide's notes hidden from Jan. 6 panel  
page 10

India meets New Zealand in crucial T20 World Cup match today  
page 16



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## IN BRIEF



Traders demand proper space for street vendors  
NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi High Court pulled up the State Government over its "poor implementation" of the Street Vendors Act, 2014, traders welcomed the development, while street vendors expressed their discontent over the issue.

CITY PAGE 2

Decision to leave Cong. is final, says Amarinder  
CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab CM Amarinder Singh on Saturday dismissed reports of back-end talks with the Congress, saying the time for rapprochement is over and his decision to leave the party is final.

STATES PAGE 5

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MAGAZINE PAGE 8

CLASSIFIEDS PAGE 15

## PM calls for united fight against COVID at G20

Modi highlights India's contributions during the pandemic

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
NEW DELHI

Addressing the first session of the G20 summit on "Global Economy and Global Health" in Rome, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about the need for a collaborative approach to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the summit of the leaders of world's major economies, Mr. Modi highlighted India's contribution during the COVID-19 pandemic as it ensured medical supplies to over 150 countries.

Highlighting the need for resilient global supply chains, Mr. Modi invited G20 countries to invest in India for supply chain diversification and global recovery from the pandemic.

"Prime Minister spoke for the resilient global supply chains and mentioned India's bold economic reforms and lowering of the cost of doing business in India," Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said, briefing the media in Rome.

"He spoke about our vision of One Earth, One Health," said Mr. Shringla, emphasising that the fight against future pandemics requires "comprehensive global solutions".



New equation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, left, meeting Pope Francis at the Vatican on Saturday. • AP

## Pope accepts India's invite

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Pope Francis, the head of the Catholic Church, has accepted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invite to visit India. The invite was extended during a meeting

between the two dignitaries in the Vatican on Saturday.

The Pope described the invite as "the greatest gift", said Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Prime Minister Modi appreciated the G20's push to make global trade more transparent by introducing a global minimum corporate tax of 15% that will prevent tax evasion and money laundering.

"India has not only vac-

inated over a billion persons, but will be able to produce more than five billion vaccine doses that will reduce vaccine inequity in the developing world," said Mr. Shringla.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## MGNREGS funding to continue: Govt.

This comes after *The Hindu's* report of a negative net balance of ₹8,686 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Centre is committed to releasing funds for proper implementation of its flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the Rural Development Ministry said on Saturday. The statement comes a day after *The Hindu* had reported that the scheme faces a negative net balance of ₹8,686 crore, including pay-

ments due.

"The Government of India is committed to release funds for wage and material payments for proper implementation of the scheme, as per the provisions of the Act and guidelines applicable for the Central Government and the State Governments. Whenever additional fund is required, the Ministry of Finance is requested to provide the funds," said the Ministry, adding that last year,



A file photo of workers engaged in desilting work in Visakhapatnam. • K.R. DEEPAK

the Finance Ministry had allocated ₹50,000 crore additional funds over and above the initial budget estimate.

As *The Hindu* had reported, such supplementary budget allocations can only be approved by the next ses-

sion of Parliament, which is scheduled to begin in a month's time. "Fund release towards wage and material is a continuous process," said the Ministry, noting that the initial budget allocation for the current financial year was 18% higher than the budget estimate for the previous year.

"During the current FY, so far over ₹63,793 crore have been released for the implementation of the scheme. Currently, ₹8,921 crore funds are available, which can meet the wage liability equal to this current availability."

## NIA to contact Iran over drug heist

DEVESH K PANDEY  
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) will contact the authorities in Iran to gather information in connection with the 3,000-kg heroin seizure by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence at Mundra port in Gujarat this September.

"The NIA has received all the documents from the DRI for further probe into the links of those involved in the case," said an official.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## Byelections to 3 LS, 29 Assembly seats peaceful

81% polling in Haryana's Ellenabad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A turnout of between 50% to over 81% was recorded on Saturday in byelections to three Lok Sabha seats and 29 Assembly seats spread across 13 States and one Union Territory. The Congress's Pratibha Singh, wife of the late Virbhadra Singh, former Chief Minister, and Abhay Chautala of the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) are among the prominent candidates in the fray.

Officials said polling in all



Voters at a polling station, during the Tarapur Assembly bypolls, in Munger. • PTI

the States was peaceful and held under the COVID-19 protocol. Ellenabad in Haryana recorded 81% polling.

LOK SABHA BYPOLL PAGE 8

## 'Chinese build-up matter of concern'

DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

While India has strengthened its defences as well as added offensive elements to its military posture in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, the massive Chinese infrastructure development and troop build-up in the Rest of Arunachal Pradesh (RALP) area is a matter of concern, and efforts are on by the Indian side to address it, according to several officers.

DETAILS PAGE 7

## AAP to project Delhi model for U.P. election

Party's saffron shadow looms large ahead of first outing in State

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

Contesting all 403 seats in its very first outing in Uttar Pradesh, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) wants to cast its net wide beyond a particular religion or caste, yet at the same time, it is not shrinking away from its saffron hues, as its national convener Arvind Kejriwal last week initiated the party's campaign with a visit to the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Party leader in charge of U.P. and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said the primary vote plank will be the 'Delhi Model' of governance. The AAP has already promised 300 units of free electricity. The next rounds of the poll campaign will be focused on rising unemployment, decrepitude of U.P. Government schools and the



Stiff challenge: U.P. Police detaining AAP MP Sanjay Singh ahead of the party's 'Tiranga Yatra' in Varanasi last week. • FILE PHOTO

State's crumbling health infrastructure, he said.

For now, though, it is Mr. Kejriwal's temple run that is making news, not the 'Delhi Model'. Mr. Singh said, "Should we leave temples in the hands of *adharmi* [sinners]? Should we leave religion in the sole ownership of those who utilise it to spread communal tension? Is Yogi Adityanath the gatekeeper of the Ram Temple?"

He alleged that there was

corruption in the acquisition of a piece of land by the Ram Temple trust in March.

He said, "We have been working for nearly two years in the State. It is a sign of the Government's nervousness about our presence that they have slapped 17 cases on me, including that of sedition."

The party is more than ready to take on the BJP, Mr. Singh said. "For 170 seats, we have announced our probable candidates and we are

going to announce the next set of names soon," he said.

Importantly, the party believes it will perform better than the Congress. "In the recent panchayat elections, we got 40 lakh votes and won 83 seats, while the Congress could only secure 59 seats," Mr. Singh said.

### 'Record of defeating BJP'

If the BJP is the key opponent, would it have been better to work with the other Opposition parties rather than going it alone? Mr. Singh says an emphatic no. "We have a proven record of defeating the BJP. We did it twice in Delhi. And whichever State we have fought in, the BJP has lost," he said.

The AAP, however, is yet to reveal its chief ministerial candidate. The party is facing a similar problem in Punjab, with its Delhi leader Raghav Chadha being a more prominent face than the party's State leaders. "We will reveal it when the right time comes," Mr. Singh said.

## Going the extra mile



Exercising franchise: A woman shows her identity card while returning home using a ropeway over a river after casting her vote in the Mandi Lok Sabha byelection in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district on Saturday. • ANI

## The good business of intimate spaces

Providing safe spaces for couples through micro-renting of hotel rooms has overcome taboos to be successful

ANURADHA RAMAN  
NEW DELHI

Started in 2016 with claims of pioneering a social movement and breaching an enormous taboo - offering to provide a hotel room for a very short stay for couples - StayUncle has stayed the course.

The name of the start-up, a play on then dominant Internet hosting service, Go Daddy, and perhaps, a nod to 'uncles and auntsies' who have been at the vanguard of upholding middle-class morals, StayUncle, is considering a name change to reflect its anti-patriarchal, anti-caste, gender-neutral and inter-faith credo.

"While the name was just an on-the-spur kind of a thing, the time is now right for a name change," said



Sanchit Sethi

Amit Sharma, the CEO of StayUncle, where everyone goes by the suffix of 'aunty' or 'uncle'.

Operating today in 40 cities and with linkages with 1,800 five-star, four-star and three-star hotels, the start-up is by no means the first in the hospitality business to offer a 'no questions asked' stay. OYO had started its relationship mode a couple of years ago. But with an aggressive

positioning of the brand and single-minded focus on couples, and a cheeky tagline post-COVID - "We are clean to get you dirty" - the managers of the start-up are not worried about the comparison. Neither are they apologetic about their tagline.

### Obstacle course

"We are singularly focused on couples," reminded Sanchit Sethi, the co-founder of the start-up. To this end, the entire process of booking a room is literally a phone call and an app away. No questions asked other than preferences according to the customer's budget. An identification document, namely driver's licence or Aadhar is, however, necessary at the time of

booking a hotel.

Couples from different religions or castes in India have long faced hurdles - from family opposition to death threats, some even paying with their lives - for daring to fall in love. Moral policing has reared its head in major cities in North India, making it virtually impossible for couples even to be seen in public places.

However, StayUncle has managed to steer clear of such controversies by what it calls 'sensitising' its partners. "We carry out sensitising exercises with the hotels and tell them that caste and religion is not their business to meddle with," said Mr. Sethi, a BITS Pilani graduate. The first two years did see threats over the phone and

odd-demonstrations by people airing their concern about the corrupting influence of StayUncle.

### 'Real challenge'

"The real challenge before us was to persuade hotels to be LGBT-friendly. It took us a long time to win them over along with the help of an NGO," he recalled.

And business was not really easy for the odd bunch of fresh graduates who fancied themselves as relationship managers, after managing short stays of business professionals to begin with.

"The first 20 hotels we reached out to said a flat 'no'. The 21st hotel in Greater Kailash said 'yes' and from there, there was no turning back," Mr. Sethi said.

## 'Congress practised appeasement'

Amit Shah seeks second term for BJP in Uttarakhand

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday charged the Congress with playing appeasement politics.

Addressing a public rally in Dehradun, he said when he visited the city earlier during the Congress's reign, his convoy got stranded and he was told that on Fridays, there was permission to block the national highway to allow 'namaz'.

"They even thought of giving a break on Friday... those who indulge in appeasement can never work for 'devabhoomi'," he said.

Mr. Shah sought another term for the BJP for continued development of Uttarakhand, which is set to go to the polls in the first quarter of 2022. He said the Congress captured power to



Amit Shah at an event in Dehradun on Saturday. • PTI

merely enjoy it, went back on its poll promises and never worked for the welfare of the poor. Its leaders were missing in action during public crises such as floods and COVID-19, but would congregate for dharnas, protests and press conferences on different issues just ahead of elections, Mr. Shah said.

During the BJP rule, he said Uttarakhand recorded development on all fronts. It was one of the few States to

have achieved 100% first dose of COVID-19 vaccination. Swift rescue operations were conducted by the State administration during the recent natural disasters. The BJP had fulfilled about 85% of the promises made in its election manifesto, he said.

### New scheme launched

Under the Ghasyari Kalyan Yojana, which he launched on Saturday, nutritious fodder would be provided to cattle owners. He said the initiative would help in improving milk production.

Mr. Shah said all rural societies had been computerised and they were being linked to banks at the district and State levels. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development would prevent embezzlement of funds, he said.

# Proper place required for street vendors, say market associations

Traders welcome HC's observation; vendors say they fear for their livelihoods

MUNEEF KHAN  
NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi High Court pulled up the city Government over its "poor implementation" of The Street Vendors Act, 2014, members of market associations across the Capital said their "concerns were taken into account", while street vendors expressed their discontent over the development.

The High Court, while a batch of petitions on the Street Vendors Act on Friday, had questioned the irregularities in the representation of market associations - Connaught Place, Sarojini Nagar, Khan Market, Janpath and Gole Market - in Town Vending Committees (TVC).

"We have made multiple efforts regarding the representation in TVCs but the Delhi Government has done nothing for the representation of bigger markets. If there is a committee of 30 people, there are only two representatives from market associations. There is no balance in representation and this is a problem that exists



A vendor selling his wares in Lajpat Nagar. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

in Sarojini Nagar and Janpath as well," said Atul Bhargava, president, New Delhi Traders Association, who had filed the petition for removal of "illegal" street vendors in Connaught Place. He added that while they were "not against the livelihood" of street vendors, a "proper place" was required for them to conduct their business.

The TVCs - headed by Municipal Commissioners - comprise members representing street vendors, market associations, traders as-

## Hawkers can't impinge upon others' rights: HC

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Saturday said street vendors do have a fundamental right "but when they use a public way, they impinge on someone else's right to walk". The court, while hearing petitions on the Street Vendors Act, 2014, said hawkers should get proper places to sit and proper kiosks in every market. "They should have a proper licence. Then you don't have to pay 'hafta' to the police," the court said. PTI

sociations and residents welfare associations. According to the Street Vendors Act, the TVCs look into the matters of street vendors.

Pramod Sharma, a member of a market association in Sarojini Nagar, said the "definition" of a street vendor under the 2014 Act "remained unclear". "A street vendor's economic criteria must be defined, otherwise any individual can occupy space as they like. It has been seven years since the Act came into force but there has been no

improvement."

## 'Define illegal vendors'

The street vendors, meanwhile, objected to the use of the term "illegal vendors". Arbind Singh, president of the National Association of Street Vendors in India, said while elected representatives of street vendors have a "40% presence in TVCs", the decision to implement their "suggestions lie with the civic bodies".

"It seems that the city is suddenly at war with the street vendors who are fearful about their livelihoods. Who are 'illegal vendors' is a question that the municipal authorities and the police should ask," said Mr. Singh.

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

## FOOD SPOT



RAHUL VERMA

There was a time when a satisfying meal meant a greasy burger eaten with a large dollop of pumpkin sauce at a small college canteen. The buns and the vegetable patty were fried, but the onion rings and tomato slices that embraced the patty were fresh and gave a crunch to the burger. Those were simple days, when gourmet burger was an oxymoron.

Cut to today, and I am overwhelmed by the kind of burgers that chefs are offering us. A few days ago, I tried out the burgers of Louis Burger, a new cloud kitchen run by Zorawar Kalra, an entrepreneur who truly knows his food. He runs a multi-restaurant outfit called Massive Restaurants. After launching Louis Burger in Mumbai, the Delhi chapter was opened earlier this month.

**Patty, the real McCoy**  
I had a sampling - and found them delicious. The buns were soft and milk-washed; the fries were thick, crisp and peri-peri

## Gourmet burgers with a touch of gold

A new cloud kitchen run by Zorawar Kalra is offering a range of delectable burgers to choose from



flavoured, if you like them spicy (and plain, if you don't). But the real McCoy was the patty - prepared with ingredients varying from lamb and double buff to grilled chicken and various kinds of mushrooms.

There is a lot to choose from: the Smash Lamb Cheese Burger is a juicy lamb patty with Emmental cheese; the Classic Chicken Burger is flavoured with honey mustard and the Grilled


AF (air-fried) Chicken Burger has truffle mayo with cheddar. The prices range from ₹215 to ₹888, and the food is delivered through Swiggy and Zomato.

The vegetable burgers are worth trying out. The Farm House Burger has various kinds of veggies with mozzarella, pickled onion and a hot sauce. The Vegan Gratitude Burger consists of beets, refried beans, sweet potato, jalapeno, confit to-


mato and vegan mayo. The jalapeno gave a nice kick to the burger, while the beets gave it a sweet touch. The fried chicken wings (₹195) are superb. The chicken pieces are deliciously plump, and the coating is crunchy and hot, with a paprika rub.

The burger that troubled me somewhat was the Louis Grand Royale (₹888). As a burger it was delicious, for it had a flavourful buff patty (you can ask for lamb) with truffle, cheddar and shimeji. What didn't work for me was the thin gold waq sheet on top of the bun. Who wants gold on their burger? Its vegetarian version is the Truffletake Burger - consisting of shitake and shimeji mushrooms, truffle, English cheddar, parmesan, gold waq and truffle oil. Again, the mushrooms were delectable but the gold completely unnecessary. If you ignore the waq, the fare is delicious.

I was so inspired by Louis Burger that the next evening I organised an in-house burger meal for us. I put a slice of Amul cheese, some moist ham and a crisp lettuce leaf between two small buns, and made a happy meal out of a hastily prepared burger. The only thing missing, alas, was the pumpkin sauce.



(31 अक्टूबर, 1875—15 दिसम्बर, 1950)




**भारत की एकता और अखंडता के शिल्पकार लौहपुरुष**

**सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल जी**

**की जयंती**


**राष्ट्रीय एकता दिवस पर**

**शत-शत नमन**



राष्ट्र के लिए जो सेवा सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल जी ने की है, हम उससे निरंतर प्रेरणा लेते रहेंगे।

**- नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री**



**सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल जी की स्मृति में**

**75 मोटर साइकिल सवारों की रैली को फ्लैग ऑफ**

समय : प्रातः 8:00 बजे | स्थान: 5, कालिदास मार्ग, लखनऊ

**राष्ट्रीय एकता की शपथ मार्च पास्ट एवं झांकियों को फ्लैग ऑफ**

समय : प्रातः 9:00 बजे | स्थान: विधान भवन के समक्ष, लखनऊ

**योगी आदित्यनाथ**

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**गर्भिमयी उपस्थिति**

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नगरीय रोजगार एवं गरीबी उन्मूलन, उत्तर प्रदेश

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**संयुक्ता भाटिया**  
महापौर  
लखनऊ

**दिनांक : 31 अक्टूबर, 2021**

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सोशल मीडिया रिजल्ट्स के माध्यम से देख सकते हैं।

## 'COVID left over 100 children orphaned'

Nearly 3K lost a parent: Govt. data

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

Over a hundred children in the Capital were orphaned while an estimated 2,500 to 3,000 lost a parent to COVID-19, from the time it assumed pandemic proportions till a little after the conclusion of its devastating second wave, according to Delhi Government statistics.

The Department of Women and Child Development (WCD) identified over 250 orphaned children and over 6,000 children left with a single parent between March 2020 and August 16 this year. Around 40% of them, in both categories, are understood to have been impacted by COVID-19.

### In need of care, protection

Dr. Rashmi Singh, special secretary-cum-director, WCD and Social Welfare, said inquiries regarding all children identified as having been orphaned had been completed and over 230 of them were declared in need of care and protection. In single-parent cases, of the over 5,500 cases, over 5,000 were declared in need of care and protection.

"The mandate of the department is to identify and ensure that children found to be vulnerable for whichever reason must receive care and protection. The need to enhance the identification and a focused response towards such children was heightened due to the pandemic," Ms. Singh said.

"In addition to stepping up our efforts to identify them through existing means such as local intelligence, during the second wave, we went to the extent of making public appeals through garbage collection vehicles operated by various civic bodies, asking for help in finding children in need of assistance on helpline number 1098," she added.

The WCD has begun child-centric convergence-cum-facilitation camps where stakeholders are brought on a common platform to facilitate completion of procedural requirements for access to schemes and services. These range from opening of bank accounts of minors and declaring of guardians to Aadhaar enrolment among others.

## DU releases fourth list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University released its fourth cut-off list on Saturday with unreserved category seats already filled in some much sought-after colleges.

Since the first cut-off list was declared on October 1, 63,504 students have secured admissions.

At Hansraj College, BA (Hons) economics, BA (Hons) history and BCom (Hons) courses are still open for admission while most of the other courses are closed for the unreserved category.

Hindu College had closed admissions to BA (Hons) philosophy after the first cut-off list but it was opened under the special list with a cut-off of 97.75%. The minimum marks required for admission has come down by 0.25%.

Admission to all other courses at the college have been closed.

## Woman arrested for 'role' in AIIMS purchase scam

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 59-year-old woman has been arrested for her alleged involvement in the store item purchase scam at AIIMS, the police said on Saturday.

The accused, identified as Sneha Rani Gupta, a resident of Pitampura, misappropriated ₹13.8 crore for purchasing linen items using forged supply orders, the police said. No actual supply of items took place, and the payment was released to the supplier firm in the name of M/s Sneh Enterprises. This firm was a supplier and in business with AIIMS since many years.

**Timings**  
**DELHI**

**SUNDAY, OCT. 31**  
RISE 06:32 SET 17:38  
RISE 01:29 SET 14:59

**MONDAY, NOV. 01**  
RISE 06:33 SET 17:37  
RISE 02:29 SET 15:34

**TUESDAY, NOV. 02**  
RISE 06:34 SET 17:36  
RISE 03:32 SET 16:07

**Delhi Weather** max min

Delhi City 30 15  
Safdarjang 30 15  
Palam 29 17

**Delhi Palam Today**  
30°C A dry weather to prevail. Day will be slight warm with mainly clear sky. Night will be very cool and hazy.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
31°C The weather will be dry. A very cool and hazy morning turns slight warm day with mainly clear sky. Night remains very cool and hazy.

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# Noida airport will be 'quick and easy' to use

Airport to award EPC contract by first quarter of 2022; operations likely from October 2024

JAGRITI CHANDRA  
NEW DELHI

The second airport for the National Capital Region, Noida International or Jewar airport, will seek to distinguish itself from Delhi's congested Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport through "quick, simple and easy" operations that reduce turnaround time for aircraft, says its CEO Christoph Schnellmann.

Switzerland's Zurich Airport International won the bid in 2019 to build and oper-

ate the Noida International Airport. It aims to award the engineering, procurement and construction contract for the airport in the first quarter of 2022, when the construction work can begin in full swing. The airport is expected to start operations from October 2024 with one terminal building and a capacity to handle 1.2 crore passengers per annum. The airport will be developed in four phases, taking it to a capacity of 7 crore

passengers per annum by 2040.

## 'Lower fuel burn'

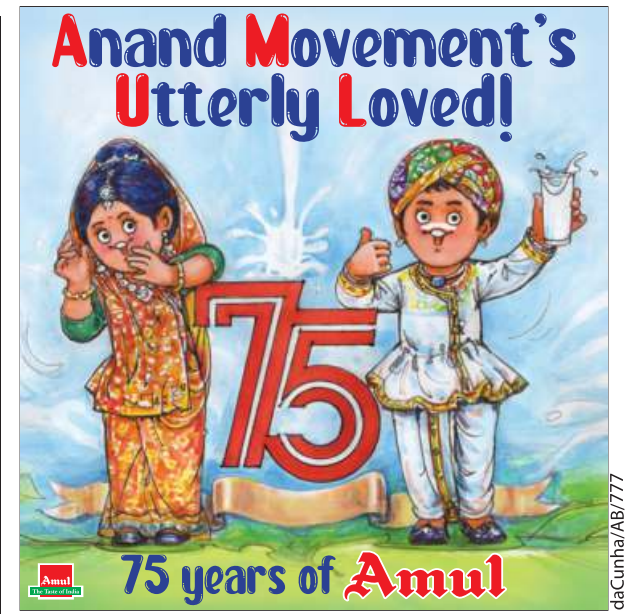
"We have taken great pains to design an airport that is quick, simple and easy to use for airlines as well as other stakeholders such as cargo and freight forwarders. The design will allow higher rotations that permit their aircraft to spend more time in the air, or that allow lower fuel burn, resulting in lower fuel costs," Mr. Schnellmann

told *The Hindu*.

The design of the airport will also ensure "mixed rotations" so that an international flight can depart to another domestic destination without having to reposition itself. The passenger terminal, too, will be designed in a manner to ensure easy transfers for domestic and international passengers. The airport will also "stand out" through the use of technology to offer a unique experience to its passengers.

The Noida International Airport has been planned with the intent to reduce congestion at the IGI, which is expected to see 11 crore passengers per annum by 2024, the structural capacity of the airport beyond which it can't be expanded.

"We expect to serve all major metropolitan areas in India from Noida International Airport and certainly a large number of secondary and regional destinations in U.P.," said the CEO.



# Politics over Chhath Puja heats up

BJP accuses Kejriwal of being anti-Purvanchal; AAP seeks L-G's intervention

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) issued specific orders prohibiting the observance of Chhath Puja on the banks of the Yamuna, politics over the festival resur-

rected. While the BJP accused Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of being anti-Purvanchal and demanded that he convene an emergency meeting to discuss the issue, the Aam Aadmi Party sought Lieute-

nant-Governor Anil Bajjal's intervention to resolve the issue.

The celebration of Chhath Puja, the DDMA ordered, would be allowed only at designated sites located outside containment zones, subject to certain restrictions. No site for the observance of the puja, according to the DDMA, could be designated on the banks of the Yamuna.

"Respected Arvind Kejriwal, you are a member of the DDMA. Why did you not say anything in response to this

issue during the DDMA meeting?" asked north-east Delhi BJP Manoj Tiwari, who also wrote to the Chief Minister regarding the prohibition on the observance of Chhath Puja.

## 'Why no proposal?'

"Why did your government not table a proposal to allow Chhath Puja on the riverbank? You remained quiet because you have been anti-Chhath since the beginning. No one from the BJP is a member of the DDMA. If you

indeed move a proposal to allow Chhath on the riverbank, make it public," he added.

Mr. Tiwari demanded an emergency meeting to discuss the issue with all the seven BJP MPs from Delhi to reach a solution.

AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha, meanwhile, wrote to Mr. Bajjal seeking an appointment with him.

He said that unlike other pujas, Chhath Puja idols are not immersed in the Yamuna and won't cause pollution.

# After Ghazipur, Tikri border opens for traffic

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A day after vehicular movement started at Ghazipur border, where farmers have been protesting against the new farm laws, the Tikri border also opened for smaller vehicles on Saturday, the police said.

"Bigger and commercial vehicles are not allowed at

the moment because they'll get stuck ahead in the protest," a police officer said. The police started removing the barricades at the Tikri border on Thursday. There has been no such development at the Singhu border.

The protesting farmers have welcomed the move as they believe it paves way for their entry into the Capital.

# AQI likely to be 'moderate'

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality continued to be in the "poor" category for the fourth consecutive day on Saturday, as per official data.

The effect of stubble burning has come down and the AQI is expected to improve to 'moderate' level on Sunday due to change in wind direction.

**THE HINDU**  
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# SDMC allocates ₹41 lakh for facilities at ghats

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

In view of the upcoming Chhath Puja celebrations, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation on Saturday approved ₹41.6 lakh for providing facilities at ghats in all 104 wards under its jurisdiction.

The civic body has allocated ₹40,000 for "two ghats in each ward" in order to provide the "required facilities". Standing Committee chairman B.K. Oberoi said that celebrations will be held "keeping COVID-19 norms in mind".

# Hospitals to use COVID beds for dengue patients

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has allowed hospitals to use 33.33% of total beds reserved for COVID-19 treatment for admitting patients suffering from vector-borne diseases, as per an official order. The order came in the wake of surge in cases of dengue in the Capital. Delhi has reported over 1,000 cases of dengue this year so far.

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- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

सत्यमेव जयते  
राजस्थान सरकार

**एक बलिदान  
जो राष्ट्र की प्रेरणा बना**

पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री, भारत रत्न  
**श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी**  
(19.11.1917 - 31.10.1984)  
की पुण्यतिथि पर शत शत नमन

‘मुझे इस बात का गर्व है कि मैंने अपना पूरा जीवन अपने लोगों की सेवा में बिताया है। मैं अपनी आखिरी सांस तक ऐसा करती रहूंगी और जब मैं मरूंगी तो मेरे खून का एक-एक कतरा भारत को मजबूत करने में लगेगा।’

“यह उनकी भावना हम सबके लिए प्रेरणास्रोत रहेगी।”  
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मुख्यमंत्री, राजस्थान

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## 'Do Channi, Sidhu endorse Tytler appointment?'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh on Saturday asked Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and Congress's State unit chief Navjot Singh Sidhu to clarify if they have endorsed naming Jagdish Tytler as a permanent invitee to the Delhi

Congress's new executive committee.

In a statement issued here, Mr. Chugh said, "Mr. Tytler has been named as one of the key Congress leaders in Delhi, but he, Kamal Nath and Sajjan Kumar continue to be the blue-eyed boys of the party in spite of the fact that their role in the riots

against Sikhs has always been highlighted by many witnesses."

"Mr. Sidhu had confessed that he barely escaped the anti-Sikh riots and now he feels proud of being a leader of the Congress?" he asked. He said Sikh leaders, including Mr. Channi and Mr. Sidhu, owe an explanation to the people of Punjab.

## Punjab to terminate 'faulty' PPA

Cong. leaders have long demanded mixing deal signed by previous Govt.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Saturday approved a proposal of power utility Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) for terminating the power purchase agreement with private sector electricity generator GVK due to high cost.



Charanjit Singh Channi

### High power cost

The PSPCL has issued a termination notice to the company, according to an official statement.

The development assumes significance as several State Congress leaders, including Navjot Singh Sidhu, have been pressing for scrapping the 'faulty' PPAs signed during the previous SAD-BJP regime.

"A default notice has been served by the PSPCL to GVK on Saturday for cancellation of the PPA due to high cost and falling lowest in the merit order, procurement of energy from GVK that had been restricted only within the range of 25% to 30%

during most of the times of a year resulting in higher tariff of about ₹7.52 per unit for the last year," the statement said.

Mr. Channi said this step has been taken to safeguard the interests of the consumers by way of "reducing the burden of costly power".

A spokesperson of the CMO said the basic premise of entering into the PPA with GVK was to provide cheaper power. The GVK power project was set up at Goindwal Sahib with a capacity of 2x270 MW. GVK has been generating energy by arranging coal from

Coal India limited. As per the PPA, the company was required to arrange a captive coal mine but it failed to do so, he added.

The spokesperson said the capacity charges are being decided by the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC) based on capital cost of around ₹3,058 crore, which is equivalent to about ₹1.61 per unit of fixed cost. He said GVK went against this decision and moved the Appellate Tribunal for Electricity for claiming higher fixed cost of ₹2.50 per unit, which is pending adjudication. As per the claims made by GVK, variable cost is ₹4.50 per unit and fixed cost of ₹2.50 per unit, he said.

"Thus, the total claim of GVK under tariff comes out around ₹7 per unit which increases further due to the surrender of its costly power. Therefore, the intention of GVK is clear that it requires to charge higher tariff which is not the basic premise on which PPA was entered into with PSPCL," the spokesperson said.

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## SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



Imran Khan

General public is hereby informed that this person namely Imran Khan S/o Irshad Ullah Khan R/o G-60, 1st Floor, Nizamuddin West, New Delhi Age : 50 years, Height : 6', Face : Long, Complexion : Fair, Build: Normal, wearing blue colour shirt, black colour pant and leather chappale in feet, has been missing since 02.10.2021 alongwith his Car no. DL 3CBD 0991 from the jurisdiction of P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin, South-East Distt., New Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 18-A dated 10.10.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin, New Delhi.

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

E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph. : 011-24356743, 24358593  
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## Now, lawyer found dead in Jharkhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DHANBAD (JHARKHAND)

An assistant public prosecutor of Dhanbad court was found dead at her apartment in Manoram Nagar on Saturday, police said.

The body was recovered from the flat after her neighbours informed the police in the afternoon, they said. Senior Superintendent of Police Sanjiv Kumar said she stayed alone in her apartment, and added that an investigation is underway. She was taken to Shahid Nirmal Mahto Medical College Hospital in Saraidhela, where the doctors declared her dead, the SSP said.

In July, a 49-year-old Additional District and Sessions Judge in Dhanbad was allegedly knocked down by an autorickshaw. The CBI filed its chargesheet on October 20.

## Shillong Sikhs to challenge colony takeover by Govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Mazhabi or Dalit Sikhs of a prime locality in Shillong may take the State Government to court for taking possession of their colony despite separate orders from the Meghalaya High Court and the National Commission for Minorities to maintain the status quo.

The Harijan Panchayat Committee said they would not give up without a fight against a Government that is "bent upon taking the land

gifted to us" by the Syiem, or the king-like chieftain, 200 years ago. "The Government has disregarded the court and the commission. We are discussing with our lawyers," Gurjit Singh, the committee's secretary, told *The Hindu*.

The case on the Government's move to evict the residents of Harijan Colony, also called Punjabi Lane, for a developmental project has been in the court for four years since a communal flare-up in May-June 2018.

**बिहार सरकार**

**पिछड़ा वर्ग एवं अति पिछड़ा वर्ग कल्याण विभाग**

**मुख्यमंत्री अत्यंत पिछड़ा वर्ग सिविल सेवा प्रोत्साहन योजना**

संच लोक सेवा आयोग, नई दिल्ली द्वारा आयोजित सिविल सेवा (प्रारंभिक) परीक्षा, 2021 में उत्तीर्ण होने वाले बिहार राज्य के अधिसूचित अत्यंत पिछड़ा वर्ग के स्थायी निवासी अभ्यर्थियों के लिए आवेदनक सूचना

राज्य सरकार द्वारा लागू की गई योजना के तहत संच लोक सेवा आयोग, नई दिल्ली द्वारा आयोजित सिविल सेवा (प्रारंभिक) परीक्षा, 2021 में उत्तीर्ण होने वाले बिहार राज्य के अधिसूचित अत्यंत पिछड़ा वर्ग के स्थायी निवासी अभ्यर्थियों को एकमुश्त रूप 1,00,000/- (एक लाख रुपये) मात्र की प्रोत्साहन राशि प्रदान करने हेतु ऑनलाईन आवेदन आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं।

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**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**

Invitation for Tender through E-Procurement System

Sr. Divisional Material Manager, North Eastern Railway, Lucknow and on behalf of The President of India, invites tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following item. Complete description of the item and other conditions are available on [website www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in). SN: 1, Tender No.: 60216076 (56XXN001). Description of Material: PVC insulated armoured underground unscreened power cable as per RDSO specification No. IRS-S:63/2014 & IS: 1554 (Part-1) with latest amendment, if any 2x25 mm2 identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification., Qty.: 13 KM, SN: 2, Tender No.: (56XXN002). Description of Material: PVC insulated armoured underground unscreened power cable as per RDSO specification No. IRS-S:63/2014 & IS: 1554 (Part-1) with latest amendment, if any 2x25 mm2 identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification., Qty.: 48 KM, SN: 3, Tender No.: (56XXN003). Description of Material: Supply of PVC insulated armoured underground unscreened power cable as per RDSO specification No. IRS-S:63/2014 & IS: 1554 (Part-1) with latest amendment, if any 2x25 mm sq identification for core as per para 3.2.5 of the specification., Qty.: 13 KM, Due Date: For SN 1 to 3:- 15.11.2021, Earnest Money: For SN 1 to 3:- ₹ 1,50,560/- Note- Above Tender has been upload on the web site [www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in). The firms, who desire to participate in e-tender are advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III Digital Signature Certificate Authority licensed by CCA India. Manual offers against e-tenders will not be considered. For details, please visit the website [www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in) Senior Divisional Materials Manager CPRO/S-75 Lucknow

About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955

DO NOT TRAVEL WITH INFLAMMABLE ARTICLE IN TRAIN

## OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

### DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

**Eulogy**

*1<sup>st</sup> Year Remembrance*

The familiar scene replays,  
In the dead of the night,  
Rousing me, an agonizing reminder,  
I see your placid submission,  
What should I have inferred,  
That you were ready?  
The calm nod, the tired yes,  
The last faces you wished to see,  
Did you already know,  
Why did it have to be me,  
You said I was your Diamond,  
I was your guardian angel,  
Did I win your vote of confidence,  
As your constant healer?  
That I must now face the brevity,  
Not of life but of time spent,  
There is just not enough,  
So much I had to say,  
Much more to do,  
Or is it ordained,  
That I carry my faith,  
My tenacity,  
Lone and yet not,  
That under your watchful shadow,  
I will seek my answers,  
When my core is shaken,  
Even as my mind falters,  
You shall become my constant companion,  
Do I have your word for it?  
The rapping sounds,  
The smell of familiar Cologne,  
The ruffle of papers,  
The flow of poetry.....  
I feel you. I am, but a DNA strand, of your Being.

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1942 - October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Yours,  
Priya

*Dr. Somiah Francis Victor Selvaraj*  
DM (CARDIO) MD (MED) FCCP FICA FRSTM FISE  
Director, GG Hospitals  
A Senior Cardiologist and Physician par excellence,  
An illustrious alumnus of Kilpauk and Madras medical college, Recipient of best doctor award, Medical excellence award and Pride of India award, Above all, A humanitarian, a loving father and husband who lived life on his terms and served his patients until the very end of life.

Your Beloved  
Dr. Kamala Selvaraj (Wife)  
Dr. Priya Selvaraj (Daughter), Dr. Deepu Rajkamal Selvaraj (Son)  
Neharikka Sanjay, Lakshan Sanjay, Samiksha Sanjay and Tamira Rajkamal Selvaraj (Grandchildren)

Loving members of the Somiah Family and the Ganesan Family  
Doctors and Staff, GG Hospitals.

**Office of The Superintending Engineer**  
9th Circle Public Work Department Dehradun  
Office of the Superintending Engineer, 9<sup>th</sup> Circle PWD,  
Dehradun Uttarakhand

Website - <http://pwd.uk.gov.in> E-mail: [sepdwddun@rediffmail.com](mailto:sepdwddun@rediffmail.com)

Letter No. 8587/1C -9/21 Dated: 29/10/2021

**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING**

**e-tender Notice(Short term)**

The Superintending Engineer 9th Circle, Public Works Department, Dehradun on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites short terms tender in two bid system for the following work. Information regarding tender shall be available on <https://www.uktenders.gov.in> from date 03.11.2021.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lacs)	Validity of Tender (In days)	Cost of Tender Document (In Rs.)	Period of Completion (In Month)	Contractor Category of Registraion
1.	Widening & beautification of motor road from Jogiwala - Ladpur - Raipur to near Khairi Man Singh via Sahastradhara Crossing under CRIF. (Job No. - 37)	70.00	60.00	5000.00 + 18% G.S.T.	18	Registered in 'A' & above category in Road and Bridge works in Central Govt. / State Govt./ any Govt. Undertaking

## Deshmukh plea to quash probe denied

Minister ignored summons, says HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Friday rejected the plea from former Home Minister of Maharashtra Anil Deshmukh to quash the summons against him by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Commenting on the allegations of money laundering against Mr. Deshmukh, the court said, "he has without any valid reason, refused to cooperate with the investigation by not attending the summonses issued by the authorities".

A Division Bench of Justices Nitin Jamdar and S.V. Kotwal, in a detailed order made available on Saturday, recorded: "A search was carried out at the residence of Mr. Deshmukh and his son on June 25, 2021 and issued summons against him requiring him to remain present on an assigned date.... On July 30, the ED sent



Anil Deshmukh

fourth summons and then the agency issued an order of provisional attachment on July 16, 2021."

The case dates back to March 20, 2021 when former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh wrote a letter to CM Uddhav Thackeray accusing Mr. Deshmukh of abusing his position and power to seek illegal monetary benefits. Soon thereafter a petition was filed before the High Court which led to a preliminary inquiry against him by the CBI. The ED then stepped in and started a probe.

## Congress is driving Modi's growth: Mamata

Bengal CM blames Opposition party's delayed decisions

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

"Modiji is going to be more powerful because of the Congress," Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee said as she continued her attack on the Congress during her visit to Goa.

The West Bengal Chief Minister also accused the Congress of not being serious about politics. It was not taking decisions on time, she alleged. "They did not take politics seriously. Modiji is going to be more powerful because of the Congress... If one cannot make the decision, why the country should suffer for that. They [Congress] have got enough opportunities," she said.

This was the second day in a row that she had targeted the Congress. Her criticism came on the day when Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was visiting Goa. Ms. Ba-



Mamata Banerjee in Goa on Saturday. •PTI

nerjee arrived in Goa on October 28. On Saturday, she interacted with media persons and visited the Mapusa market and interacted with locals. Ms. Banerjee noted that the Congress fielded candidates against her party in West Bengal Assembly polls and one should not expect her to throw flowers at them. "Instead of the BJP, they contested against me in my State. When they contested against my party in Bengal, how can they expect that

we will shower flowers in return," she remarked.

The Congress, along with Left parties and the Indian Secular Front, fielded candidates against the Trinamool Congress. It, however, did not field a candidate against Ms. Banerjee in the Bhabanipur bypoll on September 30.

### 'Trojan Horse of BJP'

Reacting to her remarks, West Bengal Pradesh Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said Ms. Banerjee was the "Trojan Horse" of the BJP.

"Before August 20, the Congress was all good. What happened between August 20 and September 16 that the Chief Minister's nephew [Abhishek Banerjee] came out of the office of the Enforcement Directorate and started targeting the Congress," Mr. Chowdhury asked.

## Manifesto commitments a guarantee, says Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
PANAJI

Kickstarting the Congress's poll campaign in Goa, where Assembly elections are due early next year, Rahul Gandhi on Saturday asserted that his party will give in its election manifesto in the state will not just be a commitment, but a "guarantee" as not keeping the word will dent his credibility.

Addressing members of the fishermen community at Velsao beach in South Goa following his arrival in the state for his day-long visit, he said his party will prepare the poll manifesto in an open and transparent manner after holding talks with different stakeholders in the state, and its focus will be environmental protection.

He also alleged that while the BJP indulges in hatred and divides people, the Congress spreads love and affection as it believes in uniting people and tak-



Rahul Gandhi interacts with party workers in Goa on Saturday. •PTI

ing them forward. "I am not here to waste your time or my time. Just as your time is important, my time is important...The commitment that we will make to you in the manifesto is not just a commitment, but a guarantee," he said.

"My credibility is important to me. Unlike many other leaders, when I say something here, I will make sure it happens. If I come here I say to you that we will not allow coal hub and I don't do it, next time I come here I will have no credibility," he said.

## In Bengal's tribal villages, art fights COVID-19

Awareness campaign held by Jadavpur University, UNICEF and artists' collective

BISHWANATH GHOSH  
KOLKATA

Earlier this month when the cities of West Bengal were busy celebrating Durga Puja, children in five tribal villages of the State were painting the walls of their homes to create awareness against COVID-19, which continues to be a major threat in both urban and rural areas.

The campaign, which began on October 1, is being organised by the community radio of Jadavpur University with support from UNICEF and is being executed by the Kolkata-based Chalchitra Academy, a collective of artists.

"The pandemic was not only pushing many rural communities into isolation but was also threatening many forms of folk art. People were on the verge of abandoning those arts and taking up professions that brought more income. So we decided to use these very people and their art forms to spread awareness about COVID-19 and to promote vaccination," Imankalyan Lahiri, who teaches international relations at the university and is the convenor of the community radio, told *The Hin-*



Children in tribal villages of West Bengal seen painting walls. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

du.

### Art with awareness

The villages where this campaign is going on include Lalbazar, Uraanshol, Gangadharpur, Sebaton and Khwarasuli - all of them located in Jhargram district, bordering Jharkhand. "We are using chhau dance, paik dance and patachitra (showing artworks to the accompaniment of songs) to caution the people against COVID and encourage them to get vaccinated," said artist Mrinal Mandal, a founding member of Chalchitra Academy and who is executing the campaign.

Santhal and Kurmi tribes - very shy people, very nice people. In normal times I teach art to them so that they can use art as a source of living. But now I am also drawing out indigenous artists and getting them to help us with the campaign. This way we are getting to kill many birds with one stone - promoting their art, getting them some income, and creating awareness. Only last week we honoured shellac artist Brindaban Chanda [from East Medinipur] and patachitra artist Dhukusham Chitrakar (from West Medinipur) - both senior and talented artists who need financial help," Mr. Mandal said. The campaign in these villages - which includes cultural events and painting competitions for children - will spill over to next year and to newer areas such as Dinajpur and the Sunderbans.

"In fact, we will resume the campaign with renewed vigour post-Diwali because during this time the villagers celebrate the festival of Bandhna, when the walls of houses are scrubbed clean for a fresh coat," Mr. Mandal said.

## Decision to leave Cong. is final, says Amarinder

'No back-end talks with party'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Saturday dismissed reports of back-end talks with the Congress, saying the time for rapprochement is over and his decision to leave the party is final.

Mr. Singh reiterated that he will soon launch his political party and said he wanted to build "a strong collective force in the interest of Punjab".

"Reports of backend talks with @INCIndia are incorrect. The time for rapprochement is over. The decision to part ways was taken after much thought and is final. I'm grateful to [Congress president] Sonia Gandhi ji for her support but will not stay in Congress now [sic]," tweeted Singh's media advisor quoting the former Chief Minister.

### Launch party

He was reacting to some media reports which suggested that some Congress leaders are engaged in back-end talks to persuade him to remain in the party.



Amarinder Singh

## Power sector employees threaten to boycott work

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JABALPUR

The Madhya Pradesh United Forum for Power Employees and Engineers (MPUPFEE) on Saturday gave a call to employees of the State-owned power companies to boycott work from November 1 to press for their various demands.

Employees of the State-owned power companies will go on karya bahishkar andolan (work boycott agitation) to press for their five-point demand from November 1, MPUPFEE coordinator engineer V.K.S. Parihar said. The demand includes payment of 50% of the arrears of dearness allowance and deferred increment amount in the salary for October, Mr. Parihar said. The forum has already put forth its demand in a series of meetings with the State Energy Minister.

## Second NBW issued against Param Bir Singh in extortion case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

A Magistrate court in Mumbai on Saturday issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh in an alleged extortion case registered in Goregaon.

### First NBW

On October 26, a Magistrate court in Thane had issued the first NBW against Mr. Singh in another alleged extortion case against him concerning Vinay Singh, a businessman and gangster Riyaz Bhatti.

The Crime Branch had issued two summons to Mr. Singh to join the investigation. One of the summons was sent to his official residence in Mumbai and the other at a Chandigarh address. It is after he failed to respond to the summons, the Mumbai Police moved court for issuing an NBW against him.

Along with Mr. Singh, dismissed assistant police inspector Sachin Waze currently lodged at Talaja Central Jail is also an accused in the Goregaon extortion case. The case is about Bimal Agarwal, a builder-hoteller complaining against Mr. Singh and alleged extortion.

On October 20, the Maharashtra government had told the Bombay High Court that Mr. Singh is not traceable and that it cannot give a statement that no coercive action will be taken against him.

This statement was made when the court was hearing a plea filed by Mr Singh seeking to quash one FIR filed against him registered at two places. The plea mentioned, "The FIR refers to an event of 2015 and is belatedly registered after having failed to pressurize him to withdraw his complaint against former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh.

Govt. of Haryana

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

5+2

# National Unity Day

Sunday, October 31, 2021

Haryana remembers sculptor of India's unity & integrity

## Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

on his birth anniversary

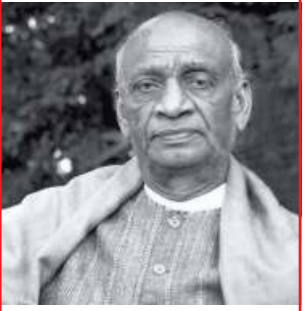
Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Haryana

www.pharyana.gov.in @Cmohry @DiprHaryana

#75YearsofAmul

MILESTONE MOMENTS

Amul 75 YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS



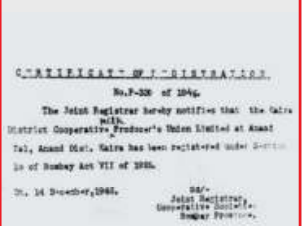
THE IRON MAN. THE VISIONARY OF DAIRY COOPERATIVES.



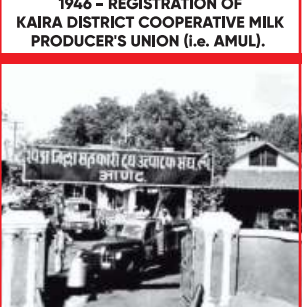
1920 - POLSON DOMINATES DAIRY AND PROFITS.



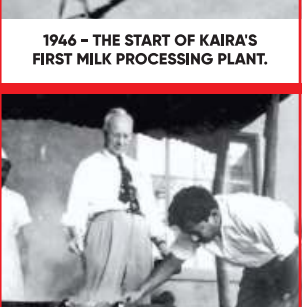
1946 - THE MEETING THAT MADE AMUL, PRESIDED OVER BY MORARJI DESAI.



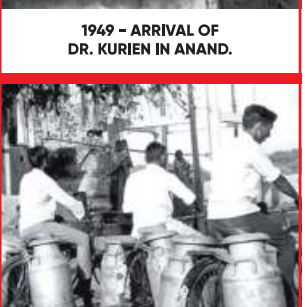
1946 - REGISTRATION OF KAIRA DISTRICT COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCER'S UNION (i.e. AMUL).



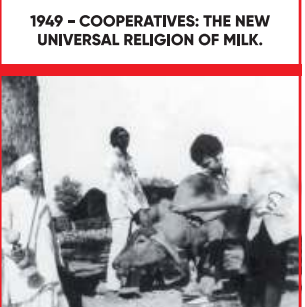
1946 - THE START OF KAIRA'S FIRST MILK PROCESSING PLANT.



1949 - ARRIVAL OF DR. KURIEN IN ANAND.



1949 - COOPERATIVES: THE NEW UNIVERSAL RELIGION OF MILK.



1950 - KAIRA MILK UNION'S MOBILE VETERINARY SERVICE.

Amul 75 YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS

#75YearsofAmul

## IN BRIEF



## Puneeth Rajkumar's last rites today

**BENGALURU**  
As thousands of grieving fans continue to flock to the Kanteerava stadium here on Saturday to pay tributes to Kannada film star Puneeth Rajkumar who passed away on Friday, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said the last rites of the actor will be performed on October 31 and appealed for calm.

## Farmers can now get diesel at their doorstep

**VIZIANGARAM**  
Farmers in around 100 villages here in Andhra Pradesh will be able to get diesel at their doorstep with the launching of a 6,000-litre mobile diesel dispenser called Bowser truck. Nelli Marla MLA Badukonda Appala Naidu inaugurated the Bowser at an outlet at Ainada junction on Saturday.

## More water released from Mullaperiyar

T.N. opens 3 more spillway shutters on Kerala's request

A CORRESPONDENT  
IDUKKI

The Tamil Nadu Public Works Department has increased the discharge of water from the Mullaperiyar dam into the Periyar river by opening three more spillway shutters on Saturday.

The dam in Kerala's Idukki district is under the control of the Tamil Nadu Government. The total quantity of water released rose to 2,974 cusecs (cubic feet per second) by evening.

## Inflow rising

Water was released from the dam on Friday as the level crossed 138 ft. In the wake of increased inflow, more water was discharged that night when the water level reached 138.85 feet, though the upper rule curve was 138 feet.

This was despite the dra-



With bated breath: The Periyar flowing past Upputhara town in Idukki. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

wal of 2,340 cusecs by Tamil Nadu. The water level reached 138.9 feet at 10 a.m. on Saturday, after release of an additional 274 cusecs of water overnight.

Tamil Nadu subsequently let out 831 cusecs of water.

However, the water level again rose to 138.95 feet at noon and at 4 p.m., three more spillway shutters (2, 3 and 4) were opened to release 2,974 cusecs of water.

Following this, there was increased inflow into the Pe-

riyar by Saturday evening.

Announcements via loudspeakers were made in the main areas downstream of the dam, to alert people. Upputhara is the last town on the banks of the Periyar before the water flows into the Idukki reservoir at Ayyappancoil.

Kerala Water Resource Minister Roshy Augustine said Tamil Nadu released more water on the request from Kerala. There was no reason for any anxiety among those living in the catchment areas of the Periyar, he said. Even if they (Tamil Nadu) released four times more water than the present amount, it would not be a problem for Kerala, Mr. Augustine added.

The India Meteorological Department has issued an orange alert indicating heavy rain in five districts, including Idukki, till November 1. The other districts are Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Kottayam.

(With PTI inputs)

## Centre of Excellence to come up in Rajasthan forestry training institute

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
JAIPUR

The climate change expertise will be developed for the first time among the forest officials in Rajasthan with the establishment of a Centre of Excellence at the Forestry and Wildlife Training Institute in Jaipur.

## Approval given

The State Government has given approval to the new centre under the Societies Registration Act. Titled as the Centre for Conservation of Natural Resources, Environment Protection and Climate Change, the new institution will help in policy formation for a better conservation of wildlife reserves and natural resources, while involving the climate change experts of international repute in the measures for environment protection. Principal Forest and Environment Secretary Sreya Guha said here earlier this week that the Centre of Excellence would offer training programmes to the students, researchers, academicians and environmental activists in addition to the forest officials. "The institute will establish itself as a world class training centre with the new facility," Ms. Guha said. An appropriate framework would be established in



Rajasthan Forestry and Wildlife Training Institute, situated on Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg in Jaipur.

•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

the institute for long-term management to meet the requirements of the changing times and circumstances, Ms. Guha said. The training programmes will be organised in collaboration with reputed institutions in the country engaged in the research on the impacts of climate change.

Established in 1986 under the National Social Forestry Project, the Forestry and Wildlife Training Institute has been advising the State government on policy formation for managing the fast diminishing forest resources, while ensuring livelihood security of the people living in and around the forested areas. Two subsidiary campuses of the institute function from Jodhpur and Alwar, providing training to the Forest Department's front-line staff.

## Peaceful voting in 4 Assembly seats

Good turnout in Telangana, A.P. and Karnataka

P SRIDHAR  
HUZURABAD

The fiercely contested Huzurabad byelection in Telangana passed off peacefully on Saturday, recording a high voter turnout of 86.33%, barring a few isolated skirmishes between the cadres of the ruling TRS and the BJP over allegations of money distribution and presence of outsiders.

High voter enthusiasm marked the bypoll as the polling percentage surpassed the 2018 turnout of 84.4%.

Mild tension prevailed at Ganmukla village in Veena-



People waiting outside a polling station in Huzurabad mandal, Telangana, on Saturday. •G.N. RAO

vanka mandal after a group of BJP activists and TRS cadre had a verbal spat over the alleged presence of non-locals in the village.

The polling in the Badvel constituency in YSR Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh was also peaceful as over

68.12% of voters exercised their franchise. The byelection was necessitated by the death of YSRCP MLA Venkata Subbaiah in March.

In the Sindgi and the Hangal Assembly segments in Karnataka, people came out in good numbers to exercise

their franchise. However, both constituencies registered a decline in the polling percentage.

As per the initial reports from the election authorities, Hangal recorded over 83.44% polling. Turnout here was slightly less than that in the previous election. It recorded 84.40% polling in the 2018 Assembly election and 80.80% in the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

Sindgi too recorded a decline compared to the previous Assembly election with approximate 69.41% polling. The constituency saw 71.43% polling in 2018. The segment, however, saw 59.83% polling during the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

(With inputs from A.P. & Karnataka)

## Not against voluntary conversions: RSS leader

Hosabale opposes forced attempts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HUBBALLI

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) welcomes the proposed anti-conversion law, which will "prevent forced religious conversions done with ulterior motives", but is not opposed to voluntary conversions, RSS national general secretary (Sarkaryavah) Dattatreya Hosabale has said.

Addressing presspersons on the sidelines of the RSS national executive meeting at Rashtrrothana Vidya Kendra near Dharwad on Saturday, he clarified that the RSS was not opposed to voluntary change of faith. Howev-

er, "forced conversions by minority communities just to increase their numbers is not acceptable", he said.

Mr. Hosabale said the opposition by the minority communities to the anti-conversion law revealed their "real intention". Already 10 States had passed the law. Himachal Pradesh had passed the law during the Congress rule, he said.

Mr. Hosabale said the Karnataka Government should pass the law and if at all there were any lacunae, amendments could be brought in. "It is wrong to oppose the Bill even before it is approved."

## 'Tripura using COVID mandate to stop TMC from entering State'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA

The TMC on Saturday accused the Biplab Deb government in Tripura of making every effort to stop the party from expanding its base in the North Eastern State, dubbing the recent move to make COVID tests mandato-

ry for certain travellers a tactic to stonewall its campaigns

Senior TMC leader Partha Chatterjee said the BJP is scared of party national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and using its machinery to stop his rally on Sunday.

## July 18 to be observed as T.N. Day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The DMK government on Saturday announced that July 18 would be observed as Tamil Nadu Day.

## Resolution adopted

In a statement, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said a government order on this would be issued soon. July 18 was the day when a resolution, moved by the then Chief Minister, C.N. Annadurai, was adopted in the Assembly to rename the Madras Presidency as Tamil Nadu in 1967. It may be recalled that the previous AIADMK government had announced that November 1 would be observed as Tamil Nadu Day from 2019.

The DMK government's decision followed representations from many political parties, Tamil scholars and enthusiasts, who pointed out that parts of the Madras Presidency became Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala on November 1, 1956, and hence it might not be appropriate to observe it as Tamil Nadu Day.

## Financial aid

Mr. Stalin said 'Border Savours', who, throughout their lifetime resorted to the struggle for safeguarding the border of Tamil Nadu when the linguistic States were formed, would be honoured with a cash prize of ₹1 lakh each on November 1 this year as a special case.

There are a total of 110 'Border Savours' and they are being granted a monthly financial assistance of ₹5,500, along with a medical allowance ₹500. After their demise, a financial assistance of ₹3,000, besides the medical allowance ₹500, is provided to their legal heirs throughout their lifetime.

## That weekend feel



Small joys: People enjoying a merry-go-round ride on the R.K. Beach in Visakhapatnam on Saturday. •K.R. DEEPAK

## Kerala police promise safe rehabilitation for Maoists

'We want to dispel their fears about the surrender policy'

ABDUL LATHEEF NAHA  
MALAPPURAM

The Kerala police have intensified their efforts to get Maoists hiding in the jungles of the Western Ghats to surrender, especially in the wake of the setbacks and the attrition being faced by the Kabani, Nadugani, Siruvani and Bhavani units of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist).

The surrender of Ljesh, aka Ramu, in Wayanad last week has increased the hopes of the police of more surrenders in future. The way the police dealt with Ramu by offering him safety and rehabilitation under the surrender-cum-rehabilitation scheme of 2018 is also

expected to send positive signals to the Maoists.

Even as the Government said that the trial of the surrendered Maoists would be in accordance with the crimes they committed, the police indicated that maximum leniency would be shown. "We want to dispel their fears and unfounded concerns about the surrender policy. It will be transparent," said a senior police officer who had been instrumental in drafting the surrender package. The police are trying to convey to them that their safe rehabilitation would be ensured.

The behaviour of Maoists, especially in recent months, seemed to indicate increas-

ing despondency among the cadres. Small groups came to two tribal hamlets off Munderi in the Nilambur forest in the last two weeks.

## Cadre strength down

Sources close to the police and Maoists indicated that the cadres were struggling for survival. They have reportedly stopped conducting classes for tribespeople. The last time they came to the colony was for provisions. The number of Maoist cadres has almost halved in the past 10 years.

It was in 2011-12 that the Maoist movement began to emerge once again in Kerala with the Wayanad-Nilambur forests as its base.

## Centre snatching jobs, says Medha

Activist calls for greater unity to force Centre to drop plan to privatise steel plant

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
VISAKHAPATNAM

Social activist and Narmada Bachao Andolan leader Medha Patkar has lashed out at the Union Government for "spreading the false news that privatisation and partnership with private corporates will bring the new normal of progress and development of the country".

Ms. Patkar was in the city on Saturday to extend solidarity to the workers of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), who are on a relay hunger strike for the past 260 days against the decision of the BJP-led NDA Government to go in for strategic sale of the steel plant.

Addressing the workers, Ms. Patkar said, "We all know the truth that the 'sale



Solidarity show: Activist Medha Patkar leading a rally of VSP workers in Visakhapatnam on Saturday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

of India' will snatch away the sources of livelihood, including land, water, forests, and also employment, apart from reservation for SC/ST communities. The huge unemployment in the country is not caused by the pandem-

## Preparations on to open all schools in Kerala tomorrow

Training conducted for teachers as well as parents

STAFF REPORTER  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Pravesanotsavam (admission festival) will be held in all schools in Kerala on the reopening day on Monday by adhering to COVID-19 protocols, Minister for General Education V. Sivankutty has said.

The State-level Pravesanotsavam would be held at Cotton Hill Upper Primary School here, he said.

He was addressing media persons here on Saturday in connection with the steps taken by the State Government for school reopening.

The Minister said all arrangements for resumption of offline classes after months away from campus had been completed, and students and parents need not have any anxiety on this



Final touches being given to a primary school in Kottayam on Saturday.

score. In the first phase, primary students and those in classes 10 and 12 will begin school. In the second phase, classes 8, 9 and 11 will resume on November 15.

Meetings with Ministers for Health, Transport, and Local Self-Government had

been conducted to prepare the guidelines, students' transport protocols, and steps to be taken by local bodies for the reopening.

School cleaning and disinfection had been taken up with public and stakeholder support.

## Learning gap

Teacher training and parent training were also held to cover aspects such as safety protocols, possible mental and emotional problems in students returning to school, learning backwardness and gaps, and so on, the Minister said.

The Minister stressed that teaching would not be full-fledged initially. Focus would be on fun and play and recreation and increasing their confidence.

low unionisation, she said. The farmers who parted with their lands for the establishment of the steel plant had every right to question the "mala fide intentions" of the Government, she said.

Commending the VSP workers on their relentless struggle, Ms. Patkar said it was an inspiration for many other struggles in the country. She called for greater unity among all sections to exert pressure on the Centre to change its "adamant attitude".

IFTU national president Aparna said the public sector undertakings were safeguarding the economy of the nation. She said the people of the country were facing financial problems due to the "lopsided policies" of the Government.

FROM PAGE ONE



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong at the G20 Summit in Rome on Saturday. •PTI

## PM calls for united fight against COVID at G20

Mr. Shringla explained that the certification of India's Covaxin is "pending" with the WHO and that the emergency use authorisation of WHO will help India meet this goal. Mr. Modi also met French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the G20.

"France has played an important role in developing

the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy. The two leaders agreed to cooperate for rules based order in the region," said Mr. Shringla. Mr. Modi also met Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong, and the discussion covered India-Singapore cooperation that was visible during the second wave of COVID-19 in April-May.

## Pope Francis accepts India's invite

"Had a very warm meeting with Pope Francis. I had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues with him and also invited him to visit India," said Prime Minister Modi in a social media post after the meeting.

Prime Minister Modi was scheduled to meet the Pope for half an hour but an informed source said that the meeting went on for an hour.

"PM Modi and the Pope discussed a wide range of issues, such as fighting climate change and removing poverty, aimed at making our planet better," said the source. Prime Minister Modi presented the Pope with a silver candle stand and the latter gifted Mr. Modi a bronze plaque bearing an inscription from the Old Testament.

A statement issued by the Vatican after the meeting said, "During a brief conversation, the cordial relations between the Holy See and India were discussed."

PM Modi also met Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin and Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, the statement added.

Mr. Modi was accompanied by the National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla during the visit to the Vatican.

Later, briefing the media, Mr. Shringla said, the meeting between PM Modi and Pope Francis was "one to

one". Pope Francis has been vocal about the need to act on climate change and spoken in the past against enduring conflicts in Syria and Afghanistan. He has called upon countries to take in refugees from Afghanistan and has spoken against racism and other forms of hate crimes.

Pope Francis has called on countries to act urgently to deal with the issue of climate change.

**"Shared responsibility"**  
On Friday, he said, "Climate change can be faced with a renewed sense of shared responsibility for our world, and an effective solidarity based on justice, a sense of our common destiny and a recognition of the unity of our human family in God's plan for the world."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi became one of the G20 leaders who met the Pope on the sidelines of the summit in Rome. U.S. President Joe Biden met the pontiff on Friday.

The last Papal visit to India took place in 1999 when Pope John Paul II was hosted here.

Pope Francis visited Sri Lanka in 2015 and he was hosted by Myanmar and Bangladesh in 2017, but on both the occasions, India was not part of his travel plans.

The Pope made history with his Iraq visit earlier this year, his first to the war-torn country. He also visited the United Arab Emirates in 2019.

## NIA to contact Iran over drug heist

In due course, we will also seek necessary information from the Iranian authorities," said an official. Six Afghan nationals, an Uzbek woman and three Indian nationals were earlier arrested by the DRI from different places.

As it turned out, the contraband was packed in Afghanistan and sent by a Kandahar-based company, Hassan Hussain Limited, in the guise of a consignment of semi-processed talc stones being imported by Aashi Trading Company in Vijayawada. It was shipped from the Bandar Abbas port in Iran.

**Land route**  
Based on the findings, the agencies suspect that the consignment was transported from Afghanistan to Iran by land route, and the drug

traffickers roped in some middlemen in Iran to get the documents prepared for cargo shipping.

They may get information from the Iranian authorities on those who booked the consignment at the Bandar Abbas port.

After taking over the case, the NIA has conducted searches at multiple locations in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, Alipur, Khera Kalan, Nebsarai and neighbouring Noida.

The premises included a warehouse from where the agency seized some white powdery substance, suspected to be talc mixed with narcotics, on October 20.

The samples were sent for chemical examination. The seized consignment was meant to be transported from Mundra to Delhi for further distribution.

# 'Chinese build-up in RALP a matter of concern'

With increased Chinese presence, the Army has moved additional troops to strengthen its position in the region

DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

While India has strengthened its defences and added offensive elements to its military posture in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, the massive Chinese infrastructure development and troop build-up in the Rest of Arunachal Pradesh (RALP) area is a matter of concern, and efforts are on by the Indian side to address it, according to several officers.

There has been an increase in Chinese patrols in the RALP, especially in the Asaphila area, along with massive development of infrastructure, at least two officers independently said. "They come for patrols and make a mess of the area. They leave stuff behind; in some instances, they had left tents and spades," one of the officers with the knowledge of the matter said. "They have built extensive road construction all across," the other officer noted.

**Two road axis**  
Other than the Kameng area, which consists of East and West Kameng districts, the

rest of the State is referred to by the Army as the RALP.

India has two road axis in the forested RALP area in Lohit and Siang and now efforts are under way to improve infrastructure all across.

China is now moving troops closer to the LAC in RALP and this fits into a similar pattern across the entire Line of Actual Control (LAC), a third officer remarked. In addition to roads, there is construction of tunnels, habitat and related facilities to support the troops. For instance, construction of tunnels has been reported opposite the Subansiri area in recent months, the officer said, citing intelligence inputs.

In an interaction with a group of visiting journalists from Delhi in Tenga earlier this month, in response to questions on the situation in the Asaphila area, General Officer Commanding, Eastern Command, Lt. Gen. Manoj Pande, said: "We have observed build-up by China close to LAC essentially in terms of habitat and that has led to correspondingly more number of troops that are located there."



Across the border: A file photo of a Chinese Army's patrolling car on the Chinese side at an altitude of 15,700 ft above the sea level near Arunachal Pradesh. •RITU RAJ KONWAR

He noted that it was one of the areas on the LAC where the two sides had differing areas of perception. In terms of the number of patrols coming close to the LAC from the other side, there had only been a marginal increase vis-a-vis the "activities that were happening in the last couple of years", he said.

Last year, as the focus was on eastern Ladakh since the May stand-off, in addition to massive mobilisation and re-tasking of troops in Ladakh,

the Army quietly reoriented troops in the eastern sector as well, against the backdrop of heightened Chinese activity across the LAC. Of the 3,488-km LAC, 1,346 km falls in the eastern sector.

**In Tawang sector**  
In the Tawang sector, there has been a significant push to expand infrastructure that enabled faster troops reorientation, which is a shortfall in the RALP area, one of the officers cited above said.

Efforts were on by the Army and at the national level to speed up things, he stressed. The Army's Engineering Task Forces have been employed.

In terms of troops, till 2010, the Army had only one division tasked for looking after RALP. With increased Chinese presence, the Army has since moved additional troops to strengthen its position.

The construction activity across the eastern sector has been synced to the changing weather patterns in the region.

For instance, in 4 Corps and 33 Corps area, the construction activity stops by September while in 3 Corps area, it begins after September.

To keep the momentum on infrastructure development and enable long-term planning, the Army has proposed a five-year roll-on infra development plan instead of the current two-year plan, officials have stated.

**1,600-km highway**  
In a broader national effort, work is also under way on the 1,600-km Trans-Aruna-

chal highway with the alignment running along the LAC up to the Myanmar border. The highway, which had been delayed, was now gathering pace, at least two officials said.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, said on Facebook in March 2019 when he was the Minister of State for Home, that one of his biggest dream projects to connect the remote locations of Arunachal Pradesh was finally approved and a tender for the Detailed Project Report (DPR) was invited.

"The Trans-Arunachal highway, which was delayed due to land compensation issue is also settled now. The DPR for industrial corridor along the Arunachal-Assam border is also under progress," he had said.

Tendering for some parts of the project had since been done, officials added.

As reported by *The Hindu* recently, the Army has significantly augmented its firepower in the Tawang sector as well as strengthened its surveillance capabilities to keep an eye on Chinese activities across the LAC.

## Army: two soldiers killed in Rajouri explosion

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

Two soldiers were killed and another was injured in an explosion near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Naushera sector on Saturday.

"During an area domination patrol in the Naushera sector in Rajouri, a mine blast occurred. Two soldiers suffered critical injuries and later succumbed to their injuries," a Jammu-based Army spokesman said. He said another soldier was under treatment.

Officials said the blast took place when the Army was on patrol duty as part of measures to check infiltration of terrorists from across the border.

The deceased soldiers were identified as Lt. Rishi Kumar, a resident of Bihar's Begusarai, and Sepoy Manjit, a resident of Punjab's Sirsivala, Bathinda.

"They were brave and extremely committed to the profession of soldiering and have made the supreme sacrifice for the nation in the line of active duty. The nation and the Army shall forever remain indebted to the bravehearts for their supreme sacrifice," the spokesman said.



Out on bail: Aryan Khan after being released from Arthur Road jail in Mumbai. •PTI

## Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan released from jail in Mumbai

After 25 days in prison, he was granted bail by Bombay HC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Aryan Khan, son of actor Shah Rukh Khan, was released from the Arthur Road jail in Mumbai on Saturday morning.

Mr. Khan, 23, was arrested on October 3 by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) after a drug bust on a cruise ship. He was sent to jail on October 8.

After 25 days in prison, he was granted bail by the Bombay High Court on Thursday

but the detailed order, citing bail conditions, was made available only on Friday.

However, his release papers did not reach the jail on time. One of the advocates appearing for Mr. Khan told *The Hindu* that there was delay in taking the papers to the jail, and as per protocol, no inmate would be released after 5.30 p.m. Hence, Mr. Khan had to spend one more night in prison.

The High Court on Thurs-

day directed Mr. Khan, Arbaaz Merchant and Munmun Dhamecha to execute a bond of ₹1 lakh with one or more sureties in order to be released from jail.

The order granting bail to Mr. Khan was hailed by several film personalities, while a huge group of fans gathered outside Mr. Shah Rukh Khan's sea-facing bungalow 'Mannat' in suburban Bandra in a show of solidarity and to celebrate the end of his son's incarceration.

## Aryan Khan saga raises questions at the NCB

Lack of progress in high-profile cases

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Arrest and bail of Aryan Khan in a drug case and subsequent allegations on the functioning of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), especially of its zonal director Sameer Wankhede, has raised questions on the past cases of the agency.

A Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader raising suspicion on the functioning of Mr. Wankhede had pointed out that none of the high-profile cases where Bollywood celebrities were called in for questioning have been taken to their logical conclusion; instead all those are either pending for investigation or trial has not yet begun.

In 2020, the NCB under Mr. Wankhede stepped in to investigate the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput and arrested his girlfriend and actor Rhea Chakraborty for allegedly supplying drugs to him based on her WhatsApp chats. In the following months, a total of 33 individuals, including her, were arrested by the NCB.

A year later, a majority of the 33 arrested have been granted bail, including Ms. Chakraborty and her brother Showik, while six others remain imprisoned. The

NCB filed an 11,700-page chargesheet in this case in March 2021 but the trial is yet to begin.

After the arrest of Ms. Chakraborty, top actors of Bollywood including Deepika Padukone, Sara Ali Khan, Shraddha Kapoor, Arjun Rampal and Rakul Preet Singh were questioned by the NCB. The agency claimed that they were cracking down on the drug nexus in Bollywood.

Agisilaos Demetriades, brother of actor Arjun Rampal's partner, was arrested in October 2020 over alleged possession of drugs. He too was granted bail in December 2020. In September 2021, he was again arrested in Goa in relation to the case involving seizure of a small quantity of hashish and contraband. Actor Armaan Kohli's house was also raided by the NCB earlier this year. He was questioned and arrested.

In August 2021, actor Armaan Kohli's house was searched by the NCB, a day after the arrest of drug peddler Ajay Raju Singh. Mr. Kohli was questioned and arrested. According to the officials, a small amount of drugs was found in his home. In October 2021, Kohli's bail plea was rejected by the special NDPS court.

## ED freezes chopper stored in Chennai

It follows request from U.S. authorities

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen a BELL-214 Helicopter that was dismantled and stored at a warehouse in Chennai. The action follows a request made by the U.S. Department of Justice and in accordance with the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty with that country.

The ED said the helicopter was imported by Ha-meed Ibrahim and Abdulla of M/s Marilog Avion Services Co. Ltd., Bangkok from AAR Corporation, United States and shipped to India through Thailand in 2019. It was dismantled and stored on the premises of J. Mata-dee Free Trade Warehouse Zone in Chennai. The helicopter was frozen under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, on October 23, the agency said in a statement.

Sources in the intelligence agencies said a logistics service provider involved in Customs clearances was examined by a central agency in Chennai a few days ago in connection with an input relating to shipment of helicopter components. State law-enforcing agencies said they had no formal communication about the case. However, it is not clear whether the ED freezing the BELL-214 helicopter pertains to the same investigation.

After the helicopter was purchased from the U.S. by a Thailand company and then moved to India, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security registered a case over its alleged end use in a prohibited country.

The U.S. Department of Justice made a request for assistance in executing the 'Warrant for Arrest in Rem' on the helicopter located in Chennai issued by the U.S. District Court, Columbia.

## Cyber criminals stalk shoppers

Online phishing attacks and fraud on the rise as Deepavali sales pick up

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA  
NEW DELHI

Tushar Mathur (name changed), 48-year-old Delhi-based creative art director, wanted to gift his wife a Louis Vuitton bag for Deepavali and decided to order it online. After seeing great 'festive' deals on the seemingly-genuine website, LouisVuitton.in, Mr. Mathur paid ₹36,000 for the bag. The bag was delivered to his place as promised, only it turned out to be a cheap imitation. Mr. Mathur tried to visit the website again to complain but the website no longer existed.

He is not alone. While the festive season is a booming time for online retailers and bargain hunters, cyber criminals also take advantage of this surge in online transactions.

According to cyber security solution provider Check Point Software Technologies (CPTS), every year around festive season there is a spike in the number of new domains registered that con-



Festive frenzy: People purchase decorative items at a market, ahead of the Deepavali festival, in Mumbai on Saturday. •PTI

tain the word 'Deepavali'. "This year we found a 200% increase in the number of new domains registered that contain the word 'Deepavali'. Three per cent of these domains have been found to be malicious and another 31% are suspicious," Harish Kumar, Head, Enterprise & Government, CPTS, India & SAARC told *The Hindu*.

Likewise Amit Jaju, Sr. Managing Director for India at advisory firm Ankura, said based on the inquiries they have received and online statistics, there had been over

300% increase in cyber incidents in recent weeks leading up to Deepavali.

"Social engineering attacks are the most commonly deployed form of attacks," Ritesh Chopra, Director Sales and Field Marketing, India & SAARC Countries, NortonLifeLock said. These attacks use psychological manipulation to trick users into making security-related mistakes such as clicking on legitimate looking emails, weblinks or social media messages. While such attacks fall under the umbrella

of 'phishing attacks', these are more sophisticated. Attackers may pick up some information already available about consumers and then build on it to trick them into taking an action.

"We all know about cookies... if cookies are being tracked and you have been looking to travel or buying a gift card... a threat actor can come back to you with a fake offer specifically for what you want," Mr. Chopra said.

Nitin Bhatnagar, Associate Director, PCI Security Standards Council said, "The most effective way to avoid these attacks is to keep devices used for social media browsing and general internet surfing separate from devices used for financial transactions." One can avoid these traps by regularly changing passwords, deleting unwanted apps, blocking high value international and e-commerce transactions on their cards through the Bank's app and only enabling them when performing a transaction, he added.

## Patriotism can't be forced by guns: Mufti

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

Former J&K Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking his intervention in the recent arrests of Kashmiri youth for allegedly celebrating Pakistan's win against India in the T20 World Cup match.

"Patriotism and a sense of loyalty has to be cultivated with compassion and can't be forced by wielding the baton or by the barrel of a gun," Ms. Mufti wrote.

Referring to the arrests of the three Kashmiri students in Uttar Pradesh and lodging of a case in Srinagar against medical students, Ms. Mufti said, "A friendly cricket match between India and Pakistan that was solely a source of entertainment for people here bruised by incessant lockdowns, Internet gag and restriction of movement, led to booking of youngsters under the draconian UAPA for simply choosing to cheer the winning side."

## Bypolls held to three Lok Sabha seats

Dozen Assembly seats at stake for BJP; high turnout recorded in the northeastern States

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI

Byelections were held to three Lok Sabha seats — Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Mandi in Himachal Pradesh and Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh — on Saturday in addition to 29 Assembly seats across 13 States. The counting of votes for all seats will take place on November 2.

Dadra and Nagar Haveli recorded a 75.51% turnout as the voting concluded at 7 p.m., Election Commission officials said. Election to the seat was necessitated after the death of seven-time Independent MP Mohan Delkar whose wife Kalaben Delkar is contesting from the Shiv Sena against the BJP's Mahesh Gavit and the Congress's Mahesh Dhodi.

The Mandi Lok Sabha seat, where the Congress candidate is pitted against a Kargil war hero and BJP candidate, Khushal Singh Thakur, registered a relatively lower turnout of 49.83% till 5 p.m. The seat fell vacant after the death of Ramswaroop Sharma (BJP) in March. Independent India's first voter, 104-year-old Shyam Saran Negi, was among those



**Exercising their franchise:** Voters displaying their hands with gloves on as they stand in a queue to cast their vote for Tamulpur Assembly bypolls, in Assam on Saturday. •PTI

who cast their votes in the bypoll for the Mandi seat.

Besides the Lok Sabha seats, bypolls were held in three Assembly seats in Himachal Pradesh, five Assembly seats in Assam, four in West Bengal, three each in Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya, two each in Bihar, Karnataka and Rajasthan and one seat each in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Mizoram and Telangana.

Out of these, the BJP was holding around half a dozen seats, the Congress had nine, while the rest were with the regional parties.

Among the Assembly seats, the Ellenabad Assembly constituency in Haryana is a keenly followed contest as INLD leader Abhay Singh Chautala seeks re-election after resigning from the seat this year to protest against the Centre's farm laws.

The byelections to nine Assembly seats in three north-eastern States on Saturday saw a high turnout. Deaths of the sitting MLAs or their defection to the BJP forced bypolls to five seats in Assam, three in Meghalaya

and one in Mizoram.

Election officials in Assam said over 70% cast their votes by 5 p.m. in the Bhabanipur, Gossaigaon, Mariani, Tamulpur and Thowra seats.

The average voting percentage in Mawphlang, Mawryngkneng and Rajabala constituencies in Meghalaya was 78.79% and in Mizoram's Tuirial seat was 78.49%. These are not the final figures, officials in the two States said.

The Assam unit of the BJP and its regional ally, United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), were confident of sweeping the five seats.

The BJP had fielded three defectors — Ruppjyoti Kurmi from Mariani, Sushanta Borghain from Thowra and Phanidhar Talukdar from Bhabanipur. The first two had defected from Congress and the third from the All India United Democratic Front. Candidates of the UPPL contested from Gossaigaon and Tamulpur in the Bodoland Territorial Region.

The Congress, which contested all the nine seats in the region, hoped to consolidate its position besides retaining the Mawryngkneng and Rajabala seats.

## Lakhimpur violence: SKM forms 7-member panel of advocates

It will take up legal fight against accused

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Samkyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Saturday said a seven-member panel of lawyers has been formed to fight cases in courts in connection with the Lakhimpur Kheri violence.

The SKM, an umbrella body of 40 farm unions spearheading the farmers' agitation against the Centre's three agricultural laws, said the panel comprises advocates Suresh Kumar Munna, Harjeet Singh, Anupam Verma, Mohamad Khawaja, Yadvinder Verma, Sunder Singh and Israr Ahmed.

"The seven-member team will pursue the legal fight against main accused Ashish Mishra and others in the Lakhimpur Kheri case," it said in a statement.

The farmers' body said it will also fight for the dismissal and arrest of Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra.

It added that the panel of advocates will work contin-



Villagers watch a burnt car which had run over farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri in U.P. • FILE PHOTO

uously under the guidance of senior advocates of the Morcha to bring justice to the deceased and injured farmers, including the family of the young journalist who was killed in the incident.

Eight people were killed in the October 3 incident. Four farmers and a journalist were run over when a car allegedly driven by Ashish Mishra ploughed through a walking column of farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri district's Tikunia village.

## U.S. Trade Representative to visit India on November 22

Visit likely related to reviving the Trade Policy Forum

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON DC

U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai will travel to India and other Asian countries next month, in her first trip to the region as the country's chief trade negotiator.

Ms. Tai and Deputy USTR Sarah Bianchi will travel to Tokyo, Seoul and New Delhi "to meet with government officials and stakeholders to discuss the enduring U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and to strengthen trade and economic relationships with key allies and partners," the office of the USTR said in a press statement.

The officials will be in New Delhi on November 22 and return to Washington on November 24. They will be in Tokyo on November 15 and Seoul on November 18, the announcement said.

The visit is presumably connected with the two countries' intention to restart the Trade Policy Forum — a dialogue to progress trade ties.

A joint statement following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the White House last month, said the two countries "looked forward to reconvening the India-U.S. Trade Policy Forum before the end of 2021, to en-



**Stronger ties:** Enhancing global access to COVID-19 vaccines is expected to come up during Katherine Tai's visit. •REUTERS

hance the bilateral trade relationship by addressing trade concerns, identifying specific areas for increased engagement and developing an ambitious, shared vision for the future of the trade relationship."

Nevertheless, during remarks in front of the press at the Oval Office last month, Mr. Modi brought up trade, but U.S. President Joe Biden did not mention it.

Enhancing global access to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics, via a waiver of intellectual property rights at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), is expected to come up during Ms. Tai's visit.

The WTO proposal, introduced by India and South Africa, has the support of the Biden administration.

The discussions in New Delhi are likely to be broader though, as suggested by the

USTR statement. Issues that have been challenges to the relationship include India's access to the U.S.'s preferential trade program (the Generalised System of Preferences or GSP) being revoked during the Trump years, agricultural market access for both countries, the concerns of the U.S. over the direction of digital trade policy in India among others. The GSP program expired — for all countries — on December 31 last year and has not been renewed by the U.S. Congress. For India to be re-admitted to the program, Congress would first need to reauthorise it.

In general, the activity in Washington around trade talks with India has been relatively tempered in the Biden administration, compared to the activity (and unpredictability) during the Trump administration.

## BJP MLA, 6 rebel BSP legislators join SP

Bhajpa pariwar will be Bhaagta Pariwar, taunts Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LUCKNOW

Seven legislators — one from the BJP and six suspended from the BSP — joined the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday in the presence of Akhilesh Yadav, who hit out at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Mr. Yadav claimed the BJP and the Congress "are the same".

"The people of the State are so agitated that the BJP will be wiped out in the coming days and *Bhajpa pariwar* (BJP family) will appear as *Bhaagta Pariwar* (runaway family)," the SP chief said



Akhilesh Yadav at a press conference in Lucknow on Saturday. •PTI

here while taunting the ruling party over its MLA Rakesh Rathore's desertion and indicating that some others from the BJP were also in touch with him.

Those who joined the SP — BJP MLA from Sitapur Rakesh Rathore and BSP rebels Aslam Raini (Shrawati), Sushma Patel (Madiyahan), Aslam Ali (Hapur), Hakim Lal Bind (Handia), Mujtaba Siddiqui (Phoolpur) and Hargovind Bhargava (Sidhauli) — expressed their resolve to make Mr. Yadav the Chief Minister again. Taking to Twitter, Mr. Yadav claimed that the BJP will not get enough ticket aspirants "even if it declares 403 Chief Ministers".

Earlier this year, an audio clip purportedly of Mr. Rathore criticising Prime Minister

Narendra Modi had gone viral on social media, after which he was asked by the party leadership to explain his alleged anti-party activities.

The BSP rebels were suspended by party president Mayawati after they had opposed the nomination of the party's official candidate Ramji Gautam for Rajya Sabha in October 2020.

He also distanced himself from the party's former ally, the Congress. "The opinion of Samajwadis for the Congress and the BJP is that both are the same."

## Plea seeks to regulate internal party polls

PIL urges Delhi HC to give a directive to ECI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Barely two weeks after the Congress Working Committee (CWC) announced an elaborate schedule for organisational polls, a former Youth Congress leader moved the Delhi High Court to direct the Election Commission of India (ECI) to regulate the internal polls of all political parties.

And on Thursday, the court issued a notice to the ECI after hearing the public interest litigation (PIL) plea

of C. Rajashekharan, a former general secretary of the Youth Congress (IYC).

'Feudal' character

The petitioner, who is now a senior advocate, argued that most internal polls were an "eyewash" and most parties had a "feudal" character.

"It is submitted that although most political parties provide for elections through the provisions, said elections are often an eyewash for established political families within the said parties to continue to retain power as the top leadership of said party..." the plea contended.

"The continued sidelining of the political process has been made possible on account of the lack of regulatory oversight and uniform norms of internal democracy applied to political parties," it added.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, the petitioner insisted that his PIL petition was not aimed at a particular party, especially the Congress.

G-23 reformists' plea

Asked to comment about his plea coinciding with the demand for transparent internal polls by the Congress's group of 23 reformists (G-23), he stressed, "I have raised the issue of in-

ternal democracy and transparent organisational polls much before G-23".

Clean-up system

Mr. Rajashekharan, who had worked with G-23 leaders like Manish Tewari in the Youth Congress, said, "This is my second PIL, as I am determined to bring the second wave of democratic reforms".

"I am no longer associated with any party but I want to clean up the system. Only courts can do that and ensure internal democracy in political parties," he stated.

"I am not a Communist but I must admit that only Left parties hold their intra-

party elections in a democratic manner," he added.

Mr. Rajashekharan, who shuttles between Chennai and Delhi, observed that the trigger for filing the PIL petition was the "rush" among people to register political parties and resort to crowd-sourcing.

Major loopholes

"The rules to register a political party are fairly strict but once the registration is done, there are enough provisions in the rules that be used as loopholes," noted Mr. Rajashekharan, who was also associated with a couple of regional parties in Tamil Nadu.

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

## A movement to root out invasive alien species

The Pune-based MABI is taking up the fight in Maharashtra and beyond

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

Dr. Sachin Puneekar is a man on a mission: the noted city-based botanist, finding his world of flora and fauna increasingly under siege from invasive alien species (IAS), has launched a green forum to combat the menace.

Dr. Puneekar, along with a number of environmentalists, retired Forest Department authorities, farmers, green activists and other stakeholders has come together to form a forum called Movement Against Biological Invasions (MABI) — a green movement aimed at systematically charting and rooting out IAS.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) defines IAS as "an alien species whose introduction and spread threaten ecosystems, habitats, or species with socio-cultural, economic and environmental harm and harm to human health".

"Forest-invasive species can supplant native plants,

eliminate food and cover for wildlife and threaten rare plant and animal species," says Dr. Puneekar, adding that the impact of globalisation leading to the increased movement of people, trade and de-forestation have led to the introduction of IAS in the indigenous environment in massive quantities.

'Spread is alarming'

"The spread of IAS spread is alarming and is wiping out local native species like grasses and other herbaceous species. As a result, the local food chain is afflicted with the IAS competing for space and light with native flora. For instance, the Cosmos sulphureus IAS is now almost taking up all the space in roadside shrubbery and is widely prevalent in Pune," he notes.

MABI has so far conducted several 'obnoxious weed eradication' drives in various parts of Maharashtra as well as across the country, name-



Members of the 'Movement Against Biological Invasions' weeding out invasive alien species in Pune. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ly in Northeastern States like Sikkim.

Seeds of the MABI movement were sown in 2016 when a "bonfire" was organised by Dr. Puneekar's environmental NGO Biospheres on the occasion of Holi in association with the Pune Municipal Corporation and State Forest Department.

Each week, green spaces in Pune district hum with the activity of MABI members, determinedly rooting out IAS and holding weed bonfires. "The knock-on effects of unchecked IAS are alarming. These species can change the functions of ecosystems and

increase losses in forestry and natural resource management costs, while also posing a danger to biological diversity and other human enterprises — as well as to human health," says Dr. Puneekar.

He further observes the potential threat to livestock health as the IAS hamper the growth of native grasses which are fodder species for herbivores and livestock. "Some IAS are poisonous which may cause allergies and skin diseases among the animals. Furthermore, given that it is virtually impossible to segregate pure fodder

from IAS, the chances that livestock will be consuming adulterated fodder is high," Dr. Puneekar said.

Another indirect effect of the rise in IAS is a heightening of the man-animal conflict.

"The widespread prevalence of IAS like *Lantana camara* has reduced the proportion of natural grasses for herbivorous animals forcing their movement to human habitats in search of paddy crops and other edible items. This has resulted in the movement of animals like the Indian gaur and the chinkara (Indian gazelle) from their natural habitats to human settlements, thus endangering them," Dr. Puneekar said.

Spreading awareness

Given the poor appreciation of this phenomenon in India and other developing countries, awareness was generally low regarding IAS and its baneful effects.

"Policymakers and other stakeholders are not yet sen-

sited to the magnitude of problem. So, awareness is our first priority," he says.

One of the MABI's prime objectives is to help farmers improve their productivity by identifying IAS and rooting it out. Through seminars, workshops, slideshows, video teasers, documentary, information brochures, the forum is helping making people literate about various aspects of IAS.

"On an average, 32% of the farmers' budget goes into the control of weeds, which includes the regular spraying of insecticide and labour costs. Moreover, weeds change according to climatic conditions," says Maruti Chavan, a farmer from Indapur in Pune district. He added that unchecked growth of IAS was baneful for soil health, which was prone to faster deterioration.

To help farmers relate better to the phenomenon, the MABI has hit upon the idea of using historical analogies to explain the potential ill-effects of IAS.



# Abortion rules to aid minors

These recognise them as vulnerable and seek to make services accessible

JAGRITI CHANDRA  
NEW DELHI

The new abortion rules notified by the Union Government recently recognise minors as a vulnerable category and seek to make services more accessible to them. But social stigma and conflict with the POCSO Act, 2012, or the law against child sexual abuse, pose hurdles.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Rules, 2021, define new categories of vulnerable women who are allowed termination up to 24 weeks upon meeting certain conditions and with the permission of two doctors.

## New categories

These include minors, survivors of sexual assault and those with foetal malformation. Others may seek abortion up to 20 weeks with the permission of one doctor upon meeting certain criteria - earlier you needed the permission of one doctor for termination up to 12 weeks, and two doctors for 12 to 20 weeks. The amended law provides for setting up of State-level medical boards

## Extending the limit

A look at the changes brought by the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Rules, 2021

Minors, survivors of sexual assault, those with foetal malformation are some of the categories of vulnerable women who are allowed termination of pregnancy up to 24 weeks upon meeting certain conditions and with the permission of two doctors



Others may seek abortion up to 20 weeks with the permission of one doctor upon meeting certain criteria. Earlier permission of one doctor for termination up to 12 weeks, and two doctors for 12 to 20 weeks was needed

to decide if a pregnancy may be terminated after 24 weeks.

"Minors were included as a special category because it was found that a large number of them were approaching courts for permission to terminate pregnancies beyond 20 weeks. They were the third largest category after those with foetal abnormalities and rape survivors. Moreover, if you look at the social context, the detection of pregnancies in case of minors gets delayed, and then after that the need to negotiate and seeking relevant care becomes all the more difficult," says Vinoy Manning, Chief Executive

Officer of the Ips Development Foundation and Member, Campaign Advisory Group, Pratigya Campaign.

There is a need to fight stigma around adolescent sex. Contraception services rarely reach adolescents. Medical practitioners also rue the obstacles posed by the POCSO Act, 2012, in providing services.

Section 19 of the Act requires any person aware of a minor engaging in sex to report the matter to the local police even if it was a consensual act as the law pegs the age of consent at 18.

"While the Government has extended the upper limit to 24 weeks for minors,

we don't know how much this move will help as adolescent girls find out about their pregnancy in the last minute, when they will be forced to go to medical boards. We need to do more for young people. We need to have information on having sex, ensure access to contraception and be less judgmental so that they don't delay expressing their need for abortion," says Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India.

"There is evidence that as a result of POCSO, there is a dramatic drop in the percentage of minors seeking abortion. We have to find a solution for allowing a minor to get a safe termination without the fear of the police harassment," says Dr. Nozer Sheriar, former Secretary-General and MTP Chair, Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India.

Acknowledging that POCSO introduces "a chill factor" for doctors, Mr. Manning says the challenge lies in educating them that mandatory reporting should not result in denial of service.

# ₹12,000 crore to upgrade stations, boost amenities

21 railway stations have been identified in the first phase

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

In a major plan to boost passenger amenities, the Indian Railways plan to spend ₹12,000 crore to upgrade major railway stations across the country. Of the 21 stations identified in the first phase, six have been chosen from Southern Railway comprising the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry.



Renovation in motion: Of the 21 stations identified, six come under Southern Railway. ■ LAKSHMI NARAYANAN E.

After reviewing the ongoing modernisation works of railway stations, a proposal for the introduction of "major upgradation of Railway Stations on Indian Railways" costing ₹12,000 crore under the head of "Passenger Amenities" would be processed for inclusion in the supplementary budget for the year 2021-22.

The Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) had developed the Master Plans of stations that would be included in the major upgrade scheme. While a detailed note on the scope of work would be communicated soon after the scheme is not-

ified under the Umbrella Work of the Supplementary Budget, 2021-22, General Managers of eight Zonal Railways were told to initiate preliminary work nomination and prepare draft for inviting tenders.

Under the Southern Railway, Madurai, Rameswaram and Kanniyakumari in Tamil Nadu; Ernakulam and Kollam in Kerala; and Puducherry stations have been identified for the scheme in the first phase.

Other prominent stations are Tirupati and Nellore (South Central Railway), Su-

rat in Western Railway, Gandhi Nagar, Jaipur and Udaipur in North Western Railway; Prayagraj and Kanpur in North Central Railway; and Ghaziabad and Lucknow in Northern Railway.

The Railways have a total of 7,325 railway stations with a running track of 99,235 km. Dozens of these stations were developed with modern amenities in the recent years under schemes such as "World Class Stations", "Multi-Functional Complexes", "Adarsh Stations" and "Touch and Feel" Scheme.

# An evening to remember with Kashmir Ki Kali, shikaras, music

Rerun of the 1960s Hindi hit and an ensemble of cultural programmes create celebratory ripples across the famed Dal Lake in Srinagar

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

Otherwise, a place with no night life or cinema halls, Srinagar saw the Dal Lake again reverberating with musical evenings and a big-screen floating cinema with the 1964 Shammi Kapoor starrer Bollywood blockbuster *Kashmir Ki Kali* opening to an audience seated on decked-up shikaras (hooded boats).

The lake, a centre of tourist attraction, on Friday evening saw a fleet of shikaras and houseboats filled with tourists witnessing a gripping laser show and a film on the history of houseboats in Kashmir. The biggest attraction was the open-air theatre set up in the middle of the lake.

Several top officials, including Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta; Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor;



Reviving tourism: Tourists watching a movie sitting in shikaras at Asia's first open air 'Floating Theatre' cinema on the Dal Lake on Friday. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, H&UDD; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole; Tourism Secretary Sarmad Hafeez; and Tourism Director G.N. Itoo, watched the first show

of the movie, which was shot in Kashmir in the 1960s.

"This will revive Kashmir's Bollywood links and provide tourists recreation while they stay in houseboats," a senior tourism official said.

The Government has been organising a series of events marking the 75th Independence Day in the Valley. The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture

Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) Foundation also participated in a week-long iconic musical festival, which saw local as well as outside audience immersed in musical evenings.

## Play of ragas

Music director Pt. Hari Prasad Chaurasia, accompanied by Pt. Ram Kumar Mishra, rendered *Raag Yaman* and *Dadra Dhun* in Mishr Khmaj, which left the audience spellbound at the Chashm-e-Shahi garden in Srinagar earlier this week.

"I was very happy to perform in the Valley after many years. I wish to come back soon. I congratulate the Jammu and Kashmir Government and all the departments for this festival," Mr. Chaurasia said.

A spokesman of SPIC MACAY said it was trying to contribute in spreading peace and harmony through classi-

cal traditions of the country and bring cultural heritage to the young people.

"This concert was an attempt towards the same objective. We hope and pray that Jammu and Kashmir organises more such festivals and brings the composite culture of our country to the young and old of Kashmir," Rashmi Malik, chairperson of the SPIC MACAY Foundation, said.

## Sufi musical evening

The week-long *Aaghaz e Nashist* also saw local singers performing at a Sufi musical evening on the lawns of the picturesque Botanical Garden. Local Sufi singers, Abdul Rashid Hafiz and Gulzar Ganai, also mesmerised the audience with their renditions.

Introducing local people to different genres of storytelling, the festival saw famous Kathak exponent Vid-

ha Lal and Vusat Iqbal Khan, a Dastangoi from the Delhi Gharana, telling the tales of mystics and literary legends.

"A unique feature of the event was the participation of a large number of tourists, currently in the Valley, who remained glued to the performances despite the autumn cold. The musical evening was organised with an aim to promote the iconic role of *rishis* and Sufi saints in disseminating peaceful and syncretic traditions for which Jammu and Kashmir is known across the globe," a Tourism Department spokesperson said.

Jammu and Kashmir hosted a good number of tourists this year, with the top hotels in many of the tourist destinations running at full capacity.

It has emerged as a favourite destination among the domestic tourists during the pandemic.

# App to give no-fishing zone alerts

STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR

With the mass nesting season of the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles approaching, the Odisha Government, in collaboration with the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), has come up with a customised mobile application to alert fishermen to no-fishing zones in the Bay of Bengal.

Fishermen and boat crew members can download the offline Fisher Friend Mobile Appli-

cation (FFMA) free to know the GPS locations and the boundaries of the zones.

According to the Government, the app will not require cellular network coverage and will work in offline mode in the outer sea.

The Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, located off the Odisha coast, has been declared a no-fishing zone. Each year, the turtles congregate near the Dhamara, the Devi, and the Rushikulya river mouths and along the sanctuary for mass nesting. "The app also

has additional features for providing fishing boats with near real-time information regarding weather, potential fishing zones, ocean state forecasts, disaster alerts and other information provided by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information System, which will further strengthen the safety and security of the fishermen," the Government said.

The app would benefit more than 22,000 fishing boats, including trawlers, motorised and non-motorised vessels.

## 31<sup>st</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Pranams at the lotus feet of my beloved Guru  
Padma Bhushan awardee, Sangita Kalanidhi  
**Dr. M.L. VASANTHAKUMARI**  
Padma Bhushan awardee, Sangita Kalanidhi  
**Smt. SUDHA RAGUNATHAN**

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**KARNATAKA SLUM DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
Office of the Technical Director, Near Highway Circle, Jawa Factory Road, Bannimantap, Mysore-570001  
Ph: 0821-2491424, e-mail: ksdbtd1@gmail.com  
Website: www.karnataka.gov.in/ksdb

## INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) CALL-2

Two Cover System (e-PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)  
On behalf of the Commissioner, KSDB, Bangalore, The Technical Director, Mysuru Circle, Mysuru invites lumpsum tender from eligible Tenderers for Construction of 500(G+3) DUs including infrastructure works by adopting Fast Track innovative technology at Sy.No. 17/1 of Kannuru village in Mangaluru City under PMAY (U) - HFA. Call-2 (KSDB/2021-22/BD/WORK\_INDENT3162/CALL-2). Approximate value of work is Rs.2806.14 Lakhs. EMD: Rs. 28.06 lakhs. Tender notification, schedule, specifications are available in the website: <https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in>.

1	Time & Date of Pre-bid Conference	20.11.2021 at 11.00 AM
2	Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders in e-Portal	30.11.2021 upto 5.00 PM
3	Date & Time for Opening of Technical bids	02.12.2021 at 11.00 AM
4	Date & Time for Opening of Financial bids	Date & time will be intimated to the eligible bidders
5	Place of Receiving and opening of Tender documents	Office of The Technical Director, KSDB, Mysore Circle, Near Highway Circle, Jawa Factory Road, Bannimantap, Mysuru - 570001

Sd/- Technical Director  
KSDB, Mysuru  
DIPR/DDU/NC/2037/2021-22  
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Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene

## DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

(Training wing) Alandur Road, Guindy, Chennai-600032.

Ref.No.30300/Pur2/2021 Dt: 25/10/2021

Sealed Tenders in Two cover system are invited from Indian manufacturers/ Authorized Dealer for the supply of Machineries & Equipment (for the trades of Fitter, Electrician, Wireman, MMV, Welder, Operator Advanced Machine Tools, Machinist, Tool & Die Maker (Press Tools, Jigs & fixtures) and Medical Electronics) for Government Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) functioning at various places in Tamil Nadu.

The details of Machineries & Equipment to be procured along with specifications are mentioned in the tender documents, which can be downloaded from the Government tender website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) or [www.skillstraining.tn.gov.in](http://www.skillstraining.tn.gov.in) at free of cost.

1	Tender inviting authority	The Joint Director (S.A.M.C) O/o Director of Employment and Training, Guindy, Chennai 32
2	EMD	1% of the total quoted amount in respect of Each schedule.
3	Conditions	As stipulated in the tender document
4	Sale of tender document	01.11.2021 to 03.12.2021 up to 11.00 AM (on all working days)
5	Last date for receipt of tender	03.12.2021 up to 3.00 PM
6	Date, time and place of opening the tender	03.12.2021 at 3.30 PM
7	Pre-bid meeting	15.11.2021 at 11.30 AM at the above venue

DIPR/3147/TENDER/2021 Joint Director (S.A.M.C) / Tender Inviting Authority

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, NORTHERN (R&B) CIRCLE, SAMBALPUR

1<sup>st</sup> Corrigendum to  
T.C.N bearing Bid Identification No. CEENC(R&B)/10/2021-22  
ORDER NO.2735 Dtd. 16.10.2021  
TENDER REFERENCE NO: SENC(R&B)/10/2021-22 (TCN No. 2643 Dtd.29.09.2021)  
Due to unavoidable circumstances the following modification is made to the tender call notice mentioned above.

Sl No	Description of Activity	Schedule Date	Extended Date
1	Availability of Bid documents in the web site	16.10.2021 to 17.00 Hours of 3.11.2021	03.11.2021 to 17.00 Hours of 18.11.2021
2	Opening of Technical Bid	05.11.2021 at 11.00 Hours	20.11.2021 at 11.00 Hours

All other terms and Conditions remain unchanged.  
Chief Construction Engineer, Northern (R&B) Circle, Sambalpur.  
B-518: OIPR-34035/11/0011/2122

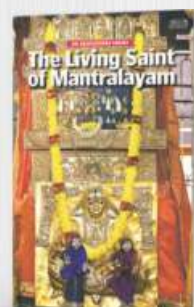
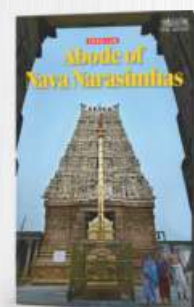
## POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH

ADMISSION NOTICE No. 101/2021  
Online applications are invited for admission to the following courses for the January 2022 session through Computer Based Test (CBT) at various cities across the country as per detail given below:

Courses	Date of Exam	Closing Date for Online Submission of application.
Ph.D		
Fellowship/Post Doctoral Fellowship	26.11.2021	12.11.2021
House Job (Dental)		
M.Sc/M.Se (MLT)		

For eligibility criteria, number of seats and other details, applicants are advised to read the prospectus and instructions given there in carefully before starting online registration and filing of application form. The prospectus of admission is available on Institute's website i.e. [www.pgimer.edu.in](http://www.pgimer.edu.in). The candidates are requested to visit the PGIMER website regularly for all subsequent changes/updates for entrance examination/communications/addendum/corrigendum.  
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23<sup>rd</sup> OCT TO 7<sup>th</sup> NOV 2021

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# 3 killed as Sudanese march against coup

We are free revolutionaries and we will continue the road of democratic transition, say protesters

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KHARTOUM

The Sudanese security forces on Saturday killed three protesters during mass anti-coup rallies, medics said, despite warnings from global powers who had urged the military to exercise restraint.

"Two demonstrators were killed in the city of Omdurman by the putschist military council," the independent Central Committee of Sudan's Doctors said in a tweet, adding that one was shot in the head and the other in the stomach.

It later said security forces had shot dead a third protester, also in Omdurman, Khartoum's sister city.

Forces "have fired live rounds at protesters in Omdurman" and areas in the capital, the medics said.

More than 100 people have been wounded in the violence or have suffered breathing difficulties due to tear gas, the committee added. The latest killings bring the death toll since the out-



Strong resistance: Anti-coup protesters taking part in a rally in Khartoum on Saturday. ■ AFP

break of anti-coup protests on Monday to 12.

Sudan's Interior Ministry slammed reports of killings on Saturday as "inaccurate" and denied forces had used live rounds. "Groups of protesters... attacked the police, as well as vital sites, which

prompted the police to fire tear gas," the Ministry said in a statement.

Saturday's demonstrations came almost a week after the military on Monday detained Sudan's civilian leadership, dissolved the government and declared a

state of emergency, leading to a chorus of international condemnation – and warnings against using force.

"No, no to military rule," and "We are free revolutionaries and we will continue the road" of democratic transition, protesters carrying

Sudanese flags chanted in Khartoum.

Despite bloodshed throughout the week, organisers on Saturday aimed to stage a "million-strong" march against the military's power grab, similar to mass protests that led to the toppling of autocrat Omar al-Bashir in 2019.

Demonstrations took place throughout Khartoum State as well as in the eastern regions of Gedaref and Kasala, and the Red Sea city of Port Sudan, witnesses and AFP correspondents said.

Protests also broke out in the central State North Kordofan, and White Nile State in the south, according to witnesses. "We want civilian rule... It has to be civilian 100%," said Hashim al-Tayib, a protester in southern Khartoum.

Sudan had been led since August 2019 by a civilian-military ruling council which was supposed to last three years and lead to full civilian rule.

# Four Gulf countries withdraw diplomats from Lebanon

Move follows Lebanese Minister's remarks on Yemen war

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
DUBAI

The United Arab Emirates said on Saturday it was withdrawing its diplomats from Lebanon, following a similar move by Saudi Arabia over a Lebanese Minister's criticism of the Riyadh-led military intervention in Yemen.

The diplomatic row, which has also seen Riyadh suspend imports from Lebanon and both Kuwait and Bahrain expel Lebanese envoys, is another blow to a country already in the grip of crippling political and economic crises. Lebanon had been counting on financial assistance from the Gulf to rescue its economy.

"The UAE announced the withdrawal of its diplomats from Lebanon in solidarity with the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in light of the unacceptable approach of some Lebanese officials towards Saudi Arabia," the Fo-



The UAE Embassy in the Lebanese capital Beirut. ■ AFP

reign Ministry said in a statement. It "also decided to prevent its citizens from travelling to Lebanon", it added. It came a day after the Saudi and Bahraini moves and hours after Kuwait asked Lebanon's envoy to "leave in 48 hours" and recalled its Ambassador from Beirut.

The dispute was sparked by the broadcast this week of an interview in which Lebanon's Information Minister George Kordahi criticised the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen.

In his remarks – recorded in August but aired on Monday – Kordahi called the seven-year war in the impoverished Arabian Peninsula country "futile" and said it was "time for it to end".

Mr. Kordahi said Yemen's Houthi rebels were "defending themselves... against an external aggression", adding that "homes, villages, funerals and weddings were being bombed" by the Saudi-led coalition.

The Houthis are backed by Saudi Arabia's regional rival Iran, which also wields significant influence in Lebanon, due to its strong backing of the powerful Shiite movement Hezbollah. Mr. Kordahi's comments saw Saudi Arabia announce on Friday that it was recalling its Ambassador and it gave Beirut's envoy 48 hours to leave Riyadh. The Minister's words have sparked calls for him to resign or be sacked.

# Trump wants call logs, aide's notes blocked

A House committee is investigating the January 6 Capitol Hill insurrection

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former President Donald Trump is trying to block documents, including call logs, drafts of remarks and speeches and handwritten notes from his Chief of Staff relating to the January 6 Capitol insurrection from being released to the committee investigating the riot, the National Archives revealed in a court filing early on Saturday.

Mr. Trump has sued to prevent the National Archives from transmitting those documents, and thousands more, to the House committee investigating the attack.

President Joe Biden declined to assert executive privilege on most of Mr.



Donald Trump

Trump's records after determining that doing so is "not in the best interests of the United States".

The Saturday filing, which came as part of the National Archives and Record Administration's opposition to Mr. Trump's lawsuit, details the effort the agency has undertaken to identify records

from the Trump White House in response to a broad, 13-page request from the House committee for documents pertaining to the insurrection and Mr. Trump's efforts to undermine the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election.

The document offers the first look at the sort of records that could soon be turned over to the committee for its investigation.

Billy Laster, the director of the National Archives' White House Liaison Division, wrote that among the documents Mr. Trump has sought to block are 30 pages of "daily presidential diaries, schedules, appointment information showing visitors to the White House, activity logs, call logs, and switch-

board shift-change checklists showing calls to the President and Vice President, all specifically for or encompassing January 6, 2021"; 13 pages of drafts of speeches, remarks, and correspondence concerning the events of January 6, 2021; and "three handwritten notes concerning the events of January 6 from (former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows' files".

Mr. Trump also tried to exert executive privilege over pages from former White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany's binders of talking points and statements "principally relating to allegations of voter fraud, election security, and other topics concerning the 2020 election".

# Taliban shoot two dead over wedding music

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL

Taliban fighters shot dead two wedding guests who were listening to music, local officials and a witness said on Saturday, forcing Afghanistan's new Government to insist such attacks are not authorised.

A relative of the victims said Taliban fighters opened fire while music was being played at a wedding in Sorkhrud, in Nangarhar province, killing two and wounding two more. Music was banned the last time the Taliban ruled Afghanistan and, while the new Government has not yet issued such a decree, its leadership sees it as a breach of Islamic law.

# Taliban-appointed diplomats take charge of missions in Pak.

Islamabad plays down new postings as 'administrative matter'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has quietly allowed the Taliban-appointed "diplomats" to take charge of the Afghan Embassy and consulates in the country, a media report said on Saturday.

Although Pakistan does not recognise the Taliban as the legitimate government in Kabul, it still issued visas to the appointed "diplomats".

Sardar Muhammad Shokaib has started working as the first secretary in the Afghan Embassy in Islamabad, while Hafiz Mohibullah, Mullah Ghulam Rasool and Mullah Muhammad Abbas have been assigned to the Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi consulates of Afghanistan, the Dawn newspaper reported. Shokaib would effectively be the Afghan charge d'affaires in Islamabad.

No details about Shokaib were shared but according to a report by Voice of America, he is an ethnic Pashtun from Zabul province who served in the Information and Cultural Department in southern Kandahar and was associated with a Taliban magazine. He reportedly once worked as the Taliban spokesman under the name of Qari Yousaf Ahmadi and

was arrested in Pakistan and later lived in Peshawar for several years.

Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesman Asim Iftikhar tried to play down the new appointments by saying that it was an "administrative matter".

"With regard to appointment of new staff in the Afghan Embassy, this is an administrative matter and is meant to enable the embassy to perform its functions, primarily the consular functions as you are aware there are millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and there are visa issues as well," he said.



# Macron says U.K. credibility is at stake

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron says France's dispute with Britain over fishing rights is a test of the U.K.'s credibility in a post-Brexit world.

France is angry over restrictions on permits to fish in British waters, and says they run counter to the agreement Britain signed when it left the European Union. France has threatened to block British boats and tighten checks on U.K. vessels starting Tuesday. The U.K. says some French boats need to supply more paperwork. Ahead of a meeting with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson this weekend, Mr. Macron defended France's position in an interview with the *Financial Times* and argued that the fishing dispute could hurt Britain's reputation worldwide.

"Make no mistake, it is not just for the Europeans but all of their partners. Because when you spend years negotiating a treaty and then a few months later you do the opposite of what was decided on the aspects that suit you the least, it is not a big sign of your credibility," Mr. Macron was quoted as saying.

Mr. Macron said he was sure that Britain has "good will" to solve the dispute. "We need to respect each other and respect the word that has been given," he said.

# Sri Lanka bans strikes over opposition to power deal

Unions slam agreement with U.S. firm

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's President on Saturday effectively banned trade union action against a controversial energy deal with a U.S. firm in an attempt to scupper dissent within his coalition government.

The Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) last month agreed to sell a 40% stake in its thermal power plant outside Colombo to New Fortress Energy, a move trade unions say hands the U.S. firm a monopoly over LNG sales to the country.

"We will have a mass protest rally on Wednesday bringing all our members out from power stations," CEB trade union leader Ranjan Jayalal said.

"If the government fails to remedy the situation by then, there will be a general strike."

Strikes by electricity unions usually lead to blackouts in Sri Lanka.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa's "essential services" order prohibits collective action



The Ceylon Electric Board workers protesting in Colombo on Friday. ■ AFP

across numerous public service sectors, including energy, banking, and food distribution, and is aimed at curtailing possible work stoppages backed by his disgruntled junior coalition partners.

Saturday's decree could send those who violate the order to prison for up to five years. The deal, which according to the central bank will generate \$250 million for Sri Lanka's cash-strapped state, has been slammed by Mr. Rajapaksa's coalition partners for having taken place behind closed doors and intensified fissures within the government.

# Israeli missiles hit Damascus, suburbs: Syria

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
BEIRUT

Syria's air defences responded on Saturday to missiles fired from Israel toward suburbs of the capital Damascus, wounding two soldiers, the Syrian military said.

Syria's state news agency SANA quoted a statement by an unnamed military official who said the air defences shot down several incoming surface-to-surface missiles from northern Israel just before noon, which also caused damage in the area.

Israel carries out raids on Syria mostly during night time and rarely comments on individual attacks.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor from the Syrian opposition, said the missiles hit northwest of Damascus, killing five Iran-allied militiamen. The Observatory, which relies on a network of activists on the ground, said it was not clear if those killed were Syrians or foreigners.

# COVID-19 outbreak in China developing rapidly, official says

REUTERS  
SHANGHAI

China's latest COVID-19 outbreak is developing rapidly, a health official said, as the authorities demanded high vigilance at ports of entry amid growing infections in a northeastern border city caused by the virus arriving from abroad.

Some 377 domestically transmitted cases with confirmed symptoms were reported from October 17-29, National Health Commission (NHC) data showed.

China has tackled a series of outbreaks this year since it largely contained a national spread in early 2020.

"Within the past 14 days, 14 provincial areas have reported new locally transmitted cases or asymptomatic carriers," NHC spokesperson Mi Feng said on Saturday.

"The outbreak is still developing rapidly, and the virus control situation is severe and complicated," he said.

Heihe, a small northeastern city of 1.3 million people that lies on China's side of the Amur river on the border with Russia, reported 26 local cases for October 29, a sharp increase from nine on October 28 and just one on October 27.

**INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE**  
Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao Road, Nagarabhai P.O. Bengaluru-560 072.  
Adv. No. A/1/2021 Date: October 29, 2021  
Applications are invited from eligible candidates for six posts of Assistant Professor under Backlog, Advertisement, application form, API Score Excel Sheet can be downloaded from www.isec.ac.in. The last date for receiving applications is November 19, 2021 by 5.00 p.m. Sd/ Registrar /c

**RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT UTPADAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
O/o SE (Fuel), 205, DREAMAX Plaza, Sahkar Marg, Jaipur-302005  
E-TENDER NOTICE: TN-04 (RVU2122GLOB01179)  
Online tenders are invited for lifting/taking delivery of Raw coal from SECL's Kusmundra, Dipka & Chhal OC on behalf of RVUN, transportation of raw coal from mines to the nearest Railway siding and loading of the same into Railway wagons for dispatch to RVUN's TPSs and completing all documentation as required by coal company, Railways and RVUN for year 2021-22. Tender details are available on websites http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in (for e-tender), www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvunl & www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in RVUN/PR-3588  
Raj.Samwad/C/7871/2021-2022 Superintending Engineer (Fuel)

**OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL S.M.S. MEDICAL COLLEGE & CONTROLLER OF THE ATTACHED HOSPITALS, JAIPUR**  
No.-FM/CJ Store/2021-22/9831-34 Dated: 25/10/2021  
Notice Inviting Bid  
Bid for "Composite work of House Keeping & Facility Management Services in Super specialty Block", at SMS Medical College, Jaipur, are invited from interested bidders upto 10.11.2021 at 12.00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) of the state; and SMS Medical College, Jaipur department website. UBN SMS2122SLRC00369  
DIPR/C/10804 PRINCIPAL & CONTROLLER

**Office of The Additional Chief Engineer PHED, Region-Kota**  
E-Notice Inviting Bid No. 71/2021-22  
Bids for works under JJM are invited from interested bidders upto 11-11-2021, 18:00 Hours. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, and departmental website details mentioned below.  
Table with columns: NIT. No., Name of work, Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs).  
71/21-22 Work for Retrofitting of Raipur- Pirawa-Chanawal Water Supply Project to provide FHTC including 10-year O&M under JJM District- Jhalawar. UBN No. PHE2122WLOB08607  
(Mahesh Jangid) Additional Chief Engineer PHED, Region, Kota  
DIPR/C/10746

**पिंपरी चिंचवड महानगरपालिका, पिंपरी, पुणे - ४११०१८**  
स्थापत्य विभाग, ई - निविदा सुचना क्र. स्थापत्य/फ मुख्यालय/HO/77/01/2021-2022  
पिंपरी चिंचवड महानगरपालिकेक कडून खालील नमुद केलेल्या कामांसाठी ई-टेंडरिंग पध्दतीने परसेटज रेट निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहे.  
१. निविदाचा दर भरताना एकूण निविदा रकमेतून रॉयल्टी रक्कम व मटेरियल टेस्टिंग रक्कम वगळून आलेल्या रकमेवर निविदा दर भरावा.  
२. प्रचलित दराने GST बिलात अदा केली जाईल त्यामुळे GST वागळून दर द्यावेत.  
३. रॉयल्टी बाबत मनापा धोरण ठरवेले ते आपणांवर बंधनकारक राहिल.  
Table with columns: अ.क्र., कामाचे नाव, एकूण निविदा रक्कम (4+6), रॉयल्टी व मटेरियल टेस्टिंग रक्कम वागळून निविदा रक्कम, रॉयल्टी ची रक्कम, मटेरियल टेस्टिंग चाजेस, बयाणा रक्कम, अनामत रक्कम, कामाची मुदत (महीने), निविदा फॉर्म फी (परत न मिळणारी).  
1. प्रभाग क्र. १ चिखली मधील धर्मराजनगरकडे जाणारा १८.०० मी रुंद डि पी रस्ता विकसीत करणे. 23,95,82,294 23,91,73,094 14,56,572 4,09,200 11,97,911 1,19,79,120 24 37,430  
निविदेचे वेळापत्रक  
ई निविदा उपलब्ध कालावधी :- दि. 30/10/2021 ते दि. 26/11/2021  
निविदा स्वीकृती अंतिम दिनांक व वेळ :- दि. 26/11/2021 दुपारी 03.00 वा. पर्यंत  
निविदापुर्व बैठक दिनांक व वेळ :- दि. 15/11/2021 दुपारी 03.00 वा.  
अ.क्र. २ चे कामासाठी निविदापुर्व बैठक स्थळ :- मा.शहर अभियंता कार्यालय, पि. चि. मनापा, पिंपरी, पुणे - 411018  
निविदा उघडणेचा दिनांक :- दि. 29/11/2021 स 03.00 वा. (शक्य झाल्यास)  
कोणतेही कारण न देता निविदा पुर्णतः किंवा अंशतः मंजूर अथवा नामंजूर करण्याचा अधिकार मा. आयुक्त यांनी स्वतःकडे राखून ठेवला आहे. निविदा संचाची विक्री https://mahatenders.gov.in या संकेतस्थळावर ई-निविदा सुचनेत नमुद केलेल्या तारखेनुसार सुरु राहिल. स्विकृतर निविदा व निविदेबाबतची इतर माहिती खालील संकेतस्थळावर उपलब्ध आहे.  
1. www.pcmindia.gov.in 2.https://mahatenders.gov.in  
सदरची ई-निविदा प्रणाली वापरबाबत काही तांत्रिक अडचण निर्माण झाल्यास NIC यांचेकडील ई-मेल support-epro@nic.in अथवा Help Desk Number 0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005, 0120-6277787 या दूरध्वनीवर संपर्क साधावा.  
सही/- (राजन पाटील) शहर अभियंता पिंपरी चिंचवड महानगरपालिका पिंपरी, पुणे - ४११०१८  
जाहिरात क्रमांक - 1168 का. क्र. स्था/नि/ फमुख्य/कावि/639/2021 दि. 29-10-2021

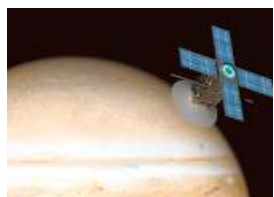
SNAPSHOTS



**Bear necessities**  
Monitoring what polar bears eat can reveal facts about environmental shifts and distribution of marine mammal prey. Researchers found by harvest-based sampling of polar bear in the Nunavut region that these were, in fact, flexible eaters, making them ideal as a monitoring tool to track environmental changes in the Arctic.



**Scent of danger**  
The olfactory organ network helps humans distinguish between millions of smells. A study by the Karolinska Institutet of Sweden, has for the first time enabled measurement of the signals from the olfactory bulb and observe what happens in the brain when a person encounters unpleasant smells. Researchers found that negative smells are processed earlier than positive smells.



**Peering at Jove**  
Jupiter is known for its banded appearance - white stripes known as zones and darker, reddish ones, belts. Using microwave radiometers, Juno probe discovered that the appearance (brightness) of Jupiter's belts and zones inverts near the base of the clouds. Since the brightness relates to either warmth of the atmosphere or presence of ammonia, researchers believe either of these parameters inverts as you go deep into the atmosphere of Jupiter.



**Progress of Alzheimer's**  
New research, led by University of Cambridge researchers, published in *Science Advances*, finds a different route to Alzheimer's. Rather than originating in a single point and spreading as a chain and killing brain cells, they found that the disease reaches different points early on. The progress of the disease depends on how quickly it kills these cells. The researchers used post mortem brain samples and also PET scans of living patients.

# On fixing priorities for vaccinating children

R. PRASAD

In August, the Indian drug regulator (DCGI) granted an emergency use approval for Zydus Cadila's DNA vaccine for use in adults and children aged 12 years and above. Recently the Subject Expert Committee of DCGI greenlighted Covaxin for children above two years. The vaccines are yet to be introduced in the national vaccination programme. The National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NTAGI) Chairperson Dr. N.K. Arora had said children with comorbidities will be prioritised to receive the vaccine "immediately and healthy children can be immunised subsequently". In an email, immunologist Dr. Satyajit Rath, formerly with the Delhi-based National Institute of Immunology and Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya, Physician-epidemiologist and vaccines expert discuss who needs the vaccine first and if healthy children need to be vaccinated.

**Which subgroup of children and adolescents needs to get the vaccine on priority - the immunocompromised, adolescents, or those with comorbidities?**

**Satyajit Rath:** This issue is somewhat complicated. Firstly, immunocompromised individuals, children or adults, may not, in fact, respond effectively to vaccination either. So simply saying that they are a vaccination priority is likely to be inadequate, and we need evidence (which we do not have) about what vaccination schedules might work well for them. Secondly, while it is true that children

with the known comorbidities (which are not common among children) ought to be a priority for vaccination, there is another issue as well. In some instances, the nature of severe COVID-19 illness may be somewhat different in children (the so-called MIS-C), and we do not know, as far as I am aware, the predisposing factors for that. That all said, it is probably best, all other things being equal, to prioritise school-going children over younger children for vaccination, since that might have somewhat more of an effect on the spread of infection.

**Chandrakant Lahariya:** The current scientific evidence does not support vaccination of all healthy children. There is some experience and data now on use of a few specific COVID-19 vaccines in 12-17 years. Since COVID-19 vaccines are developed using different platforms, each needs its own data. Of the two COVID-19 vaccines being considered for use in the children in India, have so far been used only on 500-1,500 children in the trials. In fact, one of these vaccines - the Zydus vaccine (ZyCoV-D) - has not been used on any age group outside the clinical trials. Scientifically, we know that vaccines may have some of the rare adverse events which can only be identified after their programmatic roll-out and effective adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) surveillance.

We also know that the efficacy of these have been tested against moderate-to-severe COVID-19, which are relatively low in children. Then, the experience of COVID-19 vaccines already in



Which high-risk sub-group and age sub-group to start with has to be determined by reviewing hospitalisation and mortality data.

CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA



Immunocompromised individuals may not respond effectively to vaccination either. So simply saying that they are a vaccination priority is likely to be inadequate. We need evidence.

SATYAJIT RATH

use in adolescents indicates that the risk of rare adverse events is relatively higher in adolescents than in adults. Putting these two together, there is less benefit and higher risk in vaccinating children and that's why we should wait for more safety data to be available to recommend COVID-19 vaccination beyond the high-risk groups in older children.

Which high-risk sub-group to start with and which age sub-group has to be determined by review of the hospitalisation and mortality data from COVID-19 pandemic in India. That will provide fair insight where to start. Based upon such available data, starting with the high-risk children in 16-17 years could be one approach. Once full vaccine coverage of, let's say 70-80% in that sub-group is achieved, it can be opened for high-risk children aged 12-15 years. Even the list of what constitutes high risk

children should be based upon evidence and could be dynamic with possibility of inclusion of more conditions, once evidence is available. With available evidence, I don't think India should consider vaccinating any child younger than 12 years before early next year.

**Are there sufficient data for disease severity and long COVID in children (12 years and younger) and adolescents without comorbidities? In the absence of such data, should India be in a hurry to vaccinate them?**

**S.R.:** There is evidence that even very young children can indeed suffer from severe COVID-19. I am not sure what would be considered "sufficient" evidence. Since there is no substantial risk in giving vaccines, once safety-tested with standard protocols, I am not sure why we would think in terms of "hurry" in vaccinating children.

Vaccination, after all, provides not only the individual gain of protection from severe illness but also of reduction (however modest) in the magnitude and duration of virus spread to other people.

**Are vaccines needed for healthy children and adolescents, especially since Covaxin supply is still limited and millions of adults are yet to be vaccinated with first/second dose, and nearly 60% of children have already been naturally infected?**

**S.R.:** Well, vaccines are certainly needed for everyone. As an aside, again, I do not think that guesses about the proportions of people in various groups already infected/vaccinated, which depend on sero-surveys, are well founded. Many if not most of these sero-surveys have been modest in size, yet we are assuming that they correctly reflect reality. Also, we tend to assume that this percentage (60%) is uniformly seen in all children across the country, which is quite unlikely. Finally, I continue to think that vaccination carries value even for previously infected individuals. So we need vaccines.

Our inability to provide them adequately does, however, create a depressing situation of having to make priority choices, and in this sense, adults are clearly a higher priority for COVID-19 vaccination.

**C.L.:** The healthy children in India do not need vaccination, at least not at present. It is not about vaccine availability alone. India has reached a stage where there is more COVID-19 vaccine supply than demand.

However, just because a country has more availability, it should not start vaccinating children. At the same time, that does not mean healthy children would never need COVID-19 vaccines. They may, in future. As an example, if a new variant emerges which causes moderate to severe disease in children at a rate higher than at present, then we may have to vaccinate healthy children.

The Zydus vaccine uses a novel vaccine platform, and outside the trial, the vaccine has not been used for vaccinating adults. Should such a vaccine be allowed to be used on adolescents without large-scale use in adults first?

**S.R.:** Since I do not think there are extraordinary risks with either the platform or the route of administration, I find the standard regulatory processes sufficient for determining whether to approve vaccine usage in children.

**C.L.:** It can be, at least theoretically. However, parents and people need to understand that none of the countries had rolled out vaccines for any subgroup of children without data being thoroughly examined and reviewed by the experts. None of the COVID-19 vaccines has been used in children in any country before millions of shots were administered to adults. There has been a time lag of around six months or longer use of a vaccine in adults before use in children. This was the approach even when there was a high rate of disease transmission in those settings.

## Scientists find a mineral seen in the depths of the Earth in a meteorite

The study by IIT Kharagpur scientists adds a clue to the puzzle of the formation of the Moon

SHUBASHREE DESIKAN

The key findings of a study led by IIT Kharagpur researchers could help us understand the formation and evolution of the Earth. They have studied a meteorite that fell near the town of Katol in Nagpur District of Maharashtra on May 22, 2012, reporting for the first time, presence of veins of the mineral bridgmanite, which is the most abundant mineral in the interior of the Earth, within the Katol L6 Chondrite meteorite. This finding adds evidence to the Moon-forming giant impact hypothesis.

**Abundant mineral**  
"Bridgmanite is the most

volumetrically abundant mineral of the Earth's interior. It is present in the lower mantle (from 660 to 2700 km), and it is important to understand its formation mechanism to better comprehend the origin and evolution of planetary interiors," says Sujoy Ghosh, Department of Geology and Geophysics, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, who designed the study and is the lead author of the paper published in *Proceedings*

**By studying the meteorite, we can understand the formation of the Earth and planets.**

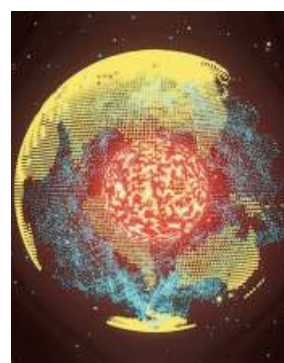
of the National Academy of Science (the U.S.). The Moon-forming giant impact hypothesis is that long ago, nearly 4.5 billion years ago, the Earth collided with a planet the size of Mars named Theia, and the force of this impact was so huge as to melt the Earth down from the surface to a depth of 750 km to 1,100 km. The hypothesis goes that this caused the Earth to be bathed in a magma ocean, and the ejecta from the collision led to the formation of the Moon.

This is the most favoured hypothesis on the formation of the Moon and the present finding by the Kharagpur team lends further support to it.

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**Molten core:** Bridgmanite is the most abundant mineral of the Earth's interior.

• GETTY IMAGES

**Magma ocean**

"Earth was an ocean of magma in the past. The heavier iron and nickel went to the core while the lighter silicates stayed in the mantle. By studying the meteorite, we can understand more details about the formation of the Earth and other planets," says Kishan Tiwari, research scholar from the Department of Geology and

Geophysics, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur and an author of the paper, in an email to *The Hindu*.

"Bridgmanite consists of magnesium, iron, calcium aluminum oxide and has a perovskite structure," says Dr Ghosh. He further explains that while the crystal structure of natural bridgmanite has been reported in other meteorites such as the Tenham and Suizhou meteorites, their chemical composition does not fully match with the terrestrial bridgmanite present in the Earth's interior between 660 and 2700 km depth.

"Our findings led to numerous other advances to understand how the Earth's core formed about 4.5 billion years ago," says Dr Ghosh. This finding could also help investigations of high-pressure phase transformation mechanisms in the deep Earth, which the group is planning to continue in future studies.

## Asian spider seen in Georgia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A large spider native to East Asia has spun its thick, golden web on power lines, porches and vegetable patches all over north Georgia this year - a proliferation that has driven some unnerved homeowners indoors and prompted a flood of anxious social media posts.

The Joro spider, (*Trichonephila clavata*) is common in Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan, Joro females have colourful yellow, blue and red markings on their bodies.

It's not clear exactly how and when the first Joro spider arrived in the U.S. or why they are so abundant this year. The bottom line is: There are many unknowns.

Most of the Joros are expected to die by late November, but they may return in equally large, or even larger, numbers next year, though scientists say even that is hard to predict with any certainty.

# Indian farming practices: Learning from elsewhere in the world

Strip cropping, as seen in the U.S., is when wheat is grown along with corn and soybean, in the same farm in an alternative manner



**SPEAKING OF SCIENCE**

D. BALASUBRAMANIAN

A paper has appeared recently in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA (PNAS)* titled: "Integrated farming with intercropping increases food production while reducing environmental footprint" (see: Q. Chai *et al.*, *PNAS* September 21, 118(38) e2106382118 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2106382118>). This work found that (1) "relay planting" enhances yield, (2) within-field rotation or "strip rotation", allowing strips for planting other plants (such as grass, fruits) besides the major crop was more fruitful, (3) "soil munching," that is, available means such as crop straw, in addition to the major crop such as wheat or rice, and (4) "no-till" or a re-

duced tillage, which increases the annual crop yield up by 15.6% to 49.9%, and decreasing the environmental footprint by 17.3%, compared with traditional monoculture cropping. This led to the conclusion that small farm holders can grow more food and have reduced environmental footprint.

How do these factors apply to the small farmers of India? Current statistics reveal that our country has a significant population of small farmers, many owning less than 2 hectares of land. About 70% of its rural households still depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihood, with 82% of farmers being small and marginal. The total production of foodgrains in 2017-18 was estimated to be 275 million tons. Some others have pointed out that only 30% of all farmers borrow from formal sources. The farm loan waivers from the state governments have been helpful in this regard, but yet, over 50% struggle to borrow from Shylockian sources.



**Planting strategy:** Relay planting means less risk and better distribution of labour. Also insects spread less over the varied crops. • GETTY IMAGES

ed to be 275 million tons. Some others have pointed out that only 30% of all farmers borrow from formal sources. The farm loan waivers from the state governments have been helpful in this regard, but yet, over 50% struggle to borrow from Shylockian sources.

**Relay planting**  
The site "Relay Cropping- GK Today" explains this in some detail. Relay planting means the planting of different

crops in the same plot, one right after another, in the same season. Examples of such relay cropping would be planting rice (or wheat), cauliflower, onion, and summer gourd (or potato onion, lady's fingers and maize), in the same season. Why do this? Well, less risk since you do not have to depend on one crop alone. It also means better distribution of labour, insects spread less, and any legumes actually add nitrogen to the soil! We have read

about how small farmers in Telangana, Karnataka and Maharashtra are actually doing this and earning money out of such relay farming. They plant onions, turmeric, chillies, ginger, garlic and even some native fruits, thus making profit, during these relay times. 'GK Today' does, however, point out the difficulties involved in such relay cropping, namely mechanisation here can be difficult, plus the management requirements are somewhat higher. It is here that women come in handy. Women plant materials for home food, such as greens, leafy vegetables and pulses such as green grams, Finger millet (*ragi* in Hindi, *kezhwaragu* in Tamil) horse gram (*chane ki dal* in Hindi, *kudure gram* in Kannada, and *kollu* in Tamil), cowpeas, and also grass (all of which add to the nitrogen to the soil and also to the world around us, fixing nitrogen not just under our feet but also in the air we breathe; the carbon dioxide,

ozone, and the oxides of nitrogen and phosphorus that we inhale every day from the filthy atmosphere is at least nullified a little, thanks to relay cropping!)

**Strip cropping**

Strip cropping has been used in the U.S. (where the fields are larger than those in India), where they grow wheat, along with corn and soybean, in the same farm in an alternative manner. However, this needs large lands. In India, where there are large fields (such as the ones owned by cities and state governments), the land is divided into strips, and strips of grass are left to grow between the crops. Planting of trees to create shelters has helped in stabilising the desert in Western India.

"Strip crop - a ray of hope" is the title given by the site 'Vikaspedia', which discusses Western Karnataka (and the nearby Telangana and Northern Tamil Nadu), dry belts with frequent

droughts, where 80% of the farmers depend on groundnut as their option. The Karnataka Watershed Development (KAWAD), together with the AME Foundation, persuaded the farmers to stop using finger millets, fodder and groundnuts.

**Soil mulching and no-till**

While these methods are not easy for small farmers in India, they could be practised at least in larger farms such as the ones owned by industry and governments. Soil mulching requires keeping all bare soil covered with straw, leaves, and the like, even when the land is in use. Erosion is curtailed, moisture retained, and beneficial organisms, such as earthworms, kept in place. The same set of benefits are also offered by not tilling the soil.

These four methods suggested by the international group are worth following in India.

#75YearsofAmul

MILESTONE MOMENTS

YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS

1952 - KAIRA UNION'S OWN DAIRY.

1954 - DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD LAYS THE FOUNDATION OF KAIRA MILK UNION.

1954 - DR. DALAYA'S BREAKTHROUGH FORMULA FOR MILK POWDER FROM BUFFALO MILK.

1955 - INAUGURATION OF AMUL'S FIRST DAIRY PLANT BY THE PRIME MINISTER PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

1956 - AMUL'S FIRST DAIRY PLANT WITH A CAPACITY OF 1 LAKH LITRES PER DAY (LLP).

1964 - SHRI LAL BHADUR SHASTRI VISITED ANAND TO INAUGURATE AMUL'S CATTLE FEED PLANT.

1965 - SECOND DAIRY PLANT OF KAIRA MILK UNION.

1965 - INSPIRED BY LAL BHADUR SHASTRI, DR. KURIEN FORMED NDD TO REPLICATE AMUL MODEL ACROSS INDIA.

YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS

#75YearsofAmul



## The IPL ten

How will two new franchises impact the Indian Premier League? What does the inflow of over ₹12,500 crore mean for the BCCI?

ASHWIN ACHAL

**The story so far:** On October 25, two new teams were added to the Indian Premier League (IPL) bandwagon after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) awarded franchise rights to Lucknow and Ahmedabad. While the Kolkata-based RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group (RPSG) acquired the Lucknow team for ₹7,090 crore, CVC Capital Partners, which submitted the bid through its subsidiary Irelia Company Pte Ltd., bought the Ahmedabad franchise for ₹5,625 crore. Lucknow and Ahmedabad were chosen ahead of Indore, Dharamshala, Cuttack and Guwahati, the other cities in the mix.

Who are the new owners?

RPSG and CVC Capital Partners outbid several other heavyweight parties such as the Adani Group, Glazer Family (owners of famous English football club Manchester United) and Aurobindo Pharma. Founded by Sanjiv Goenka, RPSG is an Indian business conglomerate with interests in power and energy, retail, IT-enabled services, FMCG, infrastructure and education. RPSG likely picked Lucknow as its home base given that the group's Noida Power Company Limited and retail outlets operate in the Greater Noida region. RPSG had earlier owned Rising Pune Supergiant, which featured in the IPL in 2016 and 2017. CVC Capital Partners is a private equity and investment advisory firm, headquartered in Luxembourg. The firm is not a new entrant to the world of sports, having earlier invested in Spain's top football league, LaLiga, Formula One and Premiership Rugby. The company's investments in sport betting companies, Tipico and Sisal, however, have caused some concern. Former IPL chairman Lalit Modi questioned the firm's legitimacy on Twitter.

Why was the bid price higher than the base price?

The key reason for the high price is likely to be the IPL media rights contract that is up for grabs for the 2023-27 cycle. Broadcast revenue is the most significant portion of the BCCI's central revenue pool from where money flows down to the franchises. From 2008 to 2017, Sony paid around ₹900 crore a year for the television rights. For 2018-22, Star raised it to a whopping ₹3,270 crore per year and with it – according to a How India Lives report published in *Mint* earlier this year – IPL's valuation went up 40%. The new broadcasting deal (2023-27) is expected to rake in upwards of ₹5,000 crore a year. This is an attractive enough proposition for a prospective owner to bid large amounts. The high price of the new teams also gives a fair indication of the value of the existing teams, giving old owners leverage if they decide to sell stakes.

How long do they have to pay the bid amount?

The new teams can pay their bid amount over a 10-year period, with BCCI president and former India captain Sourav Ganguly saying that the ₹12,715 crore will be used to improve Indian cricket across levels. The BCCI and franchises share earnings from the IPL's central revenue pool, which includes money from broadcast, title rights and official partners. The BCCI reportedly keeps 50% of the revenue and distributes the rest equally among the franchises.

What are the revenue streams for a franchise?

Apart from getting revenue from the central pool, franchises earn money through brand sponsorships and match-ticket sales. Brand sponsors include various deals, including logos on team jerseys and helmets, digital sponsors, and so forth. The successful Mumbai Indians franchise, for example, boasts of around 20 sponsors, including the likes of Samsung, DHL, Colgate and Cadbury Dairy Milk. There is also prize money on offer, with the 2021 IPL champion Chennai Super Kings receiving ₹20 crore.

Will the player retention policy and tournament format change?

In order to ensure a level playing field, the two new franchises are likely to be offered three player selections before the mega 2022 IPL auction. The existing teams will likely be allowed to retain four players from their 2021 squads. The match schedule may be similar to what was followed in the 10-team 2011 IPL edition. Teams are set to be divided into two groups of five, with a team facing the other sides in the same group twice (home and away), the four teams from the second group once (two at home and two away), and the fifth remaining side in the other group twice (home and away). This ensures seven home and seven away matches. A total of 74 matches will be held in IPL 2022, an increase from the 60 matches played in the previous edition.

# What is the controversy over Mullaperiyar?

Are there safety issues about water levels at the 126-year-old dam? How have Kerala and Tamil Nadu responded to the situation?

S. ANANDAN

**The story so far:** Coinciding with an episode of erratic, cataclysmic rain in Kerala's high-ranges, the Supreme Court last week considered a public interest litigation petition filed by a Kerala physician and two former local body representatives on the operation of the Mullaperiyar dam over which Kerala and Tamil Nadu have been sparring for long. With the threat of floods looming large and the reservoirs filling up, the court asked both States to abide by the rule curve for the period set by the Supervisory Committee constituted at its instance. Accordingly, the water level in the dam would be limited to 138 feet till October 31 and 139.5 feet till November 10. The court will hear the case again on November 11.

What is the status now?

Three shutters of the dam were opened on October 30 to release water. While people living downstream were evacuated beforehand, water release from the Mullaperiyar dam did not alter the level in the much larger Idukki reservoir, at over 94% of its storage capacity, located 35 km downstream.

Why is Mullaperiyar dam a sore point?

The Maharaja of Travancore signed a 999-year Periyar Lake lease agreement with the British government on October 29, 1886, for the construction of the Mullaperiyar dam across the Periyar in the present Idukki district. The dam became a reality nine years later. The water supplied from it through a tunnel to the water-scarce southern region of Tamil Nadu, especially the Vaigai basin, would be the lifeline for farmers of Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Sivaganga and Ramanathapuram districts. On an average, 22 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) of water is diverted, irrigating about 2.20 lakh acres and meeting the drinking water requirements of people in the region. Concerns over the safety of the gravity dam built using lime-surkhi (burnt brick powder) mortar came to the fore in 1979. In November that year, a tripartite meeting chaired by the then chairman of the Central Water Commission (CWC), K.C. Thomas, decided that the level had to be brought down from the full reservoir level of 152 feet to 136 feet to enable Tamil Nadu, which owns and maintains it, to carry out dam strengthening works. By the mid-1990s, Tamil Nadu started demanding restoration of the level.

What happened in the legal battles?

The Central Government set up an expert committee in 2000 to look into the dam's safety. The committee



**Water woes:** The 2018 floods in Kerala and the erratic monsoons have put the 126-year-old dam in the spotlight.

recommended raising the level to 142 feet, which was endorsed by the Supreme Court in February 2006. Kerala sought to restrict the level to 136 feet by way of an amendment to the Kerala Irrigation and Water Conservation Act, prompting the Tamil Nadu Government to move the Supreme Court. In February 2010, the court constituted an empowered committee to study the whole gamut of issues concerning the dam. Based on the committee's finding that the dam was "structurally and hydrologically safe", the court, in May 2014, struck down Kerala's Act and allowed Tamil Nadu to maintain the level at 142 feet. It also asked the Central Government to set up a three-member Supervisory Committee to monitor dam safety.

Why is it a social issue?

Commissioned by the Kerala Government in the latter part of the 2000s, a study by IIT-Roorkee raised questions about the survival of the dam, located in seismic zone-3, in the event of an earthquake of a fairly high magnitude. A series of tremors felt in the area in 2011 caused alarm. Subsequently, the floods of 2018 and the erratic nature of annual monsoons ever since brought the focus back on the 126-year-old dam.

Why is the case in the Supreme Court again?

Joe Joseph, a doctor who was the candidate of the corporate-backed Twenty20 in the recent Kerala Assembly election from Kothamangalam, downstream of the Mullaperiyar and Idukki dams, moved the court, along with two others, last year contending that the Supervisory Committee had abdicated its responsibilities to a sub-committee constituted at the direction of the court for water management in the dam. They also urged the court to ask the CWC to fix the 'rule curve', 'instrumentation scheme' and 'gate operation schedule' of the dam. Massive landslides had devastated the hilly regions in central Kerala and weather prediction was

ominous when the court's attention was drawn to a report prepared by the United Nations University-Institute for Water, Environment and Health, which cited "significant structural flaws" in the dam and said it "may be at risk of failure". "Leaks and leaching are also concerning, as the methods and materials used during construction are considered outdated, compared to the current building standards," it said.

The Kerala Government, a respondent, argued for lowering the full reservoir level to 139 feet as the ageing dam was in a 'deteriorating condition'. In the event of a dam failure, it would result in unfathomable human tragedy and submitted a case for decommissioning the dam, in whose place a new dam could be built to cater to Tamil Nadu's water needs. However, Tamil Nadu, relying on the Supreme Court's two judgments, has been opposing any suggestion for lowering the level from 142 feet, apart from rejecting the idea of a new dam. It says it is taking steps to complete the remaining works to strengthen the dam, including those meant for the 'baby dam,' situated alongside the main dam, for which clearances from the Kerala and Central Governments are required.

What's on the cards?

Design of a new dam by Kerala's Irrigation Design and Research Board is in the final stages. However, without Tamil Nadu on board, this is not going to be a reality. Meanwhile, in the backdrop of bad weather forecast, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan wrote to his Tamil Nadu counterpart M.K. Stalin, urging him to draw maximum quantum of water from the dam through the tunnel so that a large volume release would be avoided altogether. Assuring Mr. Vijayan of all support, Mr. Stalin informed him that the level in the dam was being closely monitored and the current storage was well within the level permitted by the Supreme Court. A meeting between the Chief Ministers to discuss the issue is being planned in December.

# How is Facebook embedding the real world in computing?

Why is Mark Zuckerberg betting on metaverse? How will it change the way social media is used?

SRIRAM SRINIVASAN

**The story so far:** On Thursday (October 28), Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the rebranding of his company to Meta. The change, he said in a post, has been brought about "to reflect who we are and the future we hope to build". Facebook, the social media platform, will, however, keep its name.

What is the future it is hoping to build?

It is called metaverse (thus the new name). Metaverse is what the Facebook founder calls "an embodied internet". It is where "you're in the experience, not just looking at it". Mr. Zuckerberg gave a glimpse of the metaverse through a demo video. It shows him being called in to join his friends playing cards in a virtual space. They are all there as their chosen avatars, one of them even floating around the virtual room. They hide or reveal their cards just as they would in a real setting. He then dials another friend, who talks about an artist who is hiding augmented reality art pieces on street walls for people to find. The friends in the virtual space get sent the link of this art and view it then and there. Metaverse, for him, marks an evolution of how people connect with each other: "We've gone from desktop to web to mobile; from text to photos to video. But this isn't the end of the line."

Is metaverse exclusive to Meta?

No. Mr. Zuckerberg sees metaverse as a successor to the mobile internet and as something that will see contribu-



**Future pointer:** The change will 'reflect who we are and the future we hope to build', says Zuckerberg. • REUTERS

tions from many companies. Metaverse is a virtual environment that will lend itself to immersive experiences. It means, according to Mr. Zuckerberg, "having a shared sense of space and not just looking at a grid of faces". The "defining quality of the metaverse" is the feeling of presence. "You will see their facial expressions, you will see their body language... All the subtle ways that we communicate that today's technology can't quite deliver."

Who else is talking about metaverse?

Video games company Epic Games, software giant Microsoft and chipmaker Nvidia are some of the companies that have been talking about metaverse. In a recent interview to *Harvard Business Review*, Microsoft chief Satya

Nadella said he sees the metaverse idea being fundamentally about this: "increasingly, as we embed computing in the real world, you can even embed the real world in computing". Venture capitalist Matthew Ball wrote an essay last year: "What's important is to recognise the metaverse isn't a game, a piece of hardware, or an online experience. This is like saying World of Warcraft, the iPhone, or Google is the Internet. They are digital worlds, devices, services, websites, etc. The Internet is a wide set of protocols, technology, tubes and languages, plus access devices and content and communication experiences atop them. Metaverse will be too."

What are Facebook's hopes with respect to metaverse?

Within the next decade, Mr. Zuckerberg wants the metaverse to reach a billion people. Toward this, the company plans to sell virtual reality devices at cost or at subsidised rates, and offer developer and creator services with low fees. Its metaverse ideas will likely emerge out of its work around virtual reality ideas such as Facebook Spaces.

What are critics saying?

Privacy is an area of concern because in an immersive environment, such as metaverse, a lot more of one's personality and information will be revealed. Social media platforms, like Facebook, essentially make their money through targeted advertisements. It has to be recorded, however, that Mr. Zuckerberg has in his note mentioned privacy and safety as things that "need to be built into the metaverse from day one".

# When can land use of allotted plots be amended?

What does the government affidavit claim on the changes? How will the space be utilised?

DAMINI NATH

**The story so far:** The Supreme Court is hearing a petition challenging the change of land use of a plot near Rashtrapati Bhavan, initially allotted for a recreational park and bus terminal, to residential. The plot, according to the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), will be the site of the new Vice-President's Enclave, which will include the residence and office of the Vice-President. In an affidavit, the Central Government informed the court that the plot had housed government offices for decades and had never been opened for the public or sported recreational space.

How has the land use been changed?

On October 28, 2020, the government notified the change in use of the 15-acre plot, called Plot No. 1, on Church Road near Rashtrapati Bhavan and North Block. The plot is proposed to be the site of a new residence and office space for the Vice-President, as a part of the larger Central Vista revamp project. The plot had been allocated for "transportation (bus terminal/parking) and government (President Estate and Parliament House) use in the masterplan of Delhi-2021 and further in the Zonal Development Plan as transportation as well as recreational (neighbourhood play area)".

With the 2020 notification, the land use of the plot was changed to "residential". The plot had had offices of the Ministry of Defence since pre-independence. With two new MoD buildings outside the Central Vista being completed recently, defence personnel have begun shifting from the hutments on this plot as well as others along the Central Vista.

What are the rules on recreational areas in the land acts?

Section II-A of the Delhi Development Act, 1957, gives the "Central Government" the authority to "make any modifications to the masterplan or the zonal development plan". This section was cited when the Delhi Development Authority published a notice inviting objections and suggestions regarding the then-proposed land-use change on March 4, 2020. As many as 90 submissions were received and "considered" before the change was notified in October.

The plot is owned by the Land & Development Office, under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, which is executing the project through the CPWD.

Why does the amendment matter?

The government has said the change was required for it to go ahead with its plan to build the Vice-President's Enclave, for which the CPWD invited bids and shortlisted construction agencies in October. Financial bids have been invited till November 2. The CPWD has proposed construction of three of the nine office buildings planned as the new Central Secretariat on the site of the current Vice-President's residence on Maulana Azad Road. The government has argued the plots occupied by hutments are under-utilised.

What lies ahead?

The CPWD submitted its affidavit on October 28, and hearing the matter the next day, the Supreme Court gave the petitioner time to file a rejoinder. It adjourned the matter till November 16. The CPWD has said the petition is misconceived and liable to be dismissed with costs. It said overall the space open to the public in the Central Vista would increase with the shifting of Ministries from the 27-acre North Block and South Block, which are to be converted into "national museums".

COP26

# The race to tackle global warming

At the Glasgow summit, nearly 120 countries will seek consensus on rules to cut emissions, mechanisms to adapt to climate events and compensation for nations for loss, damage

In Focus

- IPCC warned in August that the observed increase in global surface temperature showed unusual warming during the 1850-2020 period
- The gap between a projected emissions cut against the actual need could lead to a rise in temperature by 2.7°C by 2100, says a UN report
- India, which has pledged to cut the emissions by 33-35% of GDP by 2030, has declared its pre-2020 performance on this metric achieved, at 24%

G. ANANTHAKRISHNAN

The COP26 UN Climate Change Conference opening in Glasgow, Scotland, on Sunday has raised expectations, just as the COP21 conference in Paris did six years ago, that there will be determined action by 2030 on the defining challenge before humanity. After the COVID-19 pandemic forced a postponement of the event in 2020, nearly 120 countries are now ready to engage in environmental diplomacy until November 12, when major emitters of greenhouse gases, such as China, the U.S., the EU and India, and developing countries, including small island states, will try for consensus on rules to cut emissions, mechanisms to adapt to climate impacts and compensation for nations for loss and damage. The climate negotiations seek to raise the ambition of countries under the Paris Agreement of 2015 to cut carbon dioxide emissions, after a long spell of drift since 2015 caused by economic declines, an upsurge of nationalism, the withdrawal of the U.S. from the pact

under President Donald Trump and the pandemic. Under President Joe Biden, the U.S. returned to multilateral diplomacy and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), giving new life to the idea that advanced nations will transfer green technologies without hard intellectual property barriers and provide the agreed \$100 billion funding for developing countries annually from 2020 to help reduce emissions. The funds will also help them adapt to extreme climate events such as intense storms, fires, droughts, floods and food deficits.

**Climate impact**  
The impact of the climate on the frequency and intensity of these events was documented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its special report of 2018 on 1.5 degrees C warming, and the just-released assessment on the physical science behind a warming world. All the headline points in the latest report point to a narrowing window for the world to taper down emissions before the tempera-



ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

ture rises beyond 2 degrees C. At Glasgow, the poorer half of the world, which did not contribute to the problem but faces disastrous impacts, will press the key question of equity. Under the UNFCCC, all countries do not have the same responsibilities, given their respective levels of development. This principle of common but differentiated responsibility guides the Paris Agreement.

**G20 countries, accounting for nearly 80% of global emissions, are not on a clear course to achieving net zero based on 2030 commitments**

India, which has pledged to cut the emissions intensity of its growth by 33-35% of GDP from 2005 levels by 2030, has declared its pre-2020 performance on this metric achieved, at 24%, while it is working to fulfil other Paris promises – raising renewable energy

capacity to make up a 40% share and expanding forest cover to create a 2.5 to 3 billion tonne carbon sink. More recently, it announced a scale-up of its renewable power plans to 450 GW by the end of the decade, and a national hydrogen policy to produce the chemical element through green methods, aiding its deployment in industrial sectors as well as transport, and aiming for export.

**Science sets tempo**  
The tempo for the Glasgow conference has been set by scientific reports, warning of continuing extreme human pressure on the climate system. One IPCC report of August 2021 warned that the observed increase in global surface temperature showed unprecedented warming during the 1850-2020 period compared with reconstructed temperature data over a period of 2,000 years. On the eve of the climate meet, the UN Environment Programme issued its 12th Emissions Gap Report, comparing the updated emissions reduction pledges made by

countries for 2030, with what is needed to keep the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees C or even 2 degrees C. That gap, between a projected emissions reduction of 7.5% for 2030 against the need for 30 to 55% cuts, and even taking into account the latest promises by countries, could lead to a rise in temperature by 2.7 degrees C by the end of the century. Moreover, G20 countries, accounting for nearly 80% of global emissions, are not on a clear course to achieving net zero (balancing out emissions) based on 2030 commitments.

The net zero concept remains contentious, because of the uncertainties surrounding long-term targets, but big countries such as China have set such a goal, while the EU as a bloc, Germany, the U.K., France, Canada and others have legal mandates. At COP26, the road to these targets is set to become the focus of debate. Article 6 of the Paris pact provides for the establishment of rules, modalities and procedures, which will enable countries, pu-

blic and private entities to reduce emissions, and which will be accounted towards national pledges. The private sector sees the potential for a market mechanism for emissions credits, while critics see scope for juggled numbers that do not cut real emissions, and lead to deception through creative accounting.

Another conference priority is to raise the ambition of high carbon countries, notably China, to phase out coal in energy production. This is a contentious issue, since coal is a reliable option for many, despite its contribution to high emissions and atmospheric pollution, and even the U.S., along with India, emphasises carbon capture technology – expensive and nascent at present – rather than a quick move to alternatives. Australia too bats for coal.

**Power shortage**  
The International Energy Agency (IEA) predicted a “rebound” in global coal use in 2021 spurred by COVID-19 recovery, and the recent power shortages worldwide have increased attraction for coal. Solar

and wind are not adequate to meet the surge. That setback, however, has not eased up the pressure from young climate activists on countries to move away from “dirty” coal. Their disinvestment campaign is hurting, as public and private sectors pull out their money. The militant campaigners, led by the face of the youth movement, Greta Thunberg, will be heard in Glasgow.

Scientists too are disappointed with the progress. James Hansen, the former NASA researcher whose testimony to the U.S. Congress in 1988 on human-caused global warming proved greatly influential, has called COP26 a ‘gas bag season’ since politicians are not ready to talk about the gravity of scientific evidence.

The IPCC says in its latest report, “It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred.” COP26 will be a stocktake of whether political will is strong enough to stave off disaster.

ABDEL FATTAH AL-BURHAN

# A force of the status quo

Sudan's army chief has seized power, throwing transition into chaos

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

For several Sudanese who took to the streets in protest after General Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan ousted civilian Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and took absolute power in a military coup on October 25, the events would have reminded of Karl Marx's words – “the first time as tragedy, the second as farce”. After all, Sudan had in 1964 and in 1985, seen transitions from military dictatorships, only for political infighting, economic crisis and military coups to follow leading to another spell of authoritarian rule. Little is known of Gen. al-Burhan, 61, who was already the chairman of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan (SCS). The Council was formed after the Sudanese revolution in 2019 that ousted dictator Omar al-Bashir's regime. The transition was first conducted by a Transitional Military Council (TMC) under the leadership of Lt. Gen. Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf, who served as de facto head of State for one day, before naming General al-Burhan as his successor and head of the Council. After civilian protests, aimed at rejecting this council which consisted of military officers who either served



ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

or were seen as close to the Bashir regime, were violently put down, the African Union suspended Sudan and imposed sanctions even as agitations led by Force of Freedom and Change (FFC), a joint social movement comprising 22 Sudanese political parties and social groups, escalated. The TMC under Gen. Burhan's leadership finally relented and the FFC was incorporated into a new body, the SCS, which was formed after the Draft Constitution Declaration was signed on August 4, 2019, along with a power sharing agreement, promising elections in late 2022.

**Return of tensions**  
Initially, there were some promising signs that the civilian-military transitional partnership was working. But tensions between the civilian leadership and the

military leaders remained over at least one issue – bringing Bashir's regime to account for genocidal acts, human rights abuses and corruption. Analysts say the military was uncomfortable with this as it would expose their own acts and their financial interests that were entrenched during Bashir's rule. Gen. Burhan, after all, played a key role as inspector general of the armed forces during the fag end of Bashir's tenure – overseeing Sudan's intervention in the Yemen Civil War. He had also been a regional army commander in Darfur between 2003 and 2008, a period that coincided with the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians. Gen. Burhan's military cohort that came into prominence are also accused of being part of a small elite that had garnered significant fi-

nancial clout during the oil boom in the 2010s along with select supporters of the Bashir regime. A *New York Times* report points out that Gen. Burhan and Lt. Gen. Mohamed Hamdan, the head of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces that is accused of genocide in Darfur and is also the deputy Chairman of the TMC, together controlled “hundreds of state-owned enterprises dealing in the production and sale of minerals, including gold, imports and exports of livestock, construction materials and pharmaceuticals”. Clearly, the military coup is an attempt to deter greater civilian control in a country ravaged by poverty and years of misrule. Western governments have promptly cancelled promised tranches of aid and are compelling the return to the transitional regime even as new protests have erupted. But Gen. Burhan seems to be emboldened due to his regime's closeness with those in Egypt and some Gulf countries and would seek to control the transition of power with a pliant technocrat in charge rather than an assertive civilian-linked to political and social movements. Sudan is in for another spell of turmoil.

GALAGODAATHTHE GNANASARA

# The divisive monk

The controversial figure will lead a presidential panel in Sri Lanka

MEERA SRINIVASAN

Even the most charitable account of Sri Lanka's civil war cannot term the “peace” that followed its bloody, May 2009 end anything but tentative. The ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils remains unresolved. The period has also witnessed a spike in violence directed at the Muslim community. News of every such attack in recent years has invariably come alongside an influential religious figure making emphatic claims about the country belonging first and foremost to Sinhala Buddhists. Galagodaaththe Gnanasara ‘Thero’ [as Buddhist priests in Sri Lanka are respectfully referred to], 46, is arguably Sri Lanka's most controversial monk, whom President Gotabaya Rajapaksa recently appointed as chairman of a 13-member task force to evolve proposals for the government's ‘One Country, One Law’ endeavour. The saffron-robed monk, who hails from the southern Galle district and entered priesthood as a child, came to prominence in 2012 when he founded the Bodu Bala Sena (BBS, or Buddhist Power Force) with a fellow priest. The stated vision of the organisation, which Gna-



ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R KUMAR

nasara Thero describes as a “national movement”, is to protect Buddhism for future generations. Within the next year the ethno-religious organisation unveiled the rather divisive terms of its activism. In January 2013, the BBS, led by its General Secretary Gnanasara Thero, campaigned aggressively against the halal certification of meat, that at tests food items as being compliant with Islamic conventions, therefore allowing Muslims to consume it both domestically and in the export market. The following month, the BBS held a rally in a Colombo suburb, calling upon supporters to become a Sinhala civilian police force against Muslim extremism. “This is a Sinhala country; there is a global principle that minorities must reside in a country in a manner

that does not threaten the majority race and identity,” Gnanasara Thero said at the rally. **Violent mob**  
In March that year, images of a violent mob led by Buddhist monks pelting a Muslim-owned store with stones, and setting fire to another took the country by shock. It was the surest sign at the time, of the fragility of Sri Lanka's post-war “peace”, under persisting threat with majoritarian Sinhala Buddhist forces that had now found a new target. The monk repeatedly made news thereafter, like in June 2014 when he referred to Muslims in derogatory terms at a rally in the southern Aluthgama town. “This country still has a Sinhala police. A Sinhala army. If a single Sinhalese is touched, that will be the end of them all,” he warned. The ensuing

violence claimed at least four lives and injured dozens. The same year, the monk signed a pact with Myanmar's Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu of the extremist 969 movement. Gnanasara Thero was also present at the central Digana town ahead of a series of targeted attacks on Muslim homes and Muslim-owned shops in early 2018. While probing Sri Lanka's Easter Sunday terror bombings of April 2019, investigators pointed to the Aluthgama and Digana violence as possible triggers for some Muslim youth to radicalise and be drawn to the suicidal terror network. In fact, a Presidential Commission of Inquiry appointed to investigate the serial bomb attacks even recommended that Gnanasara Thero be charged for “inciting racial tensions” in Aluthgama. But he has been to prison. In August 2018, Sri Lanka's Court of Appeal gave him a six-year jail sentence, convicting him for contempt of court. Except, President Maithripala Sirisena pardoned him when he had served barely nine months. Gnanasara tried entering Parliament twice – in 2004, and 2020 – but was unsuccessful. He, nevertheless, chairs a crucial task force on legal reforms in the country.

#75YearsofAmul

MILESTONE MOMENTS

Amul 75

YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS

THE THREE MEN WHO MADE AMUL. DR. VERGHESSE KURIEN, SHRI TRIBHUVANDAS PATEL & DR. H. M. DALALYA.

1965 - CREATION OF AMUL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION.

1966 - BIRTH OF 'BUTTER GIRL' AND 'UTTERLY BUTTERLY DELICIOUS'.

1966 - 1<sup>ST</sup> AMUL BUTTER TOPICAL.

1973 - AMUL'S MARKETING DIVISION (GCMF) IS BORN.

1996 - INAUGURATION OF CHEESE PLANT BY DY. CHAIRMAN PLANNING COMMISSION OF INDIA.

1996 - INAUGURATION OF AMUL STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY BY PM, H. D. DEVE GOWDA.

2015 - PRESIDENT OF INDIA, PRANAB MUKHERJEE INAUGURATED FULLY AUTOMATIC CATTLE FEED PLANT.

Amul 75

YEARS OF MILK & PROGRESS

#75YearsofAmul

## IL&FS's phase I InvIT gets NCLT nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Scam-tainted Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd. (IL&FS) said it has received an approval from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to introduce phase one of Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT).

With this approval, six road projects would be transferred to the newly formed Roadstar Infra Investment Trust under its InvIT Phase I, IL&FS said in a filing with the exchanges.

"These six road projects' special purpose vehicles (SPVs) will be transferred to the InvIT at an aggregate valuation of ₹9,214 crore determined by an independent valuer appointed in accordance with SEBI InvIT Regulations," IL&FS added.

## Green power transmission units' auctions gain speed

₹10,000-cr. worth auctions in process

LALATENDU MISHRA  
MUMBAI

Power transmission project related auctions in India are gaining momentum to support the country's capacity addition in renewables.

According to data from the Ministry of Power, Central Electricity Authority (CEA) and a Crisil report, transmission projects worth almost ₹10,000 crore are under various stages of the auction process in the inter-State transmission bidding.

Of this, 80% are a part of Green Energy Corridors (GEC). These are dedicated Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) projects sanctioned by the Ministry of Power to evacuate large-scale renewable energy from zones that are rich in such energy in the country. Project bids estimated at

# 'India's \$5 tn goal set back by 3-5 years'

EY India sees country's economy now reaching the target size by 2027-28 in its 'optimistic scenario'

VIKAS DHOOT  
NEW DELHI

India's goal of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25 is likely to be set back by about 3-4 years in an 'optimistic or business-as-usual' scenario, and may have to wait till 2029-30 in a worst-case outcome, as per an EY India estimate.

India is poised to overtake China in terms of the annual pace of economic expansion and become the global growth leader for the next five years, starting from 2021-22, as per the latest projections of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). EY India's macro-fiscal unit, tax and economic policy group used the IMF projections to arrive at their estimates.

The IMF has projected a 9.5% GDP growth for India this fiscal, followed by an 8.5% growth next year and



**Booster dose:** India must ramp up public sector investment to help crowd in private investments, says EY India. ■ REUTERS

the consulting major's economy team led by chief policy advisor D.K. Srivastava reckoned this indicated a real GDP growth of 6% in the medium term.

"This is still lower than the previous peak of trend growth rate of close to 7% during the four years from 2007-08 to 2010-11," EY India

said in a report. "In fact, if we include the forecasted growth of 9.5% for this year and 8.5% for 2022-23, the trend growth rate is uplifted to only 4.9% by 2022-23," it noted, adding that this suggested the need for initiatives to lift the trend growth rate to 7% or above in the medium term.

"As a point of reference, we consider the likely year by which the Indian economy would reach or just cross the \$5 trillion mark in three alternative scenarios. In our benchmark solution, we utilise the IMF projections for real and nominal GDP growth up to 2026-27. The exchange rate projections are also taken from the IMF," the firm's economists noted.

"In the pessimistic scenario, the real GDP growth is reduced by 1 percentage point starting 2022-23 as compared to the benchmark solution. Other parameters namely implicit price deflator-based inflation and exchange rate depreciation are kept at the same levels as in the benchmark solution. In this case, the crossover point shifts one year forward to 2029-30," EY said.

"In the optimistic scenario,

real GDP growth is increased by 1 percentage point beginning 2022-23 as compared to the benchmark solution. In this case, India reaches the \$5 trillion mark by 2027-28," the EY team concluded in a chapter on 'India and the global economy in context of the evolving contours of post-COVID recovery' in its October report.

### 'Raise public spending'

Calling for a ramp up in public sector investment to help crowd in private investments, EY emphasised the need to reverse the declining trend in the overall investment rate from a peak of 39.8% of GDP in 2010-11 to an estimated 29.3% in 2020-21.

"These trends indicate that more policy initiatives are needed to lift the trend growth rate to 7% or above," it underlined.

## Indian Bank reports frauds worth ₹266 cr.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Indian Bank on Saturday said it had reported over ₹266 crore worth of fraud to the Reserve Bank, relating to three NPA accounts.

These non-performing accounts have been declared as fraud and reported to RBI as per regulatory requirement, the lender said in a regulatory filing.

It has declared MP Border Checkpost Development Co. Ltd. as fraud with an outstanding of ₹166.89 crore; Pune Sholapur Road Development (₹72.76 crore) and SONAC (₹27.08 crore). Indian Bank said it had held provisions worth ₹12.58 crore against SONAC. While in the case of other two accounts, the provisions held are equivalent to the entire exposure, respectively.

## 'Local growers yet to savour rising global coffee prices'

Govt. intervention sought to check cartels, say trade sources

STAFF REPORTER  
KALPETTA

With only a few weeks remaining for the coffee harvest to begin, a disparity in the prices of Robusta coffee in the international market and India has become a major cause for concern among growers in South India.

Though the price of coffee in India is usually based on international markets, especially the London market, a proportionate increase in the price of the produce overseas is yet to get reflected in the local market, according to trade sources.

While the price of Robusta coffee rose by about \$70 a ton in the international market, the Indian market was yet to reflect the increase. According to Coffee Board



would begin only by the end of December, they added. According to the board's final estimates, the total coffee production in India during 2020-2021 stood at 3.69 lakh tons, including 2.35 lakh tons of Robusta. Of this, a little more than 1.64 lakh tons were exported.

Recently, the Centre extended RodTEP (Refund of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) scheme to the coffee sector to boost exports. But the growers were not enthused, the sources added. Alleging that some international players were likely trying to enhance profits by not increasing the prices, the trade sources sought the Union Commerce Ministry's intervention to stop such exploitation.

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## SPORT

### TV PICKS

**Men's T20 World Cup:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.

**Badminton:** Paris Open, Star Sports 3, 5.30 p.m.

**Premier League:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. & 10 p.m.

**Bundesliga:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 8 p.m. & 10 p.m.

**Men's World Boxing Championships:** Sony Six (SD & HD), 10.30 p.m.

### IN BRIEF

#### Iniyan triumphs

ARANDELJOVAC (SERBIA)

GM P. Iniyan won the fifth Rujna Zora round-robin chess tournament (Classical time format) here on Saturday. The 19-year-old remained undefeated, winning five games and drawing four, and collected seven points from nine games.

#### Heat rides Butler's form, rolls over Hornets

LOS ANGELES

Jimmy Butler scored 32 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, while Bam Adebayo had 26 points as Miami Heat stretched its winning streak to three straight games with a 114-99 NBA win over Charlotte Hornets on Friday. **The results:** Raptors 110 bt Magic 109; Nets 105 bt Pacers 98; Heat 114 bt Hornets 99; Pelicans 109 bt Kings 113; Nuggets 106 bt Mavericks 75; Trail Blazers 111 bt Clippers 92; Lakers 113 bt Cavaliers 101. AFP

#### Today's races postponed

BENGALURU

The Stewards of the Bangalore Turf Club have decided to postpone the first day races of the Bangalore Winter Meeting scheduled to be held on Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, as per the directions received from the Police Authority in view of the demise of actor Puneeth Rajkumar. The same card will hold good.

## Sathiyam & Harmeet win crown

Duo claims its first international title beating France's Lebeson and Cassin

### WTT

SPORTS BUREAU  
TUNIS

As a pair, G. Sathiyam and Harmeet Desai of India won their first international title by bagging the men's doubles title of the World Table Tennis Contender Tunis here on Saturday, with a 11-9, 4-11, 11-9, 11-6 victory over France's Emmanuel Lebeson and Alexander Cassin in the final.

After losing the first game, the French pair fought back taking a 5-1 and 9-3 lead to pocket the second game. The third game was close with leads changing hands



**Taking the honours:** G. Sathiyam and Harmeet Desai with their trophies. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

between the two pairs. However, it was the Sathiyam-Harmeet duo that won it at 11-9. Running up a 4-1 lead in the fourth, the Indians never looked back after taking a

6-5 lead.

"I have reached the final playing with Sharath anna, [Soumyajit] Ghosh and Sanil [Shetty], but I have never won a men's doubles crown.

I am extremely happy. The key factor for our win was the speed," Sathiyam told *The Hindu*.

Harmeet, who had won a doubles title with Soumyajit Ghosh in the 2015 Commonwealth Championships, was equally ecstatic.

"Winning with Sathiyam is really special. Since Sathiyam had earlier seen [Emmanuel] Lebeson in the mixed doubles semifinals, we devised certain strategies and it worked well for us," he said. "We are also trying different [men's doubles] combinations to prepare for the 2022 Commonwealth Games."

## Nihal Sarin lies joint second

Harika among nine leaders in women's section

### CHESS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Nihal Sarin continued his impressive run in the \$425,000 FIDE Grand Swiss, beating Australia's Temur Kuybovkarov with black pieces in the third round in Riga, Latvia, on Friday.

Nihal's second victory put him joint second with 2.5 points behind leader Alireza Firouzja (3) of France.

D. Gukesh, R. Praggnanandhaa and Arjun Erigaisi, too, maintained their unbeaten run by drawing against higher-rated rivals. P. Harikrishna scored his first victory but B. Adhiban suffered a se-

cond straight loss. Surya Shekhar Ganguly and S. P. Sethuraman also lost.

In the women's section, D. Harika defeated former World champion Antoaneta Stefanova (Bulgaria) for her second victory to be among the nine leaders at 2.5 points.

**The results (third round, involving Indians):** Open: K. Sasi-

kiran (2) drew with Parham Maghsoodhloo (Iri, 2); D. Gukesh (2) drew with Vladislav Artemiev (Rus, 2); R. Praggnanandhaa (2) drew with David Howell (Eng, 2); Temur Kuybovkarov (Aus, 1.5) lost to Nihal Sarin (2.5); David Navara (Cze, 2) bt S. P. Sethuraman (1); Arjun Erigaisi (1.5) drew with Rauf Mamedov (Aze, 1.5); Surya Shekhar Ganguly (1) lost to Dariusz Swiercz (USA, 2); P. Harikrishna (1.5) bt Ivan Fernandez Morovic (Chi, 1); Raunak Sadhwani (1) drew with Jordeen van Boest (Ned, 1); B. Adhiban (0.5) lost to Volodymyr Onyschuk (Ukr, 1.5).

**Women:** D. Harika (2.5) bt Antoaneta Stefanova (Bul, 1.5); Padmini Rout (2) bt R. Vaishali (1); Vantika Agarwal (2) bt Divya Deshmukh (0.5).

## Sumit, Nishant in pre-quarterfinals

Gonzales too good for Sachin

### BOXING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BELGRADE

Sumit (75kg) sailed into the pre-quarterfinals of the AI-BA men's World Championships here on Saturday notching up a 5-0 victory over Tajikistan's Abdumalik Boltaev.

Sumit, however, copped a warning in the second round for hitting Boltaev on the back of the head repeatedly despite being cautioned by the referee. But the docking of one point had no impact on his control over the proceedings.

Later, Sachin (80kg), who got a first-round bye, lost 1-4 to American Robby Gon-

zales. The Indian seemed up for an intense showdown in the opening round but ran out of steam.

In a late night bout on Friday, Nishant Dev (71kg) rallied to defeat Mauritian Mervin Clair 4-1 to also secure a pre-quarterfinal berth.

The gold winners at the showpiece will walk away with a prize money of \$100,000. The silver medalists are to be given \$50,000, and both bronze-medallists will be awarded \$25,000 each. The total prize purse is \$2.6 million.

**The results:** 75kg: Sumit bt Abdumalik Boltaev (Tjk) 5-0; 80kg: Robby Gonzales (USA) bt Sachin 4-1; 71kg: Nishant Dev bt Mervin Clair (Mus) 4-1.

## Niki Poonacha and Zeel Desai reign supreme

Register comeback wins against Digvijay and Sharmada in the finals

### TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN  
NEW DELHI

Niki Poonacha wielded the magic wand yet again to script an improbable victory that crowned him a champion for the third time at the DLTA Complex here.

"I have a 15-match winning streak. Hope it continues," said the 26-year-old Niki after saving three matchpoints on way to a 3-6, 7-6(6), 6-4 victory over Digvijay Pratap Singh, in three hours and 38 minutes, in the Fenesta National tennis championship on Saturday.

After winning the Fenesta National title in 2019, Niki had won the ITF men's title in April this year, against the odds, at the DLTA.

Tall and blessed with a big

game, that is nicely tuned at the Rohan Bopanna Academy in Bengaluru, Niki did struggle to find his rhythm for the most part against an inspired Digvijay who did everything except hit the winning shot.

After losing the first set, Niki did take a 5-2 lead in the second, but found Digvijay catching up and sprinting ahead with his vibrant game. At 6-3 in the tie-break, it looked curtains for Niki's challenge, but Digvijay was unable to close out. Niki lobbed to save the second of the match points, while Digvijay erred in missing the other two.

In the decider, it was Digvijay who led 3-1 before Niki found a semblance of his game to turn the tide in his favour. After hitting robust groundstrokes to move



**Victorious:** National champions Zeel Desai and Niki Poonacha. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ahead, Niki served out the match brilliantly at love, firing two aces in the process, to affix his stamp of class.

In the women's final, top seed Zeel Desai recovered her rhythm after being down 1-3 in the opening set and did not

## IT demand quickening in key markets: LTTS

Autonomous EVs seeing interest: MD

MINI TEJASWI  
BENGALURU

Demand acceleration is evident for pure-play engineering services, especially in areas such as electric, autonomous, connected vehicles (EACVs), digital manufacturing and digital products across key markets including the U.S., Europe and India, said Amit Chadha, CEO and MD, L&T Technology Services (LTTS).

"Based on my interactions with global CEOs and R&D heads of many conglomerates, demand appears to be bouncing back in many of our key markets. Overall, we see demand acceleration for pure-play engineering services, in areas like EACVs, digital manufacturing and digital products," Mr. Chadha, CEO & MD, LTTS told *The Hindu*.

"From customers, we are getting positive signals on CY22 budgets, as CTOs and heads of engineering invest in growth and transformation," he added.

Auto companies were going through rapid transformation, and LTTS was partnering with major players around the globe in the areas of electrification and connected vehicles, he said.

The company's Electric Vehicles (EV) lab, backed by domain expertise was generating 'a lot of' customer interest and had helped the company win large deals in the second quarter, according to him.

### Six areas identified

To build scale in deep technology, the firm has identified six investment areas - EACVs, 5G, medical tech, digital manufacturing, AI and ML-driven smart products and sustainability, he said.

"Through investments in these areas, we will be able to create a sustainable growth engine. The EACV segment is seeing strong de-



Amit Chadha.

mand and we won an over \$25 million EACV deal in Q2," he elaborated. The market outlook had gradually improved over the last two quarters and a growing momentum was visible across industries such as automotive, healthcare and industrial products in terms of traction and large-deal wins, he pointed out.

LTTS said 5G was a 'big growth opportunity'. The firm recently opened a dedicated 5G lab in Bengaluru to deliver development, testing and integration services, using advanced automation capabilities and patented tools in the telecom space.

The firm plans hire about 2,000 engineering graduates in FY22 for centres in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Vadodara and Mumbai, and the bulk of these freshers would be recruited in the current quarter. Hiring would be based on the project pipeline and demands in specific verticals such as very-large scale integration (VLSI), embedded systems and automotive, Mr. Chadha added.

In the quarter ended September, LTTS's net profit rose 39% to ₹230 crore from a year earlier. Revenue grew 22% to ₹1,607.7 crore. The medical segment saw 'strong bounce-back' with almost 10% sequential growth, crossing \$100 million in annualised revenue. Its largest segment, transportation, registered a 6% sequential growth.



