



In a first, Army receives hand grenades from the private sector

page 10



Only 15% in the eligible group fully vaccinated against COVID-19

page 10



U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris accuses China of 'intimidation'

page 11

Kohli's India takes on Root's England in third Test from today

page 13



## NEARBY



**Sugarcane farmers end stir after hike in SAP**

CHANDIGARH  
Sugarcane farmers in Punjab on Tuesday withdrew their protest in response to Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's announcement of a ₹35 per quintal hike in the State Agreed Price for the cane crushing season 2021-22, taking the SAP to ₹360 per quintal. The matter was resolved during a meeting of farmer leaders with the CM.

**NORTH & EAST** • PAGE 4

**'77 Muzaffarnagar riot cases withdrawn'**

NEW DELHI  
Seventy-seven cases relating to the Muzaffarnagar communal riots were withdrawn by the Uttar Pradesh government without assigning any reasons, a report alerted the Supreme Court. Senior advocate Vijay Hansaria said the information is part of a letter sent to him by the Uttar Pradesh State counsel on August 20.

**NEWS** • PAGE 8

**Muslim family thrashed by residents in Ajmer**

JAIPUR  
Barely 24 hours after the attack on a Muslim bangle seller by a frenzied mob in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, a family of destitute Muslims, seeking alms, was brutally thrashed by some persons in a residential colony in Rajasthan's Ajmer city and told to "go to Pakistan".

**NORTH & WEST** • PAGE 5

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**OPPORTUNITIES** • PAGE 5

# Union Minister arrested in Maharashtra for remark on CM

Rane gets bail in case filed for saying he would have slapped Uddhav Thackeray

SONAM SAIGAL  
SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE  
MUMBAI/ PUNE

Union Minister Narayan Rane was on Tuesday arrested and taken into custody by the police at Sangameshwar in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra for his statement on Monday that he would have slapped State Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray for forgetting the year India got freedom during his Independence Day speech.

Late in the evening, a court in Mahad granted him bail. Mr. Rane was produced in the court by the police a little after 9 p.m.

Reports say the court considered his health condition and age. BJP leader Pravin Darekar and Prasad Lad, MLC, told a news agency that



**Quick trigger:** BJP and Shiv Sena workers facing off at the party office of the former in Thane on Tuesday. • PTI

he had left for Mumbai.

Earlier, the Bombay High Court denied him relief. A Ratnagiri court too rejected his petition for anticipatory bail. His lawyer, Aniket Nikam, will approach the court on Wednesday, seeking to quash the first information

reports against the former Chief Minister.

Soon after Mr. Rane spoke at the "Jan Ashirvad Yatra" of the BJP in Raigad district, clashes broke out in the State.

He is charged with Section 153 (wantonly giving provo-

## 'We cannot be suppressed'

BJP national president J.P. Nadda has termed Narayan Rane's arrest "a violation of constitutional values". "We will neither be scared nor suppressed by such action," he tweeted. Party spokesperson Sambit Patra called it "murder of democracy". • PAGE 8

cation with intent to cause riot, if rioting be committed, if not committed) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of the IPC. Shiv Sena supporters protested in various places.

**CONTINUED ON** • PAGE 8

## On safe shores



The faithful receiving the Guru Granth Sahib flown in from Afghanistan by the IAF to New Delhi on Tuesday. As many as 75 Afghan Sikhs and Hindus, who had taken refuge in a Kabul gurdwara, were on the flight. • V.V. KRISHNAN (PAGE 9)

# Graveyard silence in J&K is not normalcy: Gupkar alliance

'Present govt. takes pride in humiliating us'

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

The People's Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) on Tuesday reiterated its demand for the restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 special constitutional position of Jammu and Kashmir, and warned the Union government against mistaking "the current graveyard's silence in J&K as normalcy".

It demanded an "end to humiliating people that, otherwise, has dangerous consequences".

"To India's civil society



National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah, CPI(M)'s M.Y. Tarigami and other Gupkar leaders in Srinagar. • NISSAR AHMAD

and political parties, we want to convey that we too want to live a life of dignity. However, the current government takes pride in inflicting humiliation on us. It's unacceptable to the people of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh," Gupkar alliance spokesman M.Y. Tarigami

said, after a meeting of the alliance at the residence of National Conference president Farooq Abdullah.

Former Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti participated.

**CONTINUED ON** • PAGE 8

# T.N. launches ₹100 cr. urban employment scheme

Like MGNREGS, it offers a livelihood for urban poor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government will implement an urban employment scheme on the lines of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) at a cost of ₹100 crore to improve the livelihood of urban poor, Minister for Municipal Administration, Urban and Water Supply K.N. Nehru said in the Assembly on Tuesday.

"In the current year, it will

be implemented in two zones in the Greater Chennai Corporation, one zone each in other Municipal Corporations, one municipality each in under the seven Regional Directorate of Municipal Administration and one town panchayat each in 37 districts," the Minister said while replying to the debate on demands for grants for his department.

Mr. Nehru said, unlike other States, the urban population in Tamil Nadu was growing fast and it would reach 60% of the total population by 2036. A total of four crore people are now living in urban areas, accounting



The rising urban population made the State frame the new job scheme. • M. MOORTHY

for 53% of the total population.

Mr. Nehru added that as announced in the State budget, the government would implement the Kalaingar Urban Development Scheme at

a cost of ₹1,000 crore. "Infrastructure including community hall, markets, modern libraries will be created in municipalities and town panchayats," he said.

**Pilot scheme**

Government sources told *The Hindu* that this was a pilot scheme and the government would soon come out with guidelines for providing wages under the scheme.

The objective of the programme was to provide employment to urban poor, who had lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic as recommended by the committee headed by

former RBI Governor C Rangarajan.

"Thousands of jobs were lost and the government discussed ways to create jobs for them. Under the scheme, workers will be used for activities such as desilting of water bodies and maintenance of public parks and other places," a senior official said. Asked if the scheme would be implemented permanently, he said, "no decision has been taken so far".

The State government had submitted a memorandum to the Centre seeking funds for an urban employment scheme but was yet to get a response.

# Amarinder Ministry reels under Congress feud again

Ministers, MLAs siding with CM or Sidhu slug it out

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Congress high command's efforts to resolve issues in the party's Punjab unit have failed to yield the desired results as the crisis deepened on Tuesday, after factions supporting Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh (retired) and Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee chief Navjot Singh Sidhu spoke out against each other.

Four Ministers and over 20 MLAs openly came out against Capt. Amarinder's leadership. And, taking exception to the "anti-national" and "pro-Pakistan" comments of two of Mr. Sidhu's aides, Malwinder Mali and Pyare Lal Garg, a group of Congress Ministers and MLAs called for strong legal action against them.

Raising the pitch against Capt. Amarinder at a meeting held here, four Ministers, including Sukhjinder Randhawa, Tript Rajinder Bajwa, Sukhbinder Sarkaria and Charanjit Channi, apart from close to two dozen MLAs, expressed lack of faith in the leadership of the Chief Minister in fulfilling the party's 2017 Assembly election promises.

**'Issues not resolved'**

"We have lost faith in his [the CM's] leadership. There are certain issues for which we have been fighting for a while now. It's all about those issues, which are not settled, be it the Bargari sacrilege, curbing the drugs and transport mafias, etc. All these issues relate to the previous Akali Dal government, which have not yet been addressed. We earlier apprised the Central leadership of these issues, after which an 18-point programme was re-



**Short-lived peace:** Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu and Capt. Amarinder Singh at a meeting in July. • PTI

## Baghel to continue as Chhattisgarh CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Bhupesh Baghel will continue as the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh for now, but he should treat his colleagues in the government with respect. This message was conveyed to Mr. Baghel after former Congress president Rahul Gandhi met him and the State's Health Minister, T.S. Singh Deo, to resolve their growing differences over the leadership issue.

Mr. Deo had earlier claimed that Mr. Baghel was sworn in as the Chief

Minister on the condition that he will abide by a power sharing formula agreed upon at a meeting between him, Mr. Baghel and Mr. Gandhi.



Under the arrangement, Mr. Baghel was to vacate the Chief Minister's post in favour of Mr. Deo on June 17 this

year on completing a tenure of 2.5 years. Mr. Baghel maintains that no such arrangement was agreed upon.

**TREAT COLLEAGUES WITH RESPECT, SAYS RAHUL** • PAGE 8

leased to resolve them. But the Chief Minister is only attempting to kill time and doing nothing on the ground. Each passing day is critical as we are inching towards the Assembly election," Mr. Channi told *The Hindu*.

Within hours, however, seven of the 20-odd leaders purported to have been party to the demand for the removal of Capt. Amarinder, categorically disassociated themselves from any such move. Denying being part of

what they termed "a conspiracy hatched by a section engaged in trying to drive a wedge within the party", these seven leaders reposed their full faith in the CM's leadership.

The seven leaders are Kuldeep Vaid, Dalvir Singh Goldie, Santokh Singh Bhalai-pur, Angad Singh, Raja Warring and Gurkirat Singh Kotli, MLAs, and Ajit Singh Mofar, former MLA.

**CONTINUED ON** • PAGE 8

# 'Economic criterion not sole basis for creamy layer'

Social advancement, higher employment in govt. services, etc., play role in deciding quota eligibility: SC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday held that economic criterion should not be the sole basis to identify sections of backward communities as 'creamy layer'.

Social advancement, higher employment in government services, etc., played an equal role in deciding whether a person belonged to the creamy layer and could be denied quota benefits, it said.

"The basis of exclusion of 'creamy layer' cannot be merely economic," a Bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Aniruddha Bose observed in their judgment, while referring to the Su-

preme Court's Indra Sawhney verdict of 1992, which declared that 'creamy layer' in a backward community should be excluded from reservation so that the more deserving were able to come up.

The court had illustrated that 'creamy layer' would include "persons from backward classes who occupied posts in higher services like IAS, IPS and All India Services had reached a higher level of social advancement and economic status, and therefore, were not entitled to be treated as backward".

**Two notifications**

The court was hearing a petition challenging two notifi-



The court referred to the Indra Sawhney verdict of 1992 for the observation.

cations issued on August 17, 2016 and August 28, 2018 by the Haryana government sub-classifying backward classes solely on economic basis while fixing the criteria

for creamy layer.

The notifications, issued under the Haryana Backward Classes (Reservation in Services and Admission in Educational Institutions) Act of 2016, said backward community members who earn above ₹6 lakh annually would be treated as 'creamy layer'.

The Supreme Court held that the Haryana's notifications have violated the law declared in the Indra Sawhney judgment by identifying creamy layer only on the basis of income.

**Fresh guidelines**

"In spite of Section 5(2) of the 2016 Act making it mandatory for identification and

exclusion of 'creamy layer' to be on the basis of social, economic and other relevant factors, the State of Haryana has sought to determine 'creamy layer' from backward classes solely on the basis of economic criterion and has committed a grave error in doing so," the court held, quashing both the notifications.

The Supreme Court directed the State to issue fresh notifications in three months.

It did not, however, disturb admissions to educational institutions and appointments to State government services made on the basis of the two notifications.

# Educate 5 children for 3 months: bail condition for liquor smuggler

Parents must certify this was done, rules Bihar court judge

AMARNATH TEWARY  
PATNA

A namesake of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was granted bail by a local court on Tuesday, after nine months of imprisonment under the State's prohibition law, on condition that he would enable free education for five underprivileged children of his village for three months, which the parents would certify.

Additional District Session Judge (First) Avinash Kumar

at Jhanyharpur in Madhubani district of north Bihar granted bail to the accused, Nitish Kumar, who was arrested in November 2020 under the 2016 State prohibition law.

**'Adhere to the law'**

The court also asked the accused to adhere to the law in the future. The FIR against Kumar was lodged at the Madhepur police station by the village *chowkidar* (watchman), Jaldhari Paswan. The complainant said

he had received information that some liquor smugglers had reached the vicinity of a temple in Pachahi village in an SUV and a motorbike. "When I reached there and tried to stop the smugglers, they fled the spot after firing in the air," he said.

Kumar, a resident of the Bhargama-Bheja village, was riding the motorcycle loaded with illicit liquor, Mr. Paswan said in the police complaint. Kumar was later arrested and sent to jail.



## Police hand over keys to Maulana Saad Kandhalvi's mother

A day after the Delhi High Court ordered the police to hand over the keys of Nizamuddin Markaz residential area to Maulana Saad Kandhalvi's mother, the premises remained locked from the outside. The police handed over the keys late on Tuesday.

Maulana Saad's family refused to speak to the media because of the "negative portrayal" when the Markaz was told to close last year after a case was registered in connection with a Tablighi Jamaat congregation held in violation of COVID-19 rules.

### Already hit by lockdown

At the religious centre, a few people who were inside refused to open the door or respond to repeated calls.

Locals, however, said they cannot wait for the Markaz to reopen because their busi-



nesses have been heavily impacted and the COVID-19 induced lockdown made matters worse.

Zulfikar Alam, 52, who has an *ittar* stall outside the Markaz, said he used to sell biscuits and other edibles.

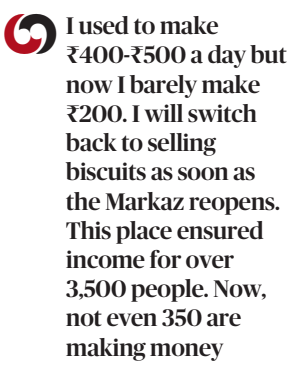
As there was no sale of the products after the Markaz shutdown, he switched to selling perfume. "I used to

make ₹400-₹500 a day but now I barely make ₹200. I will switch back to selling biscuits as soon as the Markaz reopens," he said, adding that scores of people who used to visit the Markaz were his customers. "This place ensured income for over 3,500 people. Now, not even 350 are making money."

Sarfaraz, 24, who sells ap-

parel on a wooden cart, said he is barely able to make ends meet. "Markaz khule.. Jaamaatein aaye jaaye... pehle jaisa mahaul ho... Usi ka intezar hai [The Markaz should open. People should start coming in. I am waiting for a day when it's just like before,]" he said.

On the blame that the Tablighi Jamaat received at the



**ZULFIQAR ALAM**  
Trader in the area

stating: “What is Section 60A [of Evidence Act on oral evidence], Section 310 [Code of Criminal Procedure on local inspection]? What sections have you registered? Preserving a site does not mean you lock it. Take photos and move from the site. What was recovered? Case was only that people were residing there.”

Justice Yogesh Khanna had also directed the police to hand over the keys of the residential area within two days.

The court additionally clarified that the occupants cannot enter any non-residential portion of the property till further orders.

**Government of Jharkhand**  
**Department of School Education and Literacy**  
**(Jharkhand Education Project Council, Ranchi)**  
**JSCA Stadium Road, Sector- III, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004**  
**Phone: 0651-2444501, E-Mail: jepcranchi1@gmail.com**

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**e-Procurement Notice-2<sup>nd</sup> Call**

**Ref. No.:NIT No: JEPC/CIV/634/2021/1403** **Ranchi, Date : 23.08.2021**

JEPC invites Separate Technical & Financial Bids through e-procurement method from eligible and interested contractors for Construction of "Development of School of Excellence of RK Rama Sahu School Garhwa located in Garhwa District of Palamau Division of Jharkhand". Interested and eligible bidders are requested to submit their proposal latest by 2:00 PM at 07.09.2021.

The details of tender documents can be seen and applied through website <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> only. Tender notification & Tender document can also be seen (read only purpose) from departmental website <https://jepc.jharkhand.gov.in>.

Sd/-  
**(Dr Shailesh Kumar Chourasia)**  
State Project Director  
Jharkhand Education Project Council

**PR 251933 Jharkhand Education Project Council(21-22).D**

**IN THE COURT OF THE CITY CIVIL JUDGE (COMMERCIAL COURT) (CCH-88) AT BANGALORE**  
**COM. Ex. No. 2039/2019**

**BETWEEN:**  
Official Liquidator of  
M/s. International Leasing Limited  
(in liquidation) Attached to High Court  
of Karnataka, Corporate Bhavana,  
No.26-27, 12th Floor, Rajeha Towers,  
M.G.Road, Bangalore - 560 001.

**Decree Holder**

**AND**  
G.B. Doraiswamy Other ...  
C/Notice to Jdt 1 to 3 by Paper Publication  
Under Order V Rule 20 of CPC

**1. G.B. Doraiswamy,**  
**No.158, Sent House, High Road,**  
**Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600 004.**

**2. Hemanth Agarwal, No.A-47,**  
**Friends Colony, East New Delhi.**

**3. Sri Bhagavathi Prasad**  
**Jhunjunwala, S/o**  
**N.M. Jhunjunwala, No. 50,**  
**Weston Street, R.N.403, Calcutta.**

**Judgement Debtor**

**PAPER PUBLICATION**

Whereas, the above named Decree Holder  
has filed the above Execution petition for  
recovery of **Rupees, 10,26,38,604.00** as  
per the order dated 03.04.2012 made in  
Company Application No.271/2007, in  
Company Petition No.16/1994, against the  
Judgment Debtors, they are hereby  
summoned/Noticed to appear before this  
Honble court either in person or through  
the pleader on **16.09.2021, at 11 A.M.**  
**CITY CIVIL COURT (COMMERCIAL COURT)**  
**AT BANGALORE. CCH-88)**  
defend the above case failing which  
the matter will be disposed of ex-parte.

Given under my hand and the seal of this  
court this **18th day of August, 2021.**

**BY ORDER OF THE COURT**  
**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR**  
**CITY CIVIL COURT, BANGALORE.**

**Advocate for Decree Holder:**  
**N. Murali, Advocate,**  
**No.24, 1st Main, Seshadripuram,**  
**Bangalore - 20, 9448834909**

No.SE/NRC/TB/NIT/12/2021-22/08

**PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

The Superintending Engineer, PWD, Nagaon & Hojai Road Circle, Nagaon on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites bid from Assam PWD registered contractors for 1(One) no. of work for Sankar Sangha annual Adhiveshan held at Morigaon on February 2019 under Morigaon LAC in Morigaon District amounting to Rs. 439.10949 Lakhs(approx.). Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

**sd/-**

**Superintending Engineer, PWD  
Nagaon & Hojal Road Circle, Nagaon**

Janasanyog No. CF/ 1057/21

## HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

### e-Procurement Notice

### INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The **Executive Engineer HPPWD Jubbil Distt Shimla H.P.** on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Time	Eligible class of contractor
1.	Construction of Multipurpose Hall (Auditorium) for Govt Degree College Saraswathigar (Hatkotli) Tehsil Jubbil Distt. Shimla H.P. (SH-Construction of civil work, WS & SI, rainwater harvesting tank, septic tank, soak pit and site development etc.),	Rs. 59766611/-	Rs. 11953000/-	Rs. 5000/-	24 Month	Class A

**Tender document and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <https://hptenders.gov.in> by the firm/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.**

**Key Dates:**

1.	Date of Online Publication	02.09.2021 11:00 HRS
2.	Document Download Start and End Date	02.09.2021 1130 HRS upto 14.09.2021 1730 HRS
3.	Bid Submission Start and End Date	02.09.2021 1130 HRS upto 14.09.2021 1800 HRS
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	15-9-2021 1100 Hrs
5.	Date of Technical Bid Opening,	15.09.2021 1130 HRS
6.	Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid	Date to be announced

**Executive Engineer**  
**HPPWD Jubbil Distt Shimla H.P**  
on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

HP / 3552/1-21-22

# HC asks DFS to conduct drill at Nehru Place

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday ordered the Delhi Fire Service to conduct a mock drill at Nehru Place – where a fire incident took place recently – on a working day and identify the shortcomings.

An Bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice Navin Chawla said the recommendations and suggestions made by the Delhi Fire Service will be considered by a committee, which was set up to keep a watch on any issue emerging in relation to Nehru Place.

“We have to ensure that the building is safe from all sides and the fire brigade has access to enter from all sides,” the Bench said, adding that the bylanes should also be cleared.

The court’s direction came while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) initiated by it after taking note of an incident of fire in a building at Nehru Place, District Commercial Centre.

# Afghans continue stir outside UNHCR office

## They refuse to budge from Vasant Kunj site, may go on hunger strike if demands not met

**JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ**  
NEW DELHI

People from Afghanistan on Tuesday continued their protest outside the Vasant Kunj office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the second day.

The protest slogans and cries for help got louder as they refused to budge from near the venue. They are also considering a hunger strike in case the UNHCR does not recognise those seeking refugee statuses, provide them with resettlement options and ensure their security.

**Visas expiring, no jobs**  
The protesters said they have no option but to stay put outside the UNHCR office as returning to Afghanistan is not an option now. With no job opportunities and their visas expiring soon, the protesters are a worried lot.

Sauraya, a single mother who came to India 10 years ago, said she earned a living in Delhi working as a translator. Currently, she is left without a job and is worried about how she will get through the next few



months as there is no help from back home as well.

"My refugee card provided by the UNHCR expires next month. I am unsure of what I am going to do. There are no job opportunities here and the chances of going to another country at this moment look slim. I am worried for my child's education and future," Ms. Saurya said.

Ahmar Zia Ghani, the head of the Afghan Solidarity Committee, said the protesters are asking the UNHCR to let them in to process

their refugee status or provide them with documentation to travel to another country.

**Seeking protection**

“We want UNHCR to protect us. Even if you receive a refugee card, you cannot find employment here. You have to apply for a long term Visa, which is not easy. We want a refugee status for all Afghans, a support letter from UNHCR that we can take to the Embassy of other countries here who are willing to welcome us,” Mr. Ghani

said. Another protester Zehra, who also worked as a translator in Delhi, said her family in Afghanistan have exhausted all sources of income as businesses have been shut under the Taliban regime.

"If the Taliban gets to know that their daughter is in India, they will attack my family and destroy my house. There is no employment at home and there is no employment here as well. We don't know how to get on with our lives," Ms. Zehra said.

# Govt., CAG told to respond to plea for audit of DJB accounts

## HC to hear matter again on October 4

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked the Delhi government and Delhi Jal Board to respond to a plea seeking direction to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to audit the accounts of DJB whose financial audit has allegedly not been carried out for the last six years.

An HC Bench also issued notice to CAG on the petition by Delhi BJP leader Harish Khurana and posted it for further hearing on October 4.

Mr. Khurana, in his plea, sought direction to DJB to maintain proper accounts and other relevant records and prepare an annual statement of the profit and loss with proper balance sheets from 2015 onwards as

prescribed under the law. The petition said in response to queries posted under the RTI has revealed that the copy of balance sheet for the year 2015-16 and onward is under preparation.

Senior Advocate Sanjoy Ghose, appearing for DJB, contended that the plea has been filed by an office-bearer of the rival party with political motives and submitted that the auditing was going on.

“It is mandatory to maintain financial accounts and conduct an annual audit of the accounts, in order to ascertain effective functioning of the state and local bodies. Maintaining financial accounts and conducting an annual audit of the accounts, help to secure accountability...,” the plea said.

**G.B. PANT NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
HIMALAYAN ENVIRONMENT (NIHE)**  
KOSI-KATARMAL, ALMORA - 263 643, UTTARAKHAND

**TENDER NOTICE No. - GBPNIHE/2021-22/06**

Please refer to Institute Tender notice No [GBPNIHE/2021-22/06](#) published in "The Hindu" (Delhi edition) dated 29.05.2021 from bidders who proposes to buy Institute old vehicle 32 Seater Swaraj Mazda Bus no UK-01-7669(2008 Model). The last date of receiving of Tender for vehicle is hereby extended up to 03.09.2021 at 03:00 p.m.The documents shall be submitted online at website <https://moefcc.eunizwazarde.com>.

The full details of equipment and documents are available in the Institute Website <http://gbpihed.gov.in>

**Office Superintendent**  
**Email: [store@gbpihed.nic.in](mailto:store@gbpihed.nic.in)**

## Plea in HC seeks mechanism to check age in liquor shops, bars

## Delhi govt. says petition is an attempt to stall policy

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Wednesday issued notice to the Delhi government on a petition seeking to put in place a robust mechanism for mandatory checking of age at liquor shops, bars and restaurants serving alcohol with government identity cards.

An HC Bench posted the case for further hearing on September 17.

The plea filed by Community Against Drunken Driving, against activist Prince Singhal, also sought direction to the Delhi government to res-

 Tools such as portable age verifier and a biometric matrix age checker can be placed at points of sale to check buyers below the age of 30 years

made in the Excise Rules, which permit the doorstep delivery of liquor, until a robust age verification mechanism is put in place.

Mr. Singhal further urged the court to restrain the Delhi government from giving effect to another amendment in the excise policy, which reduced the drinking age from 25 to 21 until a robust age verification mechanism is instituted.

Mr. Singhal said that he filed the current petition as the Delhi government has failed to take action

on the previous petition filed by him in 2017 where the court had directed the government to form a policy on age checking at alcohol points of sale.

“Since the Delhi government introduced the new excise policy and liberalized the alcohol policy by bringing down the legal drinking age and increasing alcohol availability making the alcohol policy almost at par with countries in the west, it has become even more pertinent to strictly monitor the age of consumer

is done in the western nations,” Mr. Singhal said.

The petition has urged that only government-issued documents such as Aadhaar card, Election I-card and a valid passport for foreign nationals should be used to verify age at points of sale.

“Tools such as portable age verifier and a biometric age check can be placed at points of sale to check buyers below the age of 30 years,” the plea said.

Senior advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Rahul Mehra, representing the Delhi government, contended that this plea was an attempt to stall the policy under one pretext or the other.

### Underage drinking

Mr. Singhal said that underage drinking has been consistently rising at 28% annually and one in every five people in AIIMS de-addiction centre are below 21 years.

The petition said was filed to address the serious need for a legislative enactment to combat excessive underage drinking, which often results in unruly and careless behavior by young people.







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- Should have financial leadership experience, competence in accounting, legal compliance and financial planning and proficient in the use of IT.

**Post 2: SENIOR MANAGER (Fund Raising)**

**Qualification:** MBA, preferably in Finance, from a reputed institution with over 15 years' of post qualification in auditing of which atleast 5 years at senior level in major organization in fund raising / experience in CSR activities.

- Should have financial leadership experience, competence in accounting, and financial planning and proficient in the use of IT.

**Post 3: SENIOR MANAGER (Accounts)**

**Qualification:** CA/CMA with over 15 yrs of post qualification in Finance & Accounts of a large organization and atleast 5 yrs at senior level.

- **Post 1 to 3 Age:** Not more than 55 years

**Post 4: MANAGER (Accounts)**

**Qualification:** CA/CMA with over 12 years' of post qualification in Finance and Accounts of a large organization and atleast 5 yrs at senior level.

- **Age:** Not more than 45 years

For all the above post Should have a commitment to the Vision and Mission of CMC Vellore

Apply with a hard copy of the bio-data, giving the names of atleast 2 referees (with contact details) along with the credentials to the General Superintendent, CMC, Vellore - 632004, by **10th September 2021** in addition a soft copy should also be send to [gso2@cmcvellore.ac.in](mailto:gso2@cmcvellore.ac.in)

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PRERNA Lakhi Bakshi, have changed my name to Perna Dilipkumar Lakhi, court decree dated 13/05/2021 for all future purposes

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

**Tender No. OP/20/08/2021-22 - for the replacement of existing old/outlived/burnt ACSR with ACSR 103mm2 in Ram Darbar, Phase-I & II for improvement of LD System under electricity 'op' S/ Divn. No-5, Indl. Area, Ph-I, U.T. Chandigarh.**

The subject cited tender due to be opened on dated i.e. 23.08.2021 at 16.00 Hrs. is hereby extended upto 31.08.2021 at 14.00 Hrs. for uploading and opening date i.e. 31.08.2021 at 16.00 Hrs. due to administrative reason.

All the other terms and conditions shall remain the same.

**Executive Engineer,  
Electricity (OP) Division No. 2  
Chandigarh, U.T.**



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4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Metro Station, Kaloorkochi-17, Kerala.  
Email: [info@csml.co.in](mailto:info@csml.co.in) Ph: 0484-2795700

TENDER NOTICE

Tender reference number : CSML/E&E/MAR/RFP/001-3  
Project Name: **Engineering, Procurement & Construction of Ernakulam Market, Kerala**

The RFP document can be downloaded from the following websites:  
[www.csml.co.in](http://www.csml.co.in), [www.kochimetro.org](http://www.kochimetro.org) and  
[www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in) Organization name: Kochi Metro Rail Ltd.

Arunachal students' body demands policy to protect native groups

'Non-locals availing of rights of STs'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A proposed Bill seeking equal rights to property for women in Arunachal Pradesh has refreshed the demand for a policy to safeguard the indigenous communities from children of non-locals "fraudulently availing rights" in the name of State's Scheduled Tribes.

The A.P. State Commission for Women had on Monday said it has submitted the draft proposal for the Arunachal Pradesh Marriage and Inheritance of Property Bill, 2021. "We have received memorandums from various organisations to scrap two sections of the draft propo-

sal," the Commission said. The clauses pertain to the movable and immovable property enjoyed by an Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe (APST) woman married to a non-APST man.

While pressure mounted on the Commission to remove the clauses, the All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union resented the "inordinate delay" by the government in publishing the draft proposal related to the existing system of issuing APST certificates to the offspring of non-APST men and APST women.

The AAPSU and other students' bodies demanded the early tabling of the Bill.

Sugarcane farmers in Punjab end stir after hike in SAP announced

State Agreed Price increased to ₹360 per quintal, says Amarinder Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Sugarcane farmers in Punjab on Tuesday withdrew their protest in response to Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's announcement of a ₹35 per quintal hike in the State Agreed Price (SAP) for the cane crushing season 2021-22, taking the SAP to ₹360 per quintal.

Poor finances

The matter was resolved during a meeting of farmers' union leaders with the Chief Minister here this afternoon, during which Capt. Amarinder, while agreeing to the SAP hike, said the State's fiscal situation had prevented



Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh with sugarcane farmers at a meeting in Chandigarh on Tuesday. •PTI

an adequate increase in the SAP for the past three to four years.

The farmers' union leaders had earlier pointed out that Punjab had failed to hike sugarcane SAP in pro-

portion to Haryana's over the same period, causing fiscal losses to them.

The Chief Minister said the farmers were not to be blamed for the problem, which had been caused by

Punjab's poor finances. While he was always with the farmers and wanted to do his best for their welfare, the State's fiscal crisis had prevented him for increasing the SAP earlier, he said, adding that balancing the needs of the farmers with those of the cooperative and private sugar mill owners was tough, given the prevailing fiscal situation.

The farmers' union leaders, representing the Sanjha Kisan Morcha that has been spearheading the sugarcane farmers' agitation for the past several days, thanked the Chief Minister for addressing their problem and announcing the hike.

Uttam Upadhyay's family in a shock over hate speech

Court to hear his anticipatory bail in Jantar Mantar case today

ANUJ KUMAR  
GHAZIABAD

In the Jhandapur colony of Ghaziabad, the name of Uttam Upadhyay is on everybody's lips. The dance teacher-turned-local right-wing leader is absconding since the video of his hate speech against Muslims at Jantar Mantar became viral on August 8. The hearing on his anticipatory bail is scheduled for August 25.

Advocate Ashish Jogi said he had applied for anticipatory bail because his client suffered from episodes of epileptic seizures leading to bipolar disorder. "No man in his senses could say such things. He was under the care of an AIIMS doctor in 2019.



Uttam Upadhyay's shop in Jhandapur colony of Ghaziabad. •ANUJ KUMAR

We have submitted the papers."

Interestingly, last Sunday, in an interaction with this correspondent, Uttam's elder brother Anuj didn't mention the medical condition. He had said the family members kept telling Uttam that one day he would get into trouble because of his 'rant against Muslims'. "It slipped out of my mind," said Anuj.

He informed Uttam last visited his house on August 9. "The family has no idea

where he is and the Delhi Police teams have checked our house and questioned us multiple times."

Anuj said he has Muslim friends and didn't know how he would face them. "Uttam used to attend RSS shakhas from a young age. He had attended a Bajrang Dal camp and had been the zonal deputy president of the BJP's Kisan Morcha. But this aggressive side has developed in the last couple of years since he started following Narsinghanand

Saraswati (controversial priest of Dasna temple), right-wing political commentator Pushpendra Kulshreshtha and Pinky Chaudhary of the Hindu Raksha Dal," he said.

Sanjeev Sharma, BJP's district president, denied that Uttam was a party member or held any post in sister organisation.

Death in family

Uttam's father Dinesh Kumar, who runs a stationery shop named after his absconding son, was also in a shock as the family was already mourning the death of their second son in a road accident last August. "We had been extra protective towards Uttam but he would not listen. He didn't tell us about the Jantar Mantar event. We came to know when relatives sent us videos." Anuj remembered one incident. "Some years ago, a cow had died in an accident

and was being taken away by the residents of the neighbouring Peer Colony. As the news spread, it enraged Uttam. He conducted its burial with the help of local police. Soon he started taking out 'Tiranga Yatras'. He had this belief that where Muslims are in minority, they preach brotherhood, but where they are in majority they try to dominate Hindus."

The family hailed from Muradnagar town of Ghaziabad and Mr. Kumar's father shifted to Jhandapur in the 1970s. One of his elder brothers is a member of the local BJP unit. "None of the party members has come in our support," he said.

Situated in Sahibabad's industrial area, Uttam's residence is not far from the spot where theatre icon Safdar Hashmi was killed by a mob comprising Congress workers on January 1, 1989, when Jhandapur was a village.

Assam civil servant held in DA case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

An Assam Civil Service officer was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly acquiring assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. An inquiry by the Chief Minister's Special Vigilance Cell revealed 89 landed properties registered in the name of Saibrah Rahman and his two wives. The market value of the properties was estimated to be more than ₹100 crore.

An official statement said assets of more than ₹6.38 cr. were found in his name. Most of these were acquired by illegal means, the statement added. The vigilance cell had received a complaint while the officer was posted as the Additional Dy. Commissioner of Dhubri district.

ENTERPRISE CONNECT

**Powergrid's Executive Director Shri Anish Anand awarded CIGRE'S Technical Council Award 2021**

The International Council on Large Electric Systems (CIGRE) France has presented the Technical Council Award for year 2021 to Shri Anish Anand, Executive Director, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), during CIGRE's Centennial Session held on 20th August, 2021. This prestigious award has been bestowed on two Indians prior to this, since its inception in 1993. CIGRE is a global non profit Organization comprising community of power system professionals having 60 National Committees spanning 90+ countries with more than 15000 members & 1250 member organizations. Shri Anish Anand is a prominent transmission line expert having more than 35 years of experience and has assumed various responsibilities & positions in POWERGRID over the years. He is also Chairman of CIGRE-India National Committee B-2 on Overhead lines and member of CIGRE Study Committee B2 & its SAG, CAG & TAG (Strategic, Customer & Technical Advisory Groups).

**PSPCL becomes top performer in PAT Cycle-II in among all Discoms of India**

PSPCL CMD Shri A.Venu Prasad disclosed that Punjab State Power Corporation Limited has created history and has become top performer in PAT (Perform, Achieve and Trade) Cycle-II in Discom sector among all Discoms of INDIA. CMD said that it has been decided by Ministry of Power to issue 80686 Energy saving certificates to PSPCL. While sharing details about (PAT) CMD said that Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) is flagship scheme under National Mission on Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE). He said that the first cycle of PAT scheme was completed in 2015 and second cycle has achieved total energy savings of 14.08 Million tonnes and also resulted in reduction of 66.01 Million Tonnes of Carbon dioxide reduction. He further said that under the PAT scheme, an energy audit of designated consumer (DC) is under taken to verify the baseline data (current level of efficiency) and thereafter emission targets are given. He also added that energy saving certificates (ESCCerts) are issued to those DISCOMS that have achieved excess over their targets. These ESCerts can be sold to DISCOMS that fail to achieve their targets to comply with energy consumption norms and are liable to financial penalty under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001

**Shri Azimul Haque joins Delhi Transco Ltd as Director (HR)**

Shri Azimul Haque, an IAS officer of AGMUT cadre has joined Delhi Transco Limited as Director (HR) recently. An alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, Shri Azimul Haque has done his B. Tech and M. Tech in Civil Engineering. After being selected through Indian Engineering Services (IES) - he joined Central Public Works Department (CPWD) where he worked for a brief period. Later, he switched over to Civil Services in 1999. During his illustrious administrative career spanning over three decades, Shri Haque has held many challenging postings. He started his career as Assistant Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) in Nicobar group of Islands under Andaman & Nicobar Administration. He has also served as Secretary to the Government of Arunachal Pradesh. In Delhi, he has served in various capacities in different departments. Some of his prominent postings include as Deputy Commissioner in MCD, District Magistrate in three districts, Special Secretary (Home), Chief Vigilance Officer in DUSIB and Director (Higher & Technical Education) etc. In addition to his responsibilities in Delhi Transco Limited, he has also been assigned the duties of Special Secretary (Power), Controller (Weight & Measurement) and Director (HR) - Indraprastha Power Generation Company Limited & Pragati Power Corporation.

**Bureau of Indian Standards organises Industry awareness workshop**

Bureau of Indian Standards, Northern Regional office organized an Industry Awareness Workshop under the Supreme guidance of Deputy Director General (North), Sh. Rajeev Sharma. In his address, DDGN explained in detail the importance of quality and standards to fulfill the visions of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India shared by Hon'ble PM. He further stated that it is our responsibility to work towards achievement of these objectives. Representatives of several Industries attended the workshop and emphasized the significance of National and International standards to achieve the goals of safety, quality and reliability. Scientists of BIS explained the Standard Formulation Process, Conformity Assessment, Registration Process and Testing Process in detail.

**Plantation drive by North Central Railway organized in Railgon Subedarganj**

Plantation Organized under the leadership of General Manager North Central Railway and President, North

A Business Initiative

Central Railway Women's Welfare Organization. North Central Railway is constantly striving towards fulfilling its social responsibility. In order to discharge its social obligations, NCR is adopting and actively contributing towards, environmental friendly concerns such as, solar power plants are being set up, research and implementation for the use of alternative fuel is underway. Efforts are being made to use more and more energy efficient electrical appliances, optimal utilization of water resources in day to day working, setting up of water recycling plants, and expansion of green cover through plantation on vacant railway land. A massive plantation program was organized at Railway Colony - Railgaon at Subedarganj. The program was organized under the leadership of General Manager North Central Railway Shri Pramod Kumar and President, North Central Railway Women Welfare Organization Smt. Poonam Kumar. Under this program 50 Saplings were planted in Park No.-2. All the Principal Heads of Departments of North Central Railway and office bearers and members of North Central Railway Women's Welfare Organization participated enthusiastically in this program. On this occasion, General Manager Shri Pramod Kumar motivated everyone to plant more and more saplings and conserve them till the full development of the planted sapling. It is worth to be mentioned that North Central Railway has set a target of planting 8 lakh saplings- Prayagraj Division-3.60 lakh, Jhansi Division-2.60 and Agra Division-1.80 saplings during the current financial year 2021-22. Under this, about 75000 saplings have already been planted so far. Principal Chief Engineer North Central Railway Shri S.K. Mishra informed that NCR is actively taking steps for plantation & more such plantation drives will be conducted from time to time. Apart from this, 3.7 million units of electricity have been generated through solar power plants in the first quarter of the current financial year thus saving about Rs.1.5 crore in electricity bills. Apart from this, about 38 lakh rupees have been saved by using energy efficient electrical appliances. Digitization of the official working is being done on priority basis to reduce the use of paper in day to day work. Portals like e-office, GeM and e-DAS are being widely used.

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that an one male person was found dead by train accident at Elec Pole No. 04/18 DN Rly Line near V.N. Puri Halt, Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi dated **19.08.2021**. In this regard a **DD No. 15A**, dated **19.08.2021**, has been registered at **P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi**. The description of the dead body is given as under **Name:** Unkonwn, **S/o:** Unkonwn, **R/O:** Unkonwn, **Age:** About 30-35 years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Injury Mark:** Head Injury. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

**SHO**  
**P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-28711697, 28714802,**  
**DP/220/RLY/2021 8750871308**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male **Age:** 45-50 years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Oval, **Build:** Weak, **Identification:** old healed amputated distal phalynx on left middle finger, old white checkard shirt, grey and black colour pant, was found unconscious in the area of **P.S. IP Estate, Delhi**. He was admitted in Lok Nayak Hospital, Delhi, where doctor declare him brought dead. In this regard a FIR No. 215 dated 09.08.2021 u/s 302 IPC has been registered at **P.S. IP Estate, Delhi**. The dead body has been preserved for identification in the mortuary of MAMC Hospital, Delhi

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

**SHO : P.S. I.P. Estate, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-23370928, 8750870426**  
**DP/957/CD/21**

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one lady **Namely:** Arti, **W/o:** Sunder Singh, **R/o:** H.No. B-68, Ph-02, Metro Vihar, Holambi Kalan, Delhi-110082, **Age:** 21 Years, **Height:** 5'2", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Build:** Medium, **Wearing:** Red Colour Suit and Salwar and Hawaii Chappal in feet has been missing since 03.06.2021 from her house. In this regard **DD No. 53A, Dated 03.06.2021**, has been lodged at **P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing lady please inform the undersigned.

**Web-site :** <http://cbi.nic.in>  
**E-Mail ID:** [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
**Fax:** 011-25011334  
**DP/1201/ON/2021**

**SHO**  
**P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi**  
**Ph.: 011-27787592, 27787593 & 7065036324**



IN BRIEF



Water dispute: Bommai to discuss with legal team
BENGALURU
Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will convene a meeting of Karnataka's legal team and experts on inter-State river water sharing disputes on Thursday in New Delhi.

Mild tremors felt in parts of A.P. and Tamil Nadu
VIJAYAWADA
An earthquake of magnitude 5.1 occurred in the Bay of Bengal off the Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu coasts at 12.35 p.m. on Tuesday, the National Centre for Seismology has reported.

Three killed as bus rams stationary truck
NALGONDA
Three passengers were killed when the bus in which they were travelling rammed into a stationary truck on the Narketpally-Addanki State highway in the Miryalaguda Town-I police limits of Telangana on Tuesday.

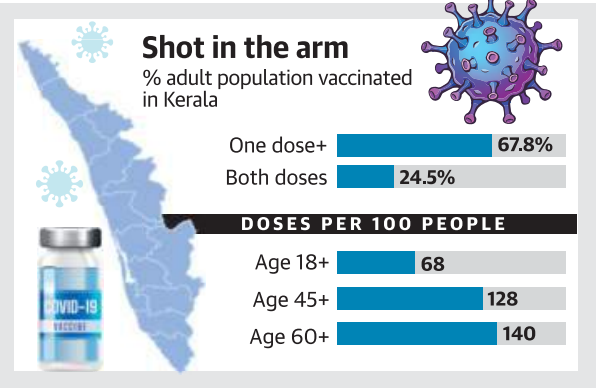
Three held for PDS rice pilferage in Hyderabad
HYDERABAD
Kandukur police apprehended three persons for allegedly pilfering 6.65 tonnes of rice meant for public distribution. The accused A. Satyanarayana Reddy, and drivers Vijay and Vamsi were apprehended during a joint operation by police and Civil Supplies officials.

Kerala to ensure one jab for all above 18

Health Minister sets September-end deadline, directs district officials to strengthen vaccination drive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With COVID-19 cases continuing to rise in Kerala, Health Minister Veena George called an emergency meeting of senior health officials here on Tuesday to review preparations for a possible third wave.



Better distribution
All districts should strengthen vaccination campaigns by preparing a clear plan of action and ensure that there are no delays in vaccine distribution, the Minister said.

of vaccination. The Centre has promised to deliver 1.11 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccine to the State, said Ms. George.
The Minister said that as all indications pointed to a surge in cases after Onam, hospitals need to be prepared to meet likely increased caseload.

Why 84-day gap between vaccine doses: Kerala HC

Court asks Centre to clarify reason

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to clarify the basis on which the 84-day gap between two doses of the Covishield vaccine had been prescribed.

following the 84-day gap, came up for hearing.
The court said if the gap was set based on the availability of vaccines, those willing to buy it could be allowed to take the second shot before the completion of the prescribed days of gap.

The court said that it wanted to know whether the stipulation of the 84-day interval between the two doses of Covishield was based on the availability of the vaccine or its efficacy.
Justice P.B. Suresh Kumar sought the clarification when a writ petition by KiteX Garments Ltd., Kochi, seeking a directive to the State government to allow it to administer the second dose of the Covishield vaccine to its workers without

In fact, hundreds of persons who were ready to pay for vaccines were waiting for completion of the gap days.

Centre's policy
The State government submitted that it followed the Central government's vaccine policy, and unless the Centre altered its policy, it could not allow narrowing down the gap.

7 lakh victims of AgriGold get relief

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday credited nearly ₹667 crore into the bank accounts of over seven lakh persons towards compensation for the deposits (below ₹10,000 and ₹10,000 to ₹20,000) made by them in the AgriGold Group.

With this, the total amount of compensation paid to 10.40 lakh victims of AgriGold scam so far reached approximately ₹906 crore.

Increase testing: Pinarayi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has directed that COVID-19 testing be maximised in districts where the vaccination coverage is low. At a review meeting held here on Tuesday, it was

decided that in districts which had already achieved a good vaccination coverage of at least one dose, testing be restricted to only those who display influenza-like symptoms.
In rest of the districts, extensive testing would be done.

Ragini, Sanjjanaa took drugs, test confirms

'Hair follicle tests valid for up to a year'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

After a gap of 10 months, two actors are in the dock again in the case that put the spotlight on drug use in the Kannada film industry. Central Crime Branch (CCB) officials said they had come up with stronger evidence against the accused as the hair follicle test conducted by the Central Forensic Science Laboratory (CFSL) in Hyderabad confirmed drug consumption by actors Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjjanaa Galrani.



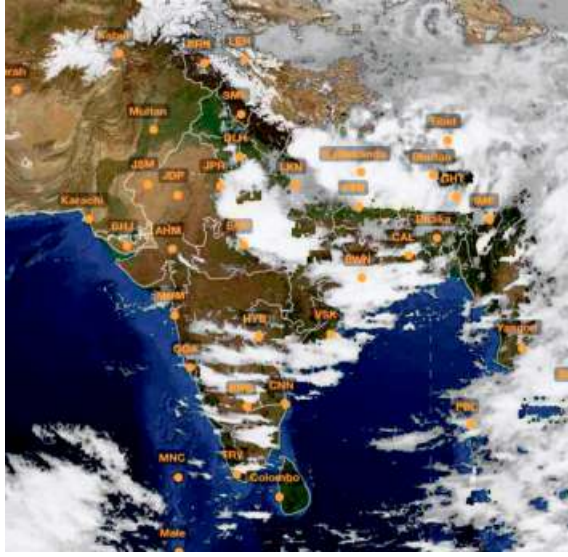
A file photo of actors Ragini Dwivedi & Sanjjanaa Galrani.

According to officials, as the urine and blood sample tests were not conclusive, the Central Crime Branch collected hair follicles and sent them to the CFSL, Hyd-

derabad, in October 2020. This is the first time that hair samples were sent for tests in a drugs case investigation. Drug traces can be found in hair for up to one year, officials said.
The CCB may summon the duo again. The two are currently out on bail.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand, east Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Kerala and Mahe

Table with 3 columns: CITY, RAIN, MAX, MIN. Lists weather data for various cities including Agartala, Ahmedabad, Aizawl, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Gangtok, Goa, Guwahati, Hubballi, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur, Kochi, Kohima, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Kurnool, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangaluru, Mumbai, Mysuru, New Delhi, Patna, Port Blair, Puducherry, Raipur, Ranchi, Shillong, Shimla, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruchi, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam.

Table with 3 columns: CITY, SO2, NO2, CO, PM2.5, PM10, CODE. Lists air quality data for various cities including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Pune, Visakhapatnam.

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Maharashtra's fresh cases exceed recoveries; 119 fatalities reported

Active COVID-19 cases rise again to reach 49,752; State's fatality rate stands at 2.11%

STAFF REPORTER
PUNE

After a steady recovery spree, Maharashtra's case surge marginally outweighed the number of patients discharged on Tuesday, with 4,355 new COVID-19 cases being reported against 4,240 recoveries. The active case tally reached 49,752.

As many as 119 deaths pushed the State's cumulative fatalities to 1,36,355. The case fatality rate stands at 2.11%.

The total cases have reached 64,34,649 while its cumulative recoveries have risen to 62,43,034 with the recovery rate standing at 96.93%.

"Of a total 5,26,32,810 lab-

Vaccination centre opened for transgenders, LGBT community

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

A special civic-run COVID-19 vaccination centre for transgenders and those from the LGBT community was inaugurated on Tuesday at Vikhroli in Mumbai.

In the first few hours of

the centre, located in Saint Joseph School under N Ward, being operational, some 100 transgenders and LGBT community members received vaccine doses, an official said. Health Minister Rajesh Tope inaugurated the centre.

oratory samples tested thus far, 64,34,649 (with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 12.22%) have returned positive with more than 1.93 lakh samples being

tested in the last 24 hours," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said.

Pune reported nearly 900 new cases, taking its total case tally to 11,11,790 while

27 deaths pushed the toll over 18,600. As per district authorities, the active cases stand at a little over 7,700.

Mumbai recorded 272 new cases to take its total tally to 7,41,661 while the active count stood at 3,073. A single death took the toll to 15,952.

Ahmednagar added 681 fresh cases and 13 fatalities, taking its total cases to 3,03,944 of whom 4,601 are active. The district's death toll has gone up to 6,469.

Satara registered 515 new cases and 24 deaths to take the total case tally to 2,34,891 of whom 5,472 are active, while the death toll climbed to 5,864.

Neighbouring Sangli logged 525 new cases and 16 deaths.

SBI organises vaccination camp

STAFF REPORTER
MUMBAI

As many as 530 doses of Covishield, a COVID-19 vaccine, were administered at a vaccination camp recently held in Mumbai.

Residents of Macchimar Nagar (mainly fisherfolk) near Badhwar Park benefited from this camp organised by the State Bank of India (SBI) under its corporate social responsibility initiative. A team from Apollo Clinic administered the shots. This camp was organised with the help of local police station and community leaders, and SBI officials thanked them for their cooperation.

Muslim family assaulted in Ajmer

Some men kicked, beat victims, told them to leave country

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Barely 24 hours after the attack on a Muslim bangle seller by a frenzied mob in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, a family of destitute Muslims, seeking alms, was brutally thrashed by some persons in a residential colony in Rajasthan's pilgrim town of Ajmer and told to "go to Pakistan".

A video clip of the incident, which went viral on social media, showed a man slapping and kicking the members of the family multiple times and humiliating them because of their religious identity. "This is not the place for you. Go to Pakistan. You will get alms only there," an assailant is heard

telling the victims in the video footage. The incident led to widespread outrage across the State and caused a major embarrassment to the ruling Congress.

The group of youths, who caught hold of the destitute persons, were enraged by their entry into the Hindu dominated neighbourhood. One of the assailants repeatedly kicked a boy on his head as he crouched on the street. The family of victims shown in the video, including a woman, are yet to be identified.

Five persons arrested after their identification in the video were released on bail by the court, as they were charged under a lesser pro-

vision of Section 151 of CrPC. Following the demand raised by Ajmer city's Muslim community, the police on Tuesday registered a case under the provisions of Indian Penal Code and launched investigation.

While the police said the victims, who apparently belonged to Uttar Pradesh, were being traced, Muslim social activists took exception to the initial laxity of police which resulted in the accused getting bail. Police registered the case under the stringent provisions only after the community members approached the senior officers with the plea that their religious sentiments had been hurt.

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Caste counts

A vision for a just India, and not partisan political gains, should inspire a fresh census

The clamour for a fresh caste census is getting louder in the country. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar led a delegation of 10 political parties of the State to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday. No political party in the country has publicly opposed the demand as yet, and most have supported the call. Mr. Modi listened to the delegation but did not open his mind on the topic. Predictably, there will be more political mobilisation on the issue. The Bharatiya Janata Party has the advantage of being in the saddle and could time an announcement best suited for itself. The last time India’s population was enumerated on the basis of caste was in 1931, when it was under colonial rule. There is a strong argument that the colonial census was about creating and reinforcing caste and religious categories in India rather than recording them in a benign manner. Effective governance requires robust data on the governed. The creation of categories is itself a political act. Indian politics and the governance structure are all premised on categories that were firmed up during colonialism. But the salience of caste as the fundamental marker of identity for an Indian has only grown since Independence.

As the democratisation of society deepens, questions are being raised regarding the status of Dalits, tribal communities and a large section of the population that is characterised in the Constitution as Socially and Educationally Backward Classes. Political representation of these communities has increased and their participation in government jobs has risen. It is assumed that particular groups within each category have benefited disproportionately from political and job reservations, and there are demands for sub-quotas. Many communities are demanding inclusion in one category or the other. Some communities are feeling short-changed by the affirmative action steps of the state. With the role of the Government as a big employer diminishing, there is a demand for affirmative action in the private sector. All these questions are being debated without adequate and reliable data, leading to conflicting and often misleading claims. Supporters of a caste census cite these reasons, while sceptics fear it will only widen social rifts. They also point to the multitude of practical problems such an exercise will encounter. What is not debatable, however, is the fact that inequitable distribution of power and wealth endangers the stability of any society. Partisan political gains should not be the motivation for a fresh census. A renewed vision for a just and united India, where all divides are reduced must guide the discussion on a caste census.

In free fall

Unless Lebanon sets aside sectarian politics, it will be unable to have a stable government

Lebanon, which has been battling multiple crises for the last couple of years, is on the brink of an economic collapse. The meltdown that forced the country to default on its bonds in 2019 for the first time since its independence in 1943 was aggravated by last year’s Beirut port blast. The explosion that killed over 200 people and wounded about 7,000 others on August 4, 2020 is estimated to have caused damage worth \$15 billion. The blast has also deepened the country’s political crisis as Lebanon has been ruled by a caretaker government ever since. The Mediterranean country is now reeling under a severe economic downturn, medicine, food and fuel shortages and rising crimes. Recently, its central bank stated that it could no longer finance fuel imports at subsidised rates citing depleted reserves. Fuel shortages have led to chaotic scenes across the country. Last week, at least 28 people were killed in the country’s north when a fuel tank exploded while locals were scrambling for its fuel. UNICEF has warned that millions of Lebanese are facing a severe water shortage. The economic crisis has pushed more than half the population into poverty, while the currency value has fallen by 90%. According to the World Bank, Lebanon’s GDP per capita fell by 40% in dollar terms between 2018 and 2020, while real GDP contracted by 20.3% in 2020. The Bank assesses that even with quick reforms, it will take years before the economy gets back to its pre-crisis size.

Since the Beirut blast, President Michel Aoun appointed three Prime Minister-designates. Two of them stepped down after having failed to form a government. According to Lebanon’s Constitution, the President should be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni, and the Parliament Speaker a Shia. Political parties are divided largely along sectarian lines. The PM-designates, who were Sunni politicians or technocrats, often failed to bring together the country’s different political factions, including that of President Aoun. In late July, former Prime Minister Najib Mikati was tasked with forming the next government. He is yet to conclude talks with other political blocs. With the country facing a severe fuel shortage, Hezbollah, the powerful Shia militia-cum-political party, has moved to import fuel directly from Iran. Hezbollah says it is trying to ease the country’s fuel situation while its opponents say the move is aimed at drawing Lebanon further into the Iranian orbit and could be counterproductive as oil deals with Iran could attract sanctions from the U.S. Lebanon’s politicians have sought fresh loans from the IMF, but the fund will release money only if the government commits itself to reforms. For that, Lebanon has to form a government first. Lebanon’s political elites should realise that the country is facing a once-in-a-century crisis, set aside their sectarian politics, and come together to form a stable government. If not, nothing can stop the country’s free fall.

The ugly face of a crime-fighting move

The implementation of the National Automated Facial Recognition System in India lacks adequate safeguards



FAIZAN MUSTAFA & UTKARSH LEO

In the monsoon session of Parliament, no meaningful debate could take place due to the controversy over Pegasus, the spyware. Some Indian journalists, civil society activists and political leaders, and a top election strategist were possibly under surveillance. There has been no categorical denial by the Government and that the Israeli software was not purchased. But above this, there is a much bigger issue of the privacy of the entire citizenry which has not received much public attention. On June 23, 2021, the Joint Committee examining the Personal Data Protection Bill (2019) was granted a fifth extension by Parliament (<https://bit.ly/388uk4Z>). While informational privacy is not the Government’s priority, it has been simultaneously exploring the potential of facial recognition technology.

A prying technology

To empower the Indian police with information technology, India approved implementation of the National Automated Facial Recognition System (NAFRS) to “facilitate investigation of crime and detection of criminals” in a quick and timely manner. On its implementation, it will function as a national-level search platform that will use facial recognition technology: to facilitate investigation of crime or for identifying a person of interest (e.g., a criminal) regardless of face mask, makeup, plastic surgery, beard or hair extension. The technology is absolutely intrusive: computer algorithms map unique facial-landmarks (biometric data) such as shape of the cheekbones, contours of the lips, distance from forehead to chin, and convert these into a numerical code – termed a faceprint. Thus, for the purposes of ‘verification’ or ‘identification’, the system

compares the faceprint generated with a large existing database of faceprints (typically available to law enforcement agencies) through a database on driver’s licence or police mugshots). But the real problem is that facial recognition does not return a definitive result – it ‘identifies’ or ‘verifies’ only in probabilities (e.g., a 70% likelihood that the person shown on an image is the same person on a watch list). Though the accuracy of facial recognition has improved over the years due to modern machine-learning algorithms, the risk of error and bias still exists. For instance, there is a possibility of producing ‘false positives’ – a situation where the algorithm finds an incorrect match, even when there is none – resulting in wrongful arrest. Moreover, much research suggests facial recognition software is based on pre-trained models. Therefore, if certain types of faces (such as female, children, ethnic minorities) are under-represented in training datasets, then this bias will negatively impact its performance.

As NAFRS will collect, process, and store sensitive private information: facial biometrics for long periods; if not permanently – it will impact the right to privacy. Accordingly, it is crucial to examine whether its implementation is arbitrary and thus unconstitutional, i.e., is it ‘legitimate’, ‘proportionate to its need’ and ‘least restrictive’? What is its potential for abuse and misuse with the pending-status of the Personal Data Protection Bill (PDPB), and the absence of clear guidelines for its deployment? How does it impact other fundamental rights such as the right to dissent? Should NAFRS be banned or simply regulated?

The Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States uses facial recognition technology for potential investigative leads; police forces in England use facial recognition to tackle serious violence. In other cases, countries such as China use facial recognition for racial profiling and mass surveillance – to track Uighur Muslims. Policing and law and order being State subjects, some Indian States



have started the use of new technologies without fully appreciating the dangers involved.

Test of ‘proportionality’

Facial recognition being an intrusive technology has an impact on the right to privacy. The Constitution of India does not explicitly mention the right to privacy. However, a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, in *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India* (2017) recognised it as a precious fundamental right. Since no fundamental right can be absolute and thus even in respect of privacy, the state may impose reasonable restrictions on the grounds of national integrity, security of the state, public order, etc.

The Supreme Court, in the K.S. Puttaswamy judgment provided a three-fold requirement (which was reiterated in *Anuradha Bhasin* while examining denial of the ‘right to Internet’ to the people of Kashmir) to safeguard against any arbitrary state action. Accordingly, any encroachment on the right to privacy requires the existence of ‘law’ (to satisfy legality of action); there must exist a ‘need’, in terms of a ‘legitimate state interest’; and, the measure adopted must be ‘proportionate’ (there should be a rational nexus between the means adopted and the objective pursued) and it should be ‘least intrusive.’ Unfortunately, NAFRS fails each one of these tests.

First, NAFRS lacks ‘legitimacy’. It does not stem from any statutory enactment (such as the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill 2018 proposed to identify offenders or an executive order of the Central Government. Rather, it was merely approved by the Cabinet Committee on Eco-

Climate change, a catalyst for Arctic cooperation

Environmental challenges should be a priority for all players in the region, outweighing military and economic issues



TATIANA BELOUSOVA

It is tempting to view the current geopolitics of the Arctic through the lenses of the ‘great power competition’ and inevitable conflict of interests. Interestingly, the current geopolitical scenario is, to a certain extent, mirrored in the Arctic region as well. This is mainly about the growing tensions between North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and Russia.

There are eight countries that have direct access to the Arctic resources, i.e., Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States. In 2013, six Observers joined the Council, including China, Japan, India, Italy, South Korea, and Singapore, bringing their total number to 13.

Security concerns

By the end of the Cold War, the geopolitical tensions and security concerns in the Arctic were almost forgotten. In October 1987, during a visit to the Kola Peninsula, Mikhail Gorbachev, then Secretary-General of the Soviet Communist Party, acknowledged the end of the Cold War era and promoted a ‘zone of peace’ in the Arctic.

The perceived ‘harmony’ was broken in 2007, when the Russian explorers planted their flag on the seabed 4,200m (13,779ft) below the North Pole to articulate Moscow’s claims in the Arctic. This move was certainly viewed as provocative by other Arctic States, and the Canadian Foreign Minister, Peter MacKay, said “this is not the 15th century”, and “countries cannot just go around, plant their flags, and claim the territories”.

The regional tension increased after the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2014. Consequently, relations between the U.S. and Russia reached their lowest point again. The rhetoric of the bilateral mistrust was transferred ‘up to the North’ and created anxiety among other stakeholders in the Arctic.

After the events in Ukraine in 2014, Russia has been increasingly viewed as a ‘rule-breaker’, ‘revisionist power’ and an ‘untrustworthy player’. Besides, Russia’s intention to re-establish the military might of its Northern Fleet also creates the security concerns and features prominently in the Norwegian foreign policy. On the other hand, some Russian military experts believe that the Barents Sea can serve as the launching area for a western seaborne attack; therefore, the Russian Navy should ensure the readiness of its anti-submarine forces in the Arctic Ocean.

The eco-dimension

In the last decades, we have been confronted with the multiple



THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

‘wake-up calls’ that are related to climate change; and these calls are getting louder. The summer of 2021 would be recorded in history as one of the most devastating seasons of our times, when ferocious floods and wildfires were destroying communities in many parts of the world. Due to the environmental transformations, natural catastrophes occur unexpectedly – on an unprecedented scale, and in unusual geographic locations. For example, the extreme heat in North America or wildfires in Russian Siberia (Yakutia), where the winter temperature can be below minus 40°. The Arctic region also bears the brunt of climate change. At the same time, it provides a platform for scientific research that can help to get to the bottom of natural calamities around the world.

Keeping in mind the existential threats, the environmental challenges should be an absolute priority for all players in the Arctic region. These considerations should outweigh military and economic issues and unite countries for the sake of eliminating the potential (and real) dangers attribut-

ed to climate change. According to The World Climate and Security Report 2020 (<https://bit.ly/3mrTmo5>; the first report of the Expert Group of the International Military Council on Climate and Security, or the IMCCS), ‘the Arctic is warming nearly twice as fast as the rest of the planet with consecutive record-breaking warm years since 2014... The Arctic is likely to begin experiencing ice-free summers within the next decade, with summers likely to be completely free of sea ice by mid-century’.

There should be concerted efforts to minimise the adverse effects on the fragile Arctic ecosystem. A good example to be highlighted is the recent case of a Norwegian drilling project; it was taken to the European court by the group of environmentalists. Their main argument is that the negative impact of mining activities can spread beyond the continental shelf of Norway.

The geopolitical vs strategic The environmental transformation and rapid ice melting have also opened up new opportunities in the region, which includes trans-Arctic shipping routes. These opportunities have inevitably attracted all stakeholders in the region, both the Arctic and non-Arctic states. China, for example, with its self-proclaimed status of a ‘near Arctic state’, has been actively engaged in various projects across the region.

the use of facial recognition technology by South Wales as unlawful in the absence of clear guidelines. In the United States, the Facial Recognition and Biometric Technology Moratorium Act of 2020 was introduced in the Senate to prohibit biometric surveillance without statutory authorisation. Similarly, privacy watchdogs in the European Union have called for a ban on facial recognition.

Unchecked pathway

At present, the Information Technology Act 2000, and the Rules framed thereunder offer broad powers to the Central government to infringe privacy in the name of the sovereignty, integrity or the security of the state. The Personal Data Protection Bill 2019 is not much different. It gives the central government unchecked power for the purposes of surveillance – it can exempt any agency of the Government from the application of the proposed law in the name of legitimate state interest.

Without adequate safeguards such as penalties that are dissuasive and sufficiently deterrent, police personnel may routinely use facial recognition technology. In sum, even if facial recognition technology is needed to tackle modern-day criminality in India, without accountability and oversight, facial recognition technology has strong potential for misuse and abuse. In the interest of civil liberties and to save democracy from turning authoritarian, it is important to impose a moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology till we enact a strong and meaningful data protection law, in addition to statutory authorisation of NAFRS and guidelines for deployment. If the Government has the will, it can get any law passed with god speed just like the recently passed 20 Bills including the OBC Bill or three Farm Bills.

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The importance of the Arctic region for China mostly stems from its energy security issues and the need to diversify shipping lanes. Transport routes from China to Europe through the Arctic are not only much shorter but also free from the challenges associated with the Malacca Strait and South China Sea. In the latter case, China will continue facing a backlash from many Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members, supported by U.S. forces.

Given the significance of the region, the Arctic will continue to draw increased attention. Apart from pursuing national interests, participating nations should also be concerned about the future developments in the region and their larger implications for humanity.

Hence, they should refrain from mutual provocations, excessive militarisation, and *quid pro quo* tactics. All the Arctic actors should have a long-term vision and strategic goals as compared to immediate short-term gains. Instead of creating a potential battleground that is reminiscent of the Cold War, the parties concerned should utilise their expertise and create the required synergy to achieve shared goals. Climate change and its dramatic consequences must be a catalyst for Arctic cooperation.

*Tatiana Belousova is Assistant Professor, Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA), O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to [letters@thehindu.co.in](mailto:letters@thehindu.co.in) must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Caste census

The Bihar Chief Minister’s meticulously crafted mission, an all-party contingent, to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi to press for a caste-based census is timely (Page 1, August 24). Since the last such census was undertaken, the country’s population has grown exponentially. No political party that has ruled since Independence has thought it wise to take up the job for reasons best known to them. The creation of a comprehensive database on

the numerical strength of each caste in the country will only enable the Government to have a clear picture as well so as to evolve appropriate laws and pieces of legislation to extend all mandated welfare-related schemes.

V. JOHAN DHANAKUMAR, Chennai

Opposition unity

The efficacy and success of Opposition unity in India will be found wanting as long as the BJD, TRS, YSRCP, BSP and SP are reluctant to join forces

(Editorial page, “Bonding rites”, August 24). Drafting a mutually acceptable common minimum programme will be a Herculean and thankless task for the Opposition front. Another seemingly insurmountable obstacle will be the taming of the ‘inflated’ egos of the leaders, all wanting to be designated as the Front’s leader or prime ministerial candidate. How far the Congress and the strong regional parties are willing to adopt a policy of ‘give and take’ will be another

ticklish issue. If the parties want to build a credible front against the BJP and entertain any realistic chance of succeeding, they will all have to make selfless sacrifices in order to achieve the common and larger goal.

C.G. KURIAKOSE, Mallippara, Kothamangalam, Kerala

MPs and Bill scrutiny

The Chief Justice of India’s assumption is that better the quality of parliamentary debates, the more unambiguous the laws are. This is a debatable

correlation. The question is do our Members of Parliament have the knowledge and expertise to scrutinise bills clause by clause and pick out ambiguities if any? They do not seem to attach any importance to the law’s semantic clarity. Even if the draft bills are circulated in advance the MPs do not seem to be keen to do their

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The story regarding Finance Minister’s direction to Infosys about the new Income Tax filing portal (Aug. 24, 2021) had erroneously referred to Pravin Rao as the CEO of Infosys. He is the COO.

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homework of scrutiny. Parliamentary committees can check the law’s indeterminateness only if the MPs can discuss the Bills in a non-partisan manner. Maybe, knowledgeable citizens can play a role in drafting laws.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN, Thiruvananthapuram



# The legal challenges in recognising the Taliban

India can deal with the Taliban government because it is a de facto one, not because it is a legitimate one



PRABHASH RANJAN

The Taliban's horrific takeover of Afghanistan has triggered a new debate in international law on the issue of recognising an entity that claims to be the new government of a state. This debate assumes significance because China and Russia, two of the five permanent United Nations Security Council members, have seemingly shown readiness to recognise a Taliban-led government whereas countries like Canada have opposed it. Questions of recognition do not arise when change of government within a state occurs when political power is transferred through legal means. However, things are different when the change of government happens through extra-legal methods like ousting the sitting government using unconstitutional means. The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan squarely falls in this category.

Recognition of governments under international law is vital for several reasons. It is important to know who the governing authority of the state is, who has the responsibility for effectually carrying out domestic and international legal obligations ranging from pursuing diplomatic relations to the protection of human rights, and so on.

### Government versus state

A salient point to remember is that recognition of the government should not be confused with recognition of the state under international law. As Malcolm Shaw, the celebrated international lawyer, writes, "a change in government, however accomplished, does not affect the identity of the State itself." Thus, in the current debate, the issue is not about the recognition of Afghanistan, whose legal personality remains intact. Whether countries recognise the Taliban regime or not will depend on their political considerations and geo-strategic interests, as evident from the Chinese and Russian overtures. However, certain criteria have evolved in international law on deciding the issue of recogni-



A Taliban fighter walks past a beauty salon in Kabul where the images of women have been defaced using spray paint. ■ AFP

tion of governments and these need to be prudently looked at.

### Tests in international law

Traditionally, the test used in international law to make a decision about the recognition of a new government is that of 'effectiveness'. According to this principle, to recognise a government means to determine whether it effectively controls the state it claims to govern. In other words, it means to determine whether the government has effective control over the state's territory (or a part of it), a majority of the population, national institutions, the banking and monetary system, etc. with a reasonable possibility of permanence. The inherent assumption is that effective control means the people of the country accept, or at least acquiesce to, the new regime; if they did not, they would overthrow it. Under this doctrine, it is immaterial how the new government occupied office (whether through civil war, revolution, or a military coup). Since there is hardly any doubt that the Taliban now effectively controls Afghanistan, as per this test, it would

be recognised as Afghanistan's government for international law and thus, international relations.

A doctrine competing with the effective control theory is that of democratic legitimacy. According to this doctrine, recognition of a government also depends on whether it is the legitimate representative of the people it claims to govern. So, governments that capture power through non-democratic means – notwithstanding their exercising de facto control over the country – should not be recognised by states. The end of the Cold War, the subsequent spread of democracy in the world, and the growing demand for universal respect for human rights gave an impetus to this doctrine in the last three decades.

This doctrine has led many countries to bestow de jure recognition (legal recognition) on governments in exile in place of governments exercising effective control. Two recent examples can be offered. First, many countries recognised Yemen's Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi government in exile since 2015 on the ground that the rebellious separatists acquired

power in Yemen through illegal means. Second, the Nicolás Maduro government in Venezuela is not recognised by several countries due to the alleged lack of democratic legitimacy.

The Taliban regime, despite exercising effective control over Afghanistan, lacks democratic legitimacy. Thus, it would fail to be recognised as the legitimate representative of Afghanistan if the doctrine of democratic legitimacy is applied. Things would become even more complicated if the Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani, who fled the country when the Taliban entered Kabul, were to announce a government in exile.

However, some international lawyers like Erika de Wet doubt whether the doctrine of democratic legitimacy, notwithstanding its worth and instinctive appeal to the champions of liberal democracy, has become a binding part of customary international law when it comes to the recognition of governments. In other words, governments may rely on the doctrine of democratic legitimacy to refuse de jure recognition of the Taliban. Nevertheless, there is no binding legal obligation on countries to withhold recognition of the Taliban on the ground that it does not enjoy democratic legitimacy. Thus, if Russia and China were to formally recognise the Taliban regime due to its effective control of Afghanistan, it would be consistent with international law.

### Options for India

Given the Taliban's brutal past, its extremist ideology, and profound absence of democratic legitimacy, India is within its right to withhold de jure recognition of the Taliban regime. Nonetheless, it will have to find a way to engage with the Taliban given India's huge investments in Afghanistan and stakes in the South Asian region. India should adopt a clear policy that it will deal with the Taliban simply because it is the de facto government, not because it is a legitimate one. This principle should be followed for bilateral relations and also for multilateral dealings such as within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Prabhash Ranjan will soon join Jindal Global Law School, O.P. Jindal Global University, as Professor and Vice Dean. Views are personal

# A surfeit of sero surveys

While they are useful in detecting the prevalence of antibodies, frequent sero surveys are expensive and futile



K.R. ANTONY

A sero surveillance survey ascertains the prevalence of a past infectious disease in a population. In the case of COVID-19, it helps to detect whether antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 are present in a population. The antibodies are like evidence in a crime scene and the virus is like a criminal. But to prevent the criminal from repeating the crime, we need to conduct RT-PCR and Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT). With this information, we can isolate the individual and prevent further infection and also manage complications of the infection if they arise.

### Benefits of sero surveys

If anyone has had a severe case of COVID-19, can they walk around freely believing that they won't get the infection again as they have developed adequate natural antibodies? No. They can still be asymptomatic carriers of the virus. They cannot be exempted from COVID-19-appropriate behaviour. And they must get vaccinated too. In other words, all sero positive individuals have to observe COVID-19-appropriate behaviour and get fully vaccinated. This means that sero surveys don't personally benefit individuals.

For public health authorities, sero surveys are of varying use at different phases of the pandemic. Such surveys are widely used by the media and by epidemiologists to show under-reporting of cases and deaths due to COVID-19. Independent sero surveillance data can expose the level of data suppression.

After releasing the fourth sero survey results, the ICMR recommended acceleration of vaccination of the vulnerable population, especially yet-to-be-vaccinated health staff; tracking COVID-19 infection in SARI cases in hospitals; and identifying clusters of current cases and cases of clinical severity for genome sequencing which would help track mutations of the virus. But these are valid irrespective of the sero conversion levels.

The second use of sero surveys is to find out whether community transmission has taken place or not. The ICMR was right in refuting some accounts by the media in mid-2020 that community transmission had taken place without the system knowing about it. Many demanded RAT or RT-PCR tests on a large scale. That would have been a wrong public health action. The first sero prevalence survey in May-June 2020 showed

that overall infection was 0.73%. The relevant public health actions to be taken then were rapid case detection, isolation and containment measures as vaccines were not ready then. In August 2020, the second survey showed that sero prevalence had increased to 7.1%. Even after the first wave, when evidence of rapid transmission was emerging, we needed an additional weapon to fight the virus apart from observing COVID-19-appropriate behaviour and that was vaccination.

The third use of sero surveys is to assess how far or close we are to herd immunity. Many virologists said that 60% of the population should be immune to COVID-19 for us to reach herd immunity. We were nowhere near a herd immunity level at that time. Though there were claims that parts of the urban poor population in Mumbai and Pune had 70% developing antibodies, the third survey found that after the first wave, only 21.4% Indians had SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. The degree of change was highest in rural areas at 19.1%. In non-slum urban areas, it was 26.2%, while in urban slums the prevalence had increased to 31.7%. The fourth survey showed that 67.6% of the population had developed antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 meeting the earlier prophesied threshold for herd immunity. Now, we have to change the goalpost to 80-90%. There are breakthrough infections everywhere. The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation has reported that over 81% have developed antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 in Ahmedabad, but there continue to be cases.

### Cost-benefit analysis

Under these circumstances, it is not rational for public health experts to advise governments to embark upon city-wise seroprevalence surveys to detect the presence of COVID-19 antibodies. Those surveys are no more useful than our COVID-19-appropriate behaviour and vaccinations to control the pandemic. For an academic documentation of the trend of the pandemic spread and penetration among communities, one national-level ICMR survey is good enough.

A survey of 5,000 people per city costs around ₹25 lakh. This is not a good investment for a country still grappling with the pandemic. If we do a cost-benefit analysis, frequent sero surveys are a poor use of staff time, technology and funds and divert attention from the core activities of screening, testing and other containment measures. The genome analysis of breakthrough cases in spite of vaccination is more beneficial for evidence-based policy changes.

K.R. Antony is a pediatrician and public health consultant based in Kochi. Views are personal

# Rethinking a perk for players

There is a need to reconsider promotions in government jobs for eminent sportspersons

M.P. NATHANAEL

After winning seven medals at the Tokyo Olympics, the Indian contingent was felicitated by the sports federations, the Sports Ministry and even the Prime Minister. They were invited as special guests to the Independence Day function at the Red Fort in New Delhi.

They were also given monetary awards by various State governments, sports bodies and others. Neeraj Chopra, a junior commissioned officer in the Army who won a gold medal in javelin, received ₹6 crore from the Haryana government, a Class-I government job, and a plot of land at a concessional rate. He was also offered ₹2 crore by the Punjab government, ₹1 crore by the BCCI, ₹1 crore by the Chennai Super Kings, ₹2 crore by BYJU'S and ₹1 crore by the JSW Group. Ravi Dahiya and Mirabai Chanu, both silver medalists, were also richer by crores after their performance. The bronze winners were awarded in lakhs.



### Jobs and promotions

In addition to cash incentives, States also offer government jobs. The Railways is the biggest employer of sportspersons. It provides a secure job for athletes. Chanu was working in the Railways. In a departure from the usual mode of appointment, she was appointed as Additional Superintendent of Police, a rank above that of Deputy Superintendent of Police, after winning the silver medal. Chopra is expected to get a promotion in the Army.

The problem begins when sportspersons are appointed to a certain rank after which the floodgates are thrown open for further promotions. It may not really be deleterious to an organisation if sportspersons are promoted in non-gazetted ranks. But promotion to gazetted ranks have a malefic impact not just on the organisation but also on the sportspersons. Even after they are promoted to gazetted ranks, they naturally continue to play sports and participate in tour-

naments up to a certain age and have no exposure whatsoever to their professional requirements. On attaining higher ranks like Superintendent of Police, they come back to their jobs without any training, exposure or experience. They prove to be misfits. Nobody other than the system stands to be blamed for this sad state of affairs. While others slog to get into government jobs as gazetted officers, these posts are offered to sportspersons on a silver platter.

Going by the monetary incentives offered to eminent sportspersons, there is a definite need to reconsider whether promotions need to be doled out to them irrespective of their professional competence to hold higher posts and ranks. This is especially the case in the security forces, where competence of a high order is called for.

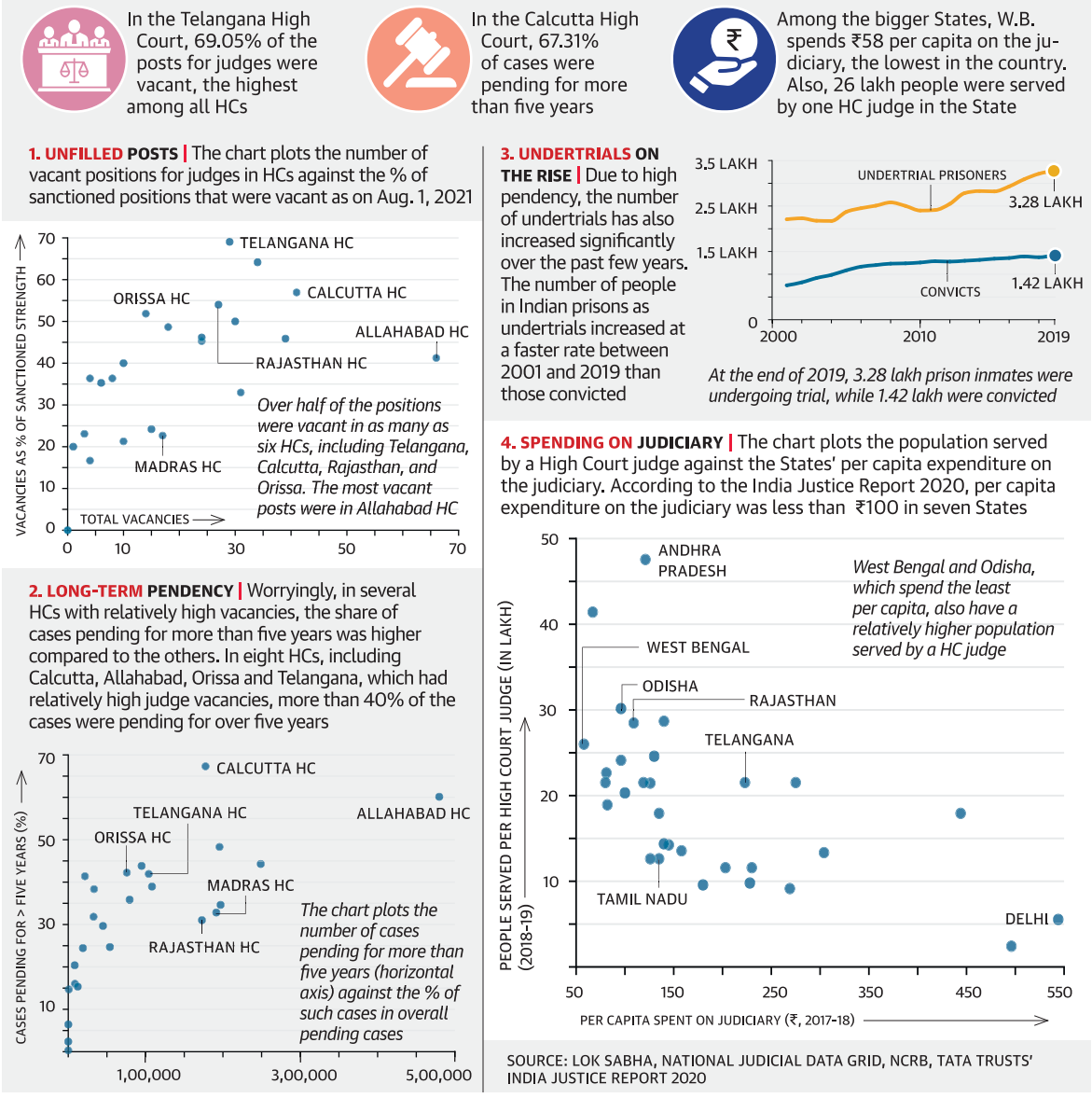
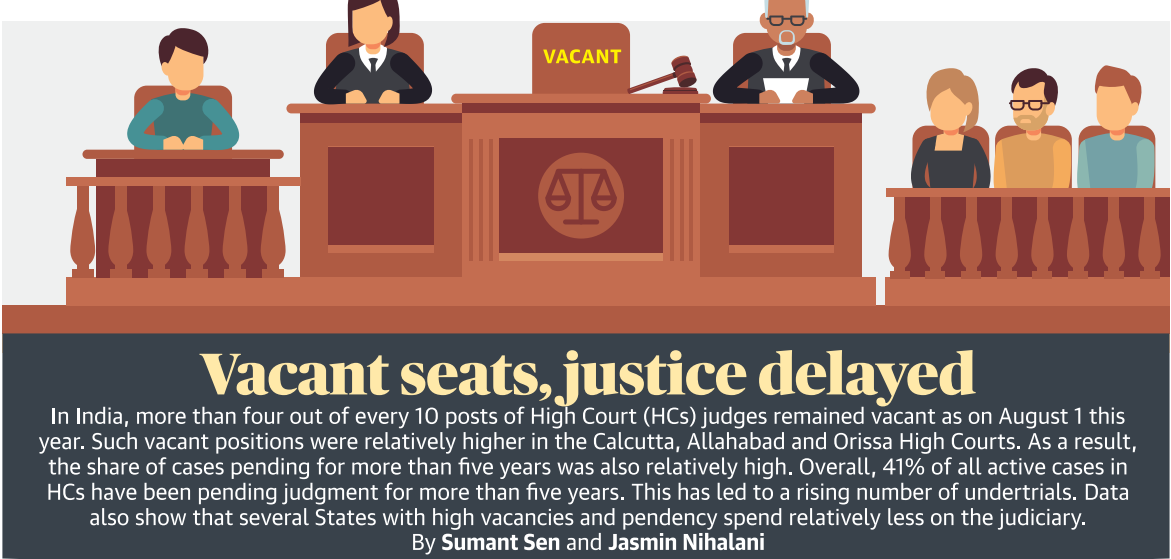
### Contributing to their sport

Alternatively, with crores of rupees in their accounts, such eminent sportspersons can venture into business and employ more sportspersons and do a world of good to their respective sports. They can set up academies to train sportspersons in their field of specialisation and thus promote their sport. The Sports Ministry and the Sports Authority of India could recruit them in various capacities and utilise their experience not only at the Central level but also in the States. Universities, colleges and schools could better utilise their services. Many of them could turn out to be good coaches.

For gazetted posts, the only channel should be competitive examinations. Recent reports stated that the number of employment offers given through job fairs organised by the Labour and Employment Ministry has fallen but applicants have increased. In these days of acute unemployment, it would be better if the needy got into government service on merit.

M.P. Nathanael is Inspector General of Police (Retd), CRPF

## DATA POINT



## The Hindu.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 25, 1971

### Indian cricket's finest hour

Madras, Aug. 25: India's victory over England in the final test at the Oval on Tuesday which was heard over radio by enthusiastic lovers of the game all over the country brought to an end England's grand unbeaten record in the 28 Tests since 1968. With one Test won and the other two drawn, India has won the series to reach a mile-stone in its cricket history. It was the first ever win for India against England on English soil. It was India's superb fielding as typified by Solkar's spectacular catch that sent back Knott and splendid spin-bowling exemplified by Chandrasekhar's match-winning spell (six for 38) which sent England crashing to a paltry total of 101 in the second innings, England's lowest against India, which tilted the scales in India's favour. The series proved most exciting with fortunes fluctuating from one side to the other. At Lord's India let slip a golden opportunity of getting off to a flying start and eventually struggling for a draw, rain after tea helping in no small measure. The second Test at Old Trafford belonged to England and it was the weather that definitely came to India's rescue. At the Oval the game was unpredictable till the end. England, which appeared to hold the initiative with a first innings lead of 71 runs, was skittled out for 101. India made the requisite runs for the loss of six wickets shortly after lunch on the final day with Abid Ali making the winning stroke with a four when it required three runs for a victory.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 25, 1921

### Threatened situation

Coimbatore, August 22: Though Coimbatore is known as one of the districts of notoriety for grave crimes, never before this, was the situation so grave as it is for some time past. For all crimes affecting life, the existence of toddy shops in thickly populated centres of the town, in lonely attris, near temples and fresh-water wells account most. In broad daylight and in open markets, a serious riot occurred last year and ended in the cold blooded murder of one of the market goers, and in the fatal injury of another. A few men were apprehended but the case ended against the prosecution. The head of the Velhala community... met in conference with coconut tree owners and appealed to them to stop trees being allowed for purposes of tapping toddy. This had the desired effect and the matter went up one step further.



FROM PAGE ONE

## Union Minister arrested for remark on CM

In Solapur, they blackened Mr. Rane's photo, garlanded it with chappals and hit it with footwear. Party activists vandalised the BJP's office in Nashik. Baramati, Nagpur and Sangli too witnessed protests.

Appearing before a Division Bench of Justices S.S. Shinde and N.J. Jamadar in the High Court, Mr. Nikam said the offences under which Mr. Rane had been charged attracted less than seven years in prison and no notice was issued to him under Section 41A (notice of appearance before police officer) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The court told him to follow the procedure and get the petition numbered by the registry first.

In his Raigad speech, Mr. Rane said, "The State's economy and all businesses are in turmoil owing to this man's [Mr. Thackeray] pathetic management of affairs...more than 1.5 lakh persons have lost their lives due to the State's mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a shortage of vaccines, no medical staff, no doctors. The State's health infrastructure was in a shambolic state... Does he [Mr. Thackeray] even have the right to speak on anything... He ought to keep a secretary as he did not even know it was the 75th anniversary of India's Independence and was asking someone backstage [on Independence Day]. I would have given him a tight slap

## Amarinder Ministry reels under Cong. feud again

The faction against the Chief Minister however, decided that a five-member delegation would meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi and apprise her of the situation and their demands.

"A consensus among us emerged and we decided that if the Chief Minister doesn't want to work, he should step down. To raise this demand and convey our sentiments, we have sought time from the high command. We are going to meet AICC (All India Congress Committee) in charge of Punjab affairs Harish Rawat tomorrow in Dehradun and then decide further," Mr Channi said.

After the meeting, Mr. Sidhu tweeted: "Got a call from Triptat Bajwa ji asking for an emergency meeting... Met him along with other colleagues at the PPCC office. Will apprise the high command of the situation."

**Sidhu's aides slammed** Meanwhile, hitting out at Mr. Sidhu's aides, Mr. Mali and Mr. Garg, State Ministers Brahm Mohindra, Vijay Inder Singla, Bharat Bhushan Ashu, Balbir Singh Sidhu and Sadhu Singh Dharam-

had I been there for forgetting the number of years of India's Independence".

The FIRs were registered against Mr. Rane in Pune by the Yuva Sena (the Shiv Sena's youth wing), one in Nashik and two at Mahad in Raigad district.

### High drama

High drama was seen in Ratnagiri when the Sangameshwar police went to arrest him, triggering heated altercations between his aides and the authorities. His custody was later handed over to the Raigad police.

While BJP Leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnis admitted that Mr. Rane ought to have shown restraint in his statements, State BJP president Chandrakant Patil said it was "against protocol" for a State government to arrest a Union Minister.

"All this arrest drama has been contrived by the Maha Vikas Aghadi government to divert the public's attention from the fact that Mr. Rane has been receiving overwhelming support in the Konkani region during his 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra'," Mr. Patil claimed.

The induction of Mr. Rane in the Union Cabinet last month is being viewed as an aggressive move on the BJP's part to neutralise the Sena in the Konkani. Himself a former Shiv Sainik, Mr. Rane's 'Sena baiting' has grown even more strident since he exited the Congress in 2017.

sot, along with MLA Raj Kumar Verka, said: "Statements by both these newly appointed advisors are clearly against India's interests and detrimental to national security."

Besides stringent legal action against Mr. Mali and Mr. Garg, these leaders also urged the Congress national leadership to direct Mr. Sidhu to immediately rein-in his aides in the interest of the party as well as the country.

### 'Massive damage'

Congress leaders also questioned Mr. Sidhu's failure to put his foot down on the diatribe by his close aides, despite the "justified uproar it has triggered across party lines".

Mr. Sidhu's omission in this regard had given ammunition to Opposition parties, which were quick to recall the PPCC's chief's personal bonhomie with the Pakistan Prime Minister and Army chief, they pointed out, warning against the "massive damage this could cause to the Congress in the run-up to the 2022 Punjab Assembly polls", which are due in less than six months.

# Nadda condemns Rane's arrest

BJP says action goes against constitutional values, voices support for Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday came out strongly in support of Union Minister Narayan Rane, who has been arrested by the Maharashtra police after he made comments against Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

The party's national president J.P. Nadda termed the arrest "a violation of constitutional values".

Taking to Twitter, Mr. Nadda said, "The arrest of Union Minister Narayan Rane ji by the Maharashtra government is a violation of constitutional values. We will neither be scared nor suppressed by such action."

"These people are troubled by the immense support the BJP is getting in the Jan-Aashirwad Yatra. We will continue to fight democratically, the yatra will continue," he added.

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra termed the arrest a



**Cause and effect:** Shiv Sena workers protesting outside Union Minister Narayan Rane's residence at Juhu in Mumbai on Tuesday. •PTI

"murder of democracy".

"He must have said some words which could have been avoided. But is this the tolerance of the Uddhav government, is this the law," Mr. Patra said, addressing a press conference in New Delhi on the issue.

Mr Patra said, "Some ministers of Maharashtra are

saying that the law has to be followed, but is there a law to pelt stones at BJP offices? Is it law to put people's lives at risk? Is it law to file 30-40 FIRs against a minister?"

Mr. Patra referred to cases registered against Ministers in the Uddhav Thackeray government and compared them to the precipitate ac-

tion against Mr Rane.

"There are cases against 27 Ministers out of 42 of the Maharashtra government. There are allegations of recovery on Anil Deshmukh, there are many allegations against Anil Parab too. Were they arrested, did the police go to their homes," he asked.

## 77 Muzaffarnagar riot cases withdrawn

No reasons were provided, *amicus curiae* tells Supreme Court in a report

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

Seventy-seven cases relating to the Muzaffarnagar communal riots were withdrawn by the Uttar Pradesh government without assigning any reasons, a report alerted the Supreme Court.

"The government orders do not give any reasons for withdrawal of the case under Section 321 of Code of Criminal Procedure. They merely state that the administration, has taken a decision to withdraw the particular case. Many such cases relate to offences

of dacoity punishable with imprisonment for life," the Supreme Court's *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, assisted by advocate Sneha Kalita, said in a report on Tuesday.

Mr. Hansaria said the information is part of a letter sent to him by the Uttar Pradesh State counsel on August 20.

The letter said 510 cases relating to the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 were registered in five districts of the Meerut zone against 6,869 accused.

Of this, chargesheets were

filed in 175 cases, final reports were submitted in 165 cases, and 170 cases were "expunged".

"Thereafter, 77 cases were withdrawn by the Uttar Pradesh State Government under Section 321 of the CrPC," Mr. Hansaria informed the Supreme Court in the report.

### 'Examine withdrawals'

The *amicus curiae* urged the Supreme Court to have the Allahabad High Court examine the withdrawal of these 77 cases by the State government.

Mr. Hansaria recalled that the Supreme Court, on August 10, had specifically ordered that no prosecution against sitting or former legislators should be withdrawn without the permission of the High Court.

"Withdrawal from prosecution is permissible in public interest and cannot be done for political consideration," the report said.

"Such application can be made in good faith, in the interest of public policy and justice and not to thwart or stifle the process of law," the report added.

## BJD reiterates demand for caste-based census

It calls for removal of 50% quota cap

SATYASUNDAR BARIK  
BHUBANESWAR

The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Tuesday reiterated its demand for conducting caste-based census and removal of 50% ceiling on reservation. The party said it would hit the streets to garner people's support on the issue.

The BJD also criticised the BJP for remaining 'silent' on the issue at a time when its partners in the National Democratic Alliance were demanding caste-based census.

"In the absence of reliable and authentic data about the exact numbers of Socially and Educationally Backward Class or Other Backward Class population,



Ranendra Pratap Swain

focused programme for welfare of the backward caste cannot be formulated. The federal system and legal concerns have come in the way of the State government to address the issue," said Ranendra Pratap Swain, senior BJD leader and Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister.

## 'Akhilesh didn't offer final respects to Kalyan Singh'

He did this to appease Muslims: BJP

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has come under the fire from the BJP for not physically paying his final respects to former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh.

Singh, who was the Chief Minister during the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992, died aged 89 on Saturday evening and was cremated on Monday in Bulandshahr by the Ganga.

On Tuesday, senior BJP OBC leaders accused Mr. Yadav of trying to appease Muslims by not paying his respects to Singh, who was a Lodhi Rajput (OBC) and a key face of the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple movement.

Swatantra Dev Singh, BJP State president, said Mr. Yadav did not come to pay tribute to Kalyan Singh, who lived barely 1 km from his residence.

"Did the charm of Muslim vote bank prevent him from paying tribute to the biggest leader of the backward castes," he asked in a tweet.

Keshav Prasad Maurya, Deputy CM, said Mr. Yadav lost the "moral right" to talk about OBCs by not turning up to pay his final respects to Kalyan Singh.

Sachidanand Hari alias Sakshi Maharaj, MP Unnao and himself a Lodhi, accused Mr. Yadav of avoiding the last rites of Kalyan Singh just to "appease" a "particular community" for votes.

## BJP plans to play OBC card in Chhattisgarh

The group has a 50% vote share

NISTULA HEBBAR  
NEW DELHI

Among the three States that the BJP lost in the 2018 set of Assembly polls, the loss of Chhattisgarh rankled the most, as the defeat there, unlike Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, was more of a rout. Ever since then, the party has been on the lookout for a way back into electoral favour, including the search for a new leader in the State, which this time around appears to be revolving around candidates from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) community.

### Radical measures

According to senior sources in the party, the loss to the Congress has led to a radical set of measures being taken in terms of organisational thinking. "Immediately after the loss of 2018, we had the general election in 2019, where the BJP changed all 11 of its candidates and managed to win nine out of the 11. This also led to some rethink on the question of leadership going up to the next Assembly polls," said the source.

BJP's national general secretary in charge of Chhattisgarh, D. Purandreshwari, and joint general secretary (organisation) Shiv Prakash have made multiple visits to Chhattisgarh, with senior party leaders in the State noticing that leaders of the OBC community being given attention.

Ajay Chandrakar, MLA, is one of the leaders being paid close attention to as he is active in the Assembly and outspoken. Former IAS officer O.P. Chaudhary, who took premature retirement from the civil services to fight and lose the 2018 polls on a BJP ticket, is also active in the interiors of the State, and is being groomed for an important role going ahead.

In Chhattisgarh, OBCs make up nearly 50% of the vote, with Mr. Chaudhary belong-



BJP's plan to not stick with one face may spell doom for former CM Raman Singh.

ing to the dominant Aghariya community among them. Mr. Chandrakar has been a Minister in former Chief Minister Raman Singh's government. Leader of the opposition Dharam Lal Kaushik, belonging to the Kurmi community, forms the third part of this triumvirate of leadership being pushed by Delhi.

In fact, the senior leadership of the party made it clear that the next polls may not be fought around one face, a development that many have taken to mean that it is the end of the road for Mr. Raman Singh.

### Route analysed

Senior party leaders in Chhattisgarh said its rout in the State was analysed, and while anti-incumbency was considered one of the main reasons for the loss, the fact that the party drew a blank on OBC support to the Congress due to its promise of bonus payment on grain procurement and the leadership of Bhupesh Baghel belonging to an OBC group was also an important factor.

The recent Cabinet reshuffle with emphasis on inclusion of many faces from the OBC communities, coupled with the demand for a caste census and the lifting of the cap for reservation, seem to have converged with the BJP's reading in Chhattisgarh, with the party hoping that one of its OBC faces may click with people.

# Treat colleagues with respect, Rahul tells Baghel

Chhattisgarh CM, Health Minister Deo meet Cong. leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

After Punjab and Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh is the latest Congress-ruled State that is witnessing a bitter factional war playing out in the media. Tensions have been simmering since June when supporters of Health Minister T.S. Singh Deo began reminding the Congress's top leadership of the agreement to rotate the position of chief minister.

However, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has said the Chief Minister's post is rotated only in a coalition government, even as he maintained that he will resign whenever the Congress leadership asked him to.

Mr. Bhagel and Mr. Singh Deo met former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on

Tuesday. Though both the Chhattisgarh leaders arrived simultaneously, Mr. Gandhi is learnt to have met them separately. General secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal and All-India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge P.L. Punia were present at these meetings that went on for nearly three hours.

### No changes

"Venugopal ji has been entrusted the work of resolving some of the issues that came up in the meeting," a source told *The Hindu*.

Speaking to a news agency, Mr.Punia claimed that "there was no discussion on a change in leadership in Chhattisgarh".

"We met Rahul ji and discussed in detail the various

schemes undertaken by the Chhattisgarh Government," Mr. Baghel told reporters outside Mr. Gandhi's residence.

Mr. Deo is said to be unhappy and sources say he may not continue in Mr. Baghel's Cabinet.

The Health Minister is reported to have raised the issue of split tenure as well as the manner in which he was treated by the Chief Minister and Mr. Gandhi is said to have expressed his displeasure over this in his meeting with Mr. Baghel.

Despite a clean sweep in Chhattisgarh in the December 2018 Assembly elections, the Congress had problems in naming its Chief Minister, as the top post was intensely contested by Mr. Baghel and Mr. Deo.

## 12-week play-based teaching module for Class 1 students

NCERT wants to stick with it even after the pandemic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

With schools having been closed for the last year and a half due to COVID-19, the Central government has issued a 12-week play-based module as a transition aid to help students ease into physical classes for the first time.

This preparatory module should be used for all Class 1 students across the country even after the pandemic, according to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) professors who prepared the 'Vidya Praveesh' module.

"COVID or no COVID, it's a fact that there is a huge variety of children coming to join Class 1 in any given year. Children come with differ-



Play-based pedagogy is not practised in 80-90% private pre-schools.

ent levels of learning and those who are behind continue to lag behind," said one of the NCERT professors, who did not wish to be named.

"This situation is exacerbated as well as equalised by the COVID-19 school clo-

sures," said another NCERT professor. "Because of the pandemic, none of the children arriving in Class 1 this year have been in any sort of physical classes," the professor added.

The 'Vidya Praveesh' module is meant to bridge the gaps for these students. .

The module lays out detailed plans, using activities, games, art integration and storytelling tools to achieve three developmental goals.

For children to maintain good health and well-being, it includes a focus on physical and motor development, socio-emotional development, nutrition, safety, hygiene and sanitation.

The other two goals aim to build the foundations for literacy and numeracy.

### IN BRIEF



#### Three militants killed in Sopore encounter

Three militants were killed in an operation in north Kashmir's Sopore on Tuesday. With this, the number of militants killed this year so far has crossed the 100-mark. "They were affiliated with Lashkar-e-Taiba's The Resistance Front," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar said. One AK 47 rifle and two pistols were recovered from the site of encounter.

#### Teachers consume poison outside Education Dept.

Five teachers engaged on contract allegedly consumed poison outside the Bikash Bhawan, the headquarters of West Bengal Education Department, on Tuesday. The primary teachers, all of them women, were rushed to hospital. The condition of two of them are said to be critical. The teachers had been seeking regularisation of service for the past few years. They also alleged that they were being transferred to remote areas after they participated in protests. The development triggered a political war of words between the TMC and BJP.

#### Four die in Agra after drinking spurious liquor

Four people have died in two villages of U.P.'s Agra district allegedly after consuming suspected spurious liquor, claimed a village head and family members of the victims on Tuesday. Police said the incident took place on Monday night in Kaulara Kalan and Barkula villages where they have sealed four liquor shops. The police have not yet confirmed that deaths occurred due to consumption of spurious liquor. The police identified the victims as Radhe (42), Anil (34) and Ramveer (40) of Kaulara Kalan village and Gaya Prasad (50) of Barkula village. •PTI



# Modi, Putin discuss crisis in Afghanistan

National Security Advisers of BRICS nations also met virtually to discuss developments in Kabul

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
ANANTH KRISHNAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday discussed charting out a “coordinated” strategy in Afghanistan, while National Security Advisers (NSA) from the five BRICS countries met virtually to discuss developments there with a focus on combating terrorism.

Officials said the Russian President called Mr. Modi to discuss developments in Afghanistan, with the two leaders agreeing to set up a “permanent bilateral channel” on the issues arising from the Taliban takeover.

“Had a detailed and useful exchange of views with my friend President Putin on recent developments in Afghanistan,” Mr. Modi tweeted after the 45-minute conversation.

Among the particular



**Diplomatic ties:** NSA Ajit Doval and other officials during a virtual meeting of BRICS NSAs in New Delhi. •PTI

areas of concern were ensuring regional security, countering radicalisation and spread of “terrorist ideology”, and the proliferation of drugs as a consequence of the developments, a Russian Embassy spokesperson said.

These were also issues that figured as the NSAs from India, Russia, China, Brazil and South Africa met virtually, one of the key meetings in the lead-up to next month’s BRICS leaders’ summit,

which India is chairing.

NSA Ajit Doval hosted the virtual meeting. The Ministry of External Affairs said the meeting “reviewed the regional and global political and security scenario with particular reference to current developments in Afghanistan, Iran, West Asia and the Gulf, and emerging threats to national security, such as cybersecurity”.

The meeting also discussed counter-terrorism,

and India raised “the issue of cross-border terrorism and activities of groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba [LeT] and Jaish-e-Mohammed [JeM], which enjoy State support and threaten peace and security,” it said.

The Ministry added that the representatives “adopted and recommended the BRICS Counter Terrorism Action Plan”.

On Afghanistan, there do remain differences within the grouping, with China and Russia broadly aligning their positions.

China and Russia, along with Pakistan, are among the few countries that continue to keep their embassies open in Afghanistan in contrast to India, which has evacuated all diplomatic personnel.

Both Russia and China continue to maintain their diplomatic presence in Kabul and have hosted Taliban delegations on a number of

occasions, most recently by China on July 28. However, both are yet to offer recognition to the new regime.

How far India and Russia can indeed coordinate their strategies, as both leaders discussed on Tuesday, remains to be seen.

Both Indian and Russian officials said it was significant that Mr. Putin reached out to Mr. Modi directly, indicating the Russian interest in working with India bilaterally, and multilaterally at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and at other forums like BRICS, despite the differences between India and China on the Afghanistan issue, and on the role of Pakistan in facilitating the Taliban. China’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the BRICS NSA’s meet was “an important platform for the five countries to strengthen political security cooperation”.

# India evacuates 77 stranded persons from Afghanistan

Passengers bring Guru Granth Sahib from gurdwaras

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
NEW DELHI

A special Air India flight arrived here on Tuesday morning carrying 77 persons from Kabul, including 46 Afghan Sikhs and Hindus. The passengers brought Sri Guru Granth Sahib from three gurdwaras. They were evacuated on Monday by an Indian Air Force flight and spent the night at Dushanbe before being airlifted on the special Air India flight.

Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan and the Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri received the Sikh holy books at the Delhi airport.

“Blessed to receive and pay obeisance to the three holy Swarup of Sri Guru Granth Sahibji from Kabul to Delhi,” said Mr. Puri after receiving the holy books.

Puneet Singh Chandhoke, one of the civil society activists who has been coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs, said the persons bringing the Sikh



**Warm reception:** Union Ministers V. Muraleedharan and Hardeep Singh Puri at the Delhi airport on Tuesday. •PTI

holy books would be taken in a procession to the Guru Arjan Devji Gurdwara in the capital’s Mahavir Nagar.

“Prominent New York-based entrepreneur Mandeep Singh Sobti and Paramjeet Singh Anand, through their Sobti Foundation, have undertaken the lifetime rehabilitation of these displaced Afghan nationals in coordination and guidance of the Government of India,” Mr. Chandhoke said.

As a cautionary measure, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, all the passengers of the flight have been sent for mandatory quarantine for a

fortnight at Chhawla camp in Najafgarh.

India is likely to operate a few more flights to evacuate Afghan and stranded Indian citizens in the coming days, Mr. Chandhoke noted.

Kabul continued to remain tense with hundreds pouring in from various parts of Afghanistan at the airport, which remains under the control of the U.S. forces. India has maintained focus on evacuating Sikhs and Hindus while also helping some of the lawmakers and officials associated with the government of President Ashraf Ghani.

# No request to delist Taliban leaders: officials

Series of September meetings key to decide UNSC stand on takeover in Afghanistan

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

There are no requests from the United Nations Security Council’s (UNSC) permanent members for the delisting of the Taliban’s top leadership from sanctions thus far, officials said here. They also refuted reports that the next meeting of the UN’s 1988 Sanctions Committee, due next month, would lift restrictions on designated terrorists like Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mullah Baradar.

Sources told *The Hindu* that the next meeting of the Taliban Sanctions Committee, as the resolution 1988 committee is referred to, is due to be held in “mid-September”, ahead of an important meeting to discuss the renewal of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in



Afghan police securing the site of a suicide car bomb blast at the Indian Embassy in Kabul in 2008. •REUTERS

Afghanistan (UNAMA), which expires on September 17.

India’s Permanent Representative to the UN (UNPR), T.S. Tirumurti, is the Chairman of the committee until December 31 this year, and is key to deciding the date of the meetings, and scrutinising requests to delist the Tali-

ban leaders.

While diplomats from at least three countries as well as External Affairs Ministry officials confirmed that there were no requests to de-designate or delist any of the sanctioned 135 individuals and five entities, they said a decision was likely to be taken on whether to extend the spe-

cial travel exemptions given to 14 Taliban members to participate in the “peace and reconciliation efforts”. The meeting could also discuss whether to include other Taliban leaders in the exemptions.

## Significant for India

The reports concerning Sirajuddin Haqqani are significant for India as he and the Haqqani group, founded by his father Jalaluddin Haqqani, are wanted for the Indian Embassy bombings in Kabul in 2008 and 2009. Around 70 persons were killed in the attacks.

In November 2012, India was instrumental, as the then President of the UN Security Council, in ensuring that the Haqqani group was designated as a terror entity.

Sirajuddin, deputy to Taliban chief Haibatullah Akhundzada, is now likely to have considerable influence in the next government in Afghanistan. His brother Anas Haqqani, who was arrested in 2014 for financing the group’s terror attacks and was released as part of a hostage swap in 2019 from Bagram prison, is now one of the chief negotiators in government formation talks in Kabul.

This is the first time the committees would meet after the Taliban takeover of Kabul on August 15. The stand taken by the UNSC members, particularly the P-5 – the U.S., Russia, China, France and the U.K. – would indicate how they intend to approach a future Taliban-led regime in Afghanistan.

## Papua New Guinea bans India flights

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PORT MORESBY

Papua New Guinea indefinitely banned flights from India on Tuesday and accused the country’s diplomats of “deception” over apparent breaches to COVID-19 travel rules.

The nation’s top COVID-19 official said in an act of deliberate “deception”, India’s High Commission helped dozens of unauthorised travellers, some COVID-19 positive, to arrive in Papua New Guinea. A repatriation charter flight from India arrived in Papua New Guinea on Tuesday with 111 persons on board, 30 more than the number approved, the officials said.

## ‘Canada outreach imperils Sikh evacuation from Afghanistan’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

An outreach from the Canadian government towards the Sikhs of Afghanistan has jeopardised India’s ongoing operation to evacuate stranded persons, said a civil society leader.

Vikramjit Singh Sahney, entrepreneur and chairman of Sun

Foundation, who has been coordinating the evacuation process from Kabul, said the Canadian attempt to take Sikhs out of Afghanistan has put the Indian initiative at risk. “At least 210 Sikhs remain in Kabul... A part of the group has gone into the refugee centre run by Canada, which is creating problems for coordination,” he said.

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RICO invites sealed tenders/bids costing more than Rs 2.00 Lacs through [eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in](http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in) for the following works/services/supply etc.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.in Lacs).
1.	<b>Unit Head, Udaipur</b>	
1.1	Providing and Fixing of Paving Tiles along roads of Mewar Industrial Area, Udaipur. UBN-RDC2122WS0800651	221.40
2.	<b>Unit Head, Rajasamand</b>	
2.1	Construction of Drains & Approaches at Ind Area Bagdad, Rajasamand. UBN-RDC2122WS0800663	338.76

Bidders/contractors may download and submit tender online. Detailed information of tenders and any kind of corrigendum/ date extension, if any in future, may be seen by bidders on websites [www.rico.co.in](http://www.rico.co.in) and [www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in)  
For queries please contact: Sr. DGM (Civil) Ph. 0141-4593212 Raj.Samwad/C/21/5140

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
MPEDA-RGCA Govt. of India, invites sealed tenders from Reputed and Experienced Contractors for the Civil Work at Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi Districts. The BOQ and details of the eligibility criteria are published in the RGCA website [www.rgca.co.in](http://www.rgca.co.in)

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**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Tender No.	Description	Due date
212213 002614	Procurement of Multi Colour Laminated Wrapper Reels of various sizes - 48GMT	16.09.2021
212223 001144	90 GSM Plain Kraft Reels & Sheets of various sizes in 24 BF. Qty: Reels - 372 MT & Sheets - 582 MT	15.09.2021

Email: [212213002614-purchase.packing@tnpl.co.in](mailto:212213002614-purchase.packing@tnpl.co.in)  
[212223001144-purchase.packing.u2@tnpl.co.in](mailto:212223001144-purchase.packing.u2@tnpl.co.in)

Detailed terms and conditions, Qty, Tender Fee, EMD, etc., are available in tender document at our websites: [www.tnpl.com](http://www.tnpl.com) / [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in),  
DIPR/2498/Tender/2021 **TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper**

**Kerala State IT Mission (KSITM),**  
**Department of Information Technology,**  
**Government of Kerala**  
Saankethika, Vrindavan Gardens, Pottakkuzhi, Pattom P.O, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala-695004  
Tel: 0471-2525444, Email ID: [stdpcrs.ksitm@kerala.gov.in](mailto:stdpcrs.ksitm@kerala.gov.in)

**Tender Notice**  
Tender No: **CPRCS/91/2021-KSITM** Dated: **24/08/2021**  
**Kerala State IT Mission invites TENDER FOR THE "SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE OF STUDENTS LAPTOPS (BASE & HIGHER MODEL), TABLETS AND CHROMEBOOKS FOR ENSURING DIGITAL EDUCATION TO STUDENTS".** Bids shall be accepted only through online at [etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://etenders.kerala.gov.in) and no manual submission of the same will be entertained. Detailed Notification and bid documents may be downloaded from <http://etenders.kerala.gov.in/nicgep/app>.

**Government of India**  
**Office of the**  
**Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Aayakar Bhavan, Maharshi Karve Road, Mumbai - 400 020.  
Date: 25-08-2021

**NOTICE**  
Reference is invited to the advertisement published in various newspapers on 08.07.2021 whereby the process for recruitment of sportspersons to various posts in the Income-tax Department, Mumbai Region was initiated by calling for applications from eligible candidates.  
In this connection, it is hereby intimated that the Competent Authority has cancelled the recruitment process. However, a fresh recruitment process will be initiated shortly.  
**(Kartik Saresa, I.R.S.)**  
Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax (HQ)  
Personnel, Mumbai

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Project Division, West Zone, Office of the Joint Commissioner (West) Premises, 2nd Floor, Sampige Road, Sheshadripuram, Bengaluru-560 020

**No.: EE(P-W)/PR/363/2021-22 Date: 24.08.2021**  
**CORRIGENDUM NOTIFICATION**  
**Ref: 1) Tender Notification No.: EE/P-W/TEND/12/2021-22**  
Date: 22.07.2021.  
The tender invited through e-procurement for the work of comprehensive development and construction of Multipurpose building and Public Toilet and other improvement works at **Ward No. 101** at Rajajinagar Constituency Package 03 has been extended due to technical reasons. The extended dates shall be read as under.  
**The modified Calendar of Events: (1) Last date and time for submission of Tender: 14.09.2021 upto 4:00 p.m. (2) Date and time of opening of Tender: 16.09.2021 at 4:30 p.m. (3) Date and time of opening of Financial Bid: Financial bids will be opened after approval of Technical bid.**  
**Sd/-, Executive Engineer,**  
**Project Division, West Zone, BBMP**  
**COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE**

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e" - PROCUREMENT NOTICE**  
**WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
E-mail : [ceworldbankprojects@gmail.com](mailto:ceworldbankprojects@gmail.com)  
**Bid Identification No. CE-W.B.P. (O) - 03 / 2021-22**

- The Chief Engineer (World Bank Project), Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Road & Bridge works as detailed below :
- Nature of work : **Bridge / Road works**
- No. of work : **05 nos.**
- Tender Cost : **Rs.10,000.00 (on-line)**
- Class of Contractor : **Work at Sl.01 - Super Class Contractor**  
**Work at Sl.02, 03 & 05 - Special/Super Class Contractor**  
**Work at Sl.04 - A/Special Class Contractor**
- Available of bid document : **From 10.00 AM of 25.08.2021 to 5.00 PM of 14.09.2021** in the website
- Date of opening of Bid : **Dt.15.09.2021 at 11.30 AM**
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website : <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

**Chief Engineer, World Bank Project, Odisha.**  
**OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**  
B-328: OIPR-34003/11/0007/2122

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**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C)**  
**IDCO, IDCO TOWERS, JANPATH, BHUBANESWAR - 751022**  
Tender Call Notice No. IDCO/H.O./P&C/EST/E-1711/03/2021/ 13507 Dated : 19.08.2021  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT**

- Name of the Work : **Construction of CDP Proposed road at Ramdaspur, Barang, Cuttack**
- Estimated Cost : **Rs.373.26 lakh (Approx.)**
- Period of Completion : **06 (Six) Calendar months.**
- Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid ID/Tender reference No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding	
1	2	3	4
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Bhubaneswar.	Bid ID/Tender Reference No. P&C/EST/E-19/2021-22	31.08.2021 at 16.00 Hrs.	15.09.2021 up to 17.00 Hrs.

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal, [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in) and Corrigendum if any will not be published in newspapers and can only be seen in the e-Procurement portal [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in) and [www.idco.in](http://www.idco.in).  
**Sd/- Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, Bhubaneswar**  
CAD-972: OIPR-14003/11/0055/2122

**By E-Mail/e-Despatch**  
E-Mail ID: [serw\\_balasore@yahoo.in](mailto:serw_balasore@yahoo.in); Ph-No-06782/260318  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER,**  
**RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE**  
**"e" - Procurement Notice for Bridge Work**  
**Identification No.- Online Tender- Bridge N.C.B. No. 299**

Letter No :- 2932/WE Date: -17.08.2021

- Name of the Work : **Bridge Work (Balance Work)**
- Total No. of Work : **01 No. (One)**
- Estimated Cost : **Rs.1275.00 Lakhs (Approximately)**
- Eligible Class of Contractor : **'Special' Class & 'Super' Class, (of Odisha P.W.D.) or relevant Class of other licensing authorities (as per annexure)**
- Period of completion : **24 (Twenty Four) Calendar Months for the work.**
- Other Details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/C C.E., R.W.Circle, Balasore		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Balasore.	N.C.B. No.-299	01.09.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	22.09.2021 Up to 5.00 P.M.	21.09.2021 Up to 5.00 P.M.	23.09.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

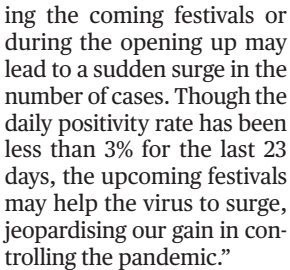
Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)  
**Sd/- Er.P.K.Sahoo, Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Balasore.**  
O-561: OIPR-25105/11/0013/2122



They also highlight the need to follow COVID-appropriate behaviour and keep complacency at bay

The complacency in people's behaviour early this

Ramji Singh, Director of AIIMS, Kalyani, West Bengal, said, "Any carelessness dur-



“India has provided one COVID vaccination dose to 45.6 crore people, that is

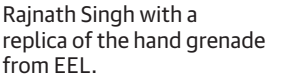
Gagandeep Kang, leading virologist and Professor at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, spoke about the need for a quicker pace of vaccination.

She said, "We should be trying to get as high as possible, as fast as possible. Unfortunately with supply being limited, we can only move at the pace which supply dictates. But within supply, we need to prioritise vulnerable groups and we have not been monitoring coverage by priority groups beyond healthcare and frontline workers. I am told that by

The Ministry noted that more than 57.15 crore doses have been provided to the States and Union Territories so far through the Central government's free-of-cost channel and through direct State procurement category.

Technology from the DRDO was sourced in 2016

The EEL had taken the technology from DRDO in 2016, the statement said.



Talking of the initiative of technology transfer to Industries by DRDO, Mr. Singh said that this was being undertaken free of cost, while providing access to testing facilities and over 450 patents.

## Dispute linked to amendments

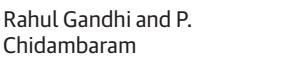
whose salaries exceeded this cap could opt, along with their employers, to contribute up to 8.33% of their actual salaries.

the “object and purpose of EPS-1995 but will also prejudice the interests of the lower waged employees”.

In the earlier version of EPS-1995, the maximum pensionable salary cap was ₹6,500. However, members

## He denounces the National Monetisation Pipeline

Addressing a press conference along with former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Mr. Gandhi said the NMP is "designed to create monopolies through privatisation" and will eventually



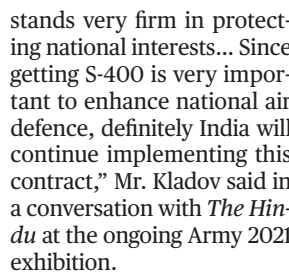
“The Prime Minister and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) used to say that the Congress Party has done

The court scheduled the case for hearing on September 14.

## Russian official confident of continuing ties

Adversaries Through Sanctions Act).  
“Indian government

**VICTOR N. KLADOV, HEAD OF  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND  
REGIONAL POLICY OF ROSTEC**



Mr. Kladov said they had no problems as far as payments are concerned. "At every stage of the contract, there is an instalment pay-

On Tuesday, the culture section, which had the information on Mughals, was no longer available.

Both winners would receive a "casket containing an engraved copper plaque" and cheques of ₹1 lakh at a formal ceremony to be held at a later date, the statement added.

CM  
VK

**Solution to puzzle 13334**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

## Conquering rajas, tamas

Krishna says even food habits can be classified as sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. That which has been offered to the Lord, and that which is good for our health is sattvic food. Eating what the tongue likes is rajasic. Eating what is bad for one's health and eating that which is not offered to God is tamasic. He who conquers rajas and tamas, who worships the Lord in archa form and spends his entire life meditating on the Lord will attain moksha.



# Taliban must guarantee safe passage: G7

British PM Boris Johnson says the leaders have agreed on a road map for engaging with Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

The Taliban must “guarantee” safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan beyond the current August 31 evacuation deadline, the G7 agreed on Tuesday, according to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Mr. Johnson, who convened the emergency meeting, said that he and his colleagues had agreed to “a road map for the way in which we’re going to engage with the Taliban” in future.

But he added that the “number one condition” was “to guarantee... through August 31 and beyond, a safe passage for those who want to come out”.

The U.K. chaired the emergency talks among the group of wealthy countries on Tuesday, saying it would urge Mr. Biden to extend his August 31 deadline to pull American forces out of Af-



**Safety first:** Members of the British and U.S. armed forces evacuating people at Kabul airport. •AFP

ghanistan. France also called on Washington to push back the timeline.

However, Mr. Biden decided after the G7 talks that he would stick to the deadline, U.S. media reported.

Britain’s Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said earlier on Tuesday it was “unlikely” evacuations from Afghanistan would be extended beyond August 31.

The G7 leaders also agreed that the Taliban would be “held accountable for their actions on preventing terrorism, on human rights in particular those of women, girls and minorities and on pursuing an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan”, according to a statement issued by Mr. Johnson’s Downing Street office.

## Stop airlifting skilled Afghans, Taliban tell U.S.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KABUL

The Taliban on Tuesday urged skilled Afghans not to flee the country, as the new rulers of Afghanistan warned the U.S. and its NATO allies they would not accept an extension to a looming evacuation deadline.

A spokesman for the Islamist group told America to stop taking “Afghan experts” such as engineers and doctors out of the country. “This country needs their expertise. They should not be taken to other countries,” Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told a press conference in Kabul.

European nations have said they would not be able to airlift at-risk Afghans be-

fore the August 31 cut-off, and U.S. President Joe Biden has faced calls from all corners to extend the evacuation window. But speaking at the press conference, Mujahid said the group opposed an extension. “They have planes, they have the airport, they should get their citizens and contractors out of here,” he said.

He also added that women Afghan government workers should stay home until security conditions in the country improved.

According to *The Washington Post*, CIA chief William Burns held a secret meeting in Kabul on Monday with Taliban co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar.

# Kamala Harris accuses China of ‘intimidation’ in disputed seas

It continues to undermine the rules-based order, she says

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
SINGAPORE

Vice-President Kamala Harris accused China on Tuesday of intimidation in disputed Asian waters, seeking to rally regional allies as the United States’ superpower status takes a hit over Afghanistan.

Her comments in Singapore came as Washington seeks to reset relations in Asia after the turbulent Donald Trump era and build a bulwark against the rising might of Beijing. But her trip to the region, which also includes a stop in Vietnam, comes as Washington faces fresh questions over its dependability amid the U.S. pull-out from Afghanistan.

In a speech laying out her administration’s foreign policy goals, Ms. Harris reiterated that Washington had “en-

during commitments” in Asia – and took aim at China. “Beijing continues to coerce, to intimidate and to make claims to the vast majority of the South China Sea,” she said. “Beijing’s actions continue to undermine the rules-based order and threaten the sovereignty of nations.”

### Beijing hits back

But Beijing hit back, holding up the Afghan debacle as an example of Washington’s “selfish” foreign policy, and accusing Washington of “bullying, hegemonic behaviour”. “The current events in Afghanistan clearly tell us what the rules and order the U.S. speaks of are,” China’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said.

China claims almost all of the resource-rich South Chi-

na Sea, through which trillions of dollars in shipping trade passes annually, with competing claims from four Southeast Asian states as well as Taiwan.

Ms. Harris also sought to allay fears that growing U.S.-China tensions could force countries that have strong ties with both of the world’s top economies to choose sides. “Our engagement in Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific is not against any one country, nor is it designed to make anyone choose between countries,” she said.

In Tuesday’s speech, she defended Biden’s decision to push ahead with the U.S. pull-out from Afghanistan as “courageous and right” and reiterated that the U.S. officials were “laser-focused” on the chaotic evacuation from Kabul airport.

## INTERVIEW | SAAD MOHSENI

# ‘Situation under control of Taliban’

India can play a crucial role in Afghanistan, says the media entrepreneur

SHAJAHAN MADAMPAT

*Chairman and chief executive of the media conglomerate MOBY GROUP, which operates in South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and Africa, Saad Mohseni is Afghanistan’s topmost media entrepreneur. Named by Time Magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, by Foreign Policy magazine as among 100 Global Thinkers, and by the BBC as one of the 10 men globally championing gender equality, Mohseni has modernised the media scene in Afghanistan over the past 20 years. Excerpts:*

**How is the situation outside Kabul?**

■ Panjshir Valley has seen some clashes. The opposition forces there seem to have helicopters flying in and out of the Kabul airport. They are not totally surrounded by the Taliban and can get ammunition and supplies via helicopters. There have also been clashes in the east of the country, involving the Islamic State. There have been some civil disturbances, people protesting and coming out onto the streets. But generally speaking, the situation seems to be pretty much under the control of the Taliban.

**Have you been speaking to any major political players in the past couple of weeks, particularly the Taliban?**

■ We talk to everyone regularly – former President Hamid Karzai, Abdullah Abdullah, other government

officials. We also speak to the Taliban obviously.

We are trying to figure out what are the best ways of engaging with this new movement that is going to take charge.

**You own and run a lion’s share of media in Afghanistan. What are your concerns right now, as an entrepreneur who has invested heavily in the media in Afghanistan?**

■ I think continuity of what we have been doing for 20 years in the same way is our main concern. The lives and well-being of our staff are very important for us. A lot of our staff members are leaving or have left. In terms of continuity, it is important for us to keep broadcasting and reporting on facts as we have done so far. We would like to remain the truth tellers that we have been, championing the narratives and values that are important to us, such as women’s rights, freedom of expression and minority rights.

**Have you received any clear assurance from the Taliban that they would not interfere with the way you run your media outlets?**

■ Yes. They have visited us, were interviewed by us. As a matter of fact, their deputy cultural commissioner was on our morning programme. They came to our station two days ago (Saturday) and gave us verbal assurances.

**Are you seeing any signs that Taliban 2.0 will be more benign, inclusive, and tolerant?**



**India’s blunder was that it supported individuals rather than Afghanistan**

■ It is mixed, but overall the signs are good. This could be just a strategy to win over support both domestically and internationally. But the signs are more positive because there is a realisation among the senior members of the Taliban that the country has changed.

You have to remember that the Afghan population, which was 21 million, is now 35 million, an increase of 70%.

Sixty-five per cent of the population is under the age of 20, and these people never experienced a Taliban-type rule. They use social media, and are techno-savvy, including young foot soldiers of the Taliban.

**How inclusive can a Taliban establishment get?**

■ They have a constituency that will demand a more conservative approach. They have to balance that with a world that expects more moderate, more liberal policies.

I think one of the reasons why it is important for people to engage, including your government, is because

there is this window to work with them so that they do have an inclusive approach.

**Who are the Taliban in terms of demographics?**

■ The senior leadership has always been predominantly from the greater Kandahar area. What they have attempted to do of late is to include others. They made inroads into the Tajiks and the Uzbeks. The result of that was a total collapse of the North in their favour. The Kandahar Taliban are still the dominant ones, and they are seen as more conservative, and perhaps more independent of Pakistan, unlike, say, the Haqqani network. So we will perhaps see this tug of war within the Taliban as to which group will prevail ultimately.

**India is nowhere in the picture as far as Afghanistan is concerned. How do you look at it?**

■ India’s blunder was that it supported individuals rather than Afghanistan. They doubled down on a few individuals and backed them to the hilt. The Indian government has to be pragmatic, and it has to deal with things on the ground. India can play a crucial role. India is a funder of big projects in Afghanistan. The Indians ought to reassess the way they tackle this and become a little bit more aggressive in terms of their outreach with the folks in Kabul today. It is important for India to think long-term.

(Shajahan Madampat is an Abu Dhabi-based writer and cultural commentator)

# Samaraweera, an advocate of liberalism, dies

The former Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka was under treatment for COVID-19

MEERA SRINIVASAN

Mangala Samaraweera, a former Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka and a notable advocate of liberalism from the country’s dominant Sinhala-Buddhist polity, passed away at a private hospital in Colombo after treatment for COVID-19-related complications failed. He was 65.

Raised in capital Colombo, Mr. Samaraweera hailed from the southern Matara district where he began his political career as a chief organiser for the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). From the late 1980s, Mr. Samaraweera campaigned for women whose sons or husbands who disappeared or were killed in the government’s crackdown against the leftist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) that led two armed insurrections against the State. He was a co-convenor of the ‘Mothers’ Front’ movement, along with Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa,



Mangala Samaraweera

his party colleague then, raising human rights violations during Ranasinghe Premadasa’s tenure as President.

Having built his political career in the SLFP, mainly under Presidents Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Mahinda Rajapaksa, Mr. Samaraweera defected to the rival United National Party (UNP) in 2010, after he fell out with Mr. Rajapaksa.

Mr. Samaraweera rose to Cabinet rank during different dispensations, making a mark in key Ministries at challenging times for the country. He served as Foreign Minister twice, from

2005 to 2007 in Mr. Rajapaksa’s first term as President, and from 2015 to 2017 in the Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe ‘national unity’ government, when he engaged closely with the international community, with Sri Lanka promising to fulfil several commitments towards post-war accountability and transitional justice. Despite his efforts, the ‘national unity’ government is widely criticised for failing to fulfil its commitments, especially those made to the war-affected Tamil community. He shared a special friendship with then External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

### Call for U-turn

Mr. Samaraweera stayed out of the August 2020 parliamentary elections that saw the Rajapaksas consolidate power in the legislature. Slamming the culture of militarisation, ethnic and religious polarisation in Sri Lan-

ka, Mr. Samaraweera called for “a radical centre”, with a “commitment to liberalism and centrist values”. He remained a bold voice over the last few years, critical of the Rajapaksa administration’s domestic and foreign policy. He stood out, challenging the Buddhist clergy who wield great influence in politics, and consistently speaking for minority rights.

In a social media post last month, Mr. Samaraweera indicated he was disillusioned with the country’s two main political parties – SLFP and UNP – of which he was part of at different times. Their latest versions – the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP or People’s Front) of the Rajapaksas and the main Opposition party Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB, or United People’s Front) – were “two sides of the same coin”, he said. Sri Lanka is “desperately gasping for a total U-turn” in policy direction, he wrote on July 28.

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## ELSEWHERE



**Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts dies at 80**

LONDON Charlie Watts, the drummer of the legendary British rock 'n' roll band the Rolling Stones, died on Tuesday at the age of 80. Watts was known as the quiet man of the band which helped define the Swinging Sixties with timeless hits such as “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” and “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction”. His level head off the stage was reflected in his metronomic time-keeping on stage, counterbalancing the energy and charisma of singer Mick Jagger and guitarists Keith Richards and Ronnie Wood.



MARKET WATCH

	24-08-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	55,959	0.73
US Dollar	74.19	0.04
Gold	46,544	0.69
Brent oil	70.54	2.87

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	695.40	27.10
Asian Paints	3045.95	-31.50
Axis Bank	746.35	10.25
Bajaj Auto	3714.75	46.50
Bajaj Finserv	16461.70	1189.80
Bajaj Finance	6980.10	227.90
Bharti Airtel	620.10	-2.55
BPCL	456.40	4.70
Britannia Ind	3812.20	-54.05
Cipla	917.65	19.30
Coal India	136.20	2.25
Divis Lab	4863.20	-11.45
Dr Reddys Lab	4587.40	72.55
Eicher Motors	2547.90	3.90
Grasim Ind	1460.15	19.50
HCL Tech	1152.90	-10.20
HDFC	2691.25	-30.70
HDFC Bank	1558.85	34.25
HDFC Life	671.10	2.30
Hero MotoCorp	2675.85	-4.70
Hindalco	420.85	14.00
Hind Unilever	2633.00	-1.15
ICICI Bank	694.45	11.75
IndusInd Bank	1005.05	16.45
Infosys	1720.85	-17.90
Indian OilCorp	105.90	2.90
ITC	205.75	-0.55
JSW Steel	691.65	7.45
Kotak Bank	1704.90	-11.95
L&T	1605.80	25.05
M&M	778.15	12.25
Maruti Suzuki	6803.20	-22.70
Nestle India Ltd.	19779.85	-241.20
NTPC	113.95	0.55
ONGC	113.20	1.45
PowerGrid Corp	176.60	0.95
Reliance Ind	2183.70	21.35
SBI Life	1160.40	24.95
State Bank	417.60	8.10
Shree Cement	26232.95	247.00
Sun Pharma	771.35	12.00
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	836.90	4.40
Tata Motors	279.80	2.85
Tata Steel	1404.65	46.00
TCS	3613.20	-24.20
Tech Mahindra	1463.35	47.35
Titan	1869.60	-0.75
UltraTech Cement	7455.35	104.35
UPL	731.05	12.10
Wipro	633.55	4.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 24

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.99	74.31
Euro	86.84	87.21
British Pound	101.56	102.00
Japanese Yen (100)	67.42	67.74
Chinese Yuan	11.42	11.47
Swiss Franc	81.03	81.39
Singapore Dollar	54.57	54.81
Canadian Dollar	58.67	58.92
Malaysian Ringgit	17.53	17.62

Source:Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



BYD India to unveil e-MPV for B2B segment

**CHENNAI**  
BYD India, a subsidiary of the Warren Buffett-backed EV maker BYD, is planning to unveil an electric MPV (multipurpose vehicle) for the B2B segment from Q4 of 2021. The decision to enter the B2B segment was in line with its electrification transport solutions goal to help India achieve its ESG goals, BYD India said.

SriLankan to add India destinations, flights

**MUMBAI**  
SriLankan Airlines said it will strengthen India presence by adding more destinations and frequencies for passenger convenience. It would introduce a host of frequency enhancements out of key Indian cities into Colombo from September 1. Currently, India accounts for more than 120 million fully-vaccinated citizens that has resulted in reawakening interest in travel, it said.

# Need protection from sudden MNC exits: auto dealers to govt.

FADA urges Centre to evolve a framework to help protect vehicle retailer's rights

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) on Tuesday urged the Centre to set up a framework to help protect the rights of auto dealers in cases of sudden exits of manufacturers from the market.

Participating in the Auto Retail Conclave, attended by the Union Minister of Heavy Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey and SIAM President Kenichi Ayukawa, FADA also sought industry status for the auto retail sector to aid in better financing options.

Stressing the need for OEMs and dealers to work together as partners in order to ensure a "win-win for all",



**Much at stake:** OEM exits hurt both an entrepreneur's zeal to do business and the customers, says FADA's Gulati. ■H. VIBHU

Mr. Ayukawa called for dealer workshops to be allowed to function as inspection and certification centres under the vehicle scrappage policy. He said SIAM was also requesting the government to start the fitness testing pro-

cess much earlier in the life of a car, noting that the current 15-year or 20-year period appeared too long. Addressing the minister, FADA President Vinkesh Gulati observed that his ministry gave permissions to

## Govt. cautions savers against Nidhi firms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has warned people against parking savings in Nidhi companies, after it found that none of the firms that had applied so far to be recognised under relevant rules was compliant with the norms.

A large number of firms operating as Nidhi companies had not even applied for recognition under section 406 of the Companies Act, 2013 and the amended Nidhi Rules of 2014 and were thus in violation of the law, the Ministry said in a statement. "Of the 348... scrutinised, not a single company could satisfy the requisite criteria."

## GDP likely grew at 18.5% in April-June: SBI report

Bank's researchers see 'upward bias'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to have grown by about 18.5% with an upward bias in the first quarter, State Bank of India's researchers wrote in their Ecowrap report.

This estimate is lower than the RBI's GDP growth projection of 21.4% for the April-June quarter.

"Based on our 'Nowcasting' model, the forecasted GDP growth for Q1... would be around 18.5% (with upward bias)," they wrote.

Higher growth in Q1 is mainly due to a low base.

SBI has developed the 'Nowcasting Model' with 41 high-frequency indicators



associated with industrial activity, service activity, and the global economy.

The researchers expect gross value added (GVA) to expand 15% in Q1FY22.

Meanwhile, the business activity index based on ultra-high-frequency indicators show a further increase in August, with the latest reading for the week ended August 16, at 103.3, it added.

## 'India pips U.S. as hub for manufacturing'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

India has overtaken the U.S. to become the second-most sought-after manufacturing destination globally, driven mainly by cost competitiveness, according to real estate consultant Cushman & Wakefield.

China retained the top slot, the consultant said in its 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index, which assessed the most advantageous locations for manufacturing among 47 countries. The rankings are determined based on four parameters: the country's capability to restart manufacturing, business environment, operating costs, and the risks.

## Centre will ensure policy certainty: FM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The Centre is committed to ensuring policy certainty and regulators have a key role in ensuring the same, Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman said.

The government is working with regulators on the issue, she said while interacting with industry captains at a Confederation of Indian Industry meeting here on Tuesday.

"Also, once the Development Finance Institution is operational, it will perform the function of long-term lending which has traditionally been done by banks," Ms. Sitharaman said and added that this would increase the competition for banks and also improve their efficiency.

## 'Chip shortage transient, likely to resolve by 2022'

MSIL output hit only partly: Bhargava

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The semiconductor shortage problem faced by the automobile industry is temporary and is expected to be over by 2022, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. chairman R.C. Bhargava said on Tuesday. He also said that the company hadn't faced a major impact due to it though production had been partly hit.

Addressing shareholders at Maruti's annual general meeting, held virtually, he also said the carmaker was looking at the electric vehicles space but would enter it only when it becomes feasible for customers in terms of affordability and also for the company to operate without making a loss.

"The shortage of semiconductors is a temporary



R. C. Bhargava

problem, partly due to COVID-19. Our estimation is that this... will be over by 2022," he said, responding to a shareholder query.

"There has been a bit of a hit on production... we have had to adjust but there is no major loss that we have to be concerned about," Mr. Bhargava added. He also said MSIL had outlined a capex of ₹4,500 crore in the ongoing fiscal year.

## CUB sees slippages flat or tad lower

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

City Union Bank Ltd. said it expected total incremental slippages for FY22 to remain flat or slip slightly below those of last fiscal, with a few quarterly spikes.

"We are on track," said N. Kamakodi, MD & CEO, said in a call with analysts. "In Q1, the bank had a slippage of ₹482 crore and slippages were front loaded. We feel it should be moderating going forward," he added. "We [will] push the growth pedal only when the environment becomes conducive for... normal advances. We expect there will not be any third wave; at the same time we are cautious," he added.

## Hyundai Motor unveils i20 N Line in India

'Motorsport styling aimed at millennials'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Bringing its performance-oriented N Line range of cars to India, Hyundai Motor on Tuesday unveiled the i20 N Line with motorsport-inspired styling and performance.

The i20 N Line, which is targeted at young millennials, is powered by a 1-litre petrol Turbo GDI engine mated with six-speed iMT (intelligent manual transmission) and seven-speed DCT transmission options.

The car is capable of achieving 0-100 km acceleration in 9.9 seconds, and Hyundai claims a fuel efficiency of up to 20.25 kilometre per litre. "Our first model under the N line range - i20 N Line, showcases our commitment to redefine mobility for Indian consumers," Hyundai Motor



S.S. Kim ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

India MD and CEO S.S. Kim said. "This is a different product from i20, and will make performance driving accessible to all," he said.

"We will subsequently introduce other models under this range over the next few years in India," he added.

The price of the car would be announced in the first week of September, and i20 N Line would be retailed through 188 Signature outlets spread across 97 cities in the country.

## Wistron to make mobiles for Optimus

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing, the Indian subsidiary of Taiwan-based Wistron Corporation, will manufacture mobile devices, IT hardware and automotive EV products for Optimus Electronics Limited (OEL).

Optimus holds performance-linked incentive (PLI) for mobile phone manufacturing and IT hardware manufacturing, and has plans to invest ₹1,350 crore in the next three to five years, the company said in a statement.

Apart from manufacturing mobile phones, Wistron and OEL would also work towards design and manufacture of tablets, laptops, wearables/wearables, telecom products, IoT/industrial IoT and smart meters/devices.

## 'Open digital systems to unlock \$700-bn opportunities by 2030'

Sectors such as healthcare, agri to benefit, says Nasscom

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Open digital ecosystems will unlock more than \$700 billion worth of business opportunities for India by 2030 across sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, MSMEs, education, and e-learning records, industry apex body Nasscom said in a report on Tuesday.

Indian platforms

Three of the largest public digital platforms in the world - Aadhaar, UPI, and CoWIN - were from India, which had significantly fast-tracked the country's pivot to digitalisation and become integral to its \$5-trillion dollar economy aspiration, the report titled Digital India: The Platformisation Play, said. "As we move from pro-



Ajay Sawhney

ducts to platforms, it is commendable to see how these platforms are now taking over the world," said Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, MeitY.

"We aim to witness a sea change from making the government services available to people in a more efficient yet convenient manner," Mr. Sawhney added.

"Such platforms can not

only bridge the silos we work in, but also help us organise our data with the help of technology, creating tremendous value for all stakeholders," he said at the Nasscom Cloud Summit, where the report was unveiled.

"Digital platforms help in the systematic creation of value generation," said Nandan Nilekani, founding chairman, UIDAI, and co-founder and chairman, Infosys. "The collaborative way of getting AI, data empowerment, and digital lending are some areas where we will be focusing on in the near future," he added.

India's robust public digital platforms had been the bedrock of the country's digital advantage, said Debjani Ghosh, president, Nasscom.

## Centre allows GM soya cake imports till Oct.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

With rising soyabean prices escalating the poultry industry's costs, the Centre on Tuesday allowed the import of 1.2 million metric tonnes of crushed and de-oiled genetically modified (GM) soya cake till October 31, 2021.

The development assumes significance as protein sources like fish, meat and milk have recorded high inflation, even as overall retail and food inflation moderated slightly in July.

Soyabean meal is an essential raw material for the poultry industry, but prices have more than doubled over the past couple of months, prompting the national poultry breeders' body to approach the government for a nod to import 1.5 million tonnes of GM soyabean meal.

## SPORT

# A tale of two of the finest off-spinners, fifty years apart



BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESH MENON

Team balance usually scores over the record of individuals in selection. Fifty years ago when India won a series in England for the first time, their most successful bowler didn't play a single Test.

This was off-spinner Erapalli Prasanna, who in 25 Tests earlier had claimed 124 wickets including 49 in eight Tests in Australia and New Zealand. He was the best in the world. Ian Chappell, one of the finest players of spin, called him 'maestro' (he continues to do so). Even the English media were shocked at the omission.

And now history seems to be repeating itself. Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, with 413 wickets, this Indian side's most

successful bowler, found himself excess to requirements in the first two Tests.

That must be difficult to accept for someone who has played 79 Tests and was once spoken of as a potential captain. Like Prasanna (also spoken of as a captain but who never led), he is an engineer; the former had to give up cricket for five years while he completed the course to keep a promise to his father.

Prasanna's main rival was Srinivas Venkatraghavan, whose tighter off-spin and sharper fielding (he was a great catcher at gully) meant that he fit best into skipper Ajit Wadekar's plans. He was the better batter too, but didn't live up to potential at the international level.

Tribute to pace attack

It is a tribute to India's pace attack today that one spinner is considered sufficient for away Tests. Thus Ravindra Jadeja, the better fielder and the more restrictive spinner, is the better option, especially if giving the fast bowlers some rest is an important role. Indian cricket falls into convenient ax-

ioms quite easily. The received wisdom is: Ashwin the lead spinner for home matches, Jadeja when playing away.

Wadekar never fully articulated why he preferred Venkatraghavan to Prasanna who had been his predecessor Tiger Pataudi's go-to bowler at every turn. Pataudi's theory was that the four best bowlers should play regardless of whether they were spinners or seamers.

Perhaps Wadekar figured that with the match-winner Bhagwat Chandrasekhar at one end and the relatively restrictive and accurate Venkatraghavan at the other, the choice ought to be between Prasanna and Bishan Bedi, attacking bowlers both, who flighted the ball and did not shy away from 'buying' their wickets by giving away runs. It kept out the bowler who had been India's spearhead on the tours preceding.

Modern teams don't buy into the 'best available' theory but look for better balance. In the first Test in England it meant that two bowlers - Ishant Sharma being the other - who between them had over 700 Test wickets were not selected. That is

India's reserve strength!

It has been a while now since India have had an all-rounder who makes the team on the strength of his batting or bowling alone. This has affected balance, but then again, not if victories in Australia and England are any indication. Hardik Pandya showed some promise before injuries disrupted his career.

Two-out-of-three theory

Test teams now follow the two-out-of-three theory in selection. This is borrowed from white-ball cricket where a player is expected to contribute substantially in two of the three crafts - batting, bowling, fielding. The pure specialist (who might be a great bowler or the best wicket-keeper) thus misses out.

There was a time when Ashwin was fielded in the slips, and he responded by taking some fine catches. But it was felt that the threat of finger injury was not worth the risk (Shane Warne was an exception in that position). Jadeja fits into the scheme of things well. He has over two

thousand runs and two hundred wickets in Tests and his limitations are his strength since he will not experiment too much. He knows his role, and is under no pressure bowling even on the fifth day of a Test, as he showed at Lord's where he bowled just six overs. That was all he was needed to do.

Teams tend not to change a winning combination, and if India stay with the one that won at Lord's, it will mean that Ashwin will have to wait a bit longer.

At Headingley, where they play next, India pulled off one of their great wins in 2002. Skipper Sourav Ganguly won the toss, and in overcast conditions on a wicket with a tinge of green favouring the seamers, he chose to bat.

It was a brave decision, and it paid off handsomely with the skipper himself, Sachin Tendulkar, and Rahul Dravid all making centuries. India went in with two spinners, Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, and won by an innings. They followed the 'best bowling attack' theory then.

In sport, victory is the ultimate justification. Whether in 1971 or in 2021.

## Pakistan-Afghanistan series postponed

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
KARACHI

The first-ever bilateral series between Pakistan and Afghanistan has been postponed until next year owing to multiple issues.

The three-match series was part of one-day Super League, a qualification process for the 2023 World Cup (50 overs) to be held in India. Since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan there has been flight disruption. A 10-day lockdown in Sri Lanka, where the series - Afghanistan's home series - was to be held, has also contributed to the postponement.



India looks to take a stranglehold on series

Lord's triumph has put Kohli's team on the ascendancy; England batsmen have to pull up their socks

INDIA IN ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LEEDS

A confident India will look to tighten the noose around England when the third match of the five-Test series begins here on Wednesday.

Skipper Virat Kohli will also like to end a prolonged lean patch. His last international hundred came in November, 2019. In this series he has managed just a couple of 40s.

Concerns about Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane's form were mitigated to some extent on the fourth day of the Lord's Test.

Strong opening pair

The performance of openers Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul has been a big plus. Both have showed remarkable temperament and technique in testing conditions.

Rishabh Pant has played his natural game and Ravindra Jadeja has also done a decent job at number seven, playing the role of a batsman more than that of a left-arm spinner.

Headingley has traditionally been seamer-friendly and it remains to be seen if India moves away from its four-pronged pace attack. Shardul Thakur is fully fit but it is unlikely Kohli will make any changes.

Malan back

England will be hoping to restore some stability to its batting with the inclusion of Dawid Malan. The southpaw last played a Test three years ago but is expected to deliver considering his rich First Class experience.

Malan will bat at number three, moving Haseeb Hammed to open alongside Rory Burns.

The England batsmen have to find a way to score and help skipper Joe Root,

Kohli's last international hundred came in November 2019

who has made the bulk of the team's runs. Mark Wood's injury puts Saqib Mahmood in a good position to make his Test debut.

No verbal battles

Root confirmed that barring Wood, the team was not facing any fitness issues, with lead pacer James Anderson also in good shape. The England skipper also hinted that his players would not be drawn into needless verbal exchanges after things heated up at Lord's.

The teams (from):

India: Virat Kohli (Capt.), Rohit Sharma, Cheteshwar Pujara, Mayank Agarwal, Ajinkya Rahane, Hanuma Vihari, Rishabh Pant (wk), R. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umesh Yadav, K.L. Rahul, Wriddhiman Saha, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav. England: Joe Root (Capt.), Moeen Ali, James Anderson, Jonathan Bairstow, Rory Burns, Jos Buttler (wk), Sam Curran, Haseeb Hameed, Dan Lawrence, Saqib Mahmood, Dawid Malan, Craig Overton, Ollie Pope and Ollie Robinson.

Match starts 3.30 p.m. IST.

Weather forecast

Day 1: Light cloud and a gentle breeze (Max temp. 19°, min. 13°)

Day 2: Light cloud and a moderate breeze (16° and 11°)

Day 3: Light cloud and a gentle breeze (17° and 9°)

Day 4: Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze (19° and 11°)

Day 5: Light cloud and a gentle breeze (17° and 11°)

Source: bbc.com



Kohli and the Root of the matter

Here's how things have panned out in the past for India while leading 1-0, and for England, while trailing 0-1, going into the third match of a five-Test series:

Table with 3 columns: Year, Result, Home/Away. It shows historical Test series results for India and England.

England has thrice bounced back from a 0-1 deficit after two matches to win a five-Test series, including the one in 2014 against India

Table with 3 columns: Year, Result, Home/Away. It shows specific Test match results for England against India.

India, which will play at Leeds in the longest format after a gap of 19 years, has won its last two Tests at the venue

Table with 3 columns: Year, Result, Home/Away. It shows Test match results for England against India from 1952 to 2002.

SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO

COMPILED BY R. NARAYANAN AND G. PRASAD



Extra special: India recorded one of its biggest victories on English soil in the 2002 Headingley Test.

Table comparing India and England's highest and lowest totals in Test matches.

IN BRIEF



India interested in hosting 2036, 2040 Olympic Games: Bach

India is among a host of countries who are interested in hosting the Olympic Games in 2036, 2040 and even beyond, IOC president Thomas Bach has said. The IOC enjoys a queue of suitors to host the Olympics in 2036, 2040 and even beyond, Bach said in a report in the Wall Street Journal. Those aspiring hosts include Indonesia, India, Germany and Qatar, the report added. IOA Secretary General Rajeev Mehta confirmed that India had shown interest in hosting the showpiece event.

Ankita, Nagal bow out of US Open qualifying

India's Ankita Raina bowed out of the US Open women's qualifiers following a three-set defeat to American Jamie Loeb 3-6, 6-2, 4-6 here on Tuesday. Sumit Nagal lost to Argentina's Juan Pablo Ficovich 5-7, 6-4, 3-6.

'Bumrah wasn't trying to get me out'

Anderson feels Indian pacer was trying to intimidate him



In the line of fire: Anderson gets into a tangle while handling a Bumrah missile.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LEEDS

Senior England pacer James Anderson felt that Jasprit Bumrah was not trying to get him out during the Lord's Test after the Indian rattled him with a barrage of bouncers.

"I got caught off-guard a little because all the batters coming in were saying how slow the pitch was. Bang it in short and it was really slow.

"When I came out to bat, Root said Bumrah was not bowling as quick as he normally does," said Anderson on the BBC Testanders Podcast.

"And then, the first ball was 90 miles an hour and on the money. I haven't felt like this in my career, but I felt he wasn't trying to get me out.

"He bowled an over, maybe 10, 11, 12 balls [sic 10]. He was bowling no-ball after no-ball, bowling short... I think he bowled two on the stumps which I managed to dig out."

Meghna, Renuka in squad

India will leave for Australia on Aug. 29



Joining forces: The Indians will look to click as a unit in the tour down under.

SPORTS BUREAU

Uttar Pradesh's Meghna Singh has been named in the India women's squad for the tour of Australia, while Himachal's Renuka Singh Thakur has been included in the T20I squad.

The Indian team will leave for Australia on August 29.

The squads:

ODIs and one-off Test: Mithali Raj (Capt.), Harmanpreet Kaur (Vice-Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Punam Raut, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Yastika Bhatia, Shikha Pandey, Meghna Singh, Pooja Vastrakar, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Poonam Yadav, Richa Ghosh (wk), Harleen Deol, Arundhati Reddy, Radha Yadav, and Renuka Singh Thakur.

The schedule:

ODIs: Sept. 19 (North Sydney Oval, 8.45 a.m.), Sept. 22 (Junction Oval, Melbourne, 4.35 a.m.), Sept. 24 (Junction Oval, 4.35 a.m.). One-off Test: Sept. 30 to Oct. 3, WACA, Perth, 11.30 a.m. T20Is: October 7 (2.10 p.m.), October 9 (1.40 p.m.) and October 11 (1.40 p.m.), all at North Sydney Oval. All times IST.

Shaheen has West Indies staring down the barrel

Chasing 329, hosts reduced to 159/7

PAKISTAN IN WI

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KINGSTON

Pakistan threw down the gauntlet to the West Indies on the penultimate day of their two-match Test series on Monday, setting the hosts 329 to win. The West Indies was 159 for seven on the fifth day when rain forced an early tea break.

The fourth day saw Shaheen Afridi claim Test-best innings figures of six for 51 as the West Indies was routed for 150 in the first in-

nings. Building on a healthy advantage of 152, the Pakistanis threw caution to the wind in racing to 176 for six at better than a run-a-ball through the afternoon, declaring for the second time in the match when captain Babar Azam was dismissed to give the bowlers more than 90 minutes to attack the home side's top order.

The scores: Pakistan 302/9 decl. & 176/6 decl. in 27.2 overs (Imran Butt 37, Babar Azam 33) vs West Indies 150 & 159/7 in 65.3 overs (Kraigg Brathwaite 39, Kyle Mayers 32).



Cock of the walk: Shaheen Afridi backed up his six-for in the first innings with two more wickets in the second.

Tailakova beats Archana

TABLE TENNIS

SPORTS BUREAU
OLOMOUC (CZECH REPUBLIC)

Mariia Tailakova of Russia overcame a fighting Archana Kamath 8-II, 11-4, 13-II, 14-12, 9-II, 12-10 in a women's singles quarterfinal match of the Czech International Open table tennis tournament here on Tuesday.

Indian results: Men: Singles: Quarterfinals: G. Sathiyar bt Ali Alkhadrawi (KSA) 11-9, 11-2, 11-9, 11-8; Doubles: semifinals: Jeet Chandra & S. Snehit lost to Samuel Walker (Eng) & Truls Møregard (Swe) 8-11, 15-13, 11-6, 9-11, 11-4. Round of 16: Manav Thakkar lost to Ali Alkhadrawi (KSA) 9-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-5; G. Sathiyar bt Sadi Ismailov (Rus) 11-9, 11-9, 11-8, 11-2; S. Snehit lost to Leo

De Nodrest (Fra) 11-7, 11-8, 11-4, 3-11, 7-11, 11-5.

Doubles (quarterfinals): Sanil Shetty & Manav lost to Vincent Picard & Bastien Rembert (Fra) 11-9, 11-6, 12-10; Jeet Chandra & Snehit bt Abdulaziz Bu Shulaybi & Ali Alkhadrawi (KSA) 11-8, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5.

Women: Singles: Archana Kamath lost to Mariia Tailakova (Rus) 8-11, 11-4, 13-11, 14-12, 9-11, 12-10. Round of 16: Archana Kamath bt Paulina Vega (Chi) 12-10, 11-13, 11-5, 11-7, 10-12, 11-7; Sreeja Akula lost to Linda Bergstrom (Swe) 11-6, 11-9, 8-11, 13-11, 11-7.

Mixed doubles (quarterfinals): Manav & Archana lost to Anton Limonov & Solomiya Brateyko (Ukr) 11-9, 9-11, 11-7, 11-13, 11-8; Sanil Shetty & T. Reeth Rishya lost to Aleksandr Khanin & Daria Trigolos (Blr) 3-11, 14-12, 15-13, 7-11, 11-8.

Pared-down ceremony in a nearly empty stadium ushers in the Games



Lights, camera, action: The Indians, led by flagbearer Tek Chand, at the opening ceremony.

Chand carries the tricolour following Mariyappan's quarantine

PARALYMPICS

AGENCIES
TOKYO

Japanese emperor Naruhito declared the Tokyo Paralympics open in a nearly empty 68,000-capacity Olympic Stadium on Tuesday, with athletes ready to defy stereotypes and shatter records despite a year-long pandemic delay.

The pared-down ceremony took place in front of around 800 VIPs and officials, but there was a celebratory mood as 162 teams enjoyed their long-awaited moment in the global spotlight.

The ceremony took "We Have Wings" as its concept, creating a mini "airport" on the stadium field and telling the story of a one-winged plane that takes to the skies.

Reduced parade

A reduced parade of roughly 3,400 Paralympians and team officials entered the stadium, wearing masks but waving and dancing after the disappointment of the postponement and worries about a potential cancellation.

Javelin thrower Tek Chand carried the Indian tricolour after Thangavelu Mariyappan was quarantined

following close contact with a COVID-19 positive person on the flight to Tokyo. Mariyappan and five other members of the Indian contingent have been placed in quarantine.

A volunteer carried Afghanistan's flag into the stadium as a "sign of solidarity" with athletes from the country, which is one of 21 nations unable to compete at the Games.

The 13-day Games, with 539 gold medals up for grabs across 22 sports, arrives two weeks after the close of an Olympics that also took place almost entirely behind closed doors.



