

SC: can't curtail right to free movement and residence across India



BJP MLA Tanmoy Ghosh goes back to Trinamool Congress page 9



North Korea appears to have restarted nuclear reactor: UN agency page 11

Lionel Messi makes his much-awaited debut for PSG in Ligue 1 page 14





School rules: staggered breaks, 50% occupancy

NEW DELH The Delhi Disaster Management Authority has

issued a Standard Operating Procedure for reopening of schools from September 1. The guidelines include 50% occupancy per classroom and staggered entry, exit and lunch breaks.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Probe into riots case appears callous: court

A Delhi court has remarked that probe into a north-east Delhi riots case, where houses were vandalised and set on fire by a mob in Gokalpuri, "appears to be highly callous, inefficient and unproductive". The court ordered framing of charges against one Rohit, who was allegedly part of the mob that undertook rioting and arson in the locality. **CITY** ▶ PAGE 2

Two dead, 3.63 lakh hit in Assam floods

The flood situation in Assam worsened on Monday, leaving two persons dead and more than 3.63 lakh people affected in 21 districts. According to an update by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority, a person each died in Barpeta and Morigaon districts.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

Avani, Sumit lead India's gold hunt at Tokyo Paralympics

Two golds, 4 silvers, 1 bronze in kitty till now

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Avani Lekhara and Sumit Antil led the golden charge as India gained a rich haul of medals at the Paralympics in Tokyo on Monday. India won five medals, with two golds, two silvers and a bronze.

However, the lone sour note was when Vinod Kumar, who won bronze in the F52 discus throw category on Sunday, was deemed ineligible after a disability classification reassessment.

India's overall tally stands at seven with two golds, four



Victory shot: Avani Lekhara taking aim at the Asaka Shooting Range on Monday during the Tokyo Paralympics. • GETTY IMAGES

silvers and one bronze, and it is currently placed 26th in the table. The day started on a rousing note as Avani became the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic gold af-

ter she registered a world record equalling score of 249.6 in the R-2 women's 10 m air rifle standing finals (SH 1).

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Rockets target Kabul airport

Pentagon warns of 'specific' threats as U.S. withdrawal winds down

REUTERS KABUL/ WASHINGTON

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The Pentagon warned on Monday of a "real" and 'specific" threat of new attacks on Kabul airport, just hours ahead of the U.S. deadline to complete its with-

drawal from Afghanistan that has been marred by Islamic State violence, with the airport coming under rocket fire. President Joe Biden has

withdraw all U.S. forces, drawing to a close his nation's longest war, which began in retaliation for the September 11 attacks in 2001.

set a deadline of Tuesday to

U.S. anti-missile defences intercepted as many as five rockets fired at Kabul's airport early in the day. Afghan



Raining misery: Taliban fighters examining a damaged car after the rocket attack in Kabul on Monday. • AFP

media said the attack was launched from the back of a vehicle. The Pajhwok news agency said several rockets struck different parts of the Afghan capital. While there were no reports of fatalities or airport damage from the rocket attacks, they caused

greater anxiety for locals already traumatised by years of war. "Since the Americans have taken control of the airport, we can't sleep properly," Abdullah, who lives near the airport, said.

The U.S. and allied forces evacuated about

Rajnath flags terror concerns

The events in Afghanistan are raising new questions in terms of security, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said. "We do not want anti-India forces to take advantage of the evolving Afghan situation for cross-border terrorism," he said. ▶ PAGE 9

1,14,400 people, including foreign nationals and Afghans deemed "at risk", in an effort that began a day before Kabul fell to the Taliban on August 15.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8 MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGES 9, 11

Private hospitals lift less than 10% of vaccines

Only 65% of doses administered till August 13

VIGNESH RADHAKRISHNAN CHENNAI

Private hospitals picked up only 9.4% of the COVID vaccines - Covishield and Covaxin - between May 1 and August 17, though 25% of the doses were allotted.

Of the 9.4% doses lifted, private hospitals had administered 65% by August 13. On the other hand, 90.6% of



A vaccination drive under way in Delhi on Monday.

such doses reached government centres, of which they administered 97%.

The figures were ascer-

tained from an RTI reply received from the Department Health and Family Welfare.

Less than 2% share

In 12 States and Union Territories, including Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Assam, the share of doses supplied to private hospitals was less than 2% of the overall supply.

In eight others, including Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab and Iharkhand, the share

was 2% to 4%. According to the revised guidelines, which came into effect on June 21, the Central government will procure 75% of vaccines produced by the manufacturers.

The remaining 25% can be directly sold to private hospitals.

In the previous policy, which was effective between May 1 until June 20, States and private hospitals could directly procure from 50% of the vaccine pool.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

25% of vaccinated health staff contracted COVID-19: study

But none of them required hospitalisation

ЈАСОВ КОЅНҮ NEW DELHI

In an indicator of the diminishing role of vaccines in preventing transmission of the coronavirus, a little over 25% of the fully vaccinated healthcare workers of a Delhi hospital contracted a fresh or 'breakthrough' in-

fection. None of the nearly 600 vaccine recipients, however, reportedly required hospitalisation. While previous reports of

similar infections have been reported in other studies in India, this is the first time that such a high percentage has been reported as part of a single study.

involved The study healthcare workers at the Max group of hospitals in Delhi and Gurugram, and

CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB). It appears as a preprint, and is yet to be peer-reviewed. The timing between the

was led by scientists at the

first and second dose varied, but 482 took the second dose within 42 days of the first. About half the recipients had been previously infected with SARS-CoV-2.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Punjab and Haryana CMs spar over farm agitation

VIKAS VASUDEVA CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal on Monday exchanged sharp words on the farmers' agitation against the Centre's farm laws and the recent baton in Haryana's charge Karnal.

At a press conference here, Mr. Lal accused Capt. Amarinder (retd) of instigating farmers. To a question on Capt. Amarinder's statement asking him to apologise to farmers, Mr. Lal said, "In what authority he is asking me to resign or apologise? Who is he to ask me to apologise or resign? Rather, he should resign for instigating farmers. About 85% of those sitting on Delhi's borders are from Punjab."

'Politically motivated' Mr. Lal said those agitating and taking law and order in

their hands were not farmers. They were politically motivated people. "The Haryana farmers

are happily working in their fields. Those from Punjab are actually sitting at Tikri and Singhu borders," he said, adding that the Congress and the Communist party leaders were misleading innocent farmers and provoking them to create chaos in Karnal as well.

The Punjab Chief Minister slammed his Haryana counterpart for defending the assault on peacefully protesting farmers by putting the onus of their agitation on Punjab, saying Mr. Lal's remarks had completely exposed his government's anti-farmer agenda.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8 **FARMERS THREATEN TO INTENSIFY STIR** ▶ PAGE 8

Adityanath bans meat, liquor sale in Mathura

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday imposed a complete ban on the sale of liquor and meat in

to make plans for the ban as well as for the engagement of people involved in such activities in some other trade," he said.

the Krishnotsava 2021 pro-"The officers are directed gramme here. He suggested DETAILS ON PAGE 8

that those engaged in liquor and meat trade may take up selling milk in order to revive the glory of Mathura that was known for producing huge The CM was speaking at quantity of animal milk.

S SHUBHRA RANJAN

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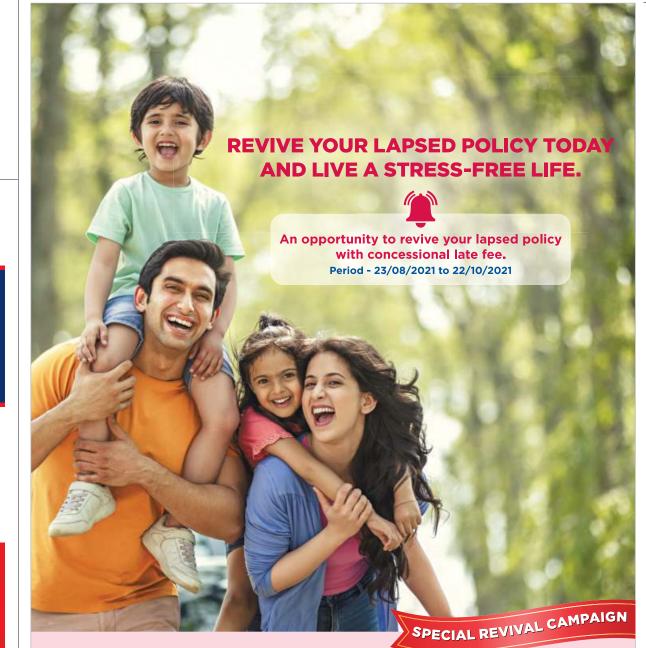
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STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Twelve people have been arrested for allegedly running an illegal call centre and cheating people on the pretext of offering them personal loans on low-interest rates under "Pradhan Mantri Loan Yojna" in Rohini, the police said on Monday.

DCP (Rohini) Pranav Tayal said the call centre's manager, Deepak Saini (24) from Nangloi, is among the arrested. "On Saturday at 11.30 p.m., the police received information regarding an illegal call center being operated near Vishram Chowk in Sector 6.

On reaching the spot, the police found some persons indulged in calling. They immediately spotted their activities and tried to hide their mobile phones," Mr. Tayal said.

The accused used to make calls and offer victims loans on lucrative interest rates.

However, they would ask them to pay a certain amount as a processing fee to execute the offer, the police said.

The owner of the centre is yet to be arrested. One laptop, 29 mobiles phones, one tablet, order book receipts etc. were recovered from their possession, they

Schools reopening: staggered lunch breaks, 50% occupancy

DDMA issues guidelines, students will need parents' consent to attend classes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

To ensure COVID-appropriate measures are followed, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has issued a Standard Operating Procedure for reopening of schools and colleges from September 1.

Schools for Classes IX-XII have been permitted to resume. The guidelines include allowing only 50% of students per classroom, thermal screening, staggered entry and exit timings, and staggered lunch breaks.

The schools are also mandated to have a quarantine facility on campus to deal with any emergencies.

Emotional support

The teachers have been asked to provide counselling and emotional support to students. "Teachers are expected to understand the current academic level of their students, establish a deep connection, initiate learning process, bridge the learning gaps to strengthen and recapitulate the foundational subject specific competency of the previous class," the guidelines stated.

The government had said no student would be forced to attend physical classes and the consent of parents is





A student has her temperature checked at a Delhi government school; students using a hand sanitiser machine before entering the premises. • FILE PHOTOS: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

mandatory. The classes would continue in blended mode and students, teachers and non-teaching staff living in containment zones

will not be allowed to come to schools and colleges.

"Schools and colleges should prepare a timetable as per occupancy limit of Schools and colleges should prepare a timetable as per occupancy limit of the classrooms, following COVID-19

norms DELHI DISASTER MANAGEMENT

classrooms following COVID norms. A maximum 50% students per classroom may be called depending upon capacity. The seating arrangement should be done in such a way that seats are occupied in an alternate manner," the guidelines said.

It added that lunch breaks may also be staggered and preferably be held in open areas. Students should also be advised to not share lunch, books and stationery items, the guidelines added.

Schools have also been instructed to thoroughly and regularly sanitise all buildings, and vehicles used for transportation. The management has also been told to ensure proper handwashing arrangements and discourage visits from guests.

Apart from the opening of schools, the DDMA said that all other activities allowed and prohibited as per its earlier orders will remain in force till September 16.

Court says probe into riots case 'appears callous, unproductive'

It orders framing of charges against man who was part of mob

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has remarked that investigation into a north-east Delhi riots case, where houses were vandalised and put on fire by a mob in Gokalpuri here, "appears to be highly callous, inefficient and unproductive".

Additional Sessions Judge Vinod Yadav made the remarks while ordering framing of charges against one Rohit, who was allegedly part of the mob that undertook rioting, vandalising and arson in the locality.

The case stems from an FIR registered on February 26, 2020 regarding a riotous mob consisting of about 400-500 persons, armed with 'dandas' and iron rods blocking the main Gokalpuri Road and thereafter setting on fire some shops and vehicles in the area of Ganga Vihar and A, B, C and D Blocks of Gokalpuri on February 24, 2020

Later, in March 2020, written complaints were received from one Anwar Ali, and his father Ashiq Ali regarding vandalising, looting and putting on fire their houses by the riotous mob on February 24, 2020.

One more complaint was received from one Irshad, in which he complained of a riotous mob that vandalised and looted various articles



A firefighter walks past damaged shops at a tyre market after they were set on fire by a mob in north-east Delhi. • FILE РНОТО

from his house in Gokalpuri and then setting it on fire. All complaints clubbed with the first FIR.

Rohit, in his defence, argued that he has been falsely implicated by the investigating agency, being resident of the same locality. He also pointed out that there is an "unexplained delay" of about two days in registering FIR, as the alleged incident took place on February 24, 2020.

Rohit also argued that he has not been specifically named by any of the complainants in their initial written complaints. He stated that out of the alleged riotous mob of 400-500 persons, only he has been chargesheeted.

The court, however, said that it has "ocular evidence"

in the form of supplementary statements of complainant Irshad as well as statements of independent public witnesses who have given a categorical account of the incident and role played by Rohit.

Police witnesses

Additionally, the court said that the presence of the accused at the spot has also been confirmed by police witnesses, who was posted as "beat officers" in the area at the relevant time. "Their statements cannot be brushed aside or discarded at this stage, merely because there has been some delay in recording of their statements or the complainant(s) have not specifically named them in their initial written complaints," the court said.

Proposal to implement 4-year course likely to be passed at DU meet today

Naming of colleges and facilitation centres is part of agenda

STAFF REPORTER

Delhi University's Executive Council (EC) is likely to pass the proposal to implement the four-year undergraduate programme under the New Education Policy (NEP), as well as the Multiple Entry and Exit Scheme, during its meeting on Tuesday.

A proposal to name upcoming colleges and facilitation centres after Sushma Swaraj, Swami Vivekananda, Veer Savarkar and Sardar Pa tel will also be discussed.

On August 23, the Academic Council (AC) had passed the structure of undergraduate programmes recommended by the NEP.

"The university shall retain the three year honours degree as well as assimilate in its structure the four year honours degree and four year honours degree with research. The university is to implement both one year and two year postgraduate programme in line with the existing structure and that of

Man held for

Rohini court

A 44-year-old man has

been arrested for allegedly

impersonating a lawyer in

Rohini court, the police

DCP (Rohini) Pranav

lawyer in

STAFF REPORTER

said on Monday

NEW DELHI

impersonating



NEP 2020," read the EC's supplementary agenda.

Core courses

The document also said: "The Multiple Entry and Exit Scheme and Academic Bank of Credit shall be implemented in DU, keeping in view maintenance of standard of education by emphasising on the core courses in the university and allowing the credits to be earned from other universities with respect to other courses."

Referring to the proposal to set up facilitation centres in Bhati Kalan and Fatehpur Beri, the document read: "On these pieces of land, university has decided to set up facilitation centres to cater to the needs and the requirements of students staying in far flung areas of Delhi and NCE as a first step towards opening a full fledged college. Through these facilitation centres, examination and admission related facilities will be extended."

Delhi to implent new plan to combat climate change by year end, say officials

'German firm to be knowledge partner'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Delhi will start implementing a new 10-year action plan by this year end to combat climate change, according to

The previous plan focused

Taval said the accused, The Centre had prepared Munna Kumar who is from the National Action Plan on Bihar, has been appearing Climate Change (NAPCC) in for hearings for a while. 2009 and asked the states to During a rape case hearprepare their own specific ing on Saturday at Rohini plans. However, Delhi submitted its plan to combat clicourt, the accused was representing the victim when mate change in 2019, becom-

the judge didn't find his deing the last state to do so. "The plan remained mostmeanour appropriate and asked for his credentials. ly on paper and could not be implemented properly. It ex-The accused couldn't share relevant details after pired in 2020. Now, we are which Bar Council was condue for a new plan," a senior sulted and the crime came official of the environment to the fore. A complaint department said.

was registered on charges on six areas, including enerof cheating. gy, transport, green cover Further enquiry reand urban development, and vealed that he had been projected a significant defraudulently representing crease in cold days and nights and increase in heavy rainfall events in Delhi.

many persons for monetary gains.

was then lodged and a case

For the new plan, a German agency is likely to be engaged as a knowledge partn-The environment department has requested the Union Environment Mi-

> the preparation of the plan. All extreme weather events of the last 10 years are being analysed to prepare a comprehensive plan which will focus on air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy, transport issues, air conditioning, heat

> > etc., the official said. The action plan will identify activities causing increase in greenhouse gas emissions and fix responsibilities of the

islands, agriculture patterns,

nistry to release ₹20 lakh for

departments concerned. It will set targets to be achieved in phases over the next 10 years. "All consultations with stakeholders will be completed within two months and the plan will be implemented by this year end," the official said.

tice Prathiba M. Singh said.

The Delhi High Court has stressed that laying down a timeline for payment of bills is extremely crucial for the continued and efficient services of lawyers representing

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi government. "The entire process of clearing of lawyers' bills needs to be improved. Timelines are required to be fixed, failing which, the government ought to pay interest on the bills of lawyers," Jus-

Officials summoned The High Court directed the Additional Chief Secretary, who is now in-charge of clearing the lawyers' bills, to appear before it on the next date of hearing to appraise of the steps that needs to be taken, "Further, a senior official from NIC (National Informatics Centre) who is handling or supervising the

preparation of the Single

Window System shall also

appear on the next date," the court ordered.

Court says Delhi government ought to pay interest on bills if it fails to improve the clearance process

Fix timeline for payment of lawyers' bills, orders HC

Sanjay Kumar Aggarwal, Principal Secretary of Department of Law, Delhi government told the court that since clearing the bills of lawyers involves coordination between various departments, the Additional Chief Secretary has now been given the responsibility of coordination. Mr. Aggarwal further submitted that the services of the National Informatics Centre are being availed of by the Delhi government to create a Single Window System for clearance of the lawyers' bills.

Operational hurdles

He said that there are two steps which are involved: first, manpower has to be deputed for the software to be prepared on the basis of the inputs given by the various departments and second, the software has to be made operational. He said that the first step of the process could take at least two months and after that, three to four months would be required for making the software operational.

"The timelines given by the GNCTD are not satisfactory. In general there is no doubt that insofar as the lawyers' bills are concerned, they take several months and sometimes years to process the same," the High Court remarked while listing the case for hearing on September 14.



Devotees waiting for their turn to worship at the ISKCON temple in Dwarka on Monday. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

ISKCON temple 'closed' following crowding

Priests allowed to continue special programmes without visitors, say police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The police and district officials in south-west Delhi's Dwarka had to close an ISK-CON temple on Monday evening due to overcrowding on the occasion of Janmashtami. "There was a rush of devotees after the evening puja at the ISKCON temple due to which it was closed. However, the priests were allowed to continue the special programmes of Janmashtami without visitors,' a police officer said.

The Sub-Divisional Magistrate was not immediately available for comments.

Temples in the city were reopened in mid-June under a phased unlock process, but visitors are not allowed as per a Delhi Disaster Manage ment Authority order.



Most temples in the city scaled down Janmashtami celebrations. Many religious places, including tKalkaji temple, Chhatarpur temple and Birla Mandir, scaled down programmes and decorations, focusing only on the rituals that mark the birth of Lord Krishna.

Decoration and lighting at the Kalkaji temple are not very different from pre-pandemic times, but Surendra Nath, the chief priest of the temple, said the lack of devotees completely alters the spirit of the festival.

the public, especially when everything else in the city has reopened," he said. The rituals at the temple

"We urge the government

to allow temples to open to

that used to host thousands of visitors will only be attended by the priests.

Chhatarpur which used to witness a footfall of as many as two lakh people during the festival, celebrated Janmashtami in the presence of a handful of individuals, including the temple trustees and priests.

Livestreaming rituals To ensure that the devotees

do not miss out on the celebrations, the Birla Mandir decided to livestream the rituals that began at noon on Monday and will continue till 2 a.m. on Tuesday.

'Gujjar was assaulted after he slapped jail official'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The initial police investigation into the death of Ankit Gujjar inside Tihar jail has found that security personnel allegedly assaulted him after the gangster slapped the deputy superintendent, officials said on Monday.

The police said they have recorded the statement of several inmates and jail employees during the probe.

Initial probe

'The initial investigation has revealed that the jail authority was trying to shift 29-year-old Gujjar. He was not ready to shift and allegedly slapped the deputy superintendent, following which the security personal assaulted him," a senior police officer said.

Gujjar was found dead inside his cell in Tihar jail while two of his former cellmates, who were lodged in an adjacent lockup, were found injured on August 4.

Gujjar was involved in several criminal cases, including killing a BJP leader.

Tihar officials had earlier said the three inmates were lodged in the same cell till August 3 night when they had a fight with the jail staff after a mobile phone was found from outside their cell. The jail staff then shifted Gujjar to another cell from where his body was recovered the next morning, they had said. Following the incident, four jail officials, including the deputy superintendent, were suspended

negligence.

A ND-NDE

DELHI

- TUESDAY, AUG. 31 RISE 05:59 SET 18:44 RISE 00:00 SET 13:53
- WEDNESDAY, SEP. 01 RISE 06:00 SET 18:43 RISE 00:19 SET 14:47
- THURSDAY, SEP. 02 RISE 06:00 SET 18:42 RISE 01:08 SET 15:39

Delhi Weather Delhi City Safdarjang

Delhi Palam Today 33°C Few spells of light rain and thunderstorm may occur humid day would prevail with cloudy sky and light winds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 33°C One or two spells of light rain and thunderstorm would prevail. Warm and humid day

THE HINDU

Slogan case: accused posts video claiming innocence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A video has surfaced online in which Hindu Raksha Dal chief Pinki Chaudhary, accused of raising communal slogans at a rally in Jantar Mantar here, is seen purportedly denying all allegations against him and claiming that he would surrender before Delhi Police on Tuesday.

In the video circulated on WhatsApp and some platforms, claimed that the charges against him are "false and

baseless". A video showing anti-Muslim slogans being raised during a protest at Jantar Mantar here was widely circulated on social media earlier, following which the police had registered a case in this connection. Eight people – Uttam Upadhyay, Ashwini Upad hyay, Preet Singh, Deepak Singh, Deepak Kumar, Vinod Sharma, Vinit Bajpai and Sushil Tiwari - in connection with the case.

In the video, Mr. Chaudhary is heard saying that he will surrender at Connaught Place police station on Tuesday at 12 p.m. and cooperate with the investigation.



Care on the move: The mohalla clinic at Shakur Basti has been created using shipping containers and can be shifted in trucks from one place to another. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

To overcome 'land issues', govt. tests out portable mohalla clinic

Jain says DDA has not given any land to build the facilities

STAFF REPORTER

Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Monday said that there has been politics related to land for mohalla cinics and the government has come up with portable mohalla clinics using shipping

One such mohalla clinic has been set up through CSR at Shakur Basti and this is a sample project, the Minister said.

"There have been politics related to mohalla clinics. Wherever we have wanted to open them, we have faced issues with land. Land is with the Central government and the DDA had promised in the High Court to

give land for 500 mohalla clinics, but they have not given land for even one mohalla clinic," Mr. Jain said.

100% transferable

"We have created readymade mohalla clinic inside shipping container. It will be built in factories. It is 100% transferable and can be shifted in trucks from one place to another," he

He said that the current mohalla clinic is a sample done through CSR by a company and despite installing them on the Delhi government land, the municipal corporations that is governed by the BJP, still

"In many areas in Delhi, we don't have enough space to build mohalla clinics. This new clinic takes only half the space of existing ones. Earlier, mohalla clinics' area was 600 square feet, now it takes only 300 square feet," Mr. Jain said.

He said that the government is planning more such projects.

Mohalla clinics is one of the flagship initiatives of the Kejriwal government to boost the primary healthcare system in Delhi. A typical mohalla clinic has a docand

midwife-cum-nurse. It provides an array of diagnostic services and essential medicines free of cost.

Containment zones plummet as cases continue to decrease

Emphasis on strict COVID-appropriate behaviour in districts with no hotspots

JATIN ANAND

Only around 200 of the 87,500-plus containment zones created in the Capital during the course of the CO-VID-19 pandemic currently remain in place.

The authorities concerned are not only still keeping an eye on such areas but also ensuring COVID-appropriate behaviour in their vicinity.

The number of containment zones in the city is decreasing rapidly with some districts such as the Central and North-East districts, having seemingly become free of them per se and others on the brink of ridding themselves of the tag.

20 new cases

The city reported only one new COVID-19 death in 24 hours and the total number of deaths stood at 25,081, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday. Also, 20 new cases were reported, taking the total cases to 14,37,736. A total of 51,387 tests were done in a day and that test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.04%.

A total of 10,828 vaccinations were administered in the city on Sunday and a total of 1.32.28.841 doses have



been given till now.

According to Revenue Department records till August 26, of the 87,508 containment zones across the city, 87,289 had been decontained and 71 were in the process of being scaled down leaving a total number of 219 remaining zones in the Capital of which 148 were active containment zones.

"It is very important to keep an eye on COVID cases which emerge from areas which were previously containment zones, testing and contact tracing so as to en-

sure that they do not relapse into the previous situation where clusters of infection develop," a senior revenue department official said.

Most affected

While no containment zones exist in the North and Central districts any more, the South-East district with two and the East district with three containment zones were expected to be free of any such demarcation over the coming days, government sources said.

In terms of active contain-

ment zones, which are classified on the basis of the difference between the number of containment zones and the number of decontained zones, the New Delhi district has the maximum number of such zones at 116 followed by 24 in in the West district and 25 in the South district.

"The Delhi government is committed towards ensuring that COVID-19 cases do not rise in the city and is implementing best practices to plug the spread of the virus," another health department official said

'U'khand has worst

AAP promises facilities if elected in 2022

STAFF REPORTER

Monday alleged that as per a CAG report, Uttarakhand services in Himalayan States and the condition of health services is so bad lives" before they even reach the hospital.

Saurabh Bharadwaj said that healthcare facilities are still inaccessible for many

The AAP has announced vices" like in Delhi.

"The recently published

vealed the extremely poor conditions of the health sector in Uttarakhand. Most of the people in Uttarakhand die before even reaching a hospital because the number of hospitals is very less," Mr. Bharadwaj said.

the State's health budget was ₹188 crore in 2018-19 and it was reduced to just ₹97 crore in 2019-20 and "only 5.25 paise" is being spent on per person's health in a year.

tals," the AAP leader said.

healthcare services'

NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on has the worst healthcare that patients "lose their

AAP chief spokesperson people.

CAG report

that they will be contesting the Assembly election in Uttarakhand in 2022 and Mr. Bharadwaj promised that if an AAP government is formed in the State, then people will be able to get "good and free health ser-

CAG report 2019-20 has re-

He further claimed that

"This CAG report further reveals that amongst all the Himalayan States, Uttarak hand has the worst health sector. The situation is so grim that many women die in the initial stages of their pregnancy. The availability of ambulances is also very poor such that 'Dandi Kandis' are used to take the patients to the hospitals and most of the times they die before reaching the hospi-

Activists seek action after report reveals toxic discharge into forest

'Scrap waste management firm's contract, act against MCG'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Citing a latest report by the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) showing discharge of highly toxic and untreated leachate into the forest area behind Bandhwari landfill here, the environmentalists have demanded that the contract of Ecogreen, the company handling waste management in Gurugram and Faridabad, be suspended and action taken against the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram.

In a letter to Chief Secretary Vijai Vardhan, and senior officials of the HSPCB and Forest Department, the environmentalists said the leachate testing report for the sample collected earlier this month confirmed the presence of certain toxins on a much higher side than the permissible limits.

Untreated leachate

"The report shows that highly toxic, untreated leachate is being discharged in the forest. Based on this re-



Bandhwari landfill receives almost 2,000 tonnes of solid waste daily from Gurugram and Faridabad. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

should be suspended," read

the letter. Vaishali Rana, one of the environmentalists, said that for the past three years she had been reporting the utter failure of Ecogreen firm and the MCG to control and treat the leachate emanat-

ing out of the landfill. "I have reported this to the authorities at least on six occasions before that Ecogreen was found discharging leachate into the Aravalis. On August 12,

port, Ecogreen's contract HSPCB officials collected leachate samples from three places from the landfill (Leachate Treatment Plant) and also outside the landfill in the Aravalis. The leachate testing report was made available to me a couple of days ago by the HSPCB and it clearly speaks of the presence of certain toxins that are on a higher side," said Ms. Rana in the letter jointly written with Vivek Kamboj and Col. (retd.) S.S. Oberoi, both environmentalists.





5 killed due to heavy rain in Uttarakhand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Five people, including three children, were killed and two others went missing after three houses collapsed in a village following heavy rain in Dharchula sub-division of the district in Uttarakhand,

an official said on Monday.

The incident took place in Jumma village late on Sunday night, Pithoragarh District Magistrate Ashish Chauhan, who rushed to the spot to supervise relief and rescue operations, said.

"Five bodies, including

those of three children, have been recovered, while the search for two more still missing is underway," SSB commandant M.P. Singh said.

The deceased have been identified as Sanjana (15), Renu (11), Shivani (9), Sunita Devi and Parwati Devi.

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CLASSIFIEDS

Two die, 3.63 lakh people hit as Assam flood situation worsens

70% of Kaziranga submerged, traffic diverted to prevent animals being run over

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The flood situation in Assam worsened on Monday, leaving two persons dead and more than 3.63 lakh people in 21 districts affected.

According to an update by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), a person each died in Barpeta and Morigaon districts. They drowned after being washed away. Lakhimpur in northeast

ern Assam was the worst af-

fected district, accounting for 1,30,001 out of a total of 3,63,135 people temporary displaced. The data showed 1,24,776 of the affected people were females and 70,544 children. Crop on 30,333.36 hec-

tares of land and 2,56,144 domesticated animals have also been affected, ASDMA



A family takes shelter on boats at a flood-hit area in Morigaon district on Monday. • PTI

officials said.

According to the State Forest Department, two onehorned rhino habitats - the Kaziranga National Park and the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary - have been partially submerged.

"About 70% of the park has been inundated and 125

of the 223 anti-poaching camps have been submerged, but the water level has been receding in the last few hours," Kaziranga Director P. Sivakumar said.

On Sunday, the police ordered the rerouting of the goods carriage due to the flooding of Kaziranga and the

resultant migration of animals from the park southward to the hills of Karbi Anglong district across the National Highway 715.

This was done after Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma reacted to speeding vehicles killing three hog deer that were dashing across the highway to the relative safety of the hills. The Kaziranga floods have so far killed three hog deer.

Detour via Bogibeel

Heavy commercial vehicles to and from Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts further east have accordingly been diverted via NH 15 on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra. This would entail a detour via the Bogibeel Bridge near Dibrugarh and Kaliabhomora Bridge near

CM Yogi visits Firozabad after dengue deaths

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

After around 40 persons, mostly children, succumbed to dengue and another mysterious viral disease in Firozabad, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the city on his way to Mathura, where he participated in Krishna Janmashtami celebrations.

"Till now 32 children and 7 adults have died," the Chief Minister told reporters before directing officials to ensure treatment of every patient at the government hospital.

He said the reason for the deaths will be probed by a team of doctors from Lucknow's King George Medical College.

The Chief Minister warned officials against laxity of any kind and directed them to arrange more ambulances to transport patients from rural

Three fatally hit by train in Odisha

STAFF REPORTER BHUBANESWAR

Three labourers were fatally hit by the Visakhapatnam-Tata Nagar down train near the Haladiapadar railway level crossing, on the outskirts of Odisha's Berhampur city, around 11 p.m. on Sunday. Four others escaped narrowly. They were walking along

Though railway employees detained the four, they managed to escape. The Government Railway Police are investigating.

State govt. issues standard operating procedure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR

The schools in Rajasthan are set to reopen from September 1 for IX to XII classes, with the government issuing a standard operating procedure (SOP), allowing 50% capacity of students and putting restrictions on holding of assembly prayers, sports activities and distribution of cooked mid-day meals. The universities, colleges and coaching institutes will also

reopen the same day.

A Group of Ministers had recently recommended restarting of academic activities in the State.

Rajasthan schools set to reopen from Sept. 1

The SOP requires the teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the drivers of buses, cabs and auto-rickshaws ferrying the students to and from schools to get at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Online education will continue only for the students of I to VIII classes till further orders.

The educational institutions were closed during the second wave of pandemic earlier this year when the lockdown was once again brought into force. The heads

of institutions have now been asked to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 containment protocol, regular sanitisation of the school premises and keep additional masks in stock for students.

Schools in two shifts The principals of both the go-

vernment and private schools have made arrangements for seating of students to prevent overcrowding and running the institutions in two shifts. According to the SOP, teachers and students will bring food and drinking water from home and eat lunch in their respective classrooms without mingling with others.

Sarwat Bano, Principal Mahatma Gandhi Government School, Adarsh Nagar, Jaipur, said on Monday that the members of the school development and management committee had been apprised of the measures for safety of students at a meeting held last week. "We are wellequipped with foot-operated sanitiser dispenser stands and extra masks for students," she said.

The Podar World School in the State Capital has come up with a 'Suraksha Chakravyuh' with five-layer protection, in which all students will be given breaks in interval for yoga and meditation sessions.

Construction of Film City to start in January

It will be spread over 1,000 acres and built at a cost of ₹6,000 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GHAZIABAD

The construction of the Film City, a pet project of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in Sector-21 of Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) area of Gautam Budh Nagar district is likely to start in January next year, said an official release.

Spread over an area of 1,000 acres and to be built at a cost of ₹6,000 crore, the

රේ

Film City is expected to provide employment to 15,000 people, the release said.

According to Arun Vir Singh, the CEO of YEIDA, the preparations are in full swing with the approval of the Detailed Project Report submitted to the government recently by the consultant company CBRE South Asia Private Limited. "CBRE now has to get the bid document ready within three weeks, which will be followed by floating of a global tender in which both domestic and foreign companies will be able to participate." According to officials, the

selection of the company to

build the Film City will be finalised by December 31. It will be built on PPP (publicprivate partnership) model in three phases. In the first phase, studios, open areas, amusement parks, and villas will be built. According to YEIDA officials, in the first

phase, 80% of the work related to shooting of films will be completed. It will be followed by the development of hospitality and other business activities. Besides, special studios will be set up to promote film tourism.

In December last year, the CM had announced his decision to build a world-class film city in the State. Subsequently, 1,000 acres of land was identified in Sector-21 of

SATYASUNDAR BARIK BHUBANESWAR

The monsoon session of Od-

isha Assembly commencing from September 1 is likely to

be stormy with two senior Ministers in the Naveen Patnaik Government embroiled

in different controversies. While Odisha Law Minister Pratap Kumar Jena

would be probed in case of

murder of Bharatiya Janata

tap Swain is drawing a lot of

flaks following allegations of

financial mismanagement

and irregularities in Cuttack

Minister's brother, is the

president of the Cuttack

Central Cooperative Bank.

Last week, Judicial Magis-

trate First Class (JMFC), Sali-

pur, ordered a fresh probe

against Mr. Jena after hear-

ing a petition regarding

dropping of Minister's name

Kulamani Baral, former

chairperson of Mahanga

block of Cuttack and BJP

leader, and his associate Di-

byasingh Baral were hacked

to death while they were re-

turning to their village in Ja-

Ramakant Baral, son of

in the chargesheet.

nuary this year.

Fresh probe ordered

Birendra Pratap Swain,

Central Cooperative Bank.

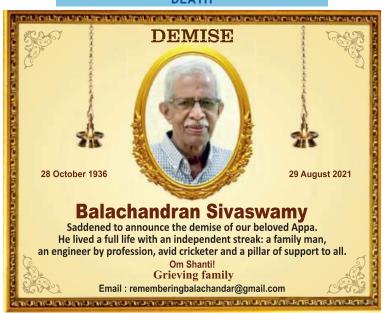
Elephant dies after falling into ditch

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA GUWAHATI

A three-year-old elephant, which fell into a ditch in Assam's Udalguri district, died of a suspected heart attack soon after being res cued, a forest official said on Monday.

The baby elephant fell into a five-foot-deep ditch at Borengajuli tea garden on Saturday and was rescued on Sunday, he said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE





OBITUARY

left us bereft on

the new paradisic world as our Heavenly Father Jehovah God has

those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice." - John 5:28 - Ravi, Puvi, Thuthi

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Party (BJP) leader in Cuttack district, the State Cooperadeceased Kulamani Baral. tion Minister Ranendra Pra-

Odisha monsoon session

likely to be a stormy affair

2 Ministers embroiled in controversies

had filed case in Mahanga Police Station against 13 persons including the Minister, alleging their involvement in the murder. He had moved the court

CM Naveen Patnaik

alleging that the investigating officer had not examined material witnesses and wrongly recorded the statement of witness under section 161 of CrPC in order to shield the Minister.

The BJP had already staged demonstrations against Mr. Jena, demanding his sacking.

Similarly, farmers across different districts have been protesting against siphoning off funds in Cuttack Central Cooperative Bank. They alleged that Mr. Swain's continuance as Cooperation Minister became untenable in wake of his brother's alleged involvement in financial irregularities in the bank.

011-45090051, 981833320

Mrs.VICTORIA MANOHAR 09-02-1941 to 29-08-2021,

our beloved mother has Sunday, August 29, 2021; But to meet us in

promised & as Jesus said: 'Do not be amazed at this, for the hour is coming in which all

& Mavi Manohar.

IN BRIEF



Classes VI to VIII to reoper from Sept. 6: Karnataka

BENGALURU The Karnataka government on Monday decided to reopen Classes VI to VIII from September 6 in taluks that have a test positivity rate of below 2%. Classes will be held for students on alternate days with COVID-19 norms in place. Attendance should not cross 50%. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on COVID-19 chaired by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

Two rubber tappers killed by wild elephants

Two rubber tappers were killed by wild elephants in separate incidents near the Chimmini dam in Thrissur district, Kerala, on Monday, The deceased were identified as Sainudhin, 49, and Peethambaran, 59. The incidents occurred at Kundayi and Palappilly, both located near the dam. Sainudhin was riding his motorbike to Elikkad when the elephant attacked him. In the second incident, Peethambaran was on his way to work when the elephant attacked him.

Ticket rates soar as UAE resumes tourist visa

As the United Arab Emirates (UAE) resumed tourist visas for fully vaccinated travellers from Monday, the flight rates between Kerala and various Emirates cities have soared higher even as travel agents are waiting for the final standard operating procedures from civil aviation authorities. A one-way ticket from Thiruvananthapuram to Dubai costs about ₹37,000 on September 5 in Etihad Airways. A direct flight from Kochi to Dubai in Emirates airline costs ₹29,000 and

Cong. hits a low in Kerala due to dissent

Party veteran A.V. Gopinath resigns while State unit expels P.S. Prasanth

G. ANAND

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Dissension in the Congress over the District Congress Committee (DCC) reorganisation hit a new low on Monday, with party veteran A.V. Gopinath from Palakkad quitting the organisation amid intense speculation that more disgruntled leaders would follow suit.

Mr. Gopinath's departure capped a long line of disagreements between 'A' and T' group factions and the official Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) leadership over the selection of DCC presidents.

Mr. Gopinath's resignation has come as a propaganda win for the CPI(M), as he praised Chief Minister Pina-

STAFF REPORTER

A woman in her 30s was

stripped, beaten with sticks

and paraded on the streets

of Raja Naik Thanda at Su-

ryapet mandal, Telangana,

on Sunday. The incident

came to light on Monday af-

ter the police said at least

five persons involved in the

changed), who was named

as an accused in the June 13

murder of Shankar Naik, a

leader of the ruling Telanga-

na Rashtra Samithi (TRS),

appeared before TV came-

ramen and narrated her or-

deal. "The women of Naik's

family dragged me from my

stripped me and smeared

chilli powder in my eyes and

house.

Ramavath Anitha (name

attack had been arrested.

SURYAPET

Woman stripped, beaten

with sticks in Telangana

Police arrest five involved in attack

rayi Vijayan and hinted that he was not inimical to the Left Democratic Front (LDF).

Social media post

A social media post by Congress leader Anil Akkara, purportedly mocking Mr. Gopinath for his "overtures" to Mr. Vijayan, seemed to have catalysed the latter's decision to quit.

KPCC president K. Sudhakaran chided Mr. Akkara for the Facebook post and expressed optimism that Mr. Gopinath would reverse his decision. Mr. Sudhakaran appeared to walk a tight line between imposing party discipline and keeping the rank and file within the party fold.

Notably, the KPCC expelled P.S. Prasanth from the

other parts of my body.

They paraded me naked in

the streets and wanted to

kill me at the village's bodrai

[centre]," she said, naming

The woman said she was

in the village to attend her

uncle's funeral when the

Anitha was reportedly re-

leased on bail last week and

was staying at a relative's

place in Suryapet town. She

said she informed the police

that she would be attending

The police said 10 per-

sons involved in the attack

were identified. Five of

them - Lunavath Bharati,

Padma, Jyothi, Sunitha and

Banoth Jyothi - were arrest-

ed and remanded in judicial

Naik family took revenge.

the attackers.



Breaking ties: Party veteran A.V. Gopinath announcing his resignation at a press conference in Palakkad. • к.к. мизтаған

party. The leader from Nedumangad had raised the flag of rebellion by "disparaging" All-India Congress Committee general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal in a letter to former party president Rahul Gandhi. A party

insider said the KPCC had received information that Mr. Prasanth would defect to the LDF. The expulsion, he said, was a pre-emptive move.

Meanwhile, top group leaders engaged the KPCC leadership in a publicised tussle over DCC reorganisation for the second consecu-

'A' group leader Oommen Chandy blamed Mr. Sudhakaran for disclosing the contemporaneous notes the lattter had taken during their closed door discussions about party reorganisation.

'I' group leader Joseph Vazhakkan blamed the KPCC leadership for keeping senior leaders out of decisionmaking.

Realignment of loyalties

The Congress also witnessed an assumed realignment of loyalties. Media outlets claimed Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, K. Muraleedharan, P.T. Thomas, T. Siddique, and Sooranadu Rajasekharan had shed their respective group identities and aligned themselves with the KPCC leadership.

Bride among seven killed in heavy rain in Telangana

Most of the victims were swept away by flash floods

STAFF REPORTER HYDERABAD/YADADRI

Seven persons died in rainrelated incidents in different parts of Telangana since Sunday night. Most of the victims were swept away in flash floods due to heavy rain in Vikarabad, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri and Hanumakonda districts.

Tragedy stuck two families in Vikarabad as a bride and the groom's sister got washed away in a canal at Marpally mandal on Sunday night. They were travelling in a car. While the bodies of the bride, Pravalika, and her sister-in-law, Swetha Reddy, were recovered, the body of an eight-year-old boy, who was also in the car, was yet to be found. The family members alleged that the driver of the car, Raghavender Reddy, was inebriated.

Pravalika and Nawaz Reddy got married on August 24. After completing the postmarriage celebrations at Pravalika's home in Mominpet, the couple was returning to Nawaz's home in Ravepally.

As water was overflowing on to the road in Marpally, several vehicles had stopped at a distance. Vikarabad Deputy Superintendent of Police A. Sanjeev Rao said Raghavender ignored the family members' plea to stop the car and not to go ahead.

In another incident at Shankarpalli in the same district, a 70-year-old man died

ALOK DESHPANDE

A day after the Enforcement

Directorate (ED) summoned

Shiv Sena leader and Tran-

sport Minister in the tripar-

tite Maha Vikas Aghadi

(MVA) government Anil Pa-

rab on August 31, the agency

reportedly conducted raids

on the officials of the depart-

ment. The allies slammed

the action saying it has be-

come clear that the ED was

working on directions of the

rashtra are nothing but polit-

ical vendetta. The ED is

probing individuals and raid-

"The happenings in Maha-

after the car in which he was travelling was swept away on Sunday night while crossing a bridge that was overflowing with water from a stream in spate.

A man and his two women pillion riders were also washed away by an overflowing stream near Kurraram village in Yadadri district on Monday.

In another incident, the body of a software engineer was found in a storm water drain at Kakaji colony, Hanumakonda town, on Monday. He was identified as V. Kranthi Kumar, 32, a resident of Shiva Nagar colony. It was stated that he might have accidentally fallen into the drain and died.

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Rajasthan, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Marathwada, Vidarbha, Konkan & Goa and Telangana. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and Rayalaseema

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	–	32.6	25.8	Kozhikode	25	31.0	22.5
Ahmedabad	12.2	35.3	28.0	Kurnool	46	28.1	22.4
Aizawl	25.4	28.0	19.0	Lucknow	7	31.8	25.8
Allahabad		34.8	26.9	Madurai		34.7	25.1
Bengaluru	3.9	26.6	19.7	Mangaluru	34.7	27.8	22.1
Bhopal	33.4	28.5	23.2	Mumbai	0.7	29.9	26.0
Bhubaneswar	0.7	32.2	24.9	Mysuru		28.0	21.0
Chandigarh	–	34.6	24.7	New Delhi		34.6	25.3
Chennai	10	32.8	24.4	Patna	2	34.3	26.2
Coimbatore		33.5	20.9	Port Blair	44	29.7	24.0
Dehradun	68	32.1	22.2	Puducherry	0.6	33.3	23.5
Gangtok	14.6	20.7	16.5	Pune		28.3	22.4
Goa	1	29.4	24.0	Raipur		32.5	25.4
Guwahati		33.5	25.0	Ranchi	0.5	29.3	23.5
Hubballi	–	27.0	22.0	Shillong		22.0	17.4
Hyderabad	16	26.0	21.6	Shimla	1	26.0	17.3
Imphal	–	31.1	22.1	Srinagar		29.2	13.5
Jaipur	1.2	33.8	25.5	Thiruvananthapuram	23	29.6	22.2
Kochi	47	29.0	–	Tiruchi		35.3	26.4
Kohima	4	26.0	17.4	Vijayawada	1	28.4	25.4
Kolkata	18	33.2	26.9	Visakhapatnam	1	31.4	25.4
(Rainfall data	in mm;	temper	ature in	Celsius)			

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

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Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI) 502: 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

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

Two arrested for circulating minor's photo

RAINA ASSAINAR

The Taloja police have arrested two persons in Uttar Pradesh for allegedly circulating a 15-year-old girl's nude photo on WhatsApp groups. The accused have been identified as Mohammad Arif Munir Ahmed (22) and Yasin Ahmed Nasiruddin Ahmed (22).

The girl, who hails from Uttar Pradesh, had come to stay with her father in Taloja in June. Some people known to the fatherdaughter duo informed them about the girl's photo being circulated on WhatsApp groups after which the father registered a case at Taloja police station.

A team was formed under the guidance of senior police inspector Kashinath Chavan. It was learnt that the photo was posted from Uttar Pradesh following which the team left for there and nabbed the duo. "The accused were brought to Navi Mumbai on Saturday," Mr. Chavan said.

Temple reopening: defying norms, BJP holds agitation

Govt. allowing liquor bars but not places of worship: Oppn.

STAFF REPORTER

Alleging that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government gave more importance to liquor bars than temples, Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Maharashtra staged protests on Monday demanding reopening of temples.

Symbolically blowing conches in their shankhnaad agitation and defying COVID-19 regulations, hundreds of BJP workers and State leaders participated in protests in key temple areas of Pune, Mumbai, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Nagpur and Solapur dis-

Alleging that the MVA government was deliberately hurting sentiments of the Hindu community, BJP MLA from Mumbai's Ghatkopar, Ram Kadam, said that the government apparently gave permission for other religions for their festivities but



BJP leader Sudhir Mungantiwar during a protest outside Babulnath temple in Mumbai on Monday. • EMMANUAL YOGINI

was refusing to open temples. "Please bear in mind, we are not advocating crowding in front of temples. But the

government can certainly devise a system based on the issuance of online passes for lakhs of devotees. When you can make rules for beer bars, then why does this government dither when it comes to reopening temples," Mr. Kadam said.

had been stationed outside Siddhi Vinayak temple to prevent Mr. Kadam from holding a protest there.

Earlier, a police shield

A partner in the coalition government, the Congress hit out at the contradictory stand taken by the BJP government at the Centre and the party's Maharashtra unit over celebration of festivals and the reopening of temples amid the looming threat of a third wave of infections.

She was made to quit her job Court allows Vaze to seek

political gameplan," said Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Minister Nawab Malik. NCP State president Jayant Patil too said the ED is

ing places as demanded by

the BJP. This is nothing but

being used to trouble the MVA government. practice of troubling anti-BJP leaders is seen not only in Maharashtra but across the country. The leaders being targeted are capable to reply in same coin but this is nothing but an effort to defame the State government using Central agencies," said Mr.

The Shiv Sena has termed the ED notice as love letter. "For any political worker, the ED notice is no longer a death warrant, but love letter. Power is not permanent. They have their days of power in Delhi. Our days will also come," said Sena Rajya Sab-

ED working on directions of BJP: MVA leaders

Residences of Transport Dept. officials raided a day after Minister issued summons

ha MP Sanjay Raut. Mr. Parab has already said he does not know the matter regarding which he has been summonedby the ED. Unauthorised resort BJP leader Kirit Somaiya on Monday claimed that Mr. Parab has built an unauthorised resort by violating coastal zone regulations in Murud village in Dapoli tehsil of costal Ratnagiri district which should be immediately demolished.

Mr. Somaiya alleged that one Bajrang Kharmate, deputy regional transport officer, acts as an agent of the Minister and deals with corruption in transfers in the RTO department.

It is said Mr. Parab was under the ED lense after dismissed Mumbai police officer Sachin Waze tried to submit a letter to the NIA court claiming the Minister had asked him to extort crores of rupees.

Mr. Parab has already denied all the allegations.

Man accused of triple talaq gets bail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court has granted pre-arrest bail to a man accused of giving triple talaq to his wife through SMS. "It is possible to settle the disputes through mediation," it said.

The wife was working with an airline as an air hostess. that her mother-in-law harassed her and forced her to get ₹10 lakh and jewellery from her maternal home. She also stated that after her husband, Adnan Moulvi, 32, went to work, her brother-inlaw would come home and speak to her in vulgar language and touch her inap-

propriately. She also learnt

by her in-laws. She alleged

that her husband was having an affair. On May 29 last, when she was at her parents' home, Mr. Moulvi sent her an SMS, saying, "Main apne hosh o hawaas mein tumko talak deta hu, talak deta hu, talak deta hu [In all consciousness, I divorce you]".

She then registered an FIR against him and his family members.

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

Farmer outfits warn govt., Oppn. to stop 'silly politics'

Rane-Thackeray spat a 'ploy' to divert attention from vital issues, says Raju Shetti

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

The 'political soap opera' being played out between Union Minister Narayan Rane and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray was nothing but 'a ploy' on the part of the ruling and Opposition politicos to divert attention from vital issues affecting farmers, former MP and farmer leader Raju Shetti has alleged.

Mr. Shetti, who heads the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana (SSS), chastised both the Central and the State governments while pointing out that farmers were protesting the import of genetically modified soybean and the crashing prices of tomatoes.

The former MP said that he was planning a major protest on September 1 in Kolhapur to demand recompense for farmers whose croplands had been destroyed in the recent floods and the unseasonal rains last

The SSS' protest, named 'Panchganga Parikrama' would see Mr. Shetti and his activists attempting water immersion.He also hit out at the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices for recommending that the Centre increase the fair and remunerative price for sugar cane growers by a mere ₹50 a auintal.

The Left-affiliated All-India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) also warned that it would stage massive protests in front of the residences of the leaders of both the ruling and Opposition parties if they continued to waste time on 'non-issues'.

growers have fallen on hard times once again. So much so, that even transporting the vegetable to the market is proving to be a loss-making trip for the average farmer, who is forced to sell his produce at ₹1 or ₹2 a kilo. At a time when farmers are in the throes of such a grave crisis, we warn both the MVA and the BJP leadership to stop playing silly politics on non-issues [alluding to the Rane-Thackeray spat]," Ajit Nawale of the AIKS said.

"Maharashtra's tomato

treatment at pvt. hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

A special court on Monday refused to grant the National Investigation Agency the custody of dismissed police officer Sachin Vaze for questioning in the Antilia bomb scare case, but allowed him to get admitted to a private hospital for the treatment of his heart ailment.

Mr. Vaze, currently in judicial custody, had told the court through his lawyer that three of his arteries had "90% blockage" and that doctors had advised immediate surgery for the same.

He urged the court to permit him to seek private medical treatment saying he did not wish to die in custody like tribal rights activist and Jesuit priest Stan Swamy.



BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA TREE AUTHORITY **PUBLIC NOTICE**

In accordance with the provision under section 8 (3) (C) of the Maharashtra (Urban Areas) Protection & Preservation of Trees Act 1975 (As modified upto January 2018) 01 proposal from 'L' ward, 02 proposal from 'M/West' ward in Zone - V, 07 proposal from 'N' ward, 02 proposal from 'S' ward and 07 proposal from T' ward in **Zone - VI**, i.e. Total <u>19</u> proposals are received for getting approval of Tree Authority / Municipal Commissioner, Chairman, Tree Authority for removal of trees

The information of the trees for cutting / Transplanting in above mentioned proposals is available on mcgm website- www.mcgm.gov.in.- About us - ward Department - Department manuals - Gardens & Tree Authority **23 - Adv- 7 days- Z- V, VI**.

On account of pandemic covid - 19, citizens are requested to send the objections / suggestions on E.mail- **sg.gardens@mcgm.gov.in** on or before Dt. 09/09/2021 only instead of attending hearing personally on Dt. 09/09/2021 Objections / suggestions received after this date will not be entertained which may olease may noted.

Supdt. of Gardens & Tree officer of the Tree Authority Penguin Building, 2nd Floor Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Udyan Dr. Ambedkar Road, Byculla (E), Mumbai-400 027.

Tel. no. -23742162 E.mail- sg.gardens@mcgm.gov.in PRO/941/ADV/2021/2022

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Supdt. of Gardens & Tree Officer

The virtue of consistency

India's focus must be on vaccinating a large number every day and not record highs

n August 27, Friday, India set a new record for a single day's vaccination – 10.7 million doses, up from 8.3 million vaccinations on the previous two days and over 6.3 million doses on August 23-24. However, on Saturday, the numbers dropped sharply to 7.9 million: 3.4 million doses were administered on August 29, but Sundays have always registered low numbers. A similar pattern was seen on June 21 – 8.7 million doses on a single day, which dropped to 5.8 million the next day and remained nearly stable at over six million for a week; the number of doses administered fell to three million-four million doses in the first half of July. The June 21 record appeared more to coincide with the day when the revised COVID-19 vaccination strategy came into effect, i.e., the Government procured 75% of the vaccines produced and supplied them to States for free. Though the record on August 27 does not coincide with any occasion, it does suggest that the intent was more to achieve a "momentous feat" of crossing the 10million mark; the steep fall in vaccinations the very next day gives rise to scepticism. During the pandemic, the focus should not be on setting records but on consistently vaccinating a large number of people daily and ensuring that vaccines are available at all centres every day; uncertainty in vaccine availability does not help in increasing uptake especially among the poor.

With vaccination being a safe and sure way to drastically cut the risk of hospitalisation due to severe CO-VID-19 disease and death, efforts should be to quickly and consistently vaccinate large numbers each day. For this, equitable and a regular supply of a large number of doses to all States is needed. One sure way to increase the number of daily doses is when the Government procures 100% of vaccines produced with no separate allocation to private hospitals. Precious time and doses were wasted between May and July 15 when private hospitals utilised only 7%-9% of vaccines produced against an allotment of 25%. The Government has belatedly revised the June 7 policy such that manufacturers will not set aside 25% of vaccines produced for private hospitals but instead supply as per demand and allot the remaining to the Government. If the rationale for allowing the manufacturers to sell vaccines to private hospitals at a higher price was to fund vaccine research, the small uptake by the private hospitals does not meet that objective. Hence, the Government should procure all the vaccines produced as this will help in better vaccine allotment to States, reduce vaccine inequity and increase uptake, and States can plan daily vaccination strategies in a more organised manner.

America's Asia policy

The U.S. must push for a rules-based international order despite Afghan debacle

resident Joe Biden has found himself in the uncomfortable position of facing not only the expected criticism from Republicans for his counhasty, botched exit from Afghanistan but also brickbats from within the Democratic Party and among the broader American public. The killing of at least 13 U.S. troops and dozens of Afghan civilians in the bomb blasts last week underscored the apparent lack of planning behind the withdrawal despite prior knowledge of its approaching deadline. The chaotic, violent scenes at Kabul airport, undergirded by the deep irony of the Taliban's unchallenged takeover of Kabul and other Afghan territories, have also no doubt stung U.S. policymakers, especially over comparisons to Saigon in 1975. How can Mr. Biden now hope to sell the big picture of Washington's engagement in the South Asia region to his domestic political constituents in a way that limits the reputational damage to the White House? The first step will be, at long last, to shift the American policy paradigm on Afghanistan from a boilerplate approach toward institution-building to recognising the political complexities of governing a society where tribal and ethnic lovalties supersede western norms of rational decision-making by government. In part, this means not demonising or cutting ties with the Taliban before they have had an opportunity to settle into power and announce intentions for governing Afghanistan. There must also be a recognition of the role that third parties are going to play, for better or worse. That must include everything from the Pakistani ISI's shadowy dealings through proxies such as the Haqqani Network, China's relentless push for access to economic projects, and India's civilisational and 'soft power' links.

In the big picture, there is an unsettling question for Washington to answer, on whether in persisting with the Trump-era promise to pull U.S. troops out of Afghanistan, Mr. Biden will be able to reassure Asian allies and partners that the U.S. will not also play a diminished strategic role in the broader Asia region. To an extent, U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris's Singapore and Vietnam trip was aimed at assuaging such concerns and shoring up enthusiasm for the rules-based international order that has taken a beating. Yet, unless Washington follows up such summit meetings with ground-level engagement, for example through the Quad or deeper bilateral initiatives with friendly democracies including India, Asian powers will be hard pressed to assume anything other than Washington's indifference toward their interests. The danger for the West of considerable blowback that could emerge thus are at least two-fold: first, Afghanistan's cyclical transitions from western-occupied territory to abandoned nation and ultimately a breeding ground for global terror outfits is well-documented; and second, China will be only too glad to step into the breach should any new spaces be ceded in the pecking order of regional hegemony in Asia.

A monetisation move that doesn't tick most boxes

The National Monetisation Pipeline may not help realise the best value for public assets to kick-start investment demand



R. NAGARAJ

Government has launched a National Monetisation Pipeline, or NMP (https://bit.ly/3mLkw9M) to sell public assets or, more precisely, their revenue streams over the next four years. The pipeline mostly includes railway stations, freight corridors, airports, and renovated national highway segments (yielding toll revenue) amounting to ₹6-lakh crore, or 3% of GDP in 2020-21.

As outlined in the Union Budget, the NMP aims to mobilise resources for financing infrastructure. The other two methods of raising resources are: setting up of a development finance institution (DFI) and raising the share of infrastructure investment in the central and State Budgets.

Hard questions

The proposed asset sale (monetisation) raises many questions. Conceptually, how is it different from disinvestment and privatisation (D-P) practised for the last three decades? Since D-P proceeds (revenues) have seriously missed the targets almost every year, how believable are the NMP targets? And how are they likely to perform differently? Is the NMP a desperate attempt to shore up public finances, after nearly two years of dismal output growth, stagnant tax-GDP ratio despite the steep rise in taxes on petroleum products? If so, is such a distress (fire) sale desirable to obtain a "fair value" for public assets? Would the market not factor in the dire state of the economy in beating down the prices, as in any distress sale?

The NMP differentiates "asset monetisation" from "asset sale" by saying: "Asset Monetisation, as en-

visaged here, entails a limited period license/lease of an asset, owned by the government or a public authority, to a private sector entity for an upfront or periodic consideration" (NMP, volume 1,

Asset monetisation as defined above is the same as the net present value (NPV) of the future stream of revenue with an implicit interest rate (whether it is a sale or lease of the asset). In a footnote, the NMP document further clarifies: "Sale, i.e. transfer of legal ownership of assets is only envisaged in cases such as disinvestment of stake, etc.". Again there seems to be conceptual confusion. Sale of minority equity does not lead to a change in managerial control. Hence, the official attempt to differentiate its initiative from the earlier efforts seems feeble and incorrect

Historic missteps

The NMP outlines mainly two modes of implementing the monetisation: public-private partnership (PPP) and "structured financing" to tap the stock market. PPP in infrastructure has been a financial disaster in India, as evident from what happened after the economic boom of 2003-08. Surely, India did create world-class airports in Mumbai and Delhi and speeded up highway road reconstruction.

However, after the 2008 financial crisis, as the world economy and trade plummeted, and as India's GDP growth rate slowed down sharply, hurting demand (and revenues for the indebted companies), many PPP projects failed to repay bank loans. Banks were left holding the non-performing assets (NPAs). Further, as the bulk of the lending was to politically connected corporate houses and firms (Bollygarchs as picturesquely described by James Crabtree in his book, The Billionaire Raj), debt resolution came in the crosshairs of the political and banking system. India is still reeling from



the legacy of that period without any easy and credible solutions in

An Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) is being mooted as an alternative means of raising finance from the stock market. In principle, InvIT is much like a mutual fund, whose performance is largely linked to stock prices. It may be worthwhile to jog one's memory to recall how the disinvestment process began in 1991 after the initiation of economic reforms. It was by "off-loading" bundles of shares of public sector enterprises (PSEs) to the financial institution UTI, which in turn sold the bundles in the booming secondary stock market to realise the best price. The euphoria was short-lived, however, as the market crashed in the wake of the Harshad Mehta scam, stalling and discrediting the disinvestment process for almost the entire decade.

Hence, it may be worth learning the lessons from the historical missteps before getting enamoured with the idea all over again by the current stock market boom. As many have apprehended, the currently high stock prices seem like a bubble with heightened uncertainties in the global financial mar-

With the U.S. Fed committed to reducing its assets purchase programme (known as quantitative easing), the "hot money" inflow that has fuelled Indian stock prices may dry up throwing up nasty surprises

In 2020-21, the economy contracted by 8% due to the pandemic

and lockdown, as in the annual report of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The current year is at best likely to regain the pre-pandemic GDP level. Aggregate saving and investment rates (that is, as ratios of GDP) have (expectedly) contracted. The stock market is however booming, dancing to shortterm foreign capital inflows, with little connection with the real economy. Given its distressed state, the asset monetisation effort appears nothing short of a fire sale.

Other solutions

Thus, it seems unwise to anchor the acutely needed investment revival strategy on a discredited PPP model or on fickle Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) investment in a frothy stock market. Instead of assets monetisation, why not monetise debt, with committed borrowing from the market and the central bank? With the financial system flush with liquidity with no takers for bank credit, why not finance the proposed investment as envisaged in the Budget - by government borrowing. The usual objections against such an idea are three: cost of borrowing, "crowding-out" of private investment, and the inflationary threat.

The RBI's annual report shows the weighted average cost of central government borrowings in 2020-21 was 5.8%. And the inflation rate as measured by the consumer price index (CPI-combined) was 6.2%. Thus, with a negative 0.4% real interest rate (real interest rate is nominal interest rate minus inflation rate), domestic borrowing in home currency is a steal. Chances of crowding-out private investments are remote with a liquidity overhang in the market. Inflation risk is also limited with little aggregate demand pressures (barring temporary bottlenecks due to localised lockdowns).

The rising public debt to GDP ratio is often red-flagged as a potential risk to rating downgrade by bond rating agencies. If the debt is productively used to expand GDP

(the denominator), such risks seem minimal. Moreover, rising external debt by fickle portfolio investors perhaps carries a greater risk to external instability. Foreign portfolio investment has skyrocketed by 6,800% in 2020-21, over the previous year, to \$38 billion (as per RBI data released in May). This, perhaps, poses a greater financial hazard than the potential rise in debt monetisation in domestic currency used for productive purposes.

In perspective

To sum up, the NMP is an ambitious "retail" sale or lease of revenue yielding public capital projects – with the potential threats of allegations of corruption and cronyism derailing the process – to revive investment demand and to halt the economic decline. The main instruments proposed for implementing the NMP are publicprivate partnerships and a stock market-based investment trust (InvIT). Both have serious shortcomings, as experience demonstrates. The NMP document seems silent on how to overcome past mistakes. Hence, the NMP appears like a fire sale which may not help realise the best social value for public assets to kick-start investment demand.

If reviving investment demand quickly is the real goal, debt monetisation seems a better option than asset monetisation. It is a "wholesale" business with lower operating and transaction costs, and at a currently negative interest rate. With excess liquidity in the financial markets, and low aggregate demand, the inflationary threat seems minimal. Such targeted borrowing, if quickly funnelled into infrastructure investment projects, could crowd-in (or bring in) private investment igniting a virtuous cycle of investment-led economic revival.

R. Nagaraj is with the Centre for Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

India is indeed walking the green talk

Even with all its challenges, the country is setting a global example in meeting its Nationally Determined Contributions



SUMANT NARAIN

fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (December 2020), India was the only G20 nation compliant with the agreement? Or that the country has been ranked within the top 10 for two years consecutively in the Climate Change Performance Index, released by an independent international organisation that evaluates the performance of countries emitting 90%+ of global greenhouse gases (GHGs)? Or that the Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme is the world's largest zerosubsidy LED bulb programme for

A world comparison needed

domestic consumers?

Despite these accomplishments, global pressures are intensifying on India to commit more towards the Conference of the Parties (COP26), scheduled for November 2021 in Glasgow. Early this year, the COP26 President, Alok Sharma, and the United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry, visited India. In July, the U.S. called out to every significant economy for committing to a meaningful reduction by 2030.

That brings us to the question. Is it fair to apply pressure on India

to raise its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) committed in the Paris Agreement? We can attempt to answer the question by comparing the achievements of other countries vis-à-vis India's performance, given that climate change is a global public good and there is a free-rider problem – not much incentive contribute their fair share since they can enjoy benefits even

Let us first gather the historical perspective. Examining World Bank data for CO₂ emissions (metric tons per capita) over two decades since the Kyoto protocol informs that at the current rate, both China and the U.S. could emit five times more than India in 2030. The U.K.'s emission levels could be more than 1.5 times that of India. Brazil, with its dense forests, may end up at similar levels.

On China and the U.S. Among recent efforts, last year, China, the world's largest GHG emitter, joined the 'race to zero' and targets carbon neutrality by 2060. Interestingly, it hopes to peak CO₂ emissions by 2030 for bending the emissions curve. The Climate Action Tracker, an independent scientific analysis tracking governments' actions, also expressed its concern stating, "Most worryingly, China remains committed to supporting the coal industry while the rest of the world experiences a decline, and is now home to half of the world's coal capacity." Recently, the U.S. rejoined the Paris Agreement and commit-

ted to reducing emissions by 50%-52% in 2030 and reaching net-zero emissions economy-wide by 2050. While they re-energise their fight on climate change, legislation may not be straightforward, given the Democrats' strength in Congress. Such ambitions will also require much more near-term investment than even the U.S. President Joe Biden's \$2.3 trillion infrastructure package.

France and Australia

The French government, during the novel coronavirus pandemic, set green conditions for bailing out its aviation industry. However, the analysts say that no baseline for reducing emissions from domestic flights was fixed, and it is unclear what measures were adopted to promote rail for domestic travel.

An Australian Prime Minister, in 2018, lost his chair on a proposal to address climate change through an emissions-reduction target. The complicated domestic politics prevented them from addressing the problem, despite the country being vulnerable, and stretches of

ing died in recent years. It was, at least, the third instance in Australia when climate issues brought down its Prime Minister. It illustrates how difficult it is for governments to develop policies to mitigate climate change.

Walking it like talking it

In comparison, with all its challenges, India is on track (as reports/documents show) to meet and exceed the NDC commitment to achieve 40% electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based sources by 2030; this share is 38.18% (November 2020). Similarly, against the voluntary declaration for reducing the emission intensity of GDP by 20%-25% by 2020, India has reduced it by 24% between 2005-2016. More importantly, we achieved these targets with around 2% out of the U.S.\$100 billion committed to developing nations in Copenhagen

(2009), realised by 2015. As part of its mitigation efforts, India is implementing one of the most extensive renewable energy expansion programmes to achieve 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030. India has also coupled its post-pandemic revival with environmental protection. As part of the fiscal stimulus, the Government announced several green measures, including a \$26.5-billion investment in biogas and cleaner fuels, \$3.5 billion in incentives for producing efficient solar photovoltaic (PV) and advanced chemistry cell battery, and \$780

the famous Great Barrier Reef hav-million towards an afforestation programme.

Some activists feel that India needs to demonstrate action at the global level. However, we need to appreciate that among many steps, India provided leadership for setting up the International Solar Alliance, a coalition of solar-recountries, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, a partnership of governments, United Nations agencies, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and knowledge institutions.

The developed nations could also intensify their pressure especially on jurisdictions not meeting the Paris Agreement goals. At this stage, India can always share independent international assessments, acknowledging that our climate action is among the few compatible with the well-below 2°C warming target. India's contribution to global emissions is well below its equitable share of the worldwide carbon budget by any equity criterion.

To sum up, India has indeed walked the talk. Other countries must deliver on their promises early and demonstrate tangible results ahead of COP26. In any case, we can always suo motu revise the NDC for the first stocktake (2023) while simultaneously protecting our interests. The responsibility of sustaining the entire planet does not rest on a few countries; everyone has to act.

Sumant Narain is a civil servant. The views expressed are personal

$LETTERS\ TO\ THE\ EDITOR\ \ \text{Letters}\ \text{emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.}$

Crime, rights, justice

The Mysuru case, where a university girl student was assaulted, calls for condign punishment to the perpetrators. It is common knowledge that in seeking justice, cases of this nature are dragged on for days. As often pointed out by law-abiding citizens, fast-track courts are the one and only answer, in such

■ The report, "Student held in rape case freed after negative DNA test result" (Inside pages, August 30),

MANI NATARAAJAN,

presents the other side of reality in India. The role of the police is in question as they need to keep in mind the phrase, "innocent until proven guilty". The future of the boy, a higher secondary student, is in focus given the tremendous mental trauma he is bound to have undergone. The issue of false cases needs to be looked into as well SHREYASI DEBNATH,

still to come to terms with

■ The report is an example of the need for police reforms. In spite of much training and instructions, many police personnel across India have

the idea of respecting human rights. Verbal abuse is most common. The details the boy has highlighted are not an isolated case of abuse by the guardians of the law. Perhaps more scientific tools are essential for investigation and interrogation. It is essential that all police stations have information about free legal aid services, the numbers of higher authorities as well those of judges to highlight third degree methods. Police stations must be monitored by local magistrates. In addition, there should be

regular training on the need

to protect rights, and use scientific tools to get to the truth. Decades have passed since Independence, yet the general perception of the police is still poor. J.P. REDDY, Nalgonda, Telangana

On oil palm

When I was working in the Department of Agriculture, Tamil Nadu, the technology mission on edible oils in the 1980s and the coverage of area under oil palm was very poor. Farmers were reluctant to adopt this crop due to its invasive nature just like the Lantana camara weed in the Western Ghats. The Indian

Research Palode, Kerala does not seem to have come up with favourable results for the suitability of oil palm in India.

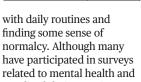
A. KAJA NAZIMUDEEN, Eruvadi, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

Institute of Oil Palm

Mental health

Mental health is one of the most trending topics right now. Teenagers and students in particular may not always express how they feel. Their concerns must be addressed and given consideration.

The pandemic has resulted in people of all age groups feeling isolated and has also left many struggling to cope To read more letters online, scan the QR code



normalcy. Although many have participated in surveys related to mental health and vocalised their experiences, some are still scared to come forward. It is essential to identify the symptoms early, provide intervention in terms of counselling, therapy or medication. All those confronting negative repetitive thoughts must not hesitate to reach out to hotlines, peers and trusted adults. NITYA RAVIKANT, Bengaluru

THE HINDU DELHI TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2021

Marital rape: an indignity to women

The marital rape exception is antithetical to women's dignity, equality and autonomy



SHRADDHA CHAUDHARY

The High Court of Chhattisgarh recently decided a criminal revision petition challenging the charges framed against the applicant husband. Based on the allegations of his wife, charges were framed by a trial court under Section 376 (rape), Section 377 (carnal intercourse against the order of nature) and Section 498A (cruelty towards wife by husband or his relatives) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The High Court upheld charges under Sections 498A and 377 but discharged the husband under Section 376 on the ground that by virtue of Exception 2 to Section 375 (the definition of rape), sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife (provided she is over the age of 18) would not amount to the offence of rape.

Since the High Court was bound by the law, which exempts husbands from being tried or punished for raping their wives by creating the legal fiction that all sex within marriage is consensual, no other conclusion was open to the Court. Notwithstanding this, the discrepancies and failings of Indian criminal law, highlighted by the judgment, deserve scrutiny.

Inconsistent provisions

First, the marital rape exception is inconsistent with other sexual offences, which make no such exemption for marriage. Thus, a husband may be tried for offences such as sexual harassment, molestation, voyeurism, and forcible disrobing in the same way as any other man. A husband separated from his wife (though not divorced) may even be tried for rape (Section 376B). A husband may be charged and tried for nonconsensual penetrative sexual interactions other than penile-vaginal penetration with his wife under Section 377 (prior to the decision of the Supreme Court in Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of *India*, 2018, consent or lack thereof was not relevant to Section 377, but it is now). As a result, penetrative intercourse that is penile-vaginal is protected from criminal prosecution when performed by a husband with his wife, even when done forcibly or without consent. If there is an underlying ra-

tionale to this extremely limited exemption, it is not immediately clear.

Patriarchal beliefs

Second, the marital rape exception is an insult to the constitutional goals of individual autonomy, dignity and of gender equality enshrined in fundamental rights such as Article 21 (the right to life) and Article 14 (the right to equality). In Joseph Shine v. Union of India (2018), the Supreme Court held that the offence of adultery was unconstitutional because it was founded on the principle that a woman is her husband's property after marriage. The marital rape exception betrays a similar patriarchal belief: that upon marriage, a wife's right to personal and sexual autonomy, bodily integrity and human dignity are surrendered. Her husband is her sexual master and his right to rape her is legally protected.

A commonly cited rationale for preserving the marital rape exemption is that recognising marital rape as a criminal offence would 'destroy the institution of marriage'. This was the government's defence in Independent Thought v. Union of India (2017). Rejecting this claim, the Supreme Court astutely observed, "Marriage is not institutional but personal - nothing can destroy the 'institution' of marriage except a statute that makes marriage illegal and punishable." If it is true, however, that criminalising marital rape will destroy the institution of marriage, what does that tell us about this socalled institution? If its very existence depends on husbands' right to rape their wives, and on the legally sanctioned violation of wives' sexual autonomy, is this institution worth saving? Does this kind of marriage deserve to be the cornerstone of our society? Surely, we can do better.

Another argument frequently raised

against the criminalisation of marital rape is that since marriage is a sexual relationship, determining the validity of marital rape allegations would be difficult. Even if we accept, arguendo, that marriage is necessarily a sexual relationship, this argument does not hold water. It is not marriage that creates a problem in adjudication, but the dangerously erroneous belief that consent may simply be assumed from a woman's clothes, her sexual history, or indeed, her relationship status. While the current law seems to operate under this misconception, marriage does not signify perpetual sexual consent. Therefore, the determination of consent or lack thereof in the context of a sexual interaction within marriage would be the same as in any other context (especially in other ongoing sexual relationships): through physical evidence, through the prosecutrix's testimony and through the defence of the accused.

Underlining subordination

It is shocking that Exception 2 to Section 375 of the IPC survives to this day. Antithetical to the liberal and progressive values of our Constitution, and violative of India's international obligations under instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the provision underlines women's subordination to men, especially within marriage. In 2017, the Supreme Court, in Independent Thought, had read down the exception so that husbands who raped their minor wives could no longer hide behind it. It is high time adult women are afforded the same protection and dignity in marriage.

Shraddha Chaudhary is Lecturer, Jindal Global Law School, Sonepat and Ph.D Candidate (Law), University of Cambridge

West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar

relatively fewer vaccines.

and Uttar Pradesh also receive

Still hanging fire on transparency

Courts need to go beyond appealing to the fictional conscience of our lawmakers



ANJALI BHARDWAJ & AMRITA JOHRI

In a recent judgment, a Supreme Court Bench headed by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman fined eight political parties for being in contempt of the Court's directions to inform citizens about the criminal antecedents of their candidates. In 2004, 24% of the Members of Parlia ment had criminal cases pending against them. This figure rose to an alarming 43% after the 2019 general elections. In a bid to address this "malignancy" of criminalisation which could be "fatal to democracy", the apex court, in a series of judgments, had directed political parties to declare and widely publicise not just the criminal antecedents of candidates, but also inform the electorate why these candidates were found to be more suitable by the party than those without criminal backgrounds. Anticipating that parties would cite 'winnability' as the criterion, the Court clarified that the reasons for selection shall be with refeto the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate concerned. Despite these clear directives, parties have been defiant.

Contempt for right to know

This is not the first instance where political parties have shown total contempt for peoples' right to information. Acting in exemplary unison, after the judgment in Union of India v. ADR (2002), wherein all candidates standing for elections were directed to file an affidavit declaring their educational, financial and criminal backgrounds, political parties amended the Representation of the People Act, 1951, to nullify the disclosure requirements. The Court struck down the amendments.

In 2013, the full bench of the Central Information Commission (CIC) declared six national political parties 'public authorities' under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. Parties were required to appoint Public Information Officers and submit themselves to provisions of the transparency law. So strong was the resolve of parties to not share information about their functioning with citizens that immediately a bill was introduced in Parliament to amend



the RTI law to exclude political parties from the ambit of the legislation. It was only due to strong public opposition that the amendments were finally dropped. Nevertheless, following the policy of what can only be termed 'uncivil disobedience', without obtaining a stay on the Commission's order from any Court, parties have steadfastly refused to comply with the directive.

The electoral bond scheme

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which came to power on the plank of transparency and anti-corruption, has taken resistance against transparency to new frontiers. It introduced the electoral bond scheme in 2018, opening the floodgates of unlimited anonymous funding to political parties by Indian and foreign sources. The Indian political system has traditionally been hostile to the idea of transparency in electoral financing. Political parties have zealously opposed any examination of the linkages between their governments' policies and decisions and the interests of their major donors. Electoral bonds have dealt a further blow to people's right to know and consolidated the role of big money in electoral politics. Peoples' ability to engage with political processes in a democratic manner and track donations by corporates to monitor and blow the whistle on quid pro quo have been seriously undermined.

The design of the scheme is such that while citizens and opposition parties have no way of knowing who is donating bonds to which party, it is not difficult for the party in power to access the data. This asymmetry of information in favour of the party in power gives it an undue advantage. It is no surprise that the lion's share of donations through bonds have been cornered by the BJP.

While hearing the challenge to the instrument of electoral bonds, the Supreme Court in 2019 observed that the matter gives "rise to weighty issues which have a tremendous bearing on the sanctity of the electoral process in the country..." Unfortunately, the case

In all the States where the supply has remained low, the

vaccination pace has remained poor too. In 10 States.

<50% of the adult population has been vaccinated with

has not received the urgent attention it requires and the petition has been languishing for nearly four years.

Political parties are at the heart of our democracy. They form governments that make policies which have a profound impact on peoples' lives. In the legislature, elected representatives make laws that govern us. People, therefore, have a right to know how political parties are functioning - who is funding them and what principles they are keeping in mind while taking policy decisions, supporting or opposing bills in the legislature, or while selecting candidates for various elections.

The Court has repeatedly appealed to the conscience of lawmakers to take steps to ensure greater transparency of political parties and prohibit involvement of persons with criminal antecedents in polity. However, in the words of Justices Nariman and B.R. Gavai, "All these appeals have fallen on the deaf ears... The nation continues to wait... Cleansing the polluted stream of politics is obviously not one of the immediate pressing concerns of the legislative branch of government."

Courts must be more proactive

It is clear that political parties and their representatives in the legislature have no interest in making themselves answerable to citizens. Keeping in mind the tremendous public interest at stake, perhaps the time has come for the judiciary to play a more proactive role. The Supreme Court needs to urgently hear the electoral bonds matter and the challenge to the refusal of political parties to comply with the CIC's order. Finally, it needs to examine whether a post facto determination of the violation of its directions regarding publicising criminal antecedents of candidates and imposition of fine of a few lakh rupees is likely to deter parties which declare incomes worth hundreds of crores every year. The judiciary could consider putting in place a mechanism to monitor compliance with its directions prior to all State and general elections and debar candidates who violate its orders.

The country can no longer afford courts being passive spectators of the debasement of democracy. Public interest demands that judicial intervention goes beyond appealing to the fictional conscience of our lawmakers.

Anjali Bhardwaj and Amrita Johri are members of the National Campaign for Peoples' Right to

The vaccine's last-mile problem

In vaccination programmes with delicate delivery requirements, the last mile means make or break

GRETE FAREMO

COVID-19 exposed and increased the vast inequalities of our world. Now, the effort to vaccinate humanity risks creating the latest front in global inequality. Against a backdrop of vaccine nationalism, debates over intellectual property or technology transfer, fair and equal access to CO-VID-19 vaccines is at risk. This will cost lives, stifle economies, and push our recovery further out of reach.

That vaccines were developed and approved at record speed shows us what we can achieve by working together. Now we need that same spirit of partnerships to vaccinate the whole world. It is a monumental task, whose scale and urgency means we should do all we can to support it. We must urgently share technology and doses, but we must also focus on communities that are most left be-

Which brings me to my point. How do we ensure vaccines get into the arms of the most vulnerable, in hardto-reach locations, fragile states and conflict zones? Even if doses are in place, paid for, and shipped, what does effective vaccine coverage mean in the mountains of Afghanistan or the Amazon, across the sprawling lands of the Central African Republic or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or places with predominantly rural and nomadic populations?

I raise these questions because running UNOPS - the UN's infrastructure and procurement agency has taught me that the last mile matters immensely. From bringing critical drugs to forest dwellers across Southeast Asia and delivering food, to delivering face masks and sanitisers by canoe in Brazil, we know that implementing projects in hard-toreach areas requires ingenuity and resilience. And when we talk about vaccines with such delicate delivery requirements, the last mile is simply make or break.

Logistical issues

Cold chain delivery requirements, for example, currently pose a far greater challenge for developing countries. This is due to the combination of poor transport infrastructure, no reliable access to electricity

to store the vaccines (even for those that do not require ultra-low temperature storage), and high daylight temperatures. The logistical challenge of getting the vaccines from warehouses to the entire human population is key to the success of this largest vaccine roll-out in our history. But this requires better health systems, supply chains and infrastructure, and strong logistics support. There are many pieces to this puzzle: from distributing the vaccines and managing the cold chain infrastructure needed, to hiring and training vaccinators, communicating clearly with the communities involved, and making sure that the medical waste from this massive vaccination exercise does not fill our lands and oceans and add to our climate emergency. All of these are even more testing in more challeng-

Long-term benefits

We have a moral – not to mention economic - obligation to get this right. But the good news is that this challenging exercise also gives us an opportunity to build more resilient health systems for a better future. If the infrastructure for vaccination clinics is created in a sustainable way, it can serve communities after the pandemic too. From solar water heaters to cold chain facilities and medical waste incinerators, the sustainable solutions offered now can benefit communities in the long-term.

Last year, the pandemic revealed not just deadly inequalities, but also key fault lines in health systems, supply chains and logistics. A year on, we owe it to our world to build on the lessons learnt, both to tackle vaccine inequality and to build the foundations for more inclusive, resilient and sustainable health systems across the world. This can be the lasting legacy of the pandemic – a world with better global health infrastructure.

We must remember that none of us are safe until all of us are safe. We must make sure we work together on this global final mile and cross the finish line together. If we fail, we cannot be sure how long this mile will last.

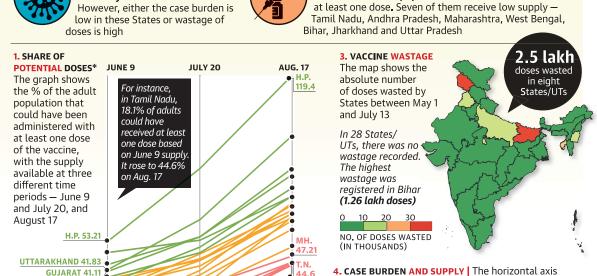
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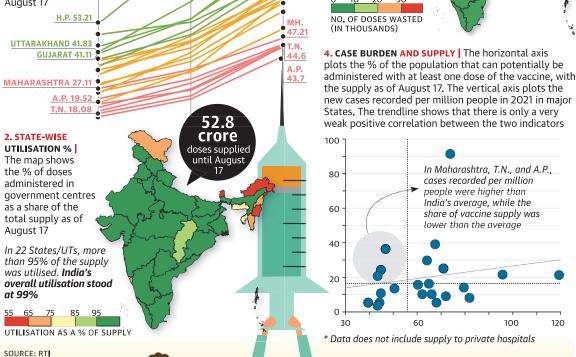
Grete Faremo is Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNOPS, the UN's infrastructure and procurement specialists

DATA POINT

Disproportionate vaccine supply

vaccine supply despite having a higher-than-average case burden, barely wasting doses and utilising more than 100% of the supplied vaccines by extracting extra doses. On the other hand, States such as Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand enjoy a relatively better stock position. This disparity in supply in otherwise similarly performing States hinders the pace of vaccination in the affected States. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Sumant Sen and Jasmin Nihalani





The Man Prindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 31, 1971

Banga Desh diplomatic mission opens

Tagore's "Amar Sonar Bangla, Ami Tomai Bhalobashi" (My Golden Bengal, I love you) rent the air and a blue flag with the territory of Bangla Desh inscribed on it went up the mast, marking the opening of a diplomatic mission of Bangla Desh in the capital to-day [New Delhi, Aug. 30]. The simple function was held at the mission building in a South Delhi colony, Ananda Niketan, but the Chief of Mission, Mr. K.M. Shehabuddin, in a statement on the occasion laid claim to the High Commission buildings in Chanakyapuri which he described as "hitherto belonging to defunct Pakistan". He also claimed "Pakistan House", the official residence of the Pakistan High Commissioner, on Tilak Marg as the rightful property of Bangla Desh. "These palatial buildings like similar missions in other capitals were built by the rulers of Pakistan with the foreign exchange earned by the jute and tea of Bangla Desh and as such none had greater right to them than the people of Bangladesh," he added. Mr. Shehabuddin explained that in order to avoid embarrassment to the host Government (meaning the Government of India) the Bangla Desh flag was hoisted, not on these two buildings, but on a separate building. Mr. Shehabuddin hoped that India would soon recognise Bangla Desh and its legally constituted government.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 31, 1921

Prison reform

Even prior to the outbreak of the European war, public men in India had come to recognise that the Indian prison system was a little out of date and needed considerable improvement and the gravamen of the charge against the Government was that India was still far behind the other civilised countries in the matter of the treatment of criminals. The Government of India had constituted a Committee with a Madras civilian, having some experience of jail administration in the Southern Presidency, as its President, to make a comprehensive survey of jail administration in the western countries and make recommendations, after recording evidence of experts, to "bring the jail administration (in India) up-to-date." As we had already remarked the Committee had shown in many of its recommendations a desire that Indian prison conditions should approximate to the humanitarian conceptions of jail reform, but they had not suggested anything like a perfect scheme of reform.

FROM PAGE ONE

Five rockets target Kabul airport ahead of deadline

Two U.S. officials told Reuters that evacuations would continue on Monday, prioritising people deemed at extreme risk. Other countries have also put in last-minute requests to bring out people

in that category. The Taliban will take full control of Kabul airport after the American withdrawal on Tuesday, Qatar's Al Jazeera TV network cited an unidentified Taliban

Avani, Sumit lead India's gold hunt at Paralympics

Coached by former ace shooter Suma Shirur, 19-year-old Avani pipped China's Zhang Cuiping, who got a silver with 248.9. Much later, there was a golden encore from Sumit, especially in a season where javelin throwers have excelled with Neeraj Chopra having prospered at the preceding Olympics. Sumit erased his own world record with a throw of 68.55 m, securing gold in the men's javelin F64 segment. The joys on the javelin front multiplied as veteran Devendra Jhanjharia claimed silver in the men's F46 section. In the same event, Sundar Singh Gurjar trailed Devendra and got the bronze. Devendra, who previously won golds in the 2004 and 2016 Paralympic Games, etched his name as India's greatest para-athlete, given his remarkable consistency across the years.

In discus throw, Yogesh Kathuniya won silver in the F56 category with a throw that registered 44.38 m.

25% vaccinated health staff got infected: study

To confirm a reinfection. the researchers relied on levels of antibodies that were directed towards the nucleocapsid region of the coronavirus, which is different from the region (spike protein) that vaccine-generated antibodies normally target.

Currently, all the vaccines are designed to produce antibodies against the spikeprotein and so high levels of antibodies against the nucleocapsid region were taken to be markers of a fresh coronavirus infection.

A breakthrough infection is one where someone tests positive at least two weeks after their second dose.

Shantanu Sengupta of the CSIR-IGIB and one of the scientists who led the study said 25% was a "conservative estimate" as many of the infections were likely asymptomatic and only a subset of them who manifested symptoms were likely to get themselves tested.

While the infections were mild it could contribute to healthcare workers unknowingly infecting patients, he said.

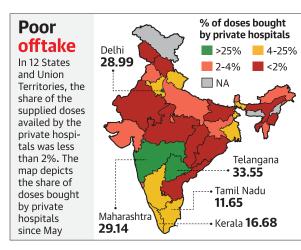
For their analysis, the scientists relied on blood samples taken every week -up to 90 - following vaccination and because this period coincided with the second wave, where most infections were due to the Delta variant, it was most likely that these breakthrough infections too were due to the Delta variant. "Two doses of the vaccine weren't protective against infection but infection followed by vaccination - even a single dose - was significantly protective against fresh infections," he added.

Currently too, Delta and its associated lineages comprise nearly half the coronavirus infections and are believed to be driving the infection in Kerala and Maharashtra.

Those healthcare workers who were previously infected had a reinfection rate of 2.5% over the same pe-

"The neutralization of Delta variant by antibodies to non-Delta spike protein is greatly reduced. This means that neither prior infection by non-Delta variants, nor existing vaccines, are individually sufficient for the path to herd immunity. This also implies that masking is an essential part of any rational COVID control strategy, being agnostic to immune escape," the authors note in their study

Private hospitals lift less than 10% of vaccines



However, between May 1 and August 17, private hospitals' share in overall supply touched 25% only in Telangana (33%), Maharashtra (29%) and Delhi (29%). Doses supplied before May 1 were not considered for analysis as 100% of the doses were procured by the Central government and supplied to the States. Murali Neelakantan, principal lawyer at amicus, Mumbai, said mandatory upfront payment and uncertain

delivery date were the reasons behind poor offtake from private players.

"In the latest phase, private hospitals were asked to pay upfront for the doses, which was not the practice in the previous phases. Also, there is no fixed date on which the doses will arrive. Thus, they were not able to plan the administration process efficiently. This explains why the private offtake dropped," he said.

Punjab and Haryana CMs spar over farm agitation

"The farmers who were protesting against the BJP meeting in Karnal when the police rained 'lathis' on them belonged to Haryana and not Punjab," said Capt. Amarinder. Blaming the BJP for the farmers' wrath, Capt. Amarinder said the crisis would not have assumed such grave proportions had the BJP, including the Haryana CM and Deputy CM Dushyant Chautala, heeded the farmers' concerns and empathised with their pain.

Farmers threaten to lay siege to mini-Secretariat at Karnal

They demand dismissal of official responsible for ordering lathi charge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Harvana farmer unions on Monday held a meeting in Karnal to demand registration of cases against the officials responsible for the lathi charge on the farmers this past weekend and ₹25 lakh compensation to the next of kin of the farmer who allegedly died due to the injuries sustained during the police action, among other things.

The unions threatened to lay indefinite siege to the Karnal mini-Secretariat in case their demands were not met till September 6.

Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) president Gurnam Singh Charuni, addressing the meeting, alleged that the government had unleashed violence on farmers holding peaceful protests and caused injuries to 40 people, including serious injuries to 11. The unions demanded government job to the next of kin of Sushil Kajal, who allegedly died from the injuries and ₹2



Strident protest: Farmers taking part in a mahapanchayat organised by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha at Gharaunda Grain market in Karnal on Monday. • РТІ

lakh each for the injured farmers.

'Illegal instructions'

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha, in a press statement, said if the Manohar Lal government did not dismiss the official responsible for ordering the lathi charge immediately and take stringent action against him, it can only be assumed that the official was acting on the instructions from elsewhere.

"It is utterly shocking that the Chief Minister is choosing to brush aside the barbaric and illegal instructions as only a wrong choice of words. It once again clearly reiterates what we have been saying, which is that the Manohar Lal-Chautala government is at war with its own people," said the press state-

Adityanath imposes ban on meat, liquor trade in Mathura

Take up selling milk to revive the glory of the city, he says

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MATHURA (U.P.)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday imposed a complete ban on the sale of liquor and meat in Mathura. "The officers are directed

to make plans for the ban as well as for the engagement of people involved in such activities in some other trade," he said.

The Chief Minister was speaking at the Krishnotsava 2021 programme here.

He suggested that those engaged in liquor and meat trade may take up selling milk in order to revive the glory of Mathura, that was known for producing huge quantity of animal milk. Mr. Adityanath also prayed to Lord Krishna to eliminate the novel coronavirus



arriving at the Sri Krishna Janambhoomi temple in Mathura on Monday. • PTI

"Every effort will be made to develop Brij Bhumi and there will be no dearth of funds for this. We are looking at a blend of modern technology and the cultural and spiritual heritage for the development of the region," he said.

He also complimented Prime Minister Narendra Modi for giving a new direction to the country.

He said places of faith neglected since long are being revived now. Cabinet Ministers Laxmi Narain Chaudhary and Shrikant Sharma were also present.



Festival cheer: Kashmiri Pandits taking out a procession on Janmashtami at Lal Chowk in

Pandits take out rath yatras on Janmasthami in Kashmir

Men and women converged on Srinagar's Lal Chowk

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Kashmiri Pandits celebrated Janmashtami, birthday of Lord Krishna, with religious fervour in Srinagar on Monday and took out 'rath yatras' for the first time in Handwara district of north Kashmir.

Kashmiri Pandits, a majority of whom migrated from J&K in the 1990s in the face of raging militancy, converged on Lal Chowk here and took out a religious procession. Men and women were seen dancing and showering flowers. Pandits also participated in a procession in Handwara market of

iority community and the administration for making it a success. We were able to celebrate the occasion like in the past," M.Y. Yogi, a Kashmiri Pandit, said in Lal Chowk. "We prayed for peace in J&K on the occasion."

Top regional leaders - National Conference's Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah; Peoples Democratic Party's Mehbooba Mufti; Apni Party;s Altaf Bukhari and Peoples Conference's Sajad - greeted the community on the occasion.

"The festival reinforces

the belief that a life of moral-"I want to thank the ma- ity and righteousness can be achieved amidst all difficulties through devotion, selfless service, commitment and compassion. We should renew our commitment to Lord Krishna's ideals on this occasion," Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha said in a message.

Such religious processions of Kashmiri Pandits were organised in the past too, especially during the regimes of Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Omar Abdullah. However, all such processions were barred last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Marandi issue hangs fire in Jharkhand

No decision yet on anti-defection law

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Almost seven months after the Babulal Marandi-led Iharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik) merged with the BJP in February this year, the Jharkhand Assembly Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahato has not yet taken any decision on granting status of Leader of the Opposition (LoP) to him under the anti-defection law pertaining to 10th Schedule of the Constitution. For the past six months, the Jharkhand Assembly has been without an LoP.

Mr. Marandi who had been a member of the BJP, was the first Chief Minister of Jharkhand after its bifurcation from Bihar in November 2000. Later, he parted ways with the BJP to form the IVM(P).

Earlier, after the merger, the BJP had declared Mr. Marandi as LoP and chief of the BJP legislature party. However, Speaker Mahato took suo motu cognisance of the revolt of two JVM(P) MLAs - Pradeep Yadav and Bandhu Tirkey – against the merger, and initiated proceedings against Mr. Marandi's membership under the anti-defection law.

Mr. Marandi later challenged the Speaker's decision in the Ranchi High Court.

Last week, on August 24,

the Speaker heard the case virtually due to the COVID pandemic. Pleading his case, Mr. Marandi's counsel, R.N. Sahay said the Speaker's court had no power to hear the case as the Election Commission of India had also ruled in favour of Mr. Marandi. Mr. Sahay also pleaded that since the case was already pending in the High Court, it would not be appropriate for the Speaker's court to hear the case. The Speaker should wait for the High Court's judgment in this case, he said.

Mr. Sahay also said the merger of the JVM(P) with the BJP was made after the expulsion of two party MLAs Pradeep Yadav and Bandhu Tirkey for anti-party activities.

Against the mandate

Former Dhanwar MLA Raj Kumar Yadav, who is also one of the petitioners in the case, meanwhile, said Mr. Marandi had contested the 2019 Assembly election on JVM(P) ticket but later merged his party with BJP which was "against the man-

Senior BJP leader and chief whip of the party in the State Assembly Biranchi Narayan said "the party will wait for the Speaker's decision and the High Court's judgment regarding this. What else we can do?'



Shah launches laddu distribution scheme

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday launched a nutritious laddu distribution scheme for pregnant womer in his Gandhinagar constituency. Under the scheme, around 7,000 pregnant women will be provided 15 nutritious laddus each free every month till the birth of their child, through NGOs. While launching the scheme the Minister said that it was his responsibility to ensure that there should not be a single malnourished mother and child in his constituency. He later took stock of development works in the area.

Armed infiltrators killed near LoC, says Army

wo alleged armed infiltrators were killed near the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of the Pir Panjal Valley in Kashmir on Monday. An Army spokesman said, "Alert Army troops detected the infiltration bid with the effective use of the integrated surveillance grid. On being challenged, the terrorists opened fire and they were neutralised." The Army said an AK-47 rifle was recovered from near one of the bodies. This action by alert troops displayed the resolve of the Army to thwart any misadventure along the

LoC, it added

'This is renovation, not restoration'

Historians say the new-look Jallianwala Bagh is a distortion of history

The new-look Jallianwala Bagh memorial that Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation on August 28 was a distortion of history of the site where British troops massacred Indians on April 13, 1919, historians said on Monday.

Mr. Modi virtually inaugurated four new galleries and opened the renovated memorial a year-and-a-half after it was closed for the revamp.

The well into which victims jumped when forces led by Reginald Dyer opened fire has been covered with a transparent barrier. The narrow entrance has been adorned with sculptures. A daily sound and light show explaining the events has been started.

Not a garden

Reacting to the development, historian and former Jawaharlal Nehru University Professor Chaman Lal said it was a "distortion of history".



Martyrs' Memorial in Amritsar. • AFP

He said the project had tried to "mystify and glamourise history".

"People visiting Jallianwala Bagh should go with a sense of pain and anguish. They have now tried to make it a space for enjoying, with a beautiful garden. It was not a beautiful garden," Professor Lal said. Rather, Jallianwala Bagh was where Indians gathered as they had on that fateful day when Dyer and his forces entered and fired on a peaceful crowd. Instead of restoration, the government has renovated the place, adding new features, he said.

'Absolutely gaudy'

Historian S. Irfan Habib said he was not opposed to additions like better toilets or a cafe for visitors, but the changes made had been "at the cost of history, cost of heritage"

"It is absolutely gaudy-...Why should there be murals on the wall? Changes the whole idea of the place from where Dyer entered to kill.

Adding glamour to the little corridor changes the whole visual history. History itself is being rewritten and renovated. This is the corporatisation of monuments," he said.

He said the well should not have been covered and the changes were unnecessary and cosmetic in nature. "It is a very sad trend," he said.

Kim A. Wagner, a Londonbased Professor of history and author of Amritsar 1919 - *An Empire of Fear and the* Making of a Massacre, said in a tweet on August 28 that the revamping of the site "means that the last traces of the event have effectively been erased".

The project was carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India and NBCC, and developed by Ahmedabad-based Vama Communications, which has in the past worked on the National Police Museum in Delhi and Mahatma Gandhi Museum in Rajkot.

ED records witness statement of actor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Enforcement Directorate on Monday recorded the witness statement of Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez in a money laundering case against 'con-

Chandrasekhar.

Earlier this month, the agency seized a sea-facing bungalow in Chennai and 16 luxury cars, besides two kg gold, during the searches in connection with a fresh case registered by the Delhi police accusing Sukesh of



Jacqueline Fernandez

cheating and extortion.

The premises of Sukesh's wife Leena Maria Paul, a small-time actor, were also searched. The police have alleged that Sukesh had been running the racket from Delhi's Rohini jail.



APPEAL

I am Thupakula Soniya, 22 years old, suffering from Ewing Sarcoma - Right Orbit. My family is extremely poor and cannot afford the huge expenditure of Rs.12,00,000/to undergo Autologous Bone Marrow Transplantation at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre Madurai. I need your blessings and support. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospita & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No.CNRB0016018) favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No.GF 1 Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006 Ph: 044-42137401/28235324/7338978027. Email ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@

Thupakula Soniya

Taliban didn't take passports: visa agency India can deal with changing

Application centre in Kabul urges Union government to revoke order cancelling issued visas

NEW DELHI

A week after the Government of India cancelled all existing visas for Afghan nationals wanting to travel to India, and instituted the "evisa only" system after reports emerged that Taliban gunmen had stolen many passports, the sole Indian visa agency has denied that any passports were lost or misplaced.

In a letter to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), a copy of which The Hindu has seen, the owners of Shahir Travel Agency that has handled Indian visas since 2009 asked the government to revoke the August 25 order and also to expedite the e-visa system to enable genuine cases of students, businesspersons, and others associated with India in the past who would need to leave Afghanistan urgently.

"We have written to the Government of India with our very legitimate concerns... The problem this fake news has created is that the current personnel in power [Taliban] have been



Flight to safety: Afghan evacuees arriving at the Hindon Air force base near New Delhi on August 22.

accused of something they did not do and that puts all our Kabul staff in danger. Therefore, we have to publicly and vociferously refute all the fake news in the Indian media," Muhammad Karim, CEO of Shahir Travel Agency, the sole Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Kabul,

told The Hindu. Mr. Karim said Taliban representatives had visited their offices, along with other offices and businesses in the city, but at no point were passports containing Indian visas taken by them or misplaced.

"All the visas that were issued by the Embassy were done so after complete security check in Kabul. NIC (National Informatics Centre of India) maintains details of all visa sticker issued and biometrics captured," the agency's letter said, adding that the government could match the passport holders at any time required.

MEA officials declined to comment on the letter. They said it was unlikely that the government would revoke its them for terror attacks in In-Mr. Karim flatly denied

the possibility. He said the agency would not jeopardise Indian interests, having worked closely with the Embassy for more than a decade. He also stated that the agency office was operating normally at present, and Afghan citizens who had deposited their passports for the Indian visa were being returned their travel documents, as and when they

were able to visit the agency. "We sincerely hope to begin our association with the Embassy of India whenever Indian officials chose to return. But we definitely feel we deserve the support of Government of India and do not wish to be left in the lurch. We request that this be clarified immediately by MEA on a public platform,' the agency said.

To a question on how many passports were in their custody, the agency said it was still bound by a contract with the Government of India and could not divulge de-

Afghan situation: Rajnath

Events raising new questions for national security, he says

Our goal is to make India

prosperous, strong and

not scare people with its power,

even in small countries that

India's growing power is not a

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The events in Afghanistan are raising new questions in terms of security, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday, while asserting that the government is alert and capable of dealing with any situation arising out of the crisis.

"Security of Indians is a cause for concern for the government. We also do not want anti-India forces to take advantage of the evolving Afghan situation for cross-border terrorism," Mr. Singh said, delivering the third Balramji Dass Tandon memorial lecture organised by Panjab University via videoconference.

The Indian government is constantly monitoring the situation in Afghanistan, he

No compromise

The government will not compromise on issues related to national security, national self-respect and uplift of the nation under any circumstances, Mr. Singh said.

threat to them

DEFENCE MINISTER

"Our goal is to make India prosperous, strong and secure. Such an India that does not scare people with its power, but instils a sense of confidence even in small countries that India's growing power is not a threat to them. It is also going to instil sense of security for them," he said.

Stating that some new threats have also emerged regarding national security, due to the development of modern technology, Mr. Singh referred to the drone attack at the Jammu Air Force Station.

"We have to continuously update and upgrade the national security system for new challenges," the Minister said.

Listing a series of defence reforms by the government to achieve self-reliance and bring cohesion, Mr. Singh said, "We are working tocreating Theatre Commands in a new way. This is also going to be a revolutionary step in itself. The process of discussion on this is still going on.'

Mayawati's loss is Akhilesh's gain in U.P.

OMAR RASHID

Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday called on senior BSP MLA Sukhdev Rajbhar, who has been ailing for the past two years, at the latter's residence here, in his latest move to woo the non-Yadav OBC communities in Uttar Pradesh.

While Mr. Rajbhar earlier this month announced that he was retiring from active politics, he ensured his son Kamlakant Rajbhar ioined the SP. In a recent open letter, Mr. Rajbhar lamented that the "Bahujan movement" and "social justice" movement had

He said he had asked his son to follow the leadership of Mr. Yadav.

The switch by Mr. Sukhdev not only gives a boost to the SP before the Assembly election scheduled next year but also adds to the series of defections from the BSP.

A five-term MLA, Mr. Sukhdev served as a Minister in the SP-BSP government and a Cabinet Minister in 1997 before being appointed Speaker by Mayawati from 2007-12, when she was in power with a majority.

"His [Mr. Sukhdev's] experience and blessings are very important for us all," Mr. Yadav tweeted after the meeting.

The Rajbhars are a community concentrated in parts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and outfits like the Suheldev Bharativa Samai Party of Om Prakash Rajbhar have become vocal in the State politics demanding a share in power.

The BSP also suffered a loss in western Uttar Pradesh as Brahmin leader Yogesh Dwivedi quit on Sunday. He joined the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), which is an ally of the SP in

India supports Palestine peace process: Shringla

decision, given the uncer-

tainty over the security situa-

tion in Afghanistan, and par-

ticularly after the deadline

for all foreign troops to leave

the country expires on

As *The Hindu* has reported

earlier, the Ministry of Home

Affairs has delayed issuing

any e-visas, as it is difficult to

conduct security checks on

applicants without local in-

puts as the Indian Embassy

On August 27, MEA spo-

kesperson Arindam Bagchi

said the decision to cancel

thousands of visas previous-

ly issued to Afghan nationals

had been made following re-

ports of people "raiding one

of our outsourcing agencies,

where Afghan passports with

was responsible for the re-

ports. Several media agen-

cies had suggested that the

worry was that a Pakistan-

backed group or intelligence

agencies may have taken the

passports in order to use

He did not mention who

Indian visas were there".

in Kabul is closed.

Delay in issuing visa

Tuesday.

Afghanistan crisis dominates UN Security Council proceedings as India's presidency draws to a close

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

India will support "all efforts" to restart the peace process between Israel and Palestine, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla conveyed to the UN Security Council meeting on Monday which also witnessed tabling of an important resolution on Afghanistan.

"Given our long-standing and firm commitment to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable state of Palestine, within secure, recognised and mutually agreed borders, living side by side with Israel in peace and security, India will remain fully supportive of all efforts to restart the peace process," Mr. Shringla



Focal point: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla speaking at the UN Security Council on Monday. •PTI

said. India's presidency of the UNSC will end on Tuesday after a month during which the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan dominated the agenda of the topmost UN organ.

Later in the session, a resolution on Afghanistan drafted by the United Kingdom and France was taken up for discussion and possible voting. The draft resolution seeks protection of civi-

and security guarantees for humanitarian access. The text reflects international concerns about the security situation in Afghanistan and its capital Kabul. The humanitarian access mentioned in the draft resolution is aimed at ensuring that people who are willing to leave Afghanistan will be allowed to do so under secure circumstances beyond August 31, the deadline for the U.S. troops to withdraw from the country.

It is understood that the resolution will be used to enforce a window of evacuation for foreign nationals who continue to remain stuck in Kabul. Apart from India and the U.S., many other countries have been unable to evacuate their nationals or allied Afghan personnel. At least 180 Hindu and Sikh Afghans remain in Kabul amid indications that the Taliban have delayed granting permission to them to travel abroad.

The resolution can also be used to force the Taliban to adhere to some of the basic international humanitarian norms. The Taliban have been demanding to take up the issue of representation on behalf of Afghanistan at the UN. But experts here believe it is likely that a discussion on the Taliban's right to represent Afghanistan at the UN will get "pushed" till the group allows full evacuation of foreigners and others willing to leave Afghanistan.

Articles 15 and 25 'sold off', says Rahul

CPI(M) slams violence against Muslims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday asked if the Union government had "sold off" Articles 15 and 25 of the Constitution that prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth and allow freedom to practise and profess any religion respectively.

Mr. Gandhi tweeted a video that showed alleged instances of Muslim men being attacked and asked to chant "Jai Sri Ram". "Article 15 and 25 of the Constitution have also been sold?" stated Mr. Gandhi, who has been attacking the government for its monetisation policy with hashtag "IndiaonSale".

CPI(M)'s charge

separately, the CPI(M) in its journal, People's Democra*cy*, said "everyday violence against Muslims is showing a disturbing pattern" and recounted "instances" of attacks in August alone in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

A 52-year-old autorickshaw driver was said to be attacked by two men in Rajasthan's Sikar for allegedly

Bellary. Mob: 94482 90592.



tacked in Kanpur ignoring the pleas of his minor daughter; and finally, a beggar and his sons were assaulted in Ajmer, the party

The editorial of People's Democracy said, "More and more, the mobs are emboldened by the knowledge that they can get off scotfree or be treated leniently by the law enforcement authorities". It alleged that the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan was being utilised by the BJP and the Hindutva forces "to whip up feelings against Muslims and spread Islamophobia".

Dated: 09.08.2021

BJP MLA Tanmoy Ghosh returns to Trinamool Congress

The BJP's strength in West Bengal has come down to 73

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

Tanmoy Ghosh, BJP MLA from Bishnupur in Bankura, West Bengal, joined the Trinamool Congress on Monday. Mr. Ghosh had switched over to the BJP from the Trinamool in March.

With this, the number of BJP MLAs has come down to 73. The party had won 77 seats in the election. Party MPs Jaganath Sarkar and Nisith Pramanik, who won the election, did not take oath as MLAs.

Mr. Ghosh, who joined the Trinamool in the presence of senior leader and Education Minister Bratya Basu, said the BJP was trying to snatch away the rights of Bengalis and malign the culture of the State. His decision to return to the party was also in protest against the use of Central agencies

'Can't curtail right to move freely or

reside anywhere on flimsy grounds'



Home turf: Tanmoy Ghosh, MLA, left, rejoining the Trinamool Congress in the presence of West Bengal Education Minister Bratya Basu on Monday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

as a tool of "political vendet-

Mr. Basu said, "I will tell the BJP leadership that the attempts to control West Bengal and Bengalis from Delhi and Gujarat are not going well even among those in the party."

The Trinamool Congress won 213 seats in the election by securing about 48% of the

votes. The BJP's vote share was about 38%

In June, Mukul Roy, who won from Krishnagar Uttar on BJP ticket, rejoined the Trinamool.

On Sunday, former MLA Sikha Mitra, also the wife of former Congress president Somendranath Mitra, returned to the ruling party in West Bengal.

Terminate 'faulty' power pacts, demands Sidhu

Punjab govt. should revise tariff, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu, speaking in the Assembly on Monday, asked the Congress government to terminate the "faulty" Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) by bringing a new law. The PPAs were signed by the previous SAD-BJP government.

Mr. Sidhu urged the go-

vernment to direct the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission to revise the tariff that is being paid to private power plants, which will make the PPAs "null and void".

He demanded that the upcoming one-day special session of the Assembly be extended by at least five days to discuss issues of public interest.

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd. (A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) (An ISO 9001. ISO 14001. OHSAS 18001 & SA 8000 Certified Company, Sankaramangalam, Chavara - 691 583 Kollam, Kerala, India,



Phone: +91-476-2651215 to 2651217. Fax: +91-0476-2680101. -01± Email: contact@kmml.com , URL:www.kmml.com SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE Competitive Tenders are invited for following. For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal : https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

Tender ID For the supply of Distribution Board / 1 2021_KMML_435764_1 **Electrical Plug Sockets** For fabrication and Supply of 2 2021_KMML_436058_1 Condensing Column Cooler E204-205 sd/-, DGM(Mtls) For The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd Our Products: Titanium Dioxide, Titanium Tetra Chloride, Nano Titanium, Titanium Sponge, Rutile, Zircon & Sillimanite

Date of NIT: 27-08-2021

In Exercise of the powers conferred by Section 10B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, its subsequent amendments and in accordance with the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 as amended from time to time notified thereunder, the Government of Rajasthan has notified the following mineral block for the purpose of grant of Mining Lease for mineral limestone and hereby invites bids in digital format only from eligible bidders through electronic auction.

rne	ne details of mineral block and last date of submission of bid is as summarized below:-											
S.	Block	Lease	Start Date of Sale of Tender	Last Date of sale of Tender	Bid Due date and time							
No.			Document on MSTC website	Document on MSTC website								
1	Rata Mandha-1 A (RM-1A) Block Tehsil	Mining Lease	27-08-2021	13-09-2021 upto 2400	01-10-2021 upto 1300							
	Shri Mohangarh & District jaisalmer			Hrs (IST)	Hrs (IST)							

mstoecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp> will obtain login ID and Password. After successful registration, the eligible bidders car purchase the Tender Document online on payment of the tender fee of Rs. 2,00,000/- + GST and can participate in the e-auction process. The GST at the rate of 18% is applicable on the purchase of tender document. The GST applicable is to be submitted by the prospective

netroet uocument and the Mineral Block Summary is available free of cost in electronic form and can be downloaded from the website of MSTC Ltd. < https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp and Department of Mines & Geology < www.mines.rajasthan.gov.in for the purpose of information only. Timelines, notifications, updates and other details for the e-auction process are available on the website of https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp and www.mines.rajasthan.gov.in only and no separate notifications shall be issued in the press.

Govt.of Karnataka (Urban Development Department)

KARNATAKA POWER

CORPORATION LIMITED

(BALLARI THERMAL POWER STATION)

CIN: U85110KA1970SGC001919

CORRIGENDUM

DMCW-SG & TG pumps, Dozing Pumps, Compressors, Heat Exchangers, Hotwell

pumps, CW & ACW Pumps, EOT cranes & Monorail Hoists of above system in

Unit-I, II (2x500MW) & III (1x700MW) of BTPS for a period of Two years. Last date

nd time for submission of tender through e-portal is extended upto 04.09.2021 @

16.00 Hrs. Details of tender documents may be downloaded from the GoK

-Procurement website: https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in Further details can be had

from the office of the Executive Engineer (TM), BTPS, KPCL, Kudithini-583152.

Vijayapur City Corporation, Vijayapura. Phone:08352-278536, Helpline: 08352-222474 Fax.No:08352-278532, Website: www.bijapurcity.gov.in

NO:VCC/ENV/SWM/Tender/2021-22/1280 Dated:30.08.2021 **Short Term E-Procurement Tender Notification**

Vijayapura City Corporation invites tender to execute following works. Interested may submit the proposals as detailed in the tender document through e-procurement

portal on or before the specified date. Name of Work: 1) Providing Manpower for SWM related Collection and Transportation Works. (INDENT NO : VCC/SWM/ MANPOWER). Tender Amount Rs. 420.20 Lakhs.

EMD Amount Rs. 4,20,000.00 2) Providing Manpower for SWM Related works at Processing Site. (INDENT NO: VCC/SWM/ PROCESSING/MANPOWER). Tender Amount Rs. 114.40 Lakhs. EMD Amount

Rs.1,14,400.00 1) Last Date for Submission of Proposals: 15.09.2021, before 5:30pm. 2) Technical Bid Opening Date: 17.09.2021, 11:00am afterwards. 3) Financial Bid Opening Date: 21.09.2021,

11:00am afterwards Sd/- Executive Engineer, Vijayapura City Corporation, Vijayapura

DIPR/VJP/250/MCA/2021-22

The rights to free movement and residence across India cannot be curtailed on flimsy grounds, a Bench of Justices Indira Banerjee and V. Ramasubramanian held in a judgment.

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court has held

that the power of the State to

pass an externment order or

a direction barring certain

people entry to specified

areas should be exercised

only in "exceptional cases".

"The drastic action of ex-

nied his fundamental right to reside anywhere in the country or to move freely throughout the country on flimsy grounds," Justice Banerjee observed in the recent judgment. The court said extern-

"A person cannot be de-

ment orders have their use in maintaining law and order. However, they cannot be employed as a vindictive or retaliatory measure.

ternment should only be ta-

ken in exceptional cases, to maintain law and order in a locality and/or prevent breach of public tranquillity and peace," the top court The judgment was based

on an appeal filed by a journalist, Rahmat Khan, who was at the receiving end of an externment order passed by the Maharashtra police.

He was banned from entering Amravati City or Amravati rural district for a year.

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN
DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND GEOLOGY Notice Inviting Tender (NIT)

	Block	Lease	Start Date of Sale of Tender	Last Date of sale of Tender	Bid Due date and time						
No.			Document on MSTC website	Document on MSTC website							
1	Rata Mandha-1 A (RM-1A) Block Tehsil	Mining Lease	27-08-2021	13-09-2021 upto 2400	01-10-2021 upto 1300						
	Shri Mohangarh & District jaisalmer			Hrs (IST)	Hrs (IST)						
The	The block is being put up for first attempt of auction. The interested and eligible bidders, upon registration on MSTC website < http://www.										

bidder itself and the copy of receipt is to be attached with the technical bid. The prospective bidder shall be solely responsible for remitting the GST as per applicable law and statutory liability in this regard will be responsibility of prospective bidder and no liability whatsoever shall be borne by the DMGR/MSTC. Detailed terms and conditions, deadlines etc. for participation in the electronic auction are provided in the Tender Document. The Mode Fender Document and the Mineral Block Summary is available free of cost in electronic form and can be downloaded from the website of

Maharashtra breaks rising COVID trend

However, Health Minister asks citizens to exercise caution against the backdrop of Ganesh festival

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

After nearly a week of cases outweighing recoveries, Maharashtra rallied again to see a trend reversal as 4,696 patients were discharged on Monday against a comparatively low surge of 3,741 new COVID-19 cases.

The active case tally dipped to 51,834.

The death toll was the lowest in a fortnight, as 52 deaths took the State's cumulative fatalities to 1,37,209. The case fatality rate remains constant at 2.12%.

Minister urges caution

Health Minister Rajesh Tope has urged caution, with festivities (including the Ganesha festival) round the corner, exhorting people not to let their guard down and

Buddhadeb

writer, dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Eminent Bengali writer

Buddhadeb Guha, author

of many notable works

such as Madhukari (Honey

Gatherer), died on Sunday.

He was 85. Guha died of

post-Covid complications

after a massive cardiac ar-

rest, family members said.

of fiction reflected his

closeness to nature and for-

ests of eastern India, had

been hospitalised earlier

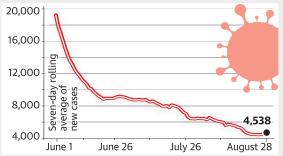
this month.

The writer, whose works

Guha, Bengali

Declining burden

The seven-day rolling average of daily COVID-19 cases continued to be on the downward trend in Maharahstra.



strictly follow the pandemic norms in order to preclude a potential 'third wave' of the

The total cases have reached 64,60,680, while the cumulative recoveries have risen to 62,68,112. The recovery rate has risen incrementally to 97.02%

"Of a total 5,38,12,827 laboratory samples tested thus far, 64,60,680 [with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 12.01%] have returned positive with more than 1.53 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," said State Surveillance Officer Pradeep Awate.

Pune reported over 650 new cases, taking its total cases to 11,17,975, while three deaths pushed the total death to 18,670. As per district authorities, the active case tally has exceeded

Cases in Mumbai

Mumbai reported 333 new cases to take its total case tally to 7,43,832, while the active count rose incrementally to 3,504. A couple of deaths took the city's death count to 15,976.

Ahmednagar reported more than 800 new cases but no deaths, taking its total cases to 3,08,378, of which 5,961 are active. The district's cumulative death toll remained constant at 6,536.

Other districts

Satara reported 446 new cases and no deaths as well, taking the total cases to 2,38,258, of which 5,421 are active, while the death toll remained constant at 5.993.

In its lowest surge in days, neighbouring Sangli reported a little more than 300 new cases and just a single death. The total case tally stands at 2,01,648, with the active cases declining to 4,356, while its total death toll reached 5,464.

Kolhapur reported 108 new cases and a single death, taking its total case tally to 2,03,899. The active cases have now dipped to 1,470. The cumulative death toll stands at 5,784.

Ire over toy train monetisation plan

A section of people in the Darjeeling hills of West Bengal are protesting against the Centre's proposed monetisation of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railways (DHR). They have staged protests at 10 stations of the heritage railway that connects New Jalpaiguri with Darjeeling, across 87.48 km.

tional and operational railways networks in mountains and hilly terrains in India – the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway located in the foothills of the Himalayas in West Bengal; the Nilgiris Mountain Railways located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu; the Kalka Shimla Railway located in the Himalayan foothills of Himachal Pradesh; and the Matheran Rail-



cus would be on profit, and local aspirations of the people would be ignored.

Raj Basu, secretary general of the DHR India Support

ings were ₹5 crore while the investment required to sustain it was ₹20 crore.

He said the DHR was the only surviving, fully functional two-feet gauge railway in the world and that it was the pride of the people of Darjeeling.

The services of the DHR resumed on August 25, 2021, after being suspended for almost a year due to COVID-19. The toy train service known for its curves and loops had suffered major damages over the past few years due to frequent landslides. On Monday, the DHR introduced a short service from Siliguri Junction to Rongtong, to attract more tourists.

Built in the British era bet-

102 Vande Bharat trains to be operational by 2024

Railways to source components only from Indian suppliers

S. VIJAY KUMAR

The Railways plans to operate 102 Vande Bharat trains by March 2024.

Days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the operation of 75 Vande Bharat trains, the Ministry of Railways has floated tenders for manufacturing 58 rakes, each comprising 16 coaches. Tenders have already been floated for making 44 rakes.

Railway officials say 102 Vande Bharat trains would be commissioned by early 2024. The Train18, later named Vande Bharat Express, was rolled out by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai. It was showcased as India's first semi highspeed train with an operational efficiency of 160 kmph and a game-changer.

On the occasion of the 75th Independence Day celebrations, Mr. Modi said 75 Vande Bharat trains would be operationalised to connect different parts of the country.

In the fresh tenders, the Ministry of Railways insisted on the compliance of the Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) Or-

Game changer: These are semi-high speed trains that can attain an operational efficiency of 160 kmph. • FILE РНОТО laid down that the eligibility der 2017, and said there was "sufficient local capacity for bidders from a country and competition in supply of that shared land border with the tendered item in re-India to participate in the quired quantity and theretender would be governed fore public procurement of by the Public Procurement

Orders of the Department of

Class-I Local Suppliers Though the Vande Bharat The new tender putrain was celebrated as one blished on Saturday invited of the most successful products of the "Make in India" bids for design, development, manufacture and supmission, it ran into a controversy over allegations of ply of equipment for threephase propulsion and comcompromises on safety ponents for train sets as per bringing production of more Research Design & Stanrakes to a grinding halt. dards Organisation specifi-

Expenditure.

There were also allegations that one company was favoured in the making of the first two rakes leading to the railway vigilance officials registering cases against several officials.

Amazon moves High Court against magistrate court order

this items is restricted to

While contractors should

certify the percentage of lo-

cal (fully indigenous) com-

ponents and imported

items, the tender conditions

only".

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

e-commerce company Amazon and its country manager have moved the Bombay HC to quash an order passed by a magistrate court after a third party failed to deliver a product to its customer. On December 6, 2019, advocate Amrpritpal Singh Khalsa had ordered a 'WD-Elements

2TB Portable External Hard Drive (Black)' on Amazon and paid ₹3,999 online. The product is sold by a thirdparty company and dispatched through an unrelated third-party courier company. The product was not delivered, despite a series of emails and calls Mr. Khalsa made to Amazon. Neither did he receive a refund. On

January 20, 2020, Mr. Khalsa lodged a complaint with the Central Police Station, Ulhasnagar. When no action was taken by the police, he approached the judicial magistrate first class, which directed a probe and a report within three months. The court issued criminal proceedings against Amazon and its country manager.

Goa Congress chief Chodankar to continue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Congress announced several new committees for poll-bound Goa but retained Girish Chodankar as the Pradesh Congress Committee chief and Digambar Kamat as the Congress Legislature Party head.

While former CM Luizinho Faleiro has been made the head of the campaign committee, Ramakant Khalap has been made the head of the Manifesto Com-

Former Lok Sabha member Francisco Sardinha will be the head of the Finance Committee.

"Private companies' focus will be on profit, local aspirations will be ignored" SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT vest in a Railway whose earn-

There are four fully func-

way located in Maharashtra.



Group, said they were not against privatisation, but it could not be a unilateral decision. "The Railways, the UNESCO and the local people should sit together and create guidelines, so that the heritage site can be preserved and sustained," he

Mr. Basu, whose support group has about 2100 active private companies would in-

ween 1879 and 1881, the Darjeeling toy train was de-Heritage Site in 1999

New initiative in J&K to restore lost glory of Pashmina shawls

Plans are afoot to re-engage women artisans in critical production process by doubling wages and announcing MSPs for GI-certified products

PEERZADA ASHIQ

Over a period, the number of women associated with hand-spinning of yarns for Pashmina shawls has dwindled significantly in Kashmir, but a rare initiative to double the wages and ensure roundthe-year orders is likely to see the re-engagement of women artisans in a critical production process of the worldfamous hand-made shawls.

The Centre For Excellence (CFE) has been set up by shawl trader Mujtaba Kadri, who owns the 'Me&K' brand and Aadhyam-Aditya Birla Group at the old city's Narwara area to restore the lost hand-driven processes involved in the intricate shawl weaving industry here. It will start enrolling women weavers from September 1.

Reviving lost sheen

"Old techniques of weaving are fading fast in Kashmir. Poor wages and machines have played a role in driving away women who used to spin the finest yarns in the world. This initiative is aimed at reviving the lost sheen of the hand-made shawls," Mr. Kadri told The

Hindu. The CFE has decided to double the wages for women from ₹1 per knot, of 10 threads with 10-inch-long varn, to ₹2.



Weaving a tradition: Women's participation has dropped from one lakh to just around 10,000 in the Valley. • FILE РНОТО

"Unlike the past, the first bulk of Pashmina wool tufts will be given to women spinners without any charge. This will not force them for any investment," Mr. Kadri

SCAN TO PLAY

said.

"We are hopeful that it will attract women to the old style of spinning rather than mill spinning," he added. Spinning on a traditional

the softness and warmth of the product. A Kashmiri woman can spin up to five grams of wool

ger threads of Pashmina

wool with fine hair-like size,

unlike machines, and adds to

"We have the potential to

engage around 1,000 spinners," Mr. Kadri said.

According to one estimate, women's participation in shawl weaving has come down significantly from one lakh to just around 10,000 in the Kashmir Valley.

It has impacted the processes involved in handmade shawls such as sorting, dusting, de-hairing, comb-

all these were dominated by the female workforce.

In the backdrop of this trend, the Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, has announced a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for geographical indication (GI)-certified handmade Pashmina shawls "to sustain the old techniques".

Incentivising the 'old'

"The minimum wage for a spinner has been fixed at ₹1.25 now. We have proposed Minimum Support Price of ₹12,000 for GI-certified plain Pashmina hand-spun and hand-woven shawls," Mah-

mood Shah, Director of the

Kashmiri charkha allows loning, spinning and finishing; Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir,

> He said the government was making all necessary interventions to ensure that those who employ old techniques and processes are "incentivised and promoted".

"The fixing of wages for the first time will help in reviving hand-spinning and hand-weaving, which make Kashmiri shawls famous," Mr. Shah said.

The move is likely to generate employment and improve the economic prospects of women weavers, who have for generations sustained the intricate and fancied Kashmiri shawls.

THEROSSWORD+ 13340 Type your answers in our online grids. On the state of genius of the properties of the propert

@ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn 17 King is after Scotsman with damaged reel and marine creature (8)

Display keystrokes of genius.

19 Start over. Ready? (5) 22 Knights consume eggs at 12 in daytime (4)

23 Rascals wrongly counsel about doctor before commencement of surgery

26 Matriarch in a warehouse hides crockery (9)

27 Receive accountant's intelligent solution excitedly, for starters, getting a pay-hike (5)

28 Bosses lost small purse containing six gold shillings (11)

DOWN

1 Wrongly takes some seafood (5)

2 Sri Lankan's transgression? He consumes drinks! (9)

4 A woman I feel may be a local female (7)

5 Land surrounded by water mentioned in Haji's letter (4) 6 Repairs ruins including North, North Eastern and Eastern convents (9)

7 Indian revolutionary's after a pop (6)

14 Ivan chose flying fish (9)

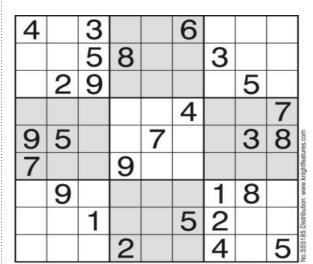
16 So that drone flies around amidst tumultuous riot (2,5,2)

17 Threaten top pilot going after soldiers (6)

20 Elephant trek arranged around America (6) 21 Mike leaves go-getter with some ivory and bones (6)

25 Initially park behind vehicle and crib (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 13339 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

DIFFICULTY RATING:

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FAITH

He controls all

The Brahmasutra, having established that the soul alone is both the doer and enjoyer, further clarifies that this ability of action and enjoyment is dependent on Ishwara, the Supreme Brahman. The Sutra 'Parat Tu Tat Srute,' draws attention to the Srutis that affirm that everything in creation is derived from the Supreme Lord and is subject to His control, pointed out Si Mani Dravid Sastrigal in a discourse. The Upanishads state that each soul enters samsara to experience the effects of past deeds, good and bad. It is a fact that when the soul takes birth, it is endowed with the sthula and sukshma sarira. It also possesses a consciousness which expresses itself as the states of thinking, desiring, striving, etc. It is able to be the knower, enjoyer and doer.

Then it may be asked that if it is all controlled by the Lord, where is the question of individual freedom. Why then should the individual be affected by the merits and demerits of such acts? Commentators have thrown light on many interesting issues regarding the question of individual freedom vs. God's control. What the sutra points out is that it is only through the Lord's sanction and grace that the jiva is able to think, desire, act, and so on. But He remains passive and does not in any way deprive the jiva of the freedom to act, think, etc. It is for the individual soul to utilise this free-

dom for its own good and for salvation. The Srutis also show that God is the sole arbiter to give the fruits of the countless deeds, good, bad and neutral, of the countless jivas in an impartial manner. This Lord is the Highest Being, is of the essence of consciousness, the ever present witness of all the activities gross and subtle in the universe without any exception by residing in each and every aspect of it.

ACROSS

1 Murmur, "Russian tour's extraordinary" (11)

- 9 Crustacean's uncooked; place in empty pan (5)
- **10** Excavates around water source including new houses (9) 11 I'm a creator designing incineration facilities (10) 12 Cheese from buffet appreciated (4)
- 13 Time to get direction and rub out (5)
- 15 Give description about sex appeal? Sure! (8)

3 To some extent, retired hotelier was highly attractive (3,3)

8 Get away from Spain's promontory (6)

18 English chapter's first lesson on radio is unencrypted (7)

24 Knots ties around cross and leaves (5)

U.S. probing if civilians were killed in strike

Reports claimed nine members of a family, including 6 children, lost their lives in the drone attack

REUTERS WASHINGTON

The United States is investigating whether civilians may have been killed in an airstrike it launched to destrov a car laden with explosives in the Afghan capital Kabul, a spokesman for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said on Sunday.

The statement came after CNN reported that nine members of a family, including six children, were killed in Sunday's airstrike in the crowded capital, where thousands of Afghans are still trying to flee the Taliban.

AFP has not been able to confirm the report. Local media also reported that civilians were killed in the strike.

"We are aware of reports of civilian casualties following our strike on a vehicle in Kabul today," Captain Bill Urban, a CENTCOM spokesman, said in a statement.



Final phase: An aircraft of the U.S. Air Force taking off from the airport in Kabul on Monday. • AFF

results of this strike, which we know disrupted an imminent ISIS-K threat to the airport," he continued, using an acronym for the Afghan branch of the Islamic State group, which carried out a suicide attack at the airport on Thursday.

"We know that there were substantial and powerful subsequent explosions resulting from the destruction

of the vehicle, indicating a large amount of explosive material inside that may have caused additional casualties," Capt. Urban continued. "It is unclear what may have happened, and we are investigating further.

"We would be deeply saddened by any potential loss of innocent life," he said.

The U.S. airstrike came af-

the Islamic State group on Thursday targeted U.S. stopping huge crowds of people from entersoil as unlawful. ing the airport as they tried to flee the Taliban regime.

Scores of people died in the attack, including 13 U.S. service personnel. The car that was destroyed by the U.S. strike had

been headed for Kabul's airport, a Taliban spokesman had said earlier. About 1,14,000 people have been evacuated since August 15, when the Taliban swept back into power. The

Unlawful action: Taliban Meanwhile, spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the U.S. drone strike resulted in civilian casualties, and condemned the United States for failing to inform the Taliban

American withdrawal from

Afghanistan is due to be

completed by Tuesday.

before ordering the strike. Mujahid told China's state television CGTN on Monday that seven people were killed in the drone attack, describing the U.S. action on foreign

"If there was any potential threat in Afghanistan, it should have been reported to us, not an arbitrary attack that has resulted in civilian casualties," Mujahid said in a written response to CGTN.

Muiahid had issued a similar condemnation of a U.S. drone strike on Saturday that killed two Islamic State militants in the eastern province of Nangarhar. He said two women and a child were wounded in that attack.

Pentagon officials said the suicide car bomber had been preparing to attack the airport in Kabul, where U.S. troops were in the final stages of a withdrawal from Afghanistan, on behalf of ISIS-K, a local affiliate of Islamic State that is an enemy of both the West and the Tali-

Pushed by U.S., Israel's Gantz holds talks with Abbas

Hamas says the meet 'deepens Palestinian political division'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE JERUSALEM

Israel's Defence Minister has met Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas for a rare high-level meeting, but a source close to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett insisted on Monday his government had no plans to reboot peace

Defence Minister Benny Gantz met Mr. Abbas in Ramallah late on Sunday for what were reportedly the first direct talks between an Israeli Cabinet member and the 86-year-old Palestinian leader in several years.

The meeting, which Mr. Gantz's office said focused on "security policy, civilian and economic issues", came just hours after Mr. Bennett returned from Washington where he met U.S. President Joe Biden.

Mr. Biden had said he would urge Mr. Bennett to find ways "to advance peace and security and prosperity Israelis Palestinians".

According to a Defence Ministry statement, Mr. Gantz told Mr. Abbas that Israel "seeks to take measures that will strengthen the PA's economy".

"They also discussed shaping the security and economic situations in the West Bank and in Gaza," and agreed to "continue communicating further," added.

A source close to Mr. Bennett said the meeting that he had approved focused on "issues between the defence establishment and the Palestinian Authority".

"There is no peace process with the Palestinians nor will there be," under Mr. Bennett's leadership, said the source who spoke on

Mahmud Abbas and Benny Gantz, right. • AFP condition of anonymity. fectively collapsed under The Gantz-Abbas meeting former Prime Minister Benalso included the head of the jamin Netanyahu who was in Israeli military branch res-

Palestinian intelligence chief Majid Faraj. Mr. Gantz's office said he and Mr. Abbas had held "a one-on-one meeting" after

ponsible for civil affairs in

the Palestinian territories,

Ghasan Alyan, senior PA offi-

cial Hussein Al Sheikh and

the broader talks. Mr. Al Sheikh confirmed the meeting on Twitter but the PA was not immediately available to comment on its substance.

Hamas vs Abbas

Mr. Bennett, 49, took office in June as head of an eclectic coalition, in which his hawkish party holds only a handful of seats.

He is a long-standing opponent of Palestinian statehood and the former head of a council that lobbies for Jewish settlers in the West Bank, a territory occupied by Israel since 1967.

West Bank are considered illegal under international

Despite Mr. Bennett's personal views, his government has sought to warm ties with the PA after relations had efpower from 2009 until June this year.

Mr. Netanyahu, also a prosettlement right-winger long reviled by Palestinians, further alienated Mr. Abbas through his tight embrace of former U.S. president Donald Trump, who was accused of extreme pro-Israel

Palestinian division

Mr. Bennett's government has indicated a desire to boost the PA amid concern over a fresh conflict with Hamas Islamists who control Israeli-blockaded Gaza and are rivals of Mr. Abbas's secular Fatah movement.

An 11-day conflict in May between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza marked the worst hostilities in the area since 2014 and unrest has persisted despite an Egypt-brokered ceasefire. On Monday, an Israeli

Border Police soldier shot Jewish settlements in the during border clashes with Gaza nine days ago died of his wounds.

Hamas, meanwhile, condemned the Abbas-Gantz meeting, charging that it "deepens Palestinian political division".

US exit will stop IS attacks in Afghanistan: Taliban

'We hope Afghans influenced by IS... will give up their operations once Islamic government is formed'

The Taliban's spokesman says the hardline Islamist group will crack down on Islamic State attacks and expects them to end once foreign forces leave the country.

"We hope that those Afghans who are influenced by IS... will give up their operations on seeing the formation of an Islamic government in the absence of foreigners," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid

"If they create a situation for war and continue with their operations, the Islamic government... we will deal with them," he added.

The evacuation of tens of thousands of foreigners and Afghans who feel at risk of reprisal or repression under the Taliban is due to end on Tuesday, along with the full withdrawal of US and NATO

Islamic State has been highly critical of the troop withdrawal deal struck between the Taliban and Washington last year, which saw the Taliban offer security guarantees.

One IS commentary published after the fall of Kabul accused the Taliban of betraying jihadists with the U.S. withdrawal deal and vowed to continue its fight, according to the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors mili-

During the Taliban's prison break spree this summer to free its fighters, many battle-hardened IS militants were also released - increasingly looking like a lethal

tant communications.

'Technical problems'

Although both groups are hardline Sunni Islamist militants, they have differed on the minutiae of religion and strategy, while each claiming to be the true flag-bearers of jihad. In recent years, the IS Af-

ghanistan-Pakistan chapter has been responsible for some of the deadliest attacks in those countries. They have massacred civilians at mosques, public squares, schools, and even hospitals.

Mujahid reiterated that the new Taliban government will not be announced until after the last U.S. soldier has

"It is important to announce the government but this requires a lot of patience. We are holding consultations to form the government Mujahid said.

"We have some technical problems on this issue," he added. Banks, government offices

and other public institutions remain largely shut with employees prevented from entering offices since the takeover, which sent the Afghani

The Taliban have promised to improve Afghanistan's economy, but to do that the new regime will have to rely on foreign aid – and there is no guarantee it will

_ Leaded petrol

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

eradicated,

says UNEP

The use of leaded petrol has been eradicated from the globe, a milestone that will prevent more than 1.2 million premature deaths and save world economies over \$2.4 trillion annually. the UN Environment Pro-(UNEP) gramme Monday.

Nearly a century after doctors first issued warnings about the toxic effects of leaded petrol, Algeria the last country to use the fuel - exhausted its supplies last month, UNEP

said. "The successful enforcement of the ban on leaded petrol is a huge milestone for global health and our environment," said Inger Andersen, executive director of UNEP.

N. Korea may have restarted N-reactor: IAEA

'Deeply troubling development' a sign it is expanding banned weapons programme, says UN agency

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Nuclear-armed North Korea appears to have restarted its plutonium-producing reprocessing reactor in a "deeply troubling" development, the UN atomic agency has said, a possible sign Pyongyang is expanding its banned weapons programme.

The development on the 5-megawatt reactor in Yongbyon - North Korea's main nuclear complex - comes with nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington at a standstill.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un offered to dismantle part of the Yongbyon complex at a second summit with then U.S. President Donald Trump but not other sites, in exchange for sanctions relief, and his offer was

Chinese regulators on Mon-

day slashed the amount of

time players under the age of

18 can spend on online

games to an hour of game-

play on Fridays, weekends

and holidays, in response to

growing concern over gam-

ing addiction, State media

the National Press and Publi-

cation Administration, said

users under the age of 18 will

only be able to play games

from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. local

time on those days, accord-

ing to the Xinhua news

oversees the country's video

The rules, published by



Another challenge: A file photo of S. Korean officials inspecting unused fuel rods stacked in a warehouse in Yongbyon. • AFP

North Korea is under multiple sets of international sanctions over its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes

"Since early July, there have been indications, including the discharge of cooling water, consistent with the operation of the reactor," the International

Atomic Energy Agency said in its annual report.

The Yongbyon reactor appeared to have been inactive from December 2018 until then, added the report dated

Friday. IAEA inspectors were kicked out of North Korea in 2009, and the agency has since monitored it from

China cuts time minors can spend on online games

To address gaming addiction, users restricted to playing only from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. on specific days

The possible operation of the reactor follows a recent indication that Pyongyang is sues also using a nearby radiochemical laboratory to separate plutonium from spent fuel previously removed from the reactor.

The signs of the reactor and laboratory operations were "deeply troubling", the IAEA said, adding the activities were a "clear violation" of UN resolutions.

A senior U.S. State Department official said Washington was aware of the report and was closely coordinating with partner countries.

This report underscores the urgent need for dialogue and diplomacy so we can achieve the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," the official said. "We continue to seek dia-

related denuclearisation. The Biden administration has previously promised a

"practical, calibrated approach", including diplomatic efforts, to persuade the impoverished North to give up banned weapons programmes. But Pyongyang has never

logue with the DPRK so we

can address this reported ac-

tivity and the full range of is-

shown any indication it would be willing to surrender its nuclear arsenal, and this month Mr. Kim's sister and key adviser Kim Yo Jong demanded the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the peninsula.

Pyongyang has stayed away from nuclear talks since the collapse of the second Trump-Kim summit in

Hurricane Ida pummels Louisiana

It knocks out power for a million people



After the storm: A car moving around downed power lines in Metairie, Louisiana, on Monday. • AP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE NEW ORLEANS

Powerful Hurricane Ida battered the southern U.S. State of Louisiana, leaving at least one dead and knocking out power for more than a million people, including the

whole of New Orleans. Ida slammed into the Louisiana coast as a Category 4 storm on Sunday, 16 years to the day after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, but had weakened to a tropical storm early Monday.

The storm knocked out power for all of New Orleans, with more than a million customers across Louiwithout power, siana according to outage tracker poweroutage.us.

"We have now lost power, citywide! This is the time to continue to remain in your safe places. It isn't a time to venture out!!," New Orleans mayor LaToya Cantrell said on Twitter.

Electricity provider Entergy said it was providing back-up power to New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board, which operates the pumping stations used to control flooding.

The National Weather Service issued warnings of storm surges and flash floods for several areas, including the town of Jean Lafitte, just south of New

Orleans. "Total devastation, catastrophic, our town levees have been overtopped," Mayor Tim Kerner told ABCaffiliate WGNO. "We have anywhere bet-

stranded in Barataria," after a barge took out the swing bridge to the island. "The winds are still too strong, we can't put boats in

ween 75 to 200 people

the water to get to them," he told WGNO. "This is a very dangerous situation. I've never seen so much water in my life," he

Cynthia Lee Sheng, president of Jefferson Parish covering part of the Greater New Orleans area, said people were sheltering in their

"We really believe the calls coming in here to our emergency operations center, is that people are in attics in Lower Lafitte," she

told WGNO. She said the power was out but rescue teams, including the Louisiana National Guard, were ready to help once they can safely get to the area.

Several residents of La-Place, just upstream from New Orleans, posted appeals for help on social media, saying they were trapped by rising flood

President Joe Biden, who described Ida as "a lifethreatening storm," declared a major disaster for Louisiana, which gives it access to federal aid.



EU drops U.S. from list of safe countries for travel

EU governments agreed on Monday to remove the U.S. from the bloc's safe travel list because of rising infections there. Visitors from U.S. and those from Israel, Kosovo. Montenegro, Lebanon and North Macedonia are likely to face tighter controls, such as tests and quarantine. REUTERS

Egypt frees reporter, activist, YouTube star

Egypt has released an online comedian, a journalist and a political activist after they spent months in pre-trail detention over alleged politically motivated charges two lawyers said on Monday. Youtuber Shadi Srour, journalist Shaimaa Sami and activist Ziyad Aboel-Fadel



walked free on Sunday. AFP



agency. Online gaming companies will be barred from providing gaming services to them in any form outside those hours and need to ensure they have put real name verification systems in place, said the regulator, which



services to children outside stipulated hours. • ISTOCKPHOTO

Previously, China limited

the total length of time minors could access online games to three hours on holiday or 1.5 hours on other

Crackdown on tech firms The new rules come amid a broad crackdown by Beijing on China's tech giants, such as Alibaba Group and Ten-

cent Holdings, which has unnerved investors, hammering Chinese shares traded at home and abroad The National Press and

Publication Administration also told Xinhua it would increase the frequency and intensity of inspections for online gaming companies to ensure they were putting in place time limits and anti-addiction systems.

Bejing bans written exams for six-year-olds Education, according to

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing on Monday banned written exams for six-and seven-year-olds, as part of sweeping education reforms aimed at relieving pressure on pupils and parents in China's hyper-competitive school system.

China's exam-oriented system previously required students to take exams from first grade onwards, culminating in the feared university entrance exam at age 18 known as the gaokao, where a single score can determine a child's life trajectory.

'Too frequent exams... which cause students to be overburdened and under huge exam pressure," have been axed by the Ministry of

Monday. The Ministry said the pressure on pupils from a young age "harms their

and

physical

new guidelines released on

Wider reforms The regulations also limit exams in other years of

mental

compulsory education to once a term, with mid-term and mock examinations allowed in junior high school. The measures are part of

wider government reforms of China's education sector, which include a crackdown on cram schools – seen by parents as a way to inflate their children's educational fortunes.

MARKET WATCH

	30-08-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	56,890	1.36
US Dollar	73.29	0.54
Gold	46,389	0.17
Brent oil	72.53	

NIFTY 50		
		CHANGE
Adani Ports		
Asian Paints		
Axis Bank		
Bajaj Auto		
Bajaj Finserv		
Bajaj Finance	7165.50	198.90
Bharti Airtel		
BPCL		
Britannia Ind		
Cipla	934.70	10.80
Coal India		
Divis Lab	5104.25	193.55
Dr Reddys Lab	4677.85	77.30
Eicher Motors		
Grasim Ind	1471.15	12.85
HCL Tech		
HDFC	2755.70.	37.50
HDFC Bank	1568.25.	19.80
HDFC Life	712.35.	8.25
Hero MotoCorp	2726.25	52.20
Hindalco	448.05	10.15
Hind Unilever	2687.70.	9.75
ICICI Bank	713.65	13.90
IndusInd Bank		
Infosys	1698.05	10.75
Indian OilCorp		
ITC	208.00	2.10
JSW Steel	686.55.	9.05
Kotak Bank	1735.85.	22.30
L&T	1660.10	22.00
M&M	791.55	16.40
Maruti Suzuki	6796.90	172.05
Nestle India Ltd	19742.25	-215.10
NTPC	114.95	1.55
ONGC	120.15	3.50
PowerGrid Corp	175.50	1.15
Reliance Ind	2270.25	42.85
SBI Life	1180.70	-3.35
State Bank		
Shree Cement		
Sun Pharma	787.20.	15.40
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.		12.55
Tata Motors		
Tata Steel		
TCS		
Tech Mahindra		
Titan		
UltraTech Cement		
	740.45	

103.43 **British Pound** .102.97.. Japanese Yen (100) 66.62. 11.47 11.42 Swiss Franc Singapore Dollar 55.07. ...55.32 Malaysian Ringitt.

IN BRIEF



Former SBI chief Kumar made HSBC Asia director

Banking giant HSBC has appointed former SBI chairman Rainish Kumar as a non-executive director for its Hong Kong-headquartered Asia unit. Mr. Kumar, who retired from the country's largest lender after four decades of service in October last year, was previously appointed as senior advisor by Baring Private Equity Asia and an advisor to Kotak Investment Advisors. PTI

'MapMyIndia plans ₹1,200-crore IPO'

Homegrown digital mapping firm MapMyIndia is looking to raise about ₹1,200 crore via an initial public offering according to sources. Backed by chip major Qualcomm and payments firm PhonePe, the company is expected to file the Draft Red Herring Prospectus in the next few days, two sources close to the development said. MapMyIndia did not respond to an e-mailed query. PTI

Ola looking to raise up to \$1.5 billion via IPO

Ride-hailing firm Ola is looking to raise \$1-1.5 billion (₹7,324-₹10,985 crore) via an initial public offering (IPO) and is expected to file the **Draft Red Herring Prospectus** in the December quarter, according to sources. Ola is working with select banks, including Citigroup and Kotak Mahindra Bank, to manage the public offering, two people close to the development said. PTI

Centre extends tenures

of Canara Bank, Bol EDs NEW DELHI The government has extended the tenure of executive directors of Canara Bank and Bank of India for two years, the State-run lenders said on Monday. The banks said the Centre informed them about the extensions through notifications on August 26, 2021. The government last week extended the term of executive directors of various public sector banks. PTI



Mittal sees scope to accelerate investments in roll-out of 5G services, fibre and data centre business

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bharti Airtel's plan to raise up to ₹21,000 crore through a rights issue will give the company the fuel to shift to a higher gear and tap large opportunities by accelerating investments in the roll-out of 5G services, fibre, and data centre business, Chairman Sunil Mittal said on Monday.

Mr. Mittal said the industry has been urging the government to address some pressing issues "inhibiting" continued investments in the sector and added that the taxes on the industry remain high.

"For every ₹100 of revenue, ₹35 go in various forms of levies. We hope that as we step up and do our part, the government will also favourably look at some of the genuine demands of the indus-



Girding for battle: Fresh capital provides a good buffer if India becomes a two-player market, says Credit Suisse. • REUTERS

try, enabling a multiplier effect and positive outcome," Mr. Mittal said in an investor call on the company's fundraising plans.

Bharti "has the opportunity to be the tip of the spear for the new digital economy and take India into the next phase of growth", he added. "This capital will help improve the leverage position for the company and simul-

taneously provide the fuel to accelerate investments across several parts of our portfolio to drive for competitive and profitable growth,"

Mr. Mittal said.

He estimated that the industry's ARPUs (Average Revenue Per User) would reach ₹200 per user per month by the end of the current financial year and eventually move to ₹300.

'Strengthen positioning' Bharti's fund raising is expected to strengthen its competitive positioning in the market and provide it the necessary ammunition for an

aggressive 5G roll-out, ana-

lysts said.

While the capital increase announcement was a "surprise", it strengthens the company's balance sheet and provides a good buffer to make accelerated investment in a scenario where India transitions to a twoplayer market, Credit Suisse said in a note.

"We think, Airtel is well placed in either of the scenarios: a two private operators sector, or three private operators post industry repair," Credit Suisse added.

Bharti's board on Sunday approved raising up to ₹21,000 crore by offering one share for every 14 equity shares held, at a price of ₹535 per share.

The promoter and promoter group would collectively subscribe to the full extent of their aggregate rights entitlement and would also subscribe to any unsubscribed shares. Promoter holding stands at about 55.8%. BofA Securities said Bhar-

ti's promoters' readiness to subscribe to any unsubscribed portion sends "a strong signal".

Bharti shares rose 4.4% on the BSE to close at ₹620.35.

Sensex extends rally on relief over U.S. rate stance

'Focus turns to macro data, auto sales'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Benchmark stock indices surged on Monday following the U.S. Federal Reserve's 'wait-and-watch' approach.

The S&P BSE Sensex rose 1.36%, or 765.04 points, to 56,889.76. Top gainers included Bharti Airtel, which added 4.44%, Axis Bank (4.15%), Tata Steel (4%), Titan (3.46%) and Bajaj Finance (2.91%).

Pointing out that the indices had maintained the trend throughout the day in line with the strength in global markets, Vinod Nair, head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said the U.S. Federal Reserve's accommodative stance had helped strengthen the equity markets worldwide.

"Global markets streng-

thened... following the dovish tone of the Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell who stated [the Fed would] stick with the waitand-see approach, giving reassurance that the easy money policy will continue this year with a smaller rate of tapering," he said.

The NSE Nifty 50 too rose 1.35% to 16,931.05 points.

"The surge in the index was led by the banking and financials pack," Ajit Mishra, VP-Research, Religare Broking Ltd., wrote in a note. "Upcoming macroeconomic data i.e. GDP numbers and auto sales numbers will be in focus for further cues on economic recovery. We expect the prevailing uptrend to continue and suggest keeping the focus on the selection of stocks," he added.

RBI tells pvt. banks: stick to CEO pay rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The RBI said on Monday that the fair value of the share-linked incentives paid to chief executive officers, whole-time directors and other key functionaries by private banks should be recognised as an expense during the relevant accounting period.

The RBI has also asked all banks, including local area banks, small finance banks and foreign banks to comply with its directions for all share-linked instruments granted after the accounting period ended March 31, 2021.

The central bank had issued guidelines on the issue in November 2019.

Future-RIL: Amazon flags SC's ruling to SEBI

It asks bourses to cancel nod for deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amazon has written to SEBI requesting the regulator to direct stock exchanges to withdraw the 'Observation Letters' that were issued related to the proposed ₹24,713-crore Future-Reliance deal.

The U.S. e-commerce giant has also urged SEBI to take necessary action to comply with the recent Supreme Court judgment related to the deal.

"In light of the directions contained in the Enforcement Judgment, and the EA Order whose validity has been affirmed by the Hon-'ble Supreme Court, Amazon requests you to take all



such action as is necessary to comply with the Supreme Court Judgment, and to further ensure that no communications subsist or emanate which are at variance with the Supreme Court Judgment," Amazon wrote in a letter dated August 17, referring to the SC ruling on the order of the Singaporebased Emergency Arbitrator (EA). In January, SEBI had cleared the deal with riders.

Axis Bank issues foreign currency debt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Axis Bank on Monday said it had started issuing debt under securities ₹35,000-crore, debt-raise plan announced earlier

In April, the private sector lender had said its board had approved a proposal to raise up to ₹35,000 crore by issuing various debt instruments in Indian or foreign currency in domestic/overseas markets in one or more tranches. "The bank has initiated the process of issuing of the debt instruments, in the form of the additional tier 1 notes in foreign currency," Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing.

'Festive sales to lift auto dealer volumes by 10-15%'

Fuel prices, third wave are risks: Crisil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Festive season sales and pent-up demand along with new offerings are expected to push automobile dealers' volumes up by 10-15% in FY22, even as they see a patchy recovery this fiscal, according to a survey by credit ratings agency Crisil.

However, a possible third wave of COVID-19, spurt in fuel prices and supply constraints of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) are seen among factors that could slow the sector down, Crisil said on Monday.

Also, the performance of the dealers varies sharply from region to region with the dealerships in north In-



dia being impacted the

"Last fiscal did see a demand uptick during the festival season, but it did not sustain. This fiscal, too, sales across segments are yet to reach pre-pandemic levels," Crisil said.

"Also, the deal conversion cycle has doubled, with customers deferring purchase decisions," said direc-

Maruti to raise prices from Sept. on costs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Monday said it will increase prices across models from September amid rising input costs.

In a regulatory filing, the company said, "Over the past year the cost of company's vehicles continue to be adversely impacted due to increase in various input costs." "Hence, it has become imperative to pass on some impact of the additional cost to the customers through a price rise," the company added.

"The price rise has been planned across models in September 2021," Maruti Suzuki India said.

'Overall hiring returns to pre-pandemic levels'

Jobs in hygiene, childcare pick up'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The overall hiring activity in India has touched pre-pandemic levels, and going ahead, the consumption economy will play an important role in spurring job growth further, according to a report by jobs site Indeed.

For the first time several in months, hiring activity in India is at a pre-pandemic baseline (February 2020 level), the data showed.

Job postings for tech software (IT) roles saw a 19% increase between July 2020 and July 2021 as an expected outcome of the pandemicinduced digitisation. Moreover, job postings for other IT job roles such as project heads and engineers also climbed 8-16%.

"The reopening of the economy and efforts by businesses to work around the

challenges presented by CO-VID-19 have pushed the Indian job market towards recovery," said Sashi Kumar,

head of Sales, Indeed India. He added that while the relevance of tech jobs continued to be high, renewed demand for retail and food iobs indicated that the consumption economy would play an important role in driving job growth further.

"Hygiene has become top priority for both employers and job seekers. What's curious is the heightened interest for veterinary, therapy, personal care, and childcare jobs.'

The easing of lockdown restrictions and the reopening of spaces sharpened the focus on hygiene and sanitisation and the demand for housekeepers, caretakers, and cleaners had grown by 60%, the report said.

LIC gets money laundering IT solution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

IDBI Intech Ltd., which offers specialised solutions to the Banking, Financial Ser vices and Insurance (BFSI) sector, has announced the implementation of its iAML (anti-money laundering) solution at Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).

The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of IDBI Bank and LIC has controlling stake in the bank.

The firm said iAML solution would provide LIC an enterprise-wide view of risk and compliance at transactions and customer level, thereby helping the insurance behemoth to upgrade its anti money laundering reporting system.

Through this solution, LIC would easily come to know if some policy holder is flouting any norms.

Cavinkare elevates next-gen to take on 'modern trade'

Founder CKR's son, daughter to helm retail, e-com verticals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

As part of its first step towards succession plan, homegrown Cavinkare Pvt. Ltd. on Monday announced a major revamp of its business operations by elevating generation next with a special thrust on verticals such as e-commerce and retail.

The 31-year-old company announced the elevation of promoter and founder chairman C.K. Ranganathan's son and daughter.

"This is Cavinkare 2.0 to take on modern trade," said Mr. Ranganathan, while announcing the elevation of Manuranjith Ranganathan and Amudhavalli Ranganathan. The personal care wing will be headed by Venkatesh Vijayaraghavan, director and CEO - FMCG.



Amudhavalli Ranganathan

While Mr. Manuranjith will nathan will focus on innova-



head retail, salon products and veterinary hospital, Ms. Amudhavalli will look after e-commerce. Mr. Rangation. Mr. Manuranjith will report to Mr. Ranganathan, and Amudhavalli to Mr. Vijayaraghavan. Currently, ecommerce accounts for 4% of Cavinkare's revenues and this is expected to touch 25% over the next five years. "With this restructuring process, we expect our turnover to touch ₹5,000 crore over the next 3 years from ₹1,700 crore now," he added. Mr. Ranganathan said that

the company would be investing ₹800-900 crore over a period of three years, of which ₹400 crore will go towards expansion of dairy business, ₹150 crore for salon products, and ₹100-150 crore for IT/ITES. The fund would be raised

through internal accruals, external funding and borrowings. Mr. Ranganathan said he was also ready to dilute his stake.

To a question, Mr. Ranganathan denied he was retiring and added that he had "many more years to go."

Rethink data centres' concentration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Major global cities like Amsterdam and Singapore are shunning any new data centres because they "suck out" power, and we need to be circumspect about concentrating all the capacities in or around the financial capital, a senior in-

dustry official said. "Rather than concentrating the capacities in one city like Mumbai or Delhi or Chennai, there has to be a diversification in geographical locations," Rahul Dhar, country director, data centres, for Microsoft, said at a CII event. He said the global experience gives something to learn for India and wondered if "we have a task force working on the same." At present, over half of the data centre capacity of the country is concentrated in Mumbai.

Pandemic spurred PC sector out of hibernation: industry

January-March sales grew 73% with record shipments: IDC

MINI TEJASWI

Personal computers (PC) are now making a quick re-entry into Indian homes after allowing laptops, notebooks, handhelds, tablets and smartphones to dominate the computing scene for well over a decade, said PC makers Dell and HP.

In the last 18 months, there has been a sharp uptick in PC adoption and the trend of families buying multiple PCs has only been gaining momentum quarter on quarter, they said.

The pandemic spurred the PC industry out of hibernation and the device has emerged as the 'most dependable' and versatile machine suitable for a 'stay-at-home



ities across learning, earning, entertaining and playing, industry officials said.

"As a result, we are seeing a huge uptick in PC adoption since the pandemic began," said Nitish Singal, head, Personal Systems (Consumer), HP India. "From one PC per family, the trend is moving to one PC per person. We expect to see growth in all segments of PCs... from education-focused devices... to gaming and high-end premium PCs," he pointed out. Dell Technologies said PC

markets had been witnessing a 'remarkable' transition from 2020. After the initial wave, "we saw a new-found dependence on PCs as families started purchasing individual devices for each member," said Raj Kumar Rishi, VP & MD, Consumers and Small Businesses, Dell Technologies, India.

grew 73.1% year-on-year to 3.1 million units in January-March, recording the highest ever first-quarter shipments in the country, according to IDC.

The PC market in India

Granules' pain pill gets Health Canada's nod

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Granules India has received marketing approval from Health Canada for Acetaminophen Extended tablets OTC, Release 650mg for the treatment of arthritis pain.

The product is a bioequivalent to the reference listed drug Tylenol Extended Release 650 tablets, the drugmaker said in a release on Monday. Priyanka Chigurupati,

executive director of Granules USA and Granules Pharmaceuticals, said that the approval was received within eight months of the "The approval is a good

addition to our portfolio. We will be launching the product in the Canada market soon," she said.

Resume coal supply: aluminium sector to CIL

'Ad hoc halt hit captive power plants'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Aluminium Association of India (AAI) on Monday sought intervention of stateowned CIL to normalise the precarious situation that has arisen due to stoppage of coal supplies and rakes for captive power plants, resulting in paucity of dry-fuel

This 'ad-hoc decision' without advance notice has brought the industry to a standstill with 'no time' to devise mitigation plans to continue sustainable operations, the AAI said in a letter to the CMD of Coal India Ltd. (CIL).

for the aluminium sector.

"This has reference to the crisis situation that has developed for the entire aluminium sector due to the recent ad hoc decision for



stopping/drastically curtailing the coal supplies and rakes for captive power plants (CPPs) resulting in a coal crunch situation for aluminium sector," the let-Also, resorting to imports

at short notice was not feasible, it said. The aluminium industry's CPPs have signed fuel supply pacts with CIL and its subsidiaries for assured coal supplies.



Two more entities apply for SFB licence

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said it has received applications from two more entities - Cosmea Financial Holdings Private Ltd. and Tally Solutions Private Ltd. - seeking licences to operate small finance banks (SFBs).

delines for 'on tap' licensing of small finance banks in the private sector. With this, a total of six entities have applied for

This is as per RBI's gui-

The other four applicants who were named in April 2021 are VSoft Technologies Private Ltd., Calicut City Service Co-opera-

the licence.

tive Bank Ltd., Akhil Kumar Gupta, and Dvara Kshetriya Gramin Financial Services Private Ltd.



Sumit spears gold with world record, Avani shoots into history

Yogesh Kathuniya and Devendra Jhajaria win silver medals while Sundar Singh picks up a bronze; the 19-year-old is the first Indian woman to win gold at the Games

Vinod loses bronze

Ineligible in disability classification

PARALYMPICS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Debutant Sumit smashed his own world record multiple times for the F64 class gold, while veteran Devendra Jhajharia's F46 category silver cemented his status of being India's greatest para-athlete as javelin throwers led the country's track-and-field medal rush at the Paralympics on Monday.

Another javelin thrower Sundar Singh Gurjar picked up bronze in Jhajharia's event, while discus thrower Yogesh Kathuniya's F56 silver ensured that India made its presence felt across the podium and through the day.

The star of the day was 23year-old Sumit as he went to the top of the podium with an astonishing throw of 68.55m in his fifth attempt, which was the best of the day by quite a distance and a new world record.

"In training, I have thrown 71m, 72m, many times. I don't know what happened in my competition. One thing is for sure: in future I will throw much better," said Sumit after the stupendous performance.

Bettering records

Hailing from Sonepat in Haryana, Sumit bettered the previous world record of 62.88m, also set by him, five times on the day.

His series read 66.95, 68.08, 65.27, 66.71, 68.55 and

Australian Michal Burian (66.29m) and Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku (65.61m) took silver and bronze respectively.

The F64 category is for athletes with a leg amputation, who compete with prosthetics in a standing position.

In March this year, Sumit had competed against Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra in the Indian GP Series 3 where he finished seventh with a 66.43m effort.

He won a silver in the at the 2019 World Championships in Dubai.

Earlier. Devendra clinched silver in the F46 category ahead of compatriot Sundar Singh Gurjar. The 40vear-old, who won gold in the 2004 and 2016 Games, pulled off a new personal best throw of 64.35m for silver.

Devendra had bettered his own world record (63.97m) but Sri Lankan Dinesh Priyan Herath Mudiyanselage set a new mark of 67.79m to take the honours. "In sport and competi-

tion, these kind of things happen. There are always ups and downs. I did my best and bettered my personal best. But it so happened that it was his (Sri Lankan's) day," said Devendra.

The 25-year-old Sundar,

who lost his left hand in 2015 after a metal sheet fell on him, was third with a best effort of 64 01m

He made it to 2016 Rio Paralvmpics but was disqualified for reporting late at the

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indian discus thrower

Monday lost his F52

category bronze medal

ineligible in disability

by the competition

panel following the

classification assessment

result being challenged

"...the panel was

by some competitors.

unable to allocate the

Vinod Kumar on

after being found

call room before the event. The bronze on Monday was nothing short of redemption for him.

The F46 classification is for athletes with arm deficiency, impaired muscle

athlete Vinod Kumar

sport class and the

as Classification not

organisers said in a

"The athlete is

the Men's F52 Discus

medal event and his

results in that

therefore ineligible for

competition are void," it

statement.

from NPC India with a

athlete was designated

Completed (CNC)," the

The 24-year-old Yogesh sent the disc to a best dis-

standing position.

tance of 44.38m in his sixth and last attempt to clinch the silver in the F56 event.

power or impaired passive

range of movement in arms,

with athletes competing in a

Brazil's Claudiney Batista dos Santos, the reigning World champion and world record holder, defended his title with a 45.59m.

Cuba's Leonardo Diaz Aldana (43.36m) took bronze. Another Indian, Sandeep Chaudhary, finished fourth.

In F56 classification, athletes have full arm and trunk muscle power. Pelvic stability is provided by some to full ability to press the knees together.

"Due to lockdown every stadium was closed. I couldn't have a coach and I am still training without a coach. It was a great moment that I could win silver medal without a coach," said Yogesh. Shooter Avani Lekhara scripted history on Monday as she became the first Indian woman to win a gold medal at the Paralympics, firing her way to the top of the podium in the R-2 women's 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1

The 19-year-old from Jaipur, who sustained spinal cord injuries in a car accident in 2012, finished with a world record-equalling total of 249.6, which is also a new Paralympic record.

event here.

On top of the world

"I can't describe this feeling, I'm feeling like I'm on top of the world. It's unexplainable," an elated Avani said.

Avani edged out 2016 Rio Games gold-medallist Cuiping Zhangh of China, who clinched the silver medal with a total of 248.9.,

World No.1 and reigning World champion Irvna Shchetnik of Ukraine took bronze with an effort of 227.5. Appearing in her maiden Paralympics, Avani, ranked fifth in the world, consistently shot 10s in both the competition stages.

She was set to obliterate the world record but two 9.9s towards the end cost her the mark.

In the qualification round, Avani had finished seventh with a total 621.7.

A student of law, Avani made her debut for India in 2017 World Cup in Al Ain,

She will also be competing in the mixed 10m Air Rifle Prone SH1, the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions SH1 and the mixed 50m Rifle Prone event. In the SH1 Rifle category, shooters are able to hold a gun with arms.

The athletes have an impairment in their legs, for example amputations or paraplegia. They compete either in a seated ot standing posi-



The **Sumit** file

Age: 23

■ Native of Sonipat,

Event & category: Javelin throw, para

athletics, F64 ■ Ranked World No. 1, also world record holder

■ Training base: Sec 4 Hooda Complex, Rath-

dhana, Sonipat ■ Personal coach: Naval

HONOURS

Gold with world record at Tokyo Paralym-

■ Silver in World Para athletics GP, Italy 2019

■ Silver in Paris Open Handisport 2019

The <mark>Jhajharia</mark> file

Native of Churu,

Rajasthan ■ Event & category:

Javelin throw, para athletics, F46

Training base: SAI Gandhinagar, Gujarat

■ Personal & National coach: Sunil Tanwai

■ Silver at Tokyo

Paralympics ■ Gold with world record at Athens

Paralympics 2004 Gold with world record at Rio Paralym-

■ Gold at World Para Athletics Championships, France 2013

■ Silver at Para Asian Games, S. Korea 2014.

■ Silver at IPC Worlds,

he won the javelin gold with a world



Doha, 2015

Awarded Padma Shri

Awarded Rajiv Gan-

dhi Khel Ratna in 2017

Arjuna Award in

■ When he was nine, he accidentally touched a high-tension electric line and his left hand had to be amputated. Initially competed with able-bodied athletes and won medals at the

school and university

■ His big break came at the 2004 Paralympics in Athens where record (62.15m) which stood for 12 years till he himself bettered it with 63.97m for the gold at the 2016 Rio



Age: 25

Javelin throw, para athletics, F46

■ Personal & National

athletics championship, Dubai 2019

athletics champion-

■ Silver in javelin throw and bronze in discus throw at Para Asian Games, 2018

■ Training base: SMS Stadium, Jaipur

coach: Mahaveer Prasad Saini

■ Gold in World para

US OPEN

NEW YORK

crowds.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Two-time Grand Slam cham-

pion Simona Halep, battling

back from injury, advanced

to the second round of the

US Open on Monday as the

hardcourts showdown be-

gan before full capacity

The 29-year-old Roma-

nian 12th seed defeated Ita-

ly's Camila Giorgi 6-4, 7-6(3)

to book a second-round

match against Slovakian

in the opening round. • AFP

Returns to action after battling injury

Firing away: Halep hit 14 winners as she eased past Giorgi

The **Yogesh** file Age: 24

■ Native of Bahadurgarh, Haryana

Event & category: Discus throw, para

athletics, F56 ■ Ranked World No. 3

■ Training base: Soni-

pat, Haryana ■ Personal coach:

Naval Singh HONOURS

■ Silver in Tokyo Paralympics

■ Bronze in World para athletics championships, Dubai 2019 ■ Gold in Handisport

Open, Paris 2019

Gold in Indian GP,

■ Son of a retired

suffered from quadriparesis, a condition which leads to muscle

weakness in both

hands and legs. Encouraged by attempted the discus



Age: 19

■ Native of Jaipur,

R2 and No. 6 in R8

■ Training base: JDA

■ Personal coach: Suma

■ National coach: Sub-

■ Silver in R2 in the Al

GoSports Foundation

Osiiek (Croatia) World

■ Silver with junior

world record in R2 at

the Al Ain World Cup

■ Bronze in R2 at the

Bangkok World Cup in

A car accident and

Inspired by Olympic

Bindra's book A shot

at history, she took up

■ Began training at the

Jagatpura Sports Com-

plex, Jaipur, in 2015. In

champion Abhinav

shooting

a spinal injury in 2012

put her on a wheelchair

Cup in 2019

Neutral venues for domestic season

athletics championship,

■ Son of an Air Force

Sumit was a wrestler

and his leg had to be

amputated below the

with a prosthetic limb

and though his dream

of becoming a wrestler

ended, he continued

In 2017, when a para

athlete told him about

the Para Games, his life

to do his workouts.

changed forever.

■ There were times

when the inner part of

his prosthetic leg was

filled with blood while

pursuing his new sport

(athletics) but he never

Junior Warrant Officer,

earlier. In January 2015,

he met with an accident

Dubai 2019

Kolkata to host Ranji final, Delhi to stage Mushtaq Ali final

CRICKET

AMOL KARHADKAR

Domestic cricket will played at neutral venues after five years, according to the calendar circulated by the State BCCI to the associations.

tic matches were held at neutral venues was in 2016-17. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the forthcoming season will have six hubs hosting a group each.

However, unlike last season, the home team of each hub will play at another venue to make it a level-playing field.

According to the detailed programme, accessed by The Hindu, the Ranji Trophy, which will return after a year's hiatus, will be played at Mumbai (Group A), Bengaluru (Group B), Kolkata (Group C), Ahmedabad (Group D), Thiruvananthapuram (Group E) and Chennai (Plate Group).

Kolkata will host the for March 16 to 20.

Trophy group stage will be played at Lucknow (Group A), Guwahati (Group B), Baroda (Group C), Delhi (Group D), Haryana (Group E) and Vijayawada (Plate Group) from Nov. 4 to 9. Delhi will host the knockouts from Nov. 16 to 22. The calendar: Ranji Trophy:

Elite A (Mumbai): Gujarat, Pun-

jab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya

Elite B (Bengaluru): Bengal

Pradesh, Services, Assam.

Vidarbha, Rajasthan, Kerala, Haryana, Tripura Elite C (Kolkata): Karnataka, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand.

Elite D (Ahmedabad): Saurashtra, Tamil Nadu, Railways, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Goa. **Elite E (Thiruvananthapuram):** Andhra, Uttar Pradesh, Baroda, Chhattisgarh

Plate (Chennai): Chandigarh, Meghalaya, Bihar, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh. Group stage: January 13 to February 13, 2022.

Pondicherry.

Knockouts: February 20 to March 20, 2022 (Kolkata). Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy: Elite A (Lucknow): Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Maharashtra, Goa,

Elite B (Guwahati): Bengal,

Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Mum-

Kashmir, Jharkhand, Himachal

Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Elite D (Delhi): Railways, Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh,

desh, Hyderabad, Uttarakhand, Saurashtra, Delhi, Chandigarh. Plate Group (Vijayawada): Tripura, Vidarbha, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram. Group stage: November 4 to 9.

Viiav Hazare Trophy (venues to be announced): Elite A: Gujarat, Andhra, Vidarbha, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir.

Knockouts: November 16 to 22

Baroda, Bengal, Karnataka, **Pondicherry** Elite C: Hyderabad, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Saurash-

Elite B: Tamil Nadu, Mumbai,

Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Elite E: Goa, Punjab, Railways, Rajasthan, Services, Assam. Plate Group: Tripura, Bihar, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur.

Group stage: Dec. 8 to 14. Knockouts: Dec. 21 to 27.



■ Native of Karauli, Raiasthan

Ranked World No. 3

Paralympics ■ Gold in World para

ship, London 2017

■ Belongs to a family of farmers. Since he could not impress in teacher advised him to try sport. He took it seriously, left home and attended a sports academy trials in Jaipur.

were going well. he lost his left hand in an accident. Realising that he could take up para sport, he started training with M.P. Saini. At the 2016 Rio Paralympics, he turned up late for his event at the call room and was disqualified. Though he was left shattered, his coach started training him in three throw events - shot put, discus and iavelin - and he began excelling in all

lucky loser Kristina Kucova,

who ousted American Ann

Open and 2019 Wimbledon

champion, tore a left calf

muscle at the Italian Open,

and missed the French Open

Tuesday's picks: Men: 1-Djo-

kovic vs Rune; 4-Zverev vs

Querrey; 6-Berrettini vs Char-

dy: 7-Shapovalov vs Delbonis;

Women: 1-Barty vs Zvonareva:

4-Pliskova vs McNally; 6-An-

dreescu vs Golubic; 7-Swiatek

vs Loeb; 10-Kvitova vs Hercog.

9-Carreno Busta vs Cressv

and Wimbledon.

Halep, the 2018 French

Li 7-5, 6-1.

Bengaluru 2019

Army Officer, Yogesh

mother Meena Devi. h throw in 2017 and finished fourth at the



Event & category: Shooting, R2 women's 10m air rifle SH1, R3 mixed 10m air rifle prone SH1, R6 mixed

■ World rank: No. 5 in

shooting range, Jaipui and home range

Shirur

hash Rana

■ Gold in air rifle at Tokyo Paralympics

COMPILED BY **STAN RAYAN AND KAMESH SRINIVASAN**

Pardeep is most expensive player

UP Yoddha picks him up for a whopping ₹1.65 crore

TP Yoddha signed Par-J deep Narwal for ₹1.65 crore at the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 8 auction on Monday, making him the most expensive player in

Season 6, when Harvana Steelers acquired the services of Monu Goyat for ₹1.51 crore. This was Pardeep's maiden appearance in a PKL auction, having previously enjoyed a long stint with Patna Pirates.

Siddharth Desai, who won the emerging player award in Season 6, was signed by Telugu Titans for ₹1.3 crore. It was UP Yoddha which won a tough bidding war for Desai, before Telugu Titans swooped in with the Final Bid Match (FBM) option to retain his services.

All-rounder Rohit Gulia



who had a forgettable Season 7 with Tamil Thalaivas, was signed by Puneri Paltan for ₹40 lakh.

'The Showman' for his flamboyant raids, will be disappointed at the price as he had earned ₹94 lakh at Tamil

was signed by Haryana Steel- hammadreza Chiyaneh be-

Domestic **players** signed Jaipur Pink Panthers:

Bengaluru Bulls: Mahender Singh (FBM) (50 lakh), Chandran Ranjit (80 lakh)

Ravinder Pahal (74 lakh)

Deepak Hooda (FBM) (55

lakh), Sandeep Dhull (FBM)

Haryana Steelers: Rohit Gulia (83 lakh)

Gujarat Giants:

Puneri Paltan: Vishal Bhardwai (60 lakh), Baldev Singh (60 lakh), Rahul Chaudhari

Telugu Titans: Surender Singh

(55 lakh), Siddharth Desai (FBM) (1.30 crore), Rohit Kumar (36 lakh) Tamil Thalaivas: Surjeet Singh

(71 lakh), Manjeet (92 lakh)

UP Yoddha: Pardeep Narwal

(75 lakh), K. Prapanjar

(1.65 crore), Shrikant Jadhav (FBM) (72 lakh) Patna Pirates: Prashanth Rai (55 lakh), Sachin (84 lakh)

Top foreign signings (Patna Pirates, 31 lakh), Aboza , Jang Kun Lee (FBM) (Patna Pirates, 20.5 lakh), Hadi Oshtorak (Gujarat Giants



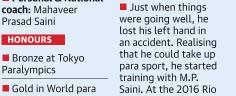
The last time the domes-

knockouts from February 20, with the final scheduled



Elite E (Haryana): Uttar Pra-

tra, Haryana. Elite D: Chhattisgarh, Madhya



Ain World Cup in 2021 The Avani file ■ Silver in R2 at the

Rajasthan

50m rifle prone SH1, R8 women's 50m rifle

2019, she was adjudged the most promising paralympic athlete by

Smooth start for Halep

PKL AUCTION

ASHWIN ACHAL

the history of the league. Raider Pardeep eclipsed the previous record, set in

ers for ₹83 lakh, making him came the most expensive fothe costliest player to reign signing of the season, emerge from the Future Ka- with Patna Pirates offering baddi Heroes scouting pro- the highest bid of ₹31 lakh.

Pardeep Narwal. ■ FILE PHOTO

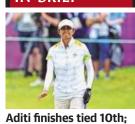
gramme. Rahul Chaudhari,

Chaudhari, nicknamed Iranian all-rounder Mo-

TV PICKS

Tokyo 2020 Paralympics: DD Sports & Eurosport (SD & HD), 5.45 a.m. & 3.15 p.m. **US OPEN 2021**: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 8.30 p.m. & 4 a.m. (Wednesday)

IN BRIEF



Vani Kapoor T-38

Aditi Ashok played a bogey-free final round of two-under 69 to finish tied 10th at the Didriksons Skafto Open here on Sunday. The 23-year-old three-time LET winner finished four-under 203. Vani Kapoor finished T-38. Frenchwoman Pauline Roussin Bouchard took the title with a score of 11-under.

Hojgaard triumphs; Shubhankar stumbles

CRANS MONTANA (SWITZERLAND) Shubhankar Sharma's hopes of a top-10 finish were dashed in the final round when he carded a six-over 76 at the European Masters here on Sunday. He slipped from tied seventh to a disappointing T-50 with a total of one-under 279. Rasmus Hojgaard became a three-time European Tour winner at the age of 20 with a 13-under aggregate. РТІ

Karan, Arvind guide Sapience to title

NEW DELH Karan Sharma (86 not out) and Arvind Kumar (32 not out) scripted a

match-winning stand of 93 for the fifth wicket to guide Sahib Sapience Club beat Richa SDS by six wickets and clinch the All India SPJ Cup tournament.

The scores: Sahib Sapience Club 212/4 in 20 overs (Yashpal Dagar 87, Badal Singh Balvan 54, Shivam Singh 49) lost to Richa SDS (Karan Sharma 86 n.o., Arvind Kumar 32 n.o.).

Drone, Krishna star in Rohtak's win

Drone Kishore (139 not out) and Krishna (4 for five) helped Rohtak Road Gymkhana crush Mahesh Cricket Academy by 234 runs in the Push Academy League (u-13) tournament.

The scores: Rohtak Road Gymkhana 313/7 in 40 overs (Drone Kishore 139 n.o.) bt Mahesh Cricket Academy 79 in 29.2 overs (Krishna 4/5).

Chandimal recalled for SA series

Sri Lanka on Monday recalled former skipper Dinesh Chandimal into a 22-member squad, led by Dasun Shanaka, for a six-match series (three ODIS & three T20Is) against South Africa. Chandimal, 31, was dropped after the tour of the West Indies in March. He missed the series against England and India, All matches will be played at the Premadasa Stadium.AFP

Washington ruled out of **UAE leg of IPL**



Washington Sundar. SPORTZPICS/BCCI

SPORTS REPORTER

All-rounder Washington Sundar has been ruled out of the UAE leg of IPL 2021 because of a finger injury, Royal Challengers Bangalore announced on Mon-

Bengal medium-pacer Akash Deep has been named as replacement.

Washington had hurt his finger during practice in the lead-up to the ongoing five-Test series in England and subsequently returned

RCB will play Kolkata Knight Riders on September 20 in Abu Dhabi.

Messi makes much-awaited PSG debut

Mbappe steals the show with a superb performance as the team registers a facile win over Reims

LIGUE 1

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Lionel Messi came on as a substitute to make his Paris Saint-Germain debut on Sunday but Kylian Mbappe stole the show by scoring both goals in a 2-0 win against Reims in Ligue 1.

Messi, wearing the number 30 jersey, came off the bench in the 66th minute to replace Neymar at the Stade Auguste-Delaune, where fans in the sell-out 21,000 crowd had earlier chanted his name as he emerged to warm up.

The six-time Ballon d'Or winner will have to wait for his first goal with his new club, and his first start, which could come when PSG hosts Clermont in its next match on September 11.

Pochettino's take

CHESS

RAKESH RAO

NEW DELHI

"I'm very happy that he made his debut. It was very important for him," PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino told broadcaster Amazon Prime after Messi's low-key first ap-

Vidit Gujrathi stunned pro-

digious teen-talent Alireza

Firouzja (France) and im-

proved his first-day perfor-

mance by half a point but

slipped two places in the

Aimchess US rapid online

After scoring just two

points from the first five

rounds, Vidit collected 2.5

from the next five but

slipped two rungs to joint

11th spot. In the remaining

five rounds, Vidit will have to

strike rich to be among the

top-eight finishers for a

chess on Sunday.



Familiar sight: Reims' Yunis Abdelhamid uses any means possible to stop PSG's Lionel Messi from foraying ahead. • REUTERS

pearance in a PSG shirt.

"He is still far away from his best form but he has been training well and he will be fit in the next two weeks, after the international break and, yes, we are waiting for the

Vidit fares better but slips two rungs

Artemiev emerges as the surprise leader after 10 rounds

place in the quarterfinals.

Vidit began by beating Fi-

rouzja and then drew with

Daniel Naroditskey (USA),

Eric Hansen (Canada) and

(France) but lost to Leinier

Young Russian Vladislav

(7.5)

emerged as the surprise

leader after 10 rounds. Mag-

nus Carlsen (Norway) and

overnight leader Levon Aro-

nian (Armenia) shared the

second spot at seven points.

Meanwhile, in a move that

reinforces India's image as a

market, a

Indian Chess Tour

chess

Dominguez Perez (USA).

Artemiev

Vachier-Lagrave

points)

best from him."

The week leading up to this game had been dominated not by Messi but by talk of Mbappe's future, with Real Madrid reportedly having two offers for the France

\$100,000 domestic chess

circuit will commence next

Chess Tour, which compris-

es four events and a Final,

the platform will provide In-

dians opportunities to quali-

fy for the elite million-dollar

Winner of each event will

get to play in one event on

the Champions Chess Tour

In addition, the four qual-

ifying events will be held

and each winner will get a

which comprises

events and a Final.

Champions

Meltwaters

Chess Tour.

Titled the MPL Indian

World Cup-winning striker rejected.

whose contract expires at the

The latest of these offers was understood to be worth €180 million, an astronomical amount for a player end of the season and who will be free to negotiate a deal with a new club in January without PSG being able to get a transfer fee.

That amount is also equal to what PSG paid Monaco in 2017 to sign Mbappe, who was clearly eager to go out on a high if this was to be his final appearance for the club.

With the transfer deadline looming on Tuesday, the 22year-old did not appear remotely distracted by the talk of a move as he headed in a glorious Angel Di Maria cross in the 15th minute to put the away side in front.

Mbappe then scored his second of the night, and third of the season, just after the hour mark, finishing off an inviting low cross to the back post by Achraf Hakimi.

Neymar started, making his first appearance of the season, while Di Maria also

played in an all-star attack. It is the only team in Ligue 1 with the maximum 12 points

after four games. The result: Reims O lost to PSG

2 (Mbappe 15, 63).

Bishwamitra, Vishal, and Neha clinch gold

BOXING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

World youth bronze-medallist Bishwamitra Chongtham (51kg), Vishal (80kg) and Neha (54kg) struck gold, while six other Indian boxers signed off with silver medals in the Asian Youth Championships in Dubai on Monday.

Vishvanath Suresh (48kg), Vanshaj (63.5kg) and Jaydeep Rawat (71kg) ended with silver medals.

In the women's competition, Nivedita (48kg), Tamanna (50kg), and Simran (52kg) claimed silver.

Daksh (67kg), Deepak (75kg), Abhimanyu (92kg) and Aman Singh Bisht (92+kg) bagged bronze medals while Lashu Yadav (70kg) ended with a bronze in the women's category.

Earlier in the junior competition, the country ended with whopping eight gold, five silver and six bronze.

After Rohit, Bharat, Vishu and Tanu claimed gold, Nikita Chand (60kg), Mahi Raghav (63kg), Pranjal Yadav (75kg) and Kirti (+81kg) picked up their yellow metals. Rudrika (70kg), Sanjana (81kg) and Aanchal Saini ended up with silver.

Avani gold lekhara aayi ALWAYS ON THE MARK!

Sheikh leads a strong men's field

Rashmi on the top among women with 28 points

CARROM

KAMESH SRINIVASAN NEW DELHI

Mohammed Sheikh of Karnataka was in irresistible form as he executed an universal slam and a white slam, to lead a strong men's field with three points after the first round of the champions league in the Indian online carrom challenge, organised by the All India Carrom Federation.

Class apart

In a field sparkling with international players, Sheikh was a class apart as he did not take more than four chances in clearing any of the eight boards.

The fact that he had already been competing in the superleague and preliminary stages of the competition helped the Karnataka player to strike a remarkable rhythm in clearing the boards.

He was followed by Yogesh Dhongade (16), Abdul Rahman (18), Riyaz Akbar Ali (19), K Srinivas (21),

India can put it across Finland: Myneni

Mohd. Ghufran (26), Vikas Dharia (26), Mohd. Arif (29) in a field of 20 players.

Universal slams

Yogesh and Riyaz also had universal slams like Mohammed Sheikh, while K. Srinivas and Mohd. Rehan had one white slam each.

Former world champion Yogesh Pardeshi was in the 11th spot with 33 points while the current world champion Prashant More was joint 12th with 35 points along with Abhishek Chavan.

The top four players after four rounds will reach the semifinals for the knockout

In the women's section, former world champion Rashmi Kumari had the distinction of executing a white slam in the second board, and led the field of 21 players with 28 points.

She was followed by Nidhi Gupta (40), Naga Jothi (43), Aakanksha Kadam (43), S Appoorwa (44), Kavya Shree (47), S Shainy (48) and Deepa Naik (49).

Renowned coach Vasoo Paranjape passes away

Scores of cricketers benefited from the octogenarian mentor

CRICKET

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Vasudev, alias Vasoo, Paranjape – a former First Class cricketer who mentored numerous greats of the game – passed away at his home here on Friday afternoon after a prolonged illness. Paranjape was 82.

Paranjape's career as a cricketer was restricted to 29 appearance for Mumbai from 1956 to 1970. But it was his great cricketing acumen, ability to mentor cricketers and an uncanny knack to motivate young and veterans alike that elevated him into the stature of one of the greatest guides of the game in Indian cricket.



Vasoo Paranjape.

It was apt that his son Jatin - a former India batter and a national selector - titled a book on his father that he coauthored with Anand Vasu as 'The Cricket Drona – for the love of Vasoo Paranjape'

Rohit Sharma, from Dilip Vengsarkar to Rahul Dravid, from Sachin Tendulkar to Ramesh Powar and from Anil Kumble to W.V. Raman, scores of international cricketers benefited from Paranjape's timely advice at different junctures in their career. While Gavaskar, who was

given the nickname 'Sunny' by Paranjape, referred to him in the book as the "conscience keeper" of every cricketer that turned up on the Mumbai maidans. Rohit has narrated how Paranjape was instrumental in Rohit being selected in the Mumbai U-17 squad for the first time. Kumble's letter to Pa-

ranjape as a teenager has al-From Sunil Gavaskar to so been reproduced in the

book. He was the coach of India Under-19 for the inaugural Youth World Cup in 1988, with the squad including the likes of M. Senthilnathan, Pravin Amre, Nayan Mongia, Narendra Hirwani, Venkatapathy Raju and Subroto Banerjee.

Besides being a mentor, Paraniane was a cricket romantic and would be ready to be involved in a discussion with cricketers and connoisseurs alike until his health deteriorated over the last few years.

Paranjape is survived by wife Lalita, daughter Radhika Shah, son Jatin and their extended families.

DAVIS CUP

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

Saketh Myneni is leaving no stone unturned in his preparations to contribute to India's Davis Cup campaign in Finland from September 18

"It is great to be back in the Indian team after a gap of two years," Myneni told The Hindu. The last time he was a member of the squad was against Pakistan in 2019, though he didn't play any

"It will be tough against Finland, but our team is capable of a couple of upsets even though playing indoors has its own challenges. Everyone is eager to prove a point," he said.

"I love the bounce and



required of him by the team. ■ v.v. SUBRAHMANYAM

fast indoor surfaces and should be comfortable playing there," he said, "And, it should be interesting to see what kind of speed Finland team has prepared for us," he said.

"But, honestly, I don't feel any kind of pressure despite not having played a Davis Cup game since 2018 for the simple reason that I have been really training hard," he said. "The pandemic had messed up my foreign tournament schedule. The Finland match should be useful in getting visas for some other tournaments as well," he

Dance of delight: Stuart Binny's six for four against Bangladesh in Dhaka in 2014 remains India's best in ODIs.

Stuart Binny calls time on his cricketing career

The all-rounder featured in six Tests, 14 ODIs and 3 T20Is

ASHWIN ACHAL

Stuart Binny, who holds the best bowling figures for an Indian in ODIs, announced his retirement from all forms of the game on Monday.

"I would like to inform you that I have decided to retire from first class and intentional cricket. It has given me tremendous joy and pride to have represented my country at the highest international level," Binny, 37, said in a statement.

The all-rounder featured in six Tests, 14 ODIs and 3 T20Is. Binny's standout performance came in 2014 when he returned a record-breaking six for four in the second ODI against Bangladesh.

Debut Test

He shone with the bat on Test debut, against England at Nottingham in 2014, scoring a crucial 78 in the second innings to help India salvage a draw. His last Test came at



his home ground M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here in November 2015, in a washedout game against South Africa. He was part of the India squad for the 2015 ICC ODI World Cup, but didn't get a

Binny, the son of former India all-rounder Roger Binny, also enjoyed a fruitful 18year domestic career. He played 95 First Class, 100 List-A and 150 T20 matches a bulk of it for a strong Karnataka side. Binny was a part of

Stuart Binny's career in numbers BATTING M Runs HS Avg. SR

rests	0	194	/0	21.55	36.23	1/0
ODIs	14	230	77	28.75	93.49	1/0
T20Is	3	35	24	17.50	120.68	0/0
First Class	95	4796	189	34.25	68.60	22/11
BOWLING	М	Wkts	BBI	Avg.	Econ	5WI/10WM
Tests	6	3	2/24	00.00	3,44	0/0
10303	О	3	2/24	86.00	3.44	0/0
ODIs	14	20	6/4	21.95	5.37	1/0
		_	•			

the Karnataka team which racked up trophies between 2013 and 2015.

A powerful and uninhibited stroke-maker, Binny often rescued Karnataka with big knocks in the middle-order. With 148 First Class wickets, Binny was a more-than-useful seamer. Binny also captained Karnataka when regular skipper Vinay Kumar was unavailable.

In 2019, Binny signed to play for Nagaland after being ignored by Karnataka selec-

The spotlight

Binny entered the spotlight with good performances in the unsanctioned Indian Cricket League (ICL). After two seasons in the ICL (2007-2009), he accepted BCCI's amnesty offer and returned Binny, enjoyed a fruitful 18-year domestic career

■ Binny, the son of former

He has expressed an interest in moving to full-time coaching

to the official fold.

Binny began his IPL career with Mumbai Indians in 2010. He represented Rajasthan Royals from 2011 to 2015 and 2018-19.

He was signed by RCB in

leased him after the 2017 In 2012, he married popular sports anchor Mayanti

2016 for ₹2 crore. RCB re-

A level-2 NCA coach, Binny has expressed an interest in moving to full-time coaching.

Langar.

He thanked the BCCI, Karnataka State, his IPL teams, coaches, selectors, captains, teammates, media, friends and family for their support.