



Identify fake COVID-19 vaccines, Health Ministry tells States

page 10



Taliban push deep into Afghanistan's holdout Panjshir Valley

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Krishna Nagar wins gold as India finishes with 19 medals

page 13

Shardul, Pant help India set England a target of 368 in Oval Test

page 13



NEARBY



JNUSU protests against counterterrorism course

NEW DELHI
The JNU Students' Union on Sunday demanded rollback of a course titled 'counterterrorism, asymmetric conflicts and strategies for cooperation among major powers' to be taught to engineering students at the university pursuing a dual degree programme with specialisation in international relations.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

U.P. legislators push to promote Hindu sites

LUCKNOW
An analysis of a tourism development scheme in Uttar Pradesh shows that most of the MLAs, even those belonging to the Opposition Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party, have chosen Hindu religious, spiritual and cultural sites for promotion. Most of the Muslim MLAs of the Samajwadi Party also preferred Hindu sites.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

SOCIOLOGY
Foundation Course (Mains 2022)
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EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 5

Agencies flag surge in number of foreign ultras in north Kashmir

Police point to changing trend, say around 40 militants active in three districts

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Taking the security agencies by surprise, foreign militants outnumber local militants in north Kashmir – comprising the three districts of Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara – in a changing trend, according to official figures.

The sudden spike in numbers has forced the police to restrict the movement of mainstream leaders and elected grassroots representatives because of fears of an increase in attacks on them, top police sources said.

'Only 11 local militants'

According to the latest data of the police, there are 40 to 50 foreign militants active in north Kashmir, compared with just 11 local militants.

It is for the first time in a decade that north Kashmir is witnessing heightened militant activities compared with south Kashmir, which remained the hub of militants after the hanging of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru in 2013.

"The foreign militants' build-up was taking place for a long time and cannot be connected with the recent situation in Afghanistan. The changing trend was visible in the past two months," a police officer said.

The presence of foreign



Fresh hurdle: Army jawans on a patrol near the Line of Control in Poonch. ■PTI

Internet curbs extended

Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir extended the mobile Internet blockade up to 5 p.m. on September 6. It was imposed after senior separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani died in Srinagar on Wednesday night. ▶ PAGE 8

States warned of infiltration

In an alert sent to all States and Central Armed Paramilitary Forces, the Centre has warned that armed terrorists from Afghanistan could attempt to "aggressively infiltrate" into India, particularly Jammu & Kashmir. ▶ PAGE 8

militants in the ranks of insurgent groups such as the Jaish-e-Muhammad, Al-Badr, Lashkar-e-Taiba and The Resistance Front (TRF) had dried up in the first quarter

of 2021. In fact, the first foreign militant, Hamas alias Asrar alias Saria, who was active since March 2018, was killed on May 4 in north Kashmir's Sopore, according

to the police. Against 32 foreign militants killed in 2020, only nine foreign militants have been killed this year so far, according to official figures.

A total of 102 militants, "mostly commanders", were killed, 88 youth recruited, 30 arrested and 425 over ground workers held this year, according to the police data.

"The biggest success against foreign militants this year was the killing of Saifulah alias Adnan alias Lamboo," an officer said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
EDITORIAL ▶ PAGE 6

12-year-old dies as Nipah reappears in Kozhikode

Two health workers symptomatic, 188 contacts isolated

STAFF REPORTER
KOZHIKODE

After a gap of over three years, a case of the zoonotic Nipah virus infection was reported in Kozhikode district of Kerala on Sunday morning, with the death of a 12-year-old boy from Pazhoor, near Chathamangalam, at a private hospital.

State Health Minister Vee-na George told the media that a contact list of 188 persons, a majority of them healthcare workers, had been prepared. "A total of 20 of them, termed high-risk contacts, are being shifted to the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode (MCH). Two of the healthcare workers – at the MCH and a private hospital – are symptomatic," she said. Others were under isolation.

Kozhikode is reporting the deadly infection for the second time in three years. Eighteen lab-confirmed cases and seven suspected ones were reported from the district in May-June 2018. A couple of the infected persons were from the nearby Malappuram district. There were 16 lab-confirmed deaths and seven suspected deaths. Two persons survived the infection.

One more infection and recovery was reported from Ernakulam in June 2019. The virus is transmitted to



Final rites of the boy who died of Nipah being performed at a burial ground in Kozhikode on Sunday. ■K. RAGESH

Central team visits family

A team from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) interacted with the boy's parents, relatives and neighbours at Pazhoor in Kozhikode. ▶ PAGE 5

T.N. steps up surveillance

Tamil Nadu has stepped up fever surveillance in nine districts bordering Kerala. Officials have been told to hold fever camps and test those entering the State.

people from animals and can also be passed on through contaminated food or directly from person-to-person. Fruit bats are considered to be a natural reservoir of the virus. Symptoms include acute encephalitis and respiratory illnesses.

Multiple hospitals

The Minister said the boy was initially taken to a private clinic at Eranjimavu with fever and other symptoms on August 29. He was taken

to two private hospitals on August 31, before being shifted to the MCH. He spent around 20 hours at the MCH and was again shifted to another private hospital on September 1. Alert staff at the private hospital, who suspected the infection to be Nipah, sent body fluid samples for testing. The initial tests were done at the National Institute of Virology's Alappuzha unit.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Mega farmers' rally vows to oust Yogi

Anger against inflation, low income spurs unity at Muzaffarnagar mahapanchayat

ANUJ KUMAR
PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
MUZAFFARNAGAR

Lakhs of farmers streamed into Muzaffarnagar on Sunday for the Samyukt Kisan Morcha's largest mahapanchayat so far to hear Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait declare his determination to oust the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh next year by tapping into rural anger and uniting farmers and workers across religion and caste.

Mr. Tikait, who was welcomed to the stage with a wave of sound and a traditional trumpet fanfare, vowed to continue the farmers' protest till Yogi Adityanath is overthrown though he was ambivalent about contesting the election himself.

During his speech, Mr. Ti-



Call for action: BKU president Naresh Tikait with farmer leader Ghulam Mohammed Jola, left, in Muzaffarnagar. ■ANUJ KUMAR

kait called out both "Allahu Akbar" and "Har Har Mahadev". His huge audience echoed his chants that rang across this western Uttar Pradesh town, the site of brutal communal riots just eight years ago.

"In my father's time, it

was common to hear both chants together at meetings, and we want to revive that atmosphere," the BKU leader said.

The SKM is a platform for farm unions which, for the last 10 months, has been protesting against three agri-

cultural reform laws which could affect State-run markets, and has also called for a legal guarantee for minimum support prices for all farm produce.

Unlike in Punjab and Haryana, where the protests originated, there is no strong existing network of State-run markets or extensive government procurement of crops in Uttar Pradesh. Hence, for most farmers here, who support the Tikait group, the demand for a guaranteed MSP prices holds much promise.

"We voted for the BJP in 2019 because it promised us MSP rates that would make farming profitable. But [Prime Minister Narendra] Modiji only lied to us," said Veer Singh, a farmer from Meerut.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Paralympics: Noida DM bags silver, family elated

Mother says he practiced hard for event

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HASSAN

"I am thrilled. The entire country is appreciating my son. What else could a mother want," said Jayashree, the mother of Uttar Pradesh-cadre IAS officer Suhas L.Y. who won the silver medal in Paralympics in Tokyo.

Ms. Jayashree spoke to *The Hindu* over phone from Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) where her son is currently posted as District Magistrate. "There have been so many calls since he won the medal. Just now I watched Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaking to my son on TV," she said. According to Ms. Jayashree, her son had worked hard for the Paralympics for the last two months.

Besides his achievements in badminton, Mr. Suhas has earned a good name as an of-



Suhas, centre, with cousin Vishnu and brother Sharath.

ficer in U.P. "He won appreciation from Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. He was posted in Gautam Buddha Nagar to help bring the COVID-19 situation under control," she said.

Mr. Suhas's cousin Vishnu Priyan said he used to play badminton since childhood but never got any formal training. "Only after becoming an IAS officer he got trained and devoted time to practising," said Mr. Priyan.

Only locals in Ladakh to get 'Resident Certificate'

For entry into non-gazetted posts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The Ladakh administration has decided to issue "Resident Certificate" only to Permanent Resident Certificate holders of the region unlike J&K, where new domicile laws allowed outsiders too to apply for jobs, land and other facilities.

According to the Ladakh Resident Certificate Order 2021 passed on Saturday, "any person who possesses a Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) issued by the competent authority in the districts of Leh and Kargil or belongs to a category of persons who would have been eligible to be issued PRC shall be eligible to receive the 'Resident Certificate'."

The order, an official spokesman said, is "to temporarily define 'Resident of Un-

ion Territory of Ladakh' for appointment to all the non-gazetted posts in any department or service of administration of Ladakh".

All tehsildars have been authorised as the competent authority to issue the 'Resident Certificate'.

Age relaxation

"The administration also enhanced the upper age limit for entry into government services against all posts," the order said.

"The upper age limit has been enhanced for the reserved category candidates from 43 years to 45 years, for the general category candidates from 40 to 42 years and for the physically challenged candidates from 42 to 44 years."

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

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The public transporter’s fleet has contracted to its lowest in over a decade with financial losses mounting each year. The new privately owned cluster buses, being engaged by the government, are gradually edging out thousands of ailing buses on Delhi’s streets

Dying transport corporation

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

The pulse of the Capital’s proverbial ‘lifeline’, the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), is growing fainter by the day. Not just its survival, but even the legacy of the DTC seems to be at stake.

The public transporter’s fleet has contracted to its lowest in over a decade with financial losses mounting each year as new, privately owned cluster buses, being engaged by the government, are gradually edging out thousands of ailing buses on Delhi’s streets.

Last week, visuals of low-floor DTC buses being inundated while wading through waterlogged city streets and commuters being forced to rely on umbrellas to avoid leaking roofs exemplify the state of its existing fleet.

As the Delhi government pursues its ambition of commandeering the largest fleet of electric buses in the country under the cluster scheme, it stands to lose the distinction of having held sway over the biggest fleet of CNG-propelled public buses in the world since 2008.

In response to an RTI query from *The Hindu*, the Transport Department stated the number of cluster buses has shot up from zero in 2010 to 3,240 till July 31, 2021, while the DTC’s strength dipped from 6,342 to 3,760.

Though it may appear to be in the lead at the moment in terms of numbers, the ailing DTC is actually set to lose that race to cluster buses sooner rather than later, perhaps for good.

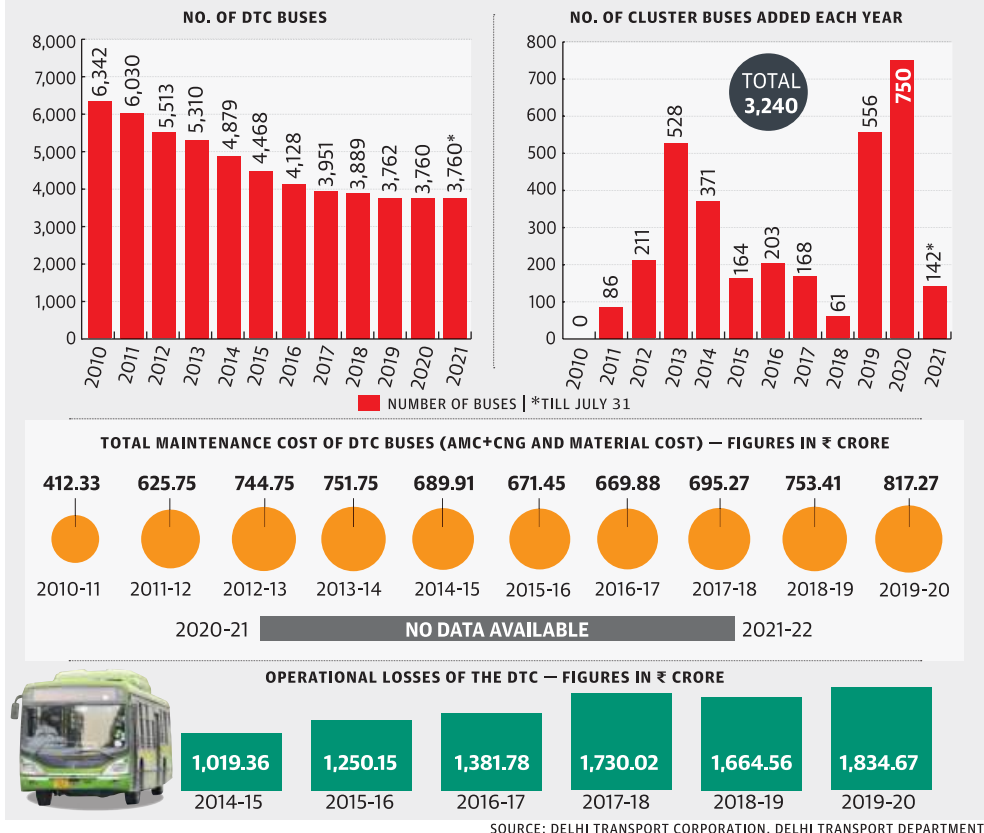
‘Overaged’ DTC

DTC Operational Statistics for August 2019 accessed by *The Hindu* states 3,764 or 99.16% of the DTC’s fleet on August 31, 2019, was “overaged” since it was “more than eight years old”.

They also noted that the average age of the different makes of buses on the fleet ranged from 8.9 to 10 years.

The department, during the monsoon session of the Delhi Assembly, submitted that the DTC’s fleet stood at 3,760 of which only 32 buses were aged between 8 to 12 years while the rest, 3,728, were aged above 10 years, subtly admitting that an

FLEET AT STAKE



overwhelming majority of it was redundant.

In June this year, 1,000 low-floor buses being procured for the DTC for the first time since 2008 were supposed to start rolling out. But the process has been stalled due to allegations of corruption and will now be investigated by the CBI.

The new buses were being procured for ₹875 crore with an additional amount of around ₹3,412 crore pledged towards a 12-year-long annual maintenance contract (AMC). While the Opposition BJP alleged irregularities in the amount for maintenance, the government retorted it had, in fact, saved ₹225 crore on annual maintenance in the process.

According to the RTI response, the DTC provisionally spent a little less than it had committed for the procurement of 1,000 new low-floor buses on the maintenance of its fleet of 3,762 buses in 2019-20: ₹817.27 crore was spent on maintenance, including the cost of CNG, in 2019-20.

City routes

The operational statistics also noted that the number of city

routes being operated by the DTC fell from 556 in 2009-10 to 437 in 2018-19; NCR routes plummeted from 44 to just 8. There had, according to the statistics, also been 11,768 breakdowns of buses of various makes and running on different routes in August 2019.

The Economic Survey of Delhi 2020-21 noted 780 breakdowns per 10,000 buses during 2017-18, 781 in 2018-19 and 880 in 2019-20.

“The DTC’s position is similar to a patient in ICU. We don’t know precisely what medicines to prescribe; all we know is that the patient needs to be revived as soon as possible,” said Professor P.K. Sarkar, road safety expert and member of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS-ISO).

“We need to create a unified transport authority which consists of experts monitoring the city’s transport sector round the clock. Route rationalisation and increasing existing bus fare need to be considered urgently,” Professor Sarkar added.

History on wheels

With its roots in one of the earliest decisions of the first government of independent In-

dia in 1948, the Delhi Transport Service had several transformations over 74 years before being forged into the iconic DTC.

Transporting about 33 lakh passengers over 6.41 lakh km per day on about 448 city and seven NCR routes, the DTC operates 30,562 average trips daily and is considered the largest transport service provider in the National Capital Region (NCR).

It has ventured well beyond the NCR, too. It was aboard a DTC bus belonging to the Sadana-Sarhad or Delhi-Lahore service that then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee travelled to Lahore for an eponymous summit in 1999.

Ten years later, in 2010, DTC buses ferried foreign athletes to and from stadia on exclusive lanes during the Commonwealth Games.

A decade later, DTC buses were transporting migrant workers to safety during the national COVID lockdown in addition to oxygen supplies and medical professionals during successive waves of the COVID-19 infection in 2020.

The transport department is

in the process of engaging 300 electric buses and is scheduled to float another tender for the engagement of 465 more electric buses soon. This will push the fleet of privately owned buses being operated on a PPP model by the government to 4,005 against the DTC’s fleet of 3,760.

The cluster scheme is based on the gross-cost model (OPEX) where fleet owners are remunerated on the basis of operational parameters irrespective of the fare box inflow.

By 2019-20, according to the Economic Survey of Delhi 2020-21, 2,910 cluster buses were ferrying 17.71 lakh passengers on 14 clusters.

As many as 556 of these were registered in 2019; 750, the highest number of cluster buses to be registered in any year since 2010, were added to the fleet in 2020.

Unions of employees – both permanent and contractual – part of the public transporter’s workforce as well as the political opposition allege that the goings on are part of the “subtle privatisation of the DTC”.

“The government wants to kill the DTC so that all its depots and official property located on prime land can be handed over to private players for a profit,” alleged Kailash Chand Malik of the Delhi Parivahan Mazdoor Sangh.

“The daily bus pass, the most popular pass among commuters, can’t be used on cluster buses. Most cluster buses are also non-air conditioned. The DTC, which has been synonymous with Delhi since the beginning, is dying a quiet but painful death,” he added.

Manoj Sharma of the DTC Karamchahi Ekta Union alleged the DTC was “getting a bad name” due to the rash driving of overworked cluster bus drivers.

Rash driving and salary

“Their drivers are private employees who need to toil for 18 to 20 hours a day to cover 150 km so they can earn around ₹25,000 as monthly salary. In the process, they end up driving rashly,” he alleged.

Transport Department

sources said cluster buses were found to be involved in around 20 accidents per year over the last two years.

“DTC buses transported migrant workers, doctors and even oxygen during the COVID pandemic. How many private operators will step forward to provide the service the DTC has and does on a daily basis despite the condition of the fleet?” he said.

However, those associated with the AAP-led Delhi government’s purported bid to revive the sector in the Capital feel otherwise.

“The engagement of buses is the only way forward. Not just the DTC, but most other government departments suffer issues because of the tendering process. Why should the commuters of Delhi suffer because buses cannot be bought for one reason or another,” asked Praveesh Biyani, Associate Professor, Centre for Sustainable Mobility, IIT-D.

Professor Biyani is working with the Delhi government on streamlining the Capital’s transportation sector. “We need reforms in the tendering process. The DTC may be in the condition that it is at the moment, but has good operational capacity otherwise,” he added.

Legacy vs utility

The DTC’s possible demise in the 74th year since its inception, former Delhi Transport Minister Ajay Maken of the Congress pointed out, would snatch the distinction of having the biggest fleet of CNG-propelled public buses in the world since 2008 from Delhi.

Former Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly and Rohini BJP MLA Vijender Gupta, who filed the complaint alleging graft in the AMC component of the 1,000 DTC low-floor buses, questioned the intentions of the government.

“It was during my tenure that the entire fleet of the DTC was made to switch over to CNG; that legacy seems to be at risk,” Mr. Maken said.

“Without adequate bus infrastructure, what can wean commuters to public transport from their preference for personal vehicles,” he asked.

“The fact that the government spent ₹800 crore towards the maintenance of close to 4,000 DTC buses in 2019-20 and was willing to commit almost three times this amount for the AMC of just 1,000 new buses says it all,” Mr. Gupta alleged.

Revival bid

“The committee constituted by Lieutenant-Governor Anil Bajal after my complaint too has directed that the AMC bid for ₹3,412 crore be cancelled and floated afresh. The government failed to revive the DTC, so is now trying to subtly privatise it and use it for corrupt practices till it can,” he added.

Professor Sarkar said though there was no other option than letting private buses operate for the time being, this needed to be allowed under intense scrutiny. For the DTC, there was a need to act decisively and soon.

“Privately owned buses can operate till the DTC gets its own buses but under intense scrutiny. If there is will, expertise and muscle, the DTC can not only be revived but converted into the best public transport service not only in India but the world,” Professor Sarkar added.



The last purchase of new buses in the DTC, the Delhi government said, was undertaken in 2008 and the last bus under that order was inducted in the DTC fleet in October 2011.

“Since then, we’ve been constantly floating tenders but have not been successful. The tenders were floated twice in the year 2013, then in the years 2014, 2018, 2019 and 2020. In spite of this, we have 300 electric buses being inducted in the DTC which will start arriving in the

Last purchase of DTC buses in 2008: govt.

next two months,” said a senior transport department official. Delhi is mandated to go to single-fuel mode, CNG-propelled buses. The Supreme Court has mandated that Delhi induct only fully disabled-friendly low-floor buses as well as only air-conditioned buses. “Buses are to be manufactured against the specific work order for requirement of Delhi. Such specified

buses are not purchased by any other State except Delhi,” the official said, adding that only three vehicle manufacturers were available to fulfil all these mandatory conditions. A Delhi government spokesperson alleged it was the BJP which had derailed the induction of 1,000 buses. “The BJP does not want induction of buses by the DTC,” the spokesperson alleged.

IN BRIEF

Gallantry medal award be made arbitrary: plea in HC

NEW DELHI
A plea was moved in the Delhi HC seeking the current system of awarding gallantry medals to Army personnel be declared arbitrary. PTI

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

Minor girl rape case: HC rejects hotel owner’s bail application

‘He facilitated crime by running hotel without valid licence’

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected anticipatory bail to a man in whose hotel a 16-year-old girl was raped multiple times for four days, noting that he facilitated the crime by running the hotel without a valid licence or maintaining guest list.

Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar observed that the man, who is the owner of the hotel and resides at the same place, cannot say that he was not aware of what was going on in his hotel and he cannot put the entire blame on the staffer of the hotel.

According to the victim, she was kept in the hotel for

about four days where she was repeatedly raped by another man.

No record of guests

“First of all, the hotel was being run by the petitioner without any valid licence and no record of the guests was being maintained and no IDs were being taken,” the judge said, adding “had ID of the victim and the accused would have been taken at the time of the said booking, then the minor girl would have been saved”.

“By running this type of hotel and without keeping a record of the guests staying in the hotel, the petitioner is facilitating in crime and pro-

secutrix is one such victim in this case,” Justice Bhatnagar said.

With the testimony of the victim yet to be recorded and looking into the allegations and the seriousness of the offence, and the role played by the hotel owner, the court said, “no ground for bail is made out. The bail application is therefore dismissed”.

The FIR was registered in Dayalpur police station on March 5, 2021, on the complaint of the victim’s father.

The man pleaded that he is the owner of the hotel and has no role to play in bookings which are being done by the hotel staffers.



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ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

“It is tricky. It is troublesome,” says Geetanjali Mehta, an English teacher at Colonel’s Central Academy School in Sector 4 here, on teaching the students simultaneously in a classroom and online with a gadget on a stand close to the blackboard. Ms. Mehta says that there were “learning gaps” despite online classes when the students returned to school after more than a year, and she noticed that “many of the students had difficulty in communicating in English” but teaching them both online and offline simultaneously was difficult. “Sometimes there are internet issues. The students online get disconnected without being noticed by the teacher. Getting feedback from the online students is also another challenge,” says Ms. Mehta.

Sitting next to her in the staff room, her colleague Shahid Qureshi, a Physics teacher, point outs that the most difficult part of the hybrid mode of teaching was to pay simultaneous attention to both sets of students - those sitting in the classroom and those attending the classes online from the comfort of their homes. “When it is either online or offline, you have one set of students to address to. But with both modes blended together, it is a bigger challenge for the teachers,” says Mr. Qureshi.

Freedom of movement
School’s vice-principal Meena Singh, adds to the discussion, saying that the new mode also “curtails the freedom of the teacher to move around”. “The teacher needs to stand in front of the stand holding the gadget and so cannot move around freely in the classroom. The teacher feels bound by the gadget,” says Ms. Singh. Though the Haryana government has gradually



A teacher taking classes on hybrid mode at Colonel’s Central Academy School in Gurugram. ■ ASHOK KUMAR

Tough lessons for teachers

Teaching students both online and offline at the same time has them at their wit’s end. From wobbly internet to limiting freedom of movement, they are struggling to straddle both worlds

opened schools from Class IV more than a month ago, with the second wave of COVID-19 ebbing, parents’ consent is mandatory for students to attend physical classes and the schools have been directed to continue with both online and offline mode of teaching.

Not feasible
Col. K. Pratap Singh, president of Haryana Progressive Schools’ Conference in Gurugram, says that the hybrid mode of teaching was not “feasible”. “The government may have directed the schools to hold both modes of classes, but it was not implementable. In our school, we have decided to conduct only physical classes for Classes IX-XII and the response is tremendous. The attendance in the classes has gradually crossed the 90%

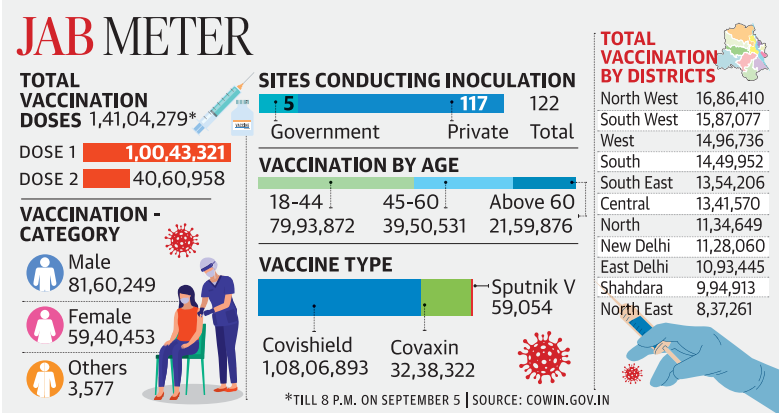
mark. We are not forcing parents to send children for physical classes and don’t mark them absent either. We will hold extra classes for them when they decide to come to school instead of holding simultaneous online classes,” says Col. Singh, also chairperson of the CCA School. The school is also scheduled to hold its term exam from September 10, but only in offline mode. But many schools in the city, such as Heritage Xperiential Learning School, have been successfully running both modes of classes.

Manifold challenges
The non-payment of dues remains another challenge for private schools. Col. Singh says that around 30-40% of parents across various schools in

Gurugram have still not cleared their dues for the past year, “instigated” by the NGOs and activists, and in the false hope of a waive-off. He says that the schools were now within their rights to take action against the parents. He quotes Section 24 of the Haryana Education Act that allows the schools to strike off the names of the students in case the dues are not paid within ten days. “The Haryana government, in its order on June 1 last year, had directed the schools to not strike off the names of the students in case of non-payment of dues but withdrew it a week later. The court orders, too, were to defer the fee and not waive off,” says Col. Singh. For the government schools, however, the challenges are different, in view of

the large strength of the classes and lack of technology at par with their private counterparts. “We have 80-90 students in each section. A majority of the parents have given their consent for physical classes. So, we have divided the students in each section into two parts and called them on alternate days to maintain social distancing. Since we don’t have the technology to hold simultaneous online and offline classes, the teachers go back to their homes to teach the students online. So a teacher ends up repeating the chapter three times. It is quite a task,” says Suman Lata Sharma, principal of Government Model Senior Secondary School, Sector 4. The online classes, says Ms. Sharma, are held mostly by sharing videos on WhatsApp groups created for each subject. She says that live online classes are rare. “We have eight sections for each class from Classes IX-XII, and a separate WhatsApp group has been created for each subject. So, there are 40 WhatsApp groups for each class. I try to monitor that the teachers hold online classes for those students not attending school, but it is not humanly possible to daily supervise so many groups,” says Ms. Sharma.

Capital takes vaccination drive closer home to residents of Loha Mandi; city sees 30 fresh cases



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
To ensure that a maximum number of people benefit from the vaccination drive, the Delhi government on Sunday launched a programme – vaccination on wheels – to reach out to the workers living in the city’s Loha Mandi area.

AAP MLA Raghav Chadha said under this drive, even the last person standing in the queue will get the vaccine. “Due to the unavailability of smartphones, people were not able to get appointments and reach their nearest vaccination centres. To get rid of this problem, the Kejriwal government has arranged this special van,” he said. The AAP MLA said since Friday, party workers have been going door-to-door in Loha Mandi, encouraging people to get vaccinated via the programme. The government said beneficiaries will be able to walk in, register themselves on the spot and wait in the van itself under the supervision of doctors while they get vaccinated. Mr. Chadha said he started the initiative in his constituency after he noticed that some labourers were hes-

itant about getting vaccinated and many were not able to get appointments to their nearest schools due to lack of smartphones, while others were not getting leave. “Keeping these problems in mind, the New Delhi district administration of Kejriwal government arranged this special van in our area. Vaccination has now reached people’s homes, our workers are running awareness campaigns and appealing to the people to come out of their homes and get vaccinated. This campaign is being received well and the people are also participating enthusiastically,” Mr. Chadha said. According to Sunday’s health bulletin, 1,68,351 beneficiaries were vaccinated in 24 hours, of which 1,02,835 received their first dose. A total of 1,40,79,991 beneficiaries have been vaccinated so far. The bulletin added that 30 new COVID-19 cases had been recorded with a positivity rate of 0.05%. The total number of tests conducted was 65,365. There were no deaths recorded in the city for the fifth consecutive day. There are 351 active cases in the city with 91 under home isolation.

22 held under Arms Act in August

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI
Three districts of Delhi Police have registered 30 cases under the Arms Act and arrested 22 people in August, according to official data.

In the outer district, seven cases were registered under the Arms Act and eight people have been arrested. The district police has recovered seven countrymade pistols, six improvised pistols and 33 cartridges, according to the data. The north district police registered eight cases under the Arms Act and arrested 14 people. Seven countrymade pistols, 10 cartridges and six knives were recovered. The southwest district police has lodged 15 cases under the Arms Act.

Timings DELHI

MONDAY, SEP. 06		
RISE	06:02	SET 18:37
RISE	05:01	SET 18:33
TUESDAY, SEP. 07		
RISE	06:03	SET 18:36
RISE	06:04	SET 19:08
WEDNESDAY, SEP. 08		
RISE	06:03	SET 18:35
RISE	07:06	SET 19:43

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	34	26
Safdarjang	34	26
Palam	34	26

Delhi Palam Today
35°C Warm and humid day would prevail with cloudy sky. Light rain and thunderstorm may occur at some areas.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
33°C Light to moderate rain and thunderstorm would occur with cloudy sky at some places. Day would remain slightly humid.

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THE HINDU
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‘Will fund teachers selected for courses from top 100 varsities’

Education department will issue necessary guidelines in a few days, says Sisodia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

On the occasion of Teachers’ Day, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced that the government will fully fund the teachers who get selected to pursue prestigious courses in the field of education from the top 100 universities in the world.

Mr. Sisodia made the announcement at an award function in which 122 teachers were honoured with the State Teachers’ Award.

“In the last five years, we have sent our teachers and principals



Sisodia at an award function in which 122 teachers were honoured with the State Teachers’ Award on Sunday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

to Cambridge, Finland, Singapore and the U.S. We believe that if our teachers apply for such

courses, they can get selected on the basis of their abilities. If they are selected, then the govern-

ment will bear the full cost of their programme. In the next few days, the Department of Education [DoE] will issue necessary guidelines for this,” Mr. Sisodia said.

The Minister added that the changes that have come in the education system of Delhi are a result of the collective efforts of Team Education of Delhi. DoE Director Udit Prakash Rai said during the pandemic, teachers not only made sure that education doesn’t stop but also played a big role in fighting against the COVID crisis.

DUTA holds stir against NEP 2020 at Mandi House

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Delhi University Teachers’ Association (DUTA) on Sunday protested against the National Education Policy 2020 at Mandi House. They said the policy was an attempt to dilute and dismantle public funded education in the country.

The teachers said NEP 2020 is an attack on the autonomy of institutions and teachers and that governance will be handed over to private bodies, which will have the power to decide all aspects of courses, and number of teachers.

The DUTA said on Teachers’ Day, it was taking to the streets, to reiterate its de-

mands that would be the real tribute any government could pay to teachers. They sought one-time regulation for the absorption for ad-hoc and temporary teachers, UGC takeover of the 12 DU colleges that are 100% maintained by Delhi government, death gratuity under the NPS scheme and promotion scheme for instructors and notification of the UGC Anomaly Committee Report.

“It is unfortunate that the government only pays lip service to the plight of teachers who work selflessly in precarious conditions while knowing that such major restructuring as envisaged in the NEP 2020 will lead to job cuts,” DUTA said.

Development of Hotel at Porbandar

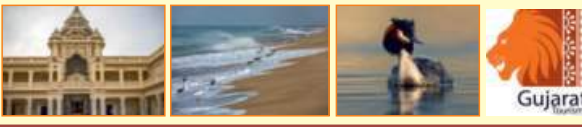
Components : Hotel with facilities equivalent to a 4 (four) star or above category, Restaurants and support infrastructure.

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- Long-Term Concession Period

RFP Document can be downloaded from <https://www.nprocure.com> & <https://www.gujarattourism.com>, **06/09/2021 onwards.**

The Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **20/09/2021**. For any further details, interested Bidders may contact **Mr. M. S. Joshi** at msjoshi@gujarattourism.com.



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ADMISSION NOTICE FOR THE ACADEMIC SESSION 2021-22

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi (AUD), a State University established by the Government of NCT of Delhi invites applications from eligible candidates seeking admission to various Undergraduate & Postgraduate programmes under different Schools of Studies in Kashmir Gate campus, Lodhi Road campus and Karampura campus as detailed below for the Academic year 2021-22:-

S.No.	Undergraduate Programmes	S.No.	Postgraduate Programmes	S.No.	New Programmes
1	B.A. (Honours) Economics	17	M.A.* (Development Studies)	1	B.A. (Honours) Hindi
2	B.A. (Honours) English	18	M.A.* (Economics)	2	M.A.* (Archaeology and Heritage Management)
3	B.A. (Honours) History	19	M.A.* (Environment & Development)	3	M.A.* (Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management)
4	B.A. (Honours) Mathematics	20	M.A.* (English)	4	M.A.* (Public Health)
5	B.A. (Honours) Psychology	21	M.A.* (Gender Studies)	5	M.Voc.* (Tourism & Hospitality Management)
6	B.A. (Honours) Sociology	22	M.A.* (History)		
7	B.A. (Honours) Social Sciences and Humanities	23	M.A.* (Psychology)		
8	B.A. Global Studies	24	M.A.* (Sociology)		
9	B.A. Sustainable Urbanism	25	M.A.* (Film Studies)		
10	B.A. Law & Politics	26	M.A.* (Literary Art)		
11	B.A. Social Sciences & Humanities (SSH)	27	M.A.* (Visual Art)		
12	BBA	28	M.A.* (Performance Studies)		
S.No. B.Voc. (Multiple Exit Options)		29	M.A.* (Law, Politics and Society)		
13	B.Voc. Accounting and Finance (A&F)	30	M.A.* (Global Studies)		
14	B.Voc. Early Childhood Centre Management and Entrepreneurship (ECCME)	31	M.A.* (Urban Studies)		
15	B.Voc. Retail Management (RM)	32	M.A.* (Education)		
16	B.Voc. Tourism and Hospitality (T&H)	33	M.A.* (Education) (Early Childhood Care & Education)		
		34	M.Des.* Specialization in Social Design		
		35	MBA#		
		36	MBA* (Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Venture Development)		
		37	M.A.* (Hindi)		

How to apply: Only online applications are accepted through website of AUD, www.aud.ac.in. For details about eligibility conditions for admission, fee etc., please refer to the Admission Brochure 2021-22 available on the website.

Last date for online registrations for B.A./B.Voc./BBA/M.A./M.Voc./MBA is 10.09.2021.

*PG Registration is active w.e.f. 06.08.2021. *For Foreign Students and PG entrance, the dates will be notified later on University website.

#Those who have already applied, need not apply again.

Details are available on University website www.aud.ac.in.

Dated: 27.08.2021

Registrar

‘Application delivered to DoPT in time’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAINITAL
Senior Indian Forest Service officer Sanjiv Chaturvedi's application for the post of SSC member was delivered in time to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) in Delhi, says an affidavit filed by the postal department in the Uttarakhand High Court here.

The affidavit files in the face of a claim made by the DoPT in the court that his application was received after the due date.

The postal department's affidavit has been filed in response to notices issued in February by the court on a plea filed by Mr. Chaturvedi claiming irregularities in the selection process for the post of member in the Staff Selection Commission.

BJP alleges corruption by Patnaik govt. in deal for CCTV cameras

Party levels graft charges worth ₹60 crore

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR
The Odisha unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday accused the Naveen Patnaik Government of indulging in corruption in the installation of closed-circuit television cameras in all police stations across the State.

“The State government through the Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) has given a purchase order for the installation of CCTV cameras at all 593 police stations to Mumbai-based vendor Crystal Integrated Services Limited. The government would pay ₹104.96 crore for the pro-



CM Naveen Patnaik

ject,” said Thakur Ranjit Das, BJP leader, while addressing a press conference here.

Mr. Das said the price quoted for installation of eight bullet cameras and 12 dome cameras to keep a tab on the activities in each police station was ₹15.57 lakh.

“If one purchases cameras of similar specifications from open market and pay for installation and maintenance, not more than ₹6 lakh would be required for

one police station. Going by the price, the government would have spent ₹38.58 crore. However, the Mumbai-based vendor would be paid ₹94.415 crore. A central monitoring system would be set up at an estimated cost of ₹10.21 crore. For obvious reasons, the government is spending additional ₹60 crore,” he alleged.

‘Cancel contract’
The overpriced installation and maintenance of CCTVs in police stations indicated BJD leaders and officials would stand to get pecuniary benefits out of the deal, Mr. Das charged. The BJP demanded that the contract be cancelled and officials involved in finalising the tender document be held accountable.

Details of counterterrorism course should be made public, says JNUSU

It does not meet the basic standard of academic rigour, say students

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union on Sunday demanded to roll back a course titled 'counterterrorism, asymmetric conflicts and strategies for cooperation among major powers' to be taught to engineering students at the university pursuing a dual degree programme with specialisation in international relations.

The students alleged that the course did not meet the basic standard of academic rigour and demanded that the course details be made public and be subjected to scrutiny by all relevant stakeholders, including sub-

ject experts. The students' body said that it rejects the introduction of such courses that reek of the "Islamophobic agenda of the administration" and demanded that the course be rolled back.

Myopic understanding
The students in a statement said "two of the modules under this course are potential inciters of Islamophobia and present a myopic understanding of countering terrorism. The modules of 'Fundamentalist-Religious Terrorism and its Impact' and 'State-sponsored Terrorism: It's Influence and Impact' reveal

attempts of misusing the university space to escalate propaganda-based misrepresentation of facts to satisfy the communal and anti-Communist propaganda of the current regime with a total disregard to basic principles of scientific pedagogy".

JNU Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadeesh Kumar had said that the objective of the course is to give students an in-depth understanding of the challenges emanating from terrorism to India's national security and how India can get equipped with the adequate responses in the case of any eventuality.

"It is imperative that an

academic institution like JNU takes the lead and builds a good set of counterterrorism specialists. India urgently needs a critical mass of such specialists in this field," Mr. Kumar said.

‘Curriculum holistic’
The university said that the curriculum has been designed keeping in mind the terrorist activities at the global level and India's experiences in handling them.

It added that the curriculum is holistic and also contains sections on the role of intelligence information and the counterterrorism cooperation among major powers.

Opium seized from Imphal hotel, two arrested

IBOYAIMA LAITHANGBAM
IMPHAL
Acting on a tip-off, the Manipur police raided a hotel in Imphal on September 2 and arrested two persons. They seized one kg of opium from them.

The arrested were identified as M. Katrik (27) of Chennai and A. Banik of Moreh in Manipur. Police suspect they were involved in other incidents too.

In another development, a combined team of Manipur police and troops of 38 Assam Rifles raided some areas at Kangchup Maku village in Kangpokpi district on Saturday.

Militant held
The team arrested Thongkhohao Doungel, a cadre of the Kukli National Front (PN). One 9 mm pistol and one magazine with three live rounds

were recovered from him.

Meanwhile, Jogeshchandra Haobijam, Superintendent of Police, Thoubal district, said that acting on reliable information, they beefed up vigilance in the Lil-long area of the district. On suspicion, they intercepted a person on Saturday in the Lil-long Turel Ahanbi area and seized 22 packets of heroin from him.

The man, Mohammad Mu-

jibur (42), disclosed that two tribal women had given him the packets. The value of the contraband is said to be over ₹8 crore in the international market

Two tribal women, D. Haokip (25) and M. Tuiboy (37), both of Moreh, the border town of Manipur, were arrested. The women, who tried to escape in a jeep, had supplied the heroin to Mujibur.

Man strangles wife to death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HOSHARPUR (PUNJAB)
A 23-year-old woman was strangled to death allegedly by her husband here on Sunday, police said. Accused Neeraj (27) informed his brother-in-law over the phone that he killed her and dumped the body near a canal, police said. The accused is absconding.

Police cannot be given the licence to meddle with civil disputes: court

It orders registration of FIR against Station House Officer, S-I

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM
A local court here has ordered the registration of an First Information Report (FIR) against the Station House Officer of Bhondsi Police Station and a Sub-Inspector for "interfering in the civil dispute" and disobeying the directions of law as contained in Section 155(2) of Criminal Procedure Code.

The court, hearing a bail application, observed that "it is not the job of (the) police to meddle with civil disputes and police officials cannot be given (the) licence to meddle with the civil disputes".

Jasbir Singh, Additional Sessions Judge, Gurugram, in his order earlier this month, also directed that "to serve the ends of justice" the applicants would be given at least

10 days' notice prior to their arrest in case any FIR was registered on the basis of the complaint.

The matter pertained to a complaint to the police in connection with a dispute between Raj Dhankar and Rajbir, the applicant, over the sale of a plot measuring around 1,500 sq yards in Bhondsi. As per the complaint to the police, Raj bought the plot from Rajbir through an agreement to sell on February 27, 2018, and paid him ₹17.5 lakh through cheque and ₹3 lakh through RTGS. But the sale deed could not be executed, and Raj filed a civil suit at Sohna court seeking possession.

The complainant twice approached the police for probe on August 2 and 4 last year, but the police dropped

proceedings saying that the matter was civil in nature and the civil suit was pending in the Sohna court.

However, the complainant again approached the police for the third time this year and a notice was served to the applicant on August 25 asking him to appear before the police and furnish certain information.

‘No power to decide’
The court, in its order, observed that it was a settled proposition of law that police had got no power to decide about the possession of a party on any piece of land, but the act of police in the present case, prima facie, revealed that "the enquiry officer is bent upon to give his findings regarding possession over the suit property".

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The Public at large is hereby informed that Late Mrs. Venu Vashisht Sehgal W/o Anurag Sehgal r/o B-16/27 Paschim Marg, DIF Phase 1, Gurgaon:- 122002 was having commercial property in joint ownership along with her Spouse: Shri Anurag Sehgal in our project Vatika Mindscapes, Unit Number 520A and measuring 750 sq.ft which her legal heirs Anurag Sehgal and Vrinda Sehgal requested the company to be transfer to her spouse Mr. Anurag Sehgal. Any person having any objection on this please may contact the company officer details as under within 15 days after which No Claim would be accepted.
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Contact : 09555930930

PUBLIC NOTICE

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The Public at large is hereby informed that Late Mrs. Venu Vashisht Sehgal W/o Anurag Sehgal r/o B-16/27 Paschim Marg, DIF Phase 1, Gurgaon:- 122002 was having commercial property in joint ownership along with her Spouse: Shri Anurag Sehgal in our project Vatika Mindscapes, Unit Number 521 and measuring 1000 sq.ft which her legal heirs Anurag Sehgal and Vrinda Sehgal requested the company to be transfer to her spouse Mr. Anurag Sehgal. Any person having any objection on this please may contact the company officer details as under within 15 days after which No Claim would be accepted.
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If you fail to repay the Bank the below mentioned amount with further interest and incidental expenses, costs, etc., in terms of this notice u/s 13(2) of the Act, the Bank will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under sub-section (4) of section 13 and under other applicable provisions of the said Act.
You are also put on notice that in terms of sub-section 13 of section 13 you shall not after publication/receipt of this notice transfer by sale, lease or otherwise other than in the ordinary course of business, the said secured assets detailed below of this notice without obtaining written consent of the Bank.
Your attention is hereby drawn invited to provisions of sub-section(8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to you to redeem the secure assets. This notice is issued without prejudice to the bank's rights in the suit/litigation pending before DRT/Court.
The details of the accounts and secured assets along with amount outstanding with interest and other charges and expenses thereon are given below.

Name of Account & Branch	Name of the owner & Description of the property mortgaged	Amount outstanding
M/S Aayesha Electricals (Prop:- Madhumita Mazumdar) A/c No.: 0599210031903 Date of Demand Notice : 31.03.2021 Date of NPA : 24.08.2021 Borrower: Smt. Madhumita Mazumdar, W/o Shri Asis Mazumdar, R/o - 10, Montessori School lane Boring Road, Patna - 800 001. Branch: S. K. Puri UBI (059920)	Detail of Property: EM of Residential Flat vide Deed No 2494 Dtd 26-02-2009 situated at Flat No 302 on the 3rd floor of the Residential Building known as "PAWAN-PRADEEP ENCLAVE" at west Boring Canal Road known as 'Khetan Lane' Mouza - Dhakanpur, P.S - Sri Krishnapuri, Survey Thana - Phulwar, Paragana - Azimabad: town and district - Patna within the limit of Patna Municipal Corporation, bearing Tauzi No 228, Khata No 530, 531 and 517, Plot No 57 and 58 and part of Plot No 64, Ward No 15, Thana No 3, Total area 1334 sq feet along with undivided proportionate share in the Land and Common assets and Common area in the name of Smt. Madhumita Mazumdar. BOUNDARY OF FLAT NO 302	Rs. 27,76,782.00 with further interest w.e.f. 31.03.2021

Date : 04.09.2021
Place : Patna
(Authorised Officer)
Punjab National Bank

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SHIFTING, DIVERSION AND MODIFICATION OF 11 KV OH LINE AND 11 KV TRACK CROSSING BY UG CABLE
E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/CON/SC/L/03/2021, Dated : 01.09.2021; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work:- Tender No. : ELC-SCL-9-2021-MSSN-BDESH; Name of Work : Shifting, diversion and modification of 11 KV OH line and 11 KV track crossing by UG cable to clear electrical infringement, upgradation of 11/0.433 KV sub-station and illumination of International Border line, provision of pump sets in connection with Mahishashan-Bangladesh International BG line project. Tender Value : ₹ 2,85,44,713.00; Date & Time of Submission of Tender at 14:30 hrs. on 01.10.2021; Date & Time of Opening of Tender at 15:30 hrs. on 01.10.2021. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available upto 14:30 hrs. of 01.10.2021 for respective tender in website http://www.irops.gov.in and will also be available in N.F. Railway/Construction website in www.nfrfyoconstruction.org.
Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Con/ Silchar
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY (Construction Organisation) SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Central team visits house of Nipah victim in Kozhikode

Family questioned, counselled in effort to trace source of infection

STAFF REPORTER
KOZHIKODE

Efforts are on to trace the source of the latest Nipah virus infection in Kozhikode district of Kerala after a 12-year-old boy died of the infection at a private hospital on Sunday morning.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the zoonotic illness is “transmitted to people from animals, and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly from person-to-person.” In infected people, it causes a range of illnesses from asymptomatic infection to acute respiratory illness and fatal encephalitis, WHO says.

A team from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) visited the neighbourhood of the boy’s house



Taking stock: Central officials interacting with neighbours of the 12-year-old who died of Nipah in Kozhikode. ■ K. RAGESH

in Pazhoor, near Chathamangalam, in the district. The members were P. Ravindran, former Deputy Director General, disaster management cell, Union Ministry for Health and Family Welfare; K. Reghu, Additional Director, NCDC; and Ruchi Jain, public health specialist. They were accompanied by officials from the State

Health Department. They also interacted with the boy’s parents and relatives.

Members of the team inspected samples of a rambutan fruit from the premises after the boy’s relatives informed them that he had eaten the fruit. More samples would be examined to see if they had been bitten by fruit bats, considered to be the

natural reservoirs of the Nipah virus. All of them have been asked to be on high alert and inform the Health Department if anyone is found with symptoms that the boy had. The team also spoke to them about the protocol to be followed at home.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Veena George said after a meeting that all the deaths in the immediate family and surroundings of the deceased would be checked.

A team of the Animal Husbandry Department would inspect the area. Restrictions have been imposed within a 3 km-radius of his house.

Contact tracing would be intensified for another week, until the incubation period of the infection gets over, the Minister added.

Delays due to rain claim life of 11-year-old

Swollen stream cuts off contact

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

A swollen stream which cuts off contact with the outside world for a small hamlet in Tandur mandal of Vikarabad district of Telangana cost the life of a 11-year-old girl suffering from fever as her treatment was delayed by several hours.

With no other road link to the habitation, the girl’s father, Harijan Balappa, and his wife Amrutamma, carried Harika on their shoulders, by turns walking 3 km over a railway track to reach a motorable road, where they hired an autorickshaw to the government hospital at Tandur on Friday.

The doctors at the hospital advised Ms. Amrutamma, who was left alone after her husband had returned for work, to rush the girl to the government-owned Niloufer Children’s Hospital in

Hyderabad.

Mr. Balappa told *The Hindu* that Ms. Amrutamma, with the help of her brothers at Tandur, pooled money to hire an ambulance, but to their shock, the Tandur-Hyderabad highway was breached at two places en route.

The driver took the vehicle through another route, longer by 15 km, via Parigi, to reach Hyderabad late in the night.

It was too late by the time the doctors at Niloufer Hospital commenced treatment on Harika as she developed complications and breathed her last around 2 a.m. on Saturday.

Village sarpanch Devvari Narendar Reddy said the gram panchayat had requested the government to sanction a bridge across the stream but it had not materialised so far.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over south Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Goa, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and coastal Karnataka and heavy rainfall at isolated places over Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	34.7	26	Kozhikode	20	27.6	24.5
Ahmedabad	—	32.9	25.7	Kurnool	4	32.5	24.2
Aizawl	4	30.2	21.6	Lucknow	—	35.6	26.6
Allahabad	—	36	26.5	Madurai	15	34.2	24.5
Bengaluru	1	27.2	20.2	Mangaluru	14.3	27.8	23.4
Bhopal	6	28.7	23.6	Mumbai	—	30	24.5
Bhubaneswar	6.8	33.4	24.2	Mysuru	—	29.4	21.3
Chandigarh	1	35.2	26.5	New Delhi	—	33.4	24.7
Chennai	—	33.7	25	Patna	—	35.2	27.2
Coimbatore	—	31.7	22.6	Port Blair	—	29.4	23.8
Dehradun	27	32.8	22.6	Puducherry	0.6	34.6	23.2
Gangtok	—	24.6	18	Pune	25.8	27.6	21.9
Goa	23	29.6	24	Raipur	—	4.2	33
Guwahati	—	36.5	26.5	Ranchi	0.8	31.9	23.9
Hubballi	—	—	—	Shillong	25	25.1	16.5
Hyderabad	6	28	21.4	Shimla	—	23	16.2
Imphal	—	30.1	22.2	Srinagar	—	32.7	15.6
Jaipur	—	32.1	25.5	Thiruvananthapuram	0.8	30.7	23.2
Kochi	20	27.6	24.2	Tiruchi	—	34.9	24.6
Kohima	5	26	16.6	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kolkata	0.5	35.1	27.2	Visakhapatnam	0.4	33.8	25.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing						Yesterday
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	6	122	30	36	38	—
Bengaluru	11	—	67	27	43	—
Chennai	3	26	67	25	51	—
Delhi	8	69	89	113	198	—
Hyderabad	4	76	19	14	22	—
Kolkata	13	25	16	60	74	—
Lucknow	8	23	98	33	42	—
Mumbai	15	10	—	70	103	—
Pune	120	192	109	—	67	—
Visakhapatnam	22	36	33	40	63	—

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Most teachers in Kerala want ‘Sir’ and ‘Madam’ to continue

Demand to scrap salutations criticised by peers

STAFF REPORTER
PALAKKAD

The recent demand raised by a college teacher to rid campuses of “the British relics like Sir and Madam,” has triggered an animated discussion in the teacher community about the usage that has been in practice for ages.

Pradeesh K., assistant professor at the Commerce Department, Government College, Chittur, raised the demand soon after the Mathur grama panchayat in Kerala’s Palakkad district took a historic decision to ban such salutations.

Mr. Pradeesh’s demand has invited sharp criticism in teacher groups. Some even went on to describe the demand as a means for cheap publicity.

Rajani Ramachandran, an English teacher from Bharat Mata College here, said that there was nothing wrong in addressing a teacher as ‘Sir’ or ‘Madam’.

“Every job, like every person, has its respect and dignity. A ‘guru’ is respected and revered in our culture,” said Ms. Ramachandran.

When students start calling their teachers as “bro” or

“*aliya*”, that will be the beginning of our culture’s decadence, pointed out another teacher, refusing to go on record.

According to Muralaeddhar V., former principal of the Government Victoria College, Palakkad, posts and positions have their inherent values. “What is respected is not the person but the post. No words can replace terms such as ‘guru’, ‘teacher’, ‘Sir’ or ‘Madam’,” he said.

Mr. Muralaeddhar said that diluting respect to create a feeling of endearment would be wrong.

Karnataka allows Ganesha festival, while A.P. slaps a ban

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Sunday relaxed curbs on public celebration of Ganesha Chaturthi festival and allowed placing of one Ganesha idol in one ward in the limits of the city corporations, including Bengaluru, and restricted the number of people to 20 at a time.

In the wake of COVID-19, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday chaired a meeting with Cabinet colleagues and experts and permitted public celebrations of the festival only for five days. Over a dozen restrictions were imposed on public celebrations of the festival.



An artist giving finishing touches to a Ganesha idol in Karnataka’s Udupi district.

According to the guidelines, organisers have to obtain permission from the local authorities for placing idols in public places. Organisers or committee members

have to produce COVID-19 negative reports and vaccination certificates.

BJP stages protest

In Andhra Pradesh, the BJP opposed the restrictions imposed by the State government on the celebration of Vinayaka Chavithi at public places.

State BJP president Somu Veerraju and general secretary S. Vishnuvardhan Reddy were arrested at the District Collector’s bungalow in Kurnool when party leaders tried to picket opposing the ban on Ganesh puja in public places.

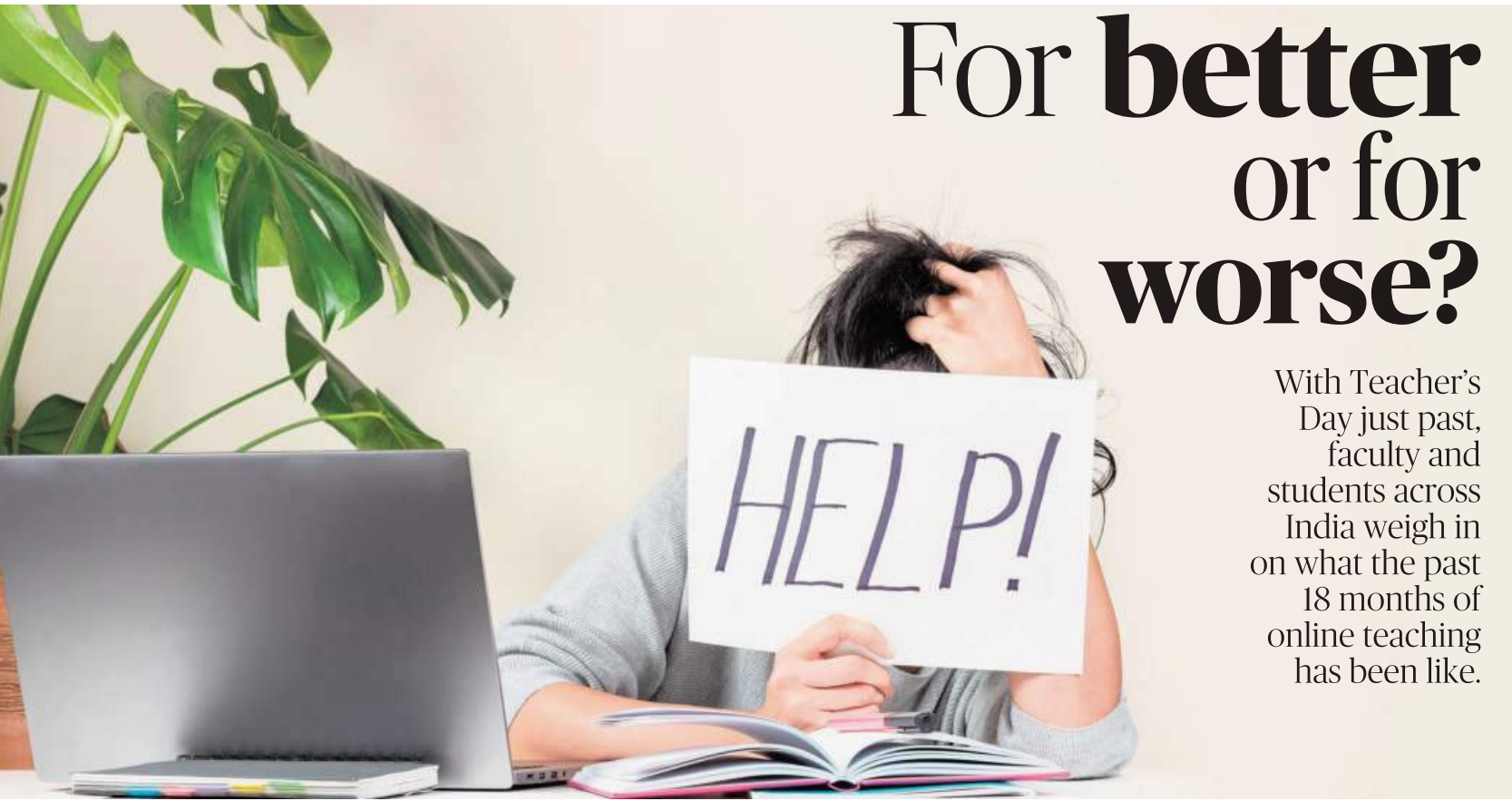
(With inputs from Kurnool)

THE HINDU

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■ VINEY KIRPAL

Twenty years ago, online teaching would have been impossible. Had a pandemic occurred, it would have crippled the educational system.

Today, we have extensive broadband access, IT-enabled tools such as Zoom, Google Meet, Slido, Moodle, and the ubiquitous smartphone and that has made a difference.

In 2020, when the government announced the replacement of brick-and-mortar classes with virtual lookalikes, we hastily assumed that the future

probably lay in online education that promised inclusivity. But reviewing the scene in the U.S., Michael Horn, author of *Choosing College* (2019, Jossey-Bass), says he doubts whether the students and their parents who have experienced hastily constructed online courses “will look back fondly on those on-line experiences”.

Like in every country, in India too, teachers are exhausted, as most had to fall back on limited, often personal, resources and no uniform plan for curriculum delivery.

It’s not been easy for the students either. With different courses being taught for the duration of one hour or 45 minutes, they have been expected

What is also apparent is the lack of recognition of the burden on faculty and students in what was a personally stressful time...

to listen to lectures through the day.

Unrealistic demands

What is also apparent is the lack of recognition of the burden on faculty and students in what was a personally stressful time, with COVID-19 having entered many households. Often unrealistic demands were made on the faculty to attend lengthy meetings, spilling over to holidays and after office. Teachers were asked to complete NAAC forms

at the cost of classes, which were considered their responsibility to complete whenever they could.

Dr. Deb Pathak, a professor of sociology from Delhi, describes the experience as “stagnating” because of the rigidity of the authorities, who insisted that a final examination carrying 60% weightage had to be held. If the teacher wanted to evaluate her/his students through continuous, creative assignments, the scope did not exist.

The same inflexibility was seen in the insistence on passing medical students based on theory courses. Dr. Smitha (name changed), a senior medical surgeon who teaches at a hospital in Hyderabad, is distressed that

students had no exposure to clinical practice of examining live patients or learning how to talk to them. “The university could have extended the courses by a year and offered clinical experience,” she says. “We could see students using textbooks to cheat.”

Full courses have not been taught in colleges. There was no time and no one to take the call on extending the term. Gayatri, an underprivileged student studying computer science engineering in Maharashtra, said, “The university asked colleges to complete the full semester’s course in six weeks. We were given some online classes and assigned courses from Coursera to study along with links to You-

Tube videos to observe practicals.” Since students recognised their teacher only by the voice, “no one asks questions.”

Dr. Shanti Bhattacharya, professor of electrical engineering at IIT-Madras, felt it was stressful to set exams to prevent cheating. She used sequential flow in Moodle so that questions came at different times for each student. Other teachers used MCQs, pop-up quizzes, gave students creative assignments that could not be copy-pasted, and held debates. Yet there were complaints of cheating.

Online teaching has stressed teachers also because they couldn’t see their students or get non-verbal feedback, say Dr. Anjali Roy, professor of English at IIT-Kharagpur and Dr. Yogesh Sneh, professor of history at Amity University, Delhi. Only Dr. Ashwin Mahalingam, who teaches civil engineering at IIT-Madras, felt it was teaching as usual, though he had to drop a lab course the previous semester.

While faculty in colleges with good resources and used IT-enabled tools regularly could focus on teaching, the number of students increased as their courses were opened up. The rest jugged between technology and the syllabus, and the latter suffered.

Online classes have left faculty dispirited. Dr. Martha (name changed), a professor of financial management in Mumbai, says, “Preparation time for every class has increased manifold.” Students have cut corners to pass, and administrations have neither appreciated faculty nor devised plans to ensure quality teaching/learning in the coming year.

Viney Kirpal is former Professor of English at IIT Bombay. ceogit@gmail.com

SCHOLARSHIPS

■ Zoological Survey of India NRC Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)

This is a research opportunity for the project “Microstructure, Individual and Subspecies Variations of the Song in Indian Robin *Copsychus Fulicata* (Family: *Muscicapidae*)”.

ELIGIBILITY: Candidates who are 28 years old on the date of the interview and have a first-class M.Sc. degree in Life Sciences/Zoology/Forestry/Omithology or equivalent. Background of ‘Animal Behaviour and/or Avian Biology’ is preferred. Valid CSIR/UGC-NET score.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: ₹31,000 p.m. plus HRA

APPLICATION: Online and post

DEADLINE: September 08

b4s.in/edge/SNR5

■ Vinati Organics Young Women Merit Scholarship

As a part of the ‘HERS’ (Health, Education, REVIVE, Skilling) initiative, Vinati Organics Ltd., in collaboration with Samhita and Collective Good Foundation, is inviting scholarship applications to help meritorious young girls from disadvantaged sections.

ELIGIBILITY: Girl students from Raigad and other districts of Maharashtra only, currently enrolled in class 12 (2021-22). They must have scored 65% or more in their class 10 or 11 examinations. Annual family income from should not be more than ₹3,60,000.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: ₹10,000 for class 12

APPLICATION: Online

DEADLINE: September 15

b4s.in/edge/VOMS1

■ Vivo for Education Scholarship

Vivo India aims to help meritorious students from society’s financially weaker sections. **ELIGIBILITY:** Residents of Telangana and Maharashtra, studying in class 10 and 12; must have scored more than 80% in their class 9 or 11 in 2020-21. Annual family income must not be more than ₹4 lakhs.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: One-time award of ₹10,000

APPLICATION: Online

DEADLINE: September 15

b4s.in/edge/VESI

Courtesy: buddy4study.com



Life after death

India must seize the opportunity to start a political dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue

Syed Ali Shah Geelani was more an Islamist than a Kashmiri nationalist, and his demise at the age of 92 brings down the curtain on a phase of separatist politics in the Valley. He represented a strident pro-Pakistan stream of Kashmiri separatism. Geelani inspired armed rebellion and remained a steadfast barrier for any potential political dialogue between New Delhi and Kashmir separatists. He opposed a settlement of the Kashmir question that the former dictator of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, had helped formulate. Geelani's recalcitrance only hardened with age, but his death did not stir any public outpouring of Kashmir grievance even when heavy policing and communication restrictions in the Valley are accounted for. But there can be no denial of the fact that people have grown wary of the relentless cycle of conflict. Geelani's brand of politics was losing mass support even before the Indian crackdown on separatists acquired a new aggressive edge after the Pulwama suicide attack in February 2019. The Narendra Modi government abandoned negotiations in Kashmir, not only with separatists but even with mainstream political parties, save a half-hearted initiative in June this year. After the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of its autonomy and reorganised into two Union Territories in August 2019, the decline of separatists including Geelani was evident.

The volatile situation in Afghanistan, and Pakistan's euphoria about the return to power of the Taliban in Kabul will have an impact on the situation in Kashmir. The Taliban have said they would 'raise voice for Kashmir Muslims' and Pakistan has always maintained that peace in Afghanistan is connected to a resolution in Kashmir. Global Islamists are exulting over the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan. With Pakistan emerging as a key influencer in Kabul, the U.S. will have to seek new terms of engagement with it. New Delhi has been in self-congratulatory mode over Kashmir. Far from secession, even autonomy questions have been rendered irrelevant in conversations on Kashmir, which now revolve around restoration of its full statehood. However, the relative calm and silence in the Valley should not be mistaken for acquiescence. Political parties have expressed frustration over the fact that the June dialogue between them and Mr. Modi was aimless and not followed through. The political dialogue with mainstream parties must be carried ahead in full earnest. The chaos in Afghanistan presents challenges for India, especially in Kashmir, which need wider deliberations with the international community. But Geelani's death could be an opportunity to set the stage for new conversations with various Kashmiri outfits. The Government must use this moment to initiate a comprehensive dialogue to find a way forward for a future of the people of Kashmir as an integral part of India.

True mettle

India needs to develop infrastructure and improve access for differently-abled athletes

India saw another fortnight of good tidings in sports from Tokyo. Close on the heels of the recent Olympics there, in which India claimed an overall tally of seven medals inclusive of a lone gold, the country's differently-abled athletes extended this tale of excellence into the Paralympic Games. The quadrennial event, which concluded at the Japanese capital on Sunday, witnessed an exemplary show by these athletes representing 2.2% of India's population, who are differently-abled. India finished 24th in the table with 19 medals that featured five golds, eight silvers and six bronzes. This was India's finest outing at the Paralympics and eclipsed the previous best of four medals at the Rio de Janeiro edition in 2016. In a nation where sporting culture is sacrificed at the altar of academic excellence, any news about success on the turf has to be treated as a system-altering result. The challenges for the differently-abled are tougher, considering the body's limitations that these athletes first cope with through sheer willpower, and then there is the secondary task of overcoming society's innate scepticism. A simple access-audit of India's urban buildings would reveal how even a ramp essential for the differently-abled is either missing or added as an after-thought. In 2016, an audit initiated by government agencies did not find a single building that was completely accessible to the differently-abled.

Seen in that context, what India's paralympic contingent achieved is mind-boggling. This was a leap of faith mounted on endless hours at grounds and inside gymnasiums while sharpening muscle-memory. The Indian contingent reflected life's vicissitudes with athletes having personal stories steeped in tragedy: accidents, polio-afflictions or genetic issues. Yet, they strove towards excellence with an effervescent smile in place. Be it athletics, where javelin throwers are the toast of the month, or badminton or shooting, India had its moments of splendour. The five gold medallists – Sumit Antil, Pramod Bhagat, Krishna Nagar, Manish Narwal and Avani Lekhara – led from the front, and the last named 19-year-old shooter also won a bronze. India drew a blank in shooting at the preceding Olympics, but the differently-abled added five medals. The coaches, the Paralympic Committee of India and Sports Ministry played their parts while India excelled in a championship held in the shadow of a pandemic. Since its first medal at the 1972 Paralympics, India was a marginal presence until now. A reflexive-rewards exercise is on from various governments, and the corporate sector. If a percentage of those riches are allocated to improve sports infrastructure for the differently-abled, India will have more reasons for cheer in the coming years.

Reaching out to the 'undesirables'

Conflict resolution is not always a morally black-and-white business, as the example of the Taliban shows



HAPPYMON JACOB

Shedding its past hesitations, the Government of India has started an open, formal engagement with the Taliban who, by all accounts, will form the next government in Afghanistan. Until the recent India-Taliban meeting in Doha, India's engagement with the Taliban was through secret channels (for several years now), open but 'unofficial' (i.e., when New Delhi sent two retired diplomats to a meeting in Moscow in which the Taliban were present), or quiet and unpublicised (an undeclared meeting of Ministry of External Affairs officials with the Taliban in Doha in June this year). Engagement with the Taliban is useful in both securing India's interests in Afghanistan (to the extent possible) and to potentially moderate Taliban's internal and external behaviour (again, to the extent possible).

Beginning the process

Should a Taliban government, when it gets formed, be recognised? Given that a Taliban-led government is a foregone conclusion now, the international community must only accord such recognition as part of a negotiated process, a process aimed at moderating Kabul's new rulers. UN Security Council Resolution 2593, adopted at a meeting chaired by India, emphasising that Afghan soil should not be used for terror activity is a good beginning internationally. The international community should eventually recognise a Taliban-led government in return for guarantees that the latter will abide by norms governing terrorism, human rights, among others.

However, the question about engaging, and eventually recognising, the Taliban which has a terrible human rights record, and has literally captured power in Afghanistan through sheer force, has

been widely debated from a moral perspective. So it might be useful to reflect on the various moral aspects of engaging with undesirable elements (terror groups, insurgents, etc.) in general and the Taliban in particular.

Geopolitics and morality

Moral judgements in the conduct of international relations rest on a slippery slope for several reasons. For instance, are moral judgements/prescriptions devoid of power politics? How much does geopolitical power shape the boundaries of morally acceptable/unacceptable behaviour in international relations? Consider, for instance, phrases such as 'axis of evil' or 'rogue states' used by past United States administrations against states they disagreed with or wanted to isolate. Notwithstanding whether one agrees or disagrees with the policies of the target states, the point here is that such framing is a product of the ability of the United States to dictate a certain global moral standard. As historian E.H Carr argues in *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939*, "It is a familiar tactic of the privileged to throw moral discredit on the under-privileged by depicting them as disturbers of the peace; and this tactic is as readily applied internationally as within the national community."

While all states use moral arguments in the pursuit of their respective national interests, it is the moral logic used by the powerful states or coalitions that tend to win over the weaker ones, thereby becoming the standards of behaviour. Put differently, morality is often a product of power even though there are other sources of morality than just power. Arguments stemming from moral universalism should, therefore, be challenged not only because they are patronising, but also because crude national interests often masquerade as moral universalism. Moral universalism may be desirable and even useful in certain contexts and for certain purposes, but it must be viewed with a critical eye. At the same time, one must also be careful not to fall victim to extreme arguments from moral re-



AFP

lativism. Indeed, a healthy conversation between universalism and relativism could produce politically useful moral arguments. In short, moral questions governing the behaviour of states cannot be divorced from the geopolitical power and location of those states.

Range of 'undesirables'

The second question is who the rightful object of our moral approbrium should be. Should they include only non-state actors and individuals, or also states? In general, there are degrees of behaviour that are generally considered reprehensible – ranging from freedom struggle, insurgency, state-sponsored terror to terrorist violence. While deciding to condemn, we routinely use a selective application of morality. Let us take the example of the Taliban. They have an irrefutable history of indulging in terrorist violence, human rights violations (especially those of women), and religious intolerance. But so have many countries with an equally dishonourable history of violent behaviour and proxy wars. Whether those states are held accountable or not depends on essentially two factors: their military power to dissuade potential discipliners (North Korea is a good example), and their ability to justify their actions in a 'morally acceptable' manner. Legitimacy and sovereignty accorded to states provide them with an added layer of protection.

The point here is about how we routinely single out certain actors as fit cases of our moral opprobrium which is a function of power and geopolitics. The Taliban's culpability is beyond doubt, as is that of many states. But why add another entity (Taliban) to the mix of powerful wrong-doers, you might ask. Here is why.

The key to revitalising India's reservation system

A socio-economic caste-based census becomes a necessary precondition to initiate any meaningful reform



SUPRIY RANJAN

Hoardings and posters lauding the Narendra Modi government for introducing reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) examinations and a renewed debate on caste census have once again brought the debate on affirmative action in the limelight. The affirmative action programme that was envisaged during the founding moments of the republic is indeed one of the remarkable provisions to have been worked out by our Constitution makers. It has been historically significant in enunciating the principle of justice in a deeply unequal and oppressive social order such as ours.

Still no equity

While it is undeniable that these provisions have been one of the protagonists of Indian democracy's success stories, these have also accumulated a fair share of problems and call for immediate policy attention and debate.

Through reservation of seats in political and public institutions of the state, it was thought that the hitherto marginalised groups – which have suffered generations of

oppression and humiliation – would, finally, be able to find place in the power sharing and decision-making processes. However, this strategy of removal of disabilities has not translated into an equalisation of life chances for many groups in our heterogeneous society.

Problems with current policy

There is now a strong demand from those who have not been able to accrue the benefits of reservations from within the marginalised sections, to devise some policy option which may be able to supplement the existing system of reservation.

The fact that the current system suffers from the "problem of reification" is not just wishful thinking, but a hard fact.

The data released by the Justice G. Rohini Commission's report on the sub-categorisation of OBCs gives a good synoptic view to understand this. Based on the last five years' data on appointments in central government jobs and OBC admissions to central higher education institutions, the commission concluded that 97% of central OBC quota benefits go to just under 25% of its castes. As many as 983 OBC communities – 37% of the total – have zero representation in both central government jobs and admissions to central universities. Also, the report states that just 10% of the OBC communities have accrued 24.95% of jobs and admissions



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

(https://bit.ly/3h3L2rh).

Clearly, the assumption that the disadvantages of every sub-group within each category are the same is severely misplaced.

It is important to note that the Rohini Commission's data are based just on the institutions that come under the purview of the central government. We hardly have any legible data on the socio-economic conditions of varied social groups at more local levels of State and society.

Consequently, asymmetrical distribution of reservation has severely deterred political projects of unified subaltern solidarity. Parties that were once able to build large Bahujan solidarities are now finding it difficult to garner such support. This should give us hints about the extent of the problem rather than ruling them out as mere conspiracies of breaking lower caste unity.

Insufficiency of data

As underlined above, there is a dire need of accurate data pertaining to the socio-economic condi-

tion of different social groups. Though caste-based reservations have been pivotal in animating upward social mobility and led to the emergence of a handful of politically mature and visible Dalit-Bahujan castes, we hardly have sufficient data about the actual reach and access of this policy measure.

We do not know what liberalisation has done to castes which remained tied to more traditional sources of income and were incapable of realising the new opportunities provided by the opening of the economy. We do not know how these groups have navigated and transitioned to a more accentuated regime of capital amidst nearly no social security net on the ground. The marginal majority within still dwells in the waiting room of history, waiting to see the light of the policy grid of the state.

Affirmative action

What is urgently required is a mechanism that can address this lacuna and make the system more accountable and sensitive to intra-group demands. Since every further categorisation will only lead to reification and fragmentation in the long run, two things are required.

One, we urgently need to develop a wide variety of context-sensitive, evidence-based policy options that can be tailored to meet specific requirements of specific groups. Two, we need an institution alike the Equal Opportunities Commission of the United States

ternatives and potential outcomes; not based on quixotic notions of moral universalism.

There are serious moral questions being raised about New Delhi's recent outreach to the Taliban. Critics have argued that it is morally reprehensible for India to engage with a violent outfit such as the Taliban just because they are on the verge of statehood. While I do appreciate the moral logic of such criticism, let us keep in mind that international politics is not a site of perfect moral choices. More so, moral choices are also a product of geopolitical contexts and the historical location of a country. For India, located where it is – amidst a geostrategically challenging environment – its ability to make a 'morally perfect' choice *vis-à-vis* the Taliban is rather limited. It is imperative for New Delhi, therefore, to make an already bad situation somewhat better by engaging with an entity it otherwise would not have desired to engage.

A difficult art

Finally, there is a larger argument for reaching out to undesirable/rogue elements – to build peace and resolve conflicts. Notwithstanding what they say, democratic governments have routinely negotiated with terrorists, secretly or openly. Consider examples from the British government's secret talks with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) while the IRA was still carrying out attacks against the U.K., to the Spanish government's talks with the Basque Homeland and Freedom even after the latter's violence killing civilians, to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam-Sri Lankan government negotiations in the 2000s. Talking to the undesirables is a time-tested phenomenon. More importantly, peace-building is not always a morally black-and-white business. Often enough, the process of conflict resolution can be morally challenging, politically complicated and involves difficult choices.

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or the United Kingdom which can undertake two important but interrelated things: make a deprivation index correlating data from the socio-economic-based census of different communities including caste, gender, religion, and other group inequalities and rank them to make tailor made policies. And, undertake an audit on performance of employers and educational institutions on non-discrimination and equal opportunity and issue codes of good practice in different sectors. This will make the formulation of policy and its monitoring simpler at an institutional level.

As evident, a socio-economic caste-based census becomes a necessary precondition to initiate any meaningful reform in the affirmative action regime in India.

It is worth noting that similar suggestions were made a decade ago in the recommendations that the expert committee for an Equal Opportunities Commission (2008) made in its comprehensive report that it submitted to the Ministry of Minority Affairs. However, little policy progress has been made in this regard. Successive governments have been reluctant to engage with such radical policy options, almost always caving in to immediate and myopic political gains.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Stranger than fiction

The background story of high-profile criminal Sukesh Chandrasekhar ('Ground Zero' page, September 4) has outstripped detective novels in every sense. That he was able to have a free run, wield untrammelled powers and wear many hats with no fear of the law, is a clear reflection of poor surveillance by multiple agencies. This is nothing but one more instance of a gross mockery of India's criminal justice system that

is already sliding.

V. JOHAN DHANAKUMAR, Chennai

■ That the law and order officials were sitting ducks before a youngster who could effortlessly and inexplicably operate expansive criminal activities while within the four walls of a prison is worrying. His methods speak volumes of the extent bribery plays its part in high places. Surprisingly, multiple instances of spoofing were 'undetected' or conveniently

ignored. Surely, he is not the only one of his tribe. And that does not augur well for the nation.

SANATH KUMAR T.S., Thrissur, Kerala

Estate mystery

The mystery of the Kodanad murder-burglary case needs to be solved. Matters concerning the case have been drifting which has raised much suspicion in the minds of the common man. The DMK's announcement of a probe is an opportunity for the Tamil Nadu police to

probe the case without a biased mind.

THARCIUS S. FERNANDO, Chennai

At Tokyo

It has been a super outing for India at the Tokyo Paralympics. Each day brought better news, to end in a stunning performance. The Indian contingent and its support system deserve wholesome praise and to have kept the Indian flag flying high from the start.

VINAY MAHADEVAN, Dubai, U.A.E

■ The Paralympic Committee of India should allocate more resources to search, support, encourage and train differently-abled sports persons. There should be a completely new infrastructure. The Indian contingent has been a source of great inspiration for youngsters.

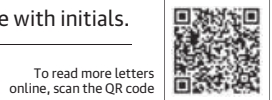
ANDREA JASPER, Chennai

A surprise

I was in dread of undergoing the ordeal of renewing my passport, but was in for a

very pleasant surprise. I received my new passport in five days from the date of application. Years ago, it was an endless wait. This time, the Passport Seva Kendra office was a revelation – courteous behaviour and quick decisions. This change needs to be taken forward, with such a transformation in our local bodies, where the ordinary citizen is still a victim of inaction.

V. ANANTHA SUBRAMANIAN, Chendammangalam, Kerala



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The judicial role in improving lawmaking

Rushed laws, rendering Parliament a rubber stamp, sacrifice core ideals of a constitutional democracy



VIKRAM A. NARAYAN
JAHNAVI SINDHU

The deterioration in the quality of deliberation in Parliament over time has prompted calls for reform from different stakeholders. On Independence Day, Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana also highlighted this problem, noting that the ambiguities and gaps in laws passed without meaningful deliberation trigger avoidable litigation. While the CJI suggested that lawyers and intellectuals enter public life to improve deliberation, the judiciary can also play a crucial role in improving the law-making process.

Many rely on the volume of Bills passed by Parliament in a session as a measure of its efficiency. However, this measure is flawed as it does not account for what is lost when efficiency is achieved by passing laws without adequate notice and deliberation. Most, if not all, of these laws create burdensome obligations on persons and often affect their fundamental rights. Legislators, as representatives of the people, are expected to exercise a duty of care before casting their vote. This entails due deliberation about the implications of the law, posing amendments and questions to the concerned Minister, and requiring expert evidence through standing committees.

Moreover, it is in the legislative organ that diverse interest groups find representation. Deliberation in such a forum ensures that the views of persons who are adversely affected by a law are heard and actively engaged with. Rushed lawmaking, rendering Parliament a rubber stamp, sacrifices two core ideals of a constitutional democracy, namely, equal participation and respect for fundamental rights.

Evaluating legislative process

The judiciary can play an important role in improving the lawmaking process and securing these ideals. A straightforward way of doing this is by enforcing the text and spirit of the constitutional provisions governing



A view of the Rajya Sabha during the monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi in August. •PTI

legislative procedures. The Constitution contains certain detailed provisions laying out how laws are to be passed by Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies. Unfortunately, these are often undermined. For example, even when the result through voice votes are unclear, the exact number of “ayes” and “nays” are not always counted, suggesting that Bills may be passed without securing the majority vote required under Article 100. This issue arose most recently when the controversial farm laws were reportedly rushed and passed by voice vote in the Rajya Sabha despite objections by Opposition members.

Similarly, Bills are certified as Money Bills to bypass the Rajya Sabha even where they do not meet the specific description of Money Bills provided under Article 110. This Article identifies seven areas that can be governed through the enactment of Money Bills, including the imposition of tax, the regulation of borrowing and appropriation of money out of the Consolidated Fund of India.

In the Aadhaar case, the Supreme Court, to an extent, recognised its power to check whether such procedural provisions had been complied with. However, these provisions will only be taken seriously if the judiciary addresses their violations in a timely manner. The longer a challenge is pending, the more ground the State has to argue that rights and obligations created under the law should not be disturbed for a “mere” procedural violation.

Another important method is for the judiciary to make deliberation a factor in evaluating the constitutional validity of laws. In exercising judicial review, the court's role is to call on the State to provide justifications explaining why the law is reasonable and, therefore, valid. While doing so, the court can also examine whether and to what extent the legislature deliberated the reasonableness of a measure. The legislative inquiry would usually include evaluating the factual basis justifying the law, the suitability of the law to achieve its aim, and the necessity and proportionality of the law relative to its adverse impact on fundamental rights. The Supreme Court, in fact, adopted this approach in the *Indian Hotel and Restaurants Association* (2013) case. The court invalidated a law prohibiting dance performances only in hotels with less than three stars as rooted in class prejudice and, therefore, violative of equality. While the State justified the classification on the ground that only such hotels were sites of trafficking, the court rejected this claim by examining the lawmaking process and found that the State did not have empirical data to support this claim.

The judiciary can also make deliberation a factor in choosing whether to employ the doctrine of “presumption of constitutionality”. This doctrine requires the court to exercise restraint and defer to legislative judgments on the reasonableness of a law. It is rooted in the fiction that the legislature is a widely representative,

deliberative organ, and thus “understands and correctly appreciates the needs of its own people”. When laws are passed without deliberation and without examination of the empirical basis on which they are premised, the State usually finds it more difficult to explain why such laws constitute a reasonable restriction on rights and, therefore, heavily relies on the doctrine of presumption of constitutionality to resist close judicial scrutiny. By extending this doctrine to such laws, the judiciary undermines the guarantee of judicial review provided to protect fundamental rights. Instead, if the judiciary confines the doctrine only to cases where the State shows that laws and their consequences were carefully deliberated in Parliament, the judiciary can encourage legislative bodies to ensure a deliberative law-making process.

Remedying dysfunction

The CJI's suggestion that the legislature be reformed from within is admittedly the ideal solution to remedying legislative dysfunction without raising concerns of separation of powers. However, legislative majorities have little incentive to cooperate for such reform, and significant public mobilisation on the issue would be necessary to change this. Against this backdrop, the judiciary can and should employ the tools available to it to nudge legislative bodies to improve their lawmaking processes. In fact, striking down laws on procedural grounds also mitigates concerns of separation of powers in certain respects. Unlike review on purely substantive grounds, it does not foreclose legislative bodies from re-legislating the issue and ensuring that the procedural defects in the law are rectified and the law is properly deliberated in Parliament.

The Indian judiciary has often demonstrated that it is possible to enrich democracy by addressing dysfunctions in other institutions. By adopting a swift and systematic approach to reviewing the legislative process, the judiciary can help restore faith in the ‘temples of democracy’ and push us toward the culture of justification the Constitution sought to create.

Vikram A. Narayan and Jahnvi Sindhu are advocates specialising in constitutional law

We cannot save journalism if we fail to save journalists

Quality journalism is tied to the well-being of journalists



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

The ideas of accountability and public good in journalism are more than two centuries old. The institutional frameworks have been evolving over the last century – technological disruption has brought in a new set of challenges. However, the core concerns remain the same. For instance, the 1947 Hutchins Commission report about the media, “A Free and Responsible Press”, concluded that the freedom of the press was in danger.

Robert M. Hutchins, who served as the president of the University of Chicago, concluded in his report that the freedom of the press was in danger for three reasons: “First, the importance of the press to the people has greatly increased with the development of the press as an instrument of mass communication. At the same time, the development of the press as an instrument of mass communication has greatly decreased the proportion of the people who can express their opinions and ideas through the press. Second, the few who are able to use the machinery of the press as an instrument of mass communication have not provided a service adequate to the needs of society. Third, those who direct the machinery of the press have engaged from time to time in practices which the society condemns and which, if continued, it will inevitably undertake to regulate or control.”

Privileged position

Jeffrey Dworkin, a former ombudsman for National Public Radio (NPR), once observed that ombudsmen were in a privileged position to connect the audience's need for accountability with media outlets' recognition that they need to improve their work in our current times.

He summarised the role as being “a mediator between the expectations of the public and the responsibilities of journalists”. This framework gives a glimpse into factors that shape my concerns, fears and anxieties about the future of journalism.

When I became a journalist in 1985, most editors used to commission special stories on December 3 to mark the Bhopal gas tragedy, which remains one of the most terrible industrial accidents faced by humanity. After many years, we are yet to ascertain the exact

death toll, the long-term impact of permitting toxic material in our atmosphere and permitting it to contaminate the groundwater. While the question of unfair compensation remains valid even today, the series of journalistic interventions helped make the Indian state act, albeit partially. December 3, in a sense, used to mark the importance of follow-ups.

Status of investigations

It is time for editors to commission stories on the status of investigations into crimes against journalists. My concern about quality journalism is firmly tied to the well-being of journalists. Though the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2013 that proclaimed November 2 as the ‘International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists’, crimes against journalists are unending and there seems to be a growing impunity for the perpetrators. The failure of law enforcement agencies across the world, including in India, is a disturbing feature.

As I am writing this column, I remember that editor Gauri Lankesh was killed four years ago on the same day. She was shot down by two assailants, widely believed to be part of a larger conspiracy to take out anti-Hindutva voices, outside her home at Rajarajeshwarinagar Nagar in Bengaluru on September 5, 2017. The next year, this newspaper carried a detailed report, “Unravelling the Gauri Lankesh murder case” (June 16, 2018), which had an interesting head deck that said, “The Karnataka police think they have cracked the case. Why they think so. And how they did it.” In February 2019, the Supreme Court had noted the murders of Lankesh, Kannada writer M.M. Kalburgi, and activists Narendra Dabholkar and Govind Pansare were part of a “very serious case”. Yet, the investigations are slow and attempts to bring those who have committed grave crimes to book remain a distant dream.

Senior journalist Pamela Philipose's tweet on September 4 captured the stark reality. “Tomorrow marks four years since the unconscionable felling down of India's dynamic editor Gauri Lankesh in her own home. So far the case involving 17 has not made it to the courts even as evidence of the direct involvement of the politically coddled Sanathan [sic] Sanstha surfaces,” she said on Twitter. Reports document how multiple pleas were deliberately made to stall the trial.

It is impossible to save journalism if we fail to save journalists.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

National Monetisation Pipeline and the infrastructure deficit

Infrastructure is key to speeding up growth

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

The government's announcement of the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), a scheme to transfer the rights to operate public infrastructure for a fixed period, has received attention in the media. Hopefully, in the skirmish over the details of the scheme, not to mention the partisan allegations flying around, the fact of the severe infrastructure deficit that India faces, and the imperative to address it, will not get overlooked. We need infrastructure not only to speed up growth in a slackened economy but also to lead a dignified life, even after we have seen off the COVID-19 pandemic.

A significant criticism of the NMP is that the transfer would end up creating monopolies, leading to a rise in price. The creation of monopolies through public policy would be an embarrassment alright. However, the claim of an inevitable monopolisation is exaggerated as the outcome would differ according to the type of infrastructure.

Monopolisation is inevitable in the case of highways and railway lines, while it is not in the case of warehouses as all the warehouses need not be sold to a single bidder. On the issue of the price, Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog, has emphasised that the price would be regulated and any increase of it capped in line with inflation when the government signs the contract with the concessionaire.

Whether private parties would be open to such an arrangement is a different question. And this really is the point. While the government may have announced its expectation of the proceeds from the monetisation, we are yet to ascertain the private sector's interest in it. The NITI Aayog has flagged the success of the public-private partnership (PPP) governing the Mumbai-Pune Expressway, but there is also the unhappy experience of a leading infrastructure company opting out of the agreement to run the Delhi Airport Express Rail Link very early on, causing a disruption. India's experience with PPP in infrastructure, enthusiastically pursued by both the United Progressive Alliance

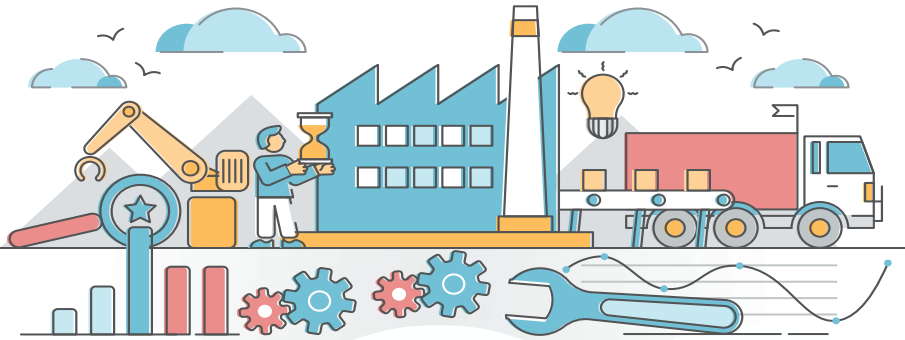
(UPA) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), has not been impressive. It may actually have contributed to the saddling of the public sector banks with non-performing assets.

Most infrastructure comes in the form of a public good, even when it may not be a natural monopoly. No wonder then that it has been built and managed by the public sector the world over. But the possibility that the price may rise after a transfer of public infrastructure to the private sector is not a good reason to oppose it. India's infrastructure has not expanded precisely because the assets generate too little revenue for even their maintenance, leave alone upgradation, due to pricing practices in the public sector. This has held back growth of the economy. Moreover, it cannot simply be assumed that monopoly would lead to a higher price. The outcome would depend upon the costs of the concessionaire, which may well be lower than that of the public entities currently managing India's assets. A comparison of the fares of Air India with that of private airlines is enough to see this.

The important consideration in an evaluation of the NMP would be the volume of funds expected to be generated. The government has announced an indicative value of ₹6 lakh crore accruing over four years. This is extraordinarily low in relation to two comparators. First, it is only 10% higher than the budgeted capital expenditure of the Government of India actually for 2021-22. Next, see it in relation to the figure of ₹100 lakh crore estimated as the infrastructural investment India needs. This was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her first Budget of 2019 and repeated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in all his subsequent Independence Day speeches. Any claim of the innovativeness of the NMP pales beside this astute estimation made by the government itself. As for the carping by the Opposition, it distracts attention from the severe infrastructural deficit we face and the need to erase it.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches at Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana

DATA POINT

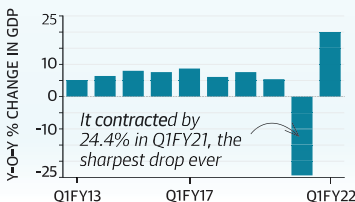


GDP: High on low base

During the first quarter of FY22, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) expanded at its quickest pace ever recorded. The sharp rise was majorly due to a low base set in Q1FY21, when the GDP recorded its sharpest contraction ever. An analysis using the absolute values of real GDP and Gross Value Added shows that the levels recorded in the latest quarter are yet to reach the pre-pandemic levels. In some cases, the economic levels are similar to what they were in FY16 and FY17.

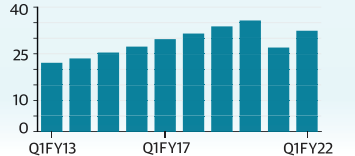
By The Hindu Data Team

1. A LOW BASE | GDP expanded by 20.1% during Q1FY22, the quickest-ever. This was mostly due to the low base set during Q1FY21



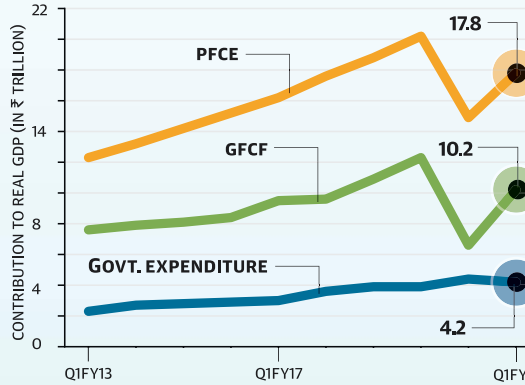
The chart plots the year-on-year change (in %) in the GDP in all the April-June quarters (first quarter) between FY13 and FY22

2. ABSOLUTE TERMS The GDP in absolute terms is yet to reach the pre-pandemic level



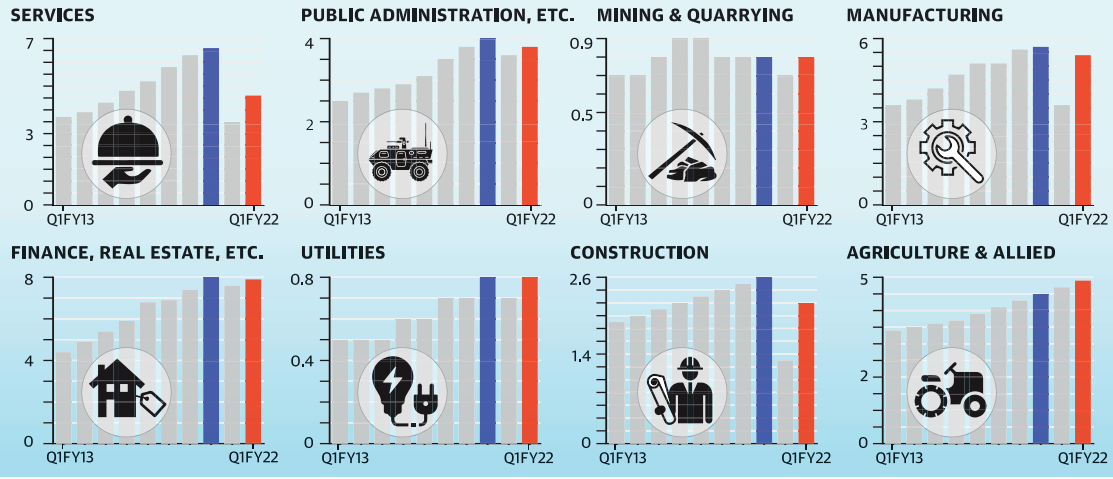
The ₹32.4 trillion of real GDP in the latest quarter is closer to the levels seen in Q1FY18. The chart plots the real GDP (in ₹ trillion) in all first quarters since FY13

3. DEMAND SIDE | Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), which reflects consumption demand from the public, is still at levels seen in FY18



Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF), which reflects investment demand by businesses, is also at levels recorded during FY18

4. SUPPLY SIDE | The Gross Value Added (GVA) by most employment-heavy sectors are yet to reach pre-pandemic levels. The GVA of the services and construction sectors are at levels seen in FY16. The manufacturing and real estate sectors are yet to revive back to the pre-pandemic levels. The charts show the GVA (in ₹ trillion) for major sectors



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 6, 1971

Refugees' return: Nepal backs India

A joint communique issued at the end of the three-day visit of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh to Nepal said the Nepalese Prime Minister, Mr. Kirtinidhi Bista had noted the social and economic implications to India as a result of facing the problem of millions of refugees from East Bengal. The communique was released at a press conference addressed by Mr. Swaran Singh prior to his departure for New Delhi. The communique was signed by Mr. Swaran Singh and Mr. Bista, who is also in charge of Foreign Affairs. It said the two leaders had discussed in depth relations between the two countries in various fields. They reiterated their mutual respect for and interest in each other's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The communique emphasised the age-old close links between the two countries in various fields and stressed the need for further strengthening them “to their mutual benefit”. Mr. Swaran Singh appreciated the all-round progress made by Nepal under the wise guidance of King Mahendra.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 6, 1921

Anniversary celebration

The birthday anniversary of the late Dadabhoj Naoroji was celebrated by various associations in Bombay last week end. At a meeting of the citizens held under the auspices of the Parsi Rajakiya Sabha, many political leaders spoke. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu said that this time they were going to prove their reverence to the greatest of Indian builders, Dadabhoj by contributing their mite to relieve the sufferers of Khulna and Punjab famine. Mr. Shaikat Ali said that unless Government settled the Khilafat and Punjab grievances, they would unfurl the banner of independence at the next session of the Indian National Congress at Ahmedabad. Let Government understand that all Indians, whether Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis or Christians were ready to give up their lives for Swaraj. He sincerely regretted the Malabar incidents and assured the audience that he and his co-workers had not been able to approach the Moplahs as their language was different and they were backward in education. He declared that the Moplahs had acted contrary to Mr. Gandhi's Khilafat programme but in the manner they had faced gunfire they have shown that they were not the people who would ever consent to be slaves.

FROM PAGE ONE

Surge in number of foreign ultras in Kashmir

An IED expert Saifullah had played a role in the 2019 Pulwama attack on July 31, he added.

The rising numbers of militants in north Kashmir, which is already over 50, has forced the security agencies to re-strategise their response.

A senior official said most mainstream leaders and elected grassroots representatives have been asked to lie low and provided with dos and don'ts when they plan to move around.

"I have been asked not to visit Sopore during the daytime, not to take the interior

routes in Handwara and Rafiabad and ensure that police personnel remain on alert after the sundown," a north Kashmir-based mainstream leader said.

In fact, the police investigation into the grenade attack on a sarpanch, Narinder Kour, on August 22 in Baramulla's Shrakwara Kreeri area was traced to TRF's non-local recruit Ali Bhai.

The police said the two suspected attackers held in the case were "in contact with LeT terrorist Hilal Sheikh and Usman, a foreign terrorist".

12-year-old dead as Nipah reappears in Kozhikode

Ms. George said the final report from the NIV lab in Pune came by Saturday night and steps were being taken to shift him to the MCH. However, the boy passed away by 5 a.m. on Sunday.

An alert has been declared in Kozhikode and surrounding districts of Malappuram and Kannur. Ms. George said the government

had contacted the Indian Council of Medical Research to procure monoclonal antibodies for the treatment. It would be made available from Australia in a week.

Meanwhile, the last rites of the deceased were performed in line with the protocol at the Kannamparamba burial ground in Kozhikode. Corporation staff supervised the procedure.

Only locals in Ladakh to get 'Resident Certificates'

Ladakh's two main amalgams, the Kargil Democratic Alliance and the Leh Apex Body, have been campaigning for Article 370-like special status for the region, which was carved out as a separate Union Territory from J&K on August 5, 2019.

It has opposed the settlement of outsiders in the region. The 'Resident Certi-

cate' being restricted to locals of the region is unlike J&K. According to the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules, 2020 issued on May 18, 2020, different categories of non-locals, including non-local government employees, to register for domicile certificates in J&K after meeting a few criteria.

Mega farmers' rally vows to oust Yogi regime in U.P.

Mr. Singh said he had sold his paddy crop at prices 22% below the announced MSP rate this year. "What is the point of declaring MSP if there are no *mandis* to sell to the government and the private trader refuses to buy at that rate," he asked.

Parkash, a farmer from the Charkhi Dadri tehsil in Haryana, noted that even as farm profits fell, input costs for everything from diesel to electricity to urea had risen. "It is not only for farmers, even the price of cooking oil, of a gas cylinder have all surged under the Modi government. He is only looking to help his corporate friends, not the common farmers who voted for him."

It is this anger and despair due to inflation, falling farm incomes and unemployment that the SKM hopes will unite farmers and workers as well as Hindus and Muslims in Uttar Pradesh. In what was seen as a significant gesture, BKU president Naresh Tikait and Muslim farmer leader Ghulam Jola sat next to each other on the stage. "We have to get over the divisive politics of this government. There was a dip in our relationship after the Muzaffarnagar riots but now it is time to move ahead," said Mr. Naresh Tikait as Mr. Jola echoed the sentiment.

They insisted that the Uttar Pradesh government's recent overtures towards cane farmers are too little too late. "This government has to go," said Mr. Tikait, adding that he was not against "Yogi or Modi" but "their policies, which are anti-farmer."

While he ruled out any direct entry into electoral politics, his younger brother hedged his bets. "There are still six months until the elections, so there is time to decide," he told *The Hindu*. Interestingly, the Rashtriya Lok Dal, which depends

BJP must re-engage with farmers: Varun

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

BJP MP from Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh Varun Gandhi on Sunday said there was a need to re-engage with the protesting farmers, in a departure from the public positioning taken by the ruling party on the protests.

"Lakhs of farmers have gathered in protest today [Sunday] in Muzaffarnagar. They are our own flesh and blood. We need to start re-engaging with them in a respectful manner: understand their pain, their point of view and work with them in reaching common ground," Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

on the same support base as the Tikaits, provided back-end support for the gathering, and while leader Jayant Chaudhary was not on stage, his face was on a number of the hoardings around town. Crowd estimates varied from one to five lakh farmers.

While the majority of those attending were from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, large contingents arrived from Punjab, and smaller groups represented most Indian States. The 10-member team from Tamil Nadu received the loudest wave of applause apart from Mr. Tikait himself. "The farm laws have done one good thing in that they integrated farmers across India and helped them rise above regional barriers. The demand for an MSP law is a national one," said Easan, founder of the Tamil Nadu Farmers' Welfare Association.

States warned of 'aggressive' infiltration

Central agency says trained militants from Afghanistan could penetrate into Jammu & Kashmir

S. VIJAY KUMAR
CHENNAI

The Union government has warned of possible infiltration by battle-hardened militants into India along the Afghanistan border, taking advantage of the weak and porous security systems there.

Highly placed official sources told *The Hindu* here on Sunday that a Central agency, in an alert sent to all States and Central Armed Paramilitary Forces, cautioned that armed terrorists owing allegiance to the Islamic State Khorasan Province, the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed could attempt to aggressively infiltrate into India, particularly Jammu & Kashmir.

Pointing to various instances of security concerns in Afghanistan, including the explosions at the Kabul airport, that could have a bearing on the security scenario in India, the alert said developments in the neighbouring country were seen as a victory to puritanical Islam. This could embolden and reinforce the ideologies of leaders of various banned



On guard: BSF men patrolling near the Line of Control in Poonch. Security has been tightened along the LoC. •PTI

outfits in India who might provoke their cadres to derail public order, the sources said.

While India was not affected by the activities of foreign terrorist fighters, the situation in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime might pave the way for convergence of radical sentiments and bring together armed fighters from other areas to pursue common goals. Security system had become extremely porous after the

U.S. armed forces fully withdrew from the war-torn country, the sources said.

Drug smuggling

Besides the congregation of trained militants who were equipped with improvised explosive devices and sophisticated weaponry, the release of prisoners lodged in jails, including several foreign nationals, was also a matter of concern since it would revive organised crimes with trans-national

network like smuggling of drugs, counterfeit Indian currency, weapons and so on, the sources said.

The States were told to brief security personnel guarding VVIPs about the escalation in threat perceptions. While cybercrime police were asked to intensify vigil on social media and curtail the spread of communally sensitive content, emphasis was laid on strengthening of surveillance in areas of public gathering since the possibility of the infiltration of suicide bombers could not be ruled out.

Vital installations

The CAPFs protecting vital installations across the country would coordinate with the State administration in enhancing the security arrangements based on the perceived threat level. Security along the international land border and coastal districts would also be strengthened with adequate checkpoints, combing operations in vulnerable areas and intensified patrolling, the sources said.

The States with Israeli es-

tablishments and Jewish settlements were also alerted to deploy additional manpower in view of a potential threat of terror attack during the forthcoming Jewish holidays in the third week of September. Security personnel were advised to conduct anti-sabotage checks in and around the Israeli Embassy and Consulate and also enforce strict access-control measures to the foreign missions, the sources said.

According to police sources, there was intelligence input on Afghanistan-Pakistan based IS operatives coordinating with their associates in India to carry out a terror attack. The input also said that foreign terrorist fighters offered to fund terror activities in India and arrange supply of sophisticated weapons, explosives and so on. Though the input did not point to any specific target, the police have scaled up security detail for important places of worship, leaders of some Hindu organisations and sensitive establishments based on previous intelligence assessments, the sources added.

Situation improves in Kashmir

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

The J&K authorities on Sunday extended the mobile Internet blockade up to Monday amid signs of improvement in the situation, four days after senior separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, 92, died here.

"Mobile Internet shall remain suspended till 17:00 of September 6 unless modified earlier," an order issued by Principal Secretary to government Shaleen Kabra reads.

The law enforcement agencies had apprehended "misuse of data services for rumour mongering, circulation of fake news, instigation for violence etc". While the situation had by and large remained peaceful, there have been "sporadic incidents".

"There was apprehension of breach of peace and public order due to the nefarious designs by the Pakistan supported handlers from across the border and the secessionists forces within, through misuse of mobile data services."

RSS distances itself from article on Infosys

'It only reflects author's opinion'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) went on record on Sunday to distance itself from an article that appeared in a magazine associated with the organisation, *Panchjanya*, which alleged that software major Infosys was with "anti-national" forces, in the way that it had messed up the Centre's Income Tax portal.

Sunil Ambekar, the all-India prachar pramukh of the RSS, took to Twitter to clarify the organisation's position on the article and its allegations against Infosys, two days after a report in *The Hindu* highlighted the story.

"As an Indian company, Infosys has made seminal contribution in the progress of the country. There might be certain issues with a portal run by Infosys, but the article published by *Panchjanya* in this context only reflects individual opinion of the author," he tweeted adding that "*Panchjanya* is not a mouthpiece of the RSS and

the said article or opinions expressed in it should not be linked with the RSS."

The article, a cover story in *Panchjanya*'s September 5 edition, alleged that Infosys had badly messed up not just the Income Tax and Goods and Services Tax portals, for which it is the technology vendor, but that Infosys Trust, through its other activities including funding was encouraging forces inimical to the security of India, and encouraging "urban naxals" et al.

The magazine's editor, Hitesh Shankar, spoke to *The Hindu* on Friday and said that the article was done because "it pertained to the country, and a lot of common people had been affected". With the RSS distancing itself from what is regarded as its own mouthpiece, it casts an interesting light on a possible division of opinion on Infosys within the Sangh Parivar, between those who see a conspiracy behind the non-functioning tax portal and others who only allege incompetency.

SC firm but friendly with govt.

CJI urges Rijiju to clear HC nominations fast, commends SC appointments

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Half of the 12 names reiterated by the Supreme Court Collegium for judicial appointments to various High Courts were originally sent to the government two years ago.

These six names, reiterated by the Collegium led by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana on September 1, were recommended by an earlier Collegium headed by then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi in July and October 2019. The present CJI was part of the Gogoi Collegium.

Advocates Jaytosh Majumdar, Amitesh Banerjee, Raja Basu Chowdhury and Lapita Banerji were first recommended by the Gogoi Collegium for the Calcutta High Court Bench on July 24, 2019. Advocate Farzand Ali was recommended to the Rajasthan High Court Bench by the Gogoi Collegium on the very same day.

In both cases, the Collegium explained that it had interacted with the advocates, "carefully scrutinised" the names for assessing "merit and suitability" and was of the "considered view" that they were fit to be High Court judges. Yet, they had not been cleared by the government.

The sixth name, advocate



Exchanging notes: Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, right, with Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju in New Delhi. •PTI

Moksha Kazmi (Khajuria), was first recommended to the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bench on October 15, 2019.

The remaining six names reiterated by the Ramana Collegium, variously on August 24 and September 1, include three judicial officers to the Allahabad High Court Bench, an advocate to the Jammu and Kashmir High Court and two advocates to the Karnataka High Court.

"He asked me 'what is the problem?'. I told him the first problem is filling up the vacancies. To expedite the filling up of vacancies... That is the first priority," Chief Justice Ramana recounted in Mr. Rijiju's presence on the dais.

Having said that, the CJI complimented the Law Minister for getting to work immediately and clearing the nine names recommended by the Collegium for the Supreme Court.

"Nine names were cleared in six days. That is a record. Thanks to him, they were cleared with jet-speed. I am very happy to be a party with him in all the decision-making process. I must thank the Prime Minister and the Law Minister... I expect the same jet-speed in clearing the names for the High Courts," the CJI conveyed.

The CJI also made it clear that judicial appointments were an "on-going process" in which speed in decision-making was of the essence. This seems to be a clear signal to the government that promptness in clearing names should not be a one-off. The court expects the government to show the same alacrity with which it cleared the nine names in future appointments to the High Courts.

"We hope to live up to the herculean challenge of filling up nearly 41% vacancies existing in all the High Courts... In another month, we expect at least 90% of the vacancies filled up in the country," the Chief Justice spoke for the judicial institution.

Mr. Rijiju, in turn, has positively returned the court's compliment. "In our first interaction, I realised that we have a CJI in whom we have full faith and trust," he said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The National Teachers' Awards were conferred on 44 teachers for their contribution to developing innovative methods of teaching by President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday.

Every year, the awards are given on Teachers' Day to celebrate the contributions of some of the finest teachers for their commitment to improve the quality of education and change lives of their students.

"Teachers should pay special attention to the fact that each student has different abilities, talents, psychology, social background and environment. Therefore, emphasis should be laid on the all-round development of each child according to their special needs, interests and abilities," President Kovind said during the virtual award ceremony.

Multiple roles

"The primary responsibility of combining the inherent talents of the students lies with the teachers. A good



Roll of honour: President Ram Nath Kovind at a virtual ceremony to confer awards on teachers on Sunday. •PTI

teacher is a personality-builder, a society-builder and a nation-builder."

Congratulating the awardees, he said, "Such teachers strengthen my belief that the future generation is safe in the hands of our well-qualified teachers. Teachers have a very important place in everyone's life. People remember their teachers lifelong."

He said teachers who nurture their students with affection and devotion not only get respect from their students but can "shape the future of students through

their behaviour, conduct and teaching".

President Kovind noted how teachers adapted to the challenges posed by the pandemic and didn't allow education to be stopped despite schools closing down.

Dedicated work

"Some teachers have developed remarkable infrastructure in schools with their hard work and dedication. I appreciate such dedicated teachers and hope that the entire teaching community will keep on changing its teaching methods according

to the changing circumstances."

The President said the National Education Policy (NEP) has set an ambitious objective of establishing India as a global knowledge superpower.

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said he was privileged to join the ceremony to recognise the efforts of the best teachers and lauded their key role in ensuring continuity of education during COVID-19.

First instituted in 1958 to recognise the excellence and commitment of teachers, September 5 came to be the fixed date for the ceremony from the mid-60s to coincide with the birth anniversary of Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, former President and an eminent educationist.

This year, online self-nomination process was followed by a three-tier selection process at district, State and national level.

A documentary film on each of the 44 awardee teachers was also shown during the presentation ceremony.

Logistics agreement with Russia to be signed soon

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

India is all set to conclude the bilateral logistics agreement with Russia soon while the agreement with the U.K. is in the final stages of conclusion. The Navy has been the biggest beneficiary of these administrative arrangements, signed with several countries, improving operational turnaround and increasing inter-operability on the high seas.

"With Russia, the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) is likely to be signed in a month or two while the one with the U.K. is in the final stages and should see conclusion soon," a defence source said. Negotiations with a few more countries including Vietnam are in the preliminary stages, officials said.

India has signed several logistics agreements with all Quad countries, France, Singapore and South Korea beginning with the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the U.S. in 2016. The agreements are administrative arrangements facilitating access to military facilities for exchange of fuel and provisions on mutual agreement simplifying logistical support and increasing operational turnaround of the military when operating away from India.

The agreement with Russia is expected to be signed during the visit of Defence Minister Gen. Sergei Shoigu in two months to co-chair the Inter-Governmental Commission meeting along with his Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh.



APEAL
Name of patient: **Ms. Mehnoor Fatima**, 12 years.
Hospital Name: Christian Medical College. Diagnosis: Thalassemia Major. This is a type of blood disorder which is life threatening. The best option for her would be to undergo Allogeneic Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplant (PBSCT). The estimated cost of PBSCT at this hospital is approximately Rs. 14,00,000.
We request Kind Hearted Philanthropists to save her. Kindly send donation by Cheque/D.D/M.O favouring **Save Poor Lives** and on the back of Cheque write **A/c Mehnoor Fatima, Our Account Details:** S/B Account No. 2000019487, State Bank of India, Rajaramapuram Branch, and IFSC Code: SBIN001855. You can donate Google Pay No. 9848607377, UPI ID: **savepoorlives@oksbi** which is exempted under 80G of I.T. Act.
Contact: SAVE POOR LIVES REGISTERED PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST, (Admin Division) Flat No. A1, Geobros Colony, Old No. 76, Kamarajar Salai, Raja Annamalaiapuram, Chennai-600 028. Ph: 044 42044165. Mobile: 9848607377, E-mail: **savepoorlives@gmail.com**. Our Website: **www.savepoorlives.com**

Cutting across party lines, U.P. MLAs shower munificence on Hindu sites

Even Samajwadi members are giving priority to temples instead of mosques, Adityanath said on project to promote heritage, tourism and spiritual sites

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

An analysis of a tourism development scheme in Uttar Pradesh shows that most of the MLAs, even those belonging to the Opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), have chosen Hindu religious, spiritual and cultural sites for promotion.

Most of the Muslim MLAs of the main Opposition Sa-

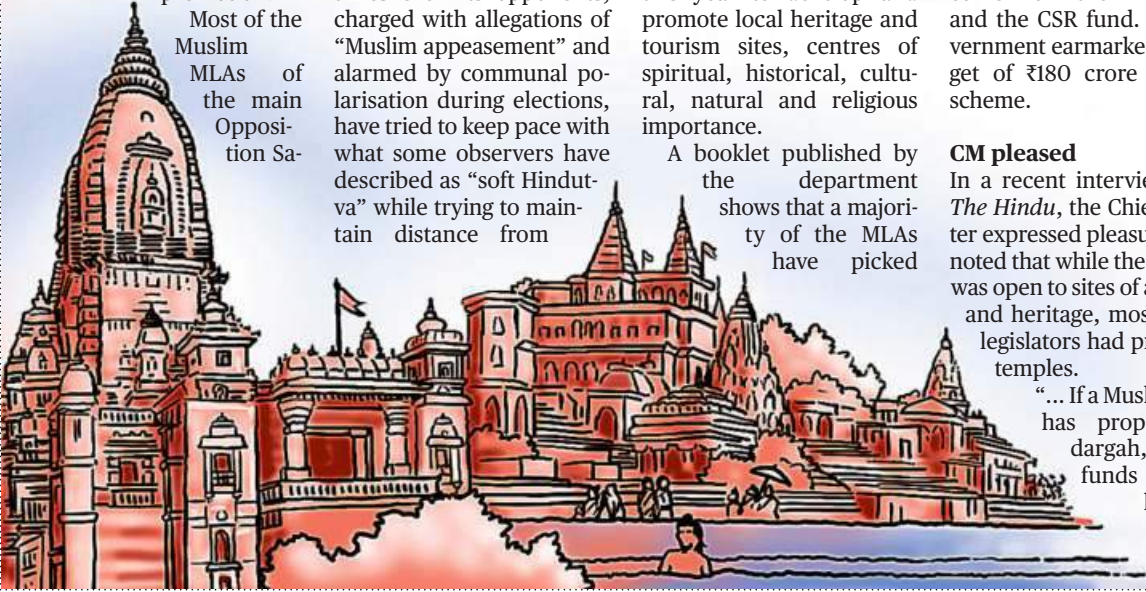


ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

Case against Baghel's father for 'derogatory remarks'

No one above law, says Chhattisgarh CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
RAIPUR

The Raipur police have registered a case against Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's father, Nand Kumar Baghel, for allegedly making derogatory comments against a community, an official said on Sunday.

After a controversy erupted over the alleged remarks of his father, the Chief Minister said he was pained by such comments and asserted that the police would take appropriate action in the matter.

Following a complaint filed by the 'Sarv Brahmin Samaj', the D.D. Nagar police here registered an FIR late on Saturday night against Nand Kumar Baghel, 86, the official said. The case was registered under IPC Sections 153-A and 505 (b). The outfit, in its com-

plaint, alleged that Mr. Nand recently appealed to people to boycott Brahmins by terming them as foreigners, and also asked people to not let them enter their villages. It also accused him of asking people to "evict" Brahmins out of the country.

According to the police, Mr. Nand reportedly made the remarks at an event in Uttar Pradesh recently.

'Pained by comments'

The Chief Minister, in a statement, said, "The remarks made by my father Nand Kumar Baghel against a specific class have come to my attention. The comments have hurt the sentiments of the class as well as social harmony and I am also pained by it."

"Nobody is above the law in my government even if he is the Chief Minister's 86-year-old father," he added.

muslim symbolisms.

While Uttar Pradesh has 403 MLAs, the State Tourism Department received proposals for development of sites in 373 constituencies.

The proposals were sent as part of the Mukyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana launched by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath earlier this year to develop and promote local heritage and tourism sites, centres of spiritual, historical, cultural, natural and religious importance.

A booklet published by the department shows that a majority of the MLAs have picked

temples, dhams, ashrams, pilgrimage sites and shrines and ghats considered holy. The legislators were asked to nominate the "most important site" in their constituency to be developed into a high-level tourism site, according to officials. A sum of ₹50 lakh was allotted to each constituency while the additional funds would come from the MLA fund and the CSR fund. The government earmarked a budget of ₹180 crore for the scheme.

CM pleased

In a recent interview with *The Hindu*, the Chief Minister expressed pleasure as he noted that while the scheme was open to sites of all faiths and heritage, most of the legislators had proposed temples.

"... If a Muslim MLA has proposed a dargah, then funds would have

gone even there. But because now even SP people are giving priority to *mandirs* instead of a dargah or a mosque, mostly temples have been proposed," Mr. Adityanath said.

Barring a few historical sites, forts, waterbodies, birthplaces of poets, parks, Buddhist and Jain sites and places linked to wildlife conservation, the BJP MLAs not surprisingly picked places connected with Hindu culture and faith.

Of the 33 SP MLAs who proposed sites under the scheme, 29 chose Hindu temples and ashrams as well as sites dedicated to local Hindu deities.

The remaining four chose a fort, a dargah, a gurdwara and a *teela* (mound) believed to be from the Mahabharata-era in Issopur, Shamli.

Muslim MLAs from the SP too preferred temples and dhams, with the exceptions being senior MLA Alam Badi of Azamgarh, who picked a gurdwara, and Abrar Ah-

mad, who picked a fort in Issauli, Sultanpur.

'No pressure'

Irfan Solanki, SP MLA from Sisamau in Kanpur, said he nominated the Balkhandeshwar temple as he felt there was no better spot in his constituency to be beautified and where families could come and spend quality time.

Mr. Solanki said that the choice made by him was not under any pressure of Hindutva politics. Pointing to his Muslim background, he also suggested that it could help in creating bridges between communities.

"If a Muslim steps forward for a temple, this would also help in tackling the feelings of Hindu-Muslim (communal) that people are fuelling," he said.

The BSP MLAs displayed a similar pattern. Of the 16 leaders who won in 2017 on BSP ticket, 13 picked Hindu religious sites, including jailed MLA from Mau, Mukhtar Ansari, whose family

has been under the radar of the Yogi Adityanath government.

Former Uttar Pradesh Speaker and current MLA from Didarganj in Azamgarh Sukhdeo Rajbhar, who recently announced retirement from active politics and facilitated his son's entry into the SP after lamenting about the weakening of the "Bahujan movement", nominated a temple of Lord Shiva. The other three picked a pond, the birthplace of poet Narottam Das in Sitapur and a site linked to the Mahabharata in Prayagraj, Lakshagraha.

In comparison, the Congress list was fairly diverse. Of the seven MLAs the party has on paper, three, including State president Ajay Kumar Lallu, nominated two temples, two picked waterbodies, another nominated an Ambedkar park in Saharanpur while one legislator chose a site near a golf course in Kanpur.

SP chief Akhilesh Yadav's uncle Shivpal Yadav, Inde-

pendent MLAs Raghuraj Pratap Singh, alias Raja Bhैया, Vinod Saroj and Aman Mani Tripathi and three MLAs of the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party, including its president Om Prakash Rajbhar, also selected temples or dhams.

Officials say the sites nominated by the legislators could indicate their electoral calculations, with the State heading to polls. The sites nominated were those where there was already a decent footfall of locals but had scope to expand amenities, said an official.

Mukesh Meshram, Principal Secretary, Uttar Pradesh Tourism and Culture, said many legislators had even proposed renovation of temples but the proposals were rejected as the scheme only deals with developing amenities around the site or structure of interest. "We said we cannot touch the religious structures. We will only provide the facilities [around it]," Mr. Meshram said.

Baghel waits for Rahul's visit to Bastar

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister wants to showcase the 'camp model of governance' in Naxal-hit areas

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing leadership tussle in Chhattisgarh, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel invited former Congress president Rahul Gandhi to the Bastar region when he met Mr. Gandhi in Delhi last week.

The former Congress chief is yet to finalise his travel programme to the State but Mr. Baghel was quick to announce Mr. Gandhi's acceptance of his invitation.

While a visit by Mr. Gandhi may be interpreted as an endorsement of Mr. Baghel, the Chief Minister's camp is also keen to "impress" Mr. Gandhi by showcasing his government's "camp model of governance" in the Maoist insurgency-affected areas of the State.

For the past several months, the Baghel government has focussed on holding "integrated development



Providing updates: A file photo of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel after his meeting with Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi.

camps" in the seven tribal-dominated districts under the Bastar division – Sukma, Dantewada, Narayanpur, Kondagaon, Bijapur, Bastar (Jagdalpur) and Kanker – where citizens are being provided with various government services such as Aadhaar cards, ration cards, health cards under the Ayushman scheme, caste certifi-

icates, and others. The local administration has been holding special camps for tribals living in the remote areas of the seven districts.

Camp model

Security forces, mainly the Central Reserve Police Force deployed in the area, first "sanitise" a particular area/village that can be easily ac-

cessed by several villages in a particular neighbourhood.

Then a facility camp is held alongside a security camp where villagers are encouraged to visit and avail the services. The State government claims that it provides transport as well as food to incentivise villagers.

It is the Chhattisgarh version of "governance at the doorstep" model that States such as West Bengal and Delhi have been trying out lately.

"Apart from the security aspect, the biggest issue is Internet connectivity in the interior areas. To make an Aadhaar card, you need to connect to the server. That is why we set up camps where there is Internet connectivity," said an official who didn't wish to be quoted.

The official claimed that in the Naxal-hit Bijapur district, over 11,484 new Aadhaar cards were issued while

another 11,000 cards were updated. Similar camps have been held in Minapa, Silger and Sarkeguda.

Police training

Besides development camps, the Baghel government is also trying to induct tribal youth into the State police through the local 'Poona Narkom' campaign, imparting police training at Chhindgarh in Sukma district.

"There was a time when the youth of Bastar did not join in the recruitment of security forces due to fear of Naxalites, but now the circumstances have changed," the official said.

While the Baghel faction is keen to score on the "camp model" with the high command, his rival and Health Minister T. S. Singh Deo has made it clear that the final word on the leadership battle has not been spoken yet.

Cong. rules out alliance with SP, BSP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Virtually ruling out an alliance with the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election, Congress's State unit chief Ajay Kumar Lallu on Sunday said his party would forge alliances only with small parties and would "not even think about" joining hands with the big ones.

He also said the governments of the BJP, the BSP and the SP that ruled Uttar Pradesh in the past 32 years failed to live up to the expectations of the people and the Congress was set for a comeback.

Mr. Lallu said in the eyes of the people of Uttar Pradesh, the Congress was the main challenger to the BJP.

He said the party would fight the polls under the supervision of Priyanka Gandhi as she is the general secretary in-charge of the State and a call on the chief ministerial face would be taken by the national leadership.

Both the SP and the BSP have also ruled out tying up with the Congress, with SP's Akhilesh Yadav saying the party will forge alliances only with small parties and BSP chief Mayawati asserting that the party would go solo in the election.

Mr. Lallu said the people's anger against the BJP over issues such as price rise, unemployment, farmers' plight, poverty, reservation and "murder of democracy" would manifest in the 2022 election.

Mamata to contest from Bhabanipur

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday announced its candidates for the byelections to three Assembly seats in West Bengal scheduled for September 30.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will contest from Bhabanipur in Kolkata.

Ms. Banerjee had represented the constituency in 2011 and 2016. With the Election Commission of India announcing the bypolls, the State's ruling party has begun its campaign for Bhabanipur. Trinamool Congress supporters started painting wall graffiti in the area with "Khela Hobe" slogans seeking votes for the Chief Minister.

In the Assembly election held earlier this year, Ms. Banerjee contested from Nandigram and lost to Suwendu Adhikari of the BJP by a narrow margin of 1,956 votes.

To continue as Chief Minister, she has to get elected to the Assembly by November 5.

From the Jangipur seat, the Trinamool is fielding former Minister Jakir Hossain, while the candidate from Samserganj is Amirul Islam.

The byelections will also test the Left-Congress alliance. The Congress is not keen on fielding any candidate against the Chief Minister. The Left parties are likely to put up a candidate if the Congress does not field anyone.

Samajwadi Party trying to shed its dominant Yadav image

Ahead of poll, it is reaching out to the non-Yadav OBC bloc

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election, the Samajwadi Party (SP) is trying to overcome its limitation of being and portrayed as a Yadav-dominated party. The leadership is now on an overdrive to reach out to the non-Yadav OBC bloc, and to expand further it has made electoral alliances with smaller caste-based parties.

SP State president Naresh Uttam Patel on August 29 started the "Kisan Naujawan Patel Yatra" targeting the numerically strong "Kurmi" voters who for the past three elections – the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and the 2017 Assembly election – have backed the BJP.

Banking on the current farmers' unrest against the Narendra Modi government, Mr. Patel, a Kurmi himself, is reaching out to these sections. "The Modi government is vacillating on the caste census. Even the reservation policy is in danger today. The farmers are not getting the promised minimum support price (MSP). Their justified demands are met with lathicharge and oppression. The government is busy branding the agitating farmers as separatists," he said.

Apart from this, on August 9 the party launched OBC 'sammelans'. The first phase of these 'sammelans', or dialogues, are being or-



ganised in the central Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand areas, and later it will move into the Purvanchal belt.

While keeping its distance from the Congress, the SP has now tied up with smaller caste-based parties such as the Mahan Dal, which is led by Keshav Dev Maurya, and the Janwadi Socialist Party of Sanjay Chauhan.

Mr. Chauhan's party has a strong hold among the Chauhan community, an extremely backward caste of the OBC category which has a considerable presence across eastern Uttar Pradesh. The Mahan Dal came into being in 2008 after Mr. Maurya left the Bahujan Samaj Party. The Maurya community is estimated to be around 6% of the total voters in the State. Though both parties are marginal forces – Mahan Dal had 0.1% vote share in the last State election – the SP is hoping that bringing them on board will broaden its reach.

The non-Yadav OBCs that

broke away from the umbrella social justice politics dominated by the Yadavs have become the bedrock of BJP politics in the State. One of the key reasons for the spectacular jump in the BJP's electoral performance from 47 seats and a 15% vote share in the 2012 Assembly election, to 312 seats (40% vote share) in the 2017 election is consolidation of these non-Yadav OBCs under the "Grand Hindu Identity".

Last month, addressing the Mahan Dal meeting, SP president Akhilesh Yadav accused the BJP of driving a wedge between the backward communities by pitting Yadavs against the rest of the OBCs. His frustration is evident as the SP leaders themselves concede that the BJP's strategy of isolating the Yadavs has worked. "Samajwadi Party stands for all backward classes, not only the Yadavs. The BJP has been successful in their smear campaign against us. But we are confident that in these seven years since 2014, the backward castes have understood the fraud perpetrated by the BJP," SP's chief spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary said.

The 2020 Bihar election results have also made the SP wary, where the RJD lost out to the BJP-JD(U) combine by a whisker because of counter-mobilisation against a possible accession of a 'Yadav' party to power.

BJP wants Hanuman temple on Jharkhand Assembly premises

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

The BJP in Jharkhand has demanded a Hanuman temple and prayer halls for other religions on the new Assembly premises, after a notification by Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahto, which surfaced on September 4, said a "namaz hall" had been allotted in the building for Muslims.

"We are not against namaz room but the Speaker should also construct a Ha-

numan temple inside the Assembly premises," former Speaker and senior BJP leader C.P. Singh said. BJP Legislature Party leader and former Chief Minister Babul Marandi too demanded that the Assembly Secretary "allot five rooms for other religions and a hall for Hindus as well to recite Hanuman Chalisa there".

Chief Whip of the BJP Legislature Party and Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan told

The Hindu over phone that the Speaker should withdraw the "unconstitutional" order; otherwise, he would be forced to approach the court.

The notification dated September 2 said "room number TW348 has been earmarked as namaz hall for offering namaz in the new Assembly building". The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Congress had supported the order.

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R.O. No.: 2133-PPICL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2021-22 Date: 04-09-2021

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(A Government of Kerala Undertaking) An ISO 9001 :2015, 14001:2015 Company
Walayar Post, Palakkad-678624-Kerala
Email: materials@malabarceaments.com / bulkmkt@malabarceaments.com

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- Disposal of Scrap, Thro' MSTC - 1) Disposal of Chrome Steel Scrap at CGU - Reg. 2) Disposal of Non-Operational Heavy Earth Machines at Mines. 3) Disposal of Obsolete Spares of Stores.

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STEEL INDUSTRIALS KERALA LIMITED (SILK)
A GOVERNMENT OF KERALA UNDERTAKING
SILK NAGAR, ATHANI P.O., THRISSUR - 680 581 - KERALA
Ph: 0487 2201766. Email: silkmds@gmail.com

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(Tender ID: 2021_SILK_437605_1, 2021_SILK_437600_1, 2021_SILK_437613_1, 2021_SILK_437618_1, 2021_SILK_437588_1)
Last date of submission: 17.9.2021, 3 p.m.
(Sd/-) Managing Director

भारतीय ताराभित्तिकी संस्थान
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ASTROPHYSICS
(विज्ञान व प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार के अखिल भारतीय संस्थान)
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Notice Inviting Tender
Notice - 560034

Sealed Tenders are invited for "Relaying of Existing Asphalt Road at Vainu Bappu Observatory (VBO) Campus, IIA, Kavalur, Tamil Nadu - Tender Notice No.: 46/IIA/CIVIL/VBO/2021-22 dated 06.09.2021. Detailed Tender Document can be downloaded from Institute's Website: www.iiaap.res.in/tenders.htm.
Last date for receipt of bid is 06.10.2021 at 1500 hours.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



Uddhav asks parties to fight COVID third wave

Appealing to parties to stop playing politics over COVID-19, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday said "agitations" must be directed at preventing a third wave and not for the reopening of temples, which would only serve to spread the virus. Warning the public against letting down guard, Mr. Thackeray reminded citizens that there was a surge in cases after festivities last year during the same time.

President arrives in Goa for three-day visit

President Ram Nath Kovind arrived in Goa on Sunday for his three-day visit to the State, during which he is scheduled to take part in an event organised by the Navy. An aircraft carrying Mr. Kovind arrived at Dabolim airport in the afternoon, from where he was flown in a helicopter to Bambolim helipad. He was welcomed by State Deputy CM Chandrakant Kavlekar and Protocol Minister Mauvin Godinho there. Mr. Kovind will present the President's Colour to naval aviation on Monday morning during the event being hosted by INS Hansa, a naval air station located near Dabolim. "The event coincides with the diamond jubilee of INS Hansa and the liberation of Goa," a Navy spokesman said.

Rahul Gandhi may offer prayers at Vaishno Devi

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi could offer prayers at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine during his two-day tour of the Jammu region next week. Though there is no official word so far, sources said Mr. Gandhi is likely to visit Jammu on September 9 and 10. Last month, he had gone to the Kashmir Valley, and addressed a gathering at the party office.

States told to identify fake vaccines

Health Ministry issues guidelines after WHO detects counterfeit Covishield jabs in the country

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Following the World Health Organization's (WHO) warning that it has identified counterfeit versions of the Covishield vaccine in South-east Asia and Africa, the Union Health Ministry has written to all States and Union Territories to identify counterfeit/falsified Covishield vaccines in India. Monitoring teams for COVID-19 vaccination in States are being provided with details for due diligence.

The Ministry said in its letter: "The States have been told to carefully authenticate vaccines before use. The Centre has provided details for identification of original labels of three vaccines being administered in India (Covishield, Covaxin, Sputnik V)." The Ministry has issued guidelines to ensure fake COVID-19 vaccines are not administered in India. The WHO noted that falsified Covishield (ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 Corona Virus Vac-



Telling them apart: WHO said falsified products were reported at patient level in Uganda, India and Myanmar.

cines-Recombinant) has been identified in the WHO's African Region and South-East Asia Region. "The falsified products were reported to WHO in July and August 2021. The genuine manufacturer of COVISHIELD (Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd.) has confirmed that the products listed are falsified. These falsified products have been reported at the patient

level in Uganda, India and Myanmar," it said. The genuine Covishield vaccine is indicated for active immunisation of individuals who are 18 years or older for the prevention of the disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, the WHO added. It advised: "The use of genuine COVID-19 vaccines should be in accordance with official guidance

from national regulatory authorities. Falsified COVID-19 vaccines pose a serious risk to global public health and place an additional burden on vulnerable populations and health systems. It is important to detect and remove these falsified products from circulation to prevent harm to patients."

Identification methods
The Ministry indicated various features to ascertain genuine products. The anti-counterfeit features in the Covaxin label include an invisible helix (DNA-like structure) that is only seen under UV light; micro text hidden in the label claim Dots, which is written as Covaxin; the green foil effect in the 'x' of Covaxin; and the holographic effect on Covaxin. On the Sputnik vaccine, the Ministry said that it's an imported product from two different bulk manufacturing sites from Russia with two different labels for both these sites. "While all the in-

formation and design is the same, only the manufacturer's name is different. For all the imported products till now, the English label is only available on the front and back of the carton of 5 ampoule packs while all other sides including the primary label on the ampoule is in Russian," the Ministry said. It also listed indicators to identify the Serum Institute of India's product labels for Covishield. It said the label's colour shade is dark green ("Shade: Pantone 355C") as per approved artwork, and the brand name appears with trade mark mentioned, that is, 'COVISHIELDTM'. The text font of the generic name appears 'un-bold', it said, while listing other features to be considered. Meanwhile, Additional Secretary, Education Ministry, Santosh Kumar Sarangi said earlier this week that over 80% of teaching and non-teaching staff in government and private schools had been vaccinated so far.

'Revise nursing council's clause for the disabled'

Group calls new rules discriminatory

**BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI**

The Indian Nursing Council's (INC) recent notification restricting the 5% reservation for persons with disabilities (PwD) in B.Sc. Nursing courses only to those with lower limb disability, and that too for the 40-50% disabled, has come under criticism from a pan-India group of health professionals with disabilities.

The group has now written to the Union Health Ministry and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities seeking the allegedly discriminatory clause be repealed, and that nurses with disabilities and disability rights activists be involved in the framing of new guidelines.

Unique connect
Speaking on the issues, nursing officer Monika Dhankar said nurses with disabilities have a unique way of connecting with their patients because of their experiences in actually being patients.

"Nursing as a profession embraces the need to avoid discrimination, yet disability as an equal opportunity issue is relatively neglected in nursing," she said. Ms. Dhankar added that nurses have an obligation to promote disability equality in relation to the provision of health care. "Adoption of the social model of disability in nursing practice, education and research as a strategy to challenge discrimination should be seriously considered," she said. The group in its letter has said that the INC drafted the "revised Nursing Curriculum in the year we commemorated the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, and despite the passage of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPDA) in 2016,



The rules coincided with the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.

has continued with the discriminatory, unfair, and unethical guidelines that prevent otherwise qualified applicants with disabilities from entering nursing". "The Union Health Ministry, which INC also reports to, enabled people with locomotor disabilities to enroll in MBBS with a disability percentage of 50-70%. Furthermore, in 2007, members of the Adhoc Committee established by the Supreme Court recommended expanding disability percentage from 40% to 70% in a gazette notification dated March 31, 2009," said Satendra Singh, founder, Doctors with Disabilities: Agents of Change, and co-chair, International Council for Disability Inclusion in Medical Education. He said that the Indian Parliament passed the new disability law, which now has 21 disabilities, in 2016. "The erstwhile Medical Council of India in 2018 modified its guidelines to accommodate candidates with newer disabilities. The INC, however, has defied the new law and not provided 5% reservation to those with upper limb disabilities, dyslexia, low vision, dwarfism, hearing impairment, thalassemia, haemophilia, sickle cell disease, and acid attack survivors, etc., despite the gazette notifying the new revised nursing curriculum," Dr. Singh said.

New mediator for Naga peace pact sought

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI**

MPs and activists have called for replacing R.N. Ravi as the interlocutor in the Naga peace process to prevent it from derailing. Mr. Ravi is the Governor of Nagaland and has been crossing swords with the extremist Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. The Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) had organised a conference in Delhi on Saturday. The participants noted the "derailment" of the peace process due to the "trust deficit" between Mr. Ravi and NSCN (IM).

Delhi Police arrest actor Leena Paul in extortion case

She helped Suresh Chandrashekar swindle money

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI**

The Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing arrested actor Leena Maria Paul on Sunday for allegedly helping her boyfriend Suresh Chandrashekar, an accused in 21 cases, in extorting ₹200 crore from a businessman's wife. The police have invoked the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime (MCOCA) Act against the accused, a senior police officer said, adding that further investigation into the matter is



Leena Paul

under way. He said Ms. Paul allegedly helped Chandrashekar in duping former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shi-

vinder Mohan Singh's wife Aditi Singh. An FIR was registered on August 7 after Ms. Singh informed the police that a man posing as a senior official of the Law Ministry in June last year had offered to help secure bail for her husband, who was in jail at that time, in return for money. Shivinder Singh was arrested in a money laundering case related to the alleged misappropriation of funds at Religare Finvest Ltd (RFL) in 2019.

Health crusader Keshav Desiraju no more

Former Union Health Secretary will be remembered as a man of silent courage and a valued leader

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Former Union Health Secretary Keshav Desiraju passed away in Chennai on Sunday due to "acute coronary syndrome". He was 66. Grandson of former President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Mr. Desiraju was an IAS officer from the 1978 batch of the Uttarakhand cadre. He had a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Cambridge and a Master's in Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. He held many positions

with the governments of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh and the Government of India and retired as the Union Secretary in the Department of Consumer Affairs. He is often referred to as the person who put mental health issues pertaining to India on the map of the world. His work and passion for ensuring accountability of the government in the health system and engagement to improving efficiency of service delivery was well-known, and he co-authored with Samiran Nundy and Sanjay Nagral, *Healers or*



Keshav Desiraju

Predators? Healthcare Corruption in India. Mr. Desiraju was known for his keen engagement with public health and clean

governance. His colleagues and successors remember him as a man whose "silent courage and ability to carry his team with him" made him a valued mentor and leader. Tributes poured in for the senior bureaucrat from medical professionals and from the civil service fraternity. "Keshav Desiraju, grandson of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, was loved and appreciated for his honesty and decency. This set him apart. He was a pillar of strength to many," said K. Sujatha Rao, who served as Union Secretary, Ministry of Health and Fam-

ily Welfare until 2010. Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh in his tweet said: "My dear, dear friend for 57 years, Keshav Desiraju, a most outstanding civil servant has just passed away. What a tragic irony that he left us on the day the country marks the birthday of his grandfather. Keshav has written the definitive biography of M.S. Subbulakshmi." Mr. Desiraju is survived by two sisters and a brother. The funeral will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday at the Besant Nagar crematorium in Chennai.

THCROSSWORD+13345

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

SCAN TO PLAY

13 Seize Greek viper (5)

14 Top channel covering Cuba's environmental problem (4,4)

16 Right kind of shirt to spread bad substance used for colouring (8)

18 One pound for a little rare raw meat (5)

20 Announced market price (4)

21 Lead-free granular substance, say (10)

23 Youngster wears deteriorated helmet (4,3)

24 Doctor originally suggested to discharge one admitted for having depression (7)

25 Sibling backs procedure to remove bone for medical condition (6)

26 Illiterate and slow to act? Not quite! (6)

■ DOWN

1 Obese person lost after making a comeback (to some extent) (5)

2 After leaving university, I educate cooks to make a cold drink (4,3)

3 India's top politician to skip meeting with trade union leaders being unprepared (9)

5 Show again some insurer/underwriter (5)

6 Civil clause regulated capital for research (7)

7 Provide helpers in resort (9)

10 Decorated items could be fair gifts (9)

13 Man and woman sharing copies with a famous English conspirator (3,6)

15 Division by 100 yielding finite number over 25 (9)

17 Promote South Indian state without rich backing (5,2)

19 Recurrent energy flow behind Earth's oval shape (7)

21 Explanation given by the greatest British setter (5)

22 Time to study. It's March! (5)

■ ACROSS

1 Fellow's harsh and unresponsive (6)

4 Centre for Science developed rare piece of silicon rubber (6)

8 A dry and largely useless experiment (7)

9 Assume Frenchman killed outside entrance of coaching institute (7)

11 Perhaps harmonica/tongue — a nice term to describe this? (5,5)

12 Deposit money, get returns (4)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13344

RUTHLESS	ACCENT
CHAIRMAN	BRIDAL
PASTE	DOWN
PARCEL	DIRECTION
STEAMER	CAESAR
ANNULMENT	UNITED
PENCIL	TABLETS
ANIMAL	TAPHOUSE
ECHOES	FEARLESS

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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



BHAVANA ACHARYA

Q. I have ₹5 lakh with me. Will it be wise to invest in gold for 20 years such that this will grow to ₹3-₹4 crore?

AMIT KUMAR YADAV

A. There are two aspects here. The first is the return you're expecting is unfortunately far too high. You are unlikely to reach your goal with your planned investment amount. For ₹5 lakh to grow into ₹3-₹4 crore in 20 years, you will need an annual return of 23-24%.

To put it in perspective, consider all 10-year periods over the past 30 years. In only about 2% of these has gold given more than even 20%. Yes, there are bursts when gold may rise very sharply by 50-80%. But these periods are almost always followed by periods of low returns. These ups and downs even out return over the long term. Gold returns have tended towards 10% or lower over the long term. If you consider stocks, the same trend holds as well. Assuming a reasonable 12% return, ₹5 lakh would grow into about ₹48 lakh in 20 years. To reach ₹3 crore, you must invest about ₹4 lakh a year.

For now, invest the ₹5 lakh in a mixture of large-cap, flexi-cap and mid-cap/small-cap mutual funds. Let the maximum exposure to the mid- and small-cap funds be 30%. This is assuming you have a high risk appetite and are willing to hold through market falls, and that you already have low-risk debt investments. Else, reduce mid- and small-cap exposure. Use SIPs or STPs over the next 6-8 months to reduce timing risks.

Q. I am aged 19 and earn ₹6,000 a month. I cannot keep an eye on market fluctuations as I am busy with exams. Where can I invest?

ASHMITA SHARMA

A. It depends on what you wish to do with your investments. If it is for a goal that is not a very long way away — say, a post-graduate degree 4 to 5 years from now — then invest 35-45% of the amount in the Nifty 50 index funds. This will give you exactly what the Nifty 50 will return. Note that you will still see return fluctuations in line with the markets. Investing in the index simply removes the need to track markets. Invest the balance in 1-2 debt funds from the short-duration debt fund and/or corporate bond fund categories. This will balance the risk you're taking with the equity funds. If your investment time frame is longer than 5 years, raise equity allocation to 60-65%. You can allocate about 10-15% for the higher-returning Nifty Next 50 index.

Q. I am a government employee with ₹10,000 a month to invest. I want to invest in mutual funds with a time frame of 5 years. If I have to invest in stocks, where do I start?

R. YADAV

A. For a 5-year time frame, split the amount equally between equity funds and debt funds. This allows equity participation, while the debt will both shield your investments from stock market volatility and deliver FD-plus return. For the equity allocation, invest ₹3,000 in large-cap or flexi-cap/value funds that predominantly invest in large-cap stocks. You can also consider index funds based on the Nifty 50 or the Nifty 100. Invest the remaining ₹2,000 in flexi-cap or focused funds that take some amount of mid-cap allocations, or go with the Nifty Next 50 index. On debt, invest equally in two funds from the short duration or banking and PSU debt or corporate-bond fund categories. This will get you started on investing in stock markets, and over time, you can develop the understanding and knowledge needed to invest directly in stocks.

Q. I am 28 and will leave my job to pursue civil services. I have savings of ₹1 lakh. Is this enough to start share market trade or should I keep it as FD with SBI?

SAURABH

A. Invest the amount as an FD with SBI or in Post Office Time Deposit. Stock market trading needs understanding, needs you to spend time tracking markets and news. It is high risk. Given that you are taking a break from work and your savings are not large, it is best to stick to safe options.

Q. I have parked my earnings and accruals in SB and term deposits. Over time, these have not fetched a perceptible increase. What is a safe and assured way to secure higher returns without incurring any loss or risk, say in equities or buying shares via SIP?

R. INDRA

A. For higher returns, you should be willing to take higher risk. Stock markets offer better returns than bank FDs. But know that stock markets will fall, and it is hard to predict when such declines may take place. Every fall, though, is followed by rallies. If you absolutely wish to avoid any risk or loss, equity markets are not for you. SIPs do not remove the possibility of loss but are just a way to invest steadily and at different market levels.

For safe options that can deliver more than bank FDs, consider instruments such as the RBI Taxable Floating Rate Bond (where interest rates are 0.35% above the prevailing NSC rate), the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, Senior Citizen Savings Scheme and post office deposits. You can also opt for FDs from banks that pay higher interest rates. But keep such deposits below ₹5 lakh in each bank in order to be adequately covered by deposit insurance. Another option is debt mutual funds, which are more tax-efficient than deposits, but still low-risk. Debt funds, however, need care in selection and understanding. Go for these if you have access to good advice and recommendations.

(The adviser is co-founder, PrimeInvestor.in)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

Where to invest your FIRST PAY

AARATI KRISHNAN

One of the most common queries we receive is from young folks starting out on their careers, asking which investment products we'd recommend. To select the investment products that best fit you, you need to be clear about your investment objectives, time horizon and risk appetite first. Here's how first-timers should go about investing.

Savings target

You need money to make money, so the secret to wealth creation lies in maxing out your savings that can be funnelled into investments.

Running a monthly SIP of ₹5,000 for 10 years in a mutual fund (MF) that delivers a 15% compound annual return will help you accumulate ₹13.93 lakh, but double that SIP to ₹10,000 and it can get you to ₹20.65 lakh with a 10% return.

This is why it helps to set a savings target that you'll stick to, come what may. Warren Buffett's tenet — "Don't save what's left after spending, but spend what's left after saving" — is a good way to ensure a high level of savings. Set a savings target that is at 10% or 15% your take-

Set a savings target that is at 10% or 15% your take-home pay to start with and raise that amount to 20-25% as your income takes off

home pay to start with and raise that amount to 20-25% as your income takes off. Set up automatic debits in your salary account that compulsorily deduct, say 15% of your pay, before the 5th of each month to go into investments like recurring deposits, SIPs in MFs or contributions to your NPS/EPF account.

Definite goals

Long lock-in products can deprive you of quick cash to meet emergencies or fulfil short-term goals. Mapping out your financial goals with their timelines before you choose products, helps you avoid this pitfall.

Start your investment plans by putting some thought into why you're investing in the first place. List out the financial goals you'd like to achieve within a year, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, by 7 years and beyond. The goals

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK
IMAGING: J.A. PREMKUMAR

need not be lofty like buying a 3-BHK or acquiring bitcoins. If you have debt to pay off (say, an education loan), get to that first by adding it to your less than 5-year goals.

Once you have a list of goals mapped to their time horizons, asset and product choices are

Clarity on investment objectives, time horizon and risk appetite are essential for beginners

ly for protection against risks, not to create wealth.

Prepare for emergencies

Our best-made plans can go awry when Acts of God or emergencies strike. During COVID-19, many folks saw their savings depleted because multiple family members had to be hospitalised. Some families lost their bread-winners.

Those who escaped such serious adversities saw their employers hand out pink slips or cut their pay. Unforeseen emergencies of this kind can force you to dip into savings, stop regular investments or even withdraw money from your retirement kitty.

Insurance plans are the most cost-effective way to shield against such risks because the insurer pays you or your dependents a big lump sum against a nominal annual premium. Pure term-life plans compensate your dependents for the loss of your income on your untimely passing. Health insurance plans cover medical expenses in the event of hospitalisation. Critical illness covers pay out a lump sum if you're diagnosed with serious illness that interrupts your career or income. Household insurance

protects your home and your other assets against natural calamities. These are the four types of insurance you should seriously think of getting in the early stages of your career.

Insurance plans, however, tend to have many exclusions that may leave you unprotected in some unforeseeable emergencies. To be able to tide over such events, it helps to have an emergency fund parked in liquid and absolutely safe avenues.

Simple products

When you select products, make sure you understand where your money is going and how returns are delivered.

In insurance plans, it is enough to start with a pure term cover and a basic mediclaim policy. For your emergency fund, a fixed deposit with a leading bank can suffice.

For medium-term needs, post office instruments like NSC or GoI savings bonds can fit the bill. For retirement, EPF, Public Provident Fund and NPS are excellent instruments. For your equity allocations, index MFs mirroring the Nifty50, Nifty Next 50 or Nifty500 can simplify your choices and reduce the need for tracking and juggling.

COVER NOTE: DRIVE IN PEACE

Going for an extra cover drive

A comprehensive plan for vehicles may be necessary following a court order

K. NITYA KALYANI

The Madras High Court had recently ordered that, from September 1 this year, all new vehicles sold in Tamil Nadu should have a 5-year bumper-to-bumper insurance cover.

This is being read as a Motor Third-Party (TP) liability cover, which is anyway statutory under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, plus an Own Damage cover plus personal-accident cover for owner, driver and passengers.

An inbuilt ₹1 lakh personal accident cover for owner-cum-driver has been compulsory for the last few years as part of the OD cover. This costs ₹100 for a death-only cover.

The recent order includes passengers and separate owner and driver covers as well, extent and nature of cover unspecified. Own Damage cover for the vehicle is the other addition. All in all, it's a good thing to have.

Let us see what this means in terms of costs and benefits for you as a vehicle owner and the one who is going to pay for it all.

If you buy a car worth ₹6 lakh, the TP liability cover will cost about ₹3,500 and the OD cover about ₹10,000



Broad-based: The court judgment includes passengers and separates owner and driver covers. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

for one year.

If you renewed this every year for the first 5 years, the TP premium will change as per annual review by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India. Your OD premium will decrease each year since the Insured Estimated Value (the sum insured) of the vehicle will reduce with depreciation. Also, you would accumulate a no-claim bonus in the form of a premium discount.

An annual PA, death-only cover for owner, driver and four passengers for ₹1 lakh each will cost ₹600. A longer period of insurance can mean a discount in the premium rate.

Put together, you will pay ₹56,500 towards insurance

when you buy the car. I am not calculating any increase in TP rate or the reductions in OD premium. If you took the same covers you would be paying 20% of this when you register the vehicle. In today's scenario, you will pay all of it in one go. So, you will pay about 5% more on your total acquisition cost.

Free of worry

For this, you get all the benefits of the insurance and can be worry-free for 5 years as you don't have to remember renewal dates.

The common practice is to buy a comprehensive policy along with a new vehicle and drop all but the statutory TP insurance on renewal.

If there is a hire-purchase

agreement, the comprehensive cover has to be maintained until the loan is paid off as part of the conditions.

Many stop with the bare minimum of TP cover alone when buying a vehicle and either renew or ignore it in later years. This has led to the biggest threat we have on our roads viz. vehicles without liability cover. Estimates put this between 40-60% of the vehicles on roads.

Affordability of five years premium upfront will now become an arguing point. As said earlier, it is a 5% add on to your vehicle acquisition cost, and will become part of the vehicle loan if you are opting for it.

Similar complaints came up with the Life Time Road Tax when it was implemented two decades ago. But now, it is just a part of your cost of acquisition; you pay your dues and are free of that responsibility for that period.

A similar practical outlook is warranted towards insurance cover and premium. After all, you just have to look at the cost of the cover versus the financial coverage you get in return.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

PRECIOUS METALS: NO CLEAR TREND

Weak dollar helps precious metals get back some shine

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

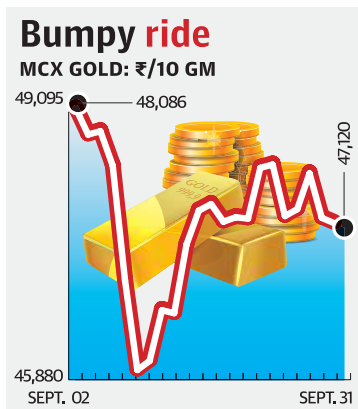
Precious metals remained in a broad range, devoid of any significant trend in August. After dropping to a low of \$1,677, there was a sharp recovery in Comex gold price in the latter half of August. The weakness in the U.S. dollar played a key role in the recovery of precious metals' prices. The drop in the U.S. bond yields, too, helped in the recovery of precious metals.

Comex gold closed almost unchanged at \$1,818.1 an ounce at the end of August. Comex silver however closed on a weak note. It fell 6% to \$24.1 an ounce at the end of August. In the domestic market, MCX gold futures dropped 1.8% to close at ₹47,120 per 10 gm. MCX silver futures witnessed a steeper cut of 7.7% to settle at ₹63,366 per kg at the end of August.

The short-term outlook for Comex gold is positive. The price is likely to rise to the immediate target of \$1,915-1,920 range. A move past \$1,840 would confirm the positive outlook for gold.

The short-term positive outlook for Comex gold would be under threat if the price falls below the \$1,720-1,740 zone. As long as this support zone is not breached, there would be a case for a move to \$1,915 and higher. Below \$1,720, Comex gold could drop to the \$1,640-1,650 zone.

The Comex silver price bounced off the key support at \$21.75-22 zone,



which is a sign of strength. A move past \$24.5 would confirm the positive undertone and could push the price to the near-term target of \$25.50-26.

On the other hand, a fall below \$21.5 would be a major sign of weakness and Comex silver could then slip to the next downside target of \$20-20.5.

MCX gold is still confined within the broad range of ₹43,500-49,100. From a short-term perspective, MCX gold will gain upward momentum on a move above ₹48,500. Above ₹48,500, the price could head to the short-term target of ₹50,500-51,000. On the other hand, a close below ₹45,600 would be a sign of weakness and could push the price to the ₹43,500-44,000 range.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

Life insurance term plan premium				
Male: 30 Years, Sum Insured - ₹1 crore, Cover up to - 70 Years				
Insurance company	Plan name	Maximum cover up to (Years)	Annual premium ₹	
LIC OF INDIA	Tech Term*	80	14,122	
Aditya Birla Capital	Life Shield Plan	85	12,998	
Aegon Life	iTerm Insurance Plan	100	9,114	
Bajaj Allianz	Smart Protect Goal	85	10,911	
Bharti AXA	Premier Protect Plan	75	11,092**	
Canara HSBC OBC	iSelect Star Term Plan	99	11,605	
HDFC Life	Click2Protect Plus	85	12,601	
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	15,628	
India First Life	e-Term Plan	80	8,260	
Kotak Life Insurance	Kotak e-Term Plan	75	9,558	
Max Life insurance	Smart Term Plan	85	11,800***	
PNB Met Life	Mera Term Plan Plus	99	12,272	
Reliance Nippon Life	Digi Term	80	11,012	
SBI Life	eShield	80	15,070	
TATA AIA Life	Maha Raksha Supreme	100	12,980	

*Maximum policy term is 40 years **Bharti AXA coverage upto 65 years for age 30 years ***Max Life offers additional 5% discount for First year

Health insurance premium				
Insurer name	Key features	Plan names	Premium (₹)	
Care Health	Day Care Treatments	NCB Super Premium	9,092	
	Family Floater option	Care	8,265	
	Health Checkups	Care with unlimited recharge	8,885	
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	NCB Super Premium with UAR	9,712	
Max Bupa Health	Day Care Treatments	Health ReAssure	9,590	
	Hospitalization at Home	Health Pulse Enhanced	10,696	
	Family Floater option	Health Companion	9,862	
	Alternate Medicine	Go Active	11,747	
Star Health	Family Floater option	Medi Classic	9,661	
	Restoration of cover	Star Comprehensive	11,476	
	Wellness Benefits	Young Star Gold Plan	8,389	
		Young Star Silver Plan	7,133	
Aditya Birla Health	Day Care Treatments	Activ assure Diamond	7,919	
	Day 1 coverage	Activ Health Platinum Enhanced	9,074	
	Day 1 coverage	Activ Health Enhance (Diabetes)	17,912	
	Day 1 coverage	Activ Health Enhance (Asthma)	13,170	
Kotak General	Hospital Room Eligibility	Activ Health Enhance (Hypertension)	19,889	
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Activ Health Platinum Essential	7,474	
	Day Care Treatments	Activ Health Essential (Diabetes)	15,072	
		Activ Health Enhance (Asthma)	11,240	
Chola MS General	Day Care Treatments	Activ Health Enhance (Hypertension)	16,587	
	Hospital Room Eligibility	Kotak Health Care-Premium (incl optional pack 1)	8,738	
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage			
	Day Care Treatments			
Liberty General	Day Care Treatments	Flexi Health	7,807	
	Hospital Room Eligibility			
	Hospitalization at Home			
	Alternate Medicine			

Data as on August 31, 2021

Source: LIC of India, www.policybazaar.com

Insurer name	Key features	Plan names	Premium (₹)
Digit Healthcare Plus	Hospital Room Eligibility	Option 1 - Maxima Restore Super	8,861
	Day Care Treatments	Option 2 - Early Cover	7,985
	Family Floater Option	Option 3 - Super care	7,541
		Option 4 - OPD Cover	11,806
Bajaj Allianz General	Hospital Room Eligibility	Individual Health Guard	12,213
	Wellness Benefits		
	Family Floater Option		
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage		
SBI General Insurance	Hospitalization at Home	Arogya Premier	11,074
	Day Care Treatments		
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Alternate Medicine		
Royal Sundaram General	Day Care Treatments	Lifeline supreme	8,578
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Alternate Medicine		
TATA AIG	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Medicare	9,820
	Day Care Treatments		
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Hospitalization at Home		
Universal Sampo General	Hospitalization at Home	Complete Healthcare Privilege	12,241
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Alternate Medicine		
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage		
Raheja QBE	Hospitalization at Home	Health QuBE Basic	4,947
	Restoration of Cover	Health QuBE SuperSaver	4,011
	Hospital Room Eligibility	Health QuBE Comprehensive	5,787
	Day Care Treatments	Edelweiss Health Insurance- Gold (Health 241 Add-on)	10,916
Edelweiss General	Hospitalization at Home	Edelweiss Health Insurance Gold	8,733
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Alternate Medicine		
	Day Care Treatments		
Liberty General	Day Care Treatments	Basic Elite Supreme	9,579
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Supreme		
Oriental Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Individual Mediclaim Policy	12,684
	Day Care Treatments		
	Hospitalization at Home		
	Hospitalization at Home		

TV PICKS

England vs India: Fourth Test, day 5, Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.

US OPEN 2021: SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 8.30 p.m. & 2 a.m. (Tuesday)

European 2022 WC Qualifiers: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 2 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF



Aditi moves up to tied 15th
AHUS (SWEDEN)
Aditi Ashok had one birdie and one bogey to hit an even par 72 to be placed at tied 15th after the third round of the Creekhurst Ladies Open. Aditi, who shot 74-73 on the first two days, is now 3-over for 54 holes. PTI

Amandeep finishes 4th at Flumserberg
FLUMSERBERG
Amandeep Drall drilled in three birdies in the last six holes for a one-under 71 that helped her finish Tied-4th at the Flumserberg Ladies Open on the Ladies European Tour Access Series, here. Vani Kapoor was the next best Indian at 2-under 214. PTI

Karthik Ashok to lead India
CHENNAI
Karthik Ashok will lead India in the 21st Asian senior men's volleyball championship to be held in Japan from Sept. 12. G.E. Sridharan will be the head coach for the event.

Fardeen wins men's title
GURUGRAM
Fardeen Qamar beat Anuj Malik 6-1, 6-3 to clinch the title in the ₹100,000 AITA men's ranking tennis tournament here.

J.S. Bedi stays as Delhi Race Club chairman
NEW DELHI
J.S. Bedi was unanimously re-elected chairman of the Delhi Race Club at its annual general meeting on September 2.
Other members of managing committee: O.P. Katyal, Sultan Singh, Rajesh Sahgal, Dhiraj Dhar Gupta, B.M. Mehra, Navaneen Sawhney, Vinay Goculdas, Gautam Shaidhar Kotwal, Col. H.S. Sodhi, Arun Seth, H.S. Bedi, S.K. Grover, and Maninder Singh Narula. **Government nominee:** Dr. Monica Priyadarshini, IAS.

National tennis from Oct. 25

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
The Fenesta National tennis championships for men and women will be played at the DLTA Complex here from October 25. Entries close on October 4.
A standard entry fee of ₹1,250 will be charged per player irrespective of them playing singles, doubles or both.
The organisers have assured that all COVID-19 protocols would be followed for the safety of everyone.

Gandas claims maiden title

Kochhar shoots day's best score, extends PGTI Order of Merit lead

GOLF

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD
Gurugram's Manu Gandas came up with a brilliant performance to clinch his maiden professional trophy – the Vooty & Haldi-sponsored Golconda Masters Telangana Open golf championship at the Hyderabad Golf Association course here on Sunday.
Gandas (64-58-64-64), the overnight leader by five shots, turned in a two-under 64 featuring four birdies and two bogeys to end with a tally of 22-under 250 and thus prevail by an impressive three strokes at the ₹40 lakh event which marked the resumption of the 2020-21 PGTI season after a six-month forced break due to COVID.
The 25-year-old Gandas collected a cheque worth ₹6,46,600 to move up from eighth to fourth in the PGTI Order of Merit. His total earnings for the season is now ₹24,12,350.
Chandigarh's Karandeep Singh Kochhar (67-64-63-59) shot the day's best score of

seven-under 59 to jump three spots and finish runner-up at 19-under 253. The 22-year-old Kochhar has now further extended his lead in the PGTI Order of Merit with a season's earnings of ₹42,95,130.
Bengaluru's Chikkaranappa (67-63-61-63), the 2019 winner, ended third at 18-under 254 following a final round score of three-under 63.
"I feel relieved and happy to have finally won a title after coming close on a few occasions before. I've waited a long time for this. The way I was playing this season, I knew that a win was just around the corner," Gandas said later.
Kochhar's flawless round, the lowest of the day, saw him make all greens in regulation. The two-time winner this season sank a 30-foot birdie on the 15th and landed his tee shot within two feet of the pin for a tap-in birdie on the 18th.
Bengaluru's Khalin Joshi (61) and Noida's Amardeep Malik (65) claimed tied fourth place at 16-under 256.



Impressive: Manu Gandas' tournament tally of 22-under 250 was enough for him to prevail by three strokes. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

India gets the better of Nepal 2-1

Choudhary and Chhetri on target for the visitors



Firing it in: Farukh Choudhary scores India's opener against Nepal. •TWITTER/@INDIANFOOTBALL

FOOTBALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KATHMANDU
Farukh Choudhary and skipper Sunil Chhetri struck in the second half to guide India to a 2-1 win over Nepal in

their second International friendly here on Sunday. It was Choudhary who put India ahead in the 62nd minute while Chhetri (80th) doubled the lead of the visitors.
Tej Tamang (87th minute)

found the net for the hosts in the dying minutes of the match at the Dasharath Stadium here. The first match ended in a 1-1 draw.
The result: Nepal 1 (Tej Tamang 87) lost to India 2 (Farukh Choudhary 62, Sunil Chhetri 80).

Strong start by Mohd. Sporting

Thrashes Indian Air Force in opening encounter

DURAND CUP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA
Local favourite and I-League side Mohammedan Sporting proved too strong for Indian Air Force (IAF) as it registered a 4-1 win to start its campaign in the 130th Durand Cup in style, at the Salt Lake Stadium on Sunday.
Milan Singh started the scoring process for Sporting in the 19th minute before defender Arijet Singh dou-

bled the lead around the half-hour mark.
Azharuddin Mallick added a third just before half-time to help Mohammedan Sporting reach a comfortable position.
Pulling one back
The Airmen got a goal back through Saurav Sadhukhan after the change of ends in the 47th minute but failed to keep up the momentum.
Mohammedan Sporting, which is the first Indian club

team to win the title in 1940, completed its authoritative showing when Marcus Joseph found the fourth goal in the 77th minute.
The Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee was present as the chief guest and greeted the two sides prior to kick off.
The result: Indian Air Force 1 (Saurav Sadhukhan 47) lost to Mohammedan Sporting 4 (Milan Singh 19, Arijet Singh 31, Azharuddin Mallick 45, Marcus Joseph 77).

Able Love should make amends

HYDERABAD: The 3-y-o filly Able Love, who ran second in her last start, should make amends in the Hyperion Plate, the chief event of Monday's (Sept. 6) races.
1 SILVER PHANTOM PLATE (1,400m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1.30 p.m.: 1. Bandit King (3) A.A. Vikrant 56, 2. Jean Lafette (7) Ajinkya 56, 3. One More Time (10) Nakhat Singh 56, 4. Salisbury (9) C. Umesh 56, 5. Star Cruise (5) B. Nikhil 56, 6. Burano (8) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 7. Galwan (1) Mukesh Kumar 54.5, 8. Miss Little Angel (4) Trevor 54.5, 9. Morior Invictus (2) Akshay Kumar 54.5 and 10. Nefferetti (6) Md. Ismail 54.5.
1. GALWAN, 2. MORIOR INVICTUS, 3. BURANO
2. HLENOF OF TROY PLATE (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.10: 1. Ashwa Raudee (II) Trevor 60, 2. Trump Star (6) Ajeeth Kumar 58.5, 3. Hard To Toss (4) Deepak Singh 58, 4. Proud (10) Kiran Naidu 58, 5. Blissful (7) Nakhat Singh 57, 6. Watch My Stride (9) Akshay Kumar 57, 7. Blue Valentine (8) R. Laxmikanth 56.5, 8. City Of Passion (3) Mukesh Kumar 56, 9. Hashtag (2) Gaurav Singh 51, 10. Sea Wolf (5) B. Nikhil 51 and 11. Sun Dancer (I) Afroz Khan 51.
1. ASHWA RAUDEE, 2. WATCH MY STRIDE, 3. CITY OF PASSION
3. HYPERION PLATE (1,400m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only

(Cat. II), 2.45: 1. My Master (4) Nakhat Singh 56, 2. Royal Support (I) R. Ajinkya 56, 3. Special Effort (3) P. Gaddam 56, 4. Wallop And Gallop (8) Deepak Singh 56, 5. Zeazemeta (7) C. Umesh 56, 6. Maus (II) Trevor 56, 7. Able Love (2) B. Nikhil 54.5, 8. Ashwa Pushkin (6) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 9. Bold Bidding (10) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 10. Inception (9) S.S. Tanwar 54.5 and 11. Moonlight Ruby (5) Neeraj 54.5.
1. ABLE LOVE, 2. BOLD BIDDING, 3. SPECIAL EFFORT
4. HILL FORT PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 3.20: 1. Air Salute (12) Abhay Singh 62, 2. Crackershow (14) A.A. Vikrant 62, 3. Red River (II) R.S. Jodha 62, 4. Silver Set (3) Md. Ismail 62, 5. Star Babe (8) Rohit Kumar 62, 6. Royal Girl (7) Gaurav Singh 61, 7. N R I Gift (13) Mukesh Kumar 58.5, 8. Minnelli (2) Surya Prakash 58.5, 9. Sheldon (9) Trevor 58, 10. Big Day (6) Nakhat Singh 57.5, 11. Proud Legacy (10) B. Nikhil 57.5, 12. Cephalonia (4) C. Umesh 54.5, 13. Hopscotch (5) Ajeeth Kumar 51 and 14. Moment Of Silence (I) Afroz Khan 50.
1. N R I GIFT, 2. STAR BABE, 3. SHELDON
5. HIDDEN BLOOM PLATE (1,600m) Maiden, 4-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.55: 1. Flying Jet (13) Gaurav Singh 60, 2. Queen Danerys (6) Nakhat

Singh 57, 3. Grand Finale (8) A.A. Vikrant 55.5, 4. Fashion Universe (2) Abhay Singh 55, 5. Moringa (10) Trevor 55, 6. Berkeley (4) C. Umesh 54.5, 7. N R I Touch (3) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 8. Balma (9) Koushik 54, 9. Southern Lady (7) S.S. Tanwar 53.5, 10. Patee (5) Rafique Sk. 51.5, 11. Forever Bond (I) R. Laxmikanth 51, 12. Mt. Davidson (12) B. Nikhil 51 and 13. Lightning Fairy (II) Surya Prakash 50.5.
1. N R I TOUCH, 2. MORINGA, 3. FASHION UNIVERSE
6. HILL FORT PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 4.30: 1. California Beauty (II) G. Nareesh 62, 2. Flamingo Fame (5) Trevor 62, 3. Team Player (9) R.S. Jodha 62, 4. Top In Class (13) Akshay Kumar 62, 5. Astronaut (10) P. Gaddam 61.5, 6. Golden Forza (12) Mukesh Kumar 59.5, 7. Elmira (8) N.B. Kuldeep 58.5, 8. Jo Malone (3) Deepak Singh 58.5, 9. Charcoal (4) Gaurav Singh 57.5, 10. That's My Speed (7) B. Nikhil 57.5, 11. India Gate (2) Ajeeth Kumar 54.5, 12. Ice Berry (I) C.P. Bopanna 52.5 and 13. Royal Avenger (6) Afroz Khan 50.
1. TOP IN CLASS, 2. FLAMINGO FAME, 3. ASTRONAUT
Day's Best: **ASHWA RAUDEE** Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6.
Mini Jackpot: 3, 4, 5 & 6.
Trebble: (i) 1, 2 & 3; (ii) 4, 5 & 6.
Tanala: All races.

Deccan Colts Championship Stakes for Kensington



Rewarding excellence: Kensington's trainer Arjun Mangalorkar, left, receiving the winner's prize for Deccan Colts Championship Stakes from HRC chairman R. Surender Reddy, right, on Sunday. •G. RAMAKRISHNA

bunch, due to which Sharp Mind, who was running in middle stumbled and fell down. The Stewards disqualified Dizizdymtownin.
2. BLUE PETER PLATE (DIV. II) (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): **RISING QUEEN** (Abhay Singh) 1, Cosmic (Rafique Sk.) 2, Sally (A.A. Vikrant) 3 and Good Tidings (Md. Ismail) 4. 3/4,

2-1/2 and 1/2. 1m, 10.42s. ₹150 (w), 40, 82 and 15 (p). SHP: 251, THP: 55, FP: 8,384, Q: 4,472, Tanala: 27, 698. Favourite: N R I Sugar. Owners: Mr. M. Rafeeq Iqbal, Mr. G.B.R. Prasad & Mr. K S N Murthy. Trainer: Robin Reddy Kondakallā.

Anjali to take on Tanvi in last four

Sunayna to fight it out with Urwash in the other semifinal

SQUASH

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GREATER NOIDA
Anjali Semwal fought her way past Tiana Parasrampur 11-9, 4-11, 11-5, 6-11, 11-7 in the women's quarterfinals of the HCL PSA Challenger squash tournament at the Shiv Nadar University on Sunday.
Anjali will take on the champion of the last tournament and the second seed Tanvi Khanna in the semifinals.
The other semifinal will feature top seed Sunayna Kuruvilla against Urwash Joshi. Abhisheka Shannon put up a tough fight against Urwash before going down in four games.
In the men's section, Rahul Baitha beat second seed Aadit Zaveri 10-12, 12-10, 4-11, 11-3, 11-6 to set up a semifinal against third seed and Chennai event champion Velavan Senthilkumar.
The results:
Men (quarterfinals): Abhishek Agarwal bt Sandeep Ramchandran 11-2, 13-11, 11-2; Abhshek Pradhan bt Jaideep Sethi 11-4, 11-7, 11-6; Velavan Senthilku-



Digging deep: Anjali Semwal fought off a tough challenge from Tiana Parasrampur. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

mar bt Navaneeth Prabhu 11-1, 11-8, 11-0; Rahul Baitha bt Aadit Zaveri 10-12, 12-10, 4-11, 11-3, 11-6.
Pre-quarterfinals: Velavan Senthilkumar bt Vaibhav Chauhan 11-2, 11-2, 11-6; Rahul Baitha bt Jamal Sakib 11-9, 11-9, 9-11, 14-12; Aadil Zaveri bt

Arin Khot 11-2, 11-8, 11-4.

Women (quarterfinals): Sunayna Kuruvilla bt Anahat Singh 11-6, 11-8, 11-3; Urwash Joshi bt Abhisheka Shannon 12-10, 6-11, 12-10, 11-7; Anjali Semwal bt Tiana Parasrampur 11-9, 4-11, 11-5, 6-11, 11-7; Tanvi Khanna bt Akshaya Sri 11-2, 11-5, 11-8.

France salvages a draw against Ukraine

Denmark stays perfect in its campaign; Norway, the Netherlands post easy wins

WC QUALIFIERS

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON
Reigning champion France missed the injured Kylian Mbappe in a 1-1 draw at Ukraine in World Cup qualifying but still stayed atop Europe Group D.
Mykola Shaparenko scored his first international goal for Ukraine just before halftime.
Anthony Martial levelled after the break following a setup from Kingsley Coman and Adrien Rabiot. It was Martial's second international goal and it came five years and three days after the Manchester United forward's previous strike in a friendly against Italy.
France has nine points from five matches and Finland is next with five points from three matches after a header from Joel Pohjanpalo earned a 1-0 win over Kazakhstan.
Ukraine also has five points from five matches, while Bosnia and Kazakhstan have two points each.
Only the group winners directly qualify for the World Cup. Second-place finishers face a playoff.
Brace by Mitrovic
Aleksandar Mitrovic scored twice as Serbia beat Luxembourg 4-1 to move level with Portugal atop group A with 10 points. Mitrovic has scored 43 goals for Serbia in 65 appearances.
Ireland and Azerbaijan earned their first points with a 1-1 draw in which Shane Duffy headed in a late equalizer for Ireland.
European Championship semifinalist Denmark extended its perfect start to



Rescue act: Anthony Martial, second left, slots in France's equaliser against Ukraine. •AFP

qualifying with a 1-0 win at the Faroe Islands following a goal from Jonas Wind in Group F.
Israel beat visiting Austria 5-2 and Scotland edged Moldova 1-0.
Denmark has 15 points, Israel 10, Scotland eight and Austria seven, while the Faroe Islands and Moldova trail with one point each.
In Group G, Memphis Depay scored a brace and the Netherlands outclassed Montenegro 4-0 to stay second in the group behind Turkey, which beat Gibraltar 3-0.
It was the first home game for Louis van Gaal in his third spell as the Netherlands' coach.
Erling Haaland converted an early penalty in Norway's 2-0 win at Latvia to raise his total to nine goals in 14 games for his national team

– exactly a year after his first goal for Norway.
Turkey has 11 points, the Netherlands and Norway 10 each, Montenegro seven, Latvia four, and Gibraltar zero.
Late goal
Marcelo Brozovic scored late for Croatia to beat Slovakia 1-0 and remain level on points with Russia atop group H.
Russia is ahead on goal difference after beating Cyprus 2-0 with goals from Aleksandr Yerkhin and Rifat Zhemaletdinov.
Also, Slovenia edged Malta with a first-half penalty from Sandi Lovric.
Russia and Croatia each have 10 points, Slovenia has seven, and Slovakia six. Malta and Cyprus have four each.
The results: Group A: Serbia 4

(Mitrovic 22, 35, Chanut 82-og, Milenkovic 90+6) bt Luxembourg 1 (Thill 77); Ireland 1 (Duffy 87) drew with Azerbaijan 1 (Makhmudov 45+1).
Group D: Finland 1 (Pohjanpalo 60) bt Kazakhstan 0; Ukraine 1 (Shaparenko 44) drew with France 1 (Martial 50).
Group F: Faroe Islands 0 lost to Denmark 1 (Wind 85); Israel 5 (Solomon 5, Dabbur 20, Zahavi 33, 90, Weissman 59) bt Austria 2 (Baumgartner 42, Arnautovic 55); Scotland 1 (Dykes 14) bt Moldova 0.
Group G: Latvia 0 lost to Norway 2 (Haaland 20-pen, Elyounoussi 66); the Netherlands 4 (Depay 38-pen, 62, Wijnaldum 70, Gakpo 76) bt Montenegro 0; Gibraltar 0 lost to Turkey 3 (Dervisoglu 54, Calhanoglu 65, Karaman 83).
Group H: Cyprus 0 lost to Russia 2 (Erokhin 6, Zhemaletdinov 55); Slovenia 1 (Lovric 44-pen) bt Malta 0; Slovakia 0 lost to Croatia 1 (Brozovic 86).



mic Run (Kiran Naidu) 3 and Colachel Battle (Trevor) 4. 4-1/2, Nk and 1/2. 1m, 28.34s. ₹56 (w), 11, 21 and 13 (p). SHP: 59, THP: 49, FP: 585, Q: 317, Tanala: 2,532. Favourite: Colachel Battle. Owners: Mr. Rama Seshu Eyyunni, Mr. Katikaneni Jivv Vikram Rao & Mr. Peddi Reddy Prabhabhar Reddy. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.
4. SHAPHIR PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **LOCKHART** (Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Dandy Man (Ashad Asbar) 2, City Of Wisdrom (Mukesh Kumar) 3 and Incredulous (Md. Ismail) 4. Sh, 3/4, and 1-1/4. 1m, 29.16s. ₹131 (w), 27, 26 and 16 (p). SHP: 65, THP: 58, FP: 1,117, Q: 608, Tanala: 6,109. Favourite: Private Empire. Owner: Mr. T. Rakesh Reddy. Trainer: Anant Vatsalya.
5. GOLDEN BABY PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): **SIYAVASH** (Ashad Asbar) & Brisbane (Surya Prakash) 1, Star Dancer (Kiran Naidu) 3 and Blickfang (Md. Ismail) 4. Read Heat, 1/2 and 3/4. 1m, 29.26s. ₹13 and 21 (w), 15, 17 and 13 (p). THP: 52, FP: 80 and 70, Q: 84, Tanala: 314 and 242. Favourite: Siyavash. Owners: Siyavash: Mr. S. Daljeet Singh & Mr. Mohammed Abdul Wajid Khan; Brisbane: Mr. & Mrs. Shapoor P. Mistry. Rep. Manjri Horse Breeders Farm Private Lim-

ited. Trainers: Siyavash: M. Srinivas Reddy; Brisbane: L.V.R. Deshmukh.
6. DECCAN COLTS CHAMPIONSHIP STAKES (GR. II) (1,600m), (TERMS) 3-Y-O ONLY: **KENSINGTON** (WIN LEGEND-ANGELIQUE) (ANTONY RAJ S) 1, Fire Power (Speaking Of Which-Roses In Bloom) (Zervan) 2, Zuccarelli (Western Aristocrat-Circle Of Bliss) (P.S. Chouhan) 3 and Angelico (Win Legend-For An Angel) (Sandesh) 4. Nose, Nk and 1/2. 1m, 40.74s. ₹235 (w), 36, 29 and 22 (p). SHP: 57, THP: 69, FP: 5,343, Q: 2,093, Tanala: C/O. Favourite: Falcon Edge. Owners: Diamond Band Racing Syndicate Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Haider Soomar, Mr. Kersi H. Vachha and Mr. Sumit Mazumder. Trainer: Arjun Manglorkar.
7. SHAPHIR PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **BALIUS** (Gaurav Singh) 1, Max (Zervan) 2, Full Volume (Ajit Singh) 3 and The Special One (Akshay Kumar) 4. 3, 1 and 3/4. 1m, 28.75s. ₹26 (w), 12, 16 and 21 (p). SHP: 51, THP: 62, FP: 110, Q: 81, Tanala: 786. Favourite: Balius. Owner: Mr. P. Venkateshwarlu. Trainer: G. Shashikanth. Jackpot: 70%: ₹1,90,167 & 30%: 32,600.
Trebble: (i) 48,444, (ii) 4,747.
Mini Jackpot: (i) 51,965 (c/o), (ii) 1,12,309 (c/o).