



U.K. to drop 10-day quarantine for vaccinated Indians

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Russia invites Taliban to talks planned in Moscow on Oct. 20

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Centre releases GST compensation dues of ₹40,000 crore to States

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Mavi, Gill boost KKR's playoff chances; PBKS beats CSK

page 13



## IN BRIEF



**Maneka, Varun out of BJP national executive**

NEW DELHI  
Lok Sabha members Maneka Gandhi and her son, Varun Gandhi, were dropped from the BJP's national executive, while Union Ministers Smriti Irani and Jyotiraditya Scindia were among those inducted into the 80-member decision-making body of the party that was announced on Thursday.

NEWS ► PAGE 9

**Bengal Speaker moves SC against HC order on Roy**

KOLKATA  
West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee has approached the Supreme Court against the Calcutta High Court order on the disqualification of Mukul Roy. Mr. Roy, who was elected on a BJP ticket in the Assembly election in May, rejoined the Trinamool Congress in June.

SOUTH ► PAGE 5

**Chhattisgarh CM opens redeveloped temple**

RAIPUR  
Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Thursday inaugurated the redeveloped ancient Mata Kaushalya temple as part of the Ram Van Gaman Tourism Circuit the State government is developing at a cost of ₹137.45 crore.

NEWS ► PAGE 10

## SC tells U.P. to file status report on Lakhimpur Kheri in 24 hours

It should say whether the accused have been arrested or not, says the court

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday gave the Uttar Pradesh Government 24 hours to file a status report identifying the accused in the First Information Report (FIR) registered on the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, and whether they have been arrested or not.

Instilling a sense of urgency in the Government, a Bench, led by the Chief Justice of India, also ordered the State to facilitate immediate medical care for the mother of a 19-year-old man who was among those killed in the incident. "While hearing this case now we got a message that the mother of one of people who died is in a state of shock over the loss of her son and needs immediate medical attention... We want you to get her admitted at the nearest hospital," the court addressed Uttar Pradesh Additional Advocate-General Garima Prashad.

**'Extreme, unfortunate'**  
Ms. Prashad stated it would be done immediately while describing the Lakhimpur Kheri incident as "extreme, unfortunate". The CJ said, "We also feel the same way."

The court observed that it was known that eight people had been killed, and they



**Long march:** Congress workers going from Mohali in Punjab to Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday. ►PTI

were farmers and a journalist. "We want to know who are the accused in the FIR and whether they have been arrested or not," Justice Surya Kant, on the Bench, told the Government.

The CJ said the status report should contain details of those killed.

News reports said four of the deceased were farmers mowed down by vehicles, which were part of the convoy of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and BJP MP Ajay Kumar Mishra.

Ms. Prashad said the government had constituted a special investigation team, and a judicial inquiry had begun. An FIR had been filed.

The CJ said, "But the grievance here is your investigation is not proper." He was

referring to a letter from advocates Shivkumar Tripathi and C.S. Panda, based on which the court had taken cognisance of the incident.

Ms. Prashad said the State would try to file a status report by Thursday, even as the court listed the case for Friday.

Thursday's hearing of the case before the CJ's Bench comes just three days after another Bench lashed out at farmers' bodies, connecting their nearly year-long protests against farm laws to the violence in Lakhimpur Kheri. That Bench, led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, had said that "nobody takes responsibility" when incidents like Lakhimpur Kheri occurred.

RELATED REPORTS ► PAGE 9

## Two arrested; Minister's son summoned

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh police have arrested two persons and issued summons to Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Mishra, for questioning in connection with the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, in which eight persons, including four farmers, were killed.

Amid demands for Mr. Ashish's arrest in the murder case, the police issued him summons to appear at the Reserve Police Lines in Lakhimpur Kheri at 10 a.m. on Friday.

The police said they had arrested two accused, Luvkush and Ashish Pandey, on the basis of the first FIR filed in connection with the mowing down of farmers by cars in the Minister's convoy. They had identified six accused, including one named person, in the murder case filed after the incident. Of the six, three died in violence at the incident spot, the police said.

PROBE PANEL SET UP ► PAGE 9

## Principal, teacher shot dead inside Srinagar school

Militant outfit claims responsibility



**Together in grief:** Teachers mourning outside the school in Srinagar after the firing on Thursday. ►NISSAR AHMAD

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

The principal and a teacher of a government school in Srinagar were shot dead inside the school on Thursday.

The killing comes just two days after three civilians, including well-known Kashmiri Pandit chemist Makhani Lal Bindroo of Bindroo Medicate, were killed in the Kashmir Valley.

The Resistant Force (TRF), a militant outfit, has claimed responsibility for the school attack.

The police said militants barged into the Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Idgah Sangam, in the old city and fired point-blank at the two, who died on the way to hospital.

The victims were identi-

fied as principal Supinder Kour, 46, from Budgam's Beerwah, and Kashmiri Pandit Deepak Chand, 38, who had migrated back to the Valley from Jammu.

A teacher told *The Hindu* that they were sipping tea when they heard gunshots outside the principal's room around 11.15 a.m. "We saw Chand falling outside the principal's room," the teacher said.

A spree of killings by militants has left seven civilians dead in six days in the Valley, spreading panic among the minorities and non-local workers, at a time when Union Ministers are on a nine-week outreach programme in Jammu & Kashmir.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 8

## Tanzanian novelist wins Nobel

REUTERS  
STOCKHOLM

Tanzanian novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah, 72, won the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature "for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee", the award-giving body said on Thursday.

Based in Britain, Mr. Gurnah is the first African writer to win the award since the Zimbabwean Doris Lessing in 2007, and only the second writer of colour from sub-Saharan Africa, after Nigeria's Wole Soyinka, who won in 1986.

"In his 10 novels he has consistently, and with great compassion, penetrated the effects of colonialism in east Africa and its effects on the lives of uprooted and migrating individuals," Anders Olsson, head of the Swedish Academy Nobel Committee, told reporters.

His novels include *Paradise*, which is set in colonial East Africa during the First World War and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize for Fiction, and *Desertion*.

CONTINUED  
ON ► PAGE 8

Abdulrazak Gurnah



## Golden glow



**Spectacular sight:** The Amba Vilas Palace is illuminated to mark the start of Dasara festivities in Mysuru on Thursday. ►M.A. SRIRAM

## No favouritism in admissions, says DU

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ  
NEW DELHI

As students from across the country knock on the doors of Delhi University for admission into its undergraduate programmes, the university, in the absence of an entrance exam, is facing a challenge in admitting students from various school Boards solely based on the cut-off.

Colleges such as Shri Ram College of Commerce, Ramjas College and Hindu College that released a 100% cut-off have seen general category seats fill up as students from the Kerala Board of Higher Secondary Education have secured many seats with a best-four subjects' score of 100%.

DETAILS ► PAGE 2

## T.N. police challenge officer's IAF custody in rape case

Petition filed before judge in Coimbatore

WILSON THOMAS  
COIMBATORE

The Coimbatore city police have approached the District Court, Coimbatore, challenging a lower court order sending a Flight Lieutenant, arrested on charges of raping a woman colleague, to the custody of the Indian Air Force (IAF), allowing a court martial.

The police said the investigating officer of the case from the All Women Police Station, Coimbatore Central, filed a petition before the Principal District Judge on Thursday seeking the custody of the accused, Amitesh Harmukh, 29.

A senior police officer said the Additional Mahila Court on September 30 had or-



**The accused:** Flight Lieutenant Amitesh Harmukh being brought to a court in Coimbatore on September 30. ►SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dered that the accused be handed over to the custody of the IAF. "The court handed over the accused to the IAF's custody. The case has not been transferred to the IAF. The police are investigating the woman officer's complaint. Now we are challenging the lower court's decision on the custody of the accused," said the officer.

According to the officer, the plea challenges the custody of the accused which the IAF claimed under Section 124 of the Air Force Act, 1950, which deals with the 'choice between criminal court and court-martial'.

"The IAF is yet to form a court martial. Similarly, the police are yet to file a charge sheet in the case. The con-

tention of the police is that it is premature to give the accused to the IAF's custody," the officer said. Another officer privy to the investigation said a bed sheet, which is suspected to have the semen stains of the accused, was sent to a government forensic lab for analysis.

**Witness gives statement**

As per the First Information Report filed by the police, the alleged incident took place at the room of the woman officer on the campus of the Air Force Administrative College, Coimbatore, on September 10. It says the accused trespassed into her room and committed the crime. The police said a woman officer, a batchmate of the survivor, on Thursday gave a statement before the Additional Mahila Court. She is one of the witnesses in the case, the police said.

## SC questions income limit for EWS quota

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the government to explain how it zeroed in on the figure of '₹8 lakh' as the annual income criterion to identify Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the forward classes of society for grant of 10% reservation in medical admissions under the all-India quota (AIQ).

The Supreme Court's query is significant as the One Hundred and Third Constitutional Amendment of 2019, which introduced the 10% EWS quota, is itself under challenge before a larger Bench.

The amendment is under question for making economic criterion as the sole ground for grant of reservation benefits.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 8

## I-T Dept. searches office of Pawar's son

NCP alleges 'excessive use of power'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PUNE

After businesses linked to Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's relatives were searched by the Income Tax Department on Thursday, officials visited the office of Mr. Pawar's son, Parth, in Mumbai's Nariman Point.

According to sources, Mr. Parth Pawar's office was searched as part of a marathon operation that went on for more than 12 hours.



Ajit Pawar

NCP chief Sharad Pawar said the I-T searches reeked of "excessive use of power". They were perhaps a reaction to comments on the Lakhimpur Kheri incident in Uttar Pradesh, which he had likened to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, he added.

According to sources, the raids began at 7 a.m. on

Thursday in sugar factories and other businesses in Pune, Satara and Kolhapur districts, owned by Mr. Pawar's relatives.

Mr. Pawar, who is also the State Finance Minister, said, "I only feel sad that the authorities have raided companies belonging to three of my sisters... One of them stays in Kolhapur and the other two in Pune. Why did they do this, I cannot fathom?"

Saying he failed to understand the reason behind the raids, he added, "If they were conducted just because they are my sisters, then the people of Maharashtra should think about the low level of politics."

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<b>2 AIR</b> JAGRATI AWASTHI (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)	<b>3 AIR</b> ANKITA JAIN (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)	<b>4 AIR</b> YASH JALUKA (ABHYAAS TEST SERIES)	<b>5 AIR</b> MAMTA YADAV (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)	<b>6 AIR</b> MEERA K (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES)
<b>7 AIR</b> PRAVEEN KUMAR (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES, ESSAY TEST, ABHYAAS, PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT PROG)	<b>8 AIR</b> JIVANI KARTIK NAGJIBHAI (GS FOUNDATION COURSE CLASSROOM STUDENT, ALL INDIA TEST SERIES, PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT PROG)	<b>9 AIR</b> APALA MISHRA (ABHYAAS TEST SERIES)	<b>10 AIR</b> SATYAM GANDHI (ALL INDIA TEST SERIES, ESSAY TEST)	YOU CAN BE NEXT

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A ND-NDE



IN BRIEF

FIR against Hindu Sena for defacing road signage

NEW DELHI  
An FIR was registered after the Hindu Sena allegedly defaced the Akbar Road signage on Thursday, the police said. Hindu Sena chief Vishnu Gupta pasted stickers stating "Hemu Vikramaditya Marg" over the Akbar Road signboard. In a video, he and a few others can be seen putting two strings of flowers on the defaced signage.

Son of ASI shot dead over monetary issue

NEW DELHI  
A 29-year-old man was shot dead in Najafgarh on Wednesday. Two persons, including a woman, have been arrested. The victim, whose father is a Delhi Police ASI, had borrowed ₹2,000 from the accused and they were demanding a heavy interest in return which he could not pay.

Delhi reports 44 fresh COVID-19 infections

NEW DELHI  
Delhi recorded 44 new COVID-19 cases and zero deaths on Thursday, while the positivity rate was recorded at 0.07%, data shared by the city government showed. The Capital has recorded only one death due to the infection in October so far.

# No favouritism in college admissions, says DU

University asserts it 'uniformly values academic credentials of all candidates, irrespective of their States and school boards'

JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ  
NEW DELHI

As students from across the country knock on the doors of Delhi University (DU) for admission into its various undergraduate programmes, the university, in the absence of an entrance exam, is facing a challenge in admitting students from various school boards solely based on cut-off percentages.

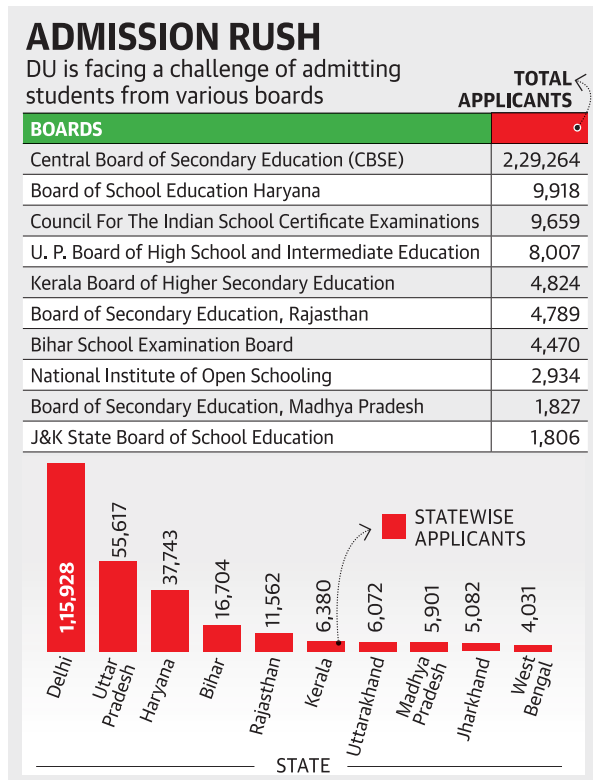
Colleges such as Shri Ram College of Commerce, Ramjas, Hindu and Hansraj, which released a 100% cut-off for admission to some of their courses, have seen students from the Kerala Board of Higher Secondary Education secure many of the seats with a best-four subjects' score of 100%.

The 100% disagreement

The high number of candidates with a score of 100% coming from the Kerala board has prompted some students' groups on DU campuses start a protest demanding that the university bring about a "moderation" process to ensure that students from all boards have an equal

opportunity to secure admission at the university. Other students' groups have alleged that some colleges are rejecting applications without stating any substantial reason or withholding applications arbitrarily stating "clarifications to be sought from the university" when it comes to students from other boards.

"DU is bound to admit students satisfying all the eligibility criteria. It is a matter of shame that applicants are being discriminated against based on their board, while the hard work put in by the applicants from varying boards is the same," said Akhil K.M. of the Students' Federation of India, Delhi University. He added that the university must put in place a mechanism through which it can clarify its doubts regarding different boards, their syllabi, and mark distribution and calculation, rather than putting the applicants at stake as, in the past as well, students from other



boards have faced similar issues.

Siddharth Yadav from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), which

has been protesting at the admission office of the university, said his organisation is demanding a process of "moderation" so that there is

no regional skew in admissions and all candidates are given an equal opportunity to study at the Central University. "There has been an irregular spike in marks this year as compared to the previous years. Due to this high cut-off, only a few State board students, where results have been inflated, are able to take admission in the most reputed university of the country, which is quite wrong. The admission process should be done after normalisation of marks of all the State boards to bring them on a par with all other students," Mr. Yadav said.

'Equal opportunity'

Responding to allegations that candidates from particular boards were securing admissions, the university said that in the first cut-off list, 60,904 candidates had applied to various colleges. Of them, 46,054 were from the Central Board of Secondary Education. Delhi University Registrar Vikas Gupta said as on Thursday, 31,172 candidates from the CBSE; 2,365 from the Kerala Board of

Higher Secondary Education; 1,540 from the Board of School Education, Haryana; 1,429 from the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations; and 1,301 candidates from the Board of Secondary Education Rajasthan, in addition to other State Boards, had successfully secured their admissions.

"Being a Central University, the University of Delhi equally and uniformly values the academic credentials of all the candidates, irrespective of their States and school boards. This year, too, equal opportunity was maintained by accepting applications based on merit only. The University of Delhi strongly refutes and condemns the falsity of news which is being circulated regarding favouring candidates from a few boards," Mr. Gupta said.

The university added that being a prestigious Central University, it was DU's utmost responsibility to maintain justice and equity among all meritorious candidates coming not only from Indian States but also from abroad.

## Allow limited activity in schools: parents

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A group of parents of primary and middle schoolchildren has written to the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) and other city officials, asking them to permit limited activities in schools for all students up to Class VIII at least once a week.

In the representation, the parents said that schools for younger children have been closed for over 550 days, which has resulted in not only learning loss but also caused immense harm to physical and mental health due to reduced physical activity and denial of social play.

The parents said that experts have concluded that younger children are at much lower risk of severe or fatal COVID-19 but the DDMA has still not taken a call to open schools.

They wrote, "We appreciate the DDMA's concern for the safety of our children, however, we are also witness to adverse effects of long-term school closures."

## Talks on with Sikh leaders over Golden Temple replica: Mayor

'Installation currently on hold, will be decided after dialogue'

MUNEEF KHAN  
NEW DELHI

South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) Mayor Mukesh Suryan on Thursday said that talks were going on with "senior Sikh leaders" regarding the installation of a replica of the Golden Temple at the Bharat Darshan Park in Punjabi Bagh here.

Mr. Suryan, who refrained from naming the "senior Sikh leaders", asserted that

the installation of the replica "is currently on hold" and that a decision would be made after the talks.

Replica controversy

A controversy had erupted over the replica with members of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee having dismantled the structure as it was against the beliefs of Sikhism. "We do not want to hurt the senti-

ments of any community. We will do what the majority asks us to do; we will follow the decision that they make," said Mr. Suryan.

The Bharat Darshan Park, which is spread over 8.5 acres, will showcase 20 replicas, made from scrap materials, monuments from across the country, including the likes of the Taj Mahal, Mysore Palace and Victoria Memorial Hall.

## IIT-Kharagpur student held for stalking Delhi schoolgirls online

He would enter online classes, join WhatsApp groups: police

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 19-year-old student of Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur has been arrested from Patna for allegedly stalking girls of a school in north Delhi, the police said on Thursday.

A senior police officer said the accused, identified as Mahavir, was a voyeur and stalker. "He has a fetish to stalk girls. His motive was not to extort money but just to threaten girls to get himself added to their social media groups," the officer said.

On October 6, the Civil Lines police station received a complaint from a school that their female students were being harassed online after which an FIR was registered.

"The complainant said that a person was stalking minor girls of the school online and also sending WhatsApp messages and calling teachers of the school from various international numbers and from numbers of students and teachers," Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Sagar Singh Kalsi said. Mr. Kalsi said the stalker was entering online classes of the school and joining

His motive was not to extort money but just to threaten girls to get himself added to their social media groups

SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

WhatsApp groups without the approval of the admin, and was changing group icons. "Several morphed nude and semi-nude photos of students were being circulated on social media platforms," he said.

The police questioned the girls and teachers and examined the WhatsApp groups to trace the stalker's number. They also wrote to WhatsApp and Instagram to get details of the IP address after which a police team tracked the accused, who was residing in Patna's Khajekalan, and arrested him.

During interrogation, Mr. Kalsi said, it was revealed that Mahavir had been stalking and harassing a minor girl from this north Delhi school for the last three years when he was preparing for the IIT entrance exam in Kota.

"He found the victim's

number on a social media platform and started pursuing her. The girl, however, stopped talking to the accused after she realised that his intentions weren't right. Though he didn't stalk her directly thereafter, he started making contacts with her friends by posing himself as a girl who was a friend of the main victim," a police officer said.

After gaining trust of the girls, the accused threatened them that he would morph their pictures and circulate on social media if they didn't help him get added to common WhatsApp groups and share links of their online classes. "He would then enter these online classes and bad-mouth the girls, including the main victim. That's when the school approached the police," the officer said.

Investigations also revealed that Mahavir used applications to fake caller ID and a virtual number on WhatsApp for contacting girls and teachers of the school.

"The accused used a voice changing app to hide his identity. He also used an app to morph photos of victims," Mr. Kalsi said.

## Security ramped up at Karkardooma courts

'It's knee-jerk reaction to Gogi's murder'

ARNABJIT SUR  
NEW DELHI

Even as the Delhi police have submitted their suggestions in an affidavit to the Delhi High Court to maximise security for both clients and lawyers inside all the seven district courts in the city, the Karkardooma court complex on Thursday saw a tight security cover with deployment of more paramilitary personnel on the premises. This comes two weeks after gangster Jitender Mann alias Gogi was shot dead by rival gang members, who posed as lawyers, inside the Rohini court.

Riots cases

However, a spot check by *The Hindu* revealed a few instances where clients and lawyers were allowed to enter the court without being frisked or asked for an identity card. The Karkardooma court complex presides over all the cases related to the north-east Delhi riots and has four specially constituted courts on its campus.

According to the court employees, there are nine gates of which five are currently open for both lawyers and the public. While three to four paramilitary person-



Policemen checking visitors at the Rohini court complex after the shoot-out.

nel, in addition to four Delhi Police officers, were guarding the main gate during the afternoon hours, those entering the premises were largely not being stopped or enquired about their whereabouts.

Meanwhile, a large number of lawyers and court officials claimed that the Karkardooma court too had been a ticking time bomb till a few days ago with just about anyone being allowed to enter the premises.

An advocate, who has been handling several Delhi riots cases, said since the cases pertained to two communities, security should have been strengthened long ago and not as the present knee-jerk reaction to Gogi's murder.

## Petition alleges 'sorry state of affairs' at Lok Nayak Hospital

High Court asks Delhi govt. to respond to plea

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the city government to respond to a plea alleging "unfortunate state of affairs" at Lok Nayak Hospital here. Justice Rekha Palli asked the Delhi government to "take steps to improve the working of the hospital", while hearing the petition filed by Ashish Pandey, who was recently admitted to the hospital.

"This is not the first time that we are hearing it... Some of this [allegations] must be true," Justice Palli said, adding that "we are not out of COVID-19 crisis". The court posted the

case for further hearing on December 20.

The plea alleged that no COVID-19 test was conducted on Mr. Pandey at the time of admission. It said there were two-three patients on each bed and up to three patients were taken to the ultrasound lab at a time.

It also alleged that "each ward, having around 72 beds, had only two PG second-year doctors and one senior resident", reflecting the shortage of doctors. It sought a direction to form a high-powered panel to look into the lapses and take action. The petition accused the hospital authorities of having a "callous attitude".

## High Court closes case seeking monitoring of anti-COVID steps

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday closed the proceedings in a case, seeking to monitor the measures being taken to combat the spread of COVID-19, noting that the Centre and the State have already provided adequate healthcare facilities.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh said petitioner Triveni Potekar, a lawyer, can ap-

proach an appropriate forum again if required in future.

Central government counsel Anil Soni said the petition, filed in March 2020, was now infructuous as adequate measures had already been taken by the authorities.

"We see no reason to further monitor the case. Liberty is reserved with the petitioner to file proper litigation in case of difficulty," the court said while closing the case.

We are taking all necessary COVID 19 Precautionary Measures

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

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL WELFARE, ASSAM**  
**UZANBAZAR, GUWAHATI-1**

NO. DSW(ICDS)/G/120/2021/67 Dated, Guwahati, the 7th October, 2021

**CORRIGENDUM/ADDENDUM**

Reference to e-Tender No. DSW(ICDS)/G/120/2021/39, dated 16/09/2021 in regard to supply of Melamine Plate, Glass, Bowl and Spoon Set for the Pre School Children of Anganwadi Centre and Mini-Aganwadi Centres of Assam, the following modifications are hereby notified through this corrigendum/addendum.

1. In SECTION 1B - In Case of Manufacture, the Bidder must submit as below- Point No. 6 at Page No. 5 of Tender Booklet may be read as:  
"Bidder must have license character like Disney/Minions/Dora for Melamine Kids Products and submit approved license copy of the authorized competent."  
**Instead of :**  
"Bidder Must have license character line Disney/Minions/Doraemon for Melamine Kids Products and submit approved license copy of the authorized competent"
2. In SECTION 1B - In case of Manufacture, the Bidder must submit as below - Point No. 9 at Page No. 5 of Tender Booklet may be read as:  
"Bidder must furnish Proof of past Performance for Rs. 10.00 Cr. During any year of Last three year i.e. 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 in any Govt. Department/Corporate as per Annexure "C" (Order Copies along with work completion certificate). If Bidder have corporate supply experience he can submit statement of account showing bill details and payment receipt the statement must be sealed and signed by Chartered Accountant."  
**Instead of:**  
"Bidder must enclose proof of Past performance supply of materials/articles in any Govt. Department to any of the last three financial years along with the Govt. Order Copy for minimum of Rs. 10.00 Crores in a single order during any of the last three financial years i.e. 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21(prescribed format in Annexure-C). Proof of same to be submitted"
3. In Annexure - "A" - 1. Items of Utensil set for Boys/Girls of 3 to 6 Year for Pre School Children at Page No. 13 of Tender Booklet may be read as:  
"Note: All items must be as per given specification and must have all over prints of Any Disney, Dora or Minions characters."  
**Instead of:**  
"Note: All items must be as per given specifications and must have all over prints of Any Disney, Doraemon or Minions characters."
4. In Annexure - "B" - TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION OF UTENSIL SET OF MELAMINE - 1. Melamine Plate, 2. Melamine Glass, 3. Melamine Bowl & 4. Melamine Spoon- at Page No. 14, 15, 16 & 17 of Tender booklet the following modification is hereby notified through this addendum:  
"In Technical Specification Of the bid Product Mention in Annexure B of (Melamine Plate, Melamine Glass, Melamine Bowl, Melamine Spoon) within the +/- 3% Tolerance in Technical Specification will be allowed.

**Director**  
**Social Welfare, Assam**  
**Uzanbazar, Guwahati-1**

Janasanyog/C/6466/21

**JEEVIKA**  
**Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society**  
**Rural Development Department**  
**Very Important**  
**Final Notice through publication in Newspaper**

This is for information to all concerned that through an MoU dated 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2014, M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd had been sanctioned the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) project by Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society(BRLPS-JEEVIKA). The project was allotted to impart placement linked training to 1,500 rural poor youths within stipulated time period. As per guidelines, the concerned PIA, i.e., M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd was given an amount of Rs. 1,17,78,500/- (Rupees One Crore Seventeen Lakh Seventy Eight Thousand and Five Hundred Only) as advance in one tranche. M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd (herein after called as PIA) could not comply with the terms of the MoU. BRLPS, after sending letters at the addresses of the representatives terminated the MoU on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018 and black listed the organization dated 03<sup>rd</sup> August 2018. Further attempts were made on behalf of BRLPS to recover the unutilized advance amount that had been paid to M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd. No response was received from the concerned PIA. The letters sent to PIA's registered/official address (M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd, 404 & 405, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Maithriviher Complex, Opp Bank of India, Ameerpet, Hyderabad-500038 & M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd, D.No.-7-1-621/359,379/2RT, F.No.102,Sreenidhi Arcade, S.R. Nagar, Hyderabad, PIN-500038) to their representatives on date- 02/08/2021 and 10/08/2021 respectively were returned undelivered. Although the earlier correspondences on the same address had been validly served and were even responded by the concerned M/s Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd. In view of the above, the concerned person/persons in Skylark Infowaves Pvt Ltd are hereby informed and called upon to take appropriate steps towards making payment of Rs. 2,10,24,943/- (Rupees Two Crore Ten Lakh Twenty Four Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty Three Only) i.e., the amount of advance paid to them along with penal interest for not carrying out their obligations that they were bound under the aforesaid MoU dated 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2014 and as per the provisions laid down in DDU-GKY Guidelines, SOP-&II and the Notifications issued by the MoRD. Above mentioned amount should be deposited within 15 days from the publication of the notice in newspapers. In case of failure to deposit the aforesaid amount to BRLPS, appropriate action for recovery of advance amount with admissible interest including proceedings under the Bihar & Orissa Public Demand Recovery Act shall be initiated against the said PIA and their representatives responsible for the lapses.

**Officer on Special Duty**  
**JEEVIKA, BRLPS**

PR. No. 07286 (Ni.Ni) 2021-22

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Govt. launches portal for dust control norms

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Thursday started a web-page – Dust Pollution Control Self-Assessment Portal – on which construction and demolition sites have to register themselves.

**₹5 lakh fine**  
The government also imposed a fine of ₹5 lakh on a construction site for alleged violation of dust control norms.

“Through this portal, all the construction works going on inside Delhi, whether it is a house or the work of agencies and contractors, or other personal constructions, will be closely monitored and managed. Training will begin next week to connect people to the portal so that they can be taught how to work with it,” Environment Minister Gopal Rai said at the launch.

The Minister said that in the first phase, the government would start the training work with civic bodies, DDA, PWD, CPWD, and other government agencies. “In the second phase, we will train private corporations...,” he said.

Fifteen mandatory measures on the portal have to be followed by everyone.

21-day drive to clean Yamuna kicks off in city

Excavators, amphibious machine being used to clear waste

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Thursday began a 21-day cleaning drive for a four-km-long stretch of the Yamuna near Sarai Kale Khan under the Centre’s “Clean India” programme.

The government is using excavators and an amphibious machine to pull waste and hyacinths to the banks of the river.

Rajendra Singh, who is dubbed “waterman of India”, is also part of the drive. “In the last 20 years, so much money has been spent to clean the river but Yamuna *ma* is still sick. People and authorities should come together to clean it,” Mr. Singh said.

**No safety gear**  
On Thursday evening, about half a dozen workers were found cleaning the river, some waist-deep and other knee-deep in the blackish water, without any boots, gloves, or masks.

Currently, the Yamuna is polluted and not even fit for bathing in the Delhi stretch, except for Palla, the point where the river enters the city, according to government data.

District                      Magistrate



Workers cleaning a stretch of the Yamuna near Sarai Kale Khan on Thursday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

“Once we pull the hyacinths to the banks, we will let those dry. After that, we will supply them to a waste-to-energy plant to generate electricity

**VISHWENDRA**  
District Magistrate (South-East)

(South-East) Vishwendra said the hyacinths in the river would be used to generate electricity.

“Once we pull the hyacinths to the banks, we will let those dry. After that, we will supply them to a waste-to-energy plant to generate electricity. We are also involving citizens, volunteers from Nehru Yuva Kendras

and NGOs in the process so that they will connect with the river and understand its current state. Once they come here and see it, they will own up the river,” Mr. Vishwendra said.

Districts have been doing different programmes under the “Clean India” initiative since October 1, with an objective to involve citizens in waste collection and its disposal.

The East district has conducted several plog runs and 2,275 kg waste has been collected, said the DM. In the North district, two waterbodies are being cleaned, a park is being beautified, and awareness programmes are being held.

Loudspeakers allowed for religious events till midnight

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Thursday permitted organisers of religious functions to use loudspeakers between 10 p.m. and 12 a.m. till October 16, after getting permission from the Delhi police.

“The Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi has accorded permission to use loudspeakers between 10 p.m. and 12 midnight up to October 16 by the organisers of Ramlila, Durga Puja, Dusshera and other religious programmes,” an official order said.

श्री विज्ञानविचारालय/श्री विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, त्रिवन्द्रम, केरल - 695 011, भारत  
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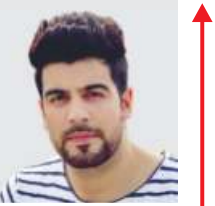
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06:18

SET

18:00

RISE

08:04

SET

19:29

SATURDAY, OCT. 09

RISE

06:19

SET

17:58

RISE

09:13

SET

20:11

SUNDAY, OCT. 10

RISE

06:19

SET

17:57

RISE

10:23

SET

21:01

Delhi Weather

max

min

Delhi City

34

24

Safdarjang

34

24

Palam

34

25

Delhi Palam Today

36°C

A dry weather will be mostly dry. A hazy morning turns very warm day with uneasy afternoon. Night will be comfortable.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow

36°C

The morning will be prevail. The morning will be hazy. Day will be very warm and humid with uneasy afternoon.

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## Leopard skin seized, 1 held in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BHUBANESWAR

One person has been arrested and a leopard skin seized from his possession in Odisha's Kandhamal district, police said on Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force (STF) of the Crime Branch and forest officials raided Siptiguda village in Baliguda wildlife range on Wednesday and made the arrest and seizure, a police officer said.

In the last one year, the STF has seized 16 leopard skin, nine elephant tusks, two deer skin and 15 kg of pangolin scales and arrested 33 people.

# To flex its muscles, BJP eyeing majority mark in Assam bypoll

Party confident of sweeping polls; Cong. battles near wipeout in eastern Assam

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

For the BJP, Assembly elections in Assam have been about achieving targets – “mission 84” in 2016 and “mission 100+” in 2021 – along with its regional allies. But its primary objective has been to attain the simple majority mark in the 126-member House, factoring in at least 35 Assembly seats where Muslim voters are dominant or are in large enough numbers to be the deciding factor.

The by-elections to five Assembly seats on October 30, and a sixth soon after, could take the BJP closer to scoring 64 seats, which would lessen its dependence on its regional allies, the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL).

The BJP is contesting three of the five seats, leaving Gossaigaon and Tamulpur in the Bodoland Territorial Region to the UPPL. For the first time, all candidates of the BJP are turncoats.



The BJP is contesting three of the five seats, leaving Gossaigaon and Tamulpur to the UPPL. ■ FILE PHOTO

Phanidhar Talukdar has been fielded from the Bhabanipur seat that he won for the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) while Rupiyoti Kurmi and Sushanta Borgohain had won the Mariani and Thowra seats, respectively, as Congress candidates six months ago.

The BJP had won 60 seats in the March-April Assembly polls but is down to 59 after the resignation of former Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who became a Rajya Sabha member. If all its three candidates win the by-polls, the party's tally will be

62, short of the simple majority mark by two.

### Challenge for Congress

The BJP is confident of the ruling alliance sweeping the five seats. The party is also upbeat about bagging Majuli, particularly after the Congress decided to let the Assam Jatiya Parishad contest the seat.

“There are no reasons why the people will not vote for our candidates, who have a sizeable support base,” the BJP's State unit president Bhabesh Kalita said.

There are speculations

that the Congress gave up the Majuli seat because Rajib Lochan Pegu, its best bet and candidate for the last two Assembly elections against Mr. Sonowal, is tipped to join the BJP.

The challenge for the Congress would be to retain Mariani and Thowra through its candidates Luhit Konwar and Manoranjan Konwar, respectively.

Their loss would leave Congress with only three of some 40 seats in eastern Assam, and there are fears that BJP could target at least one of the three MLAs.

Without the AIUDF and the Bodoland People's Front as its allies unlike in the March-April Assembly polls, the Congress is contesting all five seats while the AIUDF is contesting two (Bhabanipur and Gossaigaon).

Activist turned politician Akhil Gogoi's Rajior Dal is contesting the Mariani and Thowra seats. This could harm the prospects of Congress more than that of the BJP.

## Assam eviction: file affidavit, Gauhati HC tells govt.

Blood has been spilt and those guilty must be punished, says Chief Justice

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Gauhati High Court on Thursday directed the Assam government to file a detailed affidavit on the September 23 eviction drive in Darrang district's Dhalpur, resulting in clashes and the death of two persons, including a minor, in police firing.

A video on the clashes showed a photographer ap-

pointed by the district administration stomping on the body of a man shot by the police.

### ‘This is a big tragedy’

Hearing a public interest litigation petition by Congress MLA Debabrata Saikia and a suo motu petition in connection with the eviction, a Division Bench of Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia and Justice Soumitra Sakia said,

“This is a big tragedy, very unfortunate. Those who are guilty, if at all must be punished, no doubt about that.”

Seeking punishment on “one or two other incidents as well”, the Chief Justice remarked, “*Khoon zameen par gir gaya* [blood has been spilt].”

The Bench also asked if the State believed that the National Rehabilitation Policy was not applicable in As-

sam and directed it to file a detailed affidavit in the matter within three weeks.

In his petition, Mr. Saikia said the people evicted from Dhalpur were from marginalised and socio-economically disadvantaged sections and forced to migrate due to repeated floods and erosion by the Brahmaputra since 1960.

The court fixed November 3 as the next date of hearing.

## Maharashtra launches mega vaccination drive

It aims to vaccinate 15 lakh people daily

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

In keeping with the Centre's target to administer 100-crore COVID-19 vaccine doses till Dasara on October 15, the Maharashtra government will be holding a mega-vaccination drive from October 8 to 14 with the aim of providing jabs for 15 lakh people daily during this period, State Health Minister Rajesh Tope said on October 7.

Unveiling the drive ‘Mission Kavach Kundal’, he said that thus far, 65% of the State's eligible vaccine population (a little over 9 crore) had received the first dose while 30% had taken both doses.

“We plan to vaccinate 15 lakh persons every day in this drive. We have a sufficient vaccine stock of one crore doses to achieve this... while speaking to Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, the Minister said that it was his expectation that Maharashtra must play a major role in achieving the 100 crore-vaccination target,” Mr. Tope said.

The Health Minister said that of the roughly 9.15 crore people eligible to be vaccinated in the State, 6 crore had been given the first dose while 2.5 crore persons had taken both doses.



“As a result, Maharashtra today has opened up almost every establishment including religious places. Given the scale of our vaccination, even if someone does get infected in the future, the severity will be less, and there will not be a panic demand for ICU beds or oxygen requirement. The fatalities, too, will be controlled as a result,” Mr. Tope said, remarking that there were still some sections of society which demanded the involvement of community and religious leaders in order to expedite the pace of vaccination.

Commenting on ‘Mission Kavach Kundal’, the Health Minister further said that he had a meeting with all District Collectors and Divisional Commissioners and stressed on the pressing need to work at an enhanced pace to complete as many vaccinations as possible.

## Take action against NCB officials: Congress

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

A day after allegations were levelled against the involvement of private individuals in the raid conducted by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), the Maharashtra unit of the Congress party questioned whether senior personnel of the NCB were aware of the involvement of private citizens in the raid, and sought action against officials for violating the agency's rules.

Nationalist Congress Par-

ty (NCP) leader and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik, who had levelled the allegations, released two more videos of the two private individuals, Manish Bhanushali and Kiran Gosavi, entering and leaving hurriedly from the NCB office on the day of the raid on the cruise ship.

According to the rules, the NCB's Drug Law Enforcement Officer (DLEO) is responsible for the safety of the arrestee, and he must keep the arrestee always in sight.

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## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Mahendra S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: about 35 years, Height: 5'5", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Beard: short, Hair: Black, Wearing: Hospital Dress, was found unconscious on 29.09.2021 from Patri, Near Suvudha Restaurant Netaji Subhash Marg, Darya Ganj, Delhi & was admitted in LNJP Hospital by CAT Ambulance S-9, during the treatment Doctors declared him dead on 02.10.2021. The dead body has been preserved in MAMC Mortuary, for 72 hours. In this regard a FIR/DD No.21-A, dated 05.10.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.



SHO

P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi

Ph.: 011-23279331, 23274683

Mob.: 8750870421

DP/1028/CD/2021

RIS

Research and Information System for Developing Countries

विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

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iii) Research Assistant for medicinal plants research work

Deadline for submission of applications: 25 October 2021

For further details please visit: <https://www.ris.org.in/current-openings>

## SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that a female namely Anita Kumari W/o Ankit Kumar Das, R/o RZ C-80, Gali No.13, East Sagarpur, New Delhi has been missing since 13.09.2021 from her house the jurisdiction of PS Sagarpur, New Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 159A dated 14.09.2021 has been lodged at PS, Sagarpur, New Delhi. The description of missing female is as under

Name: Anita Kumari, Husband's Name : Ankit Kumar Das, Age : 24 Years, Height : 5'0", Built: Strong, Face : Round, Complexion : Fair, Wearing : Not Known. If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform the undersigned at following phone numbers.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

e-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)

Fax : 011-24368639

Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641

DP/847/SW/2021

SHO

P.S., Sagarpur, New Delhi

Ph. : 011-28522653, 9213225632

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified female Age : 28-30 years, Height : 5'2", Complexion : Wheatish, wearing Pink Colour suit salwar, was found injured on 30.09.2021 by train accident near Mangolpuri Station, Delhi.

She was admitted in Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Delhi. During the treatment she died. In this regard a DD No. 22-A dated 30.09.2021 has been lodged at P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi.

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

SHO - P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi

Tel. No. : 011-23693611, 23691106

DP/312/RLY/21

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.						
Office of the Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) PHE, Ground Water Division, Nowshera, Sgr.						
Gist of e-Tender.						
Fresh e-N.I.T. No.: PHE/GWDS/ 47 of 10/2021						
For and on behalf of lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders are invited in two cover system from registered Water Well Drillers/Contractors as per the details given in tender document.						
S. No.	Name of Work	No. of Hand Pump Wells	Est. Cost Rs. in Lacs	Cost of Tender Document	Time of completion	Class of Contract
01	Construction of 125mm dia Machine Drilled Hand Pump Well at Govt. schools of Kupwara Constituency of District Kupwara	20 No's	Rs.63.00 Lacs	Rs. 1000/-	70 days	Registered for Drilling 125 mm dia Machine Drilled Hand Pump Wells

### Critical Dates/Information.

1. Publishing Date	06-10-2021 (02:00 P.M)
2. Period of Downloading of Bids	06-10-2021 (02:00 P.M) to 16-10-2021 (02:00 P.M)
3. Period of Submission of bids	06-10-2021 (02:00 P.M) to 16-10-2021 (02:00 P.M)
4. Date of opening of Tender.	18-10-2021 at (3:00 P.M)
5. Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer , (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water SrinagarKashmir-190011	
6. Document Cost : Non-Refundable in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar( at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)	
7. Bid Validity Period: 180 Days	
8. The bids can be downloaded or uploaded on <a href="http://www.jktenders.gov.in">www.jktenders.gov.in</a>	
9. The bids of only those agencies shall be accepted who possess valid registration certificate of construction of 125mm dia machine drilled hand pump wells. However due to Pandemic the renewal Registration for 2021-22 is waived off for a period of 6 months from 01-04-2021 to 30-09-2021.	
10. Instead of EMD the firm has to furnish "Bid Security Declaration", format of the declaration is mentioned in the Bid Document	

Sd./

Executive Engineer

DIP/K-10052/21

Jal Shakti PHE Ground Water Division Sgr.

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Another building collapses in Bengaluru
BENGALURU
Yet another building in the city, this time in east Bengaluru, collapsed on Thursday, leading to panic. This is the third such incident in under a fortnight in Bengaluru. Fortunately, no casualties were reported and residents have been evacuated along with those from nearby buildings.

Telangana man arrested for 'raping' toddler
HYDERABAD
A man, who allegedly sexually assaulted a two-and-a-half-year-old girl by luring her with chocolates in Nirmal district of north Telangana, was arrested on Wednesday. The offence took place on October 4 and came to light only on October 6 as the child could help identify the suspect, Narayana, 50. He was addicted to alcohol and homeless, the police said.

I-T searches on close associate of Yediyurappa trigger speculation

BMTC employee under the scanner along with prominent contractors

KARNATAKA BUREAU
BENGALURU
Income Tax officials on Thursday launched massive search operations on alleged undisclosed income of Irrigation and Public Works contractors and a close aide of BJP leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and his family. Coming just ahead of the by-polls to Hanagal and Sindgi, it set off political speculation. The aide, an employee of BMTC, continues to be in the Chief Minister's secretariat "on official duty". While Mr. Yediyurappa refused to link the searches to politics or his family, some within the party fuelled the speculation. BJP MLC A.H. Vishwanath, who had alleged fraud in awarding works worth ₹20,000 crore during the tenure of Mr. Ye-



Umesh
diyurappa, said it was testimony to the corruption that prevailed during Mr. Yediyurappa's tenure. Though nearly 30 contractors, including half a dozen big contractors, were covered in search operations, the search on the residential premises of Umesh, a bus conductor/driver turned close associate of the Lingayat strongman, has gathered much attention. Mr.

Umesh has worked with BJP MLC Aiyannur Manjunath, Mr. Yediyurappa's sons BJP Shivamogga MP B.Y. Raghavendra and BJP Vice president B.Y. Viayendra in the past. The searches are being conducted in Bengaluru, Bagalkot and Bidar among other places. A few contractors are said to be linked to politicians in north Karnataka. According to sources, the searches are being conducted over contracts for canal, road and bridge works, besides an airport contract given during Mr. Yediyurappa's tenure. The role that Mr. Umesh played in securing the tenders for the contractors and their associates is under the radar. "Though IT searches on contractors are common, Umesh has emerged to be the focus of attention," sources said.

However, Mr. Yediyurappa said, "IT searches keep happening. It will not have any impact on the bypolls," he said, acknowledging that Mr. Umesh had worked with him when he was the Chief Minister. Mr. Raghavendra also acknowledged that he had worked with the family. Meanwhile, Mr. Vishwanath, who is at loggerheads with Mr. Yediyurappa over being denied Cabinet berth, claimed that Mr. Yediyurappa had to surrender his post because of such alleged corruption. Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy said, "The searches on the aide of Mr. Yediyurappa could be linked to internal affairs of BJP. It could be to keep the leader under party's control." (With inputs from Hassan and Mysuru)

Two held over moral policing in Karnataka

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

In yet another incident of 'moral policing' in Dakshina Kannada, the Mangaluru city police on Thursday arrested two men, said to be Bajrang Dal activists, on charges of assaulting a man from a minority community after seeing the latter speaking to three women from another faith here on Wednesday.

The police gave the names of the arrested as Jayaprakash and Pruthvi, employed as daily wage employees in the Dakshina Kannada Cooperative Milk Producers Union's dairy at Kulasekhara here.

According to a complaint filed by the victim, Mohammed P.V., 23, a native of Kannur in Kerala, he was riding his motorcycle with his friend Pranav on the pillion from Kankanady to Lalbagh after having dinner at Kankanady. On the way Mr. Mohammed spoke to his woman friend near a sweet stall. Then he stopped his two-wheeler near a motorcycle showroom at Kadri around 10 p.m. on Wednesday where he met two women, who were his classmates.

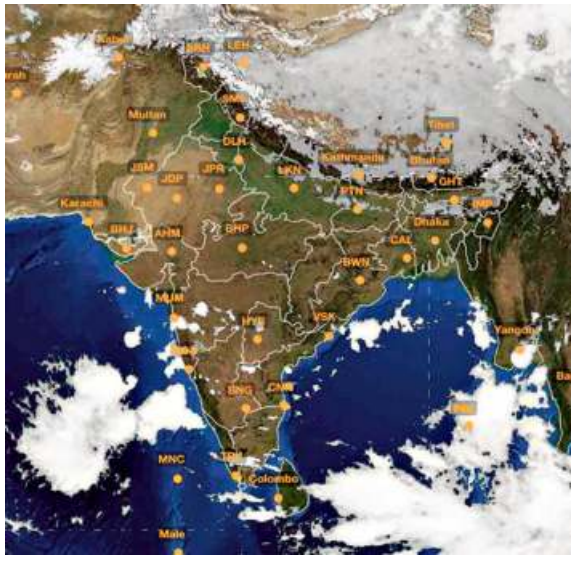
The complaint said that as they were speaking, two men who came on a motorcycle asked their names. After Muhammed revealed his name, the two men allegedly abused him for speaking with women from another faith and slapped him. Soon the police arrived at the spot.

Following the complaint, the Mangaluru East police traced the two persons and arrested them.

The Surathkal police had last month arrested five persons, including the Bajrang Dal district chief, for the alleged act of moral policing.

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 IMD: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over central Maharashtra, Marathwada, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka, Kerala, Mahe and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Gujarat, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Odisha, Telangana, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaiikal

Table with 4 columns: CITY, RAIN, MAX, MIN. It lists weather data for various cities across India, including Agartala, Ahmedabad, Aizawl, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Gangtok, Goa, Guwahati, Hubballi, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur, Kochi, Kohima, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Kurnool, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangaluru, Mumbai, Mysuru, New Delhi, Patna, Port Blair, Puducherry, Pune, Raipur, Ranchi, Shillong, Shimla, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruchi, Vijayawada, and Visakhapatnam.

Table with 4 columns: CITY, SO, NO, CO, PM2.5, PM10, CODE. It shows air quality data for various cities, including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Pune, and Visakhapatnam. The table also includes a section for 'Yesterday' with a note about observation made at 4.00 p.m. in Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab.

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

Telugu Akademi fraud mastermind got ₹20 crore

Court urged to remand the accused in judicial custody for 15 days

ABHINAY DESHPANDE
HYDERABAD

A whopping ₹20 crore was swindled by the mastermind Chunduri Venkata Koti Sai Kumar, 49, in ₹64.50 crore Telugu Akademi fixed deposit fraud. Others who siphoned off a large amount of money are -- Chairman and Managing Director of A.P. Mercantile Cooperative Credit Society Ltd., Vijayawada, B.V.V.N. Sa-

tyanarayana Rao, and realtor Nandui Venkata Raman, 50, ₹10 crore and ₹7 crore, respectively. While Sai Kumar and Raman were partners in the fraud, Rao got the share for parking the money in his society by creating a fake account in the name of Telugu Akademi. In his remand report submitted to XII Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Hyderabad Central Crime Station, Assistant Commissioner of Police (WCO) K Manoj Kumar stated that based on their preliminary investigation, they found out how much amount all the accused shared between January 2021 and August 2021.



C. Venkata Koti Sai Kumar
He said that Union Bank of India chief manager Shaik Mastanvali Saheb and Canara Bank's Santosh Nagar branch manager M. Sadhana received ₹2.5 crore and ₹1.99 crore respectively, on regular intervals. Absconding accused persons Krishna Reddy from Miyapur and Rama-

na Reddy got ₹6 crore each, Bhoopathi from Nagole got ₹2.5 crore, Padmanaban from Chennai and Yohan Raju from Vijayawada was given a share of ₹50 lakh each, and Mandan from Shiridi, Maharashtra, got ₹30 lakh from the fraud money. However, there was no mention of the amount received by Akademi's Administrative Officer and in-charge accounts officer Segoori Ramesh, in the remand report. The ACP also informed the court that confessional statements of the accused were not recorded due to lack of time while the role of each person involved in the case is yet to be ascertained. "The amount distributed between

the accused has to be recovered, and a few persons are still at large. And the bank statements of the accused are to be collected," the officer stated in the remand report. Further, he requested the court to remand the accused in judicial custody for 15 days, so as to enable them to proceed further with the investigation as they might tamper with the evidence and that difficulties might further arise in the investigation. The investigation agency has to examine several documents from the office of APMCCS, UBI and Canara Bank to establish how the amounts have been transferred to Agrasen Cooperative Bank.



A file photo of the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple.

Kerala to allow 25,000 pilgrims at Sabarimala
Virtual queue system will continue

G. ANAND
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Government will allow up to 25,000 visitors a day to the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple when the hill-top shrine opens for the annual Mandalam-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season in November. Earlier, the government had limited the number of worshippers to fewer than 1,000 a day because of COVID-19.

After chairing a top-level meeting to evaluate the arrangements for the pilgrimage here on Thursday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the virtual queue system for booking darshan in advance would continue. Pilgrims would have to register their name, address and other particulars on the police-run portal. The TDB would not allow any pilgrim to stay back at Sannidhanam.

Kerala HC flays practice of nokkukooli

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Thursday lashed out again at the practice of demanding nokkukooli by headload workers in the State. Justice Devan Ramachandran orally observed that he was disappointed that the practice still persisted despite a ban and repeated directives by the High Court. The court said it did not want to hear the word nokkukooli any more. The use of the word should be discontinued. The court added that investors were scared to invest in the State because of the militant trade unionism. If an employer did not engage a headload worker, he/she was supposed to approach the competent authorities under the Kerala Head Load Workers Act instead of resorting to violence, the court said.

Speaker approaches SC against HC order on Roy disqualification

Roy, elected on BJP ticket in May, joined Trinamool in June

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee has approached the Supreme Court against the Calcutta High Court order on the disqualification of Mukul Roy. Mr. Roy, who was elected on BJP ticket in the Assembly election in May, rejoined the Trinamool Congress in June. He was later appointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, a post usually reserved for an Opposition legislator. The BJP approached the Speaker seeking Mr. Roy's disqualification under the anti-defection law. Later, party leaders approached the High Court on the issue and the court directed the Speaker to decide on the disqualification by October 7. It pointed out that in case the Speaker was unable to de-



Mukul Roy
cide on the matter, it would take a call on the disqualification. On Thursday, when the matter came before the court, Advocate-General S.N. Mookerjee said the Speaker had moved the Supreme Court against the High Court order. The development in the case would have a bearing on the fate of legislators who had joined the ruling Trinamool Congress after being elected from the Opposition parties.

HAL delivers heaviest propellant tank to ISRO

SCI20- LOX is a semi-cryogenic tank

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The heaviest semi-cryogenic propellant tank (SCI20-LOX) ever fabricated by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has been delivered to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The semi cryo-liquid oxygen (LOX) tank – the first developmental welded hardware – is a part of the SCI20 stage intended for payload enhancement by replacing the LI10 stage in existing Mk-III launch vehicle, said a release from HAL. Last year, HAL had delivered the biggest ever cryogenic liquid hydrogen tank (C32-LH2), four meters in diameter and eight meters in length, much ahead of contractual schedule. The propellant tank was handed over by M.K. Mishra, General Manager, Aerospace Division, HAL, to T.K.B. Kumaresh Babu, Gen-

eral Manager, LHWC, head of the resident team of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre, ISRO. Till date, HAL's Aerospace Division has delivered 244 propellant tanks and 95 water tanks to ISRO for the space programmes of PSLV, GSLV Mk-II and GSLV Mk-III of diameter 2.1, 2.8 and 4 meters, where the length of the tank varies from 2.5 meters to 8.0 meters. As a strategic reliable partner, HAL has been associating with ISRO for India's prestigious space programmes for five decades. HAL has delivered critical structures, tankages, satellite structures for the PSLV, GSLV-Mk II and GSLV-Mk III launch vehicles. Various new projects are being taken up at HAL, for which installation and commissioning of unique infrastructure is nearing completion.

Ambitious project in A.P. to upskill students

APSCH to roll out Microsoft certification programme after Dasara

P. SUJATHA VARMA
VIJAYAWADA

The State government proposes to take up skilling of students on a massive scale with the help of Microsoft Corporation (India). As many as 1,62,000 students and unemployed youth across more than 300 colleges and skill development centres will benefit from the programme proposed to be rolled out by the AP State Council of Higher Education (APSCH) immediately after Dasara.

dents complete the programme and secure the certificates from Microsoft, it will create a huge impact in terms of their employability prospects," said K. Hemachandra Reddy, Chairman of the council, which is the implementing partner of the joint initiative of the Department of Higher Education and the AP State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC). An amount of ₹30.79 crore has been earmarked for implementation of the project.

The Special Chief Secretary, Department of Higher Education, will be its Convener. Minister for Information and Skill Development Training; Principal Secretary, IT and Skill Development; APSCH Chairman; Special Officer to Chief Minister Hari Krishna; and Coordinator, Overseas Education for Andhra Pradesh Kumar Annavarapu are its members. The APSCH will implement the project and will ensure that students enrolled for the course get Microsoft certification. The project was initially meant to be implemented between December 31, 2020 and December 31, 2021. But due to the COVID-19 pan-

demic, the programme is being extended for a period of one year, up to December 31, 2022. After undergoing training in certain skills, the students will write mock tests and then write the final exam to obtain the certificate. Technical workforce "The Microsoft's 'Future Ready Solutions' industry certification will enable our students to acquire the technical skills to become eligible workforce in sectors such as IT infrastructure, data science and computer science," said Mr. Kumar. The APSCH had conducted a meeting attended by the Vice-Chancellors, who were in favour of the programme.

Nassar's dress bank brightens bridal hopes

Ex-NRI on unique charity mission collects wedding dresses and offers them to needy

ABDUL LATHEEF NAHA
MALAPPURAM

Nassar Thootha's dress bank is getting replenished much faster than expected. A unique charity scheme based at Thootha on the Malappuram-Palakkad border offering free wedding dresses for the marriage of the needy is becoming the talk of the town. It is called 'Nassar's Dress Bank'. A former Non-Resident Indian (NRI), Mr. Nassar now dedicates a part of his time and resources to the dress bank. He collects wedding dresses from those are ready to donate, gets them dry-cleaned, and stores them neatly in a shop



Unique scheme: Former expatriate Nassar Thootha displaying a wedding dress in his shop. ■SAKEER HUSSAIN

that he has rented at Thootha. The dresses are displayed as though they are in a textile shop. Those who can't afford wedding dresses can approach him and take

any item for free. "And they don't have to return it," said Mr. Nassar. People from different parts of south India are approaching Mr. Nassar,

both for donating their wedding dresses, and for borrowing dresses as well. "It came as a surprise to me when I learnt that most women seldom use their wedding dress after wearing it for a few hours during the function. When I asked them to donate it, the response was tremendous," said Mr. Nassar. Hundreds have come forward to donate their wedding dress. He now has more than 1,000 dresses in his bank. They include saris, frocks, churidars, suits, and Sherwanis. They cost anywhere between ₹5,000 and ₹50,000. "They don't look like second-hand," he said.





Killing the chills

The malaria vaccine must see speedy implementation from the lab to the field

The triumphs of science are best appreciated when they make human lives easier or safer, or simply, offer hope. The first ever World Health Organization (WHO)-approved anti-malaria vaccine must count among those triumphs. The approval marks a milestone in a timeline that records a long and laborious process to grapple with malaria, and somehow make it less of a killer. The vaccine that WHO has approved – RTS,S – has been used in pilot programme participants (children and infants) in Africa from 2015 after it got a nod for this specific use from the European Medicines Agency. This triumph comes at a time of great scientific endeavour, yes, but also notably at a time when it was feared that the progress against malaria was flagging. With this vaccine, which will significantly reduce the severity of cases and prevent deaths, hope has sprung anew that humankind might retard in its tracks a pathogen that has stalked sub-Saharan Africa and several other parts of the world for years now. WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom rightly termed it as a historic moment, achieving a breakthrough not only for malaria control but also child health and science itself. The malaria vaccine, RTS,S, which has been in the making for nearly 30 years, acts against *P. falciparum*, believed to be the most deadly malaria parasite globally. As per WHO, in 2019, nearly half the world's population was at risk of malaria, while most cases and deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa. There were an estimated 229 million cases in 2019, and malaria deaths stood at 4,09,000, with the WHO African region carrying a disproportionate burden – 94% of cases and deaths. Children under five are the most vulnerable group affected by malaria; in 2019, they accounted for about two thirds of all malaria deaths.

WHO said it was making a recommendation for use based on the key findings of pilot projects implemented in child health clinics in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi over two years. Data and insights gathered from these studies showed that the vaccine was not only feasible to introduce but that it also improves health and saves lives. Remarkably, it facilitated equitable access to malaria prevention, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping reach even hitherto unreached populations. While further steps are taken to manufacture, fund and roll out the vaccine to nations affected by malaria, maintaining equity of access is key. Dr. Tedros emphasised in his press conference that as the work towards providing vaccination continues, nations may, by no means, relinquish their routine malaria prevention activities, including providing insecticide-treated bed nets. While the world now has a way to kill the rigors – the chills characteristic of the infection – the next step should be speedy and meticulous implementation of the scientific miracle from the lab to the field.

Handling complexity

The Physics Nobel winners have developed tools to get a handle on complex systems

Bringing to a close speculation about the winner of the Physics Nobel prize this year, the Nobel committee decided to award a trio of researchers. One half went to Syukuro Manabe of Princeton University, U.S., and Klaus Hasselmann of the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Hamburg, Germany, for their work in climate science. In the long line of researchers who estimated the warming of the atmosphere due to gases in it, Syukuro Manabe's modelling, in collaboration with others – and over decades – is a classic work that showed, even in the 1960s, that the atmosphere would undergo another 2.3° C warming with the doubling of carbon dioxide content. Klaus Hasselmann identified a way of treating the random noise-like variations of the weather, devising a method to generate useful "signals" on the scale of the climate. Of interest was the way these models could show the effect of human activities on the climate. The other half of the prize, to Giorgio Parisi from the Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, is for developing a method to sensibly study complex condensed matter systems called "spin glasses" – an outstanding feat in both mathematical and physical innovation. The idea to break what is called "replica symmetry", seen in a spin glass, in a consistent manner, which was his contribution, led to a method to study one of the simplest models of a genuinely complex system. His work has helped solve problems in mathematics, biology and neuroscience; for instance, how memory is stored in networks of nerve cells.

What ties together the seemingly disparate works – the climate science work by Syukuro and Hasselmann on the one hand and theoretical condensed matter physics work by Parisi on the other – is that both describe complex physical systems. Physics is often thought of as a science of simple systems, and it is mostly celebrated and sometimes chided for this. Even rocket science, which inspires awe for its grandeur and accuracy, is mostly the study of so-called simple systems. Complexity arises when there are many, many interacting pieces in the system, with each moving in an independent way. The deceptively easy-looking problem of water rushing out of a tap is notoriously difficult to understand as to when it makes a transition from simple streamlined flow to a complex turbulent flow. The Nobel winners this year have handled such complex systems and developed tools to get meaningful, quantitative results out of them. Notable in this is the climate scientists' work, which makes it obvious where science stands on the issue of global warming and estimates the human fingerprint on climate change. With the COP26 summit drawing close, the Nobel committee's decision only underscores the need to take this into account.

The Congress is at the crossroads

A revised ideological line combined with an organisational revamp can bring the party back in the reckoning



ZOYA HASAN

The judgment by contemporary writers of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's leadership is almost uniformly harsh and unforgiving. It is common to contrast the strength of the formal organisation and leadership of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with the deterioration and decay of the Congress party, especially the central leadership's failure to reverse this downside. The contrast between the Congress and the BJP is stark, not in terms of decision-making which is centralised in both cases, but in terms of overall political management.

The Congress party faces three major challenges – it has to elect a leader capable of keeping the party united, reconstruct its organisational structure across the States, and project and propagate a clear alternative ideological narrative to the BJP. These challenges are more apparent after the 2019 debacle in the general election and the leadership vacuum following Mr. Gandhi's resignation as president and the party's abject failure to elect a president to replace him.

Signs of changes

The fallout of Navjot Singh Sidhu's resignation as State Congress chief in Punjab almost 72 days after he was 'undeservingly' appointed to that post has exposed the fault lines in the party. While criticism by the media, the BJP and other Opposition politicians was on predictable lines, the absence of debate and consultation in the party regarding leadership change in Punjab just months ahead of the next Assembly elections (early next year) is a matter of wider concern.

Even though there is no percep-

tible effort to rebuild the organisation and institute formal leadership at various levels, there is a noticeable effort to revive the party through ideological changes pushed by Mr. Gandhi. Ideologically, he wants to take the Congress in a left-of-centre direction. Despite reservations within the party and outside to his unremitting critique of the Prime Minister, Mr. Gandhi has readily advanced ideological criticism of the Hindu right at every juncture. Additionally, he has pointedly attacked cronyism, which according to him has favoured a few corporate entities. He has also taken up the welfare and economic concerns of the poor.

The recent decision to induct two feisty critics of Hindutva, Kanhaiya Kumar and Jignesh Mevani, into the party's fold is an indication of this shift. This shift follows from Mr. Gandhi's widely reported statement in July to workers of his party's social media department (in an online event), "There are many people who are not scared, but are outside the Congress. All these people are ours. Bring them in," he had said, adding, "And those scared within our party should be shunted out. They are RSS people and they should go, let them enjoy. We do not want them, they are not needed. We want fearless people. This is our ideology. This is my basic message to you."

The left turn

This is not the first time the Congress has turned leftward. Indira Gandhi turned a series of measures after the 1969 split in the party, which later included the nationalisation of banks, abolition of privy purses and nationalisation of general insurance, dramatically appropriated the left platform. The second left turn happened under Congress president Sonia Gandhi's leadership when the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) which formed the government in 2004 with the support of the Left Front went on to implement the



SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

rural employment guarantee scheme and other rights based legislations. The circumstances that made these ideological shifts possible was the fact that Congress was in power in the Centre and in most States which enabled it to implement these policies. Effectively, the party has relied on the state to promote such policies. The third left turn is taking place under Mr. Gandhi when the Congress is in the Opposition, which makes the task more difficult except in these circumstances.

To regain and reconfigure

The current strategic shift indicates an attempt to regain ideological coherence and reconfigure the traditional social base of the party. Historically, as a party of consensus, the Congress had always come to power on a centrist platform reflecting its varied social base, including, most notably, its support from the lower sections of Indian society. Centrist and consensual politics, which explained its early success, do not seem to work in a divided polity. A party which once famously claimed to represent everyone seems to have lost the support of most groups in India's deeply polarised polity.

The party no longer enjoys Dalit support, competing for their vote with regional parties and the BJP; it has lost the support of upper castes who prefer to vote for the BJP; it has no support from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) ex-

Seeding a data revolution in Indian agriculture

But technology fixes and agri-business investments alone will not be enough to improve farmers' livelihoods



JAYAahari K.M. & A. ARUNACHALAM

In June this year, two significant documents relating to the Indian agriculture sector were released. The first is a consultation paper on the India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture (IDEA) from the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoA&FW) and the second on Indian Agriculture: Ripe for Disruption from a private organisation, Bain and Company. The first talks about a digital revolution in the agriculture sector and later predicts a revolutionary investment growth in agri-logistics, offtake, and agri-input delivery by 2025; these are, surprisingly, highly complementary. The fact is that every segment of present-day life is data-hungry. The MoA&FW report describes creating data to fuel the growth predicted by Bain and Company.

The forecast

The Bain report is a data-based prediction on agri-business scenarios, anchored to the agricultural set-up at present and predicting its future trajectories in another 20 years. It includes targeting the production of alternative proteins, and food cell-based food/ingredients and initiating ocean farming, etc. The report has a 'today forward- future back approach' and predicts a drastic investment opportunity development by

2025. The agriculture sector (currently worth \$370 billion), is estimated to receive an additional \$35 billion investment. The two enabling conditions for such investment opportunities are the changes in the regulatory framework, especially recent changes in the Farm Acts and digital disruption. The report argues that benefiting from the huge investments into the agri-ecosystem, doubling farmers' income targets can be achieved in near future.

The idea of integration

The IDEA-consulting paper is based on the Task Force and Working Group report constituted by the MoA&FW to design the blueprint of "digital agriculture" – which is similar to the digital disruption mentioned in the Bain report. Eventually, the farmer and the improvement of farmers' livelihood is the aim of the IDEA concept and it is proposed to happen through tight integration of agri-tech innovation and the agriculture industry ecosystem to farming and food systems. To be precise, the IDEA concept profounds the creation of second enabling conditions (which is described in the Bain report). The IDEA principles explicitly talk about openness of data, which means open to businesses and farmers, indicating the kind of integration it aims at.

Value-added innovative services by agri-tech industries and startups are an integral part of the IDEA architecture. Beyond the architecture, these services listed in the document (to be available on the platform) are equally important data for farmers and businesses. The Indian agriculture sector



RITU RAJ KUNWAR

in future will encompass farm to fork and pave the way for a single national market with a national platform with better connection between producer and consumers. Through their work, the management experts, Parijat Jain, Prashant Sarin and Shalabh Singawne (the authors of the Bain report) have depicted the agriculture reforms announced by the union government as a game-changer in the agriculture sector.

A thread of digital disruption

The IT industry has opposition to IDEA mainly due to the ethics of creating a Unique Farmer ID based on one's Aadhaar number and also the potential for data misuse. Beyond the news coverage about the prospects of achieving the goal of Doubling Farmers Income on which the present government has almost lost its hope, the Bain report has not been widely discussed – at least in the public domain. The assumptions used by authors of the Bain report, especially for its 'future back approach', need more or less focusing on widespread food production in controlled environ-

ments. No doubt, the emission, energy, and other resource footprints and sustainability issues around these techniques must be carefully studied to confirm the projected trajectory (which is not a part of the report). However, the report has convincingly demonstrated the business opportunity available in supply chains between farm to Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) *mandi* and *mandi* to the customer, which can be realised with the support of digital disruption and the latest agriculture reforms.

Both these reports heavily rely on digital disruption to improve farmers' livelihoods, without discussing how much farmers will be prepared to benefit from these newly emerging business environments. Hinting that the Union government is serious about this digital support to the agriculture sector – the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, has emphasised the significance of the farmer's database being prepared and has sought the support of States.

**An unconvincing 'how'**  
However, the fact is that a majority of small and marginal farmers are not technology-savvy. That most of them are under-educated for capacity building is ignored amidst these ambitious developments. The Bain report relies on the general assumption that more investments into the agriculture sector will benefit farmers; 'but how' has not been convincingly answered. Similarly, how the technology fix will help resolve all the nine issues of Indian agriculture listed at the

partly because the focal point of the leadership of the Gandhis was not and has not been on party building. Doubts about party regeneration in the past had led to a greater reliance on the government and welfare programmes for winning support than on reforming the party to mobilise the electorate. The response of the leadership to most fundamental issues was generally governmental rather than political. The lack of organisational heft was a severe limitation hampering its ability to reap the political dividends that could have accrued to the party from the unprecedented welfare spending by the UPA government. Organisational decline has impeded its capacity to engage with mass politics. This remains unchanged even when the party is in opposition.

The faultlines

Nearly two and a half years after its second consecutive defeat in parliamentary elections, the party still remains without a full-time president. That is the crux of the problem. It does not have a properly constituted Congress Working Committee (CWC) for institutionalised deliberations and decision-making. Even the Core Group formed by Sonia Gandhi in 2004 is invisible as power is concentrated in the Gandhi triumvirate. Rahul Gandhi is calling the shots without holding any formal position. Not surprisingly, many of the decisions taken today seem ad hoc and do not appear to be part of an overall plan on how to move forward. Yet, we cannot write off the Congress which has roots all across the country. The revised ideological line combined with an organisational revamp can bring the Congress back in the reckoning.

Zoaya Hasan is Professor Emerita at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her forthcoming book is titled 'Ideology and Organisation in Indian Politics: Growing Polarisation and the Decline of the Congress Party (2009-19)'

beginning of the report is unclear in the IDEA concept. Together, the two reports look forward to benefiting from the recent agriculture legislature changes without perceiving the capacity-building required at a farmer's end. Politically, these two reports ignore the protest of farmers against the reforms without considering it as a barrier or risk factor resulting in a repealing of these new farm laws.

Focus on the farmer

While agreeing on the fact that a data revolution is inevitable in the agriculture sector, given its socio-political complexities, we cannot just count on technology fixes and agri-business investments for improving farmers' livelihoods. There need to be immense efforts to improve the capacities of the farmers in India – at least until the educated young farmers replace the existing under-educated small and medium farmers. This capacity building can be done through a mixed approach – preferably building the capacities of individual farmers or coping with the new situation by establishing support systems, through FPOs and other farmers associations where technical support is available for farmers. Considering the size of the agriculture sector of the country this is not going to be an easy task but would need a separate programme across the country with considerable investment.

Jayaahari K.M. is India Country Coordinator of the Food and Landuse Coalition. A. Arunachalam is Director of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Agroforestry Research Institute

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.

'Save a life' incentive

The 'Good Samaritan' scheme to ensure a better response to intervene and save the lives of road accident victims could be a game-changer. But it is possible that many a Good Samaritan, true to their nature, may not be that willing to collect a reward. To reduce road accidents, strict enforcement of traffic rules and regulations is key. It should be 'ABC' (Always Be Careful) on the road. C.G. KURIAKOSE, Malippara, Kothamangalam, Kerala

I am a regular highway and city driver since 1967. Accidents that are routinely and conveniently attributed to "speeding" have their cause elsewhere: heavy vehicles habitually hog the extreme right lane, forcing motorists and others to overtake from the left, or pass from the extreme left lane; most trucks driving at night have inadequate or non-working tail-lights. Reflectors are not an alternative; tail lights of trucks, even when working, are obstructed with heavy

metal strips, supposedly to protect them from damage; trucks are often carelessly parked without the mandatory warning lights. What we need is a thorough check of tail lights at least at every inter-State checkpoint, and vigorous patrolling. PHIROZE B. JAVERI, Mumbai

Common school system

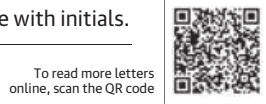
As someone who teaches in a public school, one has every reason to confirm the fact of a huge increase in admissions in such schools in

the aftermath of the financial distress among a section which has been forced them to withdraw their wards from private schools. It is also to be noted that many private schools, especially the unregistered ones, have closed down. This too has contributed to the increase in public school enrolment. There are some lessons: one, we need to have a robust public school system whose schools ought to be sufficiently funded, staffed and equipped to cater to the needs of all children in their

respective neighbourhoods. Two, it is the people who must come together to demand such a system of public education, for governments are increasingly uninterested in creating or sustaining the public system, including that of education. An unfortunate consequence of this sudden rise in the number of students in public schools is that most schools are not ready to handle the emerging situation. Not only do they suffer from a lack of infrastructure and other resources but there is also a

shortage of staff which is only getting exacerbated by the mindless depuration of teachers on non-academic duties. After all, children of the powerful and the well-off do not study in these schools. This brings us to the final lesson – people would not have suffered such a distressing situation had there been a common school system ensuring equitable education. FIROZ AHMAD, New Delhi

FIROZ AHMAD, New Delhi



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# Will a bad bank fix India’s broken banking system?

**PARLEY** A bad bank can help in debt recovery but it is no substitute to fresh capital infusion

Last month, the Union government set up the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) under the Companies Act. It thus delivered on its promise to set up a ‘bad bank’ to clean up the balance sheets of commercial banks. Under the new set up, the NARCL will take over loans worth almost ₹2 lakh crore from the books of commercial banks at a mutually agreed price. The NARCL will pay 15% of the price of these loans upfront in cash to banks and then issue security receipts in lieu of the remaining amount. The NARCL will then try to resolve these bad loans in a time-bound manner with help from the India Debt Resolution Company Limited (IDRCL). In case the IDRCL is unable to sell these bad loans at a satisfactory price to make good on the security receipts, the Centre will step in and fund the gap, but within a budget limit of ₹30,600 crore. In a conversation moderated by Prashanth Perumal J., Ajit Ranade and C.P. Chandrasekhar discuss the bad bank proposal. Edited excerpts:



**Ajit Ranade**  
is chief economist at the Aditya Birla Group

**What is the need to bail out banks? Why not let banks recognise their losses and let insolvent banks fail?**

**Ajit Ranade:** First of all, this is a one-time, time-bound effort. The bad bank has been set up to remove bad assets from the balance sheets of banks and free up capital which will allow bank lending to grow. Credit growth is important for economic growth, and bank balance sheets are constrained by the presence of bad assets. So, one of the main objectives of the bad bank is to remove these assets from the balance sheets of existing banks and consolidate them within a bad bank. Meanwhile, the resolution and recovery process can continue. The proposed design of the bad bank separates the trustee part of the NARCL, where the assets will sit, from the IDRCL, which will engage in the recovery and turnaround of bad assets. So, it's a twin structure working to free existing banking capital to enable higher credit growth.



**C.P. Chandrasekhar**  
is Professor at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, JNU



Scan the QR code to listen to the full interview online

**C.P. Chandrasekhar:** There are many reasons to bail out banks but

two in particular are crucial. One is the fact that there are depositors involved here. If you allow banks to fail, depositors who operated under the presumption that the regulatory framework would protect their money would be undermined. Historically, we've found that central banks try to actually save banks, either by bailing them out or by amalgamating them with stronger banks, in order to be able to protect depositors. Two, there is a systemic problem. If a bank fails, and there is a sort of contagion effect, you could actually have systemic problems. Banks are the core of the settlements system and the credit pipe and allowing them to go down would be a problem. And finally, there is also the option of getting banks to write off these bad assets and then the government can recapitalise them. But that would deal a significant blow to the government's finances.

**Isn't there the risk of moral hazard linked with bailouts, which makes banks more complacent?**

**CPC:** You need to compare the risk to the system itself – the impact that bank failures would have on depositors and the social and political implications of it – with the moral hazard of bailing out banks. The more important problem is the systemic risk. But second, here we have a system in which banks are predominantly publicly owned. So, the problem is, in some sense, the result of the state allowing the use of banks for certain purposes.

**Why do you think the government has opted for a bad bank over directly infusing capital into banks?**

**AR:** These so-called bad loans have been completely 100% provisioned. However, the manpower of these banks is still spent on recovery and supervision. Now, it's important that these loans be moved to a separate entity which is exclusively focused on recovery, so that the bank can then focus on its core business, which is business development, giving new loans, credit growth, etc.



**The government will continue to pour more capital into banks while bad loans will be moved to a separate entity.**

AJIT RANADE

**What is the need for a public bad bank when India already has a number of private asset reconstruction companies (ARCs)?**

**AR:** What the NARCL is doing is providing an asset resolution platform, which is for the banks and by the banks. There have been some 28-odd private ARCs, which have perhaps not performed. Under the bad bank, asset acquisition and trusteeship has been segregated from asset resolution. The primary purpose of the IDRCL is resolution through specialists who can salvage some value. Even if they can recover only 25%, that's more than what the current record shows. The IDRCL will actually have incentive to resolve debts efficiently because of the profit-sharing arrangement. So, the incentives are aligned.

**CPC:** The government has said that of the ₹2 lakh crore, it will be in a position to cover only as much as ₹30,600 crore. So, you're going to be in a situation where the banks are still going to carry the burden and take a hit to their profitability. On the other hand, if you look at those who defaulted, a large number of them being big corporates, they are going to walk away with their debts resolved at steep discounts. Banks might be left with perhaps not new losses, but with losses nevertheless, which have already been provided for, whereas

those who defaulted would be left off in terms of their assets not being seized in significant measure.

**AR:** These are two different things. One is to go after the defaulters and the other is to recover the asset and salvage value from it. Corporates are not going to go scot-free. If there is an established criminal negligence or criminal activity, there is a separate process for that. Moreover, the bad bank is focusing the energies of banking personnel. The bad bank is not to be seen as a recurring thing wherein balances will keep moving from the existing banking balance sheets into this structure. If that happens, you are inviting the tendency of what we call moral hazard, as then there is no effort from the bank per se to try and recover.

**Do you think the bad bank, which is essentially owned by the troubled banks themselves, will have a different incentive structure to efficiently resolve loans?**

**AR:** The staffing, the pay scale, etc. in the IDRCL will be different. For example, when the State Bank of India (SBI) runs an asset management company, the AMC employees are not on the same pay scale as the SBI. So, we have to recognise that the incentives, pay structure, staffing, talent, and ultimately governance... that's what's going to matter.

**CPC:** There is a lack of clarity about certain things. One is the discount which is going to be negotiated between the NARCL and the banks. Once the bad debt is moved on to the books of NARCL, it will be handed over to the IDRCL. Now, as in the case of private ARCs in the past, both these entities would also be charging a managerial fee. So, they're going to cover a large part of their costs through the managerial fee charged to manage and dispose of these assets. What is going to be the incentive to try and get the maximum price possible from these bad loans is not really clear.

**AR:** The difference is that in the case of the existing ARCs, there is no guarantee for the value that will be recovered from the security receipt. So, typically, the average purchase price of bad loans by existing ARCs is something like 36%, but there is

no backing for the security receipts; these receipts may end up being of zero value. The actual recovery could be just one-fourth of the 36%, which is 9%. In the new structure, the average purchase price will be lower, but the security receipts for the remainder of the value will be covered by the government up to ₹30,600 crore. That in itself changes the incentives.

**Does the bad bank proposal actually address the root causes of the banking crisis or is this just a temporary band aid?**

**AR:** The fact is that over the last few years, the NPA ratio has been mounting and we've tried many things. We now need to bring the problem to manageable proportions. In that sense, the bad bank is taking a small chunk out of the overall NPAs. But NPAs will continue to grow. Bad loans are a function of business cycles – during down cycles, the bad loan ratio increases, but in up cycles, the bad loan ratio comes down. The idea is to keep it within manageable proportions.

**CPC:** There is a structural issue involved here. As opposed to the 1980s and 1990s, an overwhelming share of defaulted debt in this round has been corporate debt. Why did this come about? Earlier, financing capital-intensive projects was seen as something which had to happen through the government's budget or through development finance institutions specialised in development finance. There was also the idea that you could finance these investments through long-term capital available through an active bond market, which India does not have to a significant extent. The government decided that it cannot mobilise the resources to finance investments and decided to get financial institutions to set up commercial banks. Therefore, the burden of financing these investments was transferred by the state to the public banks. And banks are not supposed to do too much of this because there are significant liquidity and maturity mismatches. So, we got this problem because we have put the burden of finance of a certain kind on banks, which should not have been put on banks, which sometimes gets concealed by focusing on some frauds here and there.

## Stronger at the grassroots

It is imperative to make disaster resilience an inherent part of community culture

RAVI MITTAL

The Panchayati Raj, first adopted by Nagaur in Rajasthan on October 2, 1959, has expanded vastly. There are now 2,60,512 Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) represented by about 31 lakh elected members across India. This system of local self-governance, where people in the villages participate in the decision-making process, is the backbone of democracy. The People's Plan Campaign and Vibrant Gram Sabha Dashboard, rolled out this year, aspire to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system by making gram sabhas more vibrant.

### A bottom-up approach

Unlike other disasters like earthquakes, COVID-19 is an unusual crisis as it is long-drawn and affects people everywhere. When the traditional top-down disaster response system was compromised during the bad months of the pandemic, it was PRIs that played a remarkable role. They helped reduce risks, responded swiftly and thus helped people recover quickly. The PRIs provided essential leadership at the local level. They performed both regulatory and welfare functions. For instance, during the nationwide lockdown, PRIs set up containment zones, arranged transport, identified buildings for quarantining people and provisioned food for the incoming migrants. Moreover, effective implementation of welfare schemes like MGNREGA and the National Rural Livelihood Mission quickened the pace of recovery while ensuring support to the vulnerable population.

Gram sabhas act as a sounding board for diverse ideas and opinions. They provide a platform to build consensus and make resolutions in the community's interest. During the pandemic, gram sabhas resolved to adhere to COVID-19 norms. In addition, regular engagement with frontline workers like ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers through committees bridged the trust gap between the community and the officials.

By representing diverse communities, PRIs mobilise them effectively. During the COVID-19 crisis, they or-

ganised community-based surveillance systems involving village elders, the youth and self-help groups (SHGs) to keep a strict vigil in quarantine centres and monitor symptoms in households. More recently, their role in mobilising citizens for COVID-19 vaccination is exemplary.

### Building capacity

The Yokohama strategy during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction in May 1994 emphasised that it is important to focus on disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness rather than disaster response alone, to reduce vulnerability. In this respect, certain initiatives can be taken to build the capacity of PRIs. One, it is crucial to include disaster management chapters in Panchayat Raj Acts and make disaster planning and spending part of Panchayati Raj development plans and local-level committees. This will ensure citizen-centric mapping and planning of resources. Various insurance products customised to local needs will build financial resilience of the community.

Two, conducting regular location-specific training programmes for the community and organising platforms for sharing best practices will strengthen individual and institutional capacities. Assigning roles to individual members and providing them with the necessary skills can make such programmes more meaningful.

Three, since the community is usually the first responder in case of a disaster, community-based disaster management plans would help. These would provide a strategy for resource utilisation and maintenance during a disaster. Such plans should tap the traditional wisdom of local communities which will complement modern practices. Moreover, financial contributions from the community should be encouraged through the establishment of community disaster funds in all gram panchayats. It is imperative to make disaster resilience an inherent part of the community culture now more than ever.

Ravi Mittal is Chief Executive Officer of the Zila Panchayat in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh



## DATA POINT

### Air thick with pollutants

Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra were the largest emitters of PM2.5 as of 2015, according to a study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW). The study analysed emission estimates from five datasets that track air pollution. U.P. emerged as the top emitter in all the five datasets. Domestic fuel used in households was the leading contributor of emissions, followed by industrial production. In 18 of the 36 States/UTs, households contributed over half the emissions.  
By The Hindu Data Team

**1** Emissions in U.P. ranged between **588 and 976 kilotonnes per year (kt/year)** while in Maharashtra they ranged between **415 and 592 kt/year**

**2** In Punjab and Haryana, a significant share of the emissions was caused by **agricultural waste burning**

**3** Emissions due to domestic fuel use/residential sector accounted for **44% of the total emissions**

**1. TOP EMITTERS** | The table shows PM2.5 emissions (in kt/year) in all States/UTs recorded by the databases\*. Barring TERI, for which the latest data were for 2016, the other sources have data until 2015. A State which features among the top-five emitters in a database is shaded  . Those which are ranked from 6 to 15 are shaded   and those ranked 16 or lower are shaded  . Only Maharashtra and U.P. feature among the top five emitters across all data sources

State	EDGAR	ECLIPSE	REAS	SMoG	TERI
U.P.	661	887	588	816	976
Maharashtra	549	549	415	592	429
M.P.	450	471	403	584	366
WB	572	438	285	338	307
Odisha	369	312	291	376	525
Rajasthan	363	435	311	452	377
Tamil Nadu	357	363	365	403	270
Bihar	329	520	308	343	404
Chhattisgarh	317	273	189	417	495
Gujarat	274	333	304	393	586
Punjab	189	152	128	776	340
A.P.	329	342	251	328	221
Karnataka	305	343	256	381	256
Telangana	198	178	169	250	184
Haryana	145	171	122	270	222
Jharkhand	154	412	180	243	152
Assam	173	142	90	134	175
Kerala	81	125	87	102	100
J&K	63	49	46	60	70
HP	32	30	17	29	71
NCT of Delhi	30	76	9	34	32
Uttarakhand	28	47	26	52	110
Meghalaya	15	24	14	17	40
Tripura	14	10	10	8	41
Manipur	13	19	11	12	33
A.P.	10	13	6	13	41
Nagaland	9	17	9	9	35
Goa	6	3	2	5	35
Mizoram	6	8	5	4	33
Sikkim	3	2	1	1	29
Puducherry	3	46	2	2	

**2. LEADING POLLUTANT** | The chart shows the five major sources of PM2.5 emissions in the country according to SMoG

**3. STATE-WISE SHARE** | The table shows the % share of various sources of PM2.5 emission among States with an emission burden of over 200 kt/year, according to SMoG. The leading source of emissions is shaded  . In 11 of the 16 States listed, domestic fuel or the residential sector was the leading contributor. This sector accounted for more than half of the total emissions in Bihar, U.P., West Bengal and Rajasthan. Agricultural burning accounted for nearly 80% of PM2.5 emissions in Punjab

State	Domestic fuel	Industrial production	Transport	Power plants	Agri waste burning
Bihar	79.8	11.4	3.5	2.3	3.0
U.P.	66.9	17.0	3.1	8.0	4.9
WB	60.6	12.3	3.9	20.9	2.3
Rajasthan	53.3	28.4	3.9	12.1	2.2
Karnataka	47.1	31.0	3.8	10.5	7.6
Jharkhand	46.1	18.4	2.5	30.6	2.5
Maharashtra	44.7	27.7	3.9	15.4	8.2
Tamil Nadu	44.4	28.0	4.2	19.5	3.9
Gujarat	41.7	39.1	3.4	12.6	3.2
M.P.	39.5	21.7	2.6	22.7	13.5
A.P.	35.6	29.8	4.7	22.3	7.6
Haryana	35.1	13.6	3.2	10.8	37.3
Odisha	34.1	43.8	2.9	16.4	2.9
Telangana	33.7	31.1	3.1	26.2	5.9
Chhattisgarh	18.9	28.1	1.2	48.8	2.9
Punjab	10.2	5.2	0.8	4.3	79.4

**\*EDGAR:** Emissions Database for Global Atmospheric Research | **ECLIPSE:** Evaluating the Climate and Air Quality Impacts of Shortlived Pollutants | **REAS:** Regional Emission Inventory in Asia | **SMoG:** Speciated Multipolluter Generator | **TERI:** The Energy and Resources Institute

## The Hindu.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 8, 1971

Chou's remark a step forward: PM

New Delhi, Oct. 7: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has welcomed for what it is worth the reported remark of Mr. Chou En-lai to a group of visiting Americans in Peking that he was prepared to accept the Soviet and Indian assurances that the Treaty of Friendship signed by them was not directed against China. Asked to comment on the Chinese statement by the waiting pressmen on her arrival in Simla to-day for the AICC (R) session, Mrs. Gandhi simply said: "What can I say? Don't you think it is a good thing? This is what we have been saying all along (that the Treaty was not aimed at any third country)." According to news agency reporting from Simla, Mrs. Gandhi was asked whether Mr. Chou's statement would facilitate normalisation of Sino-Indian relations. She replied: "This is one small step forward. Only the future can say whether it would facilitate normalisation." But the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, who returned this morning from United Nations was more guarded in his comment on the Chinese statement. With his characteristic caution, he tried to explain away his reticence with the remark that if Mr. Chou could take two months to react to the Indo-Soviet Treaty, there was no good reason why India should rush in with its reaction to what the Chinese had said about it.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 8, 1921

### Edakulam troubles

Camp Shoranur, October 7: Trouble in Edakulam which took place recently have mortally terrified the public who are fleeing to different parts. Of the Christians sufferers some have gone to Palghat side. The Nambudiris of the adjoining places, men, women and children, are running to Cochin State for shelter. The Nambudiri ladies and children who do not get into Railway trains are now seen travelling in large numbers as the roads and by-paths are not safe for their journey as usual. Damage wrought by rebels to private property at Edakulam are reported to be severe. I learn from a reliable source that the Rajas of Nilambur are seriously contemplating to move away from Calicut where they are now residing to convenient places in Cochin State and that they are in search of proper residences for their long and continuous stay for sometime. As relations of some of the princes of the Cochin Royal family through their wives it is likely they will get proper accommodation wherever they want in Cochin.



# Principal, teacher shot dead in Srinagar school

Director General of Police Dilbag Singh, who visited the spot, said, "This is an attempt to defame local Muslims of Kashmir. Killing innocent civilians, including teachers, is a move to attack and damage the age-old tradition of communal harmony and brotherhood in Kashmir. The police have

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who chaired a meeting of security officials, said, "The attacks are a part of a conspiracy in the backdrop of increasing tourist influx and planned industrial investment in Kashmir. A befitting reply will be given to the attackers."

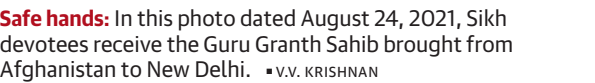
# SC questions income limit for EWS quota

“Tell us what is the basis of ₹8 lakh... You can't just say it is a matter of policy... What is the indicia of backwardness for EWS which has

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who chaired a meeting of security officials, said, "The attacks are a part of a conspiracy in the backdrop of increasing tourist influx and planned industrial investment in Kashmir. A befitting reply will be given to the attackers."

Taliban vigilantes entered main gurdwara of Kabul and removed CCTV cameras

“I would like to begin with UNSC Resolution 2593. This articulates and guides the collective approach of the global community towards Afghanistan. The resolution talks of ensuring that the Afghan territory is not used for terrorist acts, it talks of safe passage of Afghans and foreign nationals. The report...of vandalism and intolerance obviously raise

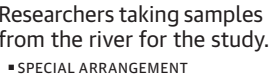


A team of Taliban vigilantes entered the main

The reports from Kabul coincided with the news that Anas Haqqani, of Taliban-aligned Haqqani Network visited the tomb of Mahmood of Ghazni who had invaded India and plundered the Somnath temple multiple times in the early medieval era. Mr /Haqqani had

# Researchers find pharmaceutically active compounds in water

Drug compounds, when released into waterbodies even in minuscule amounts, can harm human beings and the ecosystem in the long term, the researchers said, calling for upgrading wastewater treatment systems.



The study was carried out with funding from the Water Technology Initiative of the Department of Science and Technology and the Natural Environment Research Council in the U.K. The findings were published in an international peer-reviewed

## SC not to intervene in plea on NPAs

lines on the issue from time to time.

Dr. Swamy said these guidelines does not bar the court from constituting a committee.

will be heard on Friday, the

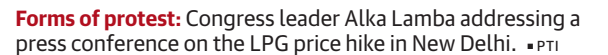
The team collected water samples from 22 locations along the entire stretch. The quality of water in the catchments was also monitored. It was found that water quality and the levels of pharmaceutical contaminants were influenced by the monsoon. The levels were high after monsoon owing to the reduced riverine flow and continuous waste discharge.

India continues to maintain ambiguity towards the Taliban and has not yet responded to the Taliban's communication to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to restart air services to Kabul. Mr. Bagchi said there is no update yet on the request. "It's a complicated and sensitive matter," he said, explaining that the air service could not be dealt with separately from ties between India and Afghanistan. India had not been able to fly evacuation flights since the situation in the capital city of Afghanistan became unstable in late August. Many Sikh and Hindu citizens of Afghanistan remain in Kabul and other Afghan cities.

# Cut fuel prices on all days of Navaratri, says Congress

## Party spokesperson 'worships' empty LPG cylinder in protest

At the press meet, Ms. Lanba demanded that the Union Government continuously reduce the prices of cooking gas, diesel and petrol on all the nine days of Navaratri. The Congress spokesperson



Senior leader Digvijaya

The seized documents included a summary of overall cash generated and disbursed, giving the particulars of the amounts received and receivable, each being more than ₹200 crore. A major part of the collected cash had been distributed among various persons. Some of the suspects had their own real estate and construction businesses.

# Indian forces to carry out exercise with U.K.

## Joint Army training on at Chaubatia

On the naval exercise, a defence official observed that it was scheduled to be

As part of training, both the Armies would familiarise with each other's weapons, equipment, tactics, techniques and procedures for carrying out joint military operations, the Army noted in a statement.

**Dream collection:** The memorabilia on display at the National Gallery of Modern Art. ■PTI

“The maximum number of bids were received by the sculpture of Sardar Patel (140 bids), wooden Ganesha (117 bids), memento of Pune metro line (104 bids) and memento of Victory flame (98 bids). The favourite picks in terms of the highest bid value were Neeraj Chopra's javelin (₹1.5 crore), auto-graphed fence of Bhavani

The proceeds of the auction would go towards the Namami Gange Mission to rejuvenate the Ganga.

## Aryan Khan, seven others sent to judicial custody for 14 days

Aryan Khan, Munmun Dhamecha and Arbaaz Merchant were arrested by the NCB on October 3 following a raid on a Goa-bound ship, while the other five were arrested the next day.

Also, the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate remanded four persons, who are said to be the "event organisers", in NCB custody till October 14.



## APPEAL

**Name of Patient: Kanak Deepak Manwani, 8 years,** Hospital Name: Christian Medical College, Diagnosis: **Thalassemia Major.** This is a type of life threatening blood disorder. The best option for her would be to undergo **Allogeneic Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplant (PB SCT).** The estimated cost of **PB SCT** at this hospital is approximately **Rs. 14,00,000.**

We request Kind Hearted Philanthropists to save her.

Kindly send donation by Cheque/D.M/O Favouring **Save Poor Lives and the back of Cheque to: Kanak Deepak Manwani, Our Account Details: S/B Account No. 200000913487, State Bank of India, Raja Annamalaiapuram Branch, and IFSC Code: SBIN001855.** You can donate Google pay No.9884607377, UPI Id: savepoorlives@okbi which is linked to the back of I.T. Act.

**Contact: SAVE POOR LIVES REGISTERED PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST, (ADMIN DIVISION) Flat No. A1, Ceeros Garden, Ground Floor, No.76, Kamarajar Salai, Raja Annamalaiapuram, Chennai-600028.**

**Ph: 044-42044165, Mobile: 9884607377. E-mail: [savepoorlives@gmail.com](mailto:savepoorlives@gmail.com)** Our website: [www.savepoorlives.com](http://www.savepoorlives.com)



# U.P. government forms panel to probe killings

IG says different teams have been formed to crack the case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

A single-member inquiry commission under retired Allahabad High Court judge Pradeep Kumar Srivastava will investigate the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, in which eight persons, including four farmers, were killed, the Uttar Pradesh Government said on Thursday.

The commission will complete its probe in two months.

On Monday, a judicial probe was promised by the Yogi Adityanath Government to the families of the four farmers who were killed after they refused to cremate the bodies and parked them in glass enclosures at the site of the inci-



In protest: A candle light march in Amritsar over the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

dent in Tikonia.

Inspector-General of Police Laxmi Singh said they had formed different teams for the case. While evading questions on why Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra, was not

yet arrested, she said, “No-body who has been involved in the incident will be left out.”

Ms. Singh said instances of firing or any firearm injuries had not been found. “Therefore, we have to proceed with other evidence,” she told presspersons.

Police teams visited the site of the incident along with forensic teams and recovered two cartridges of a .315 bore firearm. The site was also searched with a metal detector on Thursday.

The exact sequence of how the other four were killed is still unresolved. The BJP Minister and a party worker who filed the second FIR alleged that the four were lynched by farmers.

# Maneka, Varun out of BJP national executive

Scindia, Smriti among new faces inducted into the 80-member decision-making body of the party

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha members Maneka Gandhi and her son, Varun Gandhi, were dropped from the BJP’s national executive, while Union Ministers Smriti Irani and Jyotiraditya Scindia were among those inducted into the 80-member decision-making body of the party that was announced on Thursday.

The list was announced hours after Mr. Gandhi said via a tweet in the morning that the video of the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, where a group of farmers was on Sunday allegedly mowed down by cars in Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra’s convoy, was “crystal clear”.

“...Protesters cannot be silenced through murder. There has to be accountability for the innocent blood of



Party politics: PM Narendra Modi with J.P. Nadda. This is the first national executive appointed by Mr. Nadda as BJP chief.

farmers that has been spilled and justice must be delivered before a message of arrogance and cruelty enters the minds of every farmer,” he tweeted.

## Seeks action

On Monday, Mr. Gandhi wrote to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath seeking action in the matter.

BJP president J.P. Nadda appointed the 80 members, which included Prime Minister Narendra Modi; senior leaders L.K. Advani and Murlis Manohar Joshi; and former party presidents and current Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari.

In a statement, the party said 50 special invitees and

179 permanent invitees, including Chief Ministers, Deputy Chief Ministers, national spokespersons, presidents of national wings and State unit leadership, would be part of the national executive committee.

## Meeting on Nov. 7?

This was the first appointment of the national executive by Mr. Nadda since he took over as party president in January 2020. According to sources, a meeting of the national executive, which was last held in 2019 during Mr. Shah’s tenure as party president, could be held on November 7.

Among those dropped from the nation executive were former Union Ministers Mahesh Sharma, Vijay Goel and C.P. Thakur; current Union Ministers Rao Inderjit Singh, Ashwini Kumar Chou-

bey and Prahlad Singh Patel; and Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy.

Some new entrants to the party had been included in the national executive, including Mr. Scindia and Dinesh Trivedi, a former Trinamool Congress MP who had joined the BJP in the run-up to the West Bengal Assembly election earlier this year. Prominent BJP campaigners and candidates in the Bengal election, including actor Mithun Chakraborty and Swapan Dasgupta, MP, had also been included in the national executive.

Union Ministers G. Kishan Reddy, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hardeep Singh Puri, V. Muraleedharan, Bhupender Yadav, Anurag Thakur, Mee-nakshi Lekhi and S. Jaishankar were also among those in the national executive.

# Farm unions to meet today on U.P. violence

General body meeting at Singhu today

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI

Amid growing frustration that the prime accused in the Lakhimpur Kheri case has still not been arrested four days after the incident, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) platform of protesting farm unions will hold its general body meeting at the Singhu border on Friday to decide on the next course of action.

“October 12 is the *antim ardaas* [final rites] day for the martyrs of Lakhimpur Kheri. Unless our demands are met, unless the Minister of State Ajay Mishra is sacked and his son arrested, we will not hesitate to give a call for a major morcha to ensure justice for farmers. The specifics of the action will be decided on Friday,” said Abhimanyu Kohar, an SKM leader who belongs to the Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh.

## Wider impact

Apart from seeking justice for the Lakhimpur victims, farmer leaders were also preparing to discuss the wider impact of the incident on the movement. “This could be seen as a turning point for the struggle, just like the police killings of farmers at Mandsaur in M.P. in 2017,” said another leader.

The immediate agenda of the meeting would be the deadline for arrests and the resignation of Mr. Mishra. “The fact that the police allowed the prime accused to go missing, and the fact that all of this is happening in the immediate family of a Minister for Home Affairs is unbelievable, and reflects the state of law and order in Uttar Pradesh and the country,” said a SKM statement.



Rakesh Tikait

At the national level, farmer leaders dismissed the idea that Bharatiya Kisan Union leader (BKU) Rakesh Tikait, who was the face of the movement in western Uttar Pradesh, had accepted a weak compromise by allowing the angry crowds at Lakhimpur to disperse before arrests were made. “Tikait spoke on behalf of the SKM, and gave a deadline for action to be taken. We will not accept anything less than our demands. This propaganda pitting Tikait against Punjab leaders is the lies of the BJP trying to create a split on regional and communal lines,” said Jagmohan Singh, general secretary of the BKU’s Dakaunda faction.

The SKM said the Uttar Pradesh Government’s decision to set up a one-member judicial commission consisting of a retired judge of the Allahabad High Court “does not inspire confidence”, and reiterated its demand for an inquiry headed by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court into not just the incident itself, but the motives. It noted that the State Government’s notification, issued just before the Supreme Court’s *suo motu* hearing, did not mention the earlier threat issued by Mr. Mishra or mandate an inquiry into whether the incident was pre-planned with the aim of intimidating and quelling protesters.

# BJP releases candidate list for bypolls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday released a list of candidates for the Lok Sabha and Assembly bypolls to be held on October 30.

The bypolls to the Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Khandwa (Madhya Pradesh) Lok Sabha seats were necessitated following the deaths of the sitting members.

## Names of candidates

The BJP would be fielding Mahesh Gavit from Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Gyaneshwar Patil from Khandwa, and Brigadier Khushal Thakur (retd.) from Mandi, a party release said.

The party also announced the names of 16 candidates for the Assembly bypolls.

# Raghu Sharma AICC in-charge for Gujarat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Ending months of speculation, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday appointed Rajasthan Health Minister Raghu Sharma as the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge for Gujarat, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The appointment is significant because it was speculated that the party may offer the post of AICC’s Gujarat in-charge to former Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Sachin Pilot and “accommodate” him.

However, sources close to Mr. Pilot indicated that the former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister was reluctant to move out of his home State.

Dr. Sharma’s appointment also comes ahead of the impending Cabinet reshuffling in the Ashok Gehlot government, in which some Ministers are expected to be dropped to accommodate Mr. Pilot’s loyalists.

It also follows a recent meeting between Mr. Pilot and former party chief Rahul Gandhi and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

The mowing down of farmers in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, in which his son, Ashish Mishra, is accused of murder, is not the first burning controversy in the life of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra. Before he entered State-level electoral politics, Mr. Mishra was in 2000 accused of murdering a youth leader of the Samajwadi Party (SP) in Tikonia. A local sessions court acquitted Mr. Mishra and three others in March 2004 in the murder case of Prabhat Gupta, alias Raju.

A criminal appeal filed by Prabhat’s brother, Rajeev Gupta, is pending before the Allahabad High Court, which had in March 2018 reserved the judgment in the appeal. But since it could not be delivered later that year, Prabhat’s family prayed for it to be heard again. The last hearing in the case was on February 5, 2019. “If justice was prompt, then justice would not have deviated somewhere,” Mr. Rajeev, who was still pursuing the legal case, told *The Hindu*.

On September 7, a month before the incident in Tikonia in which eight persons were killed, a Division Bench



Burning rage: Protesters burning an effigy of Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Mishra in Ranchi on Monday.

of Justices Rajan Roy and Suresh Kumar Gupta directed the Uttar Pradesh Government to submit a report and restore the security that was earlier granted to Mr. Rajeev till it disposed the writ petition filed by him, which was kept pending.

Mr. Rajeev had approached the court alleging that he had faced a threat to his life, submitting that the accused in the murder case of his brother was not just an MP but also a Minister in the Government of India. Mr. Rajeev was the *pairkar* of one of the witnesses in the case, Sanjeev Gupta, who was also his brother. Mr. Rajeev had told the court that the district authorities in Kheri did not pay heed to his request for providing security and that he did not expect fair

play as the accused was an influential Minister, according to the High Court’s order.

Though the lower court acquitted Mr. Mishra, who was a vice-president of a district cooperative bank at the time the allegation against him was made, Mr. Rajeev maintained his charge 21 years after his brother was shot dead on July 8, and also claimed that there were several attempts made during this period to deter him from fighting the case.

“My father died fighting the case. My brother was shot in his temple. Why else would we fight this case till today,” said Mr. Rajeev, who was now associated with Shivpal Yadav’s party.

According to the FIR lodged in 2000 and the revision petition filed by his father,

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT CUM MEMBER SECRETARY  
RMRS, SMS HOSPITAL, JAIPUR  
[Sawai Man Singh Road, Tonk road, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302001]  
[Phone 0141-2518222, 2560291, 2518308 Email-ms.smshospital@gmail.com, cms.smshospital@gmail.com]  
No.3265/Store/SMS/MH/2021 Jaipur dated, the 5/10/21

NOTICE INVITING BID

Bids for procurement of 25 Anaesthesia Work Station, 03 Fiberoptic Bronchoscope, 05 Video Laryngoscope, 10 Laryngoscope with macintosh & miller blades for the use of various Operation theatres & Trauma centre of this hospital are invited from interested bidders up to 5.00 PM on 26-10-21. Other particular of bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>) & <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>

UBN NO MCJ2122GLOB00125

Medical Superintendent Cum Member Secretary, RMRS Sawai Man Singh Hospital Jaipur

DIPR/C/10238

The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd.  
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)  
Technical Services Centre,  
A-1, Industrial Estate, Aligarh-202001, U.P.  
Ph.: 6290392624, 9999489636. Email: [ntsecallg@nsic.co.in](mailto:ntsecallg@nsic.co.in)

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC) invites sealed offers through Tender under two Bid system from eligible bidders for Supply and Installation of machineries like Single Spindle Automatic Lathe (Traub Machine), Key Wave Milling Machine, DM Water Plant, Spot Welding Machine, Air Conditioners, Desktop Computers, Teaching Aid for their Aligarh Technical Centre. Last date of submission of Tenders is 29.10.2021 up to 15:00 Hrs.

For details, please visit NSIC's website:  
<https://www.nsic.co.in/tender/Current-Tenders.aspx>  
<https://www.eprocure.gov.in>

General Manager (Centre Head – Aligarh)

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY ANANTAPUR  
ANANTHAPURAMU - 515 002 (A.P.) INDIA

Ref.NIT No.1&2:/JNTUA CEK/FTD/Food Tech. & Food Testing Equipment /2021 Dt:07-10-2021

**e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

Tenders are hereby invited from reputed Companies / Agencies / Firms for the Supply / Installation, Testing and Commissioning of (1) **Food Testing Laboratory Equipment**, with Tender ID No.449152 and (2) **Food Technology Laboratory Equipments and Furniture** with Tender ID No.449141 for the JNTUA College of Engineering, Kalikiri, Chittoor Dist., Tender schedule is from 08-10-2021 & Last Date of Tender submission on 22-10-2021 by 04.00 p.m.

The Schedule & other details of th tender can be downloaded from e-procurement portal <https://tender.aeprocurement.gov.in> or <http://www.jntua.ac.in>

Sd/- Registrar, JNTUA.

TIRUMALA TRIPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI

MARKETING DEPARTMENT  
Roc.No.TTD-34022(31)/118/2021 Dated: 06-10-2021

**e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

e-tenders are invited for procurement of "2626 Nos of Woolen Shawls and 2650 Nos of Woolen Rugs / Blankets (for one time supply or as per supply schedule issued) from reputed manufacturers / authorized dealers viz., Raymonds, Bombay dyeing, Digiam, Gwalior, Ashnoor and Ozwal by the Marketing Department, T.T.D., Tirupati. For Tender Notice and Tender details log on to the web site <http://www.tirumala.org> and <https://tender.aeprocurement.gov.in> Click on current Tenders & select "more" and "Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams-Marketing". For further details contact phone numbers: 0877-2264079, 2264555, Fax No.0877-2264554.

Sl. No.	Name of the item	E.M.D. Rs.	Tender Period	Date of Tender
1.	2826 Nos. Woolen Shawls	1,00,000.00 (Rupees One Lakh only)	One time supply or as per schedule	21-10-21
2.	2650 Nos. Woolen Rugs / Blankets	75,000.00 (Rupees Seventy Five Thousand only)	One time supply or as per schedule	21-10-21

Roc.No.PR/13935/Adv.No.189/PRO/2021/Dated:07-10-2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE  
CMG, SDSC -SHAR SRIHARIKOTA - 524124

**Brief E-TENDER NOTICE / CORRIGENDUM-A**

No:SHAR:CMG:CIVIL:MAINT-E-PT-05(A)/21-22 Dt: 06.10.2021

"Painting of quarters at PCN, SMN & PNN Sullurpeta" (T/C-21-024, Est. cost ₹73.16 Lakhs); "Water supply line at PHC" (T/C-21-025, Est. cost ₹16.50 Lakhs); "Arresting leakages at SMN quarters" (T/C-21-026, Est. cost ₹21.30 Lakhs); "Painting of school & quarters at PCN" (T/C-21-027, Est. cost ₹44.64 Lakhs). **Sale period extended up to 18.10.2021.** Interested tenderers may visit [www.isro.gov.in](http://www.isro.gov.in) or [www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO](http://www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO) for details.

Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/ SDSC SHAR

Shivamogga City Corporation, Shivamogga

No.ಬಿಎಸ್ಸಿಎಂಸಿಎ-21,ಆರ್/24/2021-22 Date:04.10.2021

**Tender Notification (Through e-procurement)**

Tenders are invited through e-procurement portal in Two Cover system as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 1999-2000 and Act 2000 and Standard Tender Document procedure to undertake the following works coming under Shivamogga City Corporation limits. The bidders who are interested in participating through e-procurement tender can obtain the details in website [www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in).

1. Last date to apply for e-tender forms online through e-procurement payment: **On 06.11.2021 upto 4.00 P M.** 2. Date of opening of Technical bid through e-procurement: **On 08.11.2021 after 4.30 P M.** 3. Date of opening of Financial bid through e-procurement: **On 09.11.2021 after 4.30 P M.** 4. Pre-bidding meeting date: **28.10.2021 at 11.30 A M.** 5. More details can be obtained from e-portal and other details from this office during office hours. 6. Time for completion of works : **09 months (including rainy season)** 7.Grants: **Mahatma Gandhi Nagar VikasYojana.**

Sl. No:1 Indent No: 118153 Details of works : **Development works of Mahatma Gandhi Park.** Approx. Amount ( Rs in lakhs) : **300.00 EMD (in Rs) : 3,36,000.00** Class of contractors: **Class 2 and above.** Grants : **Mahatma Gandhi Nagar VikasYojana.** Note: Any changes/modifications to the above tender will be notified in e-portal only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (D-2) Shivamogga City Corporation Shivamogga

DIPR/SMG/No.13-10 zenkar/2021-22

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER & BASIN MANAGER.  
SUBARNAREKHA & BUDHABALANGA BASIN, AT/PO-LAXMIPOSI, DIST: MAYURBHANJ  
Government of Odisha "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE

**Bid Identification No.- 12 /21-22 of CEBM, SBB, Laxmiposi**

i.	Name of Work	
i. <td>Name of Work</td> <td>"Construction of Kutuni Minor from RD 00M to RD 10730M off taking at RD 63705M of JLMC with its all Minors &amp; Sub-Minors including all Structures with Cement concrete lining"</td>	Name of Work	"Construction of Kutuni Minor from RD 00M to RD 10730M off taking at RD 63705M of JLMC with its all Minors & Sub-Minors including all Structures with Cement concrete lining"
ii. <td>Estimated Cost</td> <td>Rs.2703.00 Lakh</td>	Estimated Cost	Rs.2703.00 Lakh
iii. <td>Period of Completion</td> <td>24 (Twenty four) Calendar Months</td>	Period of Completion	24 (Twenty four) Calendar Months
iv. <td>Date &amp; Time of availability of bid document in the portal</td> <td>11.10.2021 at 10.00 AM</td>	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	11.10.2021 at 10.00 AM
v. <td>Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal</td> <td>05.11.2021 up to 5.00 PM.</td>	Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal	05.11.2021 up to 5.00 PM.
vi. <td>Name &amp; Address of the O.I.T.</td> <td>Chief Engineer &amp; Basin Manager, O/O the CE&amp;BM, Subarnarekha &amp; Budhabalanga Basin, Laxmiposi, Mayurbhanj</td>	Name & Address of the O.I.T.	Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, O/O the CE&BM, Subarnarekha & Budhabalanga Basin, Laxmiposi, Mayurbhanj

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>".

Chief Engineer & Basin Manager, Subarnarekha & Budhabalanga Basin, Laxmiposi, Mayurbhanj. [cebmsbb2019@gmail.com](mailto:cebmsbb2019@gmail.com)

A-504: OIPR-32074/1/10012/21/22

CENTRAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH IN HOMOEOPATHY  
(An Autonomous Body of Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India)  
61-65, Institutional Area, Opp. D-Block, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058  
Ph.: 011-28524415 E-mail: [ad.ccrh@yahoo.com](mailto:ad.ccrh@yahoo.com), Website: [www.ccrhindia.nic.in](http://www.ccrhindia.nic.in)

Advt. No. 20/2021 Date: 9 October, 2021

**Recruitment of Research Officer (Homoeopathy)**

On-line applications are invited from Indian nationals for filling up of the posts of Research Officer (Homoeopathy) as per following details:-

Name of post :	Research Officer (Homoeopathy)
No. of posts :	21 (Twenty-one) [Group-A] (UR-11, SC-03, ST-01, OBC-04, EWS-02) [One post is reserved for physically handicapped candidate]
Level in the Pay Matrix :	Level-10 + NPA
Age Limit :	Not exceeding 40 years.
Educational and other qualifications :	(i). M.D. in Homoeopathy from a recognized Statutory Board / Council / University included in the Second Schedule to Homoeopathy Central/Council Act, 1973. (ii). Enrolment on the Central Register of CCH or State register of Homoeopathy.

Other terms and conditions are available on the website of the Council, [www.ccrhindia.nic.in](http://www.ccrhindia.nic.in). The last date for receipt of on-line applications is 08 November, 2021.

Assistant Director (Admn.)



Oct., Nov. and Dec.  
are critical,  
says official

The second COVID-19 wave is far from over, cautioned the Health Ministry on Thursday, stating that there are several districts across India still in the danger zone.

“Please watch your October, November and December – this is a critical period for the country. We have to work together to ensure that COVID-19 doesn’t spread and peak again,” said Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

“Citizens should not let their guard down as the COVID numbers could see an uptick in November and December due to the festive season in case we are not careful. The second wave of COVID-19 is not over, and the situation is plateauing with



the country still reporting as high as 20,000 new infections daily," he said.

“We cannot take the current stable situation for granted. We have to be mindful of the fact that the pandemic is going on and can take an untoward turn if we are not careful,” Mr. Agarwal said.

The Health Ministry said

The government's aim is to have institutions like the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in every State, and a medical college in every district of the country, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday.

“Every State should have an AIIMS-like institute,” Mr.

Modi said while digitally inaugurating 35 PSA (pressure swing adsorption) oxygen plants in different locations across 35 States and Union Territories from AIIMS-Rishikesh in Uttarakhand. He said that India's oxygen production capacity of 900MT has increased more than ten-fold since the onset of the pandemic.

Aayog, said that 8.36 lakh hospital beds are currently available for COVID-19 patients, in addition to nearly 1 million isolation beds in dedicated care centres.

He added that 4.86 lakh oxygen-supported beds and 1.35 lakh ICU beds are available. "We are prepared to face a daily surge of 4.5-5 lakh COVID-19 cases," Dr. Paul said.

### Visitors must have had approved jobs

Indian travellers arriving in the United Kingdom will not be required to remain in self-isolation or undergo a mandatory 10-day quarantine from October 11, British High Commissioner Alex Ellis said on Thursday. The announcement was made as part of the revised British policy regarding international travel to the U.K. which will be continuously reviewed by health officials in London to track spikes in cases of COVID-19 abroad.

“No quarantine for Indian travellers to UK fully vaccinated with Covishield or another U.K.-approved vaccine from 11 October. Thanks to (the) Indian government for close cooperation over last month,” said High Commissioner Alex Ellis in an official announcement on social media.

The development cam

India will partially restore tourist visa facilities from October 15 for foreigners who want to come here in chartered flights, the Home Ministry said on Thursday. Also, foreign tourists on air bubble flights will be allowed from November 15.

India suspended all types of visas including tourist visas in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Scheduled commercial flights are yet to resume.

Under the air bubble scheme, commercial airlines from specific countries are allowed to travel to and from India on a limited basis. The Ministry said it received representations from several State Governments as well as stakeholders in tourism to restart tourist visas too.

## AAI refutes claim made by employees' union

**NEW DELHI**  
Allegations that the Airports Authority of India received ₹500 crore from Adani Enterprises Limited for assets at three airports initially valued at ₹1,300 crore are "erroneous", the AAI said on Thursday in response to an open letter written by its employees' union to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The AAI said it received a total payment of ₹1,103 crore for the assets.

**KOLKATA**  
West Bengal Chief Minister  
Mamata Banerjee was on  
Thursday sworn in as an MLA  
of the West Bengal Assembly  
by Governor Jagdeep  
Dhankhar. Ms. Banerjee was  
sworn in following her victory  
in the Bhabanipur byelection,  
which she won by a record  
margin of 58,835 votes.

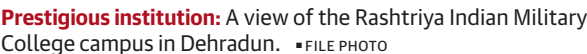
SC allows them to appear for military college exam this year onwards

The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed girls to appear in the entrance examination scheduled for December 2021 for admission to the Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC).

The exam is taken for entry to Class 8 at the RIMC.

A Bench led by Justice S.K. Kaul did not agree with the government's proposal to allow girls to sit for the exam next June rather than on December 18, 2021.

"Is it necessary to deny girls the opportunity to take part in the examination scheduled on December 18, 2021," the court asked the government. It reasoned that if the government had not shied away from admitting girls into elite military institutions for a career in the armed forces, it should not have problems in making the necessary preparations for having them write the entrance exam in December.



2021 itself. "The respondent [government] has walked a mile and should walk a step ahead," Justice Kaul observed in the order.

The court reasoned that if girls were allowed to take the exam in December, their intake into the RIMC would be in next June. On the other hand, the government's proposal in an affidavit to have the girls skip the December

exam and appear in the June exam would delay the actual entry of successful candidates into the RIMC to January 2023.

the court said the government needed only to modify the entrance exam notification, without changing any of the dates, to inform that girls would be allowed to take the

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Thursday inaugurated the redeveloped ancient Mata Kaushalya temple, part of the "Ram Van Gaman" Tourism Circuit under the State government is developing at a cost of ₹137.45 crore. Nine sites are being developed to attract tourists to the circuit, believed to be

the route taken by Lord Ram during his 14-year exile.

“Chhattisgarh is the maternal place of Lord Ram,” Mr. Baghel said while inaugurating the temple, and initiating the tourism circuit at Chandkhuri, 27 km from Raipur, the State capital. The village is considered to be the birthplace of Kaushalya, Lord Ram’s mother.

“The temple is of Kausha-

The border guarding force of India and Nepal will conduct regular joint patrolling along the border to control trans-border crimes, smuggling of arms, human trafficking and other areas of concern, a statement by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) said on Thursday.

police force, secures the Nepal and Bhutan borders. The fifth annual coordination meeting between the Director General, SSB and Inspector General, Armed Police Force, Nepal concluded on Thursday. The Indian delegation was led by Kumar Rajesh Chandra and the Nepalese delegation was led by Shailendra Khanal, IG, APF.

“The meeting deliberated

on the security scenario on the India-Nepal border and decided to take further measures for enhancing coordination and cooperation between the two border guarding forces," the SSB said. It said that the help desk established by both the APF and the SSB at transit points of the border would continue to facilitate the movement of citizens.

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Solution to puzzle 13371**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

Nature affords many lessons to us, which we often fail to grasp. Whether it is rain or a pleasant breeze, it is for all. No discrimination is shown by Nature. A man who deserves to be admired is one to whom generosity towards all comes easily, said Malayaman, in a discourse.

Pari, Pegam, Kari, Ai, Adhiyaman, Nalli and Ori were kings of the Sangam age, who covered themselves with glory, through their virtuous conduct. Sangam era works like *Sirupanatrupadai* and *Purananuru* sang their praises. There were also other kings known for being generous, like Nannan, Kumanan and Nalliyakodan, who lived 2000 years ago in Tamil Nadu.

Pari used his royal chariot to support a jasmine creeper. Pegan gave his royal cloak to a peacock dancing in the rain. Adhiyaman gave to poet Avvaiyar a gooseberry believed to confer longevity on anyone who consumed it. Tamil literature lauds selfless people. The Jain work *Naladiyar* says that he who only cares for his body is worthless. Only a person who helps others reaches heaven. Thiruvalluvar used examples from Nature to show the ways in which we can be generous. There are people who inherit property, accumulated over generations. But they do not hoard their wealth, but give gladly to others. Thiruvalluvar compares them to public tanks, which are useful to everyone in a village.

A mango tree's fruits drop to the ground, thereby benefiting many creatures. A man who earns wealth through his hard work, but gives a portion of his money to others, is like a mango tree. Every part of a neem tree has medicinal value, and the tree lets people use its bark, leaves, flowers and fruits. A man worthy of respect uses his wealth for others. Such people are compared to neem tree by Thiruvalluvar.

CMYK A ND-NDE



# Biden, Xi to hold virtual meet this year

Decision arrived at a meeting between U.S. NSA Jake Sullivan and Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi

**SRIRAM LAKSHMAN**  
**ANANTH KRISHNAN**  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping have agreed “in principle” to have a virtual meeting before the end of the year, according to senior U.S. administration officials. The decision came out of a six-hour meeting in Zurich late on Wednesday between U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and Chinese Politburo member and top diplomat Yang Jiechi.

The meeting had “a different tone from Anchorage”, reports quoted the officials as saying, referring to a stormy March meeting between Mr. Sullivan and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and their Chinese counterparts, Mr. Yang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, which was marked by public rancour.

“Today really involved a genuine back and forth, which was quite welcome – a different tone than Anchorage, a different kind of feel in the ability to go back and forth than in Anchorage,” an official said, according to the *Financial Times*, which reported on the possibility of a Biden-Xi meeting.



**Talk time:** Senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Yang Jiechi and his delegation in Zurich on Wednesday. •AP

A virtual meeting means Mr. Biden and Mr. Xi will not meet in person at the G20 summit in Rome to be held at the end of this month. Mr. Xi is unlikely to travel to Rome, and the Chinese leader has not left China for more than 600 days, since the pandemic began. His last overseas visit was to Myanmar in mid-January 2020. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be travelling to Rome for the summit.

Asked to confirm if Mr. Biden would be meeting Mr. Xi virtually, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said there was agreement to continue the dialogue at a “very

high level” and the details of what that meant were still being worked out. “We’re still working through what that would look like, when, and, of course, the final details. So we don’t quite have them yet,” she said.

A White House readout of the meeting did not announce the virtual meet. Instead, it spoke of the importance of managing the competition between the two countries responsibly and of maintaining open lines of communication, following the September 9 call between Mr. Biden and Mr. Xi.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry’s readout also did not mention a leaders’ meeting, but offered a more positive take on the state of relations in comparison to the March meeting in Anchorage, Alaska. It said both sides “agreed to maintain regular dialogue and communication on important issues”. Beijing said the meeting was “constructive, and conducive to enhancing mutual understanding” and both sides agreed “to strengthen strategic communication, properly manage differences, avoid conflict and confrontation, seek mutual benefits and win-win results, and work together to bring China-U.S. relations back on the right track of sound and steady development”.

### Many differences

Despite both readouts emphasising cooperation, it remains to be seen where the two sides will be able to bridge differences, on issues ranging from trade and technology to Taiwan.

The two sides appeared to merely reaffirm their positions on those thorny issues. The White House said Mr. Sullivan “raised a number of areas where we have con-

cern with the PRC’s actions, including actions related to human rights, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, the South China Sea, and Taiwan”. Just days ago, the U.S. criticised China for flying a record number of aircraft into Taiwan’s air defence identification zone and said America’s commitment to Taiwan was “rock solid”. Beijing hit out at the U.S. statement on Taiwan, calling it “irresponsible”.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Mr. Yang “expounded China’s solemn position on issues related to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Xizang [Tibet] and human rights as well as maritime issues, urging the U.S. side to truly respect China’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and stop using the above issues to interfere in China’s internal affairs”.

Both sides offered differing views on the relationship. While Mr. Sullivan said the U.S. would work closely with its allies and partners and engage with China at a senior level to “ensure responsible competition”, Mr. Yang told him China “opposes defining China-U.S. relations as ‘competitive’”.

# Moscow will invite Taliban to Afghanistan talks on Oct. 20

Putin discusses Afghan situation with Tajik President

**REUTERS**  
MOSCOW

Russia will invite representatives of the Taliban to international talks on Afghanistan that it plans to host in Moscow on October 20, President Vladimir Putin’s special representative on Afghanistan said on Thursday.

Zamir Kabulov, the representative, did not provide further details on the planned talks in comments carried by Russian news agencies.

Moscow hosted an international conference on Afghanistan in March at which Russia, the United States, China and Pakistan released a joint statement calling on the then-warring Afghan sides to reach a peace deal



A Taliban soldier keeping guard in Kabul. •REUTERS

and curb violence. It also called on the Taliban not to launch any offensives in the spring and summer.

Since then, the U.S. and its allies withdrew their troops after 20 years on the ground, the Taliban seized power in a lightning advance and the previous govern-

ment collapsed.

Russia is worried about the potential for fallout in the wider region and the possibility of Islamist militants infiltrating the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, which Moscow views as its southern defensive buffer. In the wake of the Taliban takeover, Moscow has held military exercises in Tajikistan and bolstered its hardware at its military base there.

Mr. Putin on Thursday also held a phone call with Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon in which the two leaders discussed the security situation surrounding the latest developments in Afghanistan, the Tajik presidency said in a statement.

# CIA launches new unit with focus on China

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
WASHINGTON

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency announced on Thursday a new China-focused unit.

CIA Director William Burns said in a statement that the new China Mission Center will address the challenge China poses to all of the U.S. spy agency’s mission areas.

“CMC will further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government,” he said.

The announcement parallels the broader shift of the administration of President Joe Biden to confronting China as its leading “strategic competitor”.

# NATO expels 8 Russian members

They were ‘undeclared’ intelligence officers, it says

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
BRUSSELS

NATO on Wednesday expelled eight members of Russia’s mission to the military alliance, saying that they were secretly working as intelligence officers and halved the size of Moscow’s team able to work at its headquarters.

“We can confirm that we have withdrawn the accredi-

tation of eight members of the Russian Mission to NATO, who were undeclared Russian intelligence officers,” a NATO official said.

NATO also reduced the number of positions that Russia can accredit people for at the organisation from 20 down to 10, the official said.

No immediate clear explanation was given for the de-

cision, which will take effect at the end of the month.

Relations between NATO and Russia have been increasingly strained since Moscow annexed Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014. The two are at odds over Russia’s nuclear missile development, aerial intrusions into NATO airspace and the buzzing of allied ships by fighter planes.



**Picking up the pieces:** Residents digging through the debris of their houses that collapsed following an earthquake in the district of Harnai on Thursday. •AFP

# 22 killed, over 300 injured as earthquake rattles Pakistan

The remote mountainous district of Harnai was the worst-hit

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
KARACHI

A powerful 5.9-magnitude earthquake jolted a mountainous part of southwestern Pakistan’s Balochistan province early on Thursday, resulting in the collapse of a coal mine and several mud houses that left at least 22 people dead and more than 300 others injured, officials said.

The National Seismic Monitoring Centre in Islamabad said the epicentre of the

earthquake was near Harnai, which has a large number of coal mines, at a depth of around 15 kilometres.

The quake affected Quetta, Sibi, Harnai, Pishin, Qila Saifullah, Chaman, Ziarat and Zhob in Balochistan. Most of the deaths and injuries were reported from the remote district of Harnai, where at least 13 people have died, according to officials.

At least four people were killed when a coal mine in which they were working

collapsed, Suhail Anwar Shaheen, the local deputy commissioner, was quoted as saying by the Associated Press.

Disaster management officials said the death toll may increase.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner of Harnai district Sohail Anwar Hashmi had said that six children were among 22 dead. He said five to six districts were affected on a “major scale” and data was still being collected.

# French Senator calls Taiwan a ‘country’

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
TAIPEI

The head of a French delegation of Senators on Thursday called Taiwan a “country” during a visit to Taipei, risking fury from China which has strongly protested against the trip.

Alain Richard, a former Defence Minister, arrived on Wednesday for a five-day visit despite repeated warnings from the Chinese Embassy in Paris.

In a speech after he was conferred a top medal of honour by President Tsai Ing-wen, Mr. Richard said Taiwan’s de facto embassy in Paris has been doing “a very good job in representing your country”.

France, like most countries, officially recognises China which claims self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory. Beijing tries to keep the island isolated on the world stage and balks at the use of the name Taiwan or any reference to it as a country. It has ramped up pressure on Ms. Tsai’s government since her 2016 election win and has aggressively tried to dissuade politicians from visiting in recent years.

The Chinese Embassy in Paris warned that the visit would damage Chinese-French relations.

# 100-year-old former Nazi camp guard goes on trial

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
BERLIN

A 100-year-old man went on trial in Germany on Thursday, accused of being an accessory to murder for serving as a Nazi SS guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin during Second World War.

The trial of the defendant, who is charged with 3,518 counts of accessory to murder, was held at the

Neuruppin state court, which moved the proceedings to a prison sport hall in Brandenburg for organisational reasons.

The suspect was identified only as Josef S.

More than 2,00,000 people were held at Sachsenhausen between 1936 and 1945. Tens of thousands of inmates died of various causes, including shootings, hangings and gassing.

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MARKET WATCH		
	07-10-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	59,678	0.82
US Dollar	74.79	0.25
Gold	46,012	0.86
Brent oil	82.12	1.32

NIFTY 50		
	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	736.15	12.15
Asian Paints	3290.85	78.60
Axis Auto	777.10	-1.85
Bajaj Auto	3828.55	58.50
Bajaj Finserv	17470.25	-146.35
Bajaj Finance	7747.90	12.75
Bharti Airtel	692.50	1.10
BPCL	449.20	2.00
Britannia Ind	3900.60	-38.00
Cipla	916.05	2.60
Coal India	190.70	-2.15
Divis Lab	509.85	-38.70
Dr Reddys Lab	4891.10	-65.50
Eicher Motors	2820.95	92.00
Grasim Ind	1592.00	-7.00
HCL Tech	1306.30	30.85
HDFC	2727.00	-23.95
HDFC Bank	1610.50	-4.40
HDFC Life	725.35	-0.30
Hero MotoCorp	2841.65	43.50
Hindalco	477.50	1.60
Hind Unilever	2669.40	-16.65
ICI Bank	702.20	12.70
IndusInd Bank	1166.70	34.85
Infosys	1691.00	17.45
Indian Oil Corp	132.25	2.15
ITC	232.95	1.70
JSW Steel	666.55	7.30
Kotak Bank	1952.45	-3.30
L&T	1712.45	17.40
M&M	878.25	44.15
Maruti Suzuki	7492.50	293.25
Nestle India Ltd.	19045.65	-111.50
NTPC	142.80	-0.50
ONGC	160.40	-7.70
PowerGrid Corp	188.30	0.70
Reliance Ind	2572.40	12.55
SBI Life	1215.05	3.00
State Bank	457.90	0.70
Sree Cement	28059.35	-50.40
Sun Pharma	823.25	22.65
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	824.55	3.90
Tata Motors	376.50	40.45
Tata Steel	1289.20	9.30
TCS	3892.90	9.30
Tech Mahindra	1417.20	31.55
Titan	2375.35	227.70
UltraTech Cement	7354.60	-8.40
UPL	727.50	0.20
Wipro	642.95	7.20

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on October 07		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.58	74.90
Euro	86.27	86.64
British Pound	101.54	101.98
Japanese Yen (100)	66.99	67.28
Chinese Yuan	11.57	11.62
Swiss Franc	80.53	80.92
Singapore Dollar	54.95	55.21
Canadian Dollar	59.30	59.55
Malaysian Ringgit	17.82	17.91
Source: Indian Bank		

IN BRIEF



TVS Motor unveils 125cc Jupiter at ₹73,400

CHENNAI  
TVS Motor Company on Thursday unveiled the Jupiter 125cc scooter at a price of ₹73,400 (ex-showroom, New Delhi). The vehicle comes with industry-first features such as the largest under-seat storage, external fuel-fill in front, mobile charger, semi-digital speedometer, and side stand indicator, the company said in a statement

P&G names Raman global CEO of fabric unit

MUMBAI  
Procter & Gamble has announced the appointment of Sundar Raman as the global CEO of the fabric and home care division. He has been elevated to the role following the promotion of Shailesh Jejurikar as COO. Mr. Raman began his career in P&G as a market analyst in India in 1998 and then moved to the U.S., where he worked in various capacities.

# World Bank retains India FY22 GDP growth forecast at 8.3%

Bank cites increase in public investment to spur demand as supportive measure

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN  
WASHINGTON DC

The World Bank has retained its June forecast for India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to grow by 8.3% in the current fiscal year, with the economy seen supported by an increase in public investment to bolster domestic demand and schemes like the production-linked incentive to boost manufacturing.

Despite the ravages of the second COVID-19 wave, the economic impact of the pandemic had been "relatively small" this year compared with the hit in 2020, the bank said in a South Asia-focused report titled 'Shifting Gears: Digitization and Services-Led Development'



Future proofing: Learning from the crisis means building social protection, says Hans Timmer. • VIJAY SONEJI

ahead of its annual meetings, which start next week in Washington.

"Over the next two years, as the base effect fades, growth is expected to stabilise at around 7%, aided by structural reforms to ease

supply-side constraints and infrastructure investment," the multilateral lender said referencing last fiscal's 7.3% GDP contraction. Downside risks in the medium term include uncertainty around asset quality deterioration due

to the pandemic, slow recovery in the informal sector and higher-than-expected inflation, the bank said.

Noting that accommodative fiscal and monetary policies globally had been key to mitigating the pandemic's economic impact, the bank said it was time to start rethinking policies.

"If you don't start now preparing for what we call the 'new normal', and there's always a new normal after a major crisis, you might well be too late," said Chief Economist for South Asia Hans Timmer.

Learning from the crisis meant building social protection and adopting greener policies, he added.

## Fitch cuts GDP growth to 8.7%, cites COVID impact

Rating outlook stays 'negative' on debt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Fitch Ratings slashed its FY22 growth forecast for India from 10% to 8.7%, citing the severe second COVID-19 wave, which it said would 'delay rather than derail' economic recovery. Accordingly, it raised the growth forecast for FY23 to 10% from 8.5% estimated earlier.

The ratings agency has also retained the 'negative' outlook on India's sovereign BBB- rating, citing greater uncertainty over the country's debt levels due to a sharp deterioration in public finances triggered by the pandemic shock.

"India's rating balances a still-strong medium-term



growth outlook and external resilience from solid foreign-reserve buffers, against high public debt, a weak financial sector and some lagging structural factors," Fitch said in its sovereign credit overview for the Asia-Pacific. The agency said higher public debt trajectories were the reason it had retained the 'negative' outlook for India as well as Japan and Australia.

## 'Auto retail sales decline 5% as two-wheelers, tractors drag'

Chip paucity hits PV stock build-up ahead of festivals: FADA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Retail sales of automobiles declined 5% last month, pulled down by a double-digit slump in sales of two-wheelers and tractors. According to data from the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), total retail sales in September were 12.96 lakh units compared with 13.68 lakh a year earlier.

While two-wheeler sales fell 11.5% to 9.14 lakh units, tractor sales slid 23.9% to 52,896 units. Sales of passenger vehicles, however, climbed 16.3% to 2.33 lakh units. Likewise, commercial



vehicle retail business grew 46.6% to 58,820 units, while sales of three-wheelers rose almost 51% to 36,612 units.

When compared with September 2019, overall retail sales were lower by 13.5%, the federation said.

"The two-wheeler category continues to play spoilsport as the entry-level seg-

## Government releases GST dues of ₹40,000 crore to States

'Amount to help meet shortfall in compensation cess'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Centre released ₹40,000 crore to States and Union Territories on Thursday to help meet the shortfall in GST compensation cess collections, through back-to-back borrowings from the market.

The Finance Ministry said this was part of the ₹1.59 lakh crore shortfall estimated in the Compensation Fund for States, to be raised via market borrowings, but indicated that total GST compensation to be paid in 2021-22 may exceed States' actual dues for the year.

An amount of ₹75,000 crore had already been transferred in July, leaving another ₹44,000 crore to be



borrowed and disbursed over the rest of 2021-22.

The balance amount would be released in due course, the Ministry said.

### 'Over and above'

"This release is in addition to normal GST compensation being released every two months out of actual cess collection," the Ministry

said, adding that more than ₹1 lakh crore was also estimated to be released to States during the financial year, based on actual GST cess collections.

### Pending dues

"The sum total of ₹2.59 lakh crore is expected to exceed the amount of GST compensation accruing in FY 2021-22," it added, signalling that some of the pending dues from 2020-21 would be offset to that extent.

"It is expected that this release will help the States/UTs in planning their public expenditure among other things, for improving, health infrastructure and taking up infrastructure projects," the Ministry said.

## Goyal bats for stronger trade ties with the U.S.

'Two nations complement each other'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Commerce, Industry and Textiles Minister Piyush Goyal made a strong pitch on Thursday for India and the U.S. to strengthen economic and trade ties, stating that the two countries were 'not really competitors' and had complementary strengths.

"India is a trusted partner and ally of the U.S.. it is in the interest of both countries to strengthen our strategic partnership into a more comprehensive economic and trade partnership also," the Minister said at the India Ideas Summit hosted by the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC).

U.S. had recently told India that a free trade pact that the Trump regime was negotiating was off the table for now

"The U.S. has huge investment surpluses that can be used in India for promoting infrastructure development and also to make India a manufacturing base to help... provide goods and services to you at affordable prices," Mr. Goyal said.

The U.S. had recently conveyed to India that a free trade agreement that was being negotiated with the erstwhile Donald Trump administration was off the table for now.

## 'South may see hit in cement production'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Following an unprecedented rise in the cost of imported coal/pet coke and shortage of vessels in the recent months, the production of cement in the South might take a hit, the South Indian Cement Manufacturers' Association (SICMA) has cautioned.

It is rather difficult to predict either further increase in the fuel cost or capacity utilisation that can be achieved by the southern cement industries in the near future, SICMA said in a statement.

"It is estimated that the resultant increase in the production cost can be a minimum of ₹60 per bag," the association added.

"Due to shortage of vessels, even high-priced coal and pet coke is not available," SICMA said in a note.

## Reliance Retail to unveil 7-Eleven stores in India

Enters franchise pact with U.S.'s SEI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd. (RRVL), through its wholly owned subsidiary 7-India Convenience Retail Ltd., has entered into a master franchise agreement with U.S. retail major 7-Eleven, Inc. (SEI), to introduce 7-Eleven convenience stores in India.

The first 7-Eleven store will be opened on Saturday in Andheri East, Mumbai. This will be followed by a rapid roll-out in key neighbourhoods and commercial areas across the Greater Mumbai cluster to start with, Reliance Retail Ventures said in a statement.

"With a rapid expansion plan on the anvil, it is expected to be a significant contributor to local employment and building the ecosystem for convenient



foods," the company said.

"7-Eleven is among the most iconic global brands in the convenience retail landscape," said RRVL director Isha Ambani. "The new pathways we build together with SEI will offer Indian customers greater convenience and choices within their own neighbourhoods," she added.

"It's an ideal time for the largest convenience retailer in the world to make our entry into India," said SEI president and chief executive officer Joe DePinto.

## SEBI may insist on open offers in BPCL deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

India's capital markets regulator is unlikely to give exemption to the company acquiring BPCL from making mandatory open offers for Petronet LNG Ltd. and Indraprastha Gas - share purchases which will be countered by other promoters of the two firms such as GAIL to save from going private, officials said.

As per the legal position evaluated by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), the acquirer of BPCL will have to make open offers to the minority shareholders of Petronet and IGL for the acquisition of 26% shares.

To avoid such a scenario, an exemption request was made to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

## LinkedIn survey finds 55% professionals are stressed

'Work-life imbalance a prime reason'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A majority 55% of employed professionals in India are feeling stressed at work due to work-life imbalance, insufficient incomes, and slow career progress, according to a survey by LinkedIn.

The survey, which was based on the responses of 3,881 professionals from July 31 to September 24, added that keeping pace with the times of change for the last 18 months had adversely affected the mental health of working professionals.

When asked to share their primary reasons for work stress, the respondents cited 'balancing work with personal needs' (34%), 'not making enough money' (32%), and 'slow career advancement' (25%) as the top three reasons.

"These stressful times of



change have impelled the need for greater flexibility and work-life balance among professionals," said Ashutosh Gupta, India Country Manager, LinkedIn.

"But our survey reveals a wide gap between what employees need and what employers are offering to cope with stress," he added.

Mr. Gupta said while nearly half of (47%) employed professionals preferred to end work at reasonable hours, only about one-third (36%) were actually able to do so.

## MSME-lender Veritas raises ₹440 crore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Veritas Finance Pvt. Ltd, a non-banking finance company (NBFC) lending to MSMEs, has raised ₹440 crore of primary investment from existing and new investors.

The company proposes to use the additional capital to further penetrate existing markets.

The current capital will place the organisation strongly to build a loan book of ₹4,000 crore in the next 12 months, the company said.

The current round of funding came from existing investors Norwest Venture Partners, Kedaara Capital and Caspian and new investors namely Evolve India Fund III Ltd and Growth Catalyst Partners LLC, Veritas Finance said in a statement.

## SPORT

### Anshu loses in final, bags silver

Sarita takes bronze, wins first medal on the big stage

#### WRESTLING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
OSLO

India will have to wait for its first woman world champion in wrestling as Anshu Malik bagged a silver medal after losing her 57kg final to 2016 Olympic champion Helen Louise Maroulis and Sarita Mor grabbed her maiden medal on the big stage by winning the 59kg bronze here on Thursday.

#### Aggressive note

The 19-year old Anshu began on an aggressive note with positive intent but eventually lost the summit clash after being pinned.

Anshu had created history on Wednesday by becoming



Top notch: Anshu Malik pins Solomiia Vynnyk to the floor during their semifinal bout. • TWITTER/SAIMEDIA

ing the first Indian woman to reach a World Championship final when she outclassed junior European champion Solomiia Vynnyk.

Sarita ended her Worlds medal drought with a convincing 8-2 win over Sweden's Sara Johanna Lindborg in the bronze playoff.

For the record, Sushil Kumar (2010) remains India's lone world champion wrestler till date.

### FIH awards the result of team's hard work, says Reid

'Best Coach' looks forward to assignment with juniors at the World Cup

#### HOCKEY

Y.B. SARANGI  
JAMSHEDPUR

Encouraged by the clean sweep of International Hockey Federation (FIH) awards, the men and women hockey players are keen to carry forward their good work in the Tokyo Olympics and achieve more glory in upcoming events.

Men's team chief coach Graham Reid, who will also coach India in the Junior World Cup in Bhubaneswar next month, said the awards were the result of the team's hard work.

"It is a reflection of the work done in the last two years. An Olympic medal after 41 years has woken a lot



Graham Reid. • FILE PHOTO

of people to hockey again," said Reid, who bagged the Best Coach award, during a virtual press conference on Thursday. Sidestepping the controversy surrounding the awards, Reid said, "We have nothing to do with how we are chosen."

Reid looked forward to his assignment with the juniors. "It is exciting looking for new

talent. Expectation is there but five years is a long time in junior hockey. We won in 2016 does not mean we will win in 2021."

#### Asian Games a priority

Listing upcoming elite men's assignments, including the Asian Champions Trophy in December and Pro League and Asian Games next year, Reid said the Asian Games would be important as the winner would qualify for the Paris Olympics.

P.R. Sreejesh, who was chosen Best Goalkeeper (men), said the Olympic bronze medal had given more responsibility and it would be important to "refocus and get the rhythm back" for future events.

Harmanpreet Singh and Vivek Sagar Prasad, who got Best Player and Best Rising Star respectively among men, expressed happiness.

Recalling how the news of FIH awards was broken to the team in a dramatic manner at the camp in Bengaluru, Best Goalkeeper (women) Savita Punia said the team would be eager to continue with the good work and get results in big events.

"We celebrated after the Olympics (fourth place finish). But there is responsibility to do well in the Asia Cup, a World Cup qualifier, and the Asian Games, an Olympics qualifier. From Rio to Tokyo, there was a big difference in mindset and self-confidence.

"The (sense of) responsibility of each player has increased. Every week we have leadership groups," said Savita, who requested coach Janneke Schopman to resume the camp as soon as possible.

Along with Savita, Gurjit Kaur (Best Player, women) and Sharmila Devi (Best Rising Star, women) welcomed the seamless transition from Sjoerd Marjine to Janneke. "It is good that Janneke will continue to work with us. She was equally involved in coaching. She worked on the mental side as well. She told us that it was normal to have pressure before big matches and that was a big change. Earlier, we did not talk about that," said Savita.



# KKR has one foot in playoffs

Boosts its NRR with an 86-run win over RR; Gill, Mavi and Ferguson shine

## IPL 2021

SPORTS BUREAU

Kolkata Knight Riders is all but assured of a place in the top four after an 86-run win over Rajasthan Royals in Sharjah on Thursday.

Needing 172 to win, RR quickly slumped to one for two. KKR opened the bowling with Shakib Al Hasan, who cleaned up Yashasvi Jaiswal in the first over before Shivam Mavi had Sanju Samson caught in the next.

Lockie Ferguson, coming back after an injury, then removed Liam Livingstone and Anuj Rawat in his first over. Rajasthan, 17 for four after the PowerPlay, sank further when Mavi got rid of Shivam Dube and Glenn Phillips in the same over. Rahul Tewatia's power-hitting allowed RR some respite but it was too little too late. Mavi finished with four for 21.

Earlier, Shubman Gill made a measured fifty. RR, which chose to chase, bowled pace right through the PowerPlay and denied the KKR openers a flying start through tight, accurate bowling.

### Slow surface

On a slow surface, Samson used three quicks, who bowled 20 dots among them and conceded three fours and a six in the first six overs. KKR's 34 for no loss was the second-slowest PowerPlay score batting first in Sharjah this season.

The surface continued to prove difficult to score freely on as the innings progressed. The RR seamers took pace off the ball; the occasional cutters gripped. There wasn't a single over of spin in the first 10 overs. Venkatesh Iyer found his timing in the 10th over when he hit



Hitting his straps: Mavi derailed Royals' chase with a clinical spell. ■SPORTZPICS/IPL

Jaydev Unadkat for two sixes.

KKR was 79 for no loss after 10.4 overs when, after having done all the hard work, Venkatesh was clean-bowled by Tewatia. He was replaced by Nitish Rana, who hit Phillips for a four and a six before becoming the Kiwi's first IPL wicket. Rana may have lasted just five balls, but his knock appeared to give KKR's innings a spurt.

The in-form Rahul Tripathi walked in at No. 4 and began by flicking Phillips through midwicket for four. After being dropped by Samson on five, Tripathi collected back-to-back boundaries off Dube. At the other end, Gill brought up his second successive fifty of the UAE-leg before Chris Morris got him for 56.

Tripathi and Dinesh Karthik's lusty blows at the death helped KKR reach the highest score in Sharjah this season.

## SCOREBOARD

**KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS**  
Shubman Gill c Jaiswal b Morris 56 (44b, 4x4, 2x6), Venkatesh Iyer b Tewatia 38 (35b, 3x4, 2x6), Nitish Rana c Livingstone b Phillips 12 (5b, 1x4, 1x6), Rahul Tripathi b Sakariya 21 (14b, 3x4), Dinesh Karthik (not out) 14 (11b, 1x6), Eoin Morgan (not out) 13 (11b, 1x4, 1x6); Extras (b-5, lb-3, w-9): 17; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 171.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-79 (Venkatesh, 10.5 overs), 2-92 (Rana, 11.5), 3-133 (Gill, 15.4), 4-145 (Tripathi, 17.1).

**ROYALS BOWLING**  
Unadkat 4-0-35-0, Morris 4-0-28-1, Sakariya 4-0-23-1, Mustafizur 4-0-31-0, Dube 2-0-18-0, Tewatia 1-0-11-1, Phillips 1-0-17-1.

**RAJASTHAN ROYALS**  
Yashasvi Jaiswal b Shakib 0 (3b), Liam Livingstone c Tripathi b Ferguson 6 (6b, 1x4), Sanju Samson c Morgan b Mavi 1 (4b), Shivam Dube b Mavi 18 (20b, 1x6), Anuj Rawat lbw b Ferguson 0 (1b), Glenn Phillips b Mavi 8 (12b, 1x6), Rahul Tewatia b Mavi 44 (36b, 5x4,

2x6), Chris Morris lbw b Varun 0 (2b), Jaydev Unadkat c Shakib b Ferguson 6 (5b, 1x4), Chetan Sakariya run out 1 (5b), Mustafizur Rahman (not out) 0 (3b); Extras (b-1): 1; Total (in 16.1 overs): 85.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-0 (Jaiswal, 0.3), 2-1 (Samson, 1.1), 3-12 (Livingstone, 3.2), 4-13 (Rawat, 3.4), 5-33 (Phillips, 7.3), 6-34 (Dube, 7.6), 7-35 (Morris, 8.6), 8-62 (Unadkat, 11.2), 9-85 (Sakariya, 15.3).

**KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING**  
Shakib 1-0-1-1, Mavi 3.1-0-21-4, Narine 4-0-30-0, Ferguson 4-0-18-3, Varun 4-0-14-1.

**Toss:** Rajasthan Royals.  
**Man-of-the-Match:** Mavi.  
KKR won by 86 runs.

Innings scan		
KKR		RR
43	Dots	60
12	Fours	7
7	Sixes	4
34/0	PP	17/4
8.55	RR	5.25

# Rahul leads from the front for Kings

His merciless assault leaves CSK gasping after a dismal display with the bat

SPORTS BUREAU

The strokeplay was iridescent. On a tricky pitch, K.L. Rahul struck the ball with grace, flow, timing and a refreshing sense of freedom. Gifted he is!

The swing of the bat was as smooth as the willow striking the ball. The sphere streaked through the gaps, cleared the fence. The surface did not matter.

Skipper Rahul's astonishing 98 not out – he fittingly ended the match with a thumping six off Shardul Thakur – off just 42 deliveries with seven fours and a stunning eight sixes enabled Punjab Kings race past CSK's 134 in only 13 overs with six wickets remaining in this IPL clash at Dubai.

Rahul's blistering display of ball-striking gave his team's run-rate a boost and lent Punjab Kings a glimmer of hope before KKR's win against RR ended it.

For CSK, suffering a hampering, this was its third successive loss.

Punjab lost wickets along the way – Mayank Agarwal was desperately unlucky to be adjudged leg-before to Thakur – but Rahul was in a different zone, striking Josh Hazlewood over his head and then pulling the Aussie for a six and a four.

Rahul indeed was a one-man demolition army. Punjab was 51 for two after the PowerPlay, and Rahul's contribution was 38.

He continued in the same manner, clearing the fence effortlessly even as he stayed balanced. Fittingly, Rahul delivered the final blow.

Earlier, even as wickets fell around him, opener Faf du Plessis [76 off 55] held the innings together, rotating the strike, striking the odd big blow.

The Punjab Kings seamers



Stand and deliver: Rahul smashed eight sixes and seven fours during his scintillating knock. ■SPORTZPICS/IPL

employed the short-ball play capably and CSK, inserted, lost wickets on a pitch that was rather two-paced.

Versatile left-arm Arshdeep Singh consumed the in-form Ruturaj Gaikwad on the pull with a mean lifter. Moeen Ali succumbed to a delivery of lift and movement from Arshdeep.

CSK was 32 for three in the

seventh over when Robin Uthappa pulled Chris Jordan to deep square-leg's hands. And Ambati Rayudu's attempted slash off Jordan proved fatal.

M.S. Dhoni's problems against the googly continued when Ravi Bishnoi castled the CSK skipper.

The ball did not roll for CSK. Rahul was King!

## SCOREBOARD

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS**  
Ruturaj Gaikwad c Shahrulkh b Arshdeep 12 (14b, 1x4), Faf du Plessis c Rahul b Shami 76 (55b, 8x4, 2x6), Moeen Ali c Rahul b Arshdeep 0 (6b), Robin Uthappa c Harpreet b Jordan 2 (6b), Ambati Rayudu c Arshdeep b Jordan 4 (5b), M.S. Dhoni b Bishnoi 12 (15b, 2x4), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 15 (17b, 1x4), Dwayne Bravo (not out) 4 (2b, 1x4); Extras (b-1, w-8): 9; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 134.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-18 (Ruturaj, 3.5 overs), 2-29 (Moeen, 5.4), 3-32 (Uthappa, 6.5), 4-42 (Rayudu, 8.3), 5-61 (Dhoni, 11.6), 6-128 (du Plessis, 19.3).

**PUNJAB KINGS BOWLING**  
Shami 4-0-22-1, Harpreet 4-0-22-0, Arshdeep 4-0-35-2, Jordan 3-0-20-2, Bishnoi 4-0-25-1, Henriques 1-0-9-0.

**PUNJAB KINGS**  
K.L. Rahul (not out) 98 (42b, 7x4, 8x6), Mayank Agarwal lbw b Shardul 12 (12b, 2x4), Sarfaraz Khan c du Plessis b Shardul 0 (3b), Shahrulkh Khan c Bravo b Deepak Chahar 8 (10b, 1x6), Aiden Markram c Dhoni b Shardul 13 (8b, 1x6), Moises Henriques (not out) 3 (3b); Extras (w-5): 5; Total (for four wkts. in 13 overs): 139.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-46 (Mayank, 4.3), 2-46 (Sarfaraz, 4.6), 3-80 (Shahrulkh, 8.6), 4-126 (Markram, 12.1).

**SUPER KINGS BOWLING**  
Deepak Chahar 4-0-48-1, Hazlewood 3-0-22-0, Shardul 3-0-28-3, Jadeja 1-0-9-0, Bravo 2-0-32-0.

**Toss:** PBKS.  
**Man-of-the-Match:** Rahul.  
Punjab Kings won by six wickets with seven overs to spare.

Innings scan		
CSK		PBKS
49	Dots	27
13	Fours	9
2	Sixes	10
30/2	PP	51/2
6.70	RR	10.69

# It's time to experiment and stay fresh for the playoffs

DC and RCB will look to rest players but not lose momentum ahead of the business end

SPORTS BUREAU

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) and Delhi Capitals (DC) will be keen to iron out any chinks ahead of the playoffs when they meet in Dubai on Friday.

The success of Avesh Khan has allowed DC to split the pace duo of Anrich Nortje and Kagiso Rabada and target batters through various passages. In T20 cricket, AB de Villiers has scored 77 runs against Axar Patel in 72 balls and has been dismissed once. The Capitals will look to hold their left-arm spinner back for de Villiers.

Among DC batters, Shimron Hetmyer has been explosive. He has been the anchor when wickets have fallen quickly, and the aggressor when the asking rate has gone up.

Shreyas Iyer, Shikhar Dhan and Prithvi Shaw have



added heft. The destructive ability of Rishabh Pant makes DC more enterprising.

Fixing the batting order should be high on RCB's agenda. The move to send Dan Christian at No. 3 against SRH failed.

However, more bizarre was the decision to send its best finisher AB de Villiers at 6, below floater Srikar Bha-

rat. In the end, de Villiers faced only 13 deliveries and had six runs to get off the last two balls but couldn't pull it off. De Villiers shouldn't be batting lower than No. 5.

Their bowling looks in excellent shape. Harshal Patel has 29 wickets so far this season. After a lean first half, Yuzvendra Chahal has rediscovered his guile. This augurs well for RCB.

TODAY'S MATCHES	
 <b>ABU DHABI, 7.30 P.M. IST</b> <b>HEAD-TO-HEAD</b> Played: <b>17</b> SRH <b>8</b>   MI <b>9</b> <b>In 2021</b> Played <b>1</b>   SRH <b>0</b>   MI <b>1</b>	 <b>DUBAI, 7.30 P.M. IST</b> <b>HEAD-TO-HEAD</b> Played: <b>26</b> RCB <b>15</b>   DC <b>10</b>   NR <b>1</b> <b>In 2021</b> Played <b>1</b>   RCB <b>1</b>   DC <b>0</b>
STAR SPORTS 1 & 55 SELECT 1 (SD & HD)	



Battle royale: The in-form Nortje will look to strike early against Kohli & Co. ■SPORTZPICS/IPL



# Dhoni not sure if it will be CSK yellow next season

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DUBAI

M.S. Dhoni has no doubt that he will be seen in yellow even in 2022 but at this point, he does not know whether that colour would be that of Chennai Super Kings.

"Well, you can see me in yellow next year. But whether I will be playing for CSK? There are a lot of uncertainties around it for a simple reason that we have two new teams coming up," said Dhoni, referring to the IPL's expansion into a 10-team competition.

"We don't know the retention policy. We don't know how many foreigners, Indian players we can retain, the money cap that every player will be cutting from the kitty. So there are a lot of



M.S. Dhoni ■SPORTZPICS/IPL

uncertainties.

"Unless the rules are in place, you can't really decide that. So we will wait for it to happen," he added.

The comment is bound to create a flutter as earlier this week, interacting with fans during the 75th year celebrations of India Cements, Dhoni hinted he will be playing for CSK next season.

# Holder lavishes praise on Umran and bowlers

N. SUDARSHAN

Sunrisers Hyderabad's West Indian all-rounder Jason Holder heaped praise on his side's bowling unit for its superlative effort in defending 141 and securing a four-run win against Royal Challengers Bangalore in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday.

"Siddarth Kaul was outstanding. The young Umran [Malik], myself and Bhuvneshwar finished it off quite well."

Holder was quite impressed by the young tearaway speedster Umran, who conceded just 21 runs from four overs, including a brilliant first spell of 3-0-10-1.

"He is consistent in training and has given us quite a hard time as he is very difficult to get hold of," said Holder, with a smile. "As you have seen, he is deceiving quite a lot of batters. "It's good to see his con-



Umran. ■SPORTZPICS/IPL

trol as well. A lot of bowlers who bowl fast may seem erratic but Umran has grouped some good deliveries together."

Mike Hesson, RCB's Director of Cricket Operations and Head Coach, felt that Glenn Maxwell's run out with 50 runs still to get was the turning point. "Considering he was scoring at over 10 runs an over, he was the man we wanted at the crease," Hesson said.

# First T20I abandoned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GOLD COAST

The first T20I between the Indian women's cricket team and Australia was abandoned due to heavy rain here on Thursday.

Invited to bat, India was 131/4 in 15.2 overs when rain disrupted the proceedings, leading to the match being eventually called off.

Jemimah Rodrigues was not out on 49 and giving her

company was Richa Ghosh (17 not out).

The teams got one point each.

Tahlia McGrath and Hannah Darlington were making their T20I debuts for Australia. For India, Renuka Singh was handed a debut while it was a maiden T20I appearance for Yastika Bhatia.

Before this, India drew the rain-affected Day/Night Test against the hosts follow-



Guiding force: Jemimah was in full flow before a downpour ended play. ■TWITTER/BCCIWOMEN

ing a 1-2 loss in the ODI series. The second T20I is scheduled to be held on Saturday at the same venue.

## SCOREBOARD

**INDIA**  
Smriti Mandhana c Darlington b Gardner 17 (10b, 2x4, 1x6), Shafali Verma c Wareham b Gardner 18 (14b, 3x6), Jemimah Rodrigues (not out) 49 (36b, 7x4), Harmanpreet Kaur lbw b Molineux 12 (5b, 3x4), Yastika Bhatia c Vlaeminck b Wareham 15 (15b, 2x4), Richa Ghosh (not out) 17 (13b, 3x4); Extras (w-2, nb-1): 3; Total (for four wkts. in 15.2 overs): 131.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-31 (Smriti, 3.2 overs), 2-37 (Shafali, 3.5), 3-55 (Harmanpreet, 5.5), 4-106 (Yastika, 12.1).

**AUSTRALIA BOWLING**  
Vlaeminck 4-0-32-0, Molineux 2-0-23-1, Gardner 3-0-28-2, Perry 1-0-3-0, Carey 2-0-17-0, Darlington 1-0-11-0, Wareham 1.2-0-3-1, McGrath 1-0-14-0.

**Toss:** Australia.  
**No Result.**  
**Second T20I: Oct. 9,** Metron Stadium, Carrara, 1.40 p.m. IST.

## IN BRIEF

**Team India trainer Webb to quit after T20WC**

NEW DELHI  
India men's team's strength and conditioning coach Nick Webb will be stepping down from his position after the upcoming T20 World Cup, the Kiwi has revealed. PTI

**ICC names match officials for T20 World Cup**

DUBAI  
The ICC on Thursday announced the appointment of 20 match officials for round one and Super 12 phase for the T20 World Cup. Nitin Menon is the lone Indian among umpires while Jagavallabhi Srinath is one of the four match referees for the tournament. Marais Erasmus and Chris Gaffaney will be the umpires for the India-Pakistan game on October 24.

**Umpires:** Chris Brown, Aleem Dar, Kumar Dharmasena, Marais Erasmus, Chris Gaffaney, Michael Gough, Adrian Holdstock, Richard Illingworth, Richard Kettleborough, Nitin Menon, Ahsan Raza, Paul Reiffel, Langton Rusere, Rod Tucker, Joel Wilson and Paul Wilson.



TV PICKS

**IPL 2021:** Star Sports 1, 2 & SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

**WC 2022 European Qualifiers:** Sony Ten 1, 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)

IN BRIEF



Stokes could miss Ashes after finger surgery

**LONDON**  
England all-rounder Ben Stokes could miss the Ashes series in Australia after undergoing another operation on his injured finger, the England and Wales Cricket Board announced on Thursday. The 30-year-old has not played since July. **AFP**



Sprinter Okagbare faces three doping charges

**MONACO**  
Nigerian sprinter Blessing Okagbare, who was barred from running the Olympic 100m semifinals hours before the race, faces three charges in a doping case. The Athletics Integrity Unit revealed on Thursday that Okagbare tested positive for blood booster EPO in Nigeria in June, failed test for growth hormone in Slovakia in July and failed to cooperate with investigation. **AP**

Kerala United posts win

**BENGALURU**  
Kerala United FC defeated Corbett FC 2-0 in a Group-B match of the 2021 I-League Qualifiers at the Bangalore Football Stadium, here on Thursday.  
**The results:** Delhi Football Club 3 (Fahad Temuri 29, Sergio Barboza Junior 36, Thingnam Radhakanta Singh 60) bt ARA FC 0; Kerala United FC 2 (Jesin TK Thonikkara 83, Hafis Alakkaparamba Mohammedali 41) bt Corbett FC 0.

Vineeth shocks Prasanna

**JHAJJAR:** Vineeth Mutyala shocked top seed Skandha Prasanna Rao 6-1, 7-6(5) to set up a title clash against Sarthak Sharma in the under-18 boys section of the AITA National series junior tennis tournament at the Joygaon Academy on Thursday.

In the under-18 girls category, Hannah Nagpal beat second seed Rachita Talwar 3-6, 6-4, 6-0 to set up a final date against top seed Janani Ramesh.

**The results (u-18, semifinals):**  
**Boys:** Vineeth Mutyala bt Skandha Prasanna Rao 6-1, 7-6(5); Sarthak Sharma bt Lakshya Chugh 6-2, 6-2.  
**Girls:** Janani Ramesh bt Kristi Boro 6-2, 6-1; Hannah Nagpal bt Rachita Talwar 3-6, 6-4, 6-0.

Revival of National-ranking tournaments planned by AAI

ARCHERY

**Y.B. SARANGI**  
**JAMSHEDPUR**

With the aim of grooming youngsters for the 2028 and 2032 Olympics, the Archery Association of India (AAI) plans to revive National-ranking tournaments.

The AAI has set a goal of making the up-and-coming talent war-ready by exposing them to tournaments round the year.

Olympic performance

“Cadet archers get just one event a year. Efforts have begun to restart National-ranking tournaments so that they get more events. More exposure on the domestic circuit will help us identify more new faces,” High Performance Director Sanjeeva Singh told *The Hindu* on the

Sports pistol team clinches gold

Adarsh Singh claims men's rapid fire pistol silver

SHOOTING

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
**LIMA**

The trio of Rhythm Sangwan, Naamya Kapoor and Manu Bhaker won the sports pistol team gold by defeating USA 16-4 in the climax while Adarsh Singh clinched the men's rapid fire pistol silver in the Junior World Championship shooting here.

Adarsh was in the race for the top spot after a strong start of two perfect rounds in the final, but was overtaken to the gold by Henry Turner Leverett of USA 32 to 28.

It was a fine performance by Adarsh after the disappointment in the second stage of qualification when he could collect only 280 points as against 294 in the first stage.

The Sidhu twins, Udhayveer and Vijayveer, also made the final but were placed fifth and sixth respectively.

Trap team second

There was another silver in the trap team event when Bakhtyaruddin Malek, Shardul Vihan and Vivaan Ka-



**On the podium:** Silver medallist Adarsh Singh, gold winner Henry Turner Leverett and Laurent Cussigh, who finished with a bronze in the rapid fire pistol event. **•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

poor went down fighting 4-6 to Italy.

India climbed further on top of the medals table with nine gold, eight silver and three bronze. USA followed a close second with six gold, eight silver and five bronze medals.

The results:

**Junior men: 25m rapid fire pistol:** 1. Henry Turner Leverett (USA) 32 (579); 2. Adarsh Singh 28 (574); 3. Laurent Cus-

sigh (Fra) 24 (578); 5. Vijayveer Sidhu 13 (572); 6. Udhayveer Sidhu 9 (577); 10. Anish Bhanwala 562; 12. Agneya Kaushik 560.

**Trap team:** 1. Italy 6 (486); 2. India (Bakhtyaruddin Malek, Shardul Vihan, Vivaan Kapoor) 4 (473); 3. Slovakia, 4. USA.

Junior women: 25m sports pistol team:

1. India (Rhythm Sangwan, Naamya Kapoor, Manu Bhaker) 16 (446) 878; 2. USA 4 (437) 859; 3. France 17 (435) 872; 4. Ukraine 7 (435)

854.

**Trap team:** 1. USA 6 (450); 2. Italy 4 (466); 3. Germany 6 (444); 4. India (Divya Singh, Aadya Tripathi, Kirti Gupta) 2 (405).

**Mixed team 50m rifle prone:** 1. Germany 17 (415.8) 6177; 2. USA-2 5 (416.3) 613.8; 3. USA-1 16 (410.9) 614.1; 4. Austria 8 (412.0) 613.2; 6. India (Samra Sift Kaur, Surya Pratap Singh) 409.5 (611.4); 9. India-2 (Ashi Chouksey, Sanskar Havelia) 604.0.

DELHI CRICKET

Sadar Bazar Youth to a 130-run victory over Push XI in the Push Academy cricket league under-13 tournament at the Amari ground in Gurugram.

**The scores:** Rkade u-13 129 in 24.5 overs (Khush 30, Hridhaan Kaira 3/46) bt Maple CC 81 in 24.1 overs (Anhad Goel 3/11); Sadar Bazar Youth 247/2 in 40 overs (Arjun Choudhary 106 n.o., Rajveer Bemby 84) bt Push XI 117 in 30.4 overs.

Manjeet scores century

Manjeet hit a fluent century with 15 fours and five sixes to help Delhi Police to an eight-wicket victory over Sporting Club in the Unique Sports cricket tournament.

**The scores:** Sporting Club 173/6 in 20 overs (Sourav Dagar 35) lost to Delhi Police 177/2 in 18 overs (Manjeet 104, Sunil Sehwal 48).

All-round show by Vohra

Saiansh Vohra took two wickets and struck 34 runs to help Delhi Cricket Hub beat New Balaji Academy by five wickets in the Birma Devi memorial under-13 cricket tournament at the Titiksha School ground, Rohini.

**The scores:** New Balaji Academy 129 for eight in 30 overs (Parikshit Singh 32) lost to Delhi Cricket Hub 131/5 in 28.3 overs (Akshay Sharma 35, Saiansh Vohra 34).

Kadhe & Gonzales crash out

INDIANS ABROAD

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
**BARCELONA**

Arjun Kadhe and Ruben Gonzales of Philippines lost 6-3, 7-6(3) to Alexander Erier and Lucas Miedler of Austria in the doubles quarterfinals of the €44,820 Challenger tennis tournament here.

**Other results: €44,820 Challenger, Barcelona, Spain: Doubles: First round:** Filip Horan-

skys & Alex Molcan (Svk) bt Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Purav Raja 6-7(2), 6-2, [10-8].

**\$25,000 ITF men, Setubal, Portugal: First round:** Anirudh Chandrasekar & Vijay Sundar Prashanth bt Tiago Cacao & Jaime Faria (Por) 6-2, 6-0.

**\$15,000 ITF, Monastir, Tunisia: Men: Second round:** Guy Den

Ouden (Ned) bt Niki Poonacha 6-0, 6-3.

**Women: Second round:** Pimradda Jattavapornvanit (Tha) bt Jennifer Luikham 4-6, 6-1, 6-3. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Naima Karamoko & Tess Sugnaux (Sui) bt Laura Boehner (Ger) & Jennifer Luikham 6-1, 6-3.

**\$15,000 ITF men, Cancun, Mexico: First round:** Seita Watanabe (Jpn) bt Siddhant Bantia 6-3, 6-1.

**\$15,000 ITF, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt: Men: Second round:** S.D. Prajwal Dev bt Hady Habib (Lbn) 3-6, 6-1, 6-3; Petr Hajek (Cze) bt Nitin Kumar Sinha 6-3, 6-7(4), 6-4. **Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Szymon Kielan & Michal Mikula (Pol) bt S.D. Prajwal Dev & Nitin Kumar Sinha 6-4, 6-4.

**Women: Doubles: Quarterfinals:** Rebeka Stolmar (Hun) & Ashmitha Easwaramurthi bt



**Swinging away:** Viraj Madappa signed off the day's best six-under 66 with his seventh birdie. **•FILE PHOTO: AFP**

hole, and added another on the 18th to put Khalin under pressure.

During his stupendous run on the back nine, Madappa missed eagle-putts on the two par-5s – 14th and 18th – from inside 12 feet. His longest birdie-putt came on the 15th where he got lucky from 30 feet. In fact, Madappa could have birdied the par-3 17th hole, too, but his putt lipped out.

All this while, Khalin stayed in the lead. He fired four birdies against a lone bogey on the front nine. Coming in, he birdied the 10th to move to 13-under for

the first time. His round's second bogey, on the 12th, brought him back to under-12. A birdie on the par-5 14th, saw Khalin hold on to this one-stroke lead until he faltered on the final green.

**The scores (third round):** 204 - Viraj Madappa (71, 67, 66), Khalin Joshi (69, 66, 69); 206 - Angad Cheema (71, 68, 67); 207 - Kartik Sharma (70, 68, 69); 208 - N. Thangaraja (70, 67, 71), Rashid Khan (67, 73, 68); 209 - Manu Gandas (67, 70, 73), Mohammad Zamil Hossain Mollah (Ban) (74, 67, 69) and Yuvraj Singh Sandhu (69, 75, 66).

India held goalless by Sri Lanka

FOOTBALL

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**MALE**

India produced a disappointing performance as it was held to a goalless draw by 205th-ranked Sri Lanka despite a dominant display in their second SAFF Championships match here on Thursday.

The seven-time champion paid the price of not creating enough chances and wasting those it got against a Sri Lankan side 98 places below them in the FIFA rankings.

Riya Sachdeva outwits Saina Deshpande

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
**NEW DELHI**

Riya Sachdeva saved a bunch of match points from being down 1-5 in the second set to outwit Saina Deshpande 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-2 in the under-16 girls' pre-quarterfinals of the National sub-junior tennis championship at the DLTA Complex here on Thursday.

Cheered strongly by the fellow trainees of the National Tennis Centre, Riya was quite steady with her strokes in taking the punch out of her opponent's game.

Saina had beaten the top seed in the second round, but could not wriggle out of the clutches of Riya this day, after a vibrant first half.

“I was impressed with Riya's ability to fight right till the end. For a 14-year-old, she showed maturity to change her game when what she was comfortable play-



Riya Sachdeva.

ing, did not work. It was the second match for her after a short gap. It is all a learning experience,” said National coach Zeeshan Ali, who watched the whole match.

In the quarterfinals, Riya will take on Sonal Patil who was brilliant in taming fifth seed Abhaya Vamuri for the loss of five games. Riya will

also play the under-14 quarterfinals against Ikaraju Kanumuri.

In the under-16 boys' section, Tarun Korwar overcame Omar Rehan Sumar 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 in an entertaining contest.

**The results (pre-quarterfinals): Under-16: Boys:** Daksh Prasad bt Mayank Sharma 6-4, 7-5; Jaishnav Shinde bt Manish Yadav 6-2, 6-2; Tejas Ahuja bt Omaansh Choudhary 7-5, 6-0; Navya Verma bt Venkat Batlanki 6-4, 7-5; Suresh Keerthivasan bt Shanker Heisnam 6-1, 6-3; Rethin Pranav bt Kriish Tyagi 6-4, 6-3; Tarun Korwar bt Omar Rehan Sumar 7-5, 4-6, 6-3; Ruslil Khosla bt Hitesh Chauhan 6-2, 6-4.

**Girls:** Riya Sachdeva bt Saina Deshpande 3-6, 7-6(5), 6-2; Sonal Patil bt Abhaya Vamuri 6-4, 6-1; Madhurima Savant bt Meher Mishra 6-3, 6-0; Apurva Vamuri bt Pushti Laddha 4-6, 6-3, 6-4; Saumya Ronde bt Ni-

yati Kukreti 6-3, 6-3; Ruma Gai-kaiwari bt Lakshmi Gowda 6-3, 6-2; Tamanna Takkoria bt Thanaya Sarai 6-4, 6-1; Suhitha Maruri bt Ananya SR 6-2, 6-2.

**Under-14: Boys:** Rayan Sajjid bt Arnab Paparkar 6-1, 6-4; Siddhant Sharma bt Vraj Gohil 6-3, 6-4; Samprit Sharma bt Jevin Kanani 6-7(7), 6-4, 6-4; Sehaj Singh Pawar bt Ashwajit Senjam 6-1, 6-7(3), 6-0; Dhruv Sachdeva bt Mahalingam Kandhavel 5-7, 7-6(6), 6-3; Tejas Ahuja bt Aditya Mor 6-3, 4-6, 6-1; Venkat Batlanki bt Pratyaksh 6-3, 6-2; Kriish Tyagi bt Swastik Sharma 5-7, 6-2, 6-2. **Girls:** Riya Sachdeva bt Rishitha Basireddy 6-3, 6-0; Ikaraju Kanumuri bt Prisha Shinde 6-2, 6-1; Maaya Rajesh bt Janhavi Kajla 6-0, 6-2; Mahika Khanna bt Priyanka Rana 6-2, 5-7, 6-2; Saijayani Banerjee bt Ishi Maheshwari 6-1, 6-4; Harithashree Venkatesh bt Anushka Bhola 6-4, 6-1; Sree Tanvi Dasari bt Aditi Rawat 6-3, 7-5; Nemha Kispotta Manshi Singh 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

No proper second-string team to send to CWG

COVID has hurt talent-spotting and grooming in the last two years, says Baskaran

HOCKEY

**STAN RAYAN**  
**KOCHI**

The real reasons for Hockey India's decision to withdraw the men's and women's teams from next year's Commonwealth Games in Birmingham may be caught in a bit of a haze. But Olympic gold medallist V. Baskaran believes that Graham Reid, the Indian men's team's head coach, had a big say in the matter.

“If you look at it, Reid now calls the tune because he has delivered a bronze at the Olympics. So, I think HI has decided to go with him,” said Baskaran, the captain of the triumphant Indian team at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, in a chat with *The Hindu*.

The hockey champion of



V. Baskaran. **•FILE PHOTO**

the Asian Games at Hangzhou (China, Sept. 10-25) will directly qualify for the 2024 Paris Olympics and the problem is the Commonwealth Games (July 28-Aug. 8) take place just a month before that in Birmingham.

“I also feel that we have to focus on the Asiad as it is an Olympic qualification event. “We lost in the last Asian Games (India won bronze in 2018 at Jakarta)

**If we win the Asian Games, we will have the same core group and can make the boys better for the 2023 World Cup in India.**

and we struggled for one and half years to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics. We had to travel a lot and do a lot of things.

Weak competition

“We can win it this time because Pakistan is not good, Korea is nothing much. If we win the Asian Games, we will have the same core group and can make the boys better for the 2023 World Cup in India. I think Reid is focusing on filling the vacuum left by players like Rupinder Pal Singh, V.S. Sunil and Birendra Lakra

who retired recently, and on qualifying for Paris.”

Another issue is that India does not have a proper second string. “The problem of not having a development team now is because of COVID. There may be players but how will you prepare them. In 2016, our Junior World Cup team was good (India won the title), but the pandemic has taken its toll.

“For the last two years, there was no talent identification, no Khelo India, no Junior Nationals, no Nationals. The problem is, who will we send as the goalkeeper. Sreejesh and Krishan Pathak are seniors (and with the Asiad probables). So, I'll agree 80% with the decision of not sending a team to the Commonwealth Games.”