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NEARBY



Sixth sero survey: 'no big change in percentage'

NEW DELHI

There is "no significant" change in the percentage of people who have developed antibodies against COVID-19, according to the sixth serological survey, compared to the previous surveys, said an official. The result of the sixth survey was submitted to the Delhi government last week.

CITY ▶ PAGE 4

Kotkapura case: Badal to skip June 16 summons

CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal patron Parkash Singh Badal will not appear before the Special Investigation Team probing the 2015 Kotkapura police firing incident due to health reasons. Mr. Badal has been summoned at a resthouse in Mohali on June 16.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 5

Man killed over cow smuggling suspicion

JAIPUR

A man was allegedly beaten to death and another seriously injured when a mob attacked them while they were transporting cattle in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh district late on Sunday night. The victims were taking three oxen in a van to their village in neighbouring M.P.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 5

G7 accommodates Indian stand on need for Internet curbs

Open Societies Statement reworked to prioritise national security over freedoms

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Internet freedoms are subject to national security, said government sources, claiming that India's tough negotiations on the joint communiqué issued by G7 and Guest Countries at the session on Open Societies had ensured that the original language criticising "Internet shutdowns" was amended to include New Delhi's concerns.

The explanation came after the 'G7 and Guest Countries: 2021 Open Societies Statement' referred to "politically motivated Internet shutdowns", which indirectly addresses Internet blackouts in various parts of the world including India.

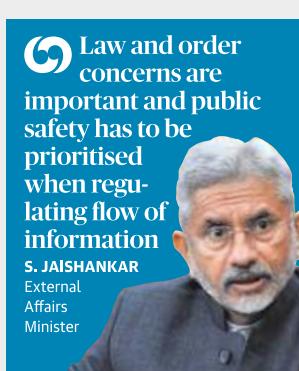
Kashmir has experienced Internet and mobile telephony shutdown since Article 370 was amended on August 5, 2019. Similar communication shutdowns were witnessed in Delhi and Assam during the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act during 2019-2020 and the farmer's protest last January. Communication shutdowns were also witnessed in other parts of the world, including Hong Kong where a protest against Chinese security laws intensified during 2019.

The G7 statement also

Global worry

The statement from the G7 and Guest Countries indirectly addresses Internet blackouts in various parts of the world, including India

■ "We are at a critical juncture, facing threats to freedom and democracy from rising authoritarianism, electoral interference, corruption, economic coercion, manipulation of information, including disinformation, online harms and cyber attacks, politically motivated Internet shutdowns, human rights violations and abuses, terrorism and violent extremism."



took note of the developments in military-ruled Myanmar as well as in larger economies. "We are at a critical juncture, facing threats to freedom and democracy from rising authoritarianism, electoral interference, corruption, economic coercion, manipulation of information, including disinformation, online harms and cyber attacks, politically motivated Internet shutdowns, human rights violations and abuses, terrorism and violent extremism," declared the statement, referring to the problems facing the democratic world.

The assertion in the statement appears to touch upon several issues that are sensitive in nature as they are often subjected to public debate in India.

Sources indicated that the mention of the topics in the statement took place in the backdrop of a sustained exchange of opinions between G7 and Indian teams.

Public safety
The statement went on to say that the G7 and guest countries would "promote respect for internationally accepted norms that drive inclusivity and protect digital civic-space, including through capacity building, and ensure that the design and application of new tech-

nologies reflect our shared values, respect human rights and international law, promote diversity and embed principles of public safety".

Government sources said that "politically motivated Internet shutdowns" clarified that national security and public order concerns are an exception to the need for Internet freedoms.

According to the sources, during his visit to London in early May, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar fielded questions about the government's actions against protesters and the clampdown in Jammu and Kashmir after August 5, 2019. The sources said Mr. Jaishankar "made it clear" that law and order concerns were important and public safety had to be prioritised when regulating the flow of information.

He also fielded questions about the Internet shutdown for months in Jammu and Kashmir, as well as during the Republic Day protests by farmers in Delhi this year.

Mr. Jaishankar attended the meetings virtually as he was under quarantine in London.

The G7 Foreign Ministers-level statement issued earlier in May, however, also referred to "Internet shutdowns" as a subject that the organisation would counter.

Govt. report flags 'lapses' in Nagaland bat study

Role of foreign authors under lens, amid sample storage row

SUHASINI HAIDAR
BINDU SHAJAH PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

More than a year after a probe into a filovirus study of bats in Nagaland by the Bengaluru-based National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) was published in 2019

Row over research

■ The study by Bengaluru-based National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) was published in 2019

■ Two scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology were listed as "co-authors" of the study

■ It was partially funded by

the U.S. Department of Defense

WHAT A HEALTH MINISTRY REPORT SAYS:

■ The study didn't have approval of the Indian Council of Medical Research

■ NCBS not equipped in terms of biosafety and biosecurity for testing samples

■ We are not aware of lapses. The [bat] samples we have collected are invaluable to research and understanding zoonotic pathogens



fairs, Defence, Home Affairs, Health, Environment, Law, Departments of Science & Technology, Development of the North Eastern Region, and others met to "streamline processes and avoid such lapses in the future," a report by the Ministry of Health said. Both the foreign-funding of the study, which cost an estimated ₹1.9 crore, as well as concerns over the storage of the bat samples collected came up for scrutiny.

No Wuhan link

The findings of the report became significant given

the debate over the origins of COVID-19 worldwide, and handling of bat samples at the Wuhan Institute laboratory. However, scientific experts and officials that *The Hindu* spoke to made it clear that the Nagaland bat study on filoviruses (Ebola and Marburg) was in no way related to the coronavirus (SARS) studies at Wuhan.

When contacted, NCBS Director Satyajit Mayor said he had no knowledge of the Health Ministry's report's conclusions.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

LJP implodes with 5 of 6 MPs edging out Chirag

Rebels choose his uncle Paras to lead parliamentary party

SOBHANA K. NAIR

NEW DELHI

Less than a year after the death of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) founder Ram Vilas Paswan, his party is on the verge of a split, with five of its six Lok Sabha members replacing party president Chirag Paswan with his uncle, Pashupati Nath Paras, as the leader of the parliamentary party.

The revolt coincides with a widely expected Union Cabinet reshuffle. For months, Mr. Paswan had pinned hopes of filling the vacancy that arose on the death of his father. The rebellion clearly shows that Mr. Paras, too, nurses the same hope.

Mr. Paras has been supported by Mr. Paswan's cousin Prince Raj (Samastipur MP), Mehboob Ali Kaiser (Khagaria), Veena Devi (Vaishali) and Chandan



In trouble: LJP leader Chirag Paswan arriving at party leader Pashupati Kumar Paras's house in New Delhi on Monday. ■ PTI

Singh (Nawada). All five MPs met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Sunday evening, and submitted a memorandum electing Mr. Paras as their parliamentary party leader.

Fails to meet uncle
Mr. Paswan is said to have learnt of the revolt late on

Sunday. On Monday morning, he rushed to meet his uncle. He was stopped at the gate for nearly 25 minutes and when he finally managed to enter his uncle's residence, he was told that Mr. Paras was not at home.

TRYING TO RESCUE LJP, SAYS PASHUPATI PARAS ▶ PAGE 9

Rajasthan govt. to set up Vedic Education Board

Cong. had promised it in its manifesto

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR

The Congress government in Rajasthan will set up a Vedic Education and Sanskar Board to revive the knowledge of ancient Sanskrit scriptures and connect the learnings of the Vedas with science and yoga. The board is likely to be set up in the coming four to five months.

Minister of State for Sanskrit Education Subhash Garg said here on Monday that a committee appointed to define the aims, objectives and functioning of the board had submitted its report to the State government. Based on the panel's recommendations, the board will adopt education modules revolving around Vedic knowledge.

The ruling Congress had promised the establishment of the Vedic Education and Sanskar Board as well as steps to promote Sanskrit

language and education in its manifesto for the 2018 State Assembly election.

CM's announcement

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had announced in January this year that the work for setting up the board would be expedited to encourage the students to carry out research on the Vedas and enable them to assimilate the country's "glorious traditions".

He had pointed out that Ayurveda and Sanskrit universities had also been established in the State during the tenure of the Congress government earlier.

The committee has reportedly studied several models of Vedic teaching being followed in other States and recommended a curriculum for schools, which would include subjects such as science, mathematics, Sanskrit, yoga and meditation.

Retail inflation at 6.3%, a 6-month high

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Rising fuel and edible oil costs sent India's wholesale prices inflation soaring to a record 12.94% in May, up from 10.5% in April, and nudged retail inflation to a six-month high of 6.3%, going past the central bank's

tolerance threshold of 6%.

Consumers experienced an inflation of 11.58% for the 'fuel and light' category in May, with urban India bearing a bigger hit of 14.24% on the same account. Food inflation reheated to 5.1% from just 1.96% in April. Rating agency ICRA reckoned that

core inflation (without factoring in food and fuel prices) also hit an 83-month high of 6.6%.

Overall retail prices saw a sharper spurt in rural areas from 3.75% in April to 6.5% in May.

FULL REPORT ▶ PAGE 12

SBI KAVACH
PERSONAL LOAN FOR COVID TREATMENT
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Journalist killed in U.P. 'road accident'

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

A journalist in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, who had written to the police on Saturday fearing threat to his life from the 'liquor mafia', died in an alleged road accident on Sunday.

Sulabh Srivastava, 42, worked as the district correspondent for ABP News channel.

AAP will contest all seats in Gujarat poll'

Kejriwal alleges BJP and Congress playing a fixed match in the State to trick voters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

AHMEDABAD

Delhi Chief Minister and convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said his party will contest all seats in the Gujarat Assembly election next year. Mr. Kejriwal said AAP would provide a "real alternative" to the people of Gujarat while visiting a temple in Ahmedabad. He inducted popular TV anchor Isudan Gadavi into the party.

"AAP will contest each and every seat in the 2022 Gujarat Assembly elections. AAP is a credible alternative to the BJP and the Congress. Gujarat will change soon," he said.

"In the past one year during the pandemic, Gujarat has been treated like an or-

phan. Today, the youth are unemployed, farmers are committing suicide and children are struggling to get admission in schools and colleges. Even businessmen

and traders are scared," he said at the Vallabh Sadan temple.

The AAP leader slammed both the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress for the "plight" of the State and said the two parties were playing a fixed match to trick the voters. "Gujarat is suffering because of the friendly alliance between them. The BJP has been in power in the State for the last 27 years. I heard people saying that the Congress is in the pocket of the BJP. Both parties are the same here as whenever the BJP is in trouble, the Congress provides help."

'Credible alternative'
He said AAP would prove to be a real and credible alternative to the ruling BJP in

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IN BRIEF

Man held for making hoax bomb call

NEW DELHI A 22-year-old man has been apprehended for allegedly making a hoax call to Delhi's Police Control Room, saying there was a bomb on the plane when he was on a Delhi-Patna flight. The police said the man was "mentally disturbed". There were over 48 passengers onboard the flight – all of them are being shifted to another aircraft.

Bag with ₹7L snatched from businessman

NEW DELHI A man was arrested for allegedly snatching away a handbag containing ₹7 lakh from a 63-year-old businessman while he was returning home in north-east Delhi after withdrawing cash from a bank here, police said on Monday. Police have recovered ₹5.70 lakh from Aas Mohd alias Ashu, a habitual offender having eight previous criminal cases.

Dining experiences are back at ITC Maurya

NEW DELHI The iconic restaurants at ITC Maurya have reopened for its patrons post the announcement to open restaurants in Delhi. The ITC Hotels is following stringent safety standards with its 'WeAssure' commitment to health and hygiene to provide worry-free responsible dining experiences to its guests.

Fire breaks out at IT building

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI A fire broke out on the first floor of a two-storey building inside Safdarjung Airport premises here on Monday, said Delhi Fire Service officials.

All the four occupants of the IT building were safely rescued, said an official, adding that there were no injuries.

The fire department said they received a call about blaze at 3.24 p.m. and six fire tenders were pressed into service. The police said two more fire brigades of the Airport Authority of India were also pressed into service.

The exact cause of blaze is yet to be known but an electrical short-circuit is suspected, said officials.

Education Minister reviews two key education projects

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI Education Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday chaired a review meeting of two key education projects – Youth for Education (YFE) programme and Parent Outreach Programme. The mission of both the programmes is a mapping of schoolchildren, Mr. Sisodia said.

"Through the YFE programme, our children would be able to receive adequate guidance from a young generation that has been through a similar process. Every child of this society, who are between ages of 20-30 years, whether it is a 12th graduate or has a job or internship or is an entrepreneur can guide our school students and help them in building their careers," he said. Mentioning the Parent Outreach project, Mr. Sisodia said,

61 held for pool party at Noida farmhouse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NOIDA Noida Police has arrested 61 people, including 15 women, for allegedly partying at a farmhouse here in violation of restrictions imposed to combat COVID-19, officials said on Monday.

The arrests were made following a raid on the property in Sector 135, under the Expressway police station limits, on Sunday night, they said.

Summer effect at Singhu: farmers start collecting milk from villages

Group of protesters make rounds, bring hundreds of litres of milk to agitation site

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

With the summer at its peak, the availability of milk for consumption of protesting farmers has gone down. They have now resorted to collecting the dairy product from other villages.

Why the shortage?

Komaldeep Singh Cheema, a resident of Doaba, has been a part of the protest since the beginning. He said because of summers, the cattle are producing less milk and is leading to a limited supply from Haryana. As a result, Mr. Cheema and a few others from the district, have decided to collect milk for the consumption of farmers at the protest.

"Those from Punjab don't prefer packaged or powdered milk. Most of them fall sick if they consume it. This essentially has made us decide to take up this initiative," he said.

Mr. Komaldeep said announcements are being made in five villages since June 2, asking people to donate milk for the protesters. "Some people gave a litre



Farmers seen protesting at the Singhu border in Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

while others gave 2. Some even donated litres, and some gave a bucket full of milk. In one of the five villages, people donated more than 450 litres," he added.

Milk collected over four days was kept in an ice-making unit for preservation. The group then started for Singhu border from Doaba on June 6. "We finally collected 750 litres, put it in a water tanker with lots of ice, and covered it with wet sacks," he said.

At the protest site, they

drive across the lengthy stretch distributing milk to people and those running langar services. The kheer langar, which was running for months, stopped a while ago because of milk shortage and also the dishes being perishable.

The group made two rounds from the villages to Singhu and is set to make its third round to the protest site. Mr. Komaldeep said that after she shared his initiative on social media, people from Canada and the UK have

called him to extend help.

Help pours in

"A man called me from the UK and asked how we were transporting the milk. When I explained we were taking it in water tankers, he said he'll send ₹1.5 lakh for a special tanker to be built for milk. Another person called from Canada and extended help for unlimited petrol for the journey," Mr. Cheema said.

Another initiative taken at the protest site is Kisan Express, a trolley fitted with seats for people to be transported from their lodging to the stage. The initiative was taken by Life Care Foundation, Kisan Aid, and Swach Morcha.

"The reason Kisan Express has been started is to increase the number of people coming to the stage area. Because of heat and mostly the elderly staying here, it became important for them to have a vehicle for commute," said Avtar Singh, who runs a makeshift hospital at the protest site. He added that the battery rickshaw was proving to be expensive and less efficient.

Delhi govt's claim on ONORC misleading, Centre tells SC

Ration card portability dependent on ePoS machines

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central government maintained in the Supreme Court that the Delhi government's claim to have launched 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC) scheme was "misleading".

"The claim of Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi regarding launch of One Nation One Ration Card [ONORC] plan in NCT of Delhi is misleading, as they claim to have implemented it only in circle 63 Seemapuri. Only a handful of transactions conducted in a single circle with about 42 electronic points of sale (ePOS) machines cannot be considered as implementation of ONORC," the Centre submitted before the court.

The Centre, represented by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, observed that the implementation of the ONORC would require national portability transactions to be rolled out formally in all the fair price shops of all the circles of Delhi in which



of inter-State migrants are present across Delhi, such as migrant workers, street dwellers, ragpickers, migratory labourers, construction workers, rickshaw pullers, auto/taxi drivers, and others, who do not have access to their National Food Security Act food grains," the Centre said.

None of these economically marginalised population, who were away from their native villages and towns, were able to access their quota of subsidised food commodities assured to them under the Food Security Act, it stated.

"There is no full implementation of the ONORC and reporting of such transactions/distribution details of NFSR/PMGKAY food grains on the central portals/dashboards," it noted.

The onus of implementing the ONORC was on the States.

While most States were implementing it, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi and West Bengal have not yet integrated into the scheme. Their integration would depend on their "technical readiness" to implement the portability of ration cards, it pointed out.

The Centre's submissions came despite Delhi's stand that it was implementing the ONORC scheme.

Recently, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey had written to the Delhi government to resume the use of ePOS machines at ration shops. He said at least 10 lakh migrant workers, who had ration cards in their home States, would be able to access subsidised food grains in the Capital.

Ration card portability under the ONORC scheme is dependent on ePOS machines, as they use Aadhaar-linked biometric authentication to verify the identity and entitlement of beneficiaries even if they are not registered at that particular shop. Delhi had suspended the use of ePOS in early 2018, after widespread complaints of poor network leading to authentication failures and exclusion of genuine beneficiaries.

Sportsman held for involvement in firing incident in west Delhi

Countrymade pistol seized; hunt on for another accused

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old silver medalist at world inter-school rope skipping championship was arrested for his alleged involvement in a firing incident in west Delhi's Mohan Garden, the police said on Monday.

The accused has been identified as Pankaj, who won the medal in 2019 in the championship, which was held in Dubai, the police said. Due to bad company, he got involved in the crime.

On May 5 at 10 p.m., the police got information regarding a firing incident at a house in Bhagwati Garden Extension. The accused persons had come to the spot

On June 8, we got a tip and nabbed Pankaj from Mohan Garden. A countrymade pistol with two live rounds were recovered from him.

SANTOSH KUMAR MEENA
DCP (Dwarka)

on a bike, a senior officer said.

A case under relevant sections was registered on the house owner, Beena's statement. The identity of the assailants was established as Pankaj and Rahul Tiwari.

"On June 8, the police got a tip-off and nabbed Pankaj

from Poswal Chowk, Mohan Garden. A countrymade pistol with two live rounds was recovered from him," said DCP (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena. The motorcycle, used in the crime, has also been recovered.

The accused said he played several national and international tournaments, winning several gold and silver medals.

A few days before the incident, he had a quarrel with one Nikhil in which Gautam – Beena's son – supported Nikhil. In order to frighten Gautam, he fired at his house, the DCP said. Efforts are on to nab the other accused, the police added.

AAP claims scam in Ram mandir land purchase

Can land price rise from ₹2 crore to ₹18.5 crore within five minutes, asks Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

AAP leader Manish Sisodia and party MP Sanjay Singh on Monday alleged that there is a "big scam" in the land bought for Ram mandir by Ram Janmabhoomi Trust.

"BJP had duped 115 crore followers of Hindutva within minutes under the name of of Prabhu Shri Ram," said Mr. Sisodia. He said that Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Trust bought 12,080 square meters of land worth ₹18.5 crore on March 18.

"The land was bought from Ravi Mohan Tiwari and Sultan Ansari in the presence of Anil Mishra and BJP Mayor of Ayodhya Rishikesh Upadhyay, who are members of this trust. Many citizens donated money to



Manish Sisodia

wards the establishment of Ram mandir, whether it was a farmer who took out some donation from their earnings or a labourer who used up his earnings to donate," Mr. Sisodia said.

"But Ravi Mohan Tiwari and Sultan Ansari had bought the same land from Harish Pathak and Kusum

Pathak five minutes before for ₹2 crore. In five minutes, Ravi Mohan Tiwari and Sultan Ansari surprisingly sold it for ₹18.5 crore to the trust. In both these transactions, Anil Mishra and BJP Mayor of Ayodhya Rishikesh Upadhyay were witnesses," the AAP leader said.

Sanjay Singh claimed that BJP leaders have defended all those involved in the "scam". "BJP leaders should now come to light and announce how much they have earned through this scam and it is crystal clear that BJP leader and Mayor of Ayodhya have a big role to play. Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Trust should give a full account of the money received through donations by people," Mr. Singh said.

Around 200 commuters fined daily for violating norms

Over 1,400 penalised since resumption of metro on June 7

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

In the past one week, since the resumption of metro services in the Capital, the daily average of the number of people fined for violation of COVID-19 norms stood at 203 while 158 people on an average were counselled per day to follow the protocol while travelling on the Delhi Metro network.

Services on the network had remained suspended for nearly a month due to the



A man readies an electric bike outside Civil Lines metro station in New Delhi on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

raging second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following certain relaxations on curbs, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) resumed services from June 7. According to data provided by the DMRC to *The Hindu*, between June 7 and June 13, a total of 1,422 commuters were fined and 1,103 people counselled even as the Delhi Metro continued to operate at 50% capacity.

The highest number of fines levied due to commuters not wearing masks was 209 on June 12 followed by 189 passengers on June 11 and 170 passengers on June 9.

June 7, the first day of resumption had seen 106 commuters being counselled by officials to follow COVID-19 protocol.

Even though resumption of services was permitted last week by authorities, metro trains continue to run at half the capacity in a bid to contain the virus transmission.

Due to the reduced capacity, only 25 passengers are permitted inside coaches at any given point, according to Delhi Metro Rail Corporation officials, while adding that standing passengers are not allowed inside coaches.

The highest number of people counselled, on a single

HC quashes bail to former Fortis chief

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday quashed a local court order granting bail to former promoter of Fortis Healthcare Shivinder Mohan Singh in a case of allegedly misappropriating funds of Religare Finvest Ltd.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait noted that "continued detention of respondent No.2 (Mr. Singh) in this FIR case is necessary not only to unearth the conspiracy hatched by him, but also to derive out/trace the siphoned money which he has created for his personal benefit".

The court said the "nature and gravity" of accusation against Mr. Singh was serious.

"The grant of bail in a case involving cheating, criminal breach of interest by an agent of such a large magnitude of money, affecting a very large number of people would also have an adverse impact not only on the progress of the case but also on the trust of the criminal justice system that people repose," it said.

On the argument of Mr. Singh that other co-accused have been granted bail in this case, the court observed, "while granting or refusing bail, the role attributed to each accused has to be seen independently and reasoning for one may not be binding on the other".

Delhi bans soaps, detergents not conforming to new BIS rules

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

To reduce pollution in the Yamuna, the Delhi government on Monday banned the sale, storage, transportation, and marketing of soaps and detergents, which do not conform to the revised Bureau of Indian Standards rules, as per an official order.

The order was issued by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee. In January, the National Green Tribunal had accepted recommendations of a two-member expert panel which had suggested directing the Delhi government to take such a step.

All authorities should ensure compliance of the order through strict vigil and surprise checks, read, the order.

Experts have cited soaps and detergents as one of the major reasons behind pollution in the Yamuna. Many times, visuals of toxic froth floating on the surface of the river in Delhi also make their way to social media.

DSSSB exam: HC upholds order for registering FIR under SC/ST Act

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday upheld a trial court's order directing authorities to lodge FIR under the provisions of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, in a case of caste-based questions being allegedly asked in the primary teachers' recruitment exam by the Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB).

The HC said the questions in two examinations held on October 13, 2018, and August 18, 2019, were "undoubtedly prima facie fall within the domain of an intentional insult or intimidation with an intent to insult members of the SC/ST within public view".

The HC said whether the DSSSB was aware of the contents of the papers can be ascertained only through an investigation.

CPI(M) seeks relief for locals of illegal colony

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
FARIDABAD

Leader of the Left parties here on Monday demanded that the residents of Khor Basti, an unauthorised colony on forest land, be rehabilitated and compensated before carrying out the demolition drive in adherence to the Supreme Court order.

The demand was made by a joint delegation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Communist Party of India leaders in a memorandum addressed to Chief Minister Manohar Lal submitted at the Faridabad Deputy Commissioner office.

The Supreme Court had on June 7 directed the Municipal Corporation of Faridabad (MCF) to remove encroachments on the forest land without any exception within six weeks. The matter is listed for hearing on July 27.

MCF Commissioner Garima Mittal told *The Hindu* that the civic body had not decided on the date of demolition, but the court orders would be implemented "in letter and spirit". She said that no rehabilitation plan was discussed so far.

Junaid murder: Nuh MLA seeks strict action

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Deputy Leader of the Congress Legislative Party and Nuh MLA Aftab Ahmed on Monday demanded strict action against the policemen accused of beating up Junaid, a resident of Jamalgarh, in police custody leading to his death. An FIR has been registered against seven Faridabad policemen on murder charges.

Mr. Ahmed, after meeting the family of the deceased, said all efforts would be made to bring the accused officers to justice.

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Our Company was originally incorporated as "Sona Oegawa Precision Forgings Limited" at New Delhi as a public limited company under the Companies Act, 1956, pursuant to a certificate of incorporation dated October 27, 1995, issued by the Registrar of Companies, NCT of Delhi and Haryana at New Delhi ("RoC") and commenced operations pursuant to the certificate of commencement of business dated November 16, 1995 issued by the RoC. The name of our Company was changed to "Sona BLW Precision Forgings Limited" as approved by our Shareholders by way of a resolution dated June 28, 2013 and a fresh certificate of incorporation dated July 23, 2013, consequent upon change of name was issued by the RoC. For details in relation to the change in our Registered and Corporate Office of our Company, see "History and Certain Corporate Matters" beginning on page 200 of the Red Herring Prospectus dated June 7, 2021 ("RHP") and filed with the RoC.

Registered and Corporate Office: Sona Enclave, Village Begumpur Khatola, Sector 35, Gurugram, Haryana – 122004, India. Telephone: +91 0124 476 8200;

Contact Person: Ajay Pratap Singh, Vice President (Legal), Company Secretary and Compliance Officer; E-mail: investor@sonacomstar.com; Website: www.sonacomstar.com; Corporate Identity Number: U27300HR1995PLC083037

PROMOTERS OF OUR COMPANY: SUNJAY KAPUR, SONA AUTOCOMP HOLDING PRIVATE LIMITED AND SINGAPORE VII TOPCO III PTE. LTD.

INITIAL PUBLIC OFFER OF UP TO [•] EQUITY SHARES OF FACE VALUE OF ₹ 10 EACH ("EQUITY SHARES") OF SONA BLW PRECISION FORGINGS LIMITED ("COMPANY") FOR CASH AT A PRICE OF ₹ [•] PER EQUITY SHARE (INCLUDING A SHARE PREMIUM OF ₹ [•] PER EQUITY SHARE) ("OFFER PRICE") AGGRAGATING UP TO ₹ 55,500 MILLION COMPRISING A FRESH ISSUANCE OF UP TO [•] EQUITY SHARES AGGRAGATING UP TO ₹ 3,000 MILLION BY OUR COMPANY ("FRESH ISSUE") AND AN OFFER FOR SALE OF UP TO [•] EQUITY SHARES AGGRAGATING UP TO ₹ 52,500 MILLION BY SINGAPORE VII TOPCO III PTE. LTD. ("SELLING SHAREHOLDER") AND SUCH EQUITY SHARES OFFERED BY THE SELLING SHAREHOLDER, THE "OFFER"). THE OFFER SHALL CONSTITUTE [•]% OF THE POST-OFFER PAID-UP EQUITY SHARE CAPITAL OF OUR COMPANY. (SUCH OFFER BY THE SELLING SHAREHOLDER, THE "OFFER FOR SALE" AND TOGETHER WITH THE FRESH ISSUE, THE "OFFER").

QIB Category : Not less than 75% of the Offer | Retail Category : Not more than 10% of the Offer

Non-Institutional Category : Not more than 15% of the Offer

PRICE BAND: ₹ 285 TO ₹ 291 PER EQUITY SHARE OF FACE VALUE OF ₹ 10 EACH.

THE FLOOR PRICE IS 28.50 TIMES THE FACE VALUE OF THE EQUITY SHARES AND THE CAP PRICE IS 29.10 TIMES THE FACE VALUE OF THE EQUITY SHARES.

BIDS CAN BE MADE FOR A MINIMUM OF 51 EQUITY SHARES AND IN MULTIPLES OF 51 EQUITY SHARES THEREAFTER.

ASBA*

Simple, Safe, Smart way of Application!!!

*Applications Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA) is a better way of applying to issues by simply blocking the fund in the bank account. For further details, check section on ASBA below.

Mandatory in public issues. No cheque will be accepted.



UPI-Now available in ASBA for Retail Individual Bidders ("RIBs")**.

Investors are required to ensure that the bank account used for bidding is linked to their PAN.
UPI – Now available in ASBA for Retail Individual Bidders applying through Registered Brokers, DPs & RTAs. Retail Individual Bidders also have the option to submit the application directly to the ASBA Bank (SCSBs) or to use the facility of linked online trading, demat and bank account.

*ASBA has to be availed by all the investors except Anchor Investors (as defined in the RHP). UPI may be availed by RIBs.
For details on the ASBA and UPI process, please refer to the details given in ASBA Form and abridged prospectus and also please refer to the section "Offer Procedure" beginning on page 428 of the RHP. The process is also available on the website of Association of Investment Bankers of India ("AIBI") and Stock Exchanges in the General Information Document. ASBA bid-cum application forms can be downloaded from the websites of BSE Limited ("BSE") and National Stock Exchange of India Limited ("NSE", and together with BSE, the "Stock Exchanges") and can be obtained from the list of banks that is displayed on the website of SEBI at www.sebi.gov.in.

**List of banks supporting UPI is also available on the website of SEBI at www.sebi.gov.in. For the list of UPI Apps and Banks live on IPO, please refer to the link: www.sebi.gov.in. HDFC Bank Limited has been appointed as Sponsor Bank for the offer, in accordance with the requirements of the SEBI Circular dated November 1, 2018. For Offer related grievance or UPI related queries, investors may contact: Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Limited – Mr. Ganesh Rane (+91 22 4336 0000) (kmccredressal@kotak.com, sonacomstar.ipo@kotak.com); Credit Suisse Securities (India) Private Limited – Mr. Abhishek Joshi (+91 22 6777 3885) (list.igcellmer-brnk@credit-suisse.com, list.sonapiro@credit-suisse.com); JM Financial Limited – Ms. Prachee Dhuri (+91 22 6630 3030) (grievance.ibd@jmfl.com, sonacomstar.ipo@jmfl.com); J.P. Morgan India Private Limited – Mr. Saarthak K Soni (+91 22 6157 3000) (investorsmsb.jpmpl@jpmorgan.com, SONACOMSTAR_IPO@jpmorgan.com) or Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities (India) Private Limited – Mr. Vishal Kanjani / Mr. Prithvi Ghag (+91 22 4037 4037) (investorgrievances-in@nomura.com, sonacomstaripo@nomura.com). For UPI related queries, investors can contact NPCI at the toll free number: 1800101740 and E-mail Id: ipo.upto@npci.org.in; HDFC Bank Limited at Tel: 022-30752977/28/2914 and E-mail: siddharth.jadhav@hdfcbank.com/prasanna.uchil@hdfcbank.com/neerav.desai@hdfcbank.com; and the Registrars to the Offer at Tel: +91 40 6716 2222 and E-mail: sonacomstar.ipo@kfintech.com.

Risks to Investors:

- The five Book Running Lead Managers associated with the Offer have handled 23 public offers in the past three financial years out of which 8 offers closed below the offer price on listing date.
- The Price/Earnings ratio based on diluted EPS for Fiscal 2021 for the Company at the upper end of the Price band is as high as 77.60 as compared to the average industry peer group PE ratio of 73.08 (excluding PE ratio of one industry outlier).
- Weighted Average Return on Net Worth for Fiscals 2021, 2020 and 2019 is 35.0%.
- Average Cost of acquisition of Equity Shares for the Selling Shareholder namely Singapore VII Topco III Pte. Ltd. is ₹ 32.34 and the Offer Price at the upper end of the Price Band is ₹ 291 per Equity Share.

BID/OFFER PROGRAMME

BID/OFFER OPEN

BID/OFFER CLOSES ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2021⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ UPI mandate end time and date shall be at 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 17, 2021.

In case of any revision to the Price Band, the Bid/Offer Period will be extended by at least three additional Working Days following such revision of the Price Band, subject to the Bid/Offer Period not exceeding 10 Working Days. In cases of force majeure, banking strike or similar circumstances, our Company and the Selling Shareholder, in consultation with the Book Running Lead Managers, may for reasons to be recorded in writing, extend the Bid/Offer Period for a minimum of three Working Days, subject to the Bid/Offer Period not exceeding 10 Working Days. Any revision in the Price Band and the revised Bid/Offer Period, if applicable, will be widely disseminated by notification to the Stock Exchanges, by issuing a public notice, and also by indicating the change on the respective websites of the Book Running Lead Managers and at the terminals of the Syndicate Members and by intimation to Self-Certified Syndicate Banks ("SCSBs"), other Designated Intermediaries and the Sponsor Bank, as applicable.

This Offer is being made in terms of Rule 19(2)(b) of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, as amended ("SCR") read with Regulation 31 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018, as amended ("SEBI ICDR Regulations"). This Offer is being made in accordance with Regulation 6(2) of the SEBI ICDR Regulations and through a Book Building Process wherein not less than 75% of the Offer shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to Qualified Institutional Buyers ("QIBs", and such portion, the "QIB Portion"). Our Company and the Selling Shareholder has, in consultation with the Book Running Lead Managers, allocated up to 60% of the QIB Portion to Anchor Investors on a discretionary basis in accordance with the SEBI ICDR Regulations ("Anchor Investor Portion"), out of which one-third was available for allocation to domestic Mutual Funds only, subject to valid bids having been received from the domestic Mutual Funds at or above the Anchor Investor Allocation Price. Further, 5% of the QIB Portion (excluding the Anchor Investor Portion) shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to Mutual Funds only, and the remainder of the QIB Portion shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to all QIB Bidders other than Anchor Investors, including Mutual Funds, subject to valid bids being received at or above the Offer Price. However, if the aggregate demand from Mutual Funds is less than 5% of the QIB Portion, the balance Equity Shares available for allocation in the Mutual Fund Portion will be added to the remaining QIB Portion for proportionate allocation to QIBs. Further, not more than 15% of the Offer shall be available for allocation on a proportionate basis to Non-Institutional Bidders and not more than 10% of the Offer shall be available for allocation to Retail Individual Bidder(s) in accordance with SEBI ICDR Regulations, subject to valid bids being received at or above the Offer Price. All potential Bidders, other than Anchor Investors, are required to mandatorily utilise the Application Supported by Blocked Amount ("ASBA") process by providing details of their respective bank account (including UPI ID (defined hereinafter) in case of Retail Individual Bidder(s)) in which the corresponding Bid Amounts will be blocked by the SCSBs, to participate in the Offer. Anchor Investors are not permitted to participate in the Anchor Investor Portion through the ASBA process. For details, see "Offer Procedure" beginning on page 428 of the RHP.

Bidders/Applicants should ensure that DP ID, PAN and the Client ID (for RIBs bidding through UPI mechanism) are correctly filled in the Bid cum Application Form. The DP ID, PAN and Client ID provided in the Bid cum Application Form should match with the DP ID, PAN, Client ID available in the Depository database, otherwise, the Bid cum Application Form is liable to be rejected.

Bidders/Applicants should ensure that the beneficiary account provided in the Bid cum Application Form is active. Bidders/Applicants should note that on the basis of the PAN, DP ID and Client ID as provided in the Bid cum Application Form, the Bidder/Applicant may be deemed to have authorized the Depositories to provide to the Registrar to the Offer, any requested Demographic Details of the Bidder/Applicant as available on the records of the Depositories. These Demographic Details may be used, among other things, for giving Allotment Advice or unblocking of ASBA Account or for other correspondence(s) related to the Offer. Bidders/Applicants are advised to update any changes to their Demographic Details as available in the records of the Depository Participant to ensure accuracy of records. Any delay resulting from failure to update the Demographic Details would be at the Bidders/Applicants' sole risk.

BOOK RUNNING LEAD MANAGERS

JM FINANCIAL

JM Financial Limited
7th Floor, Energy
Appasheeb Marath Marg
Prabhadevi,
Mumbai, Maharashtra – 400025, India
Tel: +91 22 6630 3030
E-mail: sonacomstar.ipo@jmfinancial.com
Investor Grievance E-mail:
list.igcellmer-brnk@credit-suisse.com

Website: www.credit-suisse.com/in/en/investment-banking-apac/investment-banking-in-india/ipo.html

Contact Person: Prachee Dhuri

SEBI Registration No.: INN000010361

J.P.Morgan

J.P. Morgan India Private Limited
J.P. Morgan Tower
Off. C.S.T. Road
Kallina, Santacruz (East)
Mumbai – 400 098 Maharashtra, India
Tel: +91 22 6157 3000
E-mail: SONACOMSTAR_IPO@jmorgan.com
Investor Grievance E-mail:
investorsmsb.jpmpl@jpmorgan.com

Website: www.jpm.com

Contact Person: Saarthak K Soni

SEBI Registration No.: INN000002970

NOAMURA

Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities (India) Private Limited
Ceejay House, Level 11 Plot. F. Shivasagar Estate, Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli Mumbai – 400 018 Maharashtra, India
Tel: +91 22 4037 4037
E-mail: sonacomstaripo@nomura.com
Investor Grievance E-mail: investorgrievances-in@nomura.com
Website: www.nomuraholdings.com/company/group/asia/india/index.html
Contact Person: Vishal Kanjani / Prithvi Ghag
SEBI Registration No.: INN0000011419

Investors can contact the Company Secretary and Compliance Officer, the BRLMs or the Registrar to the Offer in case of any pre-Offer or post-Offer related problems such as non-receipt of Allotment Advice, non-delivery of Allotted Equity Shares in the respective beneficiary account, non-receipt of refund orders or non-receipt of funds by electronic mode, etc.

REGISTRAR TO THE OFFER

KFINTECH

KFin Technologies Private Limited (formerly known as Kavy Fintech Private Limited)
Selenium Tower-B, Plot 31 & 32, Gachibowli, Financial District, Nanakramguda, Serilingampally, Hyderabad, Telangana – 500032, India. Tel: +91 6716 2222; E-mail: sonacomstar.ipo@kfintech.com
Investor Grievance E-mail: einward.ries@kfintech.com; Website: www.kfintech.com
Contact Person: M Murali Krishna; SEBI Registration No.: INR0000002211

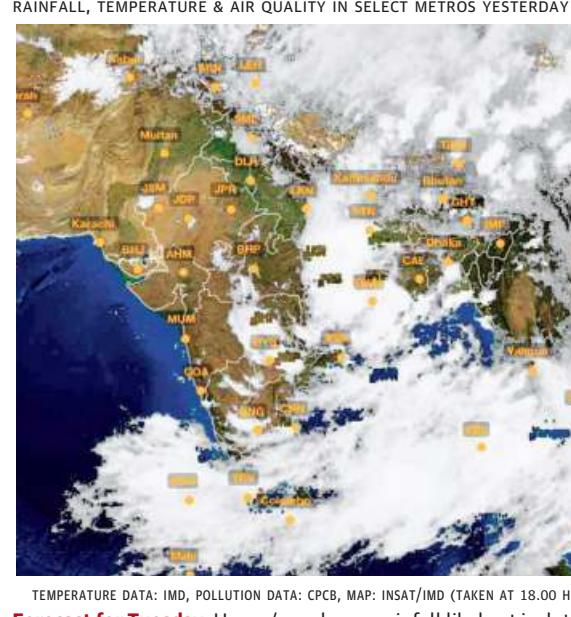
AVAILABILITY OF RHP: Investors are advised to refer to the RHP and the "Risk Factors" beginning on page 26 of the RHP before applying in the Offer. A copy of the RHP is available on the website of the SEBI at www.sebi.gov.in, the websites of the BRLMs at www.investmentbank.kotak.com, www.credit-suisse.com/in/en/investment-banking-apac/investment-banking-in-india/ipo.html, www.jmfinancial.com and www.nomuraholdings.com/company/group/asia/india/index.html and the Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com.

AVAILABILITY OF BID CUM APPLICATION FORM: Bid cum Application Form can be obtained from the Registered and Corporate Office of Company, Sona BLW Precision Forgings Limited; Tel: +91 0124 476 8200; BRLMs: Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Limited, Tel: +91 22 4336 0000; Credit Suisse Securities (India) Private Limited, Tel: +91 22 6777 3885; JM Financial Limited, Tel: +91 22 6630 3030; J.P. Morgan India Private Limited, Tel: +91 22 6157 3000 and Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities (India) Private Limited, Tel: +91 22 4037 4037; Syndicate Members: Kotak Securities Limited, Tel: +91 22 6218 5470 and JM Financial Services Limited, Tel: +91 22 6136 3400 and at selected locations of Sub-Syndicate Members (as given below), Registered Brokers, SCSBs, Designated RTA Locations and Designated CDP Locations for participating in the Offer. Bid cum Application Forms will also be available on the websites of the Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com and at all the Designated Branches of SCSBs, the list of which is available on the websites of the Stock Exchanges and SEBI.

SUB-SYNDICATE MEMBERS: Almondz Global Securities Ltd.; Anand Rathi Share & Stock Brokers Ltd.; Axis Capital Limited; Bharat Bhushan Share and Commodity Brokers Ltd.; Centrum Broking Limited; Edelweiss Broking Limited; Globe Capital Markets Ltd.; ICICI Securities Limited.; IDBI Capital Markets and Securities Ltd.; IFI Securities Ltd.; J.P. Morgan India Private Limited; JM Financial Services Limited; Janaputra Fiscal Services Private Limited; KJMC Capital Market Services Limited;



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 Tuesday: Heavy/heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Punjab, Delhi, east Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, central Maharashtra, interior Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	2...34.4	26.7	24.4	Kozhikode	89...26.8...	22.4	22.4
Ahmedabad	-39.7	29.1	26.1	Kurnool	0.1...26.8...	24.4	24.4
Aizawl	0.7	22.2	21.1	Lucknow	21...27.7...	24.7	24.7
Allahabad	-30.2	26.5	25.0	Madurai	0.2...35.2...	25.0	25.0
Bangalore	-26.5	21.0	20.0	Mangaluru	78.8...24.8...	22.4	22.4
Bhopal	18.8	22.4	20.0	Mumbai	4...33.6...	27.4	27.4
Bhubaneswar	14...30.3...	25.2	24.0	Mysuru	3...28.0...	20.6	20.6
Chandigarh	2.8...36.2...	26.0	24.0	Patna	0.2...38.6...	25.5	25.5
Chennai	-36.0	29.6	27.4	Pondicherry	15...30.1...	23.8	23.8
Coimbatore	0.8...28.2...	22.2	21.1	Raipur	1.8...32.4...	23.4	23.4
Dehradoon	5...33.5...	22.5	21.4	Rajpur	-32.8...24.6	24.6	24.6
Gangtok	2...19.8	17.5	16.0	Ranchi	-29.0...23.1	21.0	21.0
Goa	47...28.6...	24.0	22.0	Shillong	0.8...25.0...	18.8	18.8
Guwahati	45...34.7...	24.0	22.0	Shimla	-26.5...18.1	21.0	21.0
Hubballi	-23.0	21.0	20.0	Srinagar	-27.7...15.6	21.0	21.0
Hyderabad	16...31.5...	22.0	21.0	Thiruvananthapuram	32...31.0...	22.8	22.8
Imphal	0.1...34.0...	21.1	20.0	Tiruchi	0.2...33.9...	26.4	26.4
Jaipur	-38.2...27.6	22.6	21.0	Vijayawada	1...31.4...	25.4	25.4
Kochi	49...27.8...	22.2	21.0	Visakhapatnam	-32.4...27.4	21.0	21.0
Kohima	-28.7...18.0	20.0	18.0				
Kolkata	13...32.0...	27.0	25.0				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	..3...50	130	71	...90	...90	...
Bengaluru	9...37	114	44	...38	...38	...
Chennai	7...5	42	37	...68	...47	...
Delhi	3...22	46	188	247	247	...
Hyderabad	..72	14	22	24	24	...
Kolkata	..9	20	22	41	48	...
Lucknow	..3	41	77	39	51	...
Mumbai	54...40	25	34	60	54	...
Pune	..7	15	72	121	78	...
Visakhapatnam	..3	57	45	75	75	...

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Chandrapur, Maharashtra record an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 221 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Gadag, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 11

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.

NO_x: 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.

PM_{2.5} & 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

Badal not to appear before SIT tomorrow in Kotkapura case

The former CM cites health reasons, asks for rescheduling of appearance date

**VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH**

Former Punjab Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal patron Parkash Singh Badal will not be appearing before the Special Investigating Team (SIT), probing the 2015 Kotkapura police firing incident, due to health reason.

Mr. Badal has been summoned by the SIT at a resthouse in Mohali on June 16.

In a letter to the SIT chairman, Mr. Badal said that he was committed to fully cooperate with the law and that he had complete faith in the judiciary. He had, however, asked the SIT "to reschedule the date for his appearance for the investigations as he was not keeping good health and



Parkash Singh Badal

had been advised complete bed rest for ten days by doctors."

The former Chief Minister said that as soon as his health gets better he would be available to join the investigation as per law. Mr. Badal added that he was hopeful that "the newly set-up SIT, unlike the previous one, would respect the law of the

land and conduct a fair investigation, notwithstanding political interference from the ruling dispensation."

In his two-page response to the summon from the SIT, Mr. Badal said that "the entire process of investigations already stands brazenly compromised through blatant and unapologetic political interference and it reeks too strongly of political vendetta to inspire any confidence about a fair process of law being followed."

The Akali Dal leader pointed out that the very need for the present SIT had "arisen out of the brazen politicisation of the case by the previous SIT." In this regard, Mr. Badal came down heavily against one of the members of the previous SIT

for his "openly political conduct" which had allegedly subverted the entire investigative process.

SIT role questioned

"With a callous and contemptuous disregard for all the established procedures and norms, this officer completely usurped and appropriated to himself the entire functioning and designated role of all the other members of the SIT, including its Chairman, and rendered them totally redundant and they were reportedly not even part of the investigation process," said Mr. Badal.

Mr. Badal said that the findings of the previous SIT had been scripted jointly by half a dozen high profile members of the ruling party.

Punjab AAP protests 'scam' in scholarships for Dalit students

Two lakh students deprived, money given to fake colleges'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH**

The Aam Aadmi Party workers and leaders on Monday staged a protest close to the official residence of Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh against alleged irregularities in the post-matric scholarship scheme for Dalit students.

AAP's Harpal Singh Cheema, the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly led the protesters, who were prevented from reaching the CM's residence.

Mr. Cheema alleged that Congress government had squandered huge amount of money meant for scholarships of two lakh Dalit stu-

dents, jeopardizing their future. "At the behest of the government, the police administration has violated our constitutional right to protest, but we will continue our struggle and the AAP workers would go on hunger strike on June 15 in front of the offices of Deputy Commissioners in all the districts across the State," he said.

Register case

Mr. Cheema said AAP's struggle would continue until a police case was registered against the wrongdoers under Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Senior AAP leader Man-

winder Singh Giaspura said the investigation report submitted by senior IAS officer Kirpa Shankar Saroj on the alleged post-matric scholarship scam revealed that the scholarships were given to fake colleges. "As a result, genuine private colleges have not received funds and lakhs of Dalit students have been deprived of their right to education," he said.

Deputy Leader of Opposition Sarayjit Kaur Manu, said "while the government has embezzled the scholarship money of Dalit students, it has also discriminated in giving jobs to Dalit youth and promotions to employees."

E-Tender are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following job against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/ downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://tender.upnic.in>. Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

(1) 08/SPE/PE(PH-2) Supply of Balanced Cattle Feed in Temporary Gauvanish Ashray Shhal, Vill-Naglaj Wajidpur, Sec-135, Noida.

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 28.06.2021 upto 5.00 PM.

Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 29.06.2021 at 11.00 AM.

(S.C. Mishra Sr. Project Engineer (Public Health) Noida.

Office: Sector-39, Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai E-Tender Notice

Department Public Health Dept.

Division H. B. T. Trauma Care Hospital, Juhu - Mumbai - 400060

Bid No. 7100210696 / 7100210783 / 7100210695

Subject 1. Up keeping of Various services at HHSBT Trauma Hospital, Juhu - Mumbai - 400060

Bid No. 7100210696 / 7100210783

2. Repairing and Renovation of Doctor's Cabin, M.O. Room

& O.T. Room at HBT Trauma Care Hospital, Juhu - Mumbai - 400060

Bid No. 7100210695

E-Tender Sale From 15.06.2021 from 13:00 Hrs to 21.06.2021 upto 13:00 Hrs

Date and Time of Opening of Packet 'A' 21.06.2021 after 16:00 Hrs

Packet 'B' 21.06.2021 after 16:10 Hrs.

Date and Time of Opening of Packet 'C' 25.06.2021 after 15:00 Hrs.

Website <http://portal.mcgm.gov.in>

Contact Person A-Name Niranjan Jadhav — Sub Engineer

B-Telephone(office) 022-26207257 Extn. No- 172

C-E-Mail Address hbtjhog13@gmail.com

sd/- Medical Superintendent H. B. T. Trauma Care Hospital

Government of Himachal Pradesh

Jal Shakti Department

Notice Inviting Tender

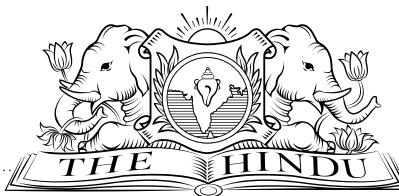
The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Vibhag Division Nalagarh invites short terms tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following work(s) through offline process:-

S / No Description of work Estimated Cost Earnest Money Cost of tender forms Stipulated Time period

1. A/R & M/O LWSS Nalagarh in Tehsil Nalagarh District Solan (HP) (SH:- Deployment of labour for smooth running repair & maintenance of distribution system) For Six Month

46700/- 9900/- 250/- Six Month

2. Stock Storage Deployment of labour (SH:- Deployment of labour in Inspection Hut at N



An elite club

The G-7 needs to be more open and less exclusive in an increasingly interlinked world

The G-7 summit, at Carbis Bay, sent out two very strong messages. The first was driven by the United States' new President Joseph Biden and his vow that "America is back" to take the lead on global challenges. The G-7 commitment to donate one billion coronavirus vaccines to poorer countries and to invest \$12 trillion in their combined pandemic recovery plan depends on U.S. commitments for a large part. The special communiqué on "Open Societies" for the G-7 outreach, and the invitation to "fellow democracies" India, Australia, South Korea and South Africa are also an extension of his stated commitment to convening a Democracy Summit this year. Even the slogan for the G-7, "Build Back Better", was a White House term to declare America's economy and jobs recovery plan. The second message was the consensus amongst the seven-member countries on countering China. The final G-7 communiqué holds no less than four direct references to China, each negative, including criticising Beijing for its rights record in Xinjiang and democratic freedoms in Hong Kong, its "non-market policies and practices...", concerns over its actions in the China Seas, and a demand for a transparent investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 virus. Though the bonhomie among the G-7 leaders was palpable, the differences and contradictions in the grouping remain a challenge. Even two decades ago, questions were raised about whether the grouping (earlier, the G-8), could claim its mantle as the world's "richest" countries, when emerging economies, China and India, are not included. On economic issues, the EU is a more representative unit than the individual European G-7 member countries. Finally, the premise of a group like the G-7, that of an exclusive club of the "haves" or "the best vs the rest", seems anachronistic in a world that is much more interlinked now than in 1975, when the grouping first came about.

India, a special guest to the G-7/G-8 since 2003, has also maintained its independent course, especially on political issues. It is significant that the G-7 outreach communiqués that included the guest countries, did not make the same references to China as the main document, and MEA officials clarified that Chinese aggression was not raised at the outreaches, which focused on the pandemic, climate change and democratic freedoms. India voiced concerns about some clauses in the joint communiqué on Open Societies which condemned "rising authoritarianism", net shutdowns, manipulation of information, and rights violations – areas where the Modi government has often been criticised itself. Addressing the session on Open Societies, Mr. Modi said that India is a "natural ally" to the G-7. In the present, the Government will be expected to walk the talk on its commitments at the G-7 outreach, especially in the areas of information clampdowns, given that India had the largest number of Internet shutdowns in 2020.

Número Uno

Djokovic is now in sight of a Golden Slam after winning on a difficult surface

Novak Djokovic has always maintained that ending his career with the most number of Grand Slam titles is one of his prime motivations to keep playing tennis. In the Roland-Garros final on Sunday, he took a giant stride in realising this dream with a sensational come-from-behind five-set victory over the fast-rising Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas for his 19th Major, pulling him within one title of his celebrated rivals Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. It was the Serb's second French Open trophy, making him only the third man in history (after Roy Emerson and Rod Laver) and first in the Open Era (post 1967) to win all four Slams at least twice. The rhythmic allure of the record aside, the sense of completeness and the feeling of sporting immortality it brings, even to a career as storied as Djokovic's, is unparalleled. So will the 34-year-old's semifinal victory over 13-time champion Nadal, the greatest of all clay-courters. That Djokovic had the tennis to challenge the Spaniard was never in doubt. What was astonishing was the way he bounced back from the shell-shocking in last year's final and outwitted an in-form Nadal. For Djokovic to not fall off the emotional cliff and defeat Tsitsipas – a player 12 years younger – brought to light one of his constant themes – poise and resilience under relentless pressure.

The triumph is yet another reminder that Djokovic is this era's most complete player. Where Federer has tweaked his shot-making with a larger racquet-head and Nadal has displayed new levels of aggression, Djokovic has prioritised balance, footwork and timing. Currently, no one can perhaps hit as well as Djokovic, from both wings, with pace and spin, at varied angles, even when on defence. As Nadal and Tsitsipas found out over exactly four hours and 11 minutes each, a tennis court had never felt smaller. This has now kindled hopes of a 'golden' Grand Slam, a herculean feat of winning all four Majors and the Olympic gold in a single year. However, if there is one man who has dared to dream and succeeded, it is Djokovic. Unseeded Barbora Krejcikova perhaps took cue and became the Czech Republic's first singles champion in Paris in 40 years, providing a storyline to latch on to after Naomi Osaka's withdrawal because of mental health concerns and Serena Williams' early exit. Nine months ago, Krejcikova was ranked outside the top-100 and had appeared in only three singles main draws at Slams. But with two doubles and three mixed doubles trophies, she was no stranger to success. Over the last fortnight, with her delightfully languid but polished game, she became the first woman since Mary Pierce in 2000 to sweep both singles and doubles at Roland-Garros.

The road from Galwan, a year later

China is now in a different league, competing with the U.S., and New Delhi faces the task of living with an uneasy calm



SUSHANT SINGH

On June 15 last year, the Line of Actual Control (LAC) witnessed its first deaths after 1975 when 20 Indian soldiers and at least four soldiers of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) died in a violent clash in Galwan in Ladakh. An Indian news report (<https://bit.ly/3wmUefH>) mentioned that around 50 Indian soldiers had been taken captive by the PLA during the clash and released in batches over three days. Although both countries have given gallantry awards to the fallen soldiers, details about the violent incident have not been officially made public so far.

Political accountability

This is in keeping with the broader approach of the Government where no official briefing or press conference about the situation in Ladakh has taken place in the last 13 months. The ministerial statements in Parliament were monologues with no questions allowed from other representatives of the people. The official excuse was operational security, but the actual reason was to avoid political embarrassment for Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Four days after the Galwan clash, Mr. Modi addressed an all-party meet where he unequivocally stated, "Na koi wahan hamari seema mein ghusha aaya hai aur nahi koi ghusha hua hai, na hi hamari koi post kisi dusre ke kabze mein hain" (No one has intruded and nor is anyone intruding, nor has any post been captured by someone). A huge public outcry led to an official clarification by the Prime Minister's Office which contained rhetoric that dodged the offending remarks (<https://bit.ly/3vjqoal>).

The Government's political strategy for dealing with the Ladakh

border crisis has been based on dodging, denial and digression. An honest appraisal of the situation in Ladakh would be politically costly for a government led by a "strong" Prime Minister, as PLA soldiers remain in control of what was hitherto in Indian control. Despite the largely supportive news channels, the Government has not been able to convince the public about its version of events. In the recent 'State of Nation' poll conducted by C-Voter, 44.8% respondents said the Chinese encroachment in Ladakh was a failure of the Modi government, while only 37.3% said it was not (<https://bit.ly/3gmiadA>).

The crisis in Ladakh erupted months after Mr. Modi had held his second informal summit with the Chinese President Xi Jinping (at Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu) and weeks after he hosted the then United States President Donald Trump for a political event in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. For someone attributing his foreign policy prowess to the power of his persona and his personal chemistry with other world leaders, there could be no worse rebuttal of his claims than the timing of the Chinese incursions. In a government identified solely with the Prime Minister and dominated by his office – there is no record of the Cabinet Committee on Security being convened to discuss the Ladakh border situation – Mr. Modi is being held responsible in the public imagination for the setback.

Military situation

The current situation is not militarily precarious in Ladakh. With a continued deployment of 50,000-60,000 soldiers, the Indian Army has been able to hold the line to prevent any further ingress by the PLA. The Chinese presence on the Indian side of the LAC in Gogra, Hot Springs and Demchok gives the PLA some tactical advantage but the area which majorly jolts Indian military plans is the Chinese control of Depsang Plains. With "official sources" trying to palm it off as a legacy issue, despite evidence to the contrary from many



retired military officers, the Indian Army has only weakened its negotiating position during the talks with the PLA. In any case, there has been no progress in talks after the disengagement at Pangong lake and Kailash range in February.

Outside of Ladakh, the Indian Army remains in an alert mode all along the LAC to prevent any Chinese misadventure but the bigger change has been its reorientation of certain forces from Pakistan border towards the China border. The basis of this shift was articulated by the Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat when he recently said that China is a bigger security threat for India than Pakistan. The Ladakh crisis has also exposed India's military weakness to tackle a collusive threat from China and Pakistan: to avoid such an eventuality, the Government opened backchannel talks with Pakistan which led to the reiteration of the ceasefire on the Line of Control.

External rebalancing

The Ladakh crisis has also led the Government to relook external partnerships, particularly with the United States. After his meeting with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar late last month, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken tweeted that they discussed the "India-China border situation". The Indian side was silent about it but senior U.S. military officials have earlier spoken of the intelligence and logistics support provided to the Indian forces in La-

dakh, while the Indian military has sought to learn from the American experience of implementing the Multi Domain Operations (MDO) doctrine to wage a war of the future against a technologically superior PLA.

That China is "a larger neighbour, which has got a better force, better technology", was acknowledged by General Rawat recently, to argue that India will "obviously prepare for a larger neighbour". The military importance of the Quad remains moot, with India reportedly refusing to do joint naval patrolling with the U.S. in the South China Sea; the two treaty allies of the U.S., Japan and Australia, also refused. Moreover, India's focus on its land borders and its limited resources for military modernisation in a period of economic decline impinge on its maritime ambitions in the Indo-Pacific.

Balancing act

Even as India has tried to talk tough with Beijing and shown greater interest in the Quad, its attempts to counter the burgeoning Chinese influence in the neighbourhood have faltered, exacerbated by the mishandling of the second wave of the novel coronavirus pandemic. With the widening power gap between New Delhi and Beijing, the challenge is as much economic as it is geopolitical. Despite the border crisis and the Indian restrictions on Chinese technology companies, China displaced the U.S. to be India's biggest trade partner in 2020-21, up to nearly 13% of India's total trade compared to 10.4% a year ago (<https://bit.ly/3cFyDRs>).

For the Modi government, it has been a difficult balancing act between its domestic rhetoric and external reality. Even though India has been dependent on China for medical equipment to fight the pandemic and asked for assured supplies, the Government has been reluctant to publicly acknowledge this dependence: it underplayed Mr. Xi's message to Mr. Modi offering support and assistance. It has asked Beijing to grant visas

to Indian students and businesspersons but has refused medical aid or Chinese vaccines. Simultaneously, New Delhi has placed the border issue at the centre of the relationship with China, arguing that there can be no normalcy without restoration of *status quo ante* at the borders.

Unappetising choices

For the past few decades, Indian planners operated on the premise that their diplomats will be able to manage the Chinese problem without it developing into a full-blown military crisis. That belief has been laid to rest. Militarily, Chinese incursions in Ladakh have shown that the idea of deterrence has failed. A return to the *status quo ante* of April 2020 remains a mirage with the Chinese side refusing to engage meaningfully after February. New Delhi has learnt that it can no longer have simultaneous competition and cooperation with Beijing; the dramatic engagement that started with Rajiv Gandhi's historic visit to China in 1988 is over.

The bouquet of choices before the Modi government is not appetising. A new reset in bilateral ties, ala the early 1990s, is difficult because China is now in a different league, competing with the U.S. India will never be comfortable taking sides in a new Cold War between the U.S. and China, as it has always valued its strategic sovereignty. Beijing seems as keen as New Delhi to avoid a military conflict, though accidents such as Galwan can never be ruled out. That leaves India with the daunting task of living with this tense and uneasy calm with China for some time, a challenge brought to the fore by the Ladakh crisis.

The events of the past one year have significantly altered India's thinking towards China. The relationship is at the crossroads now. The choices made in New Delhi will have a significant impact on the future of global geopolitics.

Sushant Singh is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi

Unlocking war histories with a purpose

The declassification of India's military history should also lead to building on successes and avoiding past follies



ARJUN SUBRAMANIAM

Saturday's announcement by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on archiving, declassifying and compiling of war histories (<https://bit.ly/3zroQql>) is a long overdue initiative that signals that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is at last willing to shed its shroud of confidentiality over happenings long gone by. Largely conforming to global practices, the policy has the potential to kick-start multiple initiatives within the MoD and the three services that will offer researchers, analysts and historians an easy lens into studying military operations in the post-Independence period.

Interlinked challenges

Drawing on my own experiences of nine years as a practitioner-historian who has struggled to put together two definitive historical and joint narratives of war and conflict in contemporary India, conversion of this policy into deliverables will be a tough and unglamorous grind. The four biggest challenges facing this initiative will be the fusion of political directives and strategic decision making with the operational and tactical happenings on ground; compilation and reconciling and analysis of events at multiple levels (headquarters, commands and field for-

mations); putting together a team of dedicated researchers and historians with a mix of academics and practitioners with access to records and files; and lastly, putting together a concurrent oral history and digitisation of all archival compilations associated with this initiative.

Decisions to go to war and wage conflict in democracies are largely political decisions and it is important that such decisions are fused into compilations of war histories. For example, one of the reasons why the Indian Army is reluctant to declassify the Henderson Brooks Report that considered operational failures during the 1962 war with China is because it is largely a scathing indictment of the Indian Army's leadership without any accountability assigned to the political establishment led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon. On the other hand, several histories of the Vietnam War can now be considered credible and well-rounded because researchers have had access not only to operational accounts but also to archived discussions between the political architects of the conflict such as Presidents J.F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson and Defence Secretary Robert S. McNamara.

Similarly, General K. Sundarji and Ambassador J.N. Dixit have borne the brunt of much criticism by researchers examining India's intervention in Sri Lanka from 1987-1990 because they expressed themselves in the open domain without fear. But it is only when researchers get access to records of



discussions involving other generals, admirals and air marshals and even Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Minister of State for Defence Arun Singh and even political heavyweights in Tamil Nadu such as M.G. Ramachandran and M. Karunanidhi, that the cobwebs around Operation Pawan will be cleared.

On 'Brasstacs'

'Most military historians of contemporary India agree that Exercise Brasstacs (1986-87) heralded the transformation of Indian war fighting doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures in conventional war fighting, particularly in the plains and the desert. However, all of them, including this writer, have relied on oral recollections to put together a mosaic of what may have transpired in the confines of the Military Operations (MO) Directorate of the Army HQ and thereafter. Writing the official history of Exercise Brasstacs must be high on the list of the initial projects in this initiative as it will highlight the fusion of decisions taken at multiple headquar-

ters right down to the regiment and squadron level.

The right approach needed

Notwithstanding the effort taken to put together official histories of the 1965 and 1971 wars, these are considered as safe histories that only scratch the surface of strategic decision making, operational analyses, leadership and lessons for the future. The reason for this is the absence of robust multi-disciplinary teams that are required to put together each such history and the desire to bring out non-controversial documents. While highlighting controversies and failures must not be an obsession with such initiatives, it is only a robust academic-cum-practitioner flavour accompanied by good and contemporary writing that will lend weight to such histories.

Unlike the Ministry of External Affairs which has stolen a march over other ministries in declassifying files, the three service headquarters and MoD have been rather slow in initiating this. Not only is it difficult to trace files from eras gone, it is highly possible that in the absence of digital conversion, several priceless discussions have been destroyed in the periodic discarding of files. But even if such files are available, who will spend long hours trying to identify elements that remain historically relevant?

Digitisation and creation of oral histories will form a critical component of this transformation. Both are either unfolding at a snail's pace or are absent in our existing official repositories of histo-

ry at the service headquarters or war colleges. A software major must be roped-in for this and an outreach must be made to individual historians, think tanks and global repositories to share their oral history collections on contemporary Indian military history.

The first chapter

Considering the timeline of 25 years, a suggested list of declassifications to trigger this transformative initiative are the Nathu La skirmish of 1967, 'The Lightning Campaign' in the Eastern Theatre during the 1971 War, Operation Meghdoot (Siachen), Exercise Brasstacs and its subsidiary operations, and Operation Falcon (Sumdorong Chu). Lest the initiative be accused of only showcasing successes, Operation Pawan (Indian Peace Keeping Force; picture) too needs to be officially written about, albeit with due sensitivity. One of the hallmarks of a leading power/emerging power/power of consequence and a leading military is the ability to take criticism, tackle institutional reluctance to expose faultlines and push forward with reform with the big picture in mind. History does not offer a blueprint for the future, but it is certainly instructive in building on successes and not repeating the follies of the past. That proposition must be the bedrock on which this initiative takes off.

Air Vice-Marshal (Dr.) Arjun Subramaniam (retd.) is a military historian and the author of *India's Wars: A Military History, 1947-1971* and *Full Spectrum: India's Wars, 1972-2020*.



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some decent players on the international stage.

ANTHONY HENRIQUES,
Mumbai

I am one of those countless fans of Djokovic who have been mesmerised by this complete tennis player. He may lack the finesse of a Nadal, but with no visible chinks in his armour, he is sure to reign for a long time.
V. LAKSHMANAN,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

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.

After Galwan
There is no denying the fact that the Government could not contain China's aggression and retrieve our territory encroached on by the Chinese last year (Page 1, June 14). China has been stealthily taking away our land. We need to gradually move towards isolating China, economically and politically, on the global stage for the sake of peace and prosperity. China cannot be trusted and we have examples, from the

unmaking of Panchsheel to Galwan. India needs to join forces that want China to play by international rules. Hopefully, Joe Biden's America will forge such an alliance. History will judge us by the actions which we take today to defend ourselves.
KANAK RAJAN NAMBIAR,
Varam, Kannur, Kerala

Fugitive's trail
The narrative on fugitive economic offender Mehul Choksi is strange. Both he and his lawyers claim that

he is a citizen of Antigua while our authorities insist that he is still an Indian. On the other hand, hundreds of thousands of people in Assam say that they are Indians and are being questioned. A citizen of Antigua does not need a visa to travel to Dominica. So why is he being held, and who has roughed him up? As the saying goes, there is more to this than meets the eye. It is remarkable how within days of his arrest, officials from several ministries in

India joined forces, hired an executive jet and went to bring him back. The speed at which it all happened, especially the release of funds for the chartered jet, shows how efficient our officials can be at times.
HEMACHANDRA BASAPPA,
Bengaluru

To the fore
The ability to dig oneself out of a trench is the mark of a true champion and Novak Djokovic demonstrated it in full measure at this year's

</div

The ideas that Satyajit Ray couldn't film

Ray was always assessing the cinematic potential of literary sources that ignited his imagination



AMITABHA BHATTACHARYA

Satyajit Ray is universally admired for his cinematic creations. However, to understand his mind, it may be worthwhile to reflect on the literary ideas that he could not transform on celluloid. Some are well known – *The Alien*, *A Passage to India* and the *Mahabharata*. But there were many more which only the Ray aficionados are aware of. Fortunately, the essays and letters of Ray and his son Sandip; the biographies by Marie Seton (*Portrait of A Director*, 1971) and Andrew Robinson (*Satyajit Ray: The Inner Eye*, 1989); Suresh Jindal's *My Adventures with Satyajit Ray – The Making of Shatranj Ke Khilari* (2017), Nasreen Munni Kabir's *Conversations with Waheeda Rehman* (2014); and articles by Bangladeshi photojournalist Amanul Haque and others throw some light on the subject.

An idea about aliens

Based on his own story and ideas, and encouraged by the famous author Arthur C. Clarke, Ray drafted the screenplay of his sci-fi film *The Alien* in 1967. Columbia Pictures agreed to produce it with Peter Sellers in an Indian role. Steve McQueen was contacted and even Robert Redford considered, and the Indian cast was almost finalised. Columbia even advanced some money for the project. However, there were many unexpected twists and turns, as recounted by Ray in "Ordeals of the Alien" (*The Statesman*, October 4 and 5, 1980), and the project had to be abandoned. Ray wrote to Sellers:

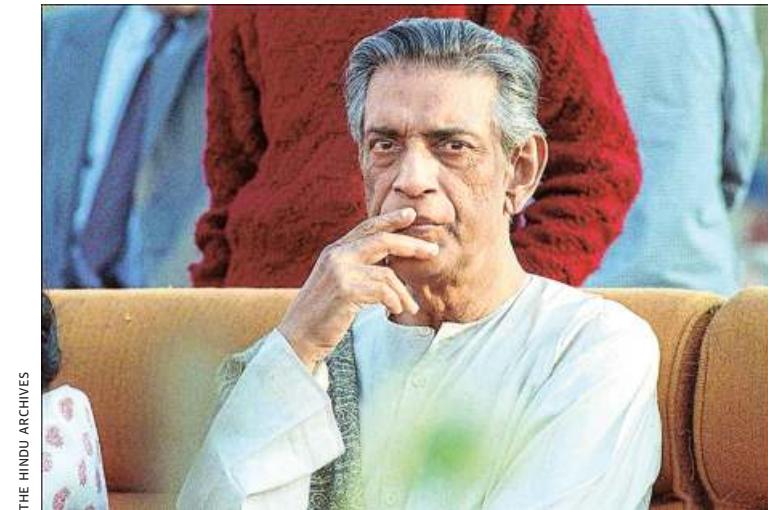
"Dear Peter, if you wanted a bigger part

Why, you should have told me so right at the start.

By declining at this juncture You have simply punctured The Alien balloon, Which I daresay would be ground-ed soon

Causing a great deal of dismay To Satyajit Ray"

The project was revived later, but by then Steven Spielberg's *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* was released (1982),



THE HINDU ARCHIVES

with 'striking parallels' noticed by Clarke and others. Ray held, as Robinson quotes, that E.T. "would not have been possible without my script of *The Alien* being available throughout America in mimeographed copies". However, Spielberg commented, "Tell Satyajit I was a kid in high school when his script was circulating in Hollywood". Despite advice, Ray did not pursue the matter further. His depiction, as communicated to Jindal, that the aliens were "benign by nature, small and acceptable to children, possessed of certain supernatural powers, not physical strength but other kinds of powers, particular types of vision, and that they take interest in earthly things" was indeed influential.

The West's image of India

Ray met E.M. Forster at Cambridge in 1966 with the intention to film *A Passage to India*. Robinson quotes Ray, "... but he knew my name. He kept shaking his head much of the time which meant that he didn't want the book to be filmed. That was the drone – no! – in words, gestures, looks, everything. He was adamant. And I felt there was no point in asking why." Later, much after Forster's death, Ray was approached in 1980 by the trustees at King's College, but by then he had lost interest in the subject. David Lean's version (1984), understandably, could not satisfy Ray – "... The whole thing is too picturesque... For me none of the characters come alive... Peggy Ashcroft's performance notwithstanding..." In a famous essay "Under Western Eyes" (*Sight & Sound*, Autumn 1982),

Ray had touched upon the limitations of the West's interest in India and how its views were often distorted and unreal, sometimes even with "grotesque stereotypes as Hurree Jamset Ram Singh..." He ended, "Slighted for so long, India will not yield up her secrets to the West so easily..." It is a pity that *A Passage...* could not be filmed by Ray.

All on paper

The *Mahabharata* fascinated Ray from his early childhood. From the late fifties he had been planning to film it. But in what language? "How to introduce even the main characters to a non-Indian audience?" At one time, he intended to cast Dilip Kumar, Toshiro Mifune and others. Ray was interested in the dice game part. More than the war, it was the exploration of personal relationships between the characters that appealed to him cinematically. In jest, he once told Jindal, "I gave up, because I couldn't imagine Kirk Douglas playing Arjuna."

Waheeda Rehman, who acted in Ray's *Abhijan* (1962), said that Ray had been keen to adapt R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* and had contacted her for the female lead. As she observed, the approach and treatment of the film would have been entirely different under Ray's direction. But then we would have missed the Bollywood blockbuster.

There were many Bengali film ideas that Ray had nurtured at some point or the other, as detailed by Sandip Ray in *Ananya Satyajit* (1998) and others. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's *Rajasimha* (with Balraj

Sahni) and Devi Chaudhurani (with Suchitra Sen), Saratchandra Chattopadhyay's *Mahesh*, Bibhutibhusan Bandopadhyay's *Drabamayeer Kashibash* and *Ichhamati*, Manik Bandopadhyay's *Padma Nadir Majhi*, Mahasweta Devi's *Bichhan*, Buddhadeva Bose's *Ekti Jibon*, Prafulla Roy's *Ram Charitra*, Shibram Chakraborty's *Debotar Jonno*, Banaphool's *Kichhuksan*, Bangladeshi writer Shahid Ali's *Jibraier Dara* and Selina Hossain's *Hanger Nodi Grenade* were thought of. For a variety of reasons, including non-availability of actors (Chunibala Devi and Suchitra Sen, for example), these ideas had to be abandoned at different stages. According to Sandip, his father moved on with his work, never regretting what could not be pursued.

Ray was approached by Indira Gandhi to make a documentary on Jawaharlal Nehru for whom he had admiration. Besides, in a letter of June 1, 1978, Ray wrote to Jindal about the proposals he had been requested to consider "... (a) documentary on Rajasthani music for French TV... (b) a 3-part film for BBC (each 90 minutes long) on any subject or subjects of my choice... (c) a proposal from UNO to make a film on 'the horrors & miseries of war', for worldwide TV screening... (d) a revival of *The Alien* under a major U.S. company backing with an updated script and a new title..." UNICEF approached him for a film on child labour. Ray was also interested in the operatic form of *Balmiki-Pratibha*, and documentaries on notables like Radhanath Sikdar who first calculated the world's highest mountain peak. None of these eventually took off for reasons not publicly known.

Conscious of what's happening all around, Ray was immersed in ideas. A storyteller, both in celluloid and print, he was always assessing the cinematic potential of literary sources that ignited his imagination. Now, on the occasion of Ray's 100th birth anniversary celebrations, it is for the researchers to probe and delve into the available material in order to fathom why many of these ideas couldn't get transported to the medium of cinema.

Amitabha Bhattacharya is a retired IAS officer who has also worked in the private sector and with the UNDP. Views are personal

A policy difficult to defend

Allowing money spent out-of-pocket to feed vaccine production in India is regressive and inequitable



SOHAM D. BHADURI

The Union government recently reversed the liberalised vaccination strategy. States no longer have to bear the responsibility of procuring vaccines; the Centre will procure them on behalf of the States as the single purchaser. While this move has been applauded, some doubt that a few things will change under the new regime. One area of objection has been that the private sector's share of total vaccines remains unchanged at 25%.

Problematic decision

As some experts have rightly pointed out, the private sector's share of total manufactured vaccines is out of sync with its share of total vaccination centres, which are far fewer than the government's, thus entailing a demand-supply mismatch between government and private centres and concomitant inequities. Although capacity to vaccinate is a more important metric to consider than just the relative share of vaccination centres, it is unlikely to be a redeeming factor. However, the policy looks problematic even if the number and the share of private vaccination centres increases substantially to accommodate their share of total vaccines.

With large, a 25% share for private vaccination entails an implicit assumption that 25% of the population is willing and able to pay for a commodity for which social benefits exceed private benefit. This is indicative of our mistaken assumption of an inflated 'middle class'. The fact is that the affluent form only a small fraction of the uppermost 25% of our population based on income.

Markets tend to under-produce commodities having significant positive externalities. Preventive services like vaccines generate a lower private demand than curative services. Subsidising or incentivising users and penalising non-users of preventive services are two ways of promoting consumption of such services. Even assuming reasonably higher levels of wealth, education, and COVID-19 awareness in the uppermost 25% of the population, significant demand generation concerns would remain, which may lag behind desirable levels. Not to mention that this section is also likely to have better access to free vaccines provided by the government, creating a 'crowding out' effect for the poorer sections. Of course, we assume here that India doesn't have a large surplus of vaccines. We

also need to consider the age structure and its possible implications. A large chunk of self-payers are likely to be younger, productive individuals, who are at lesser risk of severe disease and mortality than the elderly.

It's intriguing as to what motivates this 25% share for private players. Is the government driven by herd immunity considerations, which project that between 60% and 80% of the population needs to be imperatively immunised? It is crucial to realise that vaccinating the poorer and marginalised sections, even if it is free of charge, is much more challenging than vaccinating the easily accessible better-off sections. The resultant disparities along geographic and socioeconomic lines would not be consistent with the notion of herd immunity.

All this points to the need to increase the government's share of total vaccines. It is unfair to demonise private hospitals in this situation, especially since service charges have now been capped. The benefits, if any, of differential pricing are likely to accrue mainly to vaccine manufacturers. But vaccine production is also a costly process, and the government's track record of investing in domestic COVID-19 vaccine production has been anything but phenomenal. The result of this is that money spent out-of-pocket is feeding vaccine production in India, which is an inequitable and regressive way of doing things.

Better engagement with private sector
Traditionally, India's approach to dealing with the private sector has been 'all or none' of sorts. On accusations of extortionate pricing by private players, the government hasn't hesitated to impose often unreasonable and unfavourable pricing restrictions. On the contrary, successive governments have frequently been criticised for adopting an unduly favourable attitude towards the private sector in healthcare. It's time we moved beyond this. Greater reach, innovative processes, and efficiency are some of the strengths of the private sector. Any engagement with this sector needs to sufficiently exploit such strengths as part of a strategic purchasing framework. But this will require the government to engage with smaller players too, not just big private hospitals. This will be replete with challenges, including the need for strong regulatory and information systems. More decentralised but accountable regulation might be called for. However, it is possible to envision a favourable risk-benefit trade-off with such engagement. The pandemic is the right time to attain the appropriate public-private policy mix.

Dr. Soham D. Bhaduri is a physician, health policy expert, and chief editor of 'The Indian Practitioner'

Preserving India's archives

Moving the collections in the National Archives annexe needs careful planning and execution

UDAY BALAKRISHNAN

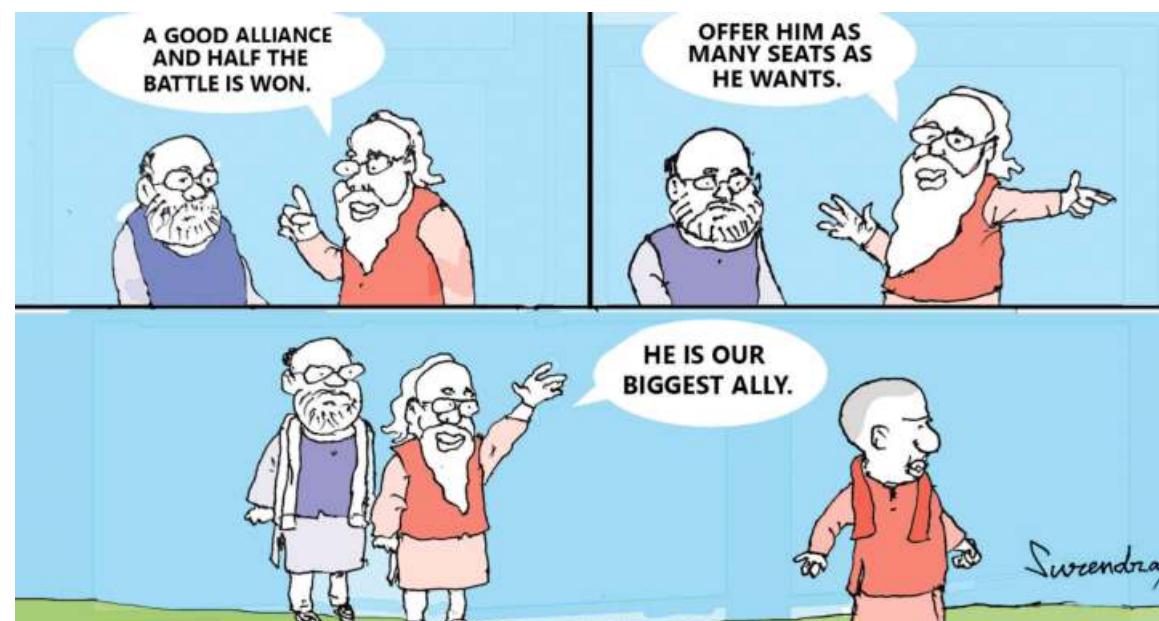
The National Archives is the primary repository of documents on India's past. The last time it was in the news was in 2016 when digital copies of files relating to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose were made publicly accessible. The imminent demolition of its annexe by the Government of India has brought the institution to public attention once again. A petition by leading Indian and foreign scholars is in circulation demanding that the government show greater openness in the proposed demolition of the National Archives annexe and the safe storage of its contents since "several centuries of India's history lie in the documents that make up the National Archives of India". The petition said: "The archival records include 4.5 million files, 25,000 rare manuscripts, more than 100,000 maps, treaties, 280,000 premodern documents and several thousand private papers... The loss or damage of a single object or archival record would be an irrevocable loss."

Moving the collections in the National Archives annexe needs careful planning and execution. Few know this better than The British Library. Its guide from its Preservation Advisory Centre, titled 'Moving Library and Archive Collections', is succinct and comprehensive, covering every aspect of shifting an archive. A significant point it makes is that "the order in which the collection is to be moved and unpacked must be carefully considered and mapped. In the long term, it is cheaper to put items into their correct place straight away, rather than being rushed into a random storage arrangement."

Moving contents

Those who are protesting the demolition of the annexe include scholars holding important positions in some of the best institutions. They have access to the finest archival expertise in the world. They are best placed to produce a detailed report on how to move the contents of the National Archive annexe and share it with the government giving names of institutions and experts willing to help. Not just the National Archives, but those of the States too are in poor shape. A case in point is the Goa archives, one of the oldest in the country. It contains material relevant not just to India but also to the rest of Asia, Europe, Africa and South America. While making their proposal, these scholars would do well to recommend an integrated national approach to archival management bringing together State archives too. The private sector could be brought in to construct a world-class building within the next two years as part of CSR and have the annexe collections shifted there. Such a project will do a lot of good for India's image rather than all the protests from a "community of concerned", which, incidentally, is all of us.

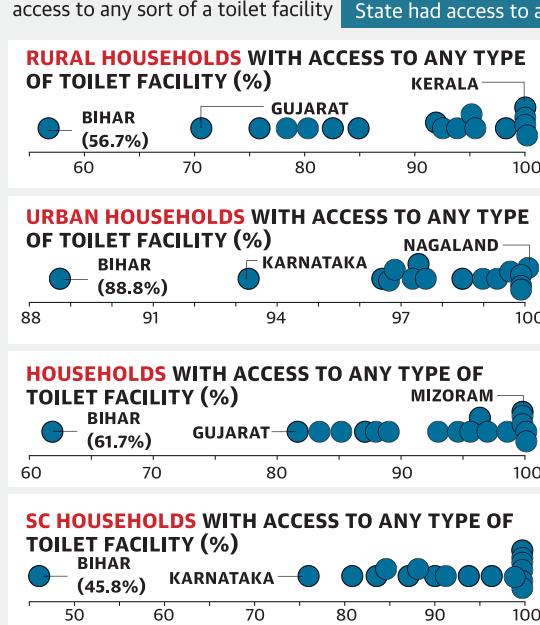
Poor shape
The National Archives is in poor shape. A series of articles published in *The New York Times* in March 2012 by the historian Dinyar Patel laid bare the parlous state of the National Archives. He noted, among other things, that "letters penned by Mohandas K. Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and other eminent Indian nationalists have suffered from exposure to humid weather, staff negligence and mishandling, and improper preservation methods." Things have improved since then, but not enough. Writing in *The Telegraph Online*, of May 30, 2021, Sana Aziz, Assistant Professor of His-



DATA POINT

Out in the open | On October 2, 2019, all the villages in India were declared open defecation-free (ODF). However, recently published data from the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) show that in not one of the 18 States surveyed did all the households have access to a toilet facility. The share of access to any type of toilet ranged between 61.7% in Bihar to 99.9% in Mizoram. The survey was initiated in mid-2019 and continued till March 2021. Data also show a wide gap in access to toilets between SC/ST households and other households. By Jasmin Nihalani and Suman Sen

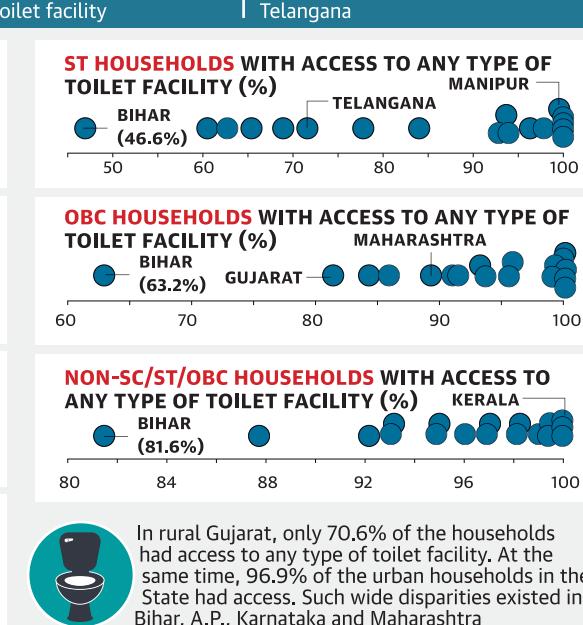
How to read the charts: Each circle corresponds to a State. The charts depict the % of households in a State that had access to any sort of a toilet facility



Note: In NFHS-5 Phase 1, data for major States such as Tamil Nadu, U.P., Punjab, Rajasthan, M.P., Jharkhand were not released

In Bihar, only 45.8% of SC households and 46.6% of ST households had access to any type of toilet facility. On the other hand, 81.6% of the non-SC/Non-ST households in the State had access to a toilet facility

Wide disparities in access to any type of toilet facility existed in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Telangana



In rural Gujarat, only 70.6% of the households had access to any type of toilet facility. At the same time, 96.9% of the urban households in the State had access. Such wide disparities existed in Bihar, A.P., Karnataka and Maharashtra

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 15, 1971

President's Rule for Punjab
(From an editorial)

The dissolution of the Punjab Assembly by the Governor, Dr. D.C. Pavate, has obviously upset the long-nurtured plans of the topplers who were getting ready to replace the shakal Akali Dal Ministry headed by Mr Badal by what could have only been an equally shaky and ramshackle coalition. No tears need to be shed over the exit of the Badal Government which, along with the Akali Dal itself, had been riven by faction and intrigue for months. Those who thought that the reunion of the faction headed by Mr. Gurnam Singh with the parent Dal under Sant Fateh Singh in November last would ensure stable government in the State would seem to have reckoned without the Akalis' penchant for groupism and infighting. The present crisis which has sparked off some vague and unspecified charges of corruption against some of the Ministers by another Minister, Mr. Trilochan Singh Riasi, was but part of this fractious struggle within the party, though his demand for a smaller and more compact Cabinet for so small a State was reasonable. Mr Badal's reluctance to get rid of some of the Ministers on the eve of the Assembly session is also easily explained, as with the outgoing Ministers would also have gone some of the needed support in the Assembly.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 15, 1921

The Tilak Swaraja Fund

We hope the attention of our readers has been drawn to the article in *Young India* by Mahatma Gandhi extracted in the *Hindu* of the 13th instant on "The Need of The Hour". Mr. Gandhi says that "it will be nothing short of a tragedy if we do not fulfil the Bezwada programme before the end of the month. This question of payment is the acid test of our sincerity, earnestness and capacity. Let us hope that the 30th of this month will not find us wanting." The Joint General Secretary of the Indian National Congress has been issuing earnest appeals to the people in this Presidency exhorting them to respond to the national call for contributing to the Tilak Swaraja Fund. He has been publishing from time to time the amounts received which up to date has only come up to about Rs. 30,000. How poor the response has been so far is shown by the amounts due, from the various Districts, and the amounts collected. We earnestly hope that Madras will not cut a sorry figure among all the Provinces on the 30th June.

FROM PAGE ONE

Govt. report flags 'lapses' in Nagaland bat study

"We are not aware of lapses," said Mr. Mayor, in written replies to *The Hindu*. "The [bat] samples we have collected are invaluable to research and understanding zoonotic pathogens," he added, directing all further enquiries on the clearances and bat samples to the Ministry of Health.

However, both the Ministry of Health report dated February 2021, as well as a series of communications between the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Department of Atomic Energy, which oversaw the NCBS study in October-November 2020, referred to the issues. *The Hindu* has seen copies of these documents.

"The research publication raised serious concerns as the samples were collected from humans and bats with intent to test for viral pathogens and resulting antibodies of highly infectious pathogens (risk group 4 viruses).

The study didn't have the requisite approval of ICMR. Moreover, the facility at NCBS was not equipped in terms of biosafety and biosecurity to undertake such testing," states the Health Ministry report.

"The inquiry committee

(including Health Ministry and ICMR officials) visited NCBS, Bangalore as well as Nagaland to understand the work done, methodology followed, and places visited during the course of the study," said the report, adding that they found "concerning lapses in the study protocols and procedures".

"All the lapses were discussed and appropriate actions were suggested," it added.

Safe storage issues

Meanwhile, differences over the storage of the Nagaland bat samples between the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), and the Ministry of Health continue. The Health Ministry wants the

samples of nucleic acid extract stored at the Bio Safety Level -4 (BSL-4) standard facility at the National Institute of Virology laboratory in Pune, rather than NCBS's Bengaluru facilities, that are rated BSL-3 at present.

While the DAE contends that the samples were "non-infectious" and had been checked for the presence of filoviruses (Ebola and Marburg), the Health Ministry contends that such samples must be handled in a laboratory equipped for "biosafety and biosecurity conditions" as otherwise they can pose a "significant public health hazard".

"The issue of bio-security comes under the Department of Biotechnology, and the ICMR has no business raising any concerns on a study done by the NCBS, which is an institution under the Department of Atomic Energy," said noted virologist Gagandeep Kang.

When asked, however, an official said that a 1987 Health Ministry order had designated ICMR Director General and the Health Secretary as the Chairpersons on the committee clearing all research involving foreign funding and foreign collaboration.

According to the citation in the study, named "Filovirus-reactive antibodies in humans and bats in Northeast India imply zoonotic spillover", that was published in 2019, the research was funded by U.S. Dept of Defense, U.S. Naval Biological Defense Research Directorate, and Indian Department of Atomic Energy, and credits researchers at Duke-NUS Singapore, U.S. Uniformed Services University as well as Shi Zhengli and Xinglou Yang from the Wuhan Institute for "writing-review and editing" the paper. (<https://journals.plos.org/plosntds/article?id=10.1371/journal.pntd.0007733>)

Residents seek

Praful Patel's

recall, withdrawal

of the 'reforms'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE



Black day: Residents of Lakshadweep islands staging a protest on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

by the administration.

Muneer Manikfan, village (deep) panchayat vice-chairperson at Minicoy, said in a video message that the protest was conducted to force the Union government to revoke the "unilateral, draconian, anti-people and anti-environment" draft legislation and orders that were issued by Mr. Patel.

In view of the protests, the police took out a route march along the streets of Kavaratti, the capital, on

Sunday night, which the islanders termed as an "intimidation tactic".

Skips Kochi

Lok Sabha members Hibi Eden and T.N. Prathapan were planning to meet Mr. Patel, who was slated to land at the Cochin International Airport on Monday morning while in transit, to register their protest against his policies.

But Mr. Patel skipped Kochi and took a special aircraft

Protests greet Administrator in Lakshadweep

Aisha Sultana moves HC, seeks bail in sedition case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE

In her petition, Ms. Sultana said she had been falsely implicated in the case "with ulterior motives and vexatious intentions". She said the actions of the Administrator had drawn flak from the islanders and people across the globe. It was in this context that she made the remarks.

to the Agatti air strip in Lakshadweep".

Meanwhile, the administration extended the lockdown till June 21, on Kavaratti, Kiltan, Bitra and Minicoy islands.

Night curfew

Shops and establishments selling essential commodities will be allowed to function between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. with permission from the designated officers. There will be night curfew on all other islands.

Fishers' sheds being used for illicit activities'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE

Justifying the demolition of fishers' sheds along the beaches of Kavaratti, the Lakshadweep administration on Monday told the Kerala High Court that illegal occupation of lands on beaches had reached a stage wherein effective actions were urgently required to protect government lands on seashore and make them available to the public.

The submission was made by S. Manu, counsel for the administration, when a petition by a few Kavaratti residents against the administration's move to demolish their sheds on the seashore came up for hearing. Counsel added that there were instances of sheds on the beaches being used for illicit activities.

Former Telangana Minister Eatala Rajender joins BJP

Veteran leader vows to bring BJP to power in Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Former Telangana Health Minister Eatala Rajender, along with his followers, formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party in New Delhi on Monday.

Union Minister for Petroleum, Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan welcomed him with a party scarf and presented the membership form in the presence of Union Minister of State for Defence G. Kishan Reddy, Telangana in-charge Tarun Chugh, State party president Bandi Sanjay Kumar and others.

"After Karnataka, we consider Telangana to be strategically very important for



Former Minister Eatala Rajender being greeted by BJP national president J.P. Nadda in New Delhi on Monday. ■ PTI

us in the South and we are sure to form the next government there. We welcome Mr. Rajender into our party fold," said Mr. Pradhan.

Mr. Rajender vowed to play his role diligently to

strengthen the BJP to bring it to power in Telangana and said more leaders were likely to join in the coming days.

Later, the leaders met BJP national president J.P. Nadda.

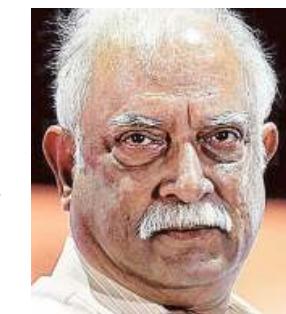
Ashok Gajapathi Raju gets back Simhachalam temple post

Govt. role in the matter very limited, he said in his plea

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The High Court of Andhra Pradesh on Monday struck down G.O. Ms. Nos 72 and 74, through which Sanchaita Gajapathi Raju was appointed as the hereditary trustee/chairperson of Sri Varahamurti Lakshmi Narasimha Vari Devasthanam at Simhachalam and the MANSAS (Maharaja Alak Narayan Society of Arts & Science) Trust respectively last year, and ordered that P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju be reinstated as chairman of both the trusts.

Mr. Ashok said in his petitions that the established practice in the Simhachalam Devasthanam had been for the "eldest male lineal descendant" of the Pusapatigandda.



P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju

Gajapathi family of the princely State of Vizianagaram to be the hereditary trustee and it was in vogue for more than three centuries and continued even after the temple came under the purview of the Madras Endowment Act of 1951 and subsequently Acts 17 of 1966 and

30 of 1987 of Andhra Pradesh. He asserted that Ms. Sanchaita had no legal claim to be claimed as a "founder family member" as per Section 17 of Act 30, 1987 leave alone being appointed as the hereditary trustee when members of the family belonging to the previous generation were there.

Mr. Ashok said in his petition that the government's jurisdiction on the MANSAS Trust was very limited as it was a public charitable trust and its functioning was guided by the trust deed executed by the settlor.

He also cited certain provisions of the Hindu Succession Act and various judgments as lending credence to his arguments.

Vatican rejects nun's plea on dismissal

She was charged with violating the rules of the religious order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHEE

The Superior General of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation Sister Ann Joseph has conveyed to Sister Lucy Kalappura, formerly a member of the congregation, that the Vatican had rejected her appeal against her dismissal from the religious order.

A letter from the headquarters of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation near Aluva on June 12 from the Superior General said the appeal by Sr. Lucy was rejected by the Apostolic Signature and that the dismissal had been confirmed.

The letter described Sr. Lucy's issue as a 'heart

Sr. Lucy terms Vatican order 'mysterious'

STAFF REPORTER
KALPETTA

was yet to start at the tribunal because of the COVID-19 spread," she told *The Hindu*.

"As per the letter from the Vatican, my appeal was produced before the Signatura in May 2020," Sister Lucy said, adding that usually the tribunal would not take such a hasty decision especially during a pandemic outbreak.

sing Sr. Lucy from the order in 2019.

The reasons included Sr. Lucy's failure to explain adequately her violating the rules of the religious order and not wearing her religious habit.

She was also accused of

obtaining a driver's licence without permission of the superiors, of buying a car, and publishing a book of poetry.

Took part in protest

Sr. Lucy shot into the lime-light with her participation in a protest in Kochi in September 2018, when priests, nuns, and religious personnel from the Catholic Church joined hands with reform-minded Church members and voluntary groups to demand the arrest of Bishop Franco Mulakkal of Jalandhar, who was accused of raping a Catholic nun.

The protest was withdrawn after the bishop was arrested.

Sr. Lucy was expelled from the congregation in August 2019 but the Mananthavady munsif court had given her a reprieve in December of the same year.

Prior to that, his mortal remains would be kept at Ravindra Kalakshetra between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Kannada actor Sanchari Vijay passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

National-award winning actor 'Sanchari' Vijay, 38, passed away late on Monday night at a private hospital in Bengaluru. His family donated his heart, kidney, and other organs after he was declared brain dead earlier in the day. The actor, who had met with a motor accident, suffered a grievous head injury and did not respond to treatment at Apollo Hospital.

The last rites of the actor, who is best known for his award-winning role in the film 'Naanu Avanalla Avalu', would be conducted at his birthplace Panchanhalli in Kadur taluk on Tuesday.

Prior to that, his mortal remains would be kept at Ravindra Kalakshetra between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.



A floating bed of degraded water hyacinth being prepared for cultivation of marigold at Thaneermukkum.

For Onam, marigolds from a floating raft

Youth undertakes farming experiment

K.A. MARTIN
KOCHEE

A small fraction of the millions of marigold flowers used during the annual Onam season to make floral carpets and decorate homes will come from a floating raft farming experiment undertaken by an enterprising young farmer in the Vembanad backwaters in Alappuzha-Cherthala Canal near Kalavoor with amaranthus having been a great success. Another experiment had been taken up at Kanjipadam. These showed that crops like vegetable cowpea, chillies and tomatoes too were suited for the farming method. The crops should be of short duration so that they can be harvested in about 45 to 60 days, by which time the water hyacinth bed degrades completely.

Sujit Swami Nikarthal, who has been into farming for over a decade, said he had put up marigold plants on about 400 sq. ft. of floating raft set up on bamboo frames and held together by coir geotextile with a bed of degraded water hyacinth. He said the flowers from the one-cent raft would be harvested for the Onam season.

Floating raft agriculture, with water hyacinth forming the bed, has been experimented with extensively. It was found, over the last five years, that amaranthus flourishes on the floating raft beds, said K.G. Padmakumar, veteran agricultural scientist and director, International Research and Training Centre for Below Sea Level Farming,

Kuttanad.

Floating raft farming had been taken up as a measure of improving adaptability and resilience in the background of climate change, said Dr. Padmakumar. He said experiments in the Alappuzha-Cherthala Canal near Kalavoor with amaranthus had been a great success. Another experiment had been taken up at Kanjipadam. These showed that crops like vegetable cowpea, chillies and tomatoes too were suited for the farming method. The crops should be of short duration so that they can be harvested in about 45 to 60 days, by which time the water hyacinth bed degrades completely.

Dr. Padmakumar said floating raft agriculture with cage fish farming could be remunerative for people. The activities could be taken up even on part-time basis to generate additional income, he added.

Vice president of the panchayat Praveen G. Panicker said the local body looked upon the novel idea as a means to get rid of water hyacinth, which posed problems across water bodies.

Karnataka to give ₹1 lakh to BPL COVID-19 victims' families

Kerala reports 7,719 new cases; fall in daily positivity rate in Telangana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Monday announced a compensation of ₹1 lakh to below poverty line (BPL) families that have lost adult members to COVID-19. Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa told reporters here that the government was aware that many families had been going through trying times following the death of earning members.

The State on Monday reported 6,835 new COVID-19 cases, taking the total to 27,71,969. Of these, 1,470 cas-



Partial lockdown: Shops being closed after 2 p.m. during the semi-lockdown in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

the past day. The active case tally came down to 80,013.

In Telangana, the daily positivity rate has come down slightly to 1.36% as 1,511 new cases and 12 deaths were reported on Monday.

A total of 1,10,681 tests were done during the day and reports of 1,479 samples were still awaited.

According to the Public Health department, the cumulative cases have gone up to

6,04,880 and the number of deaths mounted to 3,496. The case fatality rate remains at 0.57% as against 1.3% at the national level.

With 2,175 people recovered, the total recoveries stand at 5,80,923. The active cases stood at 20,461.

Kerala reported 7,719 new cases when 68,573 samples were tested in the past 24 hours. The test positivity rate (TPR) dipped from 12.24% to 11.26% on the day.

The State's active case pool is on a rapid decline and it has 1,13,817 patients now, with 16,743 patients recovering on Monday.

The total

Trying to rescue LJP: Pashupati Paras

He indicates that the party will not follow Chirag Paswan's line against JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Just hours after five of the six MPs of the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla over replacing party president Chirag Paswan with his uncle, Pashupati Nath Paras, as the Leader of the Parliamentary Party, Mr. Paras said he had no complaints against his nephew.

Speaking to mediapersons on Monday morning, Mr. Paras said he was only trying to rescue the party. In the same breath, he also praised Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, calling him '*vikas purush*', in a clear indication that the party would not follow Mr. Paswan's line against the JD (U) chief. Mr. Paras, who earlier served as a Minister in Mr. Kumar's Cabinet, made it clear that the six MPs would not join the JD (U). The rebel MPs had an hour-long meeting with another JD(U) leader Lallan Singh at party MP Veena Singh's residence.

What is particularly damaging for Mr. Paswan is that among the rebel MPs is



Simmering tensions: LJP leader Chirag Paswan arriving at his uncle's residence in New Delhi on Monday. • PTI

his cousin, Prince Raj, who is said to be very close to him and whom he had anointed as the Bihar unit chief, replacing Mr. Paras.

Mr. Raj is the son of LJP founder Ram Vilas Paswan's younger brother Ramchandra Paswan, who died in 2019. Ram Vilas Paswan never recovered from the shock of his brother's death and in some way that accelerated the deterioration of his own health, leading to his death a

year later. The Sunday evening events are the culmination of a nearly seven-month long discontent in the party against Mr. Paswan for his particularly twisted political stand.

He launched a campaign targeting the JD(U) and Mr. Kumar without severing ties with the NDA. He continued to sing paeans about Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The LJP won one Assembly seat, managed to garner nearly

6% of the vote share and cost the JD (U) nearly 35 to 40 seats.

Within the party forum, many leaders, including Mr. Paras and Mehbob Ali Kaiser, had criticised Mr. Paswan. Mr. Paras had also made a public statement praising Mr. Kumar, but had to retract it under pressure from his nephew. Mr. Paras and other rebelling MPs have also accused Saurav Pandey, another close aide of Mr. Paswan, of excessive interference and arrogance.

Fallout of State poll'
Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Kaiser observed, "The Sunday events are a fallout of the Bihar elections. We advised him not to go against Nitish Kumar. A leader has to listen to people, but Chirag was impervious to any of our suggestions."

The rebel group did not hold any grudge against Mr. Paswan, who should relent to work under Mr. Paras. "He can work a couple of years under Mr. Paras till he learns the ropes and is amenable to

listening to sound advice," Mr. Kaiser added.

Mr. Paswan's aides claimed that the entire rebellion was orchestrated by the JD(U). Recently at a virtual meeting of the NDA constituents, Mr. Paswan, had excused himself, citing ill-health. Sources said he was asked to do so by the BJP after the JD(U) made it clear that they would not tolerate his presence.

The LJP rebellion is likely to strengthen the JD(U)'s parliamentary position. Out of the 40 MPs from the State, the JD(U) has 16 and the BJP 17.

For now, Mr. Paswan has maintained a studied silence. "As of today, Chirag Paswan is the president of LJP," Abdul Khaliq, secretary general of the LJP said. Mr. Paras too has not staked claim to control the party outside of Parliament. Mr. Paswan is hoping that he can placate the rebels by leaving the president's post to his mother, Reena Paswan, though that would only bring in a temporary truce.

Fertilizer scam: ED preparing to seize assets

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated the process of identifying properties for attachment in connection with the money laundering investigation into the alleged scam in the large-scale import of fertilizers and their raw materials by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative Limited (IFFCO) at highly inflated rates.

Preliminary findings have indicated the "proceeds of the crime" to be worth about ₹900 crore. However, the amount may go up.

The ED is conducting the money laundering probe on the basis of an FIR registered by the CBI.

Among the accused are IFFCO managing director U.S. Awasthi, then Indian Potash Limited (IPL) managing director Pravinder Singh Gahlaut, their sons and others, including Rajiv Saxena, who is also an accused in the AgustaWestland case.

Govt. must practise what it preaches, says Cong.

Party takes a dig at PM's G7 speech

'Fuel prices behind inflation'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said the rise in fuel prices is behind high inflation.

"WPI inflation is 12.94%. CPI inflation is 6.3%. Do you want to know why? Fuel and power inflation is 37.61%. Thanks to PM Modi raising petrol and diesel prices every day," he said. "Food inflation is 6.3%. Do you know why? Pulses inflation is 9.39%. Edible oil inflation is 30%. These are high marks for competent economic management."

lues of "freedom of expression ,both online and offline..." Sign statements abroad. Violate them at home. Freedoms devalued: Internet shutdowns, sedition targeting journalists, students, academics etc."

IN BRIEF



Won't arrest Param Bir till June 22: Maharashtra

MUMBAI
The Maharashtra government told the Bombay High Court on Monday that it will not arrest former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh till June 22 in the case registered against him under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Senior counsel Darius Khambata, for the government, told a Bench of Justices P.B. Varale and S.P. Tavade that Mr. Singh's protection from arrest would be extended till June 22.

HC order today on Jamia student's bail plea

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court is scheduled to pronounce on Tuesday its order on a plea by Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha, arrested under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, seeking bail in connection with a case related to larger conspiracy in the north-east Delhi riots in February last year. A Bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and A.J. Bhambhani had reserved its order on the bail plea on March 18. The High Court, on June 4, granted interim custody bail to Tanha for two weeks from June 13 to June 26 to stay at a hotel here for studying and appearing in examinations scheduled from June 15. PTI

CPWD extends date to submit bids for buildings

NEW DELHI
The CPWD has extended by one week the deadline to submit bids for the three new office buildings under the Common Central Secretariat being built as part of the government's ambitious Central Vista redevelopment project. According to the CPWD official document, technical bids can be submitted till June 23 and they will be opened on the same day. Earlier, the last date to submit bids was June 16. These new buildings will come on the plot where the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts is currently located. PTI

BJP politicised Sushant's death, say Congress, NCP

MUMBAI
With investigating agencies making little headway in the actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case, the Congress and the NCP slammed the BJP for pressurising Central probe teams for political gains. NCP leader Nawab Malik said the BJP politicised the death with an eye on the Bihar Assembly election. Congress leader Sachin Sawant said it had been 310 days since the CBI started investigation and 250 days since the AIIMS panel ruled out murder. "When will CBI declare final conclusion? CBI is under immense pressure from its political bosses."

Land bought in 'transparent' deal, says Ram Temple Trust

Official cites transfer of money to sellers through bank

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

A day after it faced allegations of financial corruption worth several crores in the purchase of a piece of land in Ayodhya, the Trust set up to build the Ram Mandir said it had carried out the deal with great alacrity and transparency.

Champat Rai, general secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, said the 1.2-hectare land in Bagh Bijesi was purchased through full "transparency". Issuing a clarification over the allegations, Mr. Rai said the current sellers of the land had executed contracts in their favour in 2011, 2017 and 2019.

Since the plot was "found useful" by the Trust, the persons concerned were contacted, Mr. Rai said. The final due amount was fixed at ₹1,423 per square feet, which was much less than

He also said the land was purchased with the consent of major temples like Kaushalya Sadan.

Mr. Rai added that from Day 1, the trust had been in favour of making all payments directly into the accounts through banks and the same was followed in this case too.

He accused the parties who raised questions over

the market value of nearby land, he said.

"After an agreement was reached over the rate, the persons concerned were required to complete their previous contracts, only then the land could be acquired by the Trust," he said.

As soon as the deed of land was completed in favour of them, the Trust with "great alacrity and transparency" signed the agreement and got it registered, Mr. Rai said in a detailed note.

He also said the land was purchased with the consent of major temples like Kaushalya Sadan.

Mr. Rai added that from

Day 1, the trust had been in favour of making all payments directly into the accounts through banks and the same was followed in this case too.

He accused the parties

who raised questions over

Journalist killed in UP 'road accident'

He sought protection from liquor mafia

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

A journalist in Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, who had written to the police on Saturday fearing a threat to his life from the liquor mafia, died in an alleged road accident on Sunday, the police said.

Sulabh Srivastava, 42, worked as the district correspondent for news channel ABP News.

Additional Superintendent of Police (East) Surendra P. Dwivedi said Srivastava was returning to Pratapgarh from Lalganj between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. on Sunday after reporting on an incident when the accident took place near a brick kiln at the Katra crossing. Labourers working at the kiln found him lying injured on the road. He was taken to hospital where he was declared brought dead.

The officer said *prima facie* it was found that he was travelling alone and the death happened after he hit a pole and a tubewell on the side of the road. The police, however, were "probing all other angles deeply", he added.

Application to ADG

In an application submitted to Prayagraj ADGP Prem Prakash through WhatsApp, Srivastava had sought police protection, fearing a threat to his life from the liquor



Sulabh Srivastava

'May 28 order has no link with CAA'

Notification by Centre facilitated non-Muslims to apply for citizenship

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry maintained in the Supreme Court on Monday that its May 28 order delegating power to Collectors in 13 districts across five States to grant citizenship to non-Muslims from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh has "no relation whatsoever" with the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019.

The 2019 Act, better known as 'CAA', is under challenge before the Supreme Court. The law is accused of "fast-tracking" citizenship for non-Muslim persecuted minorities – Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Par-

si and Christian – from the three neighbours. The CAA is blamed of illegally granting citizenship on the basis of religion.

Petitions in the Supreme Court have drawn parallels between the CAA and the May 28 notification, which facilitates non-Muslims from the three countries residing in 13 districts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Punjab to apply for citizenship.

The Indian Union Muslim League, represented by advocate Haris Beeran, said the May 28 order was a deliberate ploy to implement the CAA's "malafide designs".

The Ministry countered that the May order "merely dele-

tes the power of [granting citizenship by registration and naturalisation] to the local authorities in particular cases".

"The Central government used its authority under Section 16 of the Citizenship Act... It is merely a process of decentralisation of decision-making aimed at speedy disposal of the citizenship applications of such foreigners... It has no relation whatsoever to the CAA," the MHA affidavit said.

But Mr. Beeran expressed



gates the power of [granting citizenship by registration and naturalisation] to the local authorities in particular cases".

The government reasoned that the notification did not "provide for any relaxations to the foreigners and applies only to foreigners who have entered the country legally". The applicants should possess valid documents like passports and Indian visa.

"Any foreigner of any faith can apply for citizenship of India at any time," the MHA affidavit said.

The Indian Union Muslim League, represented by advocate Haris Beeran, said the May 28 notification was only one among numerous such orders passed in the past to meet "administrative exigencies".

his doubts, saying "if it has no relation to CAA, where does the May 28 notification draw authority from to specify the same communities for the same three countries for facilitating the citizenship process".

The government reasoned that the notification did not "provide for any relaxations to the foreigners and applies only to foreigners who have entered the country legally". The applicants should possess valid documents like passports and Indian visa.

"Any foreigner of any faith can apply for citizenship of India at any time," the MHA affidavit said.

The government, however, said the May 28 notification was only one among numerous such orders passed in the past to meet "administrative exigencies".

He said the Council was the only federalist institution.

Mr. Mitra had sent a dissent note after the 44th meeting of the Council held last week and described its move to retain tax levies on COVID relief materials as a "totally anti-people decision" that was "thrust upon" members.

'Centre is undermining GST Council'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

West Bengal Finance Amit Mitra on Monday said there has been a "dramatic shift" in the Centre's policy towards the GST Council where it is resorting to an "authoritarian and majoritarian" approach undermining its authority and creating an impasse.

The government reasoned that the notification did not "provide for any relaxations to the foreigners and applies only to foreigners who have entered the country legally". The applicants should possess valid documents like passports and Indian visa.

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tries "risk stumbling into using their nuclear weapons through miscalculation or misinterpretation in a future crisis." India and Pakistan are seeking new technologies and capabilities that dangerously undermine each other's defence under the nuclear threshold," said the report. It said China's evolving profile as a nuclear-weapons state was compounding India's security challenges.

'China, India, Pak. expanding nuclear arsenals'

Number of warheads globally appears to be increasing, reversing the earlier trend, says SIPRI report

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

China is in the middle of a significant modernisation and expansion of its nuclear weapon inventory, and India and Pakistan also appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals, according to Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Year Book 2021 released on Monday.

The overall number of warheads in global military

stockpiles now appears to be increasing, a worrisome sign that the declining trend that has characterised global nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War has stalled," said Hans M. Kristensen, associate senior fellow with SIPRI's Nuclear Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme.

According to the year book, India possessed an estimated 156 nuclear warheads at the start of 2021,

compared with 150 at the start of last year, while Pakistan had 165 warheads, up from 160 in 2020. China's nuclear arsenal consisted of 350 warheads, up from 320 at the start of 2020.

The nine nuclear armed states – the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel

A year on, unanswered questions on Galwan clash

China's accounts reveal few details that appear aimed at conveying a carefully crafted message to the domestic audience

ANANTH KRISHNAN

A year after the June 15, 2020 clash in the Galwan Valley, China's official accounts of what led to the worst violence on the India-China border since 1967 still leave many questions unanswered, revealing few and selective details that appear aimed at conveying a carefully crafted message to the domestic audience.

While Chinese officials have said repeatedly in recent months "the rights and wrongs are clear" of what led to the LAC tensions, Indian officials say Beijing is, in fact, yet to provide any clarity or credible explanation of its actions last year, starting with mobilising a large number of troops in April following annual military exercises and deploying them close to the LAC, not just in Galwan Valley.

That mobilisation in April, coming at a time when India had to delay its own summer exercises because of the COVID-19 outbreak, is one of several key missing details in China's official accounts so far.



Trouble spot: A satellite image taken in May 2020 shows a PLA camp in the Galwan Valley. ■ MAXAR TECHNOLOGIES/AP

ly eight months later.

Sparse details

In the past year, China has issued two detailed statements on the LAC, a "step-by-step account" from the Foreign Ministry on June 19, 2020 and accounts in February 2021 published in the official *PLA Daily* after the Chinese government revealed it had suffered casualties as it announced military honours for five soldiers, four of them recognised posthumously.

The first Chinese account of tensions came in the Communist Party-run *Global Times* on May 18, which said Chinese troops had "bolstered border control mea-

sures and made necessary moves in response to India's recent, illegal construction of defence facilities across the border into Chinese territory in the Galwan Valley region". The June 19 statement from the Chinese government said "since April, the Indian border troops have unilaterally and continuously built roads, bridges and other facilities at the LAC in the Galwan Valley." It referred to the early morning of May 6 as the start of more serious tensions, alleging the Indian troops had "crossed the LAC by night".

Indian officials said the reverse had happened: that Indian troops had since April

been prevented from reaching Patrolling Point 14, which they go up to every summer, and that construction of facilities had taken place on India's side of PP14. Satellite images later released suggested the June 15 clash had happened near PP14. Most Indian patrolling points lie short of the LAC on India's side.

Video release

In February, the announcement of military honours for five soldiers was accompanied by the release of a video on Chinese state media from Galwan Valley.

The video clips, which triggered an outpouring of anger in China, showed Indian soldiers crossing the river and Chinese troops holding their ground. The message was to show India as the aggressor, which is the widely prevailing view in China. Left unsaid was the context of the video, in which Indian troops were trying to push back Chinese troops who had come up to PP14.

On June 11, in the lead up to the one-year anniversary

of the clash, which also comes just two weeks before China is planning a major military parade to mark the centenary of the Communist Party on July 1, state broadcaster CCTV interviewed Qi Fabao, the regimental commander who was among the five honoured in February. Mr. Qi spoke at a military meeting, appearing with "the scar on his head clearly seen", the *Global Times* reported. Chen Hongjun, one of the four soldiers who was named as being killed in the clash, will be among 29 people honoured with a medal on the July 1 anniversary.

The continued focus on Galwan, while the still unresolved tensions in Dapsang, Demchok, Gogra and Hot Springs, remain almost entirely ignored in the coverage, is one key element of the broader messaging effort, as acknowledging multiple stand-offs, as well as the fact that it is India and not China that is demanding a return to status quo in the slow-moving negotiations, would undermine the Chinese military's central claim of not being the aggressor.

At NATO meet, Biden vows to defend Europe

He calls it a 'sacred obligation' of U.S.

REUTERS
BRUSSELS

U.S. President Joe Biden told fellow NATO leaders on Monday the defence of Europe, Turkey and Canada was a "sacred obligation" for the United States, a marked shift from his predecessor Donald Trump's threats to withdraw from the military alliance.



Joe Biden

Alliance over the past four years and what Mr. Trump said were its "delinquent" members.

Allies are expected to brand China a security risk to the Western alliance for the first time, a day after the Group of Seven rich nations issued a statement on human rights in China and Taiwan that Beijing said slandered its reputation.

Mr. Biden said both Russia and China were not acting "in a way that is consistent with what we had hoped", referring to Western efforts since the mid-1990s to bring both countries into the fold of liberal democracies.

The reign of 'Bibi' is over, for now

The ousted leader has vowed to topple the 'dangerous' new govt. of PM Bennett

STANLY JOHNY



Benjamin Netanyahu

Supporters call him 'King Bibi of Israel'. Detractors deride his right-wing politics, polarising leadership and bellicose foreign policy. But Benjamin Netanyahu has been a domineering presence in Israel's politics for more than three decades. On Sunday, his illustrious political career suffered a major setback when a coalition formed by his former protégés proved majority in the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament, bringing an end to Mr. Netanyahu's 12 years of consecutive rule.

Arguably, no politician has managed to influence Israel's domestic and foreign policies as much as Mr. Netanyahu has done in the new century. He ruled from the right, made alliances with a host of Jewish orthodox parties, took a harder line towards the Palestinians, expanded the Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories, repeatedly bombed Gaza, clashed with the Obama administration over the Iran deal, took Israel's covert and overt operations to Iran and Syria, made peace with four Arab countries and clung on to power despite repeated failures to form a stable government since 2019.

Even after the 'change' coalition was formed under the leadership of centrist politician Yair Lapid and right-wing leader Naftali Bennett, Mr. Netanyahu tried till the last moment to subvert government formation. And after it became certain that Mr. Bennett would be elected Prime Minister on Sunday, in the Knesset, he threatened to "topple the dangerous left-wing government". The message is clear – Mr. Netanyahu is already plotting a comeback.

Opposition to Oslo talks
Born in Israel and brought up partly in the U.S., Mr. Netanyahu, like most Israelis, served in the military in the 1970s, along with his brother Yonatan Netanyahu. Yonatan was killed in 1976, at age 30, during an operation to rescue hostages held at Uganda's Entebbe Airport. Mr. Netanyahu rose to fame in the 1980s when he was posted as Israel's Ambassador to the UN. A fluent speaker in English with an East Coast accent, he was a regular presence in American TV shows during that time. After returning to Israel, he plunged into politics, in 1988, in the midst of the First Intifada by the Palestinians. Mr. Netanyahu built a political career by opposing the Oslo peace process in the early 1990s.

In 1993, when he was 43, Mr. Netanyahu became the leader of Likud. He lambasted the Oslo Accords, attended right-wing rallies held to

NEWS ANALYSIS

played second fiddle to Ariel Sharon. But the party came into his hands when Sharon left Likud in 2005 to form Kadima. As Likud chief, he sat in the Opposition. It was during this period that Mr. Bennett joined the Netanyahu team. A U.S.-based entrepreneur, Mr. Bennett became Mr. Netanyahu's Chief of Staff. Mr. Netanyahu came to power again in 2009. Twelve years later, the same Bennett would dislodge his former boss from power and take his job.

In the past, Mr. Netanyahu had mastered the art of survival. But his repeated failure to form a stable government after four elections since 2019 appeared to have weakened him.

He is also facing corruption charges. Even the Gaza bombing, which many predicted would help him politically, appears to have backfired as his right-wing allies criticised the ceasefire with Hamas, calling it a "surrender".

Fragile coalition

When his grip on Israeli politics finally started loosening up, his political rivals found an opportunity. Mr. Lapid stitched together a coalition of eight parties, from the right-wing Yamina of Mr. Bennett to the Arab Ra'am. This is the first time an Arab party is joining a ruling coalition in the history of Israel.

In the Knesset, Mr. Netanyahu has made it clear that he will not give up. He has called the coming together of the diverse parties an "election fraud". On the other side, the Lapid-Bennett coalition is visibly weak. When Mr. Lapid announced the coalition earlier this month, he had the support of 61 Members of the Knesset (MKs) out of 120. During the vote on June 13, the government got the backing of 60 MKs as against the Opposition's 59 – one MK from Ra'am abstained. It would be an uphill task for Mr. Bennett to keep his bloc together, especially when sensitive issues such as Jerusalem and Jewish settlements come up.

But to begin with, they did what seemed impossible till a few months ago – ousting Mr. Netanyahu from power. For Messrs. Lapid and Bennett, that itself is an achievement.

Novavax announces efficacy of about 90% for its vaccine

In India, it is slated to be produced in partnership with SII

SIRRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON



cine is safe, according to a press release from Novavax.

Novavax detected strains of the virus found first in the U.K., U.S., Brazil, South Africa and India, according to data released by the company during a Monday morning conference call.

Vaccine efficacy was 91% in "high-risk" populations (above 65 years of age, or under 65 years with comorbidities or frequent COVID-19 exposure) the company said.

Novavax said it plans to apply for authorisations in the third quarter (July-September) and is on track to manufacture 100 million doses a month by the end of September, and 150 million doses a month by the end of 2021. The U.S. has more doses than it will need to vaccinate its entire population and as a result, much of the Novavax vaccine may be used in developing countries.

Ten moderate to severe cases of the disease were observed, but all were confined to the placebo group, the company said. All 14 infections in the vaccinated group were mild. Preliminary data suggest that the vac-

tries. That it can be stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius makes it easier to use in developing countries, where maintaining unbroken cold chains can be challenging. The vaccine works by eliciting an immune response to a prefusion spike protein built from Novavax's recombinant nanoparticle technology and an adjuvant (a substance that increases immune response).

The vaccine is likely to be authorised first in a country other than the U.S., its CEO Stanly Erck said, according to the *New York Times*. "Many of our first doses will go to... low- and middle-income countries, and that was the goal to begin with," Mr. Erck told The Associated Press.

Novavax has signed an agreement with international vaccine access coalition Gavi, to supply 1.1 billion to low- and middle-income countries.

In India, the vaccine is slated to be produced in partnership with the Serum Institute of India (SII), under the name Covaxax. Earlier in June, the Drugs Controller General of India had given permission to SII to go ahead with Phase 2/3 trials.

China accuses G7 of 'political manipulation'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China on Monday accused the G7 of "political manipulation" after it criticised Beijing over its human rights record in Xinjiang and Hong Kong.

In a communiqué after a three-day summit in England, G7 leaders slammed China over abuses against minorities in the Xinjiang region and pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong, while U.S. President Joe Biden called for Beijing to "start acting more responsibly in terms of international norms on human rights".

The Chinese Embassy in the U.S. responded angrily on Monday. "The Group of Seven (G7) takes advantage of Xinjiang-related issues to engage in political manipulation and interfere in China's internal affairs, which we firmly oppose," an Embassy spokesman said in a statement.

The statement accused the G7 of "lies, rumours and baseless accusations".

Activists say China has rounded up an estimated one million Uighurs and other minorities in Xinjiang into internment camps, which Beijing says is to eradicate extremism.

EU resolution puts spotlight on Sri Lanka's rights situation

It does not take cognisance of multi-faceted progress: govt.

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

A recent resolution adopted by the European Parliament, urging the EU Commission to consider temporary withdrawal of the GSP+ status given to Sri Lanka, has put the spotlight back on Sri Lanka's human rights situation, prompting Colombo to defend its "multifaceted progress" in its response.

Sri Lanka regained the GSP+, or the EU's 'Generalised Scheme of Preferences' in 2017, on Colombo's commitment to implement 27 international conventions on human rights, labour conditions, protection of the environment and good governance. The status effectively

removes import duties on goods from Sri Lanka entering the EU.

The June 10 resolution, expressing "deep concern over Sri Lanka's alarming path towards the recurrence of grave human rights violations", makes specific reference to the use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, pointing to arrests of lawyer Hejaaz Hizbullah and poet Ahnaf Jazeem, among others, who are in "arbitrary" detention for over a year.

The resolution notes the "continuing discrimination" against and violence towards religious and ethnic minorities, while voicing "serious concern" about the 20th Amendment passed in

2020, and the "resulting decline in judiciary independence, the reduction of parliamentary control, and the excessive accumulation of power with the presidency".

Responding, Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry on Friday said it regrets the adoption of the resolution that, it observed, "contains factual inaccuracies, and does not take cognisance of the multifaceted progress made by Sri Lanka in reconciliation and development." Rejecting claims that the PTA is used for arbitrary detentions, the Ministry said it was "revising provisions" of the Act to propose "necessary amendments", drawing upon international best practices.

ANDHRA PRADESH POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
D.No. 33-26-14 D/2, Near Sunrise Hospital,
Kasturbaipet, Vijayawada-520010, Andhra Pradesh.
Date: 15.06.2021

e-Procurement Tender Notice

Bids are invited for the supply, installation, commissioning of eight (08) Real Time Noise Monitoring Stations (RTNS) and Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Services followed by data transfer to APPCB and CPCB servers online. The tender document along with the schedule can be downloaded from www.apeprocurement.gov.in or <https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in>. Bids shall be submitted online through e-Procurement platform only.

The last date for submission of bids : 12-07-2021 by 01.00 pm. For details, contact 9177303281, 8008403053

Sd/- Member Secretary, APPCB

ओणजीसी ONGC
HPHT ASSET, KAKINADA (A.P.)
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

EOA/ HPHT Asset, Kakinada invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from reputed and experienced Agencies for carrying out "Development of Parking Area by providing hardening and fencing in front of Admin Building at OGT Plant, HPHT Asset, P. Mallavaram, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh". Interested Agencies are requested to submit their profile along with documentary evidence regarding POC (Past Experience) on or before 4:00 Hrs. on 05-07-2021 through e-mail to saravananan2@ongc.co.in and sreenivasulu_p@ongc.co.in. For further details please visit website:<https://tenders.ongc.co.in>

HAR EK KAAM DESH KE NAMM

Tender Notice
Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat
Krishi Bhavan, Sector - 10 A, CH Road, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat is inviting online tender through <https://nprocure.com> from the prospective bidders meeting the basic eligibility criteria as stated in the Tender document for the below mentioned project work

Tender No.	Name of Work	Tender Start Date, Tender End Date and Tender Fee
DAG/Ecostat/AWS/1/021	Hiring Agency for providing Weather Data based on Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) for Gujarat.	Tender Start Date: 15-06-2021 (11:00 hrs.) Tender End Date: 13-07-2021 (Up to 18:00 hrs.) Tender Fee: 15,000

Prospective Bidders are requested to visit <https://nprocure.com> for the further details

-Sd/- Directorate of Agriculture G.S., Gandhinagar

INF/395/21-22

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF T.S. LTD.
e-Procurement Tender Notice (Paper Notification)
TSSPDCL intends to float tenders for procurement of (a) 3Cx16+25 Sq.mm LT/LPE AB Cable (b) 3Ph (10-40)A whole current meter in Pp Box with IRDA port (c) 33Kg 800A (Conv.) Double Break AB Switches with 0.25ms Gold Contacts (d) 9.1 Mtrs 280 Kgs PSCC Poles to City circle (e) 8.0 Mtrs 140 Kgs PSCC Poles to City circle (f) 34 Sq.mms AAA Conductor on e-procurement platform.

Phone: 040-23423139, 1035, 1026, 1448
R.O. No.: 1852-PICL-AGENCY/ADVT/2021-22 Date: 14-06-2

MARKET WATCH

	14-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,551	-0.15
US Dollar	73.29	-0.30
Gold	47,705	-1.69
Brent oil	73.39	0.90

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	768.45	-71.30
Asian Paints	2949.90	-6.35
Axis Bank	736.25	-2.20
Bajaj Auto	4146.50	-26.00
Bajaj Finserv	11926.15	18.65
Bajaj Finance	6194.15	74.15
Bharti Airtel	539.35	-1.50
BPCL	483.70	0.10
Britannia Ind	3591.25	33.35
Cipla	976.15	8.30
Coal India	159.35	-3.30
Divis Lab	4388.05	53.55
Dr Reddys Lab	5461.35	8.35
Eicher Motors	2744.95	-1.45
Grafix Ind	1493.00	2.40
HCL Tech	984.20	0.85
HDFC	2539.20	-20.60
HDFC Bank	1479.45	-6.90
HDFC Life	681.70	-0.90
Hero MotoCorp	2985.65	-18.70
Hindalco	394.80	1.65
Hind Unilever	2364.60	-1.90
ICICI Bank	635.15	-0.55
IndusInd Bank	1024.30	9.20
Infosys	1461.80	14.90
Indian Oil Corp	114.75	-0.35
ITC	207.30	-0.60
JSW Steel	729.15	-2.05
Kotak Bank	1768.05	-26.30
L&T	1515.75	12.30
M&M	807.45	-1.55
Maruti Suzuki	7177.85	-45.95
Nestle India Ltd.	17577.50	41.10
NTPC	118.20	-0.60
ONGC	124.80	1.25
PowerGrid Corp	248.70	2.40
Reliance Ind	2244.90	31.75
SBI Life	986.15	-1.95
State Bank	430.35	0.75
Shree Cement	28334.05	278.05
Sun Pharma	677.10	-4.20
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	714.75	-0.65
Tata Motors	355.95	5.20
Tata Steel	1164.80	6.45
TCS	3276.35	2.55
Tech Mahindra	1069.25	-3.75
Titan	1734.80	6.35
UltraTech Cement	6678.50	15.65
UPL	834.60	-0.55
Wipro	561.60	7.30

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.07	73.39
Euro	88.53	88.92
British Pound	102.97	103.43
Japanese Yen (100)	66.62	66.91
Chinese Yuan	11.42	11.47
Swiss Franc	81.26	81.66
Singapore Dollar	55.07	55.32
Canadian Dollar	60.11	60.40
Malaysian Ringgit	17.75	17.84

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Natco's anti-cancer drug gets U.S.FDA approval

HYDERABAD
Natco Pharma on Monday said the U.S.FDA had approved its marketing partner Breckenridge Pharmaceutical's application for Carfilzomib Vials, a generic of anti-cancer drug Kyprolis. While the 10mg and 60mg strengths received final approval, the 30mg strength has got a tentative approval.

Kirloskar Brothers opens new unit at Pune plant
MUMBAI
Kirloskar Brothers Ltd. (KBL) said it had unveiled a new manufacturing division 'Advanced Technology Product Division (ATPD)' at the company's mother plant in Kirloskarvadi, Pune. "The facility is a one-stop shop for machining, quality control checks, assembly, and testing under high pressure and high temperature," KBL said in a statement.

Download speeds stay resilient'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI
Mobile phone-usage experience in India remained resilient during the second wave of COVID-19 lockdowns despite increased demand for mobile data than the first wave, said mobile analytics firm Opensignal.

In the last three weeks of April, average data consumption had soared between 20% and 23%.

"Unlike the first lockdown, our users did not observe a substantial change in their overall download experience during the second wave."

"This highlights that the mobile experience has been remarkably resilient during the second wave despite increased demand for mobile data," it added.

CM YK

Consumer inflation quickens to 6.3%

Rural areas see sharper spurt; WPI inflation races to record 12.94% spurred by rise in fuel, edible oils

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Retail inflation hit a six-month high of 6.3% in May, thanks to a persistent rise in fuel and edible oil prices, which also played a part in pushing wholesale prices to a record 12.94% inflation in the month, as per data released on Monday.

Consumers experienced an inflation of 11.58% for the 'fuel and light' category in May, with urban India bearing a bigger hit of 14.24% on the same account. Food inflation reheated to 5.1% from just 1.96% in April.

Overall retail prices, however, saw a sharper spurt in rural areas from 3.75% in April to 6.5% in May, while it was less pronounced in urban India at a little more than 6% from 4.7% in April, as per the National Statistical



Runaway prices: Food inflation accelerated significantly to 5.1% from a mere 1.96% in April. ■ RAMAKRISHNA G

Office. At the wholesale level, fuel and power inflation nearly quadrupled to 37.6% from the 9.75% recorded in March this year, and is significantly higher than the 20.94% mark attained in April. Manufactured products' inflation rose to

10.83% from 9% in April. The high rate of inflation is primarily due to low base effect and rise in prices of crude petroleum, mineral oils, and manufactured products', an official statement on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) said.

WPI had contracted 3.37% in May 2020.

'RBI will find it tricky'

Economists said the hardening inflation numbers would make it trickier for the Reserve Bank of India to balance the need to spur growth while keeping a lid on price rise, but they don't expect a change from its 'accommodative' stance any time soon.

The RBI had recently revised its inflation estimate for 2021-22 to 5.4%, while moderating growth hopes for 2021 to 9.5%.

"The phased unlocking of the States may temper the CPI inflation to around 6% in June. We have raised our forecast for the FY2022 average CPI inflation to at least 5.4%," said its chief economist Aditi Nayar.

She, however, expects the RBI's monetary policy committee to maintain 'a high tolerance' even if average retail inflation hovers between 5.5 and 6%, given the uncertainties regarding the growth outlook.

the retail inflation as well, is going to make things difficult for RBI," said Sunil Kumar Sinha, principal economist at India Ratings.

Ratings agency ICRA said core retail inflation had hit an 83-month high of 6.6% and is expected to remain higher than 5% through the year.

"The phased unlocking of

the States may temper the CPI inflation to around 6% in June. We have raised our forecast for the FY2022 average CPI inflation to at least 5.4%," said its chief economist Aditi Nayar.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Shares of Adani Group companies witnessed a massive drubbing in morning trade on Monday, tumbling up to 25%, amid reports that the National Securities Depository Ltd. (NSDL) had frozen certain foreign portfolio investor (FPI) accounts that have holding in some of these firms.

Business Gautam Adani's group on Monday said it had written confirmation that accounts of three foreign funds, that were among its top shareholders, had not frozen and reports to the contrary were "blatantly erroneous and misleading".

Following the statement, shares of some group firms witnessed partial recovery from their early losses.

Adani Enterprises closed 6.26% lower at ₹1,501.25 and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone tumbled 8.36% to ₹768.70 on the BSE.

"We requested Registrar and Transfer Agent, with respect to the status of the Demat Account(s) of the aforesaid funds and have their written confirmation vide its e-mail dated 14th June, 2021, clarifying that the Demat Account(s), in which the aforesaid funds hold the shares of the company, are not frozen," the firms said.

All these stocks hit their respective lower circuit limits during the trade.

'Albula, Cresta, APMS'

According to media reports, the NSDL had frozen the accounts of three foreign funds which together owned shares in four Adani Group firms. The accounts were frozen on or before May 31, the report added.

Adani Enterprises, the conglomerate's flagship company, as also Adani Ports and Special Economic



Zone, Adani Green Energy Ltd., Adani Transmission Ltd., Adani Power and Adani Total Gas Ltd., in identical filings to the stock exchanges, said the reports of NSDL freezing accounts of Albula Investment Fund, Cresta Fund and APMS Investment Fund, holding shares in the group firms, were "blatantly erroneous and misleading".

"This is causing irreparable loss of economic value to the investors at large and reputation of the group," it said.

In morning trade, Adani Enterprises had tanked 24.99% to ₹1,201.10, while Adani Ports dived 18.75% to ₹681.50. Adani Green Energy dipped 4.13% to ₹1,75.95, Adani Total Gas fell 5% to ₹5,44.55, Adani Transmission declined 5% to ₹1,517.25 and Adani Power slumped 4.99% to ₹140.90.

All these stocks hit their respective lower circuit limits during the trade.

"Initially, a news report on the Adani group triggered a weak start, however the benchmark gradually recovered as the day progressed, thanks to noticeable buying in select index majors. The clarification by the company further comforted the market and helped the index to close flat."

The Sensex fell 538.45 points to 51,936.31 but later recovered to close 76.77 points higher at 52,551.53.



The second wave of COVID-19 has adversely impacted the domestic cement sales in the April-June quarter, reducing 25% on a quarter-on-quarter basis but pent-up demand is expected to push up volumes starting in the July-September quarter, as per a report.

In April, when the second wave was on the rise, domestic production was down 35% month-on-month in April and 4% lower in comparison with the pre-pandemic April 2019, said ratings agency ICRA.

Unlike last year, rural areas have also been impacted in the second wave.

"The recovery in the ru-

ral regions is expected to be gradual," it said. However, it added that pent-up demand is likely to drive offtake once lockdowns are relaxed.

ICRA AVP and sector head Anupama Reddy said cement firms have raised prices by an average of 5% in April from a year earlier, spurred by the rise in input costs, primarily power & fuel and freight expenses.

Coal India Q4 profit drops 1% on lower sales

June 30 last day for forms 15CA/15CB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Income Tax department on Monday allowed manual filing of certain forms after the new tax filing portal continued to face tech glitches even a week after its introduction.

The I-T department issued a circular allowing manual filing of Form 15CA/15CB (required for foreign remittances) with banks till June 30, so that business transactions may go on. The new portal was unveiled on June 7.

But users complained of technical issues from the very first day and not everything has been fixed even after a week, chartered accountants said.

In a statement, the I-T department said, "In view of the difficulties reported by



taxpayers in electronic filing of Income Tax Forms 15CA/15CB on the portal, it has been decided that taxpayers can submit the aforesaid forms in manual format to the authorised dealers till June 30."

Nangia & Co. LLP partner Shailesh Kumar said due to shutdown of old e-filing portal post May 31 and technical snags being faced with the new portal, filing of online Forms 15CA and 15CB has not been possible till now.

PNB Housing Fin deal under RBI, SEBI lens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as well as SEBI will look into various regulatory issues related to the proposed ₹4,000 crore-investment by U.S.-based private equity firm Carlyle and others in PNB Housing Finance, sources said on Monday.

According to the sources, concerns of minority shareholders, corporate governance and others regulatory aspects would be looked

Dumfries saves the Netherlands' blushes

Schick's worldie dampens Scotland's return to the big stage; Slovakia pulls the rug from under Poland's feet

EURO 2020

REUTERS
AMSTERDAM

Flying full back Denzel Dumfries scored a late winner to earn the Netherlands a 3-2 victory over Ukraine in a thrilling Group C opener at the European Championship on Sunday after the Dutch had thrown away a two-goal lead.

Dumfries rescued all three points for the home team five minutes from time after Ukraine had fought its way back into the match at the Johan Cruyff Arena.

The Dutch were 2-0 up with 15 minutes left, only to allow their opponents two quick goals and the chance to share the points before Dumfries headed home a dramatic winner to the delight of the home fans.

Quick one-two
Captain Georginio Wijnaldum and striker Wout Weghorst

orsted netted within seven minutes early in the second half.

That put the Dutch in command but Ukraine ensured a nervy finish when captain Andriy Yarmolenko pulled one back in the 75th minute with a superb strike and Roman Yaremchuk equalised four minutes later.

Slick finishing

In Glasgow, Scotland's long-awaited return to a major international tournament was ruined by Patrik Schick's slick finishing as the Czech Republic won 2-0 at Hampden on Monday to move top of Group D.

Schick's header just before half-time opened the scoring, but it was his stunning strike from just inside the Scotland half after the break that will live in the memory as one of the all-time great European Championship goals.

Then later Slovakia stunned Poland with a 2-1 result. An early own-goal by Po-



Saviour: Denzel Dumfries, right, headed goal ensured full points after the Netherlands let slip a two-goal advantage. • AFP

land goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny and a red card for Grzegorz Krychowiak left Poland with a mountain to climb, even though it drew level through Karol Linetty. Mi-

lan Skriniar then ensured full points for Slovakia firing in from close range.

The results: Group C: The Netherlands 3 (Wijnaldum 52, Weghorst 59, Dumfries 85) Ukraine 2 (Yarmolenko 75, Yaremchuk 79). Group D: Scotland 0 lost to Czech Republic (Schick 42, 52). Group E: Poland 1 (Linetty 46) lost to Slovakia 2 (Szczesny 18, Skriniar 69).

French icons



Lofty goal: Roland-Garros champion Novak Djokovic has set his sights on the Golden Slam – all four Majors and the Olympic title – insisting "everything is possible". • REUTERS

+ WTC: points per Test win could be equal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The World Test Championship points system is set to undergo a change during the second edition where teams will get "same standardised number of points" for winning a game rather than the 120 allocated per series, ICC interim CEO Geoff Allardice said on Monday.

In the last cycle, the value for each series was 120 points where a two-match India-Bangladesh series had 60 points for a win while a four-match India-Australia Test series had 30 points.

During the last phase, with lot of series cancelled, ICC reverted to the system where ranking was done on the basis points divided by the matches.

Pitch will have pace, bounce and carry: curator

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SOUTHAMPTON**
The head groundsman at Southampton, Simon Lee, is aiming to produce a pacy and bouncy pitch for the World Test Championship final with some assistance for spinners later on in the game.

The final will be played between India and New Zealand from June 18.

"Pitch preparation for this Test is a little simpler as we are a neutral venue, we are guided by the ICC. But what we all want is a good pitch that offers an even contest between the teams," Lee told ESPNcricinfo.

"For me, personally, I just want to get something out that has some pace, bounce and carry in the pitch. It can be a hard thing to do in England as the weather



Simon Lee.
• TWITTER/ESPNCRICINFO

doesn't help us most of the time, but the forecast in the build-up is good with a lot of sun, so we are hopeful," he said.

'Rahane advised us on how to bat in Tests'

Harmanpreet says much is expected from bowling spearhead Jhulan Goswami

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Much has changed in men's cricket since Harmanpreet Kaur played her last Test, way back in 2014. Her own masterpiece, 171 not out off 115 balls in the World Cup semifinal against Australia in England three years later, would play a big role in transforming the women's game in India.

Over the next few days though, Harmanpreet and her teammates' focus would be on the red ball, as India gets ready to take on England in the one-off Test at Bristol, starting on Wednesday. Her last, and second, Test, against South Africa at Mysuru, was also India's last.

The visitors would go into the Test match without much practice. "But as players we need to adapt,"

the India vice-captain said at a virtual press conference on Monday.

Harmanpreet and other batters got some very useful tips on how to bat in Tests from Ajinkya Rahane, the man who knows a thing or two about playing long innings.

"We got a chance to speak to Rahane, who has a lot of experience in Tests," she said. "He told us about how to bat and what should be our approach in long-form cricket. He told us how to divide an innings into five-minute periods."

Different conditions

She said the team was trying to make the best out of the short time got for preparing for the Test match. "The wickets here are totally different from those in India,"



Jhulan Goswami.
• TWITTER/BCCIWOMEN

she said. "The ball swings here and we have been practising for that at the nets."

Harmanpreet said the team was expecting a lot

from the bowling spearhead Jhulan Goswami, who had a lot of success in the previous Tests she played in England.

"Jhulan has always been someone who leads (from the front) when we are in the field," she said. "She is special for us and always gives breakthroughs whenever we need...I hope she will be fantastic in this match also."

Though only few of India's women cricketers have had the experience of playing with the red ball, Harmanpreet expressed hopes for the future. "It is a totally different scenario when you play red-ball cricket. As a player it is important to get used to conditions. We don't get any domestic games with the red ball but (I hope) in the upcoming seasons we will get more red-ball cricket, which will be very good for us."

The winner of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final, between India and New Zealand, will take home \$1.6 million along with the ICC Test Championship Mace, the International Cricket Council announced on Monday.

The team finishing second in the nine-team competition, which was played over a near two-year cycle, will get \$800,000 and the third-placed team \$450,000. The team fourth on the table will be awarded \$350,000, the fifth \$200,000, and the remaining four teams \$100,000 each.

In case the final ends in a draw or a tie, the finalists will split the prize money for the first and second places and share possession of the mace during the time they remain champion.

'Chopra model' could have been tried for others

Without competitions, very difficult for athletes to stay motivated: Uwe Hohn

**STAN RAYAN
KOCHE**

As javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra gets ready for his next meet, Sweden's Karlstad GP, back home Shivpal Singh must be really desperate for meets.

Shivpal, like Chopra, has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics but the Athletics Federation of India's plans to send him and others to Turkey and more recently to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan for competitions have failed. Visa restrictions and 14-day quarantine have often been given out as hurdles for athletes' travel abroad.

That brings us to the big question: Why didn't the AFI try the 'Chopra model' to send Shivpal and others abroad at this crucial stage with the Olympics just 40 days away. Chopra, the country's brightest hope for a medal in Tokyo, flew to Portugal via France on June 6 and won a meet in Lisbon



Beneficial: It would do a world of good if Tokyo-bound Shivpal Singh gets some international exposure. • GETTY IMAGES

four days later. "We tried since ages to get a camp or get to Europe for competitions for our top throwers but it's very difficult because of strict restrictions of other countries. But there is also no support from AFI or SAI. And the fact that Neeraj was able to leave is based on contacts of JSW (which is supporting him),"

said German Uwe Hohn, the national javelin throw coach, in a chat with *The Hindu* on Monday.

"Few athletes had one competition in 2020, for others last competition was in 2019 so they need to catch some competition. It's part of training and eight to 10 competitions should be okay."

Some Indian shooters, swimmers, wrestlers and boxers are either training or taking part in events abroad.

So one can imagine the frustration of athletes like Shivpal, Annu Rani (19th and well placed on the Road to Tokyo women's javelin rankings), long jumper M. Srishankar (qualified), shotputter Tajinderpal Singh Toor and the 4x400m men's and women's relay runners who are in the danger zone in the rankings. They are all desperate for competitions.

"Athletes realise that there's no support from anyone... so it's also very difficult to stay motivated," said Hohn a former world record holder. "Probably only Neeraj will have the advantage of international competitions (before Tokyo)."

AFI president Adilie Sumariwalla and SAI director-general Sandip Pradhan did not respond to calls or messages sent for their version.

**P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE**

Viswanathan Anand's simultaneous online chess games against celebrities on Sunday night raised more than ₹10 lakh. Less than 24 hours later, the event, conducted by chess.com for COVID-19 relief, was being talked about for all the wrong reasons.

One of the players, it turned out, had resorted to "unfair practices" during his game against the five-time World champion.

Surprise win
Nikhil Kamath, co-founder of stockbroker firm Zerodha, had sprung a surprise; he was the only one among the nine celebrities to defeat Anand.

Actor Aamir Khan, cricketer Yuvendra Chahal and singer Arijit Singh had all lost.

Kamath is now facing allegations of cheating – that is,

using the aid of a computer during his game against Anand. Chess.com has closed his account, for "violating the fair play policy". Kamath has admitted as much on Twitter.

"I had help from the people analyzing the game, computers and the graciousness of Anand sir himself to treat the game as a learning experience. This was for fun and charity. In hindsight, it was quite silly as I didn't realise

all the confusion that can get caused due to this. Apologies..."

Anand was understandably upset by the whole episode. He tweeted: "Yesterday was a celebrity simul for people to raise money. It was a fun experience upholding the ethics of the game. I just played the position on the board and expected the same from everyone."

Interestingly, Anand would not have lost if he had

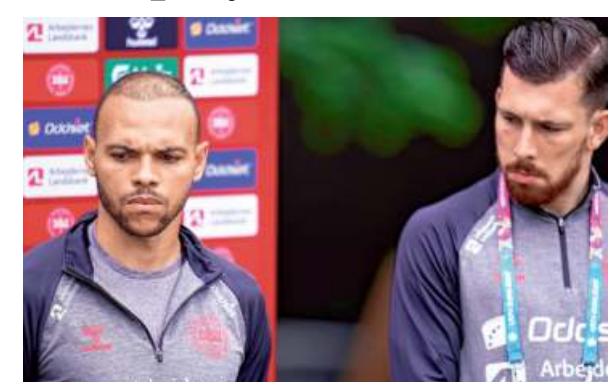
not chosen to concede. Kamath had only a few seconds left on the clock, but Anand, the great champion and gentleman that he is, resigned, rather than wait for his opponent to lose on time.

Unethical
Aruna Anand, his wife and manager, said what happened was unethical and against the spirit of the game and the cause.

"Mr. Kamath spoke to Anand over phone this morning," Aruna told *The Hindu*. "Anand told him 'Whatever you do, you please do in your personal capacity, and don't involve my name'. Anand also texted me he cannot deny what an algorithm finds out."

She said Anand's name should not have been dragged into Kamath's tweet and used as an excuse. "I think Mr. Kamath now needs to set the moral compass right," she said.

'Will play for Eriksen'



Looking ahead: Danish players Braithwaite and Hojbjerg want to give it their all in the next game. • AP

**ASSOCIATED PRESS
COPENHAGEN**

Christian Eriksen had a simple message for his Denmark teammates when he spoke to them from the hospital for the first time following his collapse at the European Championship.

"He told us to look forward, and to look forward to the game on Thursday," Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg said. Monday. "That meant a lot. ... It gave me a form of energy."

Hojbjerg along with goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel

and forward Martin Braithwaite spoke to the media.

"It gives you the feeling that it's OK to move forward," Hojbjerg said. "We really want to play on Thursday, to play for Christian."

Braithwaite fought back tears when asked about that moment. "I tried doing the only thing I could to help him at that moment," Braithwaite said.

Schmeichel, who is close friends with Eriksen and his family, said he had been able to visit the midfielder in the hospital as well.

Smooth start for Federer

**REUTERS
HALLE**

Roger Federer made a winning return to the grass courts with a hard-fought 7-6(4), 7-5 victory over qualifier Ilya Ivashka at the Halle Open on Monday.

The Swiss, who has not played a competitive match on grass since his Wimbledon final defeat by Novak Djokovic almost two years ago, was quickly back in the routine.

Federer withdrew from the French Open last week, stating that he wanted to prepare for Wimbledon.

He is bidding for an 11th title in Halle.

\$1.6 million for WTC winner

**ANI
DUBAI**

The winner of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final, between India and New Zealand, will take home \$1.6 million along with the ICC Test Championship Mace, the International Cricket Council announced on Monday.

"Jhulan has always been someone who leads (from the front) when we are in the field," she said. "She is special for us and always gives breakthroughs whenever we need...I hope she will be fantastic in this match also."

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In case the final ends in a draw or a tie, the finalists will split the prize money for the first and second places and share possession of the mace during the time they remain champion.

Controversy mars Anand's celebrity games

Nikhil Kamath admits resorting to 'unfair practices' en route to his incredible win



Incredulous! The moment that left chess aficionados stunned – Viswanathan Anand resigning against Nikhil Kamath.

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

not chosen to concede. Kamath had only a few seconds left on the clock, but Anand, the great champion and gentleman that he is, resigned, rather than wait for his opponent to lose on time.

Anand was understandably upset by the whole episode. He tweeted: "Yesterday was a celebrity simul for people to raise money. It was a fun experience upholding the ethics of the game. I just played the position on the board and expected the same from everyone."

TV PICKS

FIFA WC 2022 Qualifier: India vs Afghanistan, Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.

Euro 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

IN BRIEF



Higgo wins Palmetto title; Lahiri ends T-25

RIDGEGLAND (US)
South African Garrick Higgo carded a three-under 68 in the final round for an 11-under 273 and won the Palmetto Championship here on Sunday. Anirban Lahiri carded four-under 67 to finish a creditable tied 25th. Lahiri totalled five-under 279 (69, 73, 70, 67). PTI



Castren is first Finn to win on LPGA Tour

SAN FRANCISCO
Matilda Castren fired a 65 on Sunday to finish 14-under 274 and capture the Mediheal Championship title by two strokes, the first Finn to win on the LPGA Tour. Lee Min of Chinese Taipei came in second. AFP

Malvika Bansod triumphs

KAUNAS (LITHUANIA)
India's Malvika Bansod defeated Rachael Darragh of Ireland in straight games to clinch the women's singles crown at the RSL Lithuanian International badminton tournament here on Sunday. The third seeded Indian got the better of fourth seed Darragh 21-11, 21-11 in a summit clash that lasted just 29 minutes.

Neymar headlines Brazil's easy win

Colombia pulls off a well-choreographed free-kick routine to best Ecuador

COPA AMERICA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRASILIA

Star forward Neymar netted a penalty and created a second as hosts Brazil eased to a 3-0 victory over a coronavirus-depleted Venezuela on Sunday in the opening match of the 2021 Copa America.

Centre-back Marquinhos opened the scoring midway through the first half and Gabriel sealed the win a minute from time.

Makeshift side

Played in front of an empty Mane Garrincha stadium in Brasilia due to COVID-19 restrictions, Brazil made light of the continent's minnows, who arrived with a makeshift side missing at least eight players who were ruled out after testing positive for coronavirus the day before.

Venezuela called up 15 emergency replacements but could still only name seven.



Capping it off: Colombia's Edwin Cardona (No. 10) applies the finishing touch to an intricate team move. ■ REUTERS

ven out of a possible 12 substitutes due to a lack of available players.

The game went ahead and, predictably, reigning champion Brazil was well on top.

In Cuiaba, a surprising choreographed move gave Colombia a 1-0 win against Ecuador in its first match.

Edwin Cardona scored the winner at the Arena Pantanal in the 42nd minute of a

tense game on Sunday.

The decisive moment started when midfielder Cardona took a free kick close to the edge of the Ecuadorian penalty box. Instead of shooting, he ex-

By The Numbers

■ 7 - The number of chances created by Neymar against Venezuela

■ 7 - The number of Brazilian players who finished the first half with their average position being in the rival half

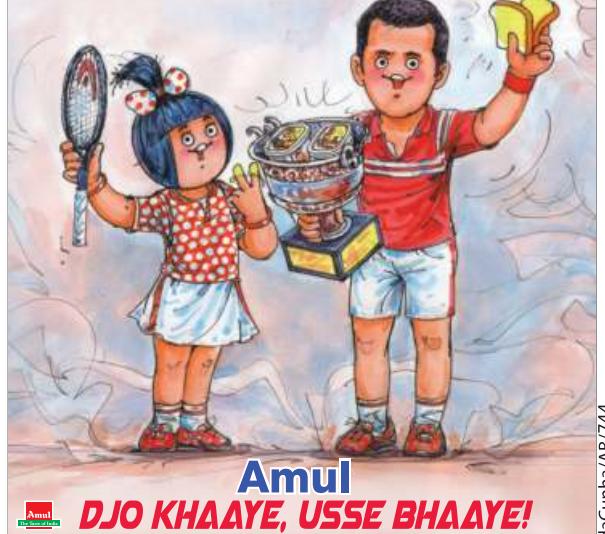
changed three short passes with Juan Guillermo Cuadrado, who moved the ball forward to where Miguel Borja was waiting.

Right-footed shot

Borja headed the ball back to Cardona, who had run toward goalkeeper Pedro Ortiz and who scored with a right-foot shot as the Ecuadorian defenders watched on. The move had to be validated by video review.

The results: Brazil 3 (Marquinhos 23, Neymar 64-pen, Gabriel Barbosa 89) bt Venezuela 0; Colombia 1 (Cardona 42) bt Ecuador 0.

SERB KUCHH JEETA...DO BAAR



Amul
DJO KHAAYE, USSE BHAAYE!

daCunha/AB/44

Messi confesses to COVID worries

REUTERS
BUENOS AIRES

Argentina striker Lionel Messi confessed on Sunday that he worries about contracting COVID-19 at the Copa America amid a spate of infections among rival

teams. Messi said the fear of contracting the virus was widespread in the squad. "It worries us because it is a risk for everyone catching COVID," he told reporters. "We try to be careful but it's not easy."

Gritty Gukesh wins Gelfand Challenge

Praggnanandhaa also tied for the top spot with 14 points from 19 rounds

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Exceeding all expectations, D. Gukesh sensationally won the \$15,000 Gelfand Challenge chess title on Sunday and with it, a 'wild card' for the elite Meltwaters Champions Chess Tour.

Placed two points behind leader Vincent Keymer, and 1.5 points from second-placed R. Praggnanandhaa at the start of the final day, Gukesh scripted the improbable in the field that featured world's 20 handpicked talents.

Gukesh, 15, won all four rounds, including the key



D. Gukesh. ■ FILE PHOTO

battle against Praggnanandhaa, and emerged on top after a series of favourable results from the games involving other title-contenders.

It was a global advertise-

ment for the chess talent in India when Gukesh tied with Praggnanandhaa for the title at 14 points from 19 rounds. He took the title due to his 17th-round win over Praggnanandhaa.

Great honour

"It's just a great honour to play in the Champions Chess Tour. I haven't thought about it and I don't have many expectations. I just want to enjoy playing the top players and learn something from them!" said Gukesh.

The results (involving Indians):

19th round: D. Gukesh bt Lei Tingjie (Chn); Nuryul Salimova (Bul) lost to R. Praggnanandhaa; Volodar Murzin (Rus) bt

Nihal Sarin; Awonder Liang (USA) drew with Leon Mendonca.

18th round: Jonas Buhl Bjerre (Den) lost to Gukesh; Praggnanandhaa drew with Olga Badelka (Blr); Nihal bt Sarasat Kademalsharieh (Irl); Menon da bt Nuryul Salimova (Bul).

17th round: Gukesh bt Praggnanandhaa; Awonder lost to Nihal; Olga drew with Mendonca.

16th round: Mendonca lost to Gukesh; Praggnanandhaa bt Christopher Yoo (USA); Nihal lost to Nuryul.

Final standings (leading finishers, including Indians): 1-2. D. Gukesh, R. Praggnanandhaa (14 points each); 3. Vincent Keymer (Ger, 13.5); 4. Volodar Murzin (Rus, 13); 5. Nihal Sarin (12); 9. Leon Mendonca (10).

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The spectre of cheating in online chess events is threatening to take root. Two more examples came to the fore on Monday when the recently-crowned National under-18 rapid online champion G. Kheerthi and runner-up Riya Mishra were suspended for cheating.

Meanwhile, in the National under-16 online rapid championship, M. Pramesh, Aaryan Varshney and Aditya Mittal shared the lead with 6.5 points from seven rounds. In the girls' section, Dhyana Patel and Aahana Pachchigar were ahead at 6.5 points.

"After we received com-

Suns complete sweep of Nuggets

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

Chris Paul and Devin Booker combined for 71 points as Phoenix Suns completed a four-game sweep of Denver Nuggets on Sunday to reach the NBA conference finals for the first time in 11 years. Paul scored 37 points and Booker finished with 34 points as the Suns beat the Nuggets 125-118 to capture the Western Conference second round series 4-0.

The results (semifinals): EC: Bucks 107 bt Nets 96 (Series tied 2-2); WC: Suns 125 bt Nuggets 118 (Suns win series 4-0).

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PH: 7290054930

NEXA EAST OF KAILASH
RANA MOTORS
PH: 9997988888

NEXA GREEN PARK
RANA MOTORS
PH: 9997988888

NEXA MEERUT ROAD
ROHAN MOTORS LTD.
PH: 9599046061

NEXA WAZIRPUR
COMPETENT AUTOMOBILES
PH: 9582668646

NEXA NARELA
DD MOTORS
PH: 9081908000