



Chamoli disaster  
was caused by an  
avalanche, says report

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New economic  
package is a hoax,  
says Rahul Gandhi

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Xi honours PLA soldier  
killed in Galwan, ahead  
of party's anniversary

Page 11



Barty battles past  
Suarez Navarro; Zverev  
eases into second round

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## NEARBY



Balaji Srivastav given  
addl. charge of Delhi CP

NEW DELHI

Senior IPS officer Balaji Srivastav will hold the additional charge of Delhi Police Commissioner when incumbent S.N. Shrivastava retires on Wednesday, the Home Ministry said.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

## Woman who converted to Islam moves HC

NEW DELHI

A woman who converted to Islam has approached the Delhi High Court seeking protection for herself and her family claiming that they are being witch-hunted by the U.P. police and media.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

## Central Vista: SC rejects plea against HC ruling

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed an appeal filed against the Delhi High Court judgment refusing to halt the Central Vista project work amid the pandemic.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 8

**COMPLETE GEOGRAPHY Module**  
by Amit Garg  
Ex- Faculty Vajiram & Ravi  
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OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 5

# Ensure that no migrant worker goes hungry, SC instructs govt.

Court sets July 31 deadline, tells States to implement One Nation One Ration Card

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

A government cannot "abdiccate" its duties to feed migrant workers, especially during a pandemic, merely because they did not have ration cards, the Supreme Court said in a judgment on Tuesday.

"There is a large number of such migrants who do not possess any card. Their above disability is due to their poverty and lack of education. The State cannot abdicate its duty towards such persons, especially in the wake of the pandemic where large numbers of migrant workers are not able to get jobs which may satisfy their basic needs," a Bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and M.R. Shah observed in an 80-page judgment.

The court set July 31 as the deadline for the Centre and the States to ensure their "bounden duty" that none among the estimated 38 crore migrant workers, who form one-fourth of the country's population, goes hungry during the pandemic. These workers too have made "considerable contributions" to the country's growth and economic development.

The court ordered the State governments to frame schemes to distribute dry rations to migrant workers by July 31. "The States/Union Territories have to make extra efforts to reach migrant labourers so that no migrant labourer is denied two meals a day," Justice Bhushan, who wrote the judgment, said.

The Centre has to supply whatever additional quantity of food grains a State demanded. The allocation of additional food grains and running of community kitchens in prominent places to feed workers should continue throughout the pandemic, the court directed.

Right to food, one of the

"bare necessities of life", was an intrinsic part of the right to live with dignity, the court told the government.

It ordered all the States to fully implement the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme by July 31. The scheme allows migrant labourers covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) to access food at any fair price shop with his or her ration card in any part of the country.

**'Unpardonable apathy'**  
The court slammed the Labour Ministry for its "unpar-

donable apathy" in not completing the work of the ₹45.39 crore National Database for Unorganised Workers (NDUW) portal to register and identify migrant workers and unorganised labourers to ensure their rights, welfare and food security.

The court had ordered the Ministry to finalise the NDUW module way back in 2018. The Centre has blamed the delay in implementation on "software" problems.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
RULING WELCOMED ▶ PAGE 8

## Fighting hunger



Helping hands: Members of an NGO distributing food to migrant labourers and the homeless in Vijayawada on Sunday. ■ K.V.S. GIRI

■ The [Labour] Ministry is not alive to the concerns of the migrant workers. The non-action of the Ministry is strongly disapproved

JUSTICE ASHOK BHUSHAN Supreme Court judge

tions to migrant workers by July 31. "The States/Union Territories have to make extra efforts to reach migrant labourers so that no migrant labourer is denied two meals a day," Justice Bhushan, who wrote the judgment, said.

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CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
RULING WELCOMED ▶ PAGE 8

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The monsoon session of Parliament is likely to begin on July 19 and go on till August 13. There is no clarity as of now whether the existing COVID-19 protocols will continue to be followed.

So far, 403 members, out

## + Monsoon session likely from July 19 to August 13

of the 540 in the Lok Sabha, and 179 members, of the 232 in the Rajya Sabha, have got both doses of vaccines.

This session will have 20 sittings. Ever since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, all the three sessions of Parliament had to be truncated due to the ris-

ing number of COVID-19 positive cases.

### First session after polls

This will be the first session since the May 2 results of the Assembly elections in four States and the Union Territory of Puducherry. Following the victory of the TMC in

West Bengal, the DMK in Tamil Nadu and the CPI (M)-led Left Front in Kerala, the Opposition will be in a stronger position.

The Opposition parties are likely to take up the management of the pandemic, especially the second wave and the vaccination drive.

**FIR in U.P., M.P. against Twitter officials over 'distorted' map**

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW/BHOPAL

An FIR has been lodged against the managing director of Twitter India, Manish Maheshwari, and his colleague, Amrita Tripathi, in Bulandshahr for allegedly showing a distorted map of India on their website.

The Cyber Crime Cell of Madhya Pradesh Police has also registered a case against Mr. Maheshwari over the distorted map, following a directive by the State Home Minister, Narmottam Mishra.

In Uttar Pradesh, the complaint was filed by a Bajrang Dal leader who alleged that in a world map on Twitter, J&K and Ladakh were shown as entities separate from India.

"This is not merely a coincidence. It has hurt my feelings as well as that of the people of Bharat," said Pravin Bhati, co-convenor, Bajrang Dal. The FIR was lodged under Section 505 (2) of the IPC and Section 74 of the IT Act.

Ms. Tripathi, who is mentioned as India head of Twitter, posted on Tuesday: "So is this a good time to clarify my role at my day job? As good a time as any? Presently on the content partnerships team at Twitter (in India). No spol powers/authority and definitely not at the level some of you think..."

(With inputs from PTI)

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The Opposition parties are likely to take up the management of the pandemic, especially the second wave and the vaccination drive.

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## IN BRIEF

**R-Day case:** Deep Sidhu, others get fresh summons

NEW DELHI  
A Delhi court on Tuesday issued fresh summons to actor-activist Deep Sidhu and other accused in connection with violence and resultant damage at the Red Fort during the Republic Day farmers' rally this year. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gajendra Singh Nagar directed all the accused to appear before it on July 12 through videoconference.

**Woman on two-wheeler injured by kite string**

NEW DELHI  
A 24-year-old woman riding a two-wheeler suffered grievous injuries after a sharp stray kite string stuck to her neck in north-east Delhi's Seelampur, the police said on Tuesday. The woman was riding her scooter on the Seelampur flyover when the kite string allegedly got stuck around her neck causing a deep injury. The woman was taken to a nearby hospital where she is being treated.

**Six hurt as two families clash over parking**

NEW DELHI  
Six people sustained injuries following a clash between two groups in north-east Delhi's Jyoti Nagar. The police have ruled out communal angle. The police said that two neighbours identified as Om Prakash and Shahnawaz live on the same street. They clashed over parking and thrashed each other with sticks.

## 3 labourers fall to death at under-construction site

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Three labourers died while another is battling for life after falling from a height at an under-construction DDA site in Dwarka on Tuesday evening. A case has been registered and investigation taken up, the police said.

DCP (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said that a PCR call was received about the accident at Dwarka Sector-14. Three of them were declared dead when taken to hospital.

The deceased have been identified as Panna Lal, Basant, and Mangal Prasad Singh, while Surender Rai is undergoing treatment.

Preliminary probe revealed that the labourers were in an open lift when the incident happened.

## Case against Twitter for 'giving access to child porn'

FIR registered based on NCPCR plaint

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has registered an FIR against Twitter for allegedly allowing access to child pornography on the microblogging platform following a complaint by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), officials said on Tuesday.

In its letter, NCPCR had asked Delhi Police to book Twitter on the basis of the findings of its recent inquiry in which it had found that child sexual abuse material (CSAM) was easily available on the platform.

The complaint was against Twitter Inc and Twitter Communication India Private Ltd., the police said. In its May 29 letter, NCPCR had said that it was found that "the toolkit for deep and dark web" was also available on Twitter.

Cell) Anyesh Roy to explain why no action had been taken against Twitter as per its letter to Delhi Police dated May 29.

Renu Gangwar, in her petition, said on May 27, she converted to Islam with her "own free will and without any threat or coercion from anyone". Following this, she changed her name to Ayesha Alvi, which was published in a few newspapers.

**Threat by media person**  
Ms. Alvi, who is a resident of Tilhar, Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh and working in Delhi, subsequently started getting calls from different media persons requesting for a meeting. However,

even after her refusal, the media person came to her place in Tilhar, and against her wishes took photographs and videos without her permission.

One particular media person demanded money while threatening to publish the news about her conversion. "When she denied, he threatened again. Thereafter, he forcefully took ₹20,000 from her," the petition, filed through advocate Kamlesh Kumar Mishra and Nitin Kumar Nayak, said.

Following the incident,

Ms. Alvi made a complaint to the Delhi police chief on June 24, seeking immediate intervention for her protection.

**Police complaint**

"Thereafter, certain other media persons also came and they started making similar demands. Some other people and organisations also started threatening me and my family to force me to reconvert to Hinduism. Feeling threatened, I came back to Delhi today [June 24]," she said in her police complaint.

"On June 26, the petitioner [Ms Alvi] has been informed that her father has been taken away by the Uttar Pradesh police and they are coming to Delhi and would take her back to Uttar Pradesh where she would be forced to file a false complaint/FIR," the petition stated.

It stated that Ms. Alvi is

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE JSR RURAL WATER SUPPLY DIVISION, GANDERBAL  
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E-mail: pherws@gmail.com / pherws@yahoo.in Phone/Fax: 0194-2416292,  
FRESH e-NIT No. 09 of 2021-22 (PHE JSR RWS Division Ganderbal)  
Notice Inviting e-Tenders:  
FRESH E-NIT No.: 09/PHE/JSR/RWS/CIVIL OF 2021 – 22.  
For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) on Turn Key Basis are invited including the maintenance cost for a period of five years from reported and resourceful contractors /Firms/companies/joint venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/Railways and other state Governments for the following work:

S. No.	Name of Work	Tendered Cost including all Taxes (Quotable)	Maintenance Part fixed Cost ] (In lacs.)	Cost of document (Rs in lacs.)	Emancipation Deposit (Rs in lacs.)	Time of completion	Tender Call	Tender Opening Place (Technical Cover on)	Class of Contractor
1	Design vetting of already designed Components of Thrust Blocks on already laid Non-excavated work complete Construction Provided Laying & fitting of D.I.A, G.I. supply mains (feeding mains), sub-mains and distribution network of varied diameters from various Raw Water Main up to various service pipes. Service Reservoir - including Providing & fitting of Non-return valve, Air Release Valves, necessary Pipe Specials of ISI Mark & specified materials like Flanges, Cliffs, M.S. Patch work, Tail pieces, tees, double collars etc. complete Successful testing & Commissioning with Trial run for 09 months after completion of the Construction work and maintenance for a period of three years on TURNKEY BASIS for WSS Construction of Impounding Reservoir for Sustainability of 11 No. Water Supply Scheme under J&K and Kangon Constituencies*. Under JKIDC including Conducting necessary additional Surveys, soil tests which may require in addition to above mentioned surveys, soil test at selected site(s) as per the Parameters/ Specification mentioned in the tender document*. Architectural aesthetics shall also be kept in consideration to make the structures appealing (LUP-1117)	₹ 192.91 Lacs	26.00 lacs	₹ 0.04 (Favouring Executive Engineer PHE JSR RWS Division Ganderbal under MH 0215)	₹ 03.90 Lacs, (Pledged Superintending Engineer JSR Hydraulic Circle Srinagar/ Ganderbal)	07 months	2nd	Office of the Superintendent Engineer Hydraulic Circle Srinagar/ Ganderbal, (IQC Engineering Complex Silk Factory Rajbagh Srinagar, J&K) 14.07.2021 at 11.30 AM	"A" Class - Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/ Companies/ Joint venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments.

Major Head of Account: Languishing (JKIDFC)  
The Bidding Documents and other details can be downloaded from the website: <https://jktdtenders.gov.in> From 25.06.2021 (10.00 a.m.) To 12.07.2021 upto 04:00 p.m.  
The validity Registration certificate of emblem card clearly indicating the date of registration along with renewal page of Current Financial Year of 2021-22 & Latest GST clearance (NOT BEFORE Crit-IV of 2020 – 21) etc., along with Self Attested What's App Number and e-mail ID of the contractor must also be uploaded while uploading the tender. The tender document of the work may be referred to, for all other necessary/ requisite documents, which are to be uploaded while uploading the tender.  
The bid document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/ downloaded from the website: [www.jktdtenders.gov.in](http://www.jktdtenders.gov.in). The Schedule showing the critical dates is given below

TABLE-II  
Position of Funds: Available:  
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RWS Division Ganderbal/Sr.  
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No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-10/2905/2021-22 Date: 28.06.2021

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The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **26.07.2021 upto 04:00 pm**

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## Woman who converted to Islam moves HC seeking protection

Family being threatened, U.P. Police and the media on a witch-hunt, says petition

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI

A woman, who had wilfully converted her religion from Hinduism to Islam, has approached the Delhi High Court seeking protection for herself and her family claiming that they are facing life threats and being witch-hunted by the Uttar Pradesh police, media and vigilante groups.

Renu Gangwar, in her petition, said on May 27, she converted to Islam with her "own free will and without any threat or coercion from anyone". Following this, she changed her name to Ayesha Alvi, which was published in a few newspapers.

Amid altered modes of teaching, learning and conducting open book examinations, Delhi University has said that attendance of students in the OBE held this year was 5%



even after her refusal, the media person came to her place in Tilhar, and against her wishes took photographs and videos without her permission.

One particular media person demanded money while threatening to publish the news about her conversion. "When she denied, he threatened again. Thereafter, he forcefully took ₹20,000 from her," the petition, filed through advocate Kamlesh Kumar Mishra and Nitin Kumar Nayak, said.

Following the incident,

"On June 26, the petitioner [Ms Alvi] has been informed that her father has been taken away by the Uttar Pradesh police and they are coming to Delhi and would take her back to Uttar Pradesh where she would be forced to file a false complaint/FIR," the petition stated.

It stated that Ms. Alvi is

"under immediate threat of being taken away by force or coercion to Uttar Pradesh by the agencies of the State or any other person".

Ms. Alvi said she is "an adult and she is protected by the Constitution to choose her own faith and she cannot be targeted and harassed for the choice she makes with regard to the religion she follows".

She has urged the court to protect her from being taken away from its jurisdiction "by force or coercion and or by way of any other illegal means by the agencies of the State or any other person".

The petition which is listed for hearing on Wednesday also urged the court "to ensure protection of life, liberty, safety and security of the petitioner, her family member and friends and they be not harassed and interrogated with regard to the conversion of the petitioner".

## No headway in Dwarka honour killing case

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Five days on, Delhi Police has made no headway in the honour killing case reported from Dwarka in which a couple was shot multiple times allegedly by their family members.

A senior police officer said that over 20 raids have been conducted in Haryana but the accused have managed to remain absconding. "There are leads but they are not working out. Day in and day out, teams have been working to find the accused," the officer said.

The police said that of the six accused who had entered the victims' rented house, three, including the woman's brother and cousin have been identified while the other three are unknown.

On June 24, six men entered Kiran Dahiya and Vinay Dahiya's house and shot at them multiple times. Vinay succumbed to injuries while Kiran is still undergoing treatment.

sheets, the university will also provide confidential results to students who require the results before they are officially announced.

Second semester examinations for the current batch of first-year students is expected to be held between August 12 and August 24, according to officials while the new semester is likely to begin from August 31.

## Govt. launches app for EMC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia reviewed progress of the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) in schools and launched a web application for all heads of schools [HoS], teachers and coordinators to access EMC-related teaching-learning material.

Mr. Sisodia said that the government has decided to give ₹2,000 to children as seed money after reviewing the prototype they create based on their idea.

"We are ready to give ₹50,000 if children want to form a group of 25 students and create an enterprise. We will use the approach used in Shark Tank [a TV show] to give seed money. Every HoS and teacher should watch that show and implement a similar approach in their schools," he said. Mr. Sisodia said that the school community needs to accept EMC as a subject as it is not just an initiative or a scheme but an indispensable subject that will equip students with the mindset and skills needed to triumph in any challenge.

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e-NIT No.: SIMS 325 (P) Tender 08 of 2021

Dated: 26 -06 -2021

Subject: Abbreviated e-tender notice for supplying refined oil on 1 year rate contract basis.

e-tenders are invited for and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir through Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura, Srinagar, from registered dealers for supplying refined oil on 1 year rate contract basis under single cover system. The detailed e-tender documents are also available at [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) & [www.skims.ac.in](http://www.skims.ac.in).

Description

Tender Fee

EMD

Supply of refined oil on 1 year rate contract basis

Rs. 750/-

Rs. 50,000/-

Nomenclature

Schedule

Online Bid submission end date

05/07/2021 upto 3:00 PM

Hard copy EMD & Tender Fee submission end date

06/07/2021 upto 3:30 PM

Technical bid opening date

Timings  
DELHI

WEDNESDAY, JUN. 30
RISE 05:27 SET 19:24
RISE 23:54 SET 10:57
THURSDAY, JUL. 01
RISE 05:28 SET 19:24
RISE 00:00 SET 11:53
FRIDAY, JUL. 02
RISE 05:28 SET 19:24
RISE 00:24 SET 12:46

Delhi Weather max min  
Delhi City 43 27  
Safdarjung 43 27  
Palam 43 28

Delhi Pilm Today  
42°C Loo type situation expected. Moderate warm winds would continue during day. Evening would also remain warm.

Delhi Pilm Tomorrow  
41°C Uneasy hot weather would continue with warm moderate winds and partly cloudy sky.

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IN BRIEF

Nurses union writes to PM for Dearness Allowance

NEW DELHI  
AIIMS Nurses Union on Tuesday wrote to the PM, demanding disbursal of Dearness Allowance (DA) to all healthcare workers who have shown "great courage and patriotism by serving the nation during this deadly pandemic". "As most of the healthcare workers are finding it difficult to make both ends meet due to an increase in fuel prices and non-disbursal of DA, we humbly request you to kindly intervene to un-freeze the DA of government servants and to ensure early disbursal of the pending DA with arrears," the letter read.

City records hottest day of the year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI  
The Capital recorded its hottest day of the year on Tuesday with the maximum temperature settling at 43 degrees Celsius, which is six degrees above normal for this time of the year.

Heatwave conditions prevailed in the city with the humidity level hovering between 78% and 25%.

The minimum temperature was recorded at 27.4 degrees Celsius.

Delhi, which usually comes under the influence of heat waves in May and June, had a relatively mild summer with the maximum temperature not rising above the 42.2 degrees Celsius mark. However, delay in monsoon, scheduled to arrive on June 27, has sent temperatures soaring.

**Relief expected soon**  
The forecast for June 30 reads: "partly cloudy sky accompanied by gusty winds. Heatwave conditions at isolated places. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 42 and 29 degrees Celsius respectively".

Some relief is expected July 1 onwards in the form of thundershowers that are likely to bring down the temperature by a few notches.

## Balaji Srivastav gets additional charge of Police Commissioner

The IPS officer served in the Cabinet Secretariat for 9 years

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Senior IPS officer Balaji Srivastav will hold the additional charge of the Commissioner of Delhi Police when incumbent S.N. Shrivastava retires on Wednesday, the Home Ministry said on Tuesday.

In an order, the Ministry said Mr. Srivastav, a 1988-batch IPS officer of the AGM-TU cadre, will discharge duties as the Commissioner of the Delhi Police in addition to his present responsibility of Special Commissioner of Police (Vigilance) till a full-fledged head of the national capital's police force is appointed.

He has previously worked as the DGP of Puducherry and Mizoram and Special Commissioner, Intelligence, Economic Offence Wing and Special Cell, Delhi.



Balaji Srivastav

Mr. Srivastava has served Cabinet Secretariat for nine years and handled sensitive assignments. He did Economics (Hons.) from St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi followed by M.A. (Economics) from Delhi School of Economics and LL.B. from Delhi University.

S.N. Shrivastava too initially took the additional charge of Commissioner of the Delhi Police in February 2020 in the wake of the communal riots in the Capital following protests over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019. He was regularised as Commissioner of the Delhi Police only last month.

## 5 cases of rectal bleeding reported in recovered COVID-19 patients

One died due to 'massive bleeding' and severe chest disease

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Five cases of Cytomegalovirus (CMV)-related rectal bleeding were reported in COVID-19 recovered patients during the second wave at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, a private hospital in Delhi, according to hospital authorities.

One of the five patients died due to "massive bleeding" and "severe" COVID-19-related chest disease, the hospital said.

All five patients were immunocompetent before COVID-19, which means they did not suffer from any condition that lowered their immunity.

Doctors said CMV is usually present in the body, but it develops into a disease when a person's immunity is lowered after COVID-19 infection. "Any

After recovering from COVID-19, you have to build your immunity by eating healthy food. You have to avoid junk food

ANIL ARORA

Chairman, Institute of Liver, Gastroenterology and Pancreaticobiliary Sciences

presented with lower gastrointestinal bleed that is bleeding in stools and one patient presented with intestinal obstruction. Two of them had massive bleed, one requiring emergency life-saving surgery in the form of removal of right side of the colon and one of them succumbed due to massive bleeding and severe COVID chest disease. Other three patients were successfully treated with antiviral therapy with ganciclovir," Dr. Arora said.

He said that mucormycosis, white fungus and CMV are opportunistic infections and they are looking for people with weak immunity. "After recovering from COVID-19, you have to build your immunity by eating healthy food. You have to avoid junk food," Dr. Arora said.

Antiviral therapy

"Out of the five cases with age group of 30-70 were from Delhi NCR, four had

## AAP workers attacked BJP men at behest of Sisodia'

Delegation to meet CP soon: Bidhuri

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI  
Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Tuesday alleged that AAP cadres had attacked and beaten up BJP workers at the behest of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Mr. Bidhuri said a BJP delegation would soon meet the Delhi Police Commissioner to urge him to fast-track the investigation. "Deputy CM had gone to Rohtas Nagar to inspect civil work on the construction of a school. The Rohtas Nagar BJP MLA, Jitender Mahajan, had already conveyed to the authorities that they would like to submit a memorandum to Mr. Sisodia," Mr. Bidhuri said.

Some relief is expected July 1 onwards in the form of thundershowers that are likely to bring down the temperature by a few notches.

## Mahila Cong. leader, others join Delhi BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI  
Delhi Pradesh Mahila Congress general-secretary Parveena Sharma along with 40 other workers joined the State BJP in the presence of its president Adesh Gupta here on Tuesday.

Welcoming Ms. Sharma and others in the party, Mr. Gupta said every citizen of the country had full trust in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The party has always been encouraging women and believes women empowerment is our aim. Women are never safe in AAP and Congress," Mr. Gupta alleged.

"In fact, the Congress has lost its base and relevance while women are being physically exploited in AAP. As both parties are without aim or leadership it is only the BJP, which is working for people's welfare," he added.

Sisodia responds

In response to the incident Mr. Sisodia tweeted: "Today, protesting against the construction of a school in Rohtas Nagar, BJP leaders and workers ransacked the school. Broke my government vehicle, broke the school gate and misbehaved with the women teachers, engineers and workers present inside. Why are the BJP's so annoyed about having a school, studying and writing?"

The memorandum pertained to termination of services of guest teachers and non-payment of salaries to teachers. In addition to this, it was also to be submitted

## Khori Basti residents seek relief from demolition order

Protesters at Jantar Mantar said rehabilitation measures should have been taken

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI  
Several residents of Faridabad's Khori Basti staged a demonstration at Jantar Mantar here on Tuesday demanding that their houses be spared the Supreme Court-ordered demolition.

The demonstrators also submitted memoranda addressed to the President, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister seeking revocation of the demolition order to protect the lives of lakhs of people during the pandemic.

Holding placards that read, "Save Khori" and "Don't render labourers homeless during a pandem-



Faridabad's Khori Basti

residents protest at Jantar Mantar on Tuesday.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ic", hundreds of residents of Khori Basti, which is spread over 170-acre forest land in Faridabad, staged the demonstration around 12 p.m. The demonstrators

included a large number of women.

Social activist Sanjay Raj, leading the demonstration, said there were 30-odd religious structures, a gauashala, a burial ground, and a government primary school in the colony.

He claimed that the colony had around 10,000 houses and was inhabited by over a lakh labourers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Chattishgarh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and other States.

Mr. Raj said the residents of the colony were living under the shadow of constant fear and the power

and electricity connections to the colony were snapped a fortnight ago.

Seeking a remedy to the court order, the residents, in a joint memorandum, said the Municipal Corporation of Faridabad is forcing the residents to vacate their houses citing court order was wrong from a "humanitarian perspective".

**'Life and death'**  
They further said that the Haryana government should have made arrangements for their rehabilitation before carrying out the demolition. The residents said it was a question of "life and death" for them.

## City sees 101 new cases; vaccine stock to last 2 days only

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The city reported 101 new COVID-19 cases in 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths stood at 24,971. A total of 66,397 tests were done in a day and TPR was 0.15%. Of the total cases,

the Delhi government on Tuesday. Also, four deaths were reported, and the total

14,07,592 people have recovered and there are 1,553 active cases.

A total of 2,04,522 doses were administered on Monday, as per a vaccination bulletin. "Vaccination in Delhi is

going on at high speed. On June 28, more than 2 lakh vaccine doses were administered in one day..." AAP MLA Atishi. The city's vaccine stock will last for only two days, as per the bulletin.

WESTERN RAILWAY

VARIOUS WORKS

Divisional Railway Manager(WA), Western Railway, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Engg. Deptt., Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400 008 invites E-tender as per details given as follow.

Sr. No.	Tender Notice No. & Date	WORK AND LOCATION	Approx. cost of work in ₹
1	BCT/21-22/129 dtd. 28.06.2021	Bandra (East & West Rly colony) - Need based repair on day to day basis by outsourcing for a period of 02 year.	74,65,727.03
2	BCT/21-22/136 dtd. 28.06.2021	Bandra (West colony) - Supply of potable drinking water through tankers for a period of 02 years.	35,89,600
3	BCT/21-22/137 dtd. 28.06.2021	i) Kandivali (Carshed) - Need based repair on day to day basis by outsourcing for a period of 02 year. ii) Virar (Carshed) - Need based repair on day to day basis by outsourcing for a period of 02 years.	1,85,22,615.78

Sr. No. : 1 to 3 : EMD (in ₹) : 0. Date & Time of Submission : On 23.07.2021 till 15.00 hrs. Date & Time of Opening : On 23.07.2021 at 15.30 hrs. Regarding detailed tender conditions please visit [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) Manual offers will not be considered.

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Follows us on : [twitter.com/WesternRly](https://twitter.com/WesternRly)

0216

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT  
BUILDING DIVISION NO. -1, RANCHI

VERY SHORT NOTICE INVITING RE-QUOTATION

(Previous PR No. 248252 Building (21-22) D

Sealed quotations are invited for below mentioned works by the Executive Engineer, Building Construction Department, Building Division No.-1, Ranchi from the Authorised manufacturer/Distributor/Dealers/Suppliers/Registered contractor in the Office of the undersigned on 07-07-2021 up to 3.00 pm and will be opened on 07-07-2021 at 3.30 pm at BCD Division No.-1, Ranchi by Executive Engineer or his authorized representative in the presence of Quotations or their authorized representative. Who so ever desire may remain present at the time of opening. The Works are:-

Sl. No.	Description	Cost of Specification & Qty.	Time of Completion
1	Supply and Installation of 236 Points Medical Oxygen Gas Pipe Line System in Sadar Hospital Ranchi.	5000	45 Days
2	Supply and Installation of 40 Points Medical Oxygen Gas Pipe Line & Manifold for Covid Care Centre in Sub-Divisional Hospital Bundi (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)	2500	45 Days

The Specification, detail Scope of work and detail of Qty are available in office of Executive Engineer, Building Division No.-1, Ranchi on 05-07-2021 to 06-07-2021 by payment of Demand Draft issued from any State Bank in favour of Executive Engineer, Building Division No.-1, Ranchi, payable at SBI Main Branch Ranchi (IFSC Code 000167) amount as mentioned para 3 above. At the time of obtaining BOQ Quotations will attach updated GST & IT return, similar nature work experience Certificate (issued by Govt. body) with request letter otherwise Quotations will not allowed to obtain BOQ.

The quotation should be accompanied with initial security deposit which will be 2% of the quoted amount (Refundable) in shape of Bank Guarantee or 5 Years/3 Years Post Office Term Deposit or N.S.C. (8<sup>th</sup> issue)/fixed deposits of a scheduled Bank duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, Building Division No.-1, Ranchi and updated GST return, IT return & Work experience issued by Govt. body.

Quotations who have similar nature work experience i.e. Gas pipe line, Manifold works experience will allowed to participate for the above work. In the case of Gazetted holiday the quotation will be received/opened on the next working day.

Executive Engineer  
Building Construction Department  
Building Division No.-1, Ranchi



IN BRIEF



ISRO spy case: Kerala HC adjourns bail pleas

KOCHI  
The Kerala High Court adjourned to June 30 the hearing on an anticipatory bail petition filed by S. Vijayan and Thampi S. Durga Dutt, former police officers and accused in a case registered by the CBI for torturing and hatching a conspiracy to frame ISRO scientist Nambi Narayanan in the ISRO espionage case.

Schools will remain shut for now: A.P. Minister

VIJAYAWADA  
Schools in Andhra Pradesh will not reopen on July 1 as planned earlier, in view of the COVID-19 situation. "Children will not be able to attend school as the conditions are still not conducive. But teachers will attend in staggered shifts to be part of the training sessions," said Education Minister A. Suresh.

Three bodies retrieved from well in A.P.

RAJAHMENDRAVARAM  
The bodies of three persons, including that of a girl, who died after their motorcycle plunged into an open well, were retrieved by the State Disaster Response Force personnel on Tuesday. The bodies were fished out from the open well at Dosakayalapalli village in East Godavari.

Customs given custody of Arjun till July 6

KOCHI  
The Customs has been given custody of Arjun Ayanik, an accused in the smuggling of 2.33 kg gold worth ₹1.11 crore through the Karipur airport in Kerala, till July 6. He was arrested on Monday. Meanwhile, a former activist of the Democratic Youth Federation of India C. Sajesh has been issued notice to present himself before the Customs team on Wednesday.

# 2015 Assembly ruckus: leaders move SC

They join the Kerala govt., which has also filed an appeal in the case

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Political leaders accused of creating a ruckus in the Kerala Legislative Assembly joined the State government in the Supreme Court on Tuesday to challenge a High Court dismissal of a prosecutor's request to withdraw a case of criminal trespass, mischief and destruction of public property against them.

The accused persons include Education Minister V. Sivankutty and other prominent leaders of the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) in the State. They were accused of vandalism on the Legislative Assembly floor during a Budget presenta-

tion in 2015. The televised images showed MLAs coming to blows on the House floor and hurling chairs, computers and other public property soon after the then Finance Minister K.M. Mani began his Budget speech during the United Democratic Front (UDF) government's tenure.

As soon as the hearing began, Justice D.Y. Chandrachud started saying "this is a case..." only to stop mid-sentence when senior advocate Jaideep Gupta submitted that he represented the accused persons and had filed a separate appeal in the case, which was numbered by the Supreme Court Registry in 2015.

In its appeal, the State government has argued that the legislators' actions in 2015 were protected from legal action by parliamentary privilege.

It said the Assembly Secretary ought not to have complained against the MLAs to the police without taking the prior sanction of the Speaker. Besides offences under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the legislators were booked under the Prevention of

Uproar in House: Chaos ensues in the Kerala Legislative Assembly as the Budget is presented in 2015.



Uproar in House: Chaos ensues in the Kerala Legislative Assembly as the Budget is presented in 2015.

Damage to Public Property Act.

The public prosecutor's application to withdraw the cases was dismissed by the Thiruvananthapuram Chief Judicial Magistrate on September 22, last year. The Magistrate had concluded that the request was made "without good faith and under external influence". The High Court confirmed the Magistrate's decision in March.

In its appeal, the State government, represented by advocate G. Prakash, said a Magistrate's role was limited when the prosecutor sought withdrawal of the case under Section 321 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. All the Magistrate needed to examine was whether the prosecutor had applied his mind "independently and properly".

## SC notice to Karnataka in Gauri Lankesh case

Petition opposes dropping of charges

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Karnataka government to a petition made by the sister of murdered activist Gauri Lankesh, challenging the dropping of organised crime charges against an accused in the case.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar issued notice to the State on the petition filed by Kavitha Lankesh.

Ms. Lankesh, a film-maker, has appealed to the top court against the High Court's decision in April to quash charges under the Karnataka Control of Organised Crimes Act (KCOCA) against Mohan Nayak.

The apex court said the accused should not be granted bail until Ms. Lankesh's plea was decided. The Bench then stood the case over to July 15.

Ms. Lankesh, represented by advocate Aparna Bhat, said an SIT investigation had revealed that the accused was part of a syndicate that was behind several instances of organised crime.



Gauri Lankesh

The mastermind behind the parcel bomb explosion at the Darbhanga railway station in Bihar appears to have established a credible line of contact with the operatives of Pakistan's intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

Nasir Malik, one of the two brothers detained by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Hyderabad recently, is said to have made the chemical explosive by taking online bomb-making instructions from his ISI handler, Iqbal Khana alias Asif Khana of Pakistan.

The suspect, who is in his forties, migrated to Hyderabad nearly two decades ago from Kairana in Shamli, Uttar Pradesh, and was part of the ready-made clothes business at Habeeb Nagar. His brother Imran Malik, 35, came to the city last year.

The Malik brothers, along with Haji Saleem and Khafeel, have also visited Saudi Arabia to meet others who share their ideology.

The official said the chemical bomb was originally intended to explode within a few hours of dispatch from the Secunderabad railway station. "They had plans to set fire to the train. Luckily, the plan failed. Had it exploded in the train, there could have been a loss of human lives and property," the official added.

A senior official at the NIA, New Delhi, told *The Hindu* that during the interrogation, they learnt that Nasir went to Pakistan thrice in the guise of meeting his blood relatives and had served in-person interactions with Khana and others, who motivated and radicalised him.

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## Flying terror

International cooperation is a must in combating new modes of terror attacks

The use of drones to attack an Indian Air Force base in Jammu on June 27-28 brought to the fore a troubling, though not unanticipated, new mode of terrorism for the country. Though there were no casualties at the base, the fact that there were at least two more subsequent attempts to use drones to attack military targets points to the future of terrorism. The use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), autonomous weapons systems and robotic soldiers by states in warfare and policing has raised moral and practical questions that remain unresolved. Non-state actors have caught up quickly. In 2018, Syrian rebels used homemade drones to attack Russian military bases in Syria; later, the same year, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro had a narrow escape after a drone flying towards him exploded a short distance away. In 2019, Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for bombing Saudi oil installations using drones. New modes of sabotage and violence enabled by technology reduce costs and risk of identification for terrorists while increasing their efficacy. Simultaneously, security agencies would find conventional tools redundant in combating terrorism. Terrorism may not even require organisations, as individuals with sufficient motivation and skills can carry out such attacks and remain under the radar like the drones they use. The existing international framework for controlling the proliferation of technology that can be weaponised, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement and Missile Technology Control Regime, is also largely useless in the emerging scenario.

States including India have sought to deal with terrorism with a combination of stringent laws, invasive surveillance, harsher policing and offensives against other countries that support terrorist groups. This approach has only had limited success in ensuring peace anywhere while the human and material costs have been high. The exponential proliferation of new technologies and Artificial Intelligence, vertically and horizontally, will make the task of combating terror even more challenging. The Jammu drone attack, Indian authorities reportedly suspect, was carried out by the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is patronised by Pakistan. The same group was behind the 2008 Mumbai terror attack in which perpetrators came by boats from Pakistan. India has tried to punish Pakistan for its support to terror groups in recent years which has shown some success. The entry of drones calls for a more complex response to terrorism. Terror groups do capitalise on state patronage but technology is enabling them too to be autonomous in an unprecedented fashion. From turning passenger planes into missiles in 2001, terrorism has come a long way, and one cannot foresee where it will go next. Enhanced international cooperation and consensus on the development and deployment of technologies are required to deal with the challenge. India can and must take an active role in the process.

## Coming soon

New layers of censorship are a threat to the existing space for public discourse

Film-makers around the world have often made extraordinary efforts to keep cinema alive. Under a repressive regime in Iran, directors such as Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Majid Majidi fought for art as a basic social need with films like *Where Is the Friend's Home?*, *The Cyclist* and *Children of Heaven*. In India, during the Emergency when the government apparatus came down heavily on any criticism, the prints of Amrit Nahata's political satire *Kissa Kursi Ka*, filmed in 1975, were destroyed. Even though a revised version was released in 1978, it invited several cuts from the Central Board of Film Certification. For the past few years, the CBFC has objected to the content of several films, ordering cuts. Now, a proposed amendment to the Cinematograph Act, 1952, will make it even more difficult for film-makers to work on thorny or controversial subjects. The draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2021, which has been put out for public comments, has a provision that allows the Government to order re-certification of a film already certified by the CBFC. Film-makers argue that the new provision adds one more layer of censorship to the existing process. Already in April, the Government took the ordinance route to scrap the Film Certificate Appellate Tribunal (FCAT), a statutory body set up to hear appeals of film-makers against decisions of the CBFC.

In 2000, the Supreme Court had upheld the verdict of the Karnataka High Court in the K.M. Shankarappa vs Union of India case that the Union government cannot exercise revisional powers in respect of films that are already certified by the CBFC. The draft acknowledges the existing apex court order but has added a new clause: "...that on receipt of any references by the Central government in respect of a film certified for public exhibition, on account of violation of Section 5B(1) of the Act, the Central government may, if it considers it necessary so to do, direct the chairman of the board to re-examine the film". The provision of Section 5B(1) of the Act, the draft says, is derived from Article 19(2) of the Constitution "which imposes reasonable restrictions upon the freedom of speech and expression in the interests of sovereignty and integrity of India..." New restrictive laws have come into place for over-the-top (OTT) platforms as well. Giving the Government powers to vet content not only curbs freedom of expression but also quells democratic dissent. Fresh barriers to content generation are a threat to the existing space for public discourse and are indicative of the current pressures on freedoms from authoritarian tendencies of the ruling establishment.

# Apt judicial reminder in era of over-criminalisation

The criminal justice system needs to take note of the Delhi High Court's recent judgment on 'defining terrorism'



FAIZAN MUSTAFA

The criminal justice system is an instrument of state and a key index of the state of democracy. Every punishment which does not arise from absolute necessity is tyrannical, said French jurist Montesquieu. In fact criminal law should be used only as a 'last resort' (*ultima ratio*) and only for the 'most reprehensible wrongs'. Unfortunately, 'crimes' originate in government policy and, therefore, criminal law reflects the idea of 'power' rather than 'justice'. Should civil society activists, students, intellectuals and protesters be charged for the crime of terrorism? Is every criminal a terrorist and every violent crime a terrorist activity? Did Parliament in enacting the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, (TADA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) intend to punish ordinary criminals under these anti-terror special laws?

### Example of misuse

In the period 2015-2019, as many as 7,840 persons were arrested under the draconian UAPA but only 155 were convicted by the trial courts. Most would eventually be acquitted by the higher courts. Even Congress governments misused TADA (enacted in 1985 and amended in 1987). Till 1994, though 67,000 people were detained, just 725 were convicted in spite of confessions made to police officers being made admissible. In *Kartar Singh* (1994), the Supreme Court of India had observed that in many cases, the prosecution had unjustifiably invoked provisions of TADA 'with an oblique motive of depriving the accused persons from getting bail'. It added that such an invocation of TADA was

'nothing but the sheer misuse and abuse of the Act by the police'.

UAPA's experience has been worse than TADA. UAPA has also been equally used and abused. The recent 133 page bail order of the Delhi High Court in *Asif Iqbal Tanha* (June 15, 2021), that led to the release of three student activists, has come as a bolt from the blue for the Delhi police. At the heart of the controversy is the meaning of the term 'terrorism' and when UAPA can justifiably be invoked.

### No consensus on definition

Though there are more than 100 definitions of terrorism available globally, there is no universal definition of the term 'terrorism' either in India or at the international level. The UN General Assembly had given this task to a committee, but in almost 50 years or so there has been no consensus on the meaning of terrorism. The fight against foreign occupation is to be kept out of terrorism as today's terrorist may be tomorrow's freedom fighter. Accordingly, neither TADA nor UAPA has a definition of the crucial terms 'terror' and 'terrorism'. Section 15 of UAPA merely defines a terrorist act in extremely wide and vague words: 'as any act with intent to threaten or likely to threaten the unity, integrity, security, or sovereignty of India or with intent to strike terror or likely to strike terror in the people...'.

How is such a terrorist act committed? UAPA says 'by using bombs, dynamite or other explosive substances or inflammable substances or firearms or other lethal weapons or poisonous or noxious gases ... or by any other means of whatever nature to cause or likely to cause death or injuries...'. What is the meaning of the expression 'by any other means'? When a general word is used in any statute after specific words, it is to be interpreted in the context of specific words. Thus, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests cannot be covered by this expression.



In *Yaqoob Abdul Razzak Memon* (2013), the Supreme Court said that terrorist acts can range from threats to actual assassinations, kidnappings, airline hijacking, car bombs, explosions, mailing of dangerous materials, use of chemical, biological, nuclear weapons etc. Since the three student activists did not do any of these things, Justices Anup Jairam Bhambhani and Siddharth Mridul could not be convinced of their involvement in any terrorist act. Through an authoritative and enlightened bail order entirely based on the apex court judgments, Justice Bhambhani reminded the Delhi police of the true meaning of a terrorist act.

### Other judgments

In *Hitendra Vishnu Thakur* (1994), the Supreme Court had defined terrorism as the 'use of violence when its most important result is not merely the physical and mental damage of the victim but the prolonged psychological effect it produces ... on the society as a whole'. Its main objective is to overthrow the government or disturb the harmony of society or 'terrorise' people...'. Thus, what 'distinguishes 'terrorism' from other forms of violence is the deliberate and systematic use of coercive intimidation'. In *Kartar Singh* (1994), the Supreme Court held that a mere disturbance of public order that disturbs even the tempo of the life of community of any particular locality is not a terrorist act. By this interpretation, the CAA protests in a few localities of

Delhi cannot be termed as terrorist activity. Even in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, the Supreme Court, in *Nalini and 25 Others* (1999) held that none of the accused had intent to overawe the government or strike terror among people, and therefore the killing of Rajiv Gandhi and 15 others was not held to be a terrorist act or disruptive activity under Section 3 of TADA.

In *Ram Manohar Lohia* (1966), the apex court explained the distinction between 'law and order', 'public order' and 'security of state'. Law and order represents the largest circle within which is the next circle representing 'public order', and the smallest circle represents the 'security of state'. Accordingly, an act may affect 'law and order' but not 'public order'. Similarly, an act may adversely affect 'public order' but not the 'security of state'. In most UAPA cases, the police have failed to understand these distinctions and unnecessarily clamped UAPA charges for simple violations of law and order.

In the historic PUCL judgment (2003) where the constitutionality of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) was under challenge, the Supreme Court had highlighted another vital dimension of terrorist act by including within its meaning amongst other things the 'razing of constitutional principles that we hold dear', 'tearing apart of the secular fabric' and 'promotion of prejudice and bigotry'.

Justice Bhambhani reiterated the first principle of criminal law, i.e., criminal provisions are to be given the narrowest possible meaning. It is a sad commentary on our criminal justice system that even the mention of this rule of thumb is being considered as a breeze of fresh air in an atmosphere of curtailment of liberties and democracy tilting towards authoritarianism.

Relying on A.K. Roy (1982) where the constitutionality of the National Security Act (NSA) was challenged, Justice Bhambhani

concluded that to ensure that a person who was not within the parliamentary intendment does not get roped into a penal provision, more stringent a penal provision, it must be more strictly construed. The apex court itself had held that while construing preventive detention laws such as the NSA, care must be taken to restrict their application to as few situations as possible. In *Sanjay Dutt* (1994) as well, the Supreme Court had held that those whom the law did not intend to punish are not to be roped in by stretching the penal provisions. In recent times, the Allahabad High Court had to quash 94 of 120 cases in which NSA has been invoked.

Accordingly, the Delhi High Court concluded that since the definition of a 'terrorist act' in UAPA is wide and somewhat vague, it cannot be casually applied to ordinary conventional crimes, and the act of the accused must reflect the essential character of terrorism. Indeed, the CAA protests were not terrorist acts. Defining terrorism may be difficult but does not everyone know when an act of terror is really committed?

**What must be done**  
One hopes that, henceforth, our police will be far more cautious in charging people under black laws such as UAPA, the NSA, etc. In any case, no anti-terror law, however stringent, can really end the problem of terrorism. Pushing a civilised state to state terrorism is the tried and tested strategy of all terrorists. Let us not fall in their trap.

Radicalisation generally succeeds only with those who have been subjected to real or perceived injustices. Let us remove injustice to combat terrorism. The creation of a truly just, egalitarian and non-oppressive society would be far more effective in combating terrorism.

Faizan Mustafa is Vice-Chancellor, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad. The views expressed are personal

## Méndez's anti-torture vision is still distant for India

The belief in the utility of torture is embedded in institutional culture and accommodated by law



DEVIKA PRASAD & ZEBA SIKORA

In a past interview, Juan E. Méndez, former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, recounts his fears while being tortured for "intelligence" by security forces of the military junta in 1970s Argentina: "I was very scared during the interrogations. Twice they had to call a doctor to check if they could continue torturing me without killing me. Only then did I realize that I could die. But when you are in that situation you live minute by minute, thinking of the moment when the torturers will get tired and stop so you can have a break".

Mr. Méndez reminds us of the palpable fear created in the exercise of torture. Decades on, instilling fear through torture – physical or psychological – to reach the "truth", is still seen as an effective interrogation "technique" by security forces. The reality that torture persists suggests that belief in its utility overrides the moral arguments and legal prohibitions against it.

### Torture does not work

A latest effort to combat torture during investigation, spearheaded by Mr. Méndez, reinforces empirical evidence that torture does not work. Launched in June 2020, the 'Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering', dubbed the 'Méndez Principles' (<https://bit.ly/3A6P8Xo>), were developed through a comprehensive, expert-driven consultative process.

**Its persistence in India**  
With their emergence as a new set of aspirational standards, it is tempting to assess whether the Méndez Principles can readily apply to the Indian context. Unfortu-

ately, enough evidence indicates that the Indian context typifies the belief in the utility of torture, and is embedded in institutional culture and accommodated by law.

In spite of the prohibition of and safeguards against "third degree methods", they are normalised in police practice. Even the National Human Rights Commission has said that "custodial violence and torture is so rampant in this country that it has become almost routine".

The belief that a certain degree of fear and pressure is necessary to compel a suspect to cough up the "truth" is widely held by police officers.

This emerged strongly in a 2019 survey of about 12,000 police personnel across India, published by Common Cause and Lokniti (<https://bit.ly/3jw5ljb>). Three out of four personnel felt that it is justified for the police to be violent towards "criminals", and four out of five personnel responded that there is nothing wrong in the police beating criminals to extract confessions. Scholars, Khanikar (2018; <https://bit.ly/3h5Wfrq>) and Jauregui (2013; <https://bit.ly/3AxFm>), studying the police in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, reveal practices of using tools such as wooden sticks in interrogation, signalling the presence of tools to beat or intimidate, while perversely labelling them with suggestive phrases like "aan milo saajna" ("come to me, my beloved"). Coercion and the



resort to violence are common in both the choice of tools and approach to interrogation. There would need to be a fundamental shift in police thinking before the goal set by the Méndez Principles of moving from coercive practices to "rapport-based interrogation" can be realised.

Structural constraints fuel the persistence of torture, since it is seen to be effective. Investigating officers are in short supply, and have little scope to develop specialisation in investigative work. Working under perceived or actual constraints, of inadequate resources, political pressure, and an overburdened legal system, officers conjure the image of a vigilante cop compelled to take matters into their own hands. Popular films, and political and public support to illegal police killings as in the Hyderabad 'Disha' case (November-December 2019), further legitimise the vigilante cop as the only 'hope' for serving justice.

**Tacit acceptance by law**  
Additionally, Indian law creates conditions which further permit torture through the "back door". While confessions before a police officer are not admissible evidence, to prevent the police from resorting to torture, other legal provisions have the effect of indirectly accommodating the use of torture in investigative practice. Section 27 of the Indian Evidence Act permits the admissibility of statements before the police to the extent that they relate to the recovery of material objects, often called 'recovery evidence'. Thus, investigators still have incentive to seek "disclosures", and information implicit in a confession, as central to their investigation. Torture and falsification, by forcing an accused to sign on blank papers,

are known abuses in the use of this provision. In an opinion study of former Supreme Court judges published in 2018 (<https://bit.ly/3x6zNnU>), 12 out of 58 judges acknowledged the heightened risk of torture as the shortcut method to obtain recovery evidence. Yet, Indian law still does not bar tainted evidence obtained through torture or coercive methods as inadmissible. It is up to individual judges to decide whether to rely on it or not.

The introduction of so-called scientific techniques of interrogation, such as lie detectors and narco-analysis, are often presented as the solutions to end physical torture. Jinee Lokaneeta's analysis in *The Truth Machines* (2020) reveals that introduction of these techniques, without addressing the existing conditions which perpetuate torture, has resulted in psychological forms of torture, supplementing coercive interrogation strategies. While the scientific validity of these techniques in determining the "truth" is held suspect, Indian law allows evidence voluntarily given by an accused through these techniques to be used as corroborative evidence. What can be voluntary in police custody without the protective cover of enforced safeguards?

In all of these ways, Indian law remains ambivalent and fails to fully prevent torture and coercion from creeping in. Structural constraints, popular culture, and political approval have shaped policing institutional cultures to valorise violence and coercion. Without urgent introspection, Méndez's anti-torture vision will remain distant for India.

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percolate to every level of the judiciary in our country.  
Dr. JESSIE LIONEL,  
Vellore, Tamil Nadu

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Relief measures

In the Government's new stimulus package, one wonders whether there will be any takers for the five lakh free tourist visas given the adverse publicity earned during the second wave. More steps are needed to shore up the battered economy.

N.J. RAVI CHANDER,  
Bengaluru

### Public sector units

Privatisation need not be the panacea for reversing the ills that affect public sector units in India (Editorial page, "Reopen the files, reconsider privatisation", June 29). As the writer suggests, India needs to have a closer look at the Chinese strategy on this issue. As far as legacy PSUs are concerned, selling

them outright is inadvisable. India is a democracy and the Government must consider all aspects. Banking is one area which the Government needs to be very careful about what it does. The Government can also think of retaining a residual stake of at least 25%.

ABHINANDAN PRASAD,  
Sangli, Maharashtra

### A road map

Of late, the quick, decisive and just verdicts being passed by the Supreme Court offer us hope. The road map spelt out for the Chief Justice of India by

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

A report titled "Jab status linked to resuming business in Northeast" (June 25, 2021) erroneously referred to Assam Chief Secretary as the Chairperson of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA). Actually, the State's Chief Minister is its Chairperson. The Chief Secretary is the Chairperson of the State executive committee of the ASDMA.

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# How Narasimha Rao found an ally in Germany

A tribute to the former PM for his vision in executing India's new diplomacy following economic reforms



KISHAN S. RANA

Diplomacy increasingly blends economics and politics. In this article, I look at how former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's momentous economic reforms of 1991 played out in Europe's largest economic power.

In September 1991, just before India's Ambassador to Germany, A. Madhavan, was to retire, Prime Minister Rao travelled to Germany, mainly to fulfil an obligation from three years ago, to launch a year-long Festival of India. Some months earlier, India had tried to postpone this event on account of the financial distress that had brought the country to the brink of insolvency, but the Germans were adamant that the commitment made by an earlier Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, regarding the festival be honoured.

## A talkfest

In Germany, an 'accidental' Prime Minister who was guiding India towards national renewal encountered a rejuvenated Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, who had just steered his nation to a serendipitous 'unification' with East Germany (which had come to pass thanks to the collapse of the Soviet Union). This created unforeseen chemistry. In effect, Chancellor Kohl decided to take a chance; he seemed to believe that the Rao government would survive though it lacked a parliamentary majority. Taking a small step, the two leaders decided to create an annual talkfest called the Indo-German Consultative Group (IGCG). At this talkfest, non-official public figures of the two countries (about half of them business leaders and the rest from the fields of academia, culture, the media, and science) were to discuss ways to steer the relationship between the two countries towards a new future. Two or three officials joined, but in a listening role; the IGCG's recommendations would go directly to the two leaders.

When I reached Bonn in May 1992, for the first working meeting at the German Foreign Office, I was told that the IGCG was an experiment for the Germans. They had no such me-



Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao being seen off at Delhi airport on his departure for Germany in September 1991. ■PIB/THE HINDU ARCHIVES

chanism with any non-ally country. Incidentally, nor did India, besides one with Japan, dating to the 1950s, which had ossified into an annual, unproductive ritual. In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs was cautiously optimistic about the new mechanism. It gradually appointed about 17 Indian figures, with P.N. Dhar as the co-chair. Germany had already named Deutsche Bank board member Ulrich Cartellieri as co-chair, and a sterling group of some 16 members. In both countries, the two Ambassadors worked with the co-chairs and the designated members, and discussed actionable ideas. The IGCG met in September 1992, at Bonn's St. Petersburg Castle overlooking the Rhine river. Its recommendations covered a page-and-a-half. A day later, Chancellor Kohl received P.N. Dhar and I, and declared himself pleased. The Foreign Office, which is not given to hyperbole, said that the meeting had "exceeded their expectations".

That set the stage for Chancellor Kohl's visit to India in February 1993, probably the first major visit by a foreign leader to Delhi after the 1991 reforms. While preparing for this visit, Chancellor Kohl's Chief of Staff, Harald Nestroy, raised a problem. It was Kohl's practice to take about 20 'special guests' – top business leaders, a few academics, scientists and public figures on his visits. Kohl wanted he and his guests to meet Rao for a substantive discussion following his own official meeting with the Prime Minister. New Delhi firmly refused: there was no such practice in India. Mr. Nestroy asked whether Prime Minister Rao would accommodate this

special request. I sought and obtained an assurance on reciprocity and used backchannels to convey this request to the Prime Minister. He knew well the importance of that German opening and agreed readily.

At Hyderabad House on February 3, 1993, after lunch, the German businesspersons raised a host of issues over India's reforms, urging improvements. Prime Minister Rao spontaneously invited them to give him all their suggestions. Kohl endorsed this, adding that when the Indian Prime Minister visited Germany a year later to continue their dialogue, they would discuss this further. Prime Minister Rao then added that he would respond to the German requests before he reached Germany. This was done; our response reached Bonn four days before the Prime Minister went there.

## A new practice

More important, as the aircraft left Delhi, Chancellor Kohl gathered his friends and asked, "Why are we so absent from India?" India had found a good ally. A few months later, for the first and only time in his 16-year chancellorship, Kohl asked the Foreign Office to produce a study on their Asia Policy. When that was finalised (after the draft was debated in the Bundestag), China, Japan and India were named as Germany's three 'strategic partners' in Asia. It was a first for India, in any western country; in those days, 'strategic' carried weight.

At Prime Minister Rao's return visit to Germany in February 1994, we stumbled into a new practice. Indian leaders were always coy about taking

business delegations. This was despite the fact that by then, the three Indian apex bodies – CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM – had begun to jointly host foreign leaders visiting New Delhi, to boost economic exchanges. But they had not "officially" been taken abroad by our leaders. That somehow seemed improper. Japan had a similar inhibition, which lasted much longer, into the 2000s.

When I asked the Foreign Office to confirm a meeting for our businesspersons with Chancellor Kohl, they stonewalled us saying there was no such practice in Germany. Mr. Nestroy then stepped in and confirmed that India could bring the businesspersons, provided they were "accompanying the Prime Minister". But a new problem came up. In New Delhi, high officials from the External Affairs Ministry and the Prime Minister's Office said that the Indian businesspersons were not "officially" with the Prime Minister; they "just happened to be in Germany at that time". That little impasse was sorted out via a direct approach with the Prime Minister, who said he had no problem with the businesspersons being associated with his visit.

The above narrative is a small tribute to P.V. Narasimha Rao for his vision and guidance in executing our new diplomacy following economic reforms. He personally steered this, sweeping away accumulated cobwebs in our thinking. After 30 years, the details or individuals are unimportant. We were all in a new game, unfamiliar with its rules and modes. And we learnt as we went along. My tribute is also to a succession of Indian and German envoys and officials who have raised this bilateral relationship to a much higher level, one that is mutually profitable. Such pragmatism became embedded in our practice of international relations. Prime Minister Rao guided and led us from the front, permitting India a smooth transition to the post-Cold War world. We confront today a different and perhaps more difficult national economy to manage, in the midst of a complex international political front. We need similar adaptability plus an ability to improvise and innovate, guided by the lodestar of national benefit.

*Kishan S. Rana is former Ambassador, author of 'Diplomacy at the Cutting Edge' (2016), and teacher*

# The trouble with rankings

A university should be judged within its social perspective



ATANU BISWAS

A culture of ranking is dominating today's world. University rankings such as Times Higher Education and Quacquarelli Symonds create a huge uproar. But should they really deserve to be the yardstick of excellence in today's higher education?

## The concept of a university

There has been a paradigm shift in the concept of a university in the modern era from the ancient times when universities like Nalanda and Taxila existed. In his 1852 book, *The Idea of a University*, John Henry Newman assumed that knowledge should be pursued "for its own sake". Newman used the ancient designation of a Studium Generale, or "School of Universal Learning". A University seems to be in its essence, a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country," Newman wrote.

The idea of the university, however, was shaped through the reforms of Wilhelm von Humboldt in Prussia. Ever since the University of Berlin was founded in 1810, the 'Humboldtian' university became a model for Europe, and subsequently for the research universities of the U.S. The central Humboldtian principle was the fusion of teaching and research in the work of the individual scholar, and the objective of the university was to advance knowledge by original and critical investigation, not just to transmit the legacy of the past or to teach skills.

In India, the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were established in 1857. The immediate interest was to produce graduates to fill up the salaried positions emerging in the wake of colonial rule. The mottos of these universities, however, were "Advancement of Learning", "Silastataphala Vidyā" (The Fruit of Learning is Character and Righteous Conduct), and "Doctrina Vim Promovet Insitam" (Learning Promotes Natural Talent), respectively. In 1919, Rabindranath Tagore wrote: "the primary function of our University should be the constructive work of knowledge".

While the concept of a university has evolved a lot, blaming the contemporary universities from Newman's standpoint would be like blaming a jet engine for not having the excellences of a windmill, as the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre said.

Back to ranking. In fact, weighted averages of scores for several performance-related

criteria are considered for ranking of the universities. The criteria and their weights differ from one ranking organisation to another. Change in weights may produce a different list of rankings. The criteria constitute research income from industry; ratio of international to domestic staff and students; number of students, research papers, citations; etc. Small but important institutes might thus trail in the ranking race. Also, many people think 'citation' is an inappropriate measure of usefulness of a research paper.

The most controversial part of the ranking methodology maybe reputational survey or academic peer review, where opinions of academics get importance. This component has significant weight, and these rankings have come in for criticism for too much emphasis on perception. Last year, seven leading IITs announced that they would boycott one such ranking, saying they are not satisfied with the transparency of the process.

## Churning out papers

Research publication is important to enhance the rank. Academics are expected to keep churning out papers. An institute invariably seeks a list of recent publications once or twice a year from its faculty members. But how does that help in quality research? Peter Higgs, the 2013 Nobel Laureate in Physics, believes that he would not have got a job in today's academic system because he would not be considered "productive" enough. When his department at Edinburgh University would ask for a list of recent publications, Higgs would reply: "None". Still, today's academics are mostly confined within the world of such 'compulsory' research and publication, for mere survival.

The concept of a university should not be the same everywhere. Universities at Chicago, Harvard and Oxford might fancy making the achievements of their students or professors the yardstick of excellence. However, there are many universities which cater to the local people as the only spectacles of higher education and prism of enlightenment. Their importance is no less than the 'elite' universities. A university should be judged within its social perspective.

The worth of university rankings, thus, is not very clear. "When we see a foreign University, we see only its smaller body - its buildings, its furniture, its regulations, its syllabus; its larger body is not present to us. But as the kernel of the coconut is in the whole coconut, so the University," Tagore envisaged a century ago. We might need to redefine the idea of a university within the framework of an ever-changing social perspective and need.

*Atanu Biswas is Professor of Statistics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata*

# A vague and wanting statement

The G7 failed to take a firm stance on the prevention of future pandemics

SHUBHAM JANGHU

Recently, the Group of Seven or G7 met in Cornwall, England. The leaders discussed a number of issues, but failed to take a firm stance on the prevention of future pandemics.

## Pandemics of the future

COVID-19 is not the last pandemic we are going to see. Given the closer proximity between humans and animals due to deforestation, displacement of humans, population growth, and the search for wild food, pathogens can easily be transmitted from animals to humans (zoonotic spillover). A report by the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response (IPPPR) notes that most of the new pathogens' origins are zoonotic.

Further, climate change is allowing the permafrost found in Arctic regions to melt and is reviving pathogens and organisms that were either once thought to be long gone or remain unknown. Recently, bdelloid rotifers, a microscopic creature that was slumbering for at least 24,000 years, was unearthed from the permafrost, which is melting in places due to climate change. Revich and Podolnaya (2011) conclude that vectors of deadly infections of the 18th and 19th centuries may make a comeback due to the same reason.

Given that we are still in the midst of a raging pandemic, what was the G7's response to all this? The Carbis Bay Health Declaration of the G7 fails to take any concrete stance on many (or arguably, any) issues. The G7 merely "acknowledge the bold recommendations of the [IPPPR] and the other review committees" and state that they will "continue to work" with other countries, the G20, the World Health Organization (WHO), and other organisations.

The Declaration takes "note" of the IPPPR's recommendation for a potential treaty under the framework of the WHO, suggesting a failure to reach a concrete agreement. Over 25 leaders from other regions have already supported the idea of a new treaty. Such a treaty is needed to plug holes in the current system and strengthen national capacities and

resilience. COVID-19 has taught us that a pandemic anywhere is a pandemic everywhere. If the capacities of developing countries are not strengthened, another virus could spread around the world. Without giving any material support, G7 offers vague commitments to "strive for fairness, inclusion and equity" and "support vulnerable countries".

**Need for a holistic approach** The world needs to adopt a holistic approach for the prevention of future pandemics. Dr. Jorge E. Vilchez et al., in their article in *The Lancet*, argue that the need is to focus on "deep prevention". They draw a distinction between upstream, midstream, and downstream stages of intervention. Downstream intervention refers to steps taken on the public health front (for example, prevention of disease spread). 'Deep prevention' focuses on upstream and midstream intervention. In the former, one would focus on the 'One Health' approach, which acknowledges the interconnection between humans, animals, plants, and the shared ecosystem. This approach can be given varying levels of intrusiveness. Towards the extreme end, it might involve banning wet markets, such as the one suspected to be the origin of COVID-19. China banned such markets in 2003 after the SARS outbreak; however, incentives to keep the industry open eroded the ban eventually. Although the Declaration seems to support 'One Health', it dilutes it to encouraging coordination efforts between the UN, WHO, World Organisation for Animal Health, and others.

Vilchez et al. suggest that the midstream intervention would involve setting up a science and policy panel such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Such a panel could ensure that science informs the law, pre-emptively detect pathogens of concern, and identify potential hotspots for an outbreak and set up a mechanism for regular inspection by the national authority and appropriate international oversight, among other things.

*Shubham Janghu is a lawyer practising in New Delhi*



## DATA POINT

### Not under cover

In Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat, fewer than 40% of households had at least one member covered by health insurance, according to the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-20). Also, in these States, the number of household members who generally chose to go to private sector clinics/hospitals for treatment was relatively higher than in other regions. So, households in these States spent more on health as the average expenditure for hospitalisation cases was seven times higher in the private sector compared to the public sector, according to the latest NSSO report on health. While the problem was acute in these four States, insurance coverage was in general very low across many States. By Suman Sen, Jasmin Nihalani & Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**POOR COVERAGE |** The % of households with at least one member covered by health insurance was as low as 12.7% in J&K. In Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, while the insurance coverage and the share of government schemes was relatively high, the share of those who sought the private sector for their health needs was also relatively high. Only States for which there is NFHS-5 published data have been presented

State	% of households where at least one member was covered by health insurance			Share of those insured under govt. schemes*	% houses which consulted the public health sector if sick			% houses which consulted the private health sector if sick
	Urban	Rural	Total		Urban	Rural	Total	
J&K	19.2	10.1	12.7	84.6	87.2	92.5	91	12.1
Manipur	12.3	15.3	14.2	64.6	78.6	86.6	83.5	20.7
Bihar	11.6	15.1	14.5	29.3	24.6	18.5	19.4	71.5
Maharashtra	20.1	19.9	20	49.1	30.9	40.6	36	67.1
Nagaland	15	23.1	20.5	73.1	61	75	70.5	36.9
Sikkim	31.2	21.6	25.7	60.4	81	92.5	87.7	18.3
Karnataka	28.2	28	28.1	46.4	45	61.5	54.7	53.1
West Bengal	25.9	31	29.3	89.4	62.4	73.2	69.6	33.4
Tripura	24.9	36.5	33	53.3	87.2	95	92.7	11
H.P.	37.1	34.1	34.5	52.5	77.5	84.3	83.3	16.4
Gujarat	36.3	41.1	39	87	46	59.6	53.8	51.1
Mizoram	41.2	52.8	46.4	93.2	83.3	94.6	88.4	16.1
Kerala	47.2	55.4	51.5	90	72.3	79.3	76	27.2
Assam	50.1	61.9	60	3.5	67.2	86.2	83.1	29.5
Telangana	52.9	65	60.8	99	36.7	35.5	35.9	58.5
Meghalaya	52.8	66.5	63.5	93.2	60.9	83	78.2	35.7
Goa	65.1	67.5	66	89.2				

## FROM PAGE ONE

**Ensure that no migrant worker goes hungry: SC**

The court ordered the Centre to get its act together and complete the work on the portal by July 31. The Labour Secretary has to file a report in a month thereafter. The Centre should complete the registration of workers by December 31 this year or all their "welfare schemes" would be considered "tall claims on paper".

Justice Bhushan observed, "The Ministry is not alive to the concerns of the migrant workers. The non-action of the Ministry is strongly disapproved".

The court said an unorganised worker was entitled to direct bank transfer if there was a State policy.

"Both, in the first and the second wave of the pandemic, migrant workers had been exposed to financial

and other forms of hardships due to their limited access and claim to the welfare resources offered by the States/Union Territories. Migrant labourers are particularly vulnerable to the economic regression," the court noted.

It suggested that the Centre ought to "redetermine" the beneficiaries under the Food Security Act in both the urban and rural areas.

The Bench directed the States/Union Territories to register establishments and license contractors under the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 and ensure that they provided the authorities complete details of the workers employed with them.

**Govt. gives nod for Cipla to import Moderna's vaccine**

In a statement, Cipla said it is "supporting Moderna, Inc. with the regulatory approval and importation of vaccines to be donated to India. At this stage, there is no definitive agreement on commercial supplies."

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Moderna vaccine has shown to have an efficacy of approximately 94.1%.

Meanwhile, responding to a question about the spread of the Delta Plus variant in India, Dr. Paul said 51 cases of Delta Plus variant have been reported from 11 States and one Union Territory — Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Haryana and Jammu (as of June 28).

**LeT 'commander' among two militants gunned down in Srinagar**

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) 'commander' Abrar, who was arrested on Monday, was killed along with another militant and three CRPF jawans were injured in an overnight encounter at Matloora here on Tuesday. "Both the terrorists were killed in the encounter. In the initial firefight, three CRPF personnel got injured and Abrar, who was with the search party, also got hit," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar said. The

condition of the injured personnel was stable, officials said.

"A foreign terrorist, who fired from inside the house, got neutralised, and Abrar also got killed," Mr. Kumar said.

"On Monday, at the Parimpura naka [checkpoint], vehicle was stopped and their identity was asked. Abrar, sitting at the back seat, tried to open his bag and take out a grenade. The naka party swiftly swung into action and grabbed him," the police said.

**Atlas of glacial lakes in Ganga basin released**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

With concerns mounting over the impact of climate change on Himalayan glaciers, the Ministry of Jal Shakti has released an updated atlas of glacial lakes that are part of the Ganga river basin. About 4,707 glacial lakes have been mapped in the Ganga basin.

Glacial lakes with water spread area greater than 0.25 ha were mapped using Resourcesat-2 Linear Imaging Self Scanning Sensor-IV satellite data. The Atlas is available on Bhuvan portal of NRSC, ISRO (<https://bhuvan.nrsc.gov.in/nhp/>)

Most Indians, cutting across religions, feel they enjoy religious freedom, value religious tolerance, and regard respect for all religions as central to what India is as a nation. At the same time the majority in each of the major religious groups show a marked preference for religious segregation and "want to live separately", according to a nation-wide survey on religious attitudes, behaviours and beliefs conducted by Pew Research Center, a non-profit based in Washington DC.

For instance, the report found that 91% of Hindus felt

**Activists welcome top court's ruling**

'It should result in universalisation of rations to all migrant workers during the pandemic'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court's ruling on Tuesday should result in the universalisation of rations to all migrant workers across India as long as the pandemic continues, as opposed to the government's one-time relief measures, said intervenors.

Social activists Harsh Mandir, Anjali Bhardwaj and Jagdeep Chhokar also welcomed the court's direction to the government to re-determine the number of people covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), given that the population has grown since the law was enacted.

"It is significant that the SC has recognised that economic distress does not go away merely with the lifting of lockdowns..." said the intervenors in a statement. "We welcome this important judgment and are happy to note that the plea to universalise rations to all migrant workers across India till the pandemic continues has been accepted."

In its ruling, the SC had di-



**Bearing the brunt:** Migrant workers outside the Kashmere Gate Metro station waiting for transport to their workplaces in New Delhi on Tuesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

rected States to distribute dry rations and run community kitchens for migrant workers, and directed the Centre to provide the needed grains to implement this. The Food Ministry has so far argued that there is no need to revive the Atma Nirbhar scheme under which it had

provided such dry rations for 2.8 crore migrants and others without ration cards last year.

In their written submission to the court on June 15, the intervenors had highlighted that the benefits of the NFSA as well as the One Nation, One Ration Card

scheme were restricted to those with ration cards.

They pointed out that several States had already exhausted their ration card quota under the NFSA, and 22 out of 29 States had less than 5% quota remaining.

"These State-wise quotas under the Act are severely

underestimated on account of being calculated as per the figures of the 2011 census and never having been updated since," said the intervenors. They argued for a revision of the quotas using the current population projection of 139 crore, which would increase NFSA coverage to 93 crore people, as against the current figure of 80 crore.

In its ruling, the SC has now directed the Centre "to undertake exercise under Section 9 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 to re-determine the total number of persons to be covered under Rural and Urban areas of the State, which shall be beneficial to a large number of persons."

The intervenors had also argued for emergency cash transfers to be given to migrant workers to pay for cooking oil, milk and vegetables, as well as non-food expenses such as medical and rental needs.

However, the court said it could not issue any direction on cash transfers as they were a matter of policy and in the domain of the State.

**Aadhaar can be ID proof for GRE, TOEFL**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Indian students writing the GRE or TOEFL examinations will be allowed to use their Aadhaar cards as identification proof from July 1. Making the announcement, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) said on Tuesday that many students have faced difficulties in getting passports due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The ETS conducts both the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), standardised tests which are an admission requirement for many universities in the United States and elsewhere.

According to the ETS website, a passport is the only accepted identification proof so far for those taking the tests in India.

This temporary measure will apply until further notice, according to an ETS statement. It will also apply to the new TOEFL Essentials Test, which the ETS will start offering from August 21.

**NIA takes over Jammu drone attack case**

DEVESH K. PANDEY  
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency on Tuesday took over the probe into the drone attack inside the IAF station in Jammu early on Sunday. Following a directive from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the NIA has re-registered the case that was earlier lodged at the

Himalayas.

There was no evidence of a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) having caused the event, he noted.

Due to the large volume of debris and the deluge, an artificial dam had formed near the confluence of Raunthi Garh and Rishiganga river, by the flowing debris which blocked the flow of the Rishiganga river and formed a small lake temporarily.

A study by the National Remote Sensing Centre indicated that the time taken from the initiation of the avalanche and its disastrous impact up to Tapovan barrage site near Joshimath was "barely 50 minutes", which indicates availability of a "very low lead time for raising any warning for the downstream areas."

"The case relates to an explosion that occurred in the premises of the Air Force Station, Satwari campus, Jammu, on June 27 and a subsequent blast, after about six minutes carried out by drones in a well-planned conspiracy..." said the agency, adding that two IAF personnel were injured in the explosion.

**Indians value religious freedom, not integration'**

South India more inclusive, says Pew Center report on religious attitudes in the country

**Free to choose**

More than 80% of adults across all major religions in India said that they were free to practice their religion in the country

Religion	They are very free to practice their religion	Respecting all religions is very important to being truly Indian	Respecting other religions is a very important part of their religious identity
Hindus	91	85	80
Muslims	89	78	79
Christians	89	78	78
Sikhs	82	81	75
Buddhists	93	84	86
Jains	85	83	73
General population	91	84	80

they have religious freedom, while 85% of them believed that respecting all religions was very important 'to being

truly Indian'.

Also, for most Hindus, religious tolerance was not just a civic virtue but also a reli-

gious value, with 80% of them stating that respecting other religions was an integral aspect of 'being Hindu'. Other religions showed similar numbers for freedom of religion and religious tolerance. While 89% of Muslims and Christians said they felt free to practice their religion, the comparative figures for Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains were 82%, 93%, and 85% respectively.

And yet, paradoxically the majority in all the faiths scored poorly on the metrics for religious segregation: composition of friends circle, views on stopping inter-religious marriage, and willingness to accept people of

other religions as neighbours.

The survey found that nationally, three-in-ten Hindus took both these positions: linking being Hindu and speaking Hindi to being Indian, and voting for BJP.

But there was a clear geographical skew in their distribution: while roughly half of the Hindu voters in northern and central India fell into this category, only 5% of Hindu voters in the South did so.

Also, Hindu nationalist sentiments were less prevalent in the South.

Among Hindus, those in the South (42%) were far less likely to say that being Hindu was very important to being truly Indian.

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IN BRIEF



**Stimulus plan doesn't address demand: CPI**

NEW DELHI  
The CPI said the stimulus package announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman offered no incentives to boost demand. The CPI said while announcing the ₹6.28 lakh crore plan, the Minister didn't mention where the funds would be mobilised from. "Is this a part of current budget expenditure?" it asked.

**Kovind lays foundation of Ambedkar memorial**

LUCKNOW  
President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday laid the foundation stone of a memorial and cultural centre dedicated to B.R. Ambedkar in Lucknow. However, BSP chief Mayawati questioned the timing of the launch, which is a few months before the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly poll.

**Time to stop talk of rift within MVA, says Raut**

PUNE  
Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut said while leaders may have different views, the tripartite MVA government in Maharashtra was functioning smoothly. He quashed reports of NCP chief Sharad Pawar being "upset" with the Sena, adding that it was time to put a stop to talk of any "unease" in the coalition.

**Jairam moves privilege motion against channel**

NEW DELHI  
Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who chairs the Parliamentary Standing Committee on science and technology, moved a privilege motion against news channel Times Now for "falsified and mischievous" reporting of the proceedings of the panel's meeting.

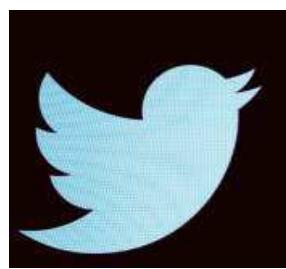
**Assault on Assam doctor: 36 chargesheeted**

GUWAHATI  
The Assam police have submitted a chargesheet naming 36 persons, including three children, for assaulting a doctor on June 1. A mob had assaulted Seui Kumar Senapati, a doctor at the Udal Covid Care Centre in central Assam's Hojai district, after a patient died of COVID-19. The doctor had to undergo surgery. The incident had come to light after a video released on social media showed several people hitting the doctor.

# House panel questions Twitter

Representatives from Google and Facebook appear before standing committee

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI



The Standing Committee on Information and Technology has sought an explanation from social media giant Twitter on why accounts of IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and committee Chairperson Shashi Tharoor were locked.

In a meeting held on Tuesday, representatives from Google and Facebook appeared before the committee on the subject of "Safe-guarding citizens' rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms, including special emphasis on women's security in the digital space".

Twitter recently locked the accounts of Ravi Shankar Prasad and Shashi Tharoor.

Sources said the committee members discussed the new IT rules with the representatives of both platforms. Both Facebook and Google have said that they will comply with the new IT

rules. "They said that they will comply with the new IT rules, as much as they can," one of the members said. Facebook pointed out that it was technically impossible to intercept messages in WhatsApp.

The new rules mandate tracing the origin of a particular message if required by the law enforcement agencies. Facebook explained that WhatsApp works on end-to-end encryption. It only sweeps metadata and no messages are intercepted or read.

Earlier in the day, Facebook announced that complying with the IT rules, it

would publish an interim report on the content it had removed proactively between May 15 and June 15.

The new rules, which came into force on May 26, mandate large social media companies to publish periodic compliance reports every month, mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken.

Non-compliance with the IT rules would result in these platforms losing their intermediary status that provides them immunity from liabilities over any third-party data hosted by them and gives them immunity from criminal culpability.

## Atul Keshap is interim U.S. Chargé D'affaires

Biden govt. silent on India envoy

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN  
SUHASINI HAIDAR  
WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI



Atul Keshap

pandemic," a statement from the State Department said.

Short- and medium-term vaccine access for India, U.S. assistance to India as it fought a second COVID-19 wave in recent months, and India's manufacturing role in a Quad (India, the U.S., Australia and Japan) plan to supply at least 1 billion vaccines for Asia by the end of 2022 top the agenda of the relationship.

Mr. Keshap was formerly the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives and played a key role in developing the U.S.-Maldives defence relationship. The two countries signed on to a framework for their security relationship last September. He also served as Deputy Assistance Secretary for South Asia and was posted previously to the American Embassy in New Delhi since the end of May.

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"Ambassador Keshap's appointment will reinforce the close U.S. partnership with the Government and people of India, demonstrated by our collaboration to overcome global challenges like the COVID-19

## Rajasthan BJP caught in turbulence

Amid factionalism, show-cause notice served on ex-Minister for speaking out against State leadership

NISTULA HEBBAR  
NEW DELHI



Former CM Vasundhara Raje

remains a strong leader

within the party.

The Rajasthan BJP is facing turmoil, with former Minister Rohit Sharma accusing the State leadership of "running the party from within office rooms" during the COVID-19 pandemic. The party served a show-cause notice on him for indiscipline, but the incident has drawn attention to the fact that the cleavage in the party between the factions that owe loyalty to and those who oppose former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje continues to exist and flare up.

Ms. Raje, a leader who headed two governments, continues to remain strong within the party with much support while the national leadership has remained wary of her power. Attempts to place Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat as the State president came a cropper a couple of years ago when she stood her ground.

**'Inner-party democracy'** During the pandemic, too, her team ran relief operations via the "Vasundhara Jan Rasoi", which was separate from the BJP-led "Sewa Hi Sangathan" programmes. Ms. Raje's photographs were said to have been removed from party posters, annoying her supporters and providing some of the background for Mr. Sharma's comments.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Sharma said, "Rajasthan

is represented by several leaders at the Centre but in my district alone, I found it difficult to coordinate relief. I spoke about that, and rather than acknowledging that there is something called inner-party democracy, I was slapped with a show-cause notice for 'indiscipline'."

When asked about him speaking on behalf of a particular faction, he said, "Not

everyone in a leadership position can become a leader.

Vasundhara Raje is a leader who brought the BJP to power first with 120 seats and the second time with 163 seats, surpassing the record of Shekhawatji [former Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat]. When we already have a powerful leader, we should put her forward," he said. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi is our face at the Centre, but in States, people want to see good local leadership and faces. The BJP's situation in West Bengal was because of this lack of a local face, and the same is in Haryana," he noted.

Mr. Sharma has been given 15 days from June 25 (when the notice was first sent) to reply.

However, BJP State chief Satish Poonia said, "His remarks on relief work are not true. More than 600 of our 'karyakartas' have lost their lives to COVID-19 in the course of serving the public. There are inner-party forums for his complaints, and his citing internal democracy for giving media interviews on party affairs is being disingenuous."

National general secretary of the BJP and in-charge of Rajasthan, Arun Singh, said out-of-turn statements would not be tolerated.

As factionalism brews, the Congress and the BJP in the State can only take solace that both suffer from a similar malaise.

## Congress asks govt. to frame drone policy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday urged the Centre to prepare a comprehensive policy to deal with armed drone attacks. Party general secretary Randeep Surjewala said on social media. The Trinamool Congress leadership said the matter will be investigated.

## Kant's tenure extended

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
AHMEDABAD

The Centre has extended the tenure of NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer Amitabh Kant by one year till June 2022. He is a 1980 batch retired IAS officer of

the Kerala cadre, who has been at the helm of the polity think tank since 2016.

Before moving to the NITI Aayog, he was Secretary in the Government of India, handling industrial policy and promotion.

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

A member of the committee of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) set up to probe allegations of post-poll violence in the State on Tuesday alleged that he was attacked in Kolkata's Jadavpur area.

Atif Rasheed, Vice-Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities and member of the Committee set up as per the instructions of the Calcutta High Court,

said some people chased and attacked him when he visited Jadavpur area to inquire into the allegations.

**Videos viral**

"On the basis of the complaints received, we came here and found 40 houses have been destroyed and the families have left. Some of the goons also attacked us in the presence of the police. If this happens to us, what about common people," Mr. Rasheed said.

Videos of the locals surrounding the NHRC committee member and arguing with him have gone viral on social media. The High Court had on June 18 directed the NHRC to set up the panel to probe the allegations. The court refused to stay the order on June 21 after an appeal by the State.

Over the past few days, the NHRC has asked for complaints and grievances on violence to be sent to the committee members either

Name of work	Stabilisation of Kuttiyadi Dam by providing supporting concrete structure on the Downstream Face & Allied structures (Civil works) under DRIP-II
Tender ID	2021_PCKNR_426252_1
RFB No	DRIP/KYIP/S/E/KNR/9/2021/22/NS
Date of Publishing	15.06.2021
Bid Submission end date	15.07.2021
EMD	30.70.00/-
Tender Class	A-Class

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Dept., Project Circle, Kannur RO/00932/D3/2021/I&PRD

ANDHRA PRADESH INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CORPORATION LIMITED (An undertaking of A.P. Govt.)		
O/o. Chief General Manager (Per) 10 <sup>th</sup> floor, APIIC Towers, IT Park, Mangalagiri, Guntur District, A.P.		
<b>e-Procurement Notice</b>		
Tender Notice No. 01/CGM/PER/APIIC/2021-22, DL-28-06-2021		
Tender Notice No. 01 - Selection of Human Resource Consultancy Services for Study on Strategic Human Resource Management in APIIC.		
Bid Download starts from 09-2021 at 1:00 PM and last date for submission of bid is 05-07-2021 up to 3:00 PM.		
The details of tender notice and bid documents can be downloaded from <a href="http://www.approcurement.gov.in">www.approcurement.gov.in</a>		
Sd/- Chief General Manager (Per) APIIC Ltd., Mangalagiri		

RAJASTHAN STATE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT CORPORATION LTD. (A Rajasthan Government Undertaking)		
Udyog Bhawan, Tilak Road, Jaipur-302001, Ph.: 0141-2277751, 4593201		
Fax: 0141-4593210 Email: <a href="mailto:rstdc@rajasthan.gov.in">rstdc@rajasthan.gov.in</a> Website: <a href="http://www.rstdc.gov.in">www.rstdc.gov.in</a>		
<b>TENDER NOTICE</b>		
RSDC invites sealed tenders/bids costing more than Rs.2.00 Lacs through eproc.rajastrapat.com for the following works/services/supply etc.		
Sr. No. Name of Work Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)		
1. Unit Head, Udaipur		
1.1 Providing and laying of Power Lines & Shifting of existing powerlines at/A Kaladwas, Udaipur. LBN-RDC2021WS000352	376.94	
Bidders/contractors may download and submit tender online. Detailed information of tenders and any kind of corrigendum/extension, if any, in future, may be seen by bidders on websites <a href="http://www.rstdc.gov.in">www.rstdc.gov.in</a> and <a href="http://www.eproc.rajastrapat.gov.in">www.eproc.rajastrapat.gov.in</a> .		
For queries please contact: Sr.DGM (Civil), Ph.: 0141-4593212 Raj.Samaddar/C/21/2843		

Dated: 25.06.2021  
No. PG/IR/Advt/21/HR-000415

Co-ordinator, ICMR-JRF Exam

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Phone No. : 0172-2755561

NOTIFICATION - ICMR-JRF 2021

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in collaboration with Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education & Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh will hold National Level Computer Based test (CBT) for award of Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) in Life science/Social science stream on **Sunday, September 12, 2021** at various cities across India.

Information brochure, online application form and other details will be available at both ICMR New Delhi website: [www.icmr.nic.in](http://icmr.nic.in) and PGIMER website: <http://pgimer.edu.in>. Tentative dates for filling of online application form will be from 01.07.2021 to 31.07.2021. Only online

## IN BRIEF



## Sonu Sood denies stocking medicines

MUMBAI Actor Sonu Sood on Tuesday filed a plea before the Bombay High Court and denied all allegations of stocking, hoarding or distributing COVID-19 medicines. The application was filed seeking permission to intervene in a public interest litigation filed by advocate Sneha Marjadi and activist Nilesh Navlakha concerning COVID-19 management by the State and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. Previously, the court had asked how actors and MLAs had access to medicines that seemed to be in short supply.

## HC tells police to find 'big fish' behind fake jabs

MUMBAI The Bombay High Court on Tuesday told the Mumbai police to identify the 'big fish' in cases where over 2,000 people were administered 'saline water' in fake COVID-19 vaccination camps allegedly orchestrated by a doctor couple of Shivam Hospital. A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni was hearing a bunch of public interest litigation (PIL) petitions concerning the supply and demand of vaccinations in the city. Public prosecutor Deepak Thakare told the court that seven FIRs had been registered and 11 arrested in the case.

## Maharashtra plans home vaccination for the aged

MUMBAI The Maharashtra government on Tuesday told the Bombay High Court that it proposes to start vaccination at home on an experimental basis for the bed-ridden. Dr. Dilip Patil, Deputy Director, State Family Welfare Bureau, filed an affidavit before a Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and G.S. Kulkarni. The affidavit was filed in a public interest litigation by two city-based advocates — Dhruvi Kapadia and Kunal Tiwari — seeking door-to-door vaccination for those above 75 years of age and wheelchair-bound.

## PMs' museum still under construction, says CPWD

The proposed Prime Minister's museum is still under construction, having missed its October 2020 deadline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials of the Culture Ministry and Central Public Works Department (CPWD) said on Tuesday. Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel visited the site, which is a part of the Teen Murti Estate, where the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML) is located, and held a review meeting with Ministry and CPWD officials. Tagbin, the company that will design the museum, made a presentation.

# Follow Health Ministry advisory till July 31: Centre

Relaxation of curbs should be carefully calibrated

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Tuesday asked the States and the Union Territories to consider implementation of targeted and prompt actions for COVID-19 management in accordance with the latest Health Ministry advisory, till July 31.

According to the order, issued under the Disaster Management Act, the national directives for COVID-19 management, as specified in the Health Ministry advisory dated June 28, will continue to be strictly followed throughout the country.

All the District Magistrates shall strictly enforce the above measures. For the enforcement of social distancing, State/UT governments may, as far as possi-

ble, use the provisions of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code," the directive said.

Any person violating the measures will be liable to be proceeded against under Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, besides legal action under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code, and other legal provisions as applicable.

## Close monitoring

In another letter, Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said that with a decline in the number of active cases, many States and Union Territories had started relaxing restrictions.

However, the process should be carefully calibrated, he wrote. They should closely monitor case positivity and bed occupancy, tak-

ing district as an administrative unit. On witnessing any early signs of increase in case positivity and higher bed occupancy, necessary action should be taken for containment and upgrade of health infrastructure. For the districts with high positivity and higher bed occupancy, imposing restrictions may be considered.

The States and the Union Territories have been asked to monitor the districts with higher numbers of active cases per million population, as it is an important indicator to predict the need for upgrading health infrastructure and logistics. There should be a continuous focus on the five-fold strategy — test-track-treat-vaccination and adherence to COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

— test-track-treat-vaccination and adherence to COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

## Cold truth



**Washed away:** Bodies, many of which are believed to be of COVID-19 victims, are seen partially exposed in shallow graves as rainwater inundated a cremation site along the banks of river Ganga near Allahabad on Tuesday. ■ RITESH SHUKLA/GETTY IMAGES

# J&J says no trial needed in India for Janssen jab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

U.S.-based pharmaceutical company Johnson & Johnson has said the requirement to conduct a bridging clinical study of its single-dose Janssen COVID-19 vaccine no longer exists in India. The company is in discussion with the Centre on vaccine supply.

The company said it was following Drug Controller General of India's recent announcement that there was no longer any requirement

for conducting post-approval bridging clinical trials for COVID-19 vaccines in India for restricted use in emergency situation in case of those already approved for restricted use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, U.K. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency of Japan and those listed in the World Health Organization's Emergency Use Listing.

Describing their collaboration as a first of its kind in the Indian pharma industry, a release on Tuesday said the companies will jointly sponsor, supervise and

# Five firms come together for COVID-19 drug trial

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

Five pharma majors — Cipla, Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Emcure, Sun Pharma and Torrent — will collaborate for the clinical trials in India of investigational, oral, anti-viral drug Molnupiravir for the treatment of mild COVID-19.

Describing their collaboration as a first of its kind in the Indian pharma industry, a release on Tuesday said the companies will jointly sponsor, supervise and

# 35.6 lakh vaccine shots given

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Bengal lead in jabs administered on Tuesday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

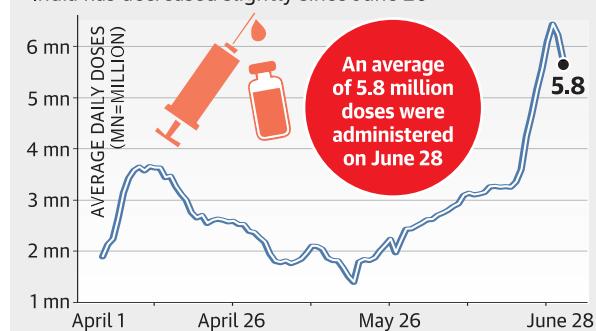
India administered 35.6 lakh (3.56 million) doses of COVID-19 vaccines until 9 p.m. on Tuesday. Maharashtra recorded the highest number of vaccinations (3.8 lakh) followed by Andhra Pradesh (2.8 lakh) and West Bengal (2.7 lakh).

Between June 1 and 28, 40.3 lakh doses were administered daily in India on average. At the current rate, a total of 108.2 crore doses can be administered by December 31, 2021, which is around 79.8 crore doses fewer than those required to fully vaccinate all adults (188 crore doses). To fully inoculate all adults by the end of this year, 83 lakh doses need to be given daily on average in the country.

The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in the country dropped to 57.5 lakh on June 28 from 64.3

## Increasing coverage

The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in India has decreased slightly since June 26



lakh recorded on June 26. However, it is more than the 46.6 lakh recorded a week before (June 22). It was also significantly higher than the average daily doses recorded a month before (May 28), which was 22.1 lakh.

About 28.9% of adults in India, 60.3% of those aged above 45 years, and 67.4% of people aged above 60 years,

cumulative caseload to 3,03,60,836. As many as 812 new deaths were also registered, taking the tally to 3,98,480.

Kerala reported 13,550 new infections, followed by Maharashtra (8,085) and Tamil Nadu (4,512). Maharashtra recorded 231 new fatalities, followed by Tamil Nadu (118) and Kerala (104). The figures do not include cases and deaths from Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Ladakh. The numbers are sourced from the respective States' health bulletins.

India records the second-highest number of seven-day average daily deaths in the world, next to Brazil (1,644). About 1,191 daily deaths were recorded on June 28. The two other countries with the highest fatality count after India were Colombia (678) and Russia (576).

# Tracking the digital divide in Kolkata

40% of students lost out, finds study

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

About 40% primary school students could not attend online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic owing to the digital divide, a report published by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen's Pratichi (India) Trust found. The study was compiled on the basis of experiences shared by hundreds of teachers across 21 State-run primary schools in Kolkata.

The 72-page report highlights the issues faced by students in accessing digital teaching learning.

## Devices and data

"There are two components to the digital divide — one is affordability and whether the families of students can afford devices that are required for digital learning. The second issue is regular accessibility of uninterrupted data, which again has an element of expenditure," Sabir Ahamed, national research coordinator, Pratichi (India) Trust, and one of the authors of the report said.

The findings are based on experiences over six months during the first wave of the pandemic (April to November 2020) shared by primary school teachers.

Dr. Reddy's will conduct the clinical trial and the others will be required to demonstrate equivalence of their products to the product used by Dr. Reddy's.

Molnupiravir is said to inhibit the replication of multiple RNA viruses.



Online education remains accessible only for a few.

Majumdar, Urba Chaudhuri, Kakali Das De and Sutapa Ghosh.

The report focused on children enrolled in Classes 1 to 5. While schools continued to provide dry rations regularly as a supplement to cooked mid-day meals, teachers have reported nutritional deficiency. Though more families of school students sought dry rations, the researchers feel that the rations were distributed among family members, and in some cases, the child's nutritional needs were not met.

Also, during the period surveyed, Kolkata witnessed one of the worst cyclones of the past few decades when Amphan battered south Bengal on May 20, 2020. For more than a couple of weeks, the entire teaching-learning process came to a complete halt due to the lack of digital connectivity.

"The report provides us with an understanding of how students are left in the digital teaching learning process. If 40% could not access digital classes in Kolkata, one can imagine the situation in remote areas of the State," Mr. Ahamed said.

# Jaishankar presses for vaccine equity

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

International cooperation is the way forward to deal with vaccine requirements to counter the threat of COVID-19 pandemic, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday during the G20 Foreign Ministers meeting at Matera in Italy.

The comment came on a day when the African Union said Covishield of Serum Institute of India has been the "backbone" of the vaccination programme in the continent supported by EU under the COVAX programme.

"Institutional multilateralism has been found wanting. Reforms have many forms but vaccine equity will be the immediate test," said Mr. Jaishankar, urging international cooperation to ensure supply of vaccines, medicines, oxygen and protective gear to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Minister's reference to "vaccine equity" echoed closely the statement from the African Union and the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) which "noted with concern" reports that Serum Institute of India's Covishield vaccine has not received clearance from the European Medicines Authority (EMA).

The AU noted that EU has authorised the European version of AstraZeneca vaccine named Vaxzevria but the same was not extended to Covishield which is meant for India and lower income countries of Africa.

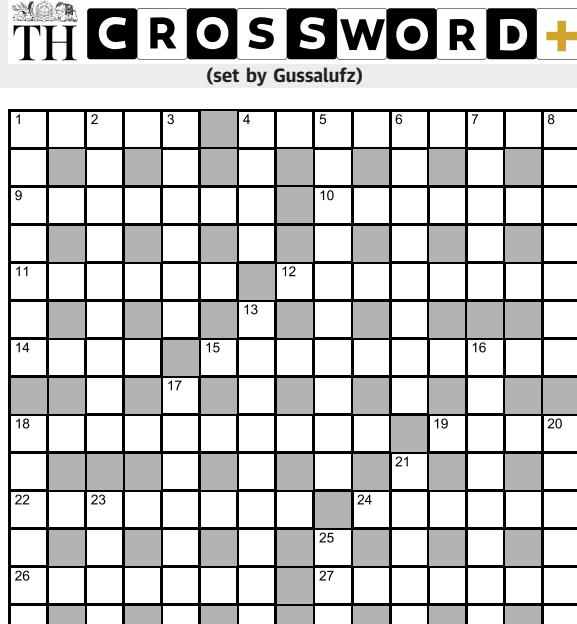
## TH CROSSWORD

13287

(set by Gussalufz)

Display keystrokes of genius.  
Type your answers into our online grids!

@ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>



## ACROSS

- 1 A bunch of taxis moving swiftly (5)
- 4 Fanzine going gaga over leftists' leader with upper-class complaint (9)
- 5 Bus stop stalker seen regularly (7)
- 10 Find ou or skip preliminaries and take a little stroll behind walls? (7)
- 11 Gussalufz's dull spear (6)
- 12 Quite possibly, Kenya's eradicated westbound smuggling (1,4,3)

- 14 No second turn for idiot (4)
- 15 Sinking feeling, conclusively, during one's breakdown (5,5)
- 18 Massive craze about Gussalufz round America (10)
- 19 "Bazaar" earnestly covers this subject (4)
- 22 Spooner's appeal, frivulous in a dozy way (8)
- 24 Composed of extremely powerful and caustic chemical (6)
- 26 Sad end of mammal in calamitous ice age (7)
- 27 Denounce a monarchy in speech (7)
- 28 Exceptional actress, really, but careless and without guile (9)
- 29 Burn evil American company! (5)
- DOWN
- 1 Control freak to switch staff around every now and then (7)
- 2 Provide sound lacking, at its core, tonal balance (9)
- 3 Traitors at the top sacrificed Britain in war to give away secrets (6)
- 4 Butter from Netherlands and Austria essentially eliminated by Brexit, unfortunately (4)
- 5 Maybe if I am drunk, to be very honest (4,6)
- 6 Behind Umberta's cover, crude novel hidden amidst books sold cheaply (8)
- 7 Only denials and retreats (5)
- 8 Wasted years following a tip from bogus analyst (7)
- 13 Thick, rotating bars and barriers (10)
- 16 Line delivery lands on? (9)
- 17 Husband's left, overwhelmed by penile dysfunction? This is where one can seek counsel, perhaps (8)
- 18 A piece of a mosaic set awkwardly, second time! (7)
- 20 Ribald entertainment shows (not of the soft kind!) (2,5)
- 21 Eagerly consumes innuendos laden with gossip, ultimately (6)
- 23 Get rid of tortuous JEE and heartless CAT! (5)
- 25 Fancy taking a girl out to swing (4)

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

## Solution to puzzle 13286

S	O	C	I	A	L	N	A	S	T
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# Xi honours PLA soldier killed in Galwan

China's presentation of the July 1 medal comes ahead of the Communist Party's 100-year anniversary

ANANTH KRISHNAN

A People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldier who died in the June 15, 2020 clash in Galwan Valley was among 29 people honoured by China's President and Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping on Tuesday.

The presentation of the July 1 medal comes ahead of the party's 100-year anniversary, which is set to be marked in Beijing on Thursday with great fanfare, including a speech by Mr. Xi.

Ahead of July 1, Mr. Xi honoured 29 people who were "outstanding party members". Among three of the awardees honoured posthumously was Chen Hongjun, a PLA soldier who died in the Galwan Valley clash last year. China had, in February, announced military honours posthumously for Chen and three others, finally confirming it had suffered casualties some eight months after the clash.

Twenty Indian soldiers died in the clash that marked the most serious violence on



An event under way in Beijing as part of the CPC's 100th anniversary, with Xi Jinping's picture in the background. ■ AFP

the border since 1967.

Mr. Xi said the recipients of the medal had "maintained staunch faith" which was "to stay true to the original aspiration and dedicate everything, even the precious life, to the cause of the Party and people". He said "generations of Chinese Communists have fought tenaciously for national independence and liberation, for prosperity and strength of the country, and for the happiness of the people."

The PLA, unique among

militaries as the military of a political party, has held its own commemorations ahead of July 1, including a ceremony and series of activities by the Xinjiang Military Command "to learn how PLA heroes, including the martyrs of the Galwan Valley conflict, defended and guarded the country's borders", the Communist Party-run *Global Times* reported, adding that the troops took a vow saying, "If war comes, I will not hesitate to rush like you to dedicate my last

heartbeat to our motherland".

Mr. Xi used Tuesday's occasion to call on the more than 91 million party members "to boldly advance toward the second centenary goal of fully building a modern socialist country, as well as the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation", referring to the 2049 centenary of the People's Republic of China.

## Building border villages

Among those honoured was Zhoigai, a Tibetan resident of a model border village called Yumai, who had in 2017 received a letter from Mr. Xi praising her patriotism and saying her example "will motivate more herders to set down roots in the border area like galsang flowers, and become guardians of Chinese territory". Mr. Xi has pushed a plan since 2017 to build "moderately well-off villages" in border areas, under which 628 villages would be developed mostly along the borders with India and Bhutan. Some of the new set-

tlements have come up on disputed territory claimed by India and Bhutan.

Other recipients of the award included Wang Shun-mao for "participation in the construction of the Nansha Islands [as China calls the Spratly Islands], developing civilian forces to safeguard China's legitimate rights in the South China Sea and leading the way in resolutely safeguarding China's territorial integrity and maritime rights without fear of death," and Wang Zhanshan, a veteran of the Korean War (referred to in China as the "War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea"), the *Global Times* said.

Among the winners was Zhang Guimei, awarded for her work in setting up China's first free high school for girls from poor families, Me-metjan Wumer, an ethnic Uighur, awarded for being "a leading model against religious extremist forces" in Xinjiang, and Liu Guijin, a former diplomat, recognised for his contributions to China-Africa relations.

## Iraqi fighters mourn those killed in strikes

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BAGHDAD

Thousands of members of Iraq's Hashid al-Shaabi paramilitary alliance gathered in Baghdad on Tuesday to mourn members killed in U.S. air strikes along the Syrian border.

Brought together by shared worries about Iran and hopes for commercial boons, the UAE and Bahrain normalised relations with Israel last year under so-called "Abraham Accords" crafted by the then U.S. administration of President Donald Trump. Sudan and Morocco have since also cultivated Israel ties.

The UAE also opened its Embassy in Israel recently.

# Israel's Lapid opens Embassy in UAE

'We're here to stay', says Foreign Minister, urging other nations to 'recognise that'

REUTERS  
DUBAI/JERUSALEM

Israel's new Foreign Minister inaugurated the country's Embassy in the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday and offered an olive branch to other former adversaries, saying: "We're here to stay."

During his two-day visit, the first to the West Asian nation by an Israeli Cabinet Minister since the countries established ties last year, Yair Lapid was also due to inaugurate a Consulate in Dubai and sign a bilateral deal on economic cooperation.

The trip is an opportunity for the two-week-old Israeli government of Naftali Ben-



**Warning ties:** Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, left, and UAE Minister of State Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh in Abu Dhabi. ■ REUTERS

nett, a nationalist who heads an improbable cross-partisan coalition, to make diplomatic inroads.

"Israel wants peace with

its neighbours – with all its neighbours. We aren't going anywhere. The Middle East is our home," Mr. Lapid said during the ribbon-cutting ce-

remony at the Abu Dhabi high-rise office serving as a temporary Embassy. "We're here to stay. We call on all the countries of the region to recognise that," he said, according to a transcript.

Brought together by shared worries about Iran and hopes for commercial boons, the UAE and Bahrain normalised relations with Israel last year under so-called "Abraham Accords" crafted by the then U.S. administration of President Donald Trump. Sudan and Morocco have since also cultivated Israel ties.

The UAE also opened its Embassy in Israel recently.

## Zuma gets 15 months in jail for contempt of court

He refused to appear before investigators

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
JOHANNESBURG

In a historic ruling, South Africa's top court on Tuesday handed the country's former President, Jacob Zuma, a 15-month jail term for "egregious" contempt of court after he refused to appear before graft investigators.

Mr. Zuma was told to turn himself in within five days, failing which police will be ordered to arrest him and take him to jail.

The ruling sets a precedent for South Africa – and a benchmark for the continent – by jailing a former head of state for failing to respond to a corruption probe. "Mr. Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma is guilty of the crime of contempt of court," Constitutional Court judge



Sisi Khamppe said.

Mr. Zuma, 79, is accused of enabling the plunder of state coffers during his nearly nine-year stay in office.

Most of the graft investigated by a commission involve three brothers from a wealthy business family, the Guptas, who won lucrative government contracts and were allegedly even able to choose Ministers.

## U.S. sending Bangladesh 2.5 mn vaccine doses: WH

'No strings attached, free in all senses'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The United States began shipping 2.5 million doses of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine to Bangladesh on Tuesday, a White House official said, as the South Asian country confronted a wave of new infections.

"Thanks to the U.S. commitment to playing a leading role in ending the pandemic everywhere, 2.5 million doses of the Moderna vaccine will begin to ship to Bangladesh," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Illustrating the urgency, delivery is expected to be completed this week.

Bangladesh, which neigh-

bours India, began a severe lockdown on Monday in response to spiraling infections from the Delta variant. People are restricted to their homes, with offices closed, traffic shut down and the security forces enforcing compliance.

The White House said that its vaccine shipments – mostly made through the World Health Organization's Covax programme – come free in all senses.

"We are sharing these doses not to secure favours or extract concessions. Our vaccines do not come with strings attached. We are doing this with the singular objective of saving lives," the official said.

# Judge dismisses competition cases against Facebook

Lawsuit alleged FB crushed competition by buying out rivals



Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives voted last week to send a package of six Bills focussed on antitrust (competition) issues in the tech sector to the full House floor for a vote. The package included legislation to increase merger fees, block big tech companies from buying potential competition and curbs on these companies favouring their own products online over those of their competitors'.

**Shares hit record highs**  
Following the judge's decision, Facebook's share price increased to a new high of \$358.03 on Monday afternoon and the firm crossed a market capitalisation of \$ 1 trillion for the first time.

Facebook welcomed the ruling and said it competes fairly. "We are pleased that today's decisions recognise the defects in the government complaints filed against Facebook. We compete fairly every day to earn people's time and attention and will continue to deliver great products for the people and businesses that use our services," a Facebook spokesperson said.

(With inputs from the Associated Press)

## Tigray forces 'seize' capital

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
GONDAR

Tigrayan forces made further gains against Ethiopian government troops and their allies on Tuesday, with a spokesman reporting they were in full control of the regional capital, residents said.

"Our forces are still in hot pursuit to south, east, to continue until every square inch of territory is cleared from the enemy."

Reuters could not independently verify his statement because almost all phone links to Tigray are down.

ferring to the regional capital. There had been some fighting on the outskirts of the city, but that was now finished, he said.

"Our forces are still in hot pursuit to south, east, to continue until every square inch of territory is cleared from the enemy."

The fighting has forced around 2 million people to flee their homes amid reports of ethnic cleansing, brutal gang-rapes and mass killings of civilians.

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**GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU  
NAGERCOIL CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
Roc.No. E1 /1642/2020 Tender Notice Dt : 22.06.2021  
The Commissioner Nagercoil Corporation invites on-line Bids for General Fund 2020-2021 from the eligible Contractors, only before 15.00 Hours on 04.08.2021 For Further details may be downloaded from the following websites <https://ntenders.gov.in>

Package No	Name of work	Estimate Amount (Rs.in lakhs)	E.M.D (Rs.in lakhs)	Tender document cost	Execution period	Contract class
1.	Construction of New office Additional Building Nagercoil Corporation	550.00	550000	Free of cost download at website	6 months	1st class

1. The bid document can be downloaded from the website <https://ntenders.gov.in> at free of cost. 2. Important dates : 1.Date and time of Pre bid meeting : 14.07.2021-3.00 PM. 2. Date and time for downloading bid documents : 03.08.2021- 3.00 PM. 3. Last date and time for submission of bid document, including online submission : 04.08.2021 3.00 P.M. 4. Date and time of opening of the Technical Bid : 04.08.2021 - 3.30 P.M.  
DIPR/ 1880 /TENDER/2021

Commissioner, Nagercoil Corporation

**KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(RAICHUR THERMAL POWER STATION)  
CIN : U85110KA1970SC0019

**BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
(Two Cover System) (Through e-procurement Portal Only)

Tenders through e-procurement portal mode are invited from the contractors/agencies who are reputed individuals/ Company and having past experience, for the following works at RTPS.

SI No.	Tender Number	Name of the work
1.	KPCL/2021-22/PS/ WORK INDENT 11231 Date: 23.06.2021	Erection and Dismantling of Cuplok scaffolding system and water washing & descaling of furnace walls, PLSH coils and RH coils of 4 X 210 MW U-1 to 4 boilers of RTPS(for any ONE Boiler).
2.	KPCL/2021-22/PS/ WORK INDENT 11264 Date: 25.06.2021	Availing of services of expert personnel for supervision of overhauling works of boiler & its auxiliaries of U-1 to 8.
3.	KPCL/2021-22/PS/ WORK INDENT 11265 Date: 25.06.2021	Radiography of Weld Joints of Pressure parts of Units # 1 to 8 Boilers during Annual Overhauling works and Emergency Tube Failures for a period of one year.

EMD: Nil. Last date for submission of tender: 23.07.2021 @ 16:00Hrs. Interested bidders may submit the bids through e-procurement portal website: [www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in). Last Date & Time for Tender Queries/ Clarification: 20.07.2021 @ 16:00Hrs. Last date for submission of completed bids(2Parts): 23.07.2021@16:00Hrs. Opening of Technical Bid (Part-1): 26.07.2021@11:00Hrs. Opening of Financial Bid (Part-2): 28.07.2021@11:00Hrs. The detailed notification regarding subject enquiry in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to GoK e-procurement website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>. Further details can be had from the office of Superintending Engineer (**Mechanical Maintenance-1**), RTPS, KPCL Shakthi Nagar- 584170. Raichur District. Mobile: 944956553.

**GRIDCO LIMITED**  
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)  
Regd. Office : Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751022, ODISHA  
Phone : 0674-2540098/2540877, Fax : 2541904/2543031 ; Web : [www.gridco.co.in](http://www.gridco.co.in)  
CIN : L40109OR1995SGC003960  
(Rupees in Lakhs)

**Statement of Standalone Un-audited Financial Results for the Year / Half year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

SI No.	Particulars	Half year ended 31.03.2021. (Un-audited / Reviewed).	Half year ended 31.03.2020. (Audited / Reviewed).	Year ended 31.03.2021. (Un-audited/ Reviewed).	Year ended 31.03.2020. (Audited/ Reviewed).
1	Total income from Operations	4,35,521.39	3,40,894.84	8,60,286.41	7,40,106.60
2	Net profit / (Loss) for the period ( before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(79,745.36)	(1,01,823.03)	(1,51,283.38)	(1,35,213.83)
3	Net profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(66,697.05)	(1,01,823.03)	(1,38,235.07)	(1,35,213.83)
4	Net profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(66,697.05)	(1,01,823.03)	(1,38,235.07)	(1,35,213.83)
5	Total comprehensive income for the period (comprising profit / (loss) for the period after Tax and comprehensive income (after Tax))	-	-	-	-
6	Paid-up Equity Share Capital (57,67,114 nos. fully paid Equity Shares of Rs.1,000/- each issued at Par)	57,671.14	57,671.14	57,671.14	57,671.14
7	Reserves excluding Revaluation Reserve as per Balance Sheet of Previous year	(7,44,599.85)	(6,06,364.78)	(7,44,599.85)	(6,06,364.78)
8	Net Worth	(6,86,928.71)	(5,48,693.64)	(6,86,928.71)	(5,48,693.64)
9	Paid-up Debt Capital / Outstanding debt	9,07,381.20	7,68,693.29	9,07,381.20	7,68,693.29
10	Outstanding Redeemable Preference share	-	-	-	-
11	Debt-Equity Ratio	15.73	13.33	15.73	13.33
12	Earnings Per Share (of Rs.1,000/- each) for continuing and discontinued Operations - 1.Basic: (1,156.51) 2.Diluted: (1,156.51)	(1,765.58)	(2,396.95)	(2,344.57)	(2,344.57)
13	Capital Redemption Reserve	-			

## MARKET WATCH

	29-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52,550	-0.35
US Dollar	74.23	-0.05
Gold	46,167	-0.37
Brent oil	75.22	-0.11

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	711.00	-5.25
Asian Paints	3001.50	18.55
Axis Bank	751.95	-10.45
Bajaj Auto	4124.65	-58.80
Bajaj Finserv	12299.90	-78.00
Bajaj Finance	6052.40	15.35
Bharti Airtel	524.95	-6.25
BPCL	466.25	-0.90
Britannia Ind	3657.15	-10.10
Cipla	979.60	16.55
Coal India	144.50	-2.70
Divis Lab	4356.15	41.75
D Dr Reddy's Lab	5433.10	28.85
Eicher Motors	2705.10	-35.35
Grasim Ind	1503.30	-17.30
HCL Tech.	983.60	-1.70
HDFC Bank	2501.20	6.25
HDFC Life	1502.05	-6.30
Hero MotoCorp	686.50	-9.70
Hindustan Unilever	2927.50	-16.15
Hindustan Unilever	374.25	-8.05
ICICI Bank	2492.55	32.35
IndusInd Bank	1018.15	9.25
Infosys	1563.05	-8.75
Indian Oil Corp.	108.15	-2.70
ITC	203.30	-0.30
JSW Steel	685.90	-9.45
Kotak Bank	1705.85	-27.20
L&T	1510.90	-3.55
M&M	781.60	-11.90
Maruti Suzuki	7487.50	-108.75
Nestle India Ltd.	17599.25	93.10
NTPC	117.60	1.45
ONGC	119.40	-2.95
PowerGrid Corp	236.00	4.15
Reliance Ind	2087.80	1.80
SBI Life	999.40	-2.70
State Bank	421.50	-5.25
Shree Cement	28134.45	-255.75
Sun Pharma	677.60	1.30
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	758.05	-7.60
Tata Motors	341.55	-1.25
Tata Steel	1172.55	-11.45
TCS	3340.85	4.10
Tech Mahindra	1088.15	-16.95
Titan	1731.60	3.55
UltraTech Cement	6824.70	-44.75
UPL	805.40	-3.70
Wipro	542.60	-4.80

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.02	74.34
Euro	88.17	88.55
British Pound	102.57	103.02
Japanese Yen (100)	66.96	67.25
Chinese Yuan	11.46	11.51
Swiss Franc	80.44	80.79
Singapore Dollar	55.07	55.32
Canadian Dollar	59.86	60.12
Malaysian Ringgit	17.82	17.91

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## JLR unveils Range Rover Sport SVR at ₹2.19 crore

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India has introduced Range Rover Sport SVR in India at prices starting at a little more than ₹ 2.19 crore ex-showroom in India. It is available with SVR's 5.0 I supercharged V8 petrol engine that delivers 423 kW power and torque of 700 Nm and is capable of accelerating from 0-100 km/h in 4.5 seconds, JLR India said.

## After Cairn, Devas sues AI to recover \$1.5 billion

Shareholders in Devas Multimedia have sued Air India (AI) in an effort to recover sums Devas won in arbitration awards against the Indian government and seize its flagship carrier's foreign assets, according to a U.S. District Court filing. The shareholders said Devas and its affiliates were owed more than \$1.5 billion by the Indian government. REUTERS

# 'OPEC risks forcing India to tap Iran for oil if prices stay high'

Pradhan says country has already exhausted its strategic petroleum reserves

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Ahead of a crucial OPEC meeting on July 1, India's Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said he was working to persuade oil exporting countries to moderate surging oil prices and warned that high prices would push the country to tap alternative import sources such as Iran.

Stressing that inflation was a major challenge for the economy, Mr. Pradhan said India had already, over the last few months, exhausted the strategic petroleum reserves it had built up last year by taking advantage of lower oil prices. "India is a very price-sensitive market.



**Free flow:** Demand for petro products will likely return to pre-pandemic levels by end-2021, says Pradhan. ■ K. PICHUMANI

With utmost politeness, I have got my own spending behaviour. If somebody is planning our Budget is \$80(a barrel)-driven, then I am sorry. My affordability is the primary thing for me," he said at the BloombergNEF Summit.

He also said India would choose options offering competitive prices within its global diplomatic framework', including Iran if the

sanctions imposed on it by the U.S. were lifted.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies (OPEC+) are expected to discuss a possible easing of supply cuts, amid a rebound in global demand, on July 1.

With retail prices for petrol crossing ₹100 a litre in several States, Mr. Pradhan conceded that 'today's price is very challenging'.

"I am persuading my friends in OPEC... I hope the price will be a little bit sober," he said. The Minister also expressed confidence that the demand for petroleum products would return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021.

## Fresh stimulus to raise fiscal deficit by 60 bps'

Banks to get ₹70,000-cr. loan window'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

The latest credit push for the pandemic-hit sectors and other relief supports will have an additional 60-basis point (bps) impact on the fiscal deficit, and can offer an additional liquidity window of ₹70,000 crore to banks, according to a report by SBI Research.

## Capital relief

Assuming equal distribution of the new announcement of ₹10 lakh crore, with 50% and 75% guarantee cover and a risk weight of 100%, banks may have a capital relief of about ₹7,500 crore that can further generate credit of about ₹70,000 crore, the report showed.

The fiscal impact of the latest announcements and those from earlier is not linear as a substantial portion of the package is contingent liabilities. Ignoring these, the immediate impact will be slightly more than ₹1.23 lakh crore, or about 0.6% of the GDP, SBI chief economist Soumya Kanti Ghosh said in the report.



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"OneWeb has completed its transformation with the exercise of a 'call option' by Bharti to invest an additional \$500 million into the company," OneWeb said in a statement.

"On completion of the call option and with Eutelsat's \$550 million investment, Bharti will hold 38.6%. The U.K. Government, Eutelsat and Softbank will each own 19.3%," the company said.

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# Gritty England finally gets the monkey off its back

Sterling and Kane's strikes end Germany's campaign in the pre-quarterfinals

## EURO 2020

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LONDON

Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane fired England into the Euro 2020 quarterfinals as it sealed a 2-0 win against Germany that ended decades of hurt at the hands of its bitter rival on Tuesday.

Sterling struck with 15 minutes left in a tense last 16 tie at Wembley before Kane clinched England's first knockout stage victory over Germany since 1966.

In the 55 years since England beat the Germans in the World Cup final, the Three Lions had endured a painful litany of defeats against *Die Mannschaft* when the stakes were highest.

England was eliminated from the 1970, 1990 and 2010 World Cups by Germany, which also beat it in the Euro '96 semifinals at Wembley.

**Ghosts exorcised**  
But Gareth Southgate's side has finally exorcised the ghosts of Paul Gascoigne's tears and its own manager's



**Redemption:** After years of coming second best to Germany, Raheem Sterling finally brought smiles to the England camp by burying this lay-off past Manuel Neuer. ■ AFP

penalty miss 25 years ago.

England produced a gritty display capped by clinical finishes from Sterling, who now has three goals in the tournament, and Kane – who finally bagged his first of the competition.

England, yet to concede a goal in the tournament, heads to Rome on Saturday for a quarterfinal against the winners of the last 16 tie between Sweden and Ukraine.

Chasing a first major international trophy since 1966, England's side of the draw looks wide open, with a potential semifinal against Denmark or the Czech Republic unlikely to strike fear into its hearts.

It was only England's second knockout stage win in the history of the European Championship and its first victory over Germany at Wembley since 1975.

For Germany manager Joachim Low, it was an agonising end to his reign as he prepares to step down after the tournament.

### Quarterfinal draw

- Switzerland vs Spain
- Belgium vs Italy
- Czech Republic vs Denmark
- England vs Sweden/Ukraine

## India needs an immediate change of tack

Batters will have to pull up their socks in order to level series

## INDIA IN ENGLAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
TAUNTON

India will have to change its batting approach and play more freely in order to bounce back against formidable hosts England in the second women's One-Day International here on Wednesday.

India conceded as many as 181 dot balls on way to posting a below par 201 which England chased down rather comfortably to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series on Sunday.

Wednesday's game could see India making multiple changes in the playing eleven as the batters' inability to rotate the strike is proving to be a big issue.

Though Mithali scored 72, her strike rate was below par and T20 skipper Harmanpreet Kaur is desperately seeking some consistency.

India went in with only one specialist spinner in Ekta Bisht at Bristol besides the



**Silver lining:** Mithali's knock was the only bright spot for India in the opening ODI. ■ AP

three pacers.

Sneha Rana, who did brilliantly with both the bat and ball on her Test debut, can

be the second spin all-rounder alongside Deepa Sharma.

On the other hand, En-

**C** All we need is one good knock from the top three and that will give us a platform (to make a significant score)

JHULIAN

gland played a near-perfect game to outplay an out-of-sorts opponent.

### The teams (from):

**India:** Mithali Raj (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Punam Raut, Harmanpreet Kaur (Vice-Capt.), Deepa Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Sneha Rana, Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Jemimah Rodrigues, Arundhati Reddy, Puja Vastrakar, Ekta Bisht, Radha Yadav, Poonam Yadav, Priya Punia and Indrani Roy (wk).

**England:** Heather Knight (Capt.), Tammy Beaumont, Kate Cross, Nat Sciver, Sophia Dunkley, Lauren Winfield-Hill, Anya Shrubsole, Katherine Brunt, Sophie Ecclestone, Amy Jones (wk), Freya Davis, Tash Farrant, Sarah Glenn, Mady Viliers, Fran Wilson, Sarah Glenn and Emily Arlott.

Match starts at 6.30 p.m. IST.

## Barty beats Suarez Navarro in emotion-filled contest

The latter was making her final appearance at The Championships; Federer survives a scare

## WIMBLEDON

AGENCIES

Ashleigh Barty's bid to win Wimbledon, 50 years after fellow Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley bagged her first title, got off to a bright start with a 6-1, 6-7(1), 6-1 victory over Carla Suarez Navarro on Tuesday.

Suarez Navarro, who has returned to the circuit after battling cancer, dominated the second set tie-break and won 7-1 after losing the first set. Barty, however, pulled herself together and cruised through in the decider.

The 41-year-old Venus Williams defeated Mihaela Buzarnescu of Romania 7-5, 4-6, 6-3, serving 10 aces in the match.

Former Wimbledon champion Angelique Kerber advanced by beating Nina Stojanovic 6-4, 6-3.

In men's singles, Roger Federer survived a huge scare to reach the second round when French opponent Adrian Mannarino was forced to retire with injury at the start of the fifth set. Eight-time champion Federer was level at 6-4, 6-7(3/7), 3-6, 6-2 when Mannarino called it quits after just one point in the decider.

The Frenchman, celebrating his 33rd birthday, had suffered a bad fall in the se-

### The highlights

■ 1 - 2018 champion Kerber's first match win at a Major since the 2020 US Open. She had three straight first-round defeats - 2020 French Open, 2021 Aus Open and 2021 French Open

■ 1 - 2010 finalist Zvonareva earned her first Wimbledon main draw win since 2014

■ 90 - Venus' 90th Major appearance in singles, an Open Era record. The win over Buzarnescu was her 90th at the All England Club in her 23rd Wimbledon

in the quarterfinals.

A long-standing hip problem, which required surgery, then pushed him tearfully to the brink of retirement.

**C** Wimbledon gave me a really good gift. One of my last matches here, against Ash. No. 1 in the world, Centre Court, with the roof. Was amazing. I am the most happy player in the tournament

**SUAREZ NAVARRO**

**C** I keep being asked if this is my last Wimbledon or last match. No. I want to play. He [Basilashvili] is ranked 28 and I have hardly played any matches and I beat him. I will keep going

MURRAY

First round: Men: 6-Roger Federer (Sui) bt Adrian Mannarino (Fra) 6-4, 6-7(3), 3-6, 6-2, 0-0, retired; 22-Dan Evans (GBR) bt Feliciano Lopez (Esp) 7-6(4), 6-2, 7-5; Sebastian Korda (USA) bt 15-Alex de Minaur (Aus) 6-3, 6-4, 6-7(5), 7-6(5); 4-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Tallon Griekspoor (Ned) 6-3, 6-4, 6-1; 9-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) bt Benoit Paire (Fra) 6-3, 6-4, 6-0; 26-Fabio Fognini (Ita) bt Albert Ramos Vinolas (Esp) 7-6(4), 6-2, 6-4.

Women: 1-Ashleigh Barty (Aus) bt Carla Suarez Navarro (Esp) 6-1, 6-7(1), 6-1; Venus Williams (USA) bt Mihaela Buzarnescu (Rou) 7-5, 4-6, 6-3; Vera Zvonareva (Rus) bt Marie Bouzkova (Cze) 7-5, 6-4; 2-Karolina Pliskova (Cze) bt Tamara Zidansek (Slo) 7-5, 6-4; 3-Tereza Mar-



**Incredible competitor:** Barty, right, hailed Suarez Navarro as 'a fighter and genuine champion.' ■ AP

tincova (Cze) bt 28-Alison Riske (USA) 6-2, 4-6, 6-1; 13-Elise Mertens (Bel) bt Harriet Dart (GBR) 6-1, 6-3; 21-Ons Jabeur (Tun) bt Rebecca Peterson (Swe) 6-2, 6-1; 15-Marina Sakkari (Gre) bt Arantxa Rus (Ned) 6-1, 6-1.

**On Monday:** Men: Kevin Anderson (RSA) bt Marcelo Tomas Barrios Vera (Chi) 6-7(4), 6-4, 6-4, 7-6(4); Denis Kudla (USA) bt 30-Alejandro Davidovich Fokina (Esp) 5-7, 4-6, 7-6(4), 6-3, 6-3; Marton Fucsovics (Hun) bt 19-Jannik Sinner (Ita) 5-7, 6-3, 7-5, 6-3; 5-Andrey Rublev (Rus) bt Federico Delbonis (Arg) 4-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2; 25-Karen Khachanov (Rus) bt Mackenzie McDonald (USA) 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (3); Andy Murray (GBR) bt 24-Nikoloz Basilashvili (Geo) 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3; Dominik Koepfer (Ger) bt 27-Reilly

## Back-to-back classics on a dramatic day

France loses its way against an inspired Switzerland; Spain overcomes Croatia



**Killer blow:** Alvaro Morata's strike sapped Croatia out of any fight in extra-time. ■ REUTERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

Kylian Mbappe missed the crucial penalty on Monday as world champion France crashed out of the Euro 2020 in a shoot-out against Switzerland, which goes through to a quarterfinal tie against Spain, which itself was taken the distance by Croatia before prevailing 5-3 in extra-time.

Switzerland triumphed 5-4 on penalties after a remarkable 3-3 draw in Bucharest. France had earlier come from 1-0 down to lead 3-1 and looked to be cruising through, only to concede two late goals.

**Quarterfinal draw**

- Switzerland vs Spain
- Belgium vs Italy
- Czech Republic vs Denmark
- England vs Sweden/Ukraine



**Saviour:** Yann Sommer's perfectly timed leap was enough to stop a poorly taken spot kick from Kylian Mbappe. ■ AFP

With no further goals, the tie went to penalties and all nine kicks were converted before Mbappe saw his effort saved by Yann Sommer.

### Slipping up

Somehow the drama in Bucharest topped that in Copenhagen earlier, when Alvaro Morata netted an all-important goal as Spain prevailed against Croatia, but only after it also let slip a 3-1 lead.

### The results:

Croatia 3 (Pedri 20-og, Orsic 85, Pasalic 90+2) lost to Spain 5 (Sarabia 38, Azpilicueta 57, Ferran Torres 77, Morata 100, Oyarzabal 103) (aet, 3-3 after 90 minutes).

France 3 (Benzema 57, 59, Pogba 75) drew with Switzerland 3 (Seferovic 15, 81, Gavranovic 90) (aet, Switzerland won 5-4 on penalties).

## T20 WC dates confirmed

## T20 WC dates confirmed

AMOL KARHADKAR

MUMBAI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday confirmed that the T20 World Cup will be played from October 17 to November 14.

The announcement came a day after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) informed its affiliates about hosting the tournament in the United Arab Emirates and Oman due to COVID-19 concerns.

Now that the suspense over the window for the T20 World Cup is over, the BCCI hierarchy is hoping to finalise the dates for the latter half of the Indian Premier League, set to start in UAE on September 19.

While October 15 is being looked as a tentative date for the final, the schedule may be crunched should all stakeholders feel the necessity for a longer break between the IPL final and the T20 World Cup.

## Mark Cavendish wins a stage after five years

van der Poel retains the yellow jersey

## TOUR DE FRANCE

REUTERS

FOUGERES

A last-gasp addition to his team, Mark Cavendish rolled back the years as he claimed his 31st Tour de France stage victory on Tuesday – five years after his last success on the world's greatest cycling race.

The Briton, who finished outside the time limit in his previous participation in 2018, crashed out in 2017 and hinted at retirement last year. He is now three victories away from the Tour's all-time stage win record held by Belgian great Eddy Merckx.

Cavendish, back in the Deceuninck-Quick Step team this season after a five-year hiatus, powered past his rivals in the final straight to beat France's Nacer Bouhanni to the line. Belgian Jasper Philipsen took third



Cavendish. ■ AFP

place while his Alpecin-Fenix teammate Mathieu van der Poel retained the overall leader's yellow jersey.

"So many people did not believe in me, you know...these guys do," a tearful Cavendish said afterwards, referring to Deceuninck-Quick Step. "I thought I'd never be back."

The day had begun with a rider protest, asking for safer racing conditions after numerous crashes.

## Barty beats Suarez Navarro in emotion-filled contest

The latter was making her final appearance at The Championships; Federer survives a scare

## WIMBLEDON

AGENCIES

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In men's singles, Roger Federer survived a huge scare to reach the second round when French opponent Adrian Mannarino was forced to retire with injury at the start of the fifth set. Eight-time champion

## TV PICKS

**Wimbledon 2021:** SS Select 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.  
**Tour de France:** Eurosport (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.  
**England Women vs India Women:** 2nd ODI: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.  
**NBA:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m. (Thursday)

## IN BRIEF



Southee raising funds for girl cancer patient

AUCKLAND New Zealand pacer Tim Southee is auctioning a shirt he wore during the inaugural World Test Championship final to raise funds for the treatment of eight-year-old Hollie Beattie diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. The shirt is signed by the entire Black Caps squad. PTI

**Riya-Namigata pair loses in pre-quarterfinals**

PALMA DEL RIO (SPAIN) Riya Bhatty and Junri Namigata of Japan were beaten 7-5, 6-2 by Himari Sato of Japan and Lulu Sun of Switzerland in the doubles pre-quarterfinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament here.

**Edgbaston to host Pak. ODI with 80% capacity**

BIRMINGHAM Eighty percent crowd capacity has been allowed for the third ODI between England and Pakistan at Edgbaston on July 13 as part of the UK Government's Events Research Programme. Earlier this month, 70 percent capacity crowds (around 60,000 spectators) were permitted at Edgbaston for the second Test between England and New Zealand. PTI

**Deadline for National sports awards extended**

HYDERABAD The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has extended the deadline for submitting applications for various National sports awards to July 5. As per the original schedule, the last date for submission was June 28. The applications are to be sent in the prescribed format to [surendra.yadav@nic.in](mailto:surendra.yadav@nic.in) or [girish.kumar@nic.in](mailto:girish.kumar@nic.in). Hard copies are not required due to lockdown on account of COVID-19.

**Fernandinho extends stay at Manchester City**

LONDON Manchester City captain Fernandinho has signed a one-year contract extension at the Premier League champions. The deal keeps the 36-year-old Brazilian at the Etihad Stadium until 2022 and he is targeting another shot at the Champions League after City lost to Chelsea in the final last month. Fernandinho joined City from Shakhtar Donetsk in 2013. AFP



Durant to anchor USA's basketball team

NEW YORK Two-time gold medalist Kevin Durant will anchor the 12-member U.S. men's basketball team at the Tokyo Olympics next month.

**The squad:** Kevin Durant, Draymond Green, Kevin Love, Bam Adebayo, Bradley Beal, Devin Booker, Jerami Grant, Jrue Holiday, Zach LaVine, Damion Lillard, Khris Middleton and Jayson Tatum. REUTERS

**Aida Mohamad set to join elite club**

BUDAPEST Hungarian fencer Aida Mohamad is about to join a very small group of women by competing in her seventh Olympics. The 45-year-old Mohamad, born in Budapest has qualified to compete in foil at the Tokyo Olympics. Her appearance will make her only the 14th woman to appear at the Games so many times. AP



# Argentina seals top spot in group

Messi leads the way in record appearance for country

## COPA AMERICA

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
CUIBA

Lionel Messi became Argentina's most capped international player on Monday, marking the occasion with two goals as he led his national team to a 4-1 win over Bolivia at the Copa America. The 34-year-old Messi's 148th appearance for Argentina beat the mark previously held by retired defender Javier Mascherano.

His two goals and one assist helped Argentina ensure top spot in Group A, setting up a quarterfinal against Ecuador on Saturday.

An Argentina team split between frequent starters and substitutes beat last-place Bolivia easily. Papu Gomez opened the scoring in the sixth minute.

Messi netted the two following goals. The first came from the spot in the 33rd and the second after a beautiful lob over Bolivian goalkeeper Carlos Lampe in the 42nd.

Erwin Saavedra scored for Bolivia on the hour but sub-



**Leader:** Lionel Messi was yet again at the forefront for Argentina with a brace. ■ GETTY IMAGES

stitute Lautaro Martinez restored the three-goal cushion in the 65th from close range.

In Rio De Janeiro, Uruguay beat Paraguay 1-0 to finish second in Group A and move into a quarterfinal against Colombia. The result

also left Chile to face defending champion and host Brazil in the next stage.

Edinson Cavani scored from the penalty spot in the 21st minute for the only goal of the match. Uruguay would have had to face Brazil if it

had lost to Paraguay, which had already secured its place in the knockout phase.

**The results:** Group A: Argentina 4 (Gomez 6, Messi 33-pen, 42, Martinez 65) bt Bolivia 1 (Saavedra 60); Uruguay 1 (Cavani 21-pen) bt Paraguay 0.

## FIG confirms Pranati's Olympic quota place

## GYMNASICS

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

The International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) has confirmed Indian gymnast Pranati Nayak's qualification for the Tokyo Olympics.

As per a FIG communication received by the Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI) on Monday, Pranati, who won a bronze medal in vault at the 2019 Asian

championships, has got an all-around slot following the reallocation of quota places under the 2020 continental championships criteria.

The reallocation was done due to the cancellation of the Asian championships, which was an Olympic qualifying event.

After Dipa Karmakar in 2016, West Bengal girl Pranati has become the second gymnast from the country to qualify for the Olympics.

the eight other boxers, who are set to leave for Tokyo from there. She was training at Pune's Army Sports Institute so far.

"I have returned to Delhi and will leave for Italy may be tomorrow or day after.

"There are stricter quarantine restrictions on those who are travelling from India. I want to avoid them," she said.

Mary Kom will take off for Assisi in a day or two to join

## Aditi qualifies for Tokyo



Aditi Ashok. ■ AFP

**SPORTS REPORTER**  
BENGALURU

Golfer Aditi Ashok booked her spot in the Tokyo Olympics, it was announced on Tuesday. Aditi sealed her second consecutive Olympic appearance by qualifying in 45th place in the women's final Olympic golf rankings.

A three-time winner on the Ladies European Tour (LET), Aditi finished 41st at Rio. The 23-year-old turned professional in 2016. A year later, she became the first from India to compete in the prestigious Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour.

In Rome, Sajan then knew exactly what he had to do and paced his race well to

## Hard work paid off, says Sajan Prakash

'I have been chasing this mark for the last two years'

## SWIMMING

M.R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Last week, Sajan Prakash was under pressure after the 19th International swimming meet in Belgrade.

Despite having the best Indian performance (1:56.95) in 200m butterfly, Sajan wasn't happy, for he had missed the A cut for Tokyo Olympics.

Sajan only had one more meet in Rome to achieve the Olympic A standard qualification mark and he was feeling the heat.

**Reworked strategy**

Sajan reworked his strategy before the Rome meet with coach Pradeep Kumar. They analysed his Belgrade race, breaking it into smaller parts, and decided that Sajan needed to gain speed and distance in the early part of the race to qualify.

In Rome, Sajan then knew exactly what he had to do and paced his race well to



**The big goal:** Sajan Prakash knew he had to come up with something extraordinary in the Rome meet to qualify for the Olympics. ■ FILE PHOTO

qualify. He went fast in the first half of the race, clocking 25.99s for the first 50 metres and 55.56s for the 100m and finished the race in 1:56.38s. He had finally breached the qualifying mark of 1:56.48s which he has been chasing since 2019.

Sajan was a relieved man, and said his hard work in Dubai with coach Pradeep had paid off.

"I am very happy that I was finally able to achieve

this. It meant a lot to me as I have been chasing this mark for the last two years. Injury and lockdown affected my training. For the last one year I was training hard with my coach Pradeep Kumar in Dubai. It was difficult to get entries for meets. I was denied entry for a meet in France but managed to get one for the Belgrade meet.

"I did my best in the Belgrade meet and knew I had to come up with something extraordinary in the Rome meet to qualify for the Olympics. ■ FILE PHOTO

extraordinary in the Rome. The six days gap we got between the two meets was used to analyse and plan strategy for my race.

"We came to conclusion that I needed to have more power and speed in the first half of the race. I went all out from the start and was able to execute my plans well," he said.

## Benchmark

Dronecharya S. Pradeep Kumar said Sajan's effort should be considered as a benchmark in Indian swimming. He also said his ward was capable of improving his performance in Tokyo.

"It is a great achievement and it means he is among the top swimmers in the world. But world standards are improving everyday. I feel Sajan can still improve this performance in Olympics. I consider his effort as a benchmark in Indian swimming which upcoming swimmers can try to emulate," he said.

"I have been chasing this mark for the last two years"

## Good mix of experience and young talent: Narang

Feels India's best bet is in 10m air rifle & pistol mixed events

## V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

HYDERABAD

The Indian shooters will be high on confidence at the Tokyo Olympics thanks to their consistent performances at the highest level in recent times, London Games bronze medallist Gagan Narang said on Tuesday.

He said the 15-member squad combined experience and exciting young talent.

"I feel India has the best chance to win medals in mixed events in both 10m air rifle and pistol events. Those who have been at the Olympics can count on their experience, while the young brigade will have no baggage to carry and this can be the biggest advantage," the 38-year-old told *The Hindu*.

"The youngsters can afford to just go out there and enjoy the competition and give their best

the shooters to perform," Narang said.

"In terms of experience, most of the Indians who will be in Tokyo have won medals at different levels, including World Cups. Their mindset has changed dramatically in the last decade."

## Raring to go

"In our early days, we were just happy to participate in the Olympics, then think of competing in the next one and then target medals. Now, these youngsters are raring to take on the best in their maiden Olympics. Importantly, they are well-versed with the latest rules too," Narang said.



Gagan Narang. ■ FILE PHOTO

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## Neeraj Chopra pulls out of Switzerland event

Javelin thrower decides to give his body some rest after a lot of travel

## ATHLETICS

PRESS TUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra pulled out of a top-level competition in Switzerland on Tuesday, owing to fatigue.

Neeraj was to compete in the Spalten Leichtathletik event in Lucerne, a World Athletics continental tour silver-level competition where the likes of Olympics gold medal favourite Johannes Vetter of Germany and some other top javelin throwers are taking part.

It is learnt that Neeraj had



Neeraj Chopra. ■ FILE PHOTO  
above Neeraj in the Road to Tokyo list, are lined up for the event.  
Neeraj had won bronze in the

Kuortane Games in Finland on Saturday with an effort of 86.79m, behind season-leader and 2017 world champion Vetter (93.59m) and 2012 Olympics gold medalist and 2016 Games bronze winner Walcott (89.12m).

That was his third best performance this season since re-writing his own national record during the Indian Grand Prix 3 in March at Patiala with a throw of 88.07m. A few days later, he reached 87.80m during the Federation Cup at the same venue.

## Clippers keep series against Suns alive

## MOTORSPORTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Indian motorsports' governing body FMSCI has nominated its president Akbar Ibrahim for the Dronacharya Award besides sending Jehan Daruvala's name to the government for Arjuna Award after inexplicably ignoring him last year.

Racer-turned-coach Akbar's name was also recommended for Dronacharya last year but none of FMSCI's nominations for the national sports awards was

## Akbar in Drona list



Akbar Ibrahim. ■ FILE PHOTO

short-listed by the government-appointed selection panel.

## AITA nominates Ankita, Prajnesh for Arjuna

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Jakarta and Palembang. Prajnesh who is ranked 148, has played five Davis Cup ties for the country.

In the Lifetime achievement category, Balram, who has a 50 year-long association with Indian tennis, will vie for the honour along with Enrico Piperno for the Dhyanchand honour.

Ankita and Prajnesh both won singles bronze medals at the 1991-2001.

ing extraordinary in the Rome. The six days gap we got between the two meets was used to analyse and plan strategy for my race.

"We came to conclusion that I needed to have more power and speed in the first half of the race. I went all out from the start and was able to execute my plans well," he said.

**Benchmark**

Dronecharya S. Pradeep Kumar said Sajan's effort should be considered