



Violence erupts across Uttar Pradesh ahead of panchayat elections  
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Deception a legitimate strategy of China, says Vijay Gokhale  
page 9



Berrettini gets past Hurkacz, meets Djokovic in the final  
page 15

## NEARBY



Colour-coded action plan for possible third wave

NEW DELHI

To deal with a possible third wave of COVID-19, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority passed a colour-coded response action plan on Friday under which curbs will be implemented in accordance with the severity of the situation.

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**UCC ought not to remain a mere hope: Delhi HC**

NEW DELHI

Favouring the introduction of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), the Delhi High Court has said the Indian youth need not be forced to struggle with issues arising due to conflicts in various personal laws in relation to marriage and divorce. The modern Indian society is "gradually becoming homogenous", the HC noted.

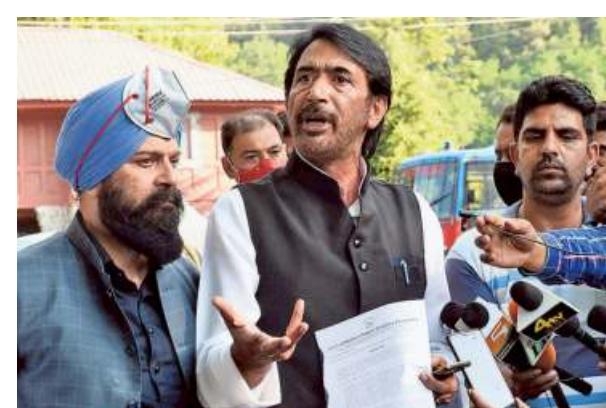
CITY ▶ PAGE 2

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## Terrain, facilities will affect delimitation in J&K, says ECI

Panel completes consultations; will also identify seats for the SCs and STs

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
JAMMU



**Seeking consensus:** J&K Congress president Ghulam Ahmad Mir speaking to mediapersons after meeting the Delimitation Commission in Srinagar. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

panels did not acknowledge the difficult terrains and people's difficulties, he pointed out.

Mr. Chandra clarified that 24 seats reserved for Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) would not be delimited in this process.

"The Commission will also specify the number of seats to be reserved for the SCs and the STs in the Legislative Assembly of the UT. It will be for the first time that seats will be reserved for the STs in J&K," he noted.

J&K has already seven seats reserved for SC people,

mainly in the Kathua-Samba belt in the Jammu region. It will be for the first time that STs, including Bakerwals and Gujjars, will get reservation in this delimitation exercise. The maximum population of Gujjars and Bakwerwals are from the Pir Panjal Valley, comprising Poonch and Rajouri districts, in the Jammu region. Mr. Chandra said the Commission had taken into account the representations made by 290 groups, comprising 800 people.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

A transparent exercise, says panel chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JAMMU

The delimitation exercise will be transparent and there should be no fears and doubts over it, Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai (retd.) said on Friday, seeking to dispel apprehensions among a section of political leaders and people that it is a pre-planned exercise guided by the agenda of a political party.

Justice Desai, who heads the Delimitation Commission, was replying to a question about apprehensions expressed by a section of political parties and people in Kashmir.

"The exercise will be transparent in nature and there should be no fears and doubts. We can only talk to those who want to participate in the process. Thos," she said.

The Mehbooba Mufti-led PDP stayed away from its proceedings.

## Cooperation Ministry will usurp States' rights: Oppn.

Parties likely to raise the issue in the monsoon session

NISTULA HEBBAR  
SANDEEP PHUKAN  
NEW DELHI

**They [BJP] want total control of the cooperative movement and that's why they have made Amit Shah in charge of the Ministry. How can they form a Ministry without an Act of Parliament?**

RAMESH CHENNITHALA, CONGRESS LEADER

**The government is yet to explain the purpose and objective of this Ministry. And the appointment of Mr. Shah raises several questions**

D. RAJA, CPI GENERAL SECRETARY

A row is about to erupt between the Treasury and Opposition benches in the monsoon session of Parliament, set to start on July 19, over the formation of the Ministry of Cooperation, which was announced on July 5. The portfolio has been given to Home Minister Amit Shah after last Wednesday's Cabinet expansion.

The government said the Ministry "will provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country" and do much to streamline the processes for "ease of doing business" and enable development of Multi-State Co-operative Banks (MSCBs). Significantly, the MSCBs have now been solely taken under the Reserve Bank of India for regulatory purposes.

Opposition leaders, however, said the move was to "hijack the cooperative movement" that currently falls under the State governments. Senior Congress leader

Ramesh Chenithala, who was the former Leader of the Opposition in Kerala – a State with a strong cooperative movement – told *The Hindu* that "the move is planned to hijack the cooperative movement".

"They [the BJP] want total control of the cooperative movement across the country and that's why they have made Amit Shah in charge of the Ministry. Cooperatives is a State subject under entry 32 of the State list under the Schedule 7 of the Constitution.

"How can they create a Ministry without an Act of Parliament?" Mr. Chenithala, a sitting lawmaker from Kerala, said.

The cooperative model

has been a source of political power in States such as Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. Many of these cash-rich cooperatives are controlled by Opposition parties, such as the Nationalist Congress Party, the CPI (M) and the Congress in some of these States.

"The government is yet to explain the purpose and objective of this Ministry. And the appointment of Mr. Shah raises several questions as it encroaches on a State's power. Our party will raise this in Parliament," CPI general secretary D. Raja said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Unwelcome visitor



**Lost harvest:** Over 8,000 bags of paddy, kept at a direct procurement centre at Nelvoy village in Kancheepuram district in Tamil Nadu, got damaged in the recent heavy rain. ■ B. VELANKANNI RAJ

## West Bengal Speaker names Roy PAC chief

BJP MLAs stage walkout from House

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Senior Trinamool Congress leader Mukul Roy was on Friday appointed Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the West Bengal Assembly by Speaker Biman Banerjee.

Mr. Roy, who had bagged the Krishnanagar Uttar constituency on a BJP ticket, joined the TMC almost a month ago on June 11.

The Speaker made the announcement in the House on the last day of the Budget session of the State Assembly. BJP legislators led by Leader of the Opposition Sudesh Adhikari erupted in protest at the announcement and walked out.

Mr. Adhikari said that as per norms, an MLA from the Opposition is appointed as the Chairperson of the PAC. "This government does not



Mukul Roy

conduct an audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General. It wants to spend and does not want anyone to know where it is spending the money," he alleged.

Senior Minister and TMC leader Subrata Mukherjee said that officially Mr. Roy is a BJP MLA and there is nothing wrong in his appointment as PAC Chairperson.

In another development, the West Bengal police registered an FIR against Mr. Adhikari in connection with the death of his security guard Shubhabrata Chakraborty in 2018.

## Privacy policy will be on hold till law is framed: WhatsApp

Will not compel users, messaging platform tells Delhi HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

WhatsApp LLC told the Delhi High Court on Friday that till the Data Protection Bill comes into force, it will not compel users to opt for its new privacy policy as it has been put on hold, and will be implemented "if Parliament allows it".

WhatsApp clarified before the Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh that it would not limit the functionality of the app for users who are not opting for the new privacy policy in the meantime.

Appearing for the instant messaging platform, senior advocate Harish Salve said, "We voluntarily agreed to put it [the policy] on hold... We will not compel people to accept." Mr. Salve said WhatsApp would non-



WhatsApp informed the court that it will continue to display the update to users.

ethless continue to display the update to its users.

### Court's concern

In response to Mr. Salve's submission, the court observed that even though the implementation had been put on hold, the policy still continued to exist.

"You are not implementing it but the policy is with

you and any day it can come," the court said.

Mr. Salve reiterated that the approach would be maintained till the Data Protection Bill becomes law.

"Commitment is that I will do nothing till the Parliament's law comes in. If Parliament allows it, I will have it. If it doesn't, bad luck... I've taken it off till the Parliament makes a law. Either we fit in or we don't," Mr. Salve said.

The Personal Data Protection Bill seeks to regulate the use of an individual's data by the government and private companies. The Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Bill has been given extension till the monsoon session of Parliament to submit its report.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## India concerned at events in Afghanistan, says Jaishankar

New Delhi and Moscow discuss the Taliban's advance

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Observing that all five zonal Benches of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) are equally powerful and that their orders would be applicable pan India, the Madras High Court has disapproved of a 2017 Central notification which terms the north zone Bench in Delhi as the principal Bench.

Passing interlocutory orders in a case, Justices N. Kirubakaran and T.V. Thamilselvi wrote: "Though in the notification dated August 10, 2017 the north zone Bench in Delhi is called principal Bench, it is prima facie contrary to the NGT Act of 2010 as the latter does not speak about any principal Bench."

Addressing a joint press conference with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Mr. Jaishankar said that there is a "legitimacy aspect" to whoever gets to govern Afghanistan.

Passing interlocutory orders in a case, Justices N. Kirubakaran and T.V. Thamilselvi wrote: "Though in the notification dated August 10, 2017 the north zone Bench in Delhi is called principal Bench, it is prima facie contrary to the NGT Act of 2010 as the latter does not speak about any principal Bench."

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

events in Afghanistan. In many cases, when there is volatility in a society, we leave the people of that country to work it out. But Afghanistan is a very different case because for more than 30 years there have been international conferences ... to discuss how to stabilise and bring peace to Afghanistan because it has proven implications for regional security and stability.. we stress that there has to be a reduction in violence," the Minister said.

The press conference in Moscow was convened within hours of the Taliban's de-

claration that around 85% of Afghan territory is now under its control. Mr. Lavrov confirmed that Taliban has taken over border crossings with Iran and Tajikistan.

The two Ministers said they had discussed the evolving situation in Afghanistan during the bilateral talks held earlier in the day. Both New Delhi and Moscow are watching the fast evolving situation in Kabul, which is reportedly surrounded by Taliban forces.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

U.S. DEFENDS PULLOUT ▶ PAGE 13

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Monsoon may advance over Delhi today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The heatwave that had gripped the city abated on Friday with the maximum temperature settling at 38.2 degrees Celsius, which was two degree above normal.

The minimum fell to 24.1 degrees Celsius, which was four degrees below normal as showers lashed parts of the city late on Thursday. Till 8.30 a.m. on Friday morning, the city had received 8.8 mm of rainfall.

The IMD has forecast a cloudy sky with the possibility of light rain and thundershowers on July 10. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 38 and 24 degrees Celsius respectively.

It added that the monsoon is also likely to land in the Capital. "Conditions are favourable for further advance of South-West Monsoon over Delhi, remaining parts of West U.P., some more parts of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan during the next 24 hours," said the weather bulletin.

## Cabinet okays real-time source study to combat air pollution

It will suggest actions to systematically assess, reduce air quality deterioration

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Cabinet on Friday approved a real-time source apportionment study with an aim to curb air pollution in the city. The project aims to identify sources of pollution on a real-time basis to initiate mitigation measures on a near real-time basis.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the project would go a long way in identifying the various factors contributing to Delhi's pollution and mitigating them.

### Identifying factors

"The real-time source apportionment project will help identify the factors responsible for the spike in air pollution at any particular spot in Delhi. It will help understand the real-time impact of various pollution sources like vehicles, dust, biomass burning, stubble burning, and emissions from industries. Based on



An anti-smog gun being used to fight air pollution in the Capital. ■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

the results, the Delhi government will take necessary actions to curb the sources of pollution," Mr. Rai said.

The study will be conducted by a team from IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Delhi, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and IISER-Mohali. The government said that the technology to carry out real-time source apportionment of pollution has not been implemented in any other city in the country.

Mukesh Sharma, Scientist at IIT-Kanpur, leading the study said that the project will provide daily and weekly forecasting of air quality, real-time diurnal source apportionment and suggest short-term daily and weekly actions to systematically assess, reduce and prevent air quality deterioration in Delhi for many years to come.

"The developed mobile laboratory will provide apportionment of the sources at multiple locations and this laboratory will be perhaps the first of its kind in the world," Dr. Sharma said.

## Govt. plans 3rd party audit of Pusa tech

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has written to a consultancy firm of the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, asking it to conduct an audit of the use of Pusa bio-decomposer, which the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation had hailed as a new, cost-effective solution to stubble burning last year.

The decision comes against the backdrop of some "negative" comments from farmers in Punjab and "positive" feedback from Haryana following the use of the technique, which uses a microbial solution for fermenting stubble into manure, officials in the Delhi Environment Department said.

The orders were passed on a writ petition filed by an en-

## 'NGT bench in Delhi is no way superior to other zonal benches'

Madras HC stays transfer of a case from south zone to north zone

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Observing that all five zonal Benches of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) are equally powerful and that their orders would be applicable pan India, the Madras High Court has disapproved of a 2017 Central notification which terms the north zone Bench in Delhi as the principal Bench.



National Green Tribunal

Environmental activist K. Saravanan of Chennai against a decision taken by the south zone Bench of NGT on June 15 to transfer his case to the "principal" Bench in Delhi since the orders to be passed in it would have pan India effect.

### Pan India effect

Not in agreement with such a decision taken by the south zone Bench, the judges stayed the operation of the transfer order.

"Though in the notification dated August 10, 2017 the north zone Bench in Delhi is called principal Bench, it is prima facie contrary to the NGT Act of 2010 as the latter does not speak about any principal Bench."

Authoring the order, Justice Kirubakaran observed:

"Vesting of power only with the Bench in Delhi is not contemplated anywhere in the statute even though power is actually concentrated in Delhi."

The orders were passed on a writ petition filed by an en-

vironmental activist K. Saravanan of Chennai against a decision taken by the south zone Bench of NGT on June 15 to transfer his case to the "principal" Bench in Delhi since the orders to be passed in it would have pan India effect.

"The jurisdiction of every Bench has been distinctly given and it is only to enable the citizens to approach the forum constituted in their zone and not to make the citizens travel to Delhi spending huge amount of money which is not possible for every citizen on each and every issue," the judges said.

"The went on to add: "If such a procedure (of transferring cases to Delhi) is adopted, it would amount to denying access to justice as is being done in other matters." Easy access to justice was the primary reason for establishing courts at Taluk level and that was the reason why even High Court Benches were being created in different parts of a State, the judges pointed out.

## 'Uniform Civil Code ought not to remain a mere hope'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI  
Favouring the introduction of Uniform Civil Code (UCC), the Delhi High Court has said the Indian youth need not be forced to struggle with issues arising due to conflicts in various personal laws in relation to marriage and divorce.

The modern Indian society was "gradually becoming homogenous, the traditional barriers of religion, com-

munity and caste are slowly dissipating" and thus UCC "ought not to remain a mere hope," Justice Prathiba M. Singh stated in an order dated July 7.

The youth of India belonging to various communities, tribes, castes or religions who solemnise their marriages ought not to be forced to struggle with issues arising due to conflicts in various personal laws, espe-

cially in relation to marriage and divorce," the order said.

### Shah Bano reference

While referring to several decisions of the Supreme court on the need for UCC, including the historical Shah Bano case of 1985, the court said:

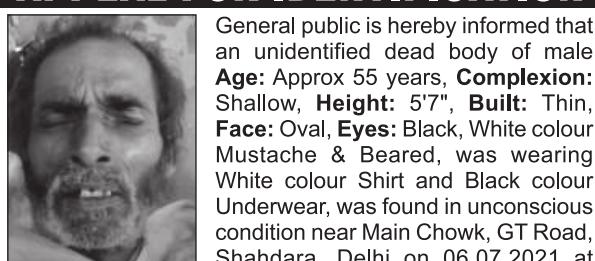
"The hope expressed in Article 44 of the Constitution that the State shall secure for its citizens Uniform Civil Code ought not to remain a

mere hope."

The High Court observed that the need for UCC was reiterated from time to time by the Supreme Court, however, "it is unclear as to what steps have been taken in this regard till date".

It directed that a copy of the order be communicated to the Secretary, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India, for necessary action as deemed appropriate.

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male

**Age:** Approx 55 years, **Complexion:** Shallow, Height: 5'7", **Built:** Thin,

**Face:** Oval, **Eyes:** Black, White colour Mustache & Beared, was wearing White colour Shirt and Black colour Underwear, was found in unconscious condition near Main Chowk, GT Road, Shahdara, Delhi on 06.07.2021 at

around 3 PM and was shifted to GTB Hospital vide MLC No. A-2960/28/21 dated 06.07.2021, where during the treatment doctor declared him dead on 07.07.2021. In this regard a DD No. 49A, dated 06.07.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Shahdara, Delhi.

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3	Annual surfacing on Oddi Kingal Km. 0/000 to 2/1405 (SH-Renewal coat 30 mm thick Bituminous Concrete in Km.7/000 to 11/000) (PMGSY).	Rs. 46,75,468/-	15.07.2021 w.e.f 1730 Hrs	Rs. 77,700/- up to 1800 Hrs
4	Construction of link road from Challa to Shilla Ropha (Sawera Khad) via Nizra Phadharach Km.0/000 to 5/120 (SH- Construction of R.C.C. Slab Culvert at Rd. 3/570).	Rs. 38,11,813/-	15.07.2021 w.e.f 1730 Hrs	Rs. 64,700/- up to 1800 Hrs
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The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://www.hptenders.gov.in).

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**IN BRIEF**



New Karnataka Governor to be sworn in on July 11

BENGALURU  
Former Union Minister Thawarchand Gehlot will be sworn in as the Governor of Karnataka on July 11 at the Glass House of Raj Bhavan. High Court of Karnataka Chief Justice Abhay Srinivas Okla will administer the oath of office and secrecy to the new Governor, according to a release.

**Mekedatu: meet resolves to draw action plan**

BENGALURU  
The Karnataka government, during a meeting chaired by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa on Friday, has decided to prepare an action plan for construction of the Mekedatu drinking water project in the Cauvery basin for catering to the needs of Bengaluru and Ramanagaram districts, said Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

## Kerala formulates action plan for Zika

13 more samples test positive

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
The Kerala Health Department has formulated an action plan for coordinated efforts to check the spread of Zika infection in the State.

Following the confirmation of one case of Zika infection in a pregnant woman here on Thursday, 13 more samples out of 19 sent to the National Institute of Virology, Pune, have tested positive for Zika, taking the number of infections reported so far in the State to 14.

These are all samples from the urban areas in Thiruvananthapuram. Steps

# Kerala's Kitex Group to invest ₹1,000 crore in Telangana

It will set up a manufacturing unit at Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD

Kerala's loss seems to be Telangana's gain with the Kitex Group on Friday agreeing in principle to set up a ₹1,000-crore apparel manufacturing facility at the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal.

It will be the first phase of investment Kitex has agreed to make, which is expected to create 4,000 jobs over two years in the State. An official announcement in this regard capped the intense efforts by Telangana to woo the group, which recently threatened to drop a ₹3,500-crore investment plan in Kerala alleging harassment by the administration there.

Sources said Telangana made a determined, strong pitch to Kitex, highlighting among other things how the State government respected



**Advantage Telangana:** Industries Minister K.T. Rama Rao with the Kitex team in Hyderabad on Friday. ■ ARRANGEMENT

wealth creators and how mega projects such as those of the Kochi-based group were eligible for tailor-made incentives.

While the Industries Department is said to have initiated discussions a few days ago, the investment announcement followed a series of meetings Industries Minister K.T. Rama Rao and senior officials, including Secretary Jayesh Ranjan, had with a

six-member delegation from Kitex that was flown in a chartered flight arranged by the Telangana government.

A release from the Minister's office said that during the meeting, Mr. Rao gave an overview of the progressive investment policies of the State government and also availability of various resources for textiles industry in Telangana. He explained about the TS-iPASS single

window clearance system and the other advantages that Telangana offered, including uninterrupted power supply. The Minister also said the cotton grown in the State was one of the finest in the world.

The Kitex delegation led by Managing Director Sabu M. Jacob made a presentation on the group's current activities and expansion plans. Later, they flew to the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in a helicopter and inspected the premises.

The release said the Kitex team was impressed with the Kakatiya Textile Park infrastructure and on returning to Hyderabad met Mr. Rao and announced plans to invest ₹1,000 crore on apparel manufacturing facility in the park, a move that is expected to generate 4,000 jobs.

## Krishna river board meet proposed next week

**B. CHANDRASHEKHAR**  
HYDERABAD

The Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), caught in the crossfire between the two member-States – Andhra Pradesh and Telangana – is planning to hold a full-board meeting next week to discuss the water sharing arrangement at least for the current water year.

The postponement of the three-member committee meeting scheduled for July 9 had become inevitable on the day Telangana wrote to the board seeking its postponement and requesting for a full-board meeting anytime after July 20.

"There's no point in having the meeting with one of the member-States making up its mind to stay away," an official of the river board said on Friday.

The board is likely to convene a meeting only after July 12, when the next hearing in the southern zone Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) is scheduled on the alleged violation of the tribunal order in case of the Rayalseema Lift Irrigation Scheme (RLIS) of Andhra Pradesh. The river board planned to visit the RLIS site for more than four months but could not do so due to Andhra Pradesh's refusal to allow the team.

At a time when the two States are engaged in a bitter row over sharing the river water, particularly in the backdrop of work taken up on the RLIS by Andhra Pradesh and hydel generation at the inter-State reservoirs of Srisailam, Nagarjunasagar and Pulicintala by Telangana, the board has been at the receiving end from two sides.

## WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Saturday:** Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand, Manipur, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. Thunderstorm with hail likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Muzaffarabad

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	... 35.3	26.6	12.2	Kozhikode	... 28.4	24.5	12.2
Ahmedabad	37.9...	28.0	32.5...	Kurnool	... 32.5	25.6	36.2...
Aizawl	6...	27.9	19.0	Lucknow	... 36.2	26.3	35.4...
Altahabad	... 35.7...	26.5	25.3...	Madurai	... 35.4	23.2	22.8
Bengaluru	... 29.0...	22.2	27.2...	Mangaluru	... 26.1	21.8	22.8
Bhopal	... 31.0...	24.2	29.0...	Mumbai	... 31.6	24.4	29.9...
Bhubaneswar	1.5...	25.2...	21.6	Mysuru	... 29.9	21.6	34.8...
Chandigarh	... 31.2...	28.8	34.8...	New Delhi	... 38.2	24.1	34.8...
Chennai	39...	33.8...	23.8	Patna	... 33.6	25.8	31.9...
Coimbatore	... 29.1...	24.3	31.9...	Port Blair	... 31.2	23.1	31.9...
Dehradun	... 34.6...	23.0	32.1...	Puducherry	57.8...	20.4	32.1...
Gangtok	0.7...	18.1	30.3...	Pune	... 30.3	22.9	32.8...
Goa	53...	29.0...	24.2	Raipur	... 30.6	23.8	30.2...
Guwahati	2...	35.5...	26.4	Ranchi	22...	22.1	25.0...
Hubballi	... 26.0...	22.0	25.0...	Shillong	... 25.0	17.9	28.4...
Hyderabad	... 31.2...	23.4	31.2...	Shimla	5...	18.2	28.4...
Imphal	... 31.2...	22.0	31.2...	Srinagar	... 34.2	19.2	31.9...
Jaipur	... 37.3...	28.8	37.3...	Thiruvananthapuram	5...	24.8	31.9...
Kochi	8...	24.9...	24.6	Tiruchi	25...	22.0	35.9...
Kohima	... 26.0...	17.8	26.0...	Vijayawada	... 32.4	26.2	34.2...
Kolkata	0.3...	34.9...	27.4	Visakhapatnam	... 35.0	25.6	35.0...

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	13	16	110	115	116	■■■■■
Bengaluru	11	19	24	136	97	■■■■■
Chennai	4	31	75	19	28	■■■■■
Delhi	6	51	38	197	165	■■■■■
Hyderabad	37	30	52	33	49	■■■■■
Kolkata	11	22	17	66	75	■■■■■
Lucknow	2	39	52	159	113	■■■■■
Mumbai	105	10	—	70	101	■■■■■
Pune	5	14	65	82	83	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	7	76	55	84	126	■■■■■

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Jind, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 182, indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Gadag, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 15

**NO<sub>x</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

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

## WEST

# Maharashtra's active cases decline to 1.12 lakh with 10,458 recoveries

State reports 8,992 COVID-19 cases, 200 fatalities; 596 new infections in Mumbai

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
PUNE  
As many as 10,458 patients were discharged in Maharashtra on Friday against a surge of 8,992 new COVID-19 cases as the State's active case tally dipped to 1,12,231.

The State saw a sharp fatality spike, with 738 deaths being added to the progressive death toll. As many as 158 of these have occurred in the last 48 hours and 42 were from the past week. A further 538 fatalities had been added as per the ongoing 'reconciliation' process, said the State Health Department.

The State's total death toll has climbed to 1,25,034 with the State's case fatality rate rising to 2.03%.

The total cases have reached 61,22,893 while its cumulative recoveries have



**Inoculation:** A woman receives a dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Mumbai on Friday. ■ PTI

gone up to 59,00,040 with the recovery rate standing at 96.08%.

Of a total 4,31,24,800 laboratory samples tested thus far, 61,40,968 (with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 14.1%) have returned positive with

over 2.16 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said.

Pune reported more than 1,200 new cases taking its total case tally to 10,66,229. Four deaths were recorded as the toll touched 17,194. Ac-

cented were given in the post in an alleged attempt to benefit in the name of medical assistance. It emerged that the accused had withdrawn ₹1 lakh received as assistance from the account.

Satara registered 1,085 cases and 24 deaths as its total case tally rose to 20,10,42 of whom 8,119 are active while the death toll went up to 4,837.

Neighbouring Sangli re-

ported more than 900 new

cases and 11 deaths. The total stands at 1,63,134.

## State resumes immunisation against filariasis

Drug administration drive will be conducted in 6 districts till July 15

**STAFF REPORTER**  
MUMBAI  
The Maharashtra government has flagged off its mass drug administration drive for the elimination of lymphatic filariasis and become the first State in the country to resume giving rounds of the drug after the second wave of COVID-19.

The drive will be conducted in six districts – Bhandara, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Gondia, Yavatmal and Nanded – till July 15. Maharashtra has 18 filariasis endemic districts. As of 2020-21, at least 31,258 lymphoedema and 11,929 hydrocoele cases were reported from these districts.

Mass drug administration is one of the two pillars of the National Programme for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis, under which anti-filarial drugs are administered to the eligible population once a year.

A combination of two drugs, diethylcarbamazine (DEC) and Albendazole, or three – Ivermectin, DEC, and Albendazole – will be administered during the drive.

Of the six districts, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur and Bhandara will undertake the triple drug therapy. Everyone except pregnant women, children below five years and seriously ill peo-

ple will be administered the drugs in the presence of health workers.

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## Undead section

The invalid Sec. 66A is often invoked out of ignorance, but serves as a tool of harassment

**I**t is quite disconcerting that the Supreme Court has been informed for the second time in two years that Section 66A of the IT Act, which was struck down as unconstitutional six years ago, is still being invoked by the police and in some trial courts. One can see why the Court deemed it "a shocking state of affairs" when a petition by the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) came up for hearing. Section 66A made messages deemed by the police to be offensive or menacing to anyone, or those that caused "annoyance", a criminal offence if these were sent through a computer or computer resource. It prescribed a prison term of up to three years on conviction. In its landmark judgment in *Shreya Singhal* (2015), the Court ruled that the provision was vague and violated the freedom of free speech. It was so broadly defined that it took into its sweep protected speech also, and therefore upset the balance between the exercise of the free speech right and the imposition of reasonable restrictions on it. In January 2019, too, the Court's attention was drawn to the same problem of the invalidated provision being used by the police to register cases based on complaints. Not much seems to have changed since then, and it is quite surprising that the police headquarters and prosecutors in the various States had not disseminated the effect of the Court ruling among officers manning police stations.

There were also instances of courts framing charges under Section 66A even after lawyers had cited the 2015 judgment. The PUCL has said as many as 745 cases are still pending in district courts in 11 States. It is not difficult to surmise that police officers who receive complaints and register them as First Information Reports may not be aware of the judgment, though one cannot rule out instances of the section being invoked deliberately as a tool of harassment. Ignorance of the law is no excuse for the citizen, and it must equally be no excuse for police officers who include invalidated sections in FIRs. Recently, police in Uttar Pradesh booked a journalist for defamation under Section 500 of the IPC, even though the Supreme Court has ruled that defamation can be pursued only by way of private complaints and there can be no FIR. The current hearing may result in directions to States and the police, as well as the court registries, for appropriate advisories to both station-house officers and magistrates, but it is not necessary for those concerned to wait for such orders. Police chiefs and the directorates of prosecution must proactively begin a process of conveying to the lower courts and investigators all important judgments and their effect on the practices relating to investigation, prosecution and the framing of charges from time to time.

## Murder of a President

Haiti needs to hold legislative and presidential elections soon for a legitimate government

**T**he brazen assassination of Jovenel Moïse, the 53-year-old President of Haiti, has pushed the impoverished Caribbean country battered by political and economic crises into more chaos. Haitian police say 28 foreign mercenaries, including retired Colombian soldiers, killed the President at his residence in Port-au-Prince early Wednesday. Most of them were arrested and some were killed in a gun battle. But key questions – who the mastermind was, what the motive was and how a group of armed foreigners could walk into a presidential residence, shoot him dead and exit – are yet to be answered. Moïse was at the centre of a political crisis that had shaken the country in recent months. His opponents claimed that his five-year-term came to an end on February 7 and demanded his resignation. Moïse, who took over office in February 2017, months after his disputed election in 2016, claimed that his term would be over only in February 2022. When the Opposition formed a parallel government, Moïse alleged a coup and cracked down on them. Moïse came to power promising to strengthen Haiti's institutions, fix its economy, fight corruption and stabilise governance. But he himself faced serious corruption allegations, his government could not hold the 2019 parliamentary elections and the economy contracted under his watch. The outbreak of COVID-19 made matters worse.

Now, Haiti stares into an uncertain future. According to the Constitution, the President of the Supreme Court should take charge. But the Supreme Court chief died of COVID-19 last month. There is no legislature as the 2019 elections have been postponed. For now, interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph has taken charge. But Moïse had fired him two days before his death and nominated Ariel Henry, a neurosurgeon, for the post. Mr. Joseph is now consolidating the government, but Mr. Henry has asked him to step down, signalling that another political crisis is taking shape in the midst of security worries. This is not the time for another power struggle. Haiti's politicians and military should take a phased approach of uncovering the truth, stabilising the country and ensuring the formation of a legitimate administration. The government's immediate priority should be to get to the bottom of the assassination. If foreign nationals were involved in the attack, as the police have claimed, Haiti should get international help in the investigation. And Haitian leaders should not allow the vacuum left by Moïse's assassination to destabilise the country further. Part of the problems Haiti faces is its inability to hold free, fair and credible elections in time and ensure a peaceful transition of power. Interim Prime Minister Joseph, Mr. Henry and other leaders should come together and hold legislative and presidential elections at the opportune time to ensure that a stable government with popular legitimacy is in place to address the myriad problems the country is facing.

# In defence of India's noisy democracy

In the current moment, it is important to be clear why comparisons with China are not only specious but also dangerous



PATRICK HELLER

**C**hina's developmental pathway over the last century has been spectacular. No country in history has ever grown faster and more dynamically. Not only have hundreds of millions been lifted out of poverty, but social indicators have improved dramatically. India's developmental record has been much more mixed. Since the 1990s, the Indian economy has grown impressively, but it remains far behind China in its global competitiveness. Poverty has come down, but employment prospects for the majority remain limited to low-wage informal sector jobs that are, by definition, precarious. Maybe, most startling of all, improvements in basic social development indicators have lagged, so much so that as Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen have pointed out, India has actually fallen behind Bangladesh and Pakistan.

**The 'too democratic' line**  
Comparing these track records, some commentators, including voices in the Government, have drawn a facile lesson. India's problem is that it is just too democratic. Unlike China, making and implementing key decisions about public investment and various reforms is impossible in the din of multiple and contradictory democratic voices. What is needed are firmer and more independent forms of decision-making that are insulated from this cacophony.

This line of thinking has at various times been embraced by sections of the Left (Leninism) and multi-lateral technocrats and bankers, but, increasingly, has become the animating fantasy of right-wing leaders and movements, ranging from elected autocrats such as Donald Trump, Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Narendra

Modi. The strangeness of these bedfellows alone should be cause for alarm. But in the current moment, it is especially important to be clear why comparisons with China are not only specious, but very dangerous.

The claim that less democracy is good for development does not stand up to comparative, theoretical and ethical scrutiny. Contrary to those who believe economic management cannot be left to the whims of democratic forces, the comparative evidence clearly shows that democratic regimes have on balance performed better than non-democratic regimes.

China, with a history of state-building going back two millennia, and an exceptionally well-organised, disciplined and brutal form of authoritarianism, has done especially well in transforming its economy. Africa and West Asia, where authoritarian governments of every stripe have dominated, remain world economic laggards. The Latin American military dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s had a terrible economic and social record, and it was with the return of democracy and the "pink wave" of Left populist parties that prosperity and social progress were ushered in. Taiwan and South Korea are also instructive. Their economic take-offs happened under military regimes and relied on labour repression. Their transitions to democracy saw their economies move up to the next level and become much more inclusive.

**Democracy and development**  
Most pointedly though, one only has to look within India to understand how development and democracy can thrive together. By just about any measure, Kerala and Tamil Nadu have done more to improve the lives of all their citizens across castes and classes than any other States in India and it is no coincidence that both have also had the longest and most sustained popular democratic movements and intense party competition in the country. In contrast, in Gujarat, where single party Bharatiya Janata Party rule has been in



place for nearly a quarter century, growth has been solid but accompanied by increased social exclusion and stagnation in educational achievement and poverty reduction. The comparative record leaves little doubt that on balance, democracies are better at promoting inclusive growth.

The theory behind the authoritarian fantasy also does not hold up. First, the assumption that authoritarianism supports forms of decision-making that can rise above the hubbub of democratic demand-making to get things done presumes that those in command will serve the general interest rather than catering to the powerful and that when they enjoy such autonomy, they actually know what to do with it. This is just hubris. On both these points, democracies are in fact more likely to meet the necessary conditions for successful decision making. Elected representatives, no matter how venal, have to win re-election, which means answering to a broad swath of the electorate.

### It allows negotiation

The conflicts and noise that democracy generates may complicate things, but in the end, having to respond to a broad spectrum of interests and identities not only protects against catastrophic decisions, but actually allows for forms of negotiation and compromise that can bridge across interests and even balance otherwise conflicting imperatives for growth, justice, sustainability and social inclusion. The remarkable progress the United Progressive Alliance governments made in building a welfare state (National Rural Employment

Guarantee Act, the Right To Information, the right to food and other programmes) is a testament to how a democracy can master even the most complex policy goals. As democratic theorists have long argued, the common good cannot and should not be determined by science, profits, technocrats or autocratic fiat. What it is and how we get there can only emerge out of sustained societal deliberation.

### A look at China

India's tryst with democracy was born not only of its liberation movement but also of its affinity with what makes democracy ethically unique: promotes equality by endowing all citizens with the same civic, political and social rights even as it protects and nurtures individuality and difference. And this is where the China-India comparison is so problematic, indeed unconscionable.

However one might like to measure or evaluate China's development successes, there is no way to discount the human cost of the party-made great famine that took some 35 million lives, a cultural revolution that made enemies out of neighbours, a one child policy that devastated families and erased a generation or the violent, systematic repression of the Uighur Muslim and Tibetan minorities. These were not unfortunate excesses or the inevitable costs of development. These were and are the irredeemable instincts and predations of an authoritarian state, one which now denounces as "historical nihilism" any interpretations of the past that challenge the party's official history. Conversely, while India's democracy has been quarrelsome, cumbersome and often dominated by elites, it has also opened social and political spaces for subordinate groups and has built a sense of shared identity and belonging in the world's largest and most diverse society. It has preserved individual liberties, group identities and religious and thought freedoms, all the things that confer recognition on human beings. To

even pose the question of a trade-off between these freedoms and the role they have played in building a pluralistic nation and some cold, utilitarian calculus of "development" not only does violence to the very idea of human agency and dignity but completely abstracts from the very different social and historical realities of India and China.

### There is a backslide

Beyond these comparative arguments for democracy, one need look no further than the object lesson the BJP government has provided to dismiss the authoritarian fantasy. The democratic backsliding has been clear. The Government has not only sought to centralise, insulate and personalise decision-making but has also aggressively undermined the independence of democratic institutions and silenced and imprisoned Opposition voices, all in the name of nationalism and promoting development. Yet, the development track is dismal at best. While corporate business interests and the billionaire class have flourished, the overall economy has sputtered and since COVID-19 has experienced the worst contraction of any sizeable economy in the world. Demonetisation and the disastrous response to the second COVID-19 wave were not just instances of utter policy incoherence fuelled by the sycophancy and myopia that comes with an inwardly focused government, but exposed a degree of callousness and arrogance rarely seen in a democracy. On the social front, the pursuit of Hindutva – a prototypical variant of authoritarian ethnic nationalism – has shaken India's democratic norms and institutional foundations and weaponised a politics of polarisation and demagogism that threaten to unravel the social fabric of the nation.

Rather than look to China, it is time to defend the noise of Indian democracy.

Patrick Heller is Professor of International Affairs and Sociology, Brown University, U.S.

# The bar on criticism that muzzles the advocate

The new Bar Council of India rules fly in the face of constitutional guarantees of free speech and freedom of profession



ARTI RAGHAVAN

**O**n June 25, 2021, amendments to the Bar Council of India rules (<https://bit.ly/2S2Lcah>) which govern the professional conduct and etiquette of advocates were notified. They render advocates liable for disciplinary proceedings for making disparaging statements about a court, judge, the Bar Council of India (or State Bar Councils) or its members. The consequences include suspension and disbarment. The amendments clarify that "... healthy and bona-fide criticism made in good faith, shall not be treated as a 'misconduct'".

Challenges were mounted before various High Courts immediately after the amendments were notified. The Bar Council of India, in response, has kept the rules in abeyance, pending a review by a committee comprising senior advocates, members of bar associations and the Bar Council of India. The amendments also require the Chief Justice of India's approval before coming into effect, which has not yet been obtained.

### The intent is clear

The intent behind these amendments is betrayed by events that preceded their introduction: On May 25, 2020, 22 senior advocates addressed an open letter (<https://bit.ly/36oLeLV>) urging the Su-

preme Court of India to intervene in the migrant crisis. A retired judge of the Supreme Court also wrote an article (<https://bit.ly/3qXRx2s>) on May 28, condemning the Court's inaction in this regard. In response, the Bar Council of India issued a press release (<https://bit.ly/2VetQql>) on May 30, characterising the criticism as a "sustained and synchronised attack on Supreme Court (sic)" by "disgruntled members of the bar and some unhappy and disappointed former judges".

This was followed by an attack on a legal news portal (Live Law) for an article (<https://bit.ly/2VbCrby>) that was critical of the Bar Council of India Chairman, Manan Kumar Mishra. The article noted how the Chairman accused certain advocates of politicising the Bar, while himself openly professing his allegiance to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In 2014, as Chairman of the Bar Council of India, he pledged his support for the party and Narendra Modi, holding himself out as the representative of India's nearly 1.7 million advocates.

In 2016, he addressed a fawning missive to Prime Minister Modi (on the Bar Council of India letter-head), describing him as the "most efficient and able leader of the world". The article recounted how the Chairman championed a 'Men Too Movement' (<https://bit.ly/36tVORC>) following the sexual harassment complaint against former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, and also denounced anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protesters as "illiterate, ignorant mass". In each of these actions, Mr. Mishra claimed to speak on be-

half of the Indian Bar, and the article deprecated this improper use of public office.

There was swift retaliation to the Live Law article. A Bar Council of India resolution (<https://bit.ly/2UBdUyq>) condemned the author for "scandal mongering and vilification", and resolved to take action against the author and Live Law. The resolution extolled (without specifics) the "...laudable acts done and being done by the [Bar Council of India Chairman] for promotion of a strong, vibrant and independent Bar and Judiciary".

### A chance for a review

It was in this backdrop that on June 3, 2020, while India was in the throes of an unprecedented novel coronavirus pandemic, and access to justice was severely impaired owing to the limited functioning of courts, the Bar Council of India convened a meeting and proposed amendments to the rules for professional conduct.

Contemporaneously, the Supreme Court made its views on censure of the judiciary clear: at a time where only matters of exceptional urgency were being entertained during the pandemic, the Court carved out an inordinate amount of time to charge individ-

duals (including advocate Prashant Bhushan) with criminal contempt for critical remarks about the Supreme Court. Today, the Court under the Chief Justice of India, N.V. Ramana, along with the Committee reviewing the new rules, have an opportunity prevent a further assault on free speech by rejecting the amendments.

Historically, our country's speech laws have served to fortify persons and institutions of power, while silencing those challenging their actions. Laws (such as sedition and criminal contempt) perpetuate the fiction that the authority of these institutions rests on the fragile foundation of 'public faith', and that dissent would impair the ability of powerful institutions such as courts and government bodies to carry out their duties.

This notion is a bogeyman that has been used to silence critics, and is a colonial and feudal relic. State institutions derive their authority from the power vested in them by the law, and nothing else. Criticism (no matter how trenchant) is essential to hold these institutions accountable, and strengthen them.

### A chilling effect

The new Bar Council of India rules fly in the face of basic constitutional guarantees of free speech and the freedom of profession. The events preceding the introduction of the amendments demonstrate how limited the scope for "healthy" criticism under the new rules would be. Further, even if disciplinary proceedings under the new rules (should they come into effect) do not result in serious

consequences such as disbarment, the pain of the process and the possible consequences to the careers of advocates would have a chilling effect.

The Bar Council of India's statement (suspending the amendments pending review by the committee) notes that "no prudent and real Advocate would oppose [the new rules]" and that "Some people are in the habit to object to each and every reformative step, but [the Bar Council of India] is not going to succumb to any such undue pressure". Hopefully, the Bar Council of India's statement is not a chronicle of a charade foretold, and the amendments will be reviewed objectively.

'Professional conduct and etiquette' is an enigmatic phrase for the Indian Bar, as it is hard to fathom what the aspirational standard is. Recently, the Solicitor General, Tushar Mehta, was questioned in court about the Government's defaults on its oxygen supply commitments during the second wave of the pandemic. In response, he said that 'we have to act as responsible individuals' and not as 'unhappy girlfriends', and added, 'Let's try and not be a cry baby'. Mr. Mehta's response was not only unprofessional but was also unacceptable for the issue of citizens being starved of oxygen. But his words are perhaps fitting response to the Bar Council of India and other institutions that are ranked by criticism from citizens who have every right to raise their voices against authority in a democracy.

Arti Raghavan is an advocate practising at the Bombay High Court

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

**Attaching Indian assets**  
As if the defiance shown by the social media platforms in recent months to adhere to Indian laws is not enough, now a bizarre situation has arisen with Cairn Energy threatening to take over 20 Indian properties in Paris (Page 1, July 9). The critical issues confronting Indian authorities only illustrate that Indian diplomacy is lacking the punch to rein in

such multinationals despite being a major investment hub. International courts are independent in the sense that they may not be expected to be considerate to our line of action. In such a situation, it is necessary that the Indian government is prudent enough to be more proactive in pre-empting such anomalous situations as it may dent the country's image as far as overseas

investors are concerned. Social media platforms are bold enough to defy the diktats of even the U.S. President. We are living in a globalised era and a policy of give and take through continued discussions should be the way forward.

V. SUBRAMANIAN,  
Chennai

### Dilip Kumar

As a teenager, and while walking out of Prabhav

Cinema Hall in Mysore after watching Bimal Roy's classic, *Devadas*, a Dilip Kumar starrer, I wore a genuinely sad look. A couple of friends of mine I ran into asked me what my problem was that made me wear such a long face. After their persistent queries, I told them that I was feeling cut up because our film industry had lost a super star in the tragic demise of a film star, who was

irreplaceable. They shook me out of my slumber, pointing out that I had watched a film and that it had nothing to do with the real Dilip Kumar. That is how he strove to infuse life

**CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:** The front-page lead story ("Amid Cabinet reshuffle buzz, eight States get new Governors" (July 7, 2021) referred to Mr. K. Hari Babu as a former MP and former BJP president of the erstwhile combined State of Andhra Pradesh. Actually, he was the president of the State unit of the Andhra Pradesh BJP post bifurcation in 2014.

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To read more letters online, scan the QR code

into his performances. His memory will remain etched in our minds.

RAFIQUE AHMED NARI,  
Chennai

# Ending the shift between Jammu and Kashmir

The 149-year-old bi-annual tradition of shifting the capital of Jammu and Kashmir to Jammu during winters and Srinagar during summers is coming to an end. Peerzada Ashiq reports on a grand and expensive practice that led to the region becoming a melting pot of cultures and what its end portends for the people

Hundreds of impassable snow-capped mountains are spread over the 300-km stretch separating the Jammu region from the Kashmir Valley. A narrow highway which cuts through the Pir Panjal mountain range and snakes through the 2.85-km-long tunnel near Banihal connects the Dogri-speaking Hindu population with the Kashmiri-speaking Muslim population.

Given that the Kashmir Valley is prone to landslides, shooting stones and heavy snow, a tradition began, 149 years ago, of shifting the capital of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) to Srinagar during summers and to Jammu during winters. The 'Darbar Move', which brought two linguistically and culturally different regions closer, was entirely dependent on the vagaries of weather.

Today, this tradition is likely to become history after the Lieutenant-Governor's administration decided to shift to e-offices this month. The administration says the epic bi-annual move is too costly and takes up precious time and resources. But the decision has left hundreds of families worried that their decades-old links with families across the mountains may fade away. Students are concerned about losing opportunities; traders about losing profits. Some suspect that the move has a larger motive.

**Sharing of cultures**  
Notwithstanding the distance and the difference in culture and language, Chasfeeda Shah, 30, a media professional from Kashmir's Hyderpora, and Maanya Sethi, 26, a human resource manager from Jammu's Gandhi Nagar, grew up seeing the Shahs and the Sethis as one family since 1983. A chance meeting between Chasfeeda's father Bashir Ahmad Shah, a police officer, and Maanya's grandfather Surinder Sethi, a Section Officer in the Irrigation Department, in Jammu city transformed into a bond and the Sethis and Shahs became one extended family.

"I was posted in Jammu during the Darbar Move in 1983 and met Sethi *sahib*. Since then, we have stuck together through thick and thin. Sethi *sahib* met with an accident in the 1990s. I shifted him to hospital and stayed by his side till he recovered. Thereafter, we celebrated weddings, Eid and Diwali together," Shah says.

Maanya is a fan of Kashmiri 'wazwan', an array of meat dishes served at Kashmiri weddings, and Chasfeeda developed a sweet tooth for the famous sweets of Jammu, also known as a city of temples. "I was introduced to 'wazwan' dishes when the Shahs invited our family on Eid many years ago. I got hooked to minced meat dishes like *Rista* and *Gushaba*. I love spending summer vacations at the Shahs' house in Srinagar. Ours is a relationship that cannot be expressed in words. When my grandfather passed away, Bashir *sahib* booked a flight so he wouldn't miss the final rites," Maanya says.

For Chasfeeda, born in conflict-ridden Kashmir, shifting to Jammu meant six months of normal life, away from bomb blasts and frequent exchange of fire. She first entered a cinema hall in Jammu because all the cinemas were closed in Kashmir in the 1990s. "The first movie I watched was *Hum Saath-Saath Hai* in Apsara cinema hall in Jammu's Gandhi Nagar. In Jammu, I would attend coaching classes conducted by a Kashmiri Pandit teacher and eat without any fear on the roadside. I like Jammu weddings – they're loud and grand unlike those in Kashmir," Chasfeeda says.

In July, when the Lieutenant-Governor administration issued a directive asking all the employees associated with the Darbar Move to vacate their flats within three weeks, without citing any reason, Chasfeeda was upset. In Jammu, Maanya felt the same way. "I will miss the Shahs if the Darbar Move stops," she says.

This is not the first time that the Darbar Move has come under a cloud. In January 1987, during his visit to J&K, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was stranded in Kashmir due to heavy snowfall while the capital was in Jammu. "Gandhi asked the Farooq Abdullah government to have a re-look at this practice because officials were unavailable when they were needed in Kashmir during winters. However, an agitation started by the Chamber of Commerce and Industries-Jammu and the Jammu Bar Association forced the government to keep the tradition," says former Director General of Tourism, Saleem Beg, who has continued to visit Jammu every winter since the 1970s, and even after his retirement.

A committee formed in 1987, headed by the then Chief Secretary, Sheikh Ghulam Rasool, submitted a report titled 'Darbar Move: The Reality' to the government, to place before it the pros and cons of the practice. But the report was put on the back burner after the Jammu agitation.

The process of shifting hundreds of files and employees ran smoothly. It al-



Porters carry official files of the Civil Secretariat of Jammu and Kashmir during the Darbar Move from Srinagar to Jammu, in Srinagar, in 2017. (Below): People enjoy cups of pink tea, which Kashmiris prefer, in Jammu's Khati Ka Talab. ■ NISSAR AHMAD



ways connected people, regions and cultures," Beg says.

#### A week-long carnival

The Hindu Dogra rulers from Jammu expanded their boundaries up to Afghanistan in the 19th Century, but most of them preferred to stay in the Valley. It was in 1872 that Maharaja Ranbir Singh began the practice of shifting his government from Jammu to Srinagar in summers, taking the arduous journey along the Banihal Cart Road.

"Dogra rulers popularised the paper-mâché artwork of Kashmir in many Jammu structures and the architectural elements of the Dogra Raj are visible in monuments in Srinagar such as the Sher Garhi Palace. Dogra ruler Pratap Singh was so impressed by Kashmir's calligraphy that he started an annual award for calligraphy artists," says Beg.

The Dogra rulers set up key institutions like J&K's first museum and the Oriental Research Library in Srinagar. "Even the Royal Samadhi is in Srinagar. The Dogra Maharajas preferred to be called as Kashmir's kings and contributed a lot to the Valley's socio-economic development," Beg says.

Zafar Choudhary, a Jammu-based writer and author of the book, *Kashmir Conflict and Muslims of Jammu*, goes to the extent of saying that the Dogra rulers were biased towards Kashmir. "The first power project of J&K was set up in Uri in the Valley so that the King's palace could be well lit in Srinagar. No such project came up in Jammu despite the Chenab river flowing through it. When Maharaja Gulab Singh, the founder of the modern but difficult State of J&K, stepped down for his son, Ranbir Singh, he decided to live the last four years of his life in Kashmir as its Governor," Choudhary says.

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The process of shifting hundreds of

files and records, many loaded in hard drives and computers, took about a week to move to the capital via trucks and buses. A total of 151 government departments used to shift capital twice a year in J&K.

All the departments would first bundle their files and seal them and then stock them in tin trunks. A team of every department would head for the capital where everyone would be shifting. On arrival of the trucks, the teams would identify the trunks and unload them and place the files in the respec-

tive departments," Beg recalls.

According to the officials of the J&K Estates Department, it took 152 trucks and 56 buses in April 2019 to ferry files and employees from Srinagar to Jammu. The August 5, 2019 decision to end J&K's special status, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, disrupted the Darbar Move in 2020 and 2021.

According to official figures, 10,112 employees had moved to Jammu, including 1,179 gazetted officers, 7,110 non-gazetted employees and 1,823 Class IV employees, in April 2019. "While the loading and unloading of files cost ₹45.41 lakh, the carriage cost ₹116.55 lakh. The Darbar Move cost about ₹1,636.04 lakh, besides the additional expenditure of ₹1,213.44 lakh as special allowance to the employees," an official of the Estates Department says, on the condition of anonymity.

The Darbar Move, which took place twice a year – in October/November to Jammu and in April/May to Srinagar – would take two weeks of working days. From the Raj Bhavan to the Chief Minister's Secretariat to the Chief Justice's office, the shifting of the capital was like a week-long carnival. It cost around ₹198 crore in 2019 to keep the tradition alive, officials say.

According to the Estates Department, 151 private houses, 125 J&K Tourism Department Corporation structures and 1,457 hotels were booked for shifting employees to Kashmir, while 69 private houses, 253 J&K Tourism Department Corporation structures and 2,387 hotels were booked in Jammu. Arranging for accommodation cost the exchequer ₹4,161 lakh in Srinagar and ₹2,053.99 lakh in Jammu in 2019.

#### Under the scanner of the court

It was this "expenditure, wastage of time and the labour" that caught the attention of the J&K High Court in May 2020 while it was hearing a petition on the Darbar Move and the ongoing pandemic. A Division Bench of the court comprising then Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Rajnesh Oswal directed the Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Go-

vernment of India, and the Chief Secretary of J&K "to examine the issues raised by the court".

Monika Kohli, amicus curiae, argued against the Darbar Move. "Jammu and Srinagar are well connected by air, road and rail service. The distance of about 300 km is covered in half an hour by flight. It is clearly logical that the consideration of extreme weather in support of the Darbar Move does not hold weight today," she said.

A battery of lawyers also questioned the security of records that were being ferried from one place to another. "Sensitive documents and old archives cannot tolerate exposure of any kind. Such documents may be on matters of security of the country as well as of the Union Territory. This security ought not be compromised for any reason whatsoever," Kohli said.

Chief Justice Mittal, who was impressed by the arguments, called for rationalisation of the tradition. "The amount of money, resources and time which could be saved could be utilised towards the welfare and development of the Union Territory, which has otherwise witnessed much turmoil. The financial savings and resources could be utilised for contributing towards the protection and propagation of its inherent culture and heritage of the communities," she observed.

**Beyond an emotional bond**  
The Darbar Move is not just an emotional bond between Kashmir and Jammu. Hundreds of students leave turmoil-hit Kashmir Valley to go to Jammu to seek admission into educational institutes and coaching centres. Retailers in Jammu procure special stocks for the 10,000 employees and their families and friends who mill around Jammu for six months.

Naresh Katoch, sales manager of the famous sweet shop, Pahalwan Di Hatti, at Jammu's Wave Mall, says his shop has traditionally attracted buyers from Kashmir during winters. "Sales would see a jump when Kashmiris would stay in Jammu. Kashmiris have a special pre-

ference for Sund Panjeeri, Kala Kand, Chana Murgi and chocolate bars and would take huge stocks back to Srinagar, where we don't have an outlet," Katoch says.

Similarly, Jammu's Khati Ka Talab area has become a hub of pink tea sellers. "Kashmiris prefer pink tea or *noon chai* (salty tea) and special morning bread. From just two to three shops in the 1980s, there are over a dozen shops serving the tea," says Niyaz Ahmad, a shopkeeper who shifted from Ramban area to Khati Ka Talab in the 1980s and managed to set up a buzzing tea business.

"The Darbar Move, if it was a practice in the West, would have been an annual festival and would probably have everyone participating, even outsiders; it would be used to showcase the uniqueness of the region. But here it's mired in politics and confusion. The fact remains that there is no viable alternative to the practice so far. Can J&K afford an administrative capital somewhere between Jammu and Srinagar," Choudhary asks.

He says many leading retail shops in Jammu have stopped buying fresh stocks now that the pandemic has disrupted the practice. "Shopkeepers would procure special stocks in September for the Kashmiris who would travel and stay here for six months," he says.

Arun Gupta, who heads the Chamber of Commerce-Jammu, says the government will soon provide a clarification about the move. "The tradition is not merely about shifting of files but a living example of brotherhood. We will oppose any move to end it. Shifting may cost the exchequer ₹200 crore but the fact remains that the people of Kashmir spend thousands of crores here and vice versa. It's the job of the government to maintain brotherhood in J&K," he says.

#### Politics over the Darbar Move

Three Jammu-based political parties – the Bharatiya Janata Party, the J&K National Panthers Party, and Ikkjutt Jammu – have welcomed the move to abandon the practice. They see this as an end to Kashmir's domination over the Civil Secretariat, the seat of governance in J&K. Kashmir-based parties have opposed the move.

Choudhary says there were more Kashmiri employees than Jammu ones in the Secretariat in the 1950s and 1960s. "That gave birth to the notion that there was a bias against Jammu," he says.

The practice resulted in the region becoming a melting pot of cultures. Marriages took place between people from different regions: Muslims from the Kashmir Valley, the Chenab Valley and the Pir Panjal Valley, otherwise separated by mountains. It resulted in new cross-cultural Muslim colonies coming up in the surroundings of Jammu city.

"Jammu has seen a new cultural landscape with cross-cultural marriages. New colonies have come up. If the Darbar Move stops, people from the Che-

nab Valley and the Pir Panjal Valley will feel like a part of them is not there," Choudhary says.

However, senior BJP leaders like Kavinder Gupta termed the end of the Darbar Move akin to the August 5, 2019 move, which took away the special constitutional position of J&K.

"We welcome it. The first priority is governance. There are e-offices in place now. It will not impact cultural interaction. Who has time to interact in this era of Internet and social media? The only issue is that the Jammu Civil Secretariat requires equal recruitment: about 70% of the recruits in the Secretariat are from Kashmir. In fact, most of the higher posts are occupied by the people of Kashmir," Ikkjutt Jammu president Ankur Sharma said.

More than resolving the issue, the Lieutenant-Governor administration has ushered in new challenges for itself. Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader M.Y. Tarigami has asked the government to explain where the Chief Secretary, the Director General of Police, and the administrative secretaries will function from. "If people have to meet any officer, where will they meet him or her? Where will the Assembly function from? Where will the Raj Bhavan be? There is no clarity on this issue," Tarigami said.

Many political analysts fear that the move will drive the wedge between the Kashmir and Jammu regions deeper, which could eventually result in their separation, the way Ladakh was carved out as a separate Union Territory on August 5, 2019. Gul Wani, head of the Department of Political Science at Kashmir University, is wary of the move. "On the face of it, it seems like a step towards good governance. But the fact remains that people from Kashmir see Jammu as a safe location to settle down and buy property. Most prefer to spend their earnings there. The old and ailing population, who cannot live in severe winters in Jammu, prefer the warm weather in Jammu. In contrast, the people from Jammu are not able to settle down in Kashmir. The whole move has a conspiracy angle to it. In Kashmir, conspiracies are proven true with time," he says.

Meanwhile, hundreds of files of the 97 departments, which include 47 Secretariat-based departments, have been digitised so far. The J&K e-office project has scanned and digitised around two crore pages from 3.50 lakh files, in a bid to end the practice of shifting the capital. "The e-office is one of the reformative steps taken to put an end to the Darbar Move in J&K, thus saving crores of rupees spent on transporting files in hundreds of trucks," Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha said earlier this month.

In Srinagar's Hyderpora, Chasfeeda is singing a lullaby to her 18-month-old daughter, Madliha. "I am not sure now if the relationship between the Shahs and the Sethis will last through the next generation," she rues, pointing towards the baby.



## FROM PAGE ONE

## Terrain, facilities in J&amp;K to reflect in delimitation

A draft report will be prepared, wherein the suggestions of the associate members will also be taken into account. Thereafter, it will be in the public domain for a consensus. Only after the fresh comments, the final draft will be prepared. Opportunity will be given to people at large to take into account all the views," he stated.

Referring to the Peoples Democratic Party's accusations that the panel's decisions were pre-planned, Mr. Chandra said, "If it was so, we would not have held such broad-based consultations. I would suggest that such apprehensions should be shunned now. The idea of coming to J&K and visit-

ing Srinagar, Pahalgam, Kishtwar and Jammu was to get peoples perspectives. People from far-off areas were able to share their difficulties. All said they were happy with the process."

The delimitation of 1995 was based on the 1981 Census and took into account 14 districts only. "J&K has 20 districts now. There are overlapping of districts as well as tehsils. In 12 districts, constituency boundaries are extended beyond the districts' limits," he added.

Most of J&K's political parties, during the meetings with the panel, have stressed on immediate restoration of statehood after the new constituencies are delineated by the panel.

## Cooperation Ministry will usurp States' rights: Oppn.

On Thursday, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury alleged that the move was taken with an eye on the cash reserves of the cooperative banks.

Dhananjay Mahadik, a former member of the Lok Sabha who won on an NCP ticket and currently with the BJP, welcomed the move as an important part in rural development. Mr. Mahadik, who was associated with sugar and milk cooperatives in Maharashtra, said that "whatever development has taken place in rural areas in Maharashtra owes a lot to the rise of cooperatives in the State." He said, "There is a limit to what private enter-

prise can do when it comes to rural development and Prime Minister Modi understands that. Ministry of Cooperation will require an Act of Parliament to be notified, as cooperatives in Maharashtra are under a State Act of 1960, but it will be very beneficial if the cooperative movement spreads across the country."

Senior BJP leaders said that a growing grass roots cooperative sector, facilitated by the Central government, would uproot some "political monopolies and old shibboleths".

"And why shouldn't that be so?" asked one general secretary of the BJP.

## Privacy policy on hold till law is framed: WhatsApp

The court was hearing the appeals of Facebook and its firm WhatsApp against the single judge order refusing to stop the Competition Commission of India's (CCI) order directing a probe into WhatsApp's new privacy policy.

Last month, an application was moved by WhatsApp for an interim stay on the probe.

Mr. Salve argued that since the genesis of the probe – the privacy policy – has been stalled for now, the inquiry into the same by the CCI had become academic.

He also urged the court to grant WhatsApp time till the end of July to respond to the questionnaire sent by the CCI in relation to the inquiry.

Senior Advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Face-

book, submitted that the CCI was jumping the gun by initiating a probe into the privacy policy when a challenge to the same was pending before two higher courts. Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi, appearing for CCI, said that as long as the privacy policy existed, its implications would continue to persist.

He added that the matter before the CCI was only at the stage of inquiry and "nothing is going to happen even if steps are taken".

Advocate Gurkaran Singh submitted before the court that his client Tapasi Kohli sought to intervene in the appeals on account of being the informant before CCI.

The court adjourned the matter till July 30 after it recorded that the CCI's affidavit was not on record.

## India concerned by events in Afghanistan'

Mr. Jaishankar's visit to Moscow coincided with an interaction between Zamir Karbulov, Special Envoy of the Russian President for Afghanistan, and a Taliban delegation, led by Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar.

The Taliban delegation promised not to allow "any one to use the soil of Afghanistan against any one country, nor will tolerate intervention of others," said Suhail Shaheen, Taliban's spokesman for international media (English). He also assured that the Taliban "are not going to target diplomats, embassies and consulates, NGOs and their staff."

The assurance of safety for the diplomatic missions and staff is important for India which has been closely monitoring the security situation in Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif housing Indian missions.

Mr. Lavrov emphasised the need for a "political solution" and said the world wants to see the agreement between the United States and Taliban implemented but cautioned that the ongoing

clashes between Taliban and Afghan security forces may "spill over to the allied countries".

The Afghan situation will also come up for further consultation at Dushanbe where the ministerial meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will take place next week. The issue will come up also at Tashkent which will host a conference of Central and Southern Asia. "We hope all the participants (at Dushanbe and Tashkent) will send a strong message to all the people of Afghanistan to start negotiating for real," said Mr. Lavrov.

In a symbolic move, Mr. Jaishankar left for Georgia after his interactions in Moscow. In Georgian capital Tbilisi, he is the first Indian External Affairs Minister to visit since the country attained freedom from Soviet control in 1991.

His interaction with Georgian Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani is likely to be watched by Moscow which continues to have tense bilateral ties with Tbilisi.

## Violence erupts ahead of block-level polls in U.P.

A BDC member's relative was killed and a woman SP candidate roughed up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BAHRAICH/LAKHIMPUR KHERI

Twenty-four incidents of crime including violence, stone-pelting, rioting and scuffles were reported in 22 districts of Uttar Pradesh during the nomination for the block pramukh elections, said ADG Law and Order Prashant Kumar. Sixteen FIRs were lodged and 25 persons arrested.

They tried to abduct her to get her vote in the polls scheduled for July 10, local residents alleged. When Yadurai Devi's brother-in-law Mayaram, 60, resisted, he was hit with the butt of a gun and died on the spot, police said.

## FIR registered

Superintendent of Police Sujata Singh said an FIR has been registered against 10 people, including Sudhir Yagyasaini and the gunman deployed for the security of his wife Sarita. Police have arrested two of the accused – Ram Bhulawan Shukla and Jitendra Kumar – and teams have been formed to arrest the others involved in the act, she said. Meanwhile, in



**Chaos and confusion:** Vehicles were vandalised during clashes between political groups as candidates for the block-level polls filed their nomination papers in Jaunpur, U.P. ■ ANI

Kaushambi's Sirathu block, police raided the residence of an independent candidate, finding 18 BDC members present there.

They were taken to the Sai-ni police station and later released after the intervention of BJP MLA Shital Prasad Patel. Circle Officer Yogendra Krishan Narain said he had got information that independent candidate Dileep Patel had held 18 BDC members hostage in his house. The BDC members however,

claimed they had gone to Mr. Patel's house willingly.

In Lakhimpur Kheri, Samajwadi Party's district president Ram Pal Yadav and others alleged that their party nominee and her proposer were manhandled by the BJP

leaders and workers. The woman was not allowed to submit the nomination papers, they claimed. In a video of the incident, two men could be briefly seen pulling Anita Yadav by her saree in full view outside the Pasawan block compound. Ms. Yadav was the proposer of the SP candidate Ritu Singh.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav had tweeted a short clip of the incident with the caption: "Satta ke bhookhe, Yogi ke gunde (Hungry for power, Yogi's goons)."

Police later arrested two men – Yash Verma and Brij Kishore – based on Ms. Singh's complaint.

Six policemen, including Mohammadi Circle Officer Abhay Pratap Malla, Pasawan SHO Adarsh Kumar Singh, one inspector and three sub-inspectors posted were suspended for the dereliction of duty.

(With inputs from Omar Rashid in Lucknow)

## IT rules: govt. plea listed for July 16

Court tags petition to one pending before Bench led by Justice Chandrachud

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday listed for July 16 a government petition to transfer the cases challenging the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, from various High Courts to itself.

A Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and Sanjiv Khanna tagged the plea to a pending special leave petition titled 'Justice for Rights Foundation versus Union of India'. Justice Khanwilkar said the case would be listed before an appropriate Bench on July 16. The government petition is likely to come up before a Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud.



**App debate:** There are several petitions in High Courts against the regulatory framework for social media intermediaries. ■ AFP

The 'Justice for Rights Foundation' case, pending before the Justice Chandrachud-led Bench, primarily concerns the regulation of content shown on the over-the-top (OTT) platforms. The Bench has been examining the issue in the backdrop of the new IT Rules. On March 23 last, it stayed all proceed-

ings in High Courts on the issue.

The government has said in the top court that the IT Rules provide a "comprehensive" mechanism to check the content on OTT platforms.

The current transfer petition deals primarily with cases in High Courts challenging

the regulatory framework for social media intermediaries in the Rules. One of them is being heard in the Delhi High Court and concerns Twitter. Recently, the government informed the court that Twitter has failed to comply with the law regulating tech companies rendering their services as 'intermediaries'.

## Ministry's affidavit

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in an affidavit filed before the court, stated that despite three months granted to all Significant Social Media Intermediaries (SSMIs) to comply with the Rules, Twitter failed to fully comply with the same.

## Journalist moves SC against sedition law

'It has a chilling effect on free speech'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Senior journalist Sashi Kumar has moved the Supreme Court saying the sedition law is being applied by the government against journalists, activists, filmmakers and civil society in a "politicised fashion".

Mr. Kumar, represented by advocates Kaleswaram Raj, Nishe Rajen Shonker and Thulasi K. Raj, cited the cases of climate activist Disha Ravi, filmmaker Aisha Sultana and journalists Vinod Dua and Siddique Kapani in this regard.

"There has been a dramatic jump in charging a person with the offence of sedition since 2016. In 2019, 93 cases were on the ground of sedition as compared to the 35 cases that were filed in 2016. The same constitutes a 165% increase. Of these 93 cases, charge sheets were filed in a mere 17% of cases and even worse, the conviction rate was an abysmally low 3.3%," the application said.

The top court has recently said it would examine the use of the sedition provision (Section 124A) of the Indian Penal Code. Mr. Kumar has sought permission to intervene in the case before the court. He said the provision has a chilling effect on the right to free speech.

## Shatabdi rakes to be standby for Vande Bharat trains



**Key routes:** Only two rakes of Vande Bharat Express trains operate now. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

They will be deployed in case of any exigency

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

The Railway Ministry has decided to deploy Shatabdi Express rakes to run as Vande Bharat Express in the event of the latter suffering a breakdown or unusual late running.

Two rakes of Train18 model, India's first semi-high-speed train, rolled out by the Integral Coach Factory here were later flagged off as Vande Bharat Express on the New Delhi-Varanasi and New Delhi-Katra sectors. After the self-propelled trains emerged a tremendous success in terms of safety, ride quality and operational efficiency, Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi announced that more Vande Bharat trains would be operated across the country. However, there has been considerable delay in manufacturing the rakes.

## No flexi fare

With just two rakes operating on the two important routes, the Railway Board has approved a proposal to utilise Shatabdi Express

rakes in case of any breakdown or unusual delay of Vande Bharat Expresses.

As a special case, the class-wise normal basic fare for Shatabdi Express would be charged and the difference in fare paid in excess by passengers would be refunded. Though the Shatabdi rake would run in the name of Vande Bharat Express the policy of flexi fare. While the ICF would roll out

the maximum of 24 rakes, the MCF and the RCF would deliver 10 each.

The first two prototype rakes are expected by December 2022 and series production of about six rakes per quarter would commence in mid 2023.

"Tejas Express rakes were run to substitute Vande Bharat Express when situations arose. Now it has been decided to deploy Shatabdi Express rakes. Coaches of these rakes can't be attached to Vande Bharat trainset since they are mechanically and electrically incompatible," a senior railway official said.

In a note on Environment Conservation published early this week, the Railways described Vande Bharat as "environment-friendly" as it produced less pollution.

## Getting the wind up over the weather



**Hot take:** There should be one authoritative source for forecasts on extreme events, the panel said. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

Parliamentary panel for synergy between IMD and private players

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
NEW DELHI

There is a need for better synergy between the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and private forecasters to avoid confusion, especially during extreme climate events like cyclones or flash floods, the Standing Committee on Science said in a meeting on Friday.

The Standing Committee was deliberating on the subject of "Update on Monsoon Situation in the Country".

Chairman of the Committee and senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, according to the sources, said that while the entry of private players was inevitable, there must be one authoritative source of forecasts. "How that needs to be done must be worked out," one of

the members said.

Currently, there are three private players in India – Skymet (India), Earth Networks and IBM Weather. Both Skymet and IBM Weather were called for the meeting. While Skymet officials participated, IBM's representatives could not participate owing to pandemic-induced travel restrictions.

In recent years, the IMD and Skymet have often made differing predictions on the monsoon. In June 2021, the Kerala government, dissatisfied with the IMD's perfor-

mance, hired Skymet Private Limited, Earth Networks and the IBM Weather Company – to use "ensemble predictions to improve extreme weather alert services in the State".

## I-T Dept. finds undeclared income of ₹300 crore

NEW DELHI  
The Income-Tax Department has conducted searches against a Hyderabad-based group into real estate, construction, waste management and infrastructure, leading to the detection of unaccounted income to the tune of ₹300 crore. "The search operation led to detection of artificial loss of about ₹1,200 crore, which is to be taxed in the hands of the respective assessee," the department said in a statement. The group's waste management business is spread across India, while its real estate activities are in Hyderabad.

The members also expressed that, year after year, the IMD assesses the monsoon to be normal though the actual experience is different. Statistically, the members said, the monsoon may be normal in terms of the average rainfall, but most certainly the number of rainfall days had decreased. There have also been far more flash floods in recent times than ever before, the members pointed out. "What is perplexing is that this has not been captured in the forecast adequately," another member said.

The committee also discussed the current monsoon forecast, deficit regions and States, urban heat islands, distribution of weather stations across districts, and matching meteorological sub-divisions with agro-climatic zones.

CM YK

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# Judges should not act like emperors, says SC

'Don't cross the line and summon officials unnecessarily'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court said on Friday that judges should not behave like "emperors" and summon government officials "at the drop of a hat".

The apex court said there would be a "reaction" if judges cross the line of separation of powers between the judiciary and the executive to call officers to court "unnecessarily". The apex court prescribed modesty and humility.

#### 'Drop of a hat'

"A practice has developed in certain High Courts to call officers at the drop of a hat and to exert direct or indirect pressure. The line of separation of powers between judiciary and executive is sought to be crossed by summoning the officers and, in a way, pressurising them to pass an order as per the whims and fancies of the court," a Bench of Justices S.K. Kaul and Hemant Gupta observed in a judgment pronounced on Friday.

Justice Gupta, who auth-



called to court. Respect to the court had to be commanded and not demanded and the same was not enhanced by calling public officers, Justice Gupta noted.

At times, officials had to travel great distances and wait for hours in court. His official work was delayed, creating an extra burden on the officer

#### 'Power of the pen'

"Summoning of the officer is against the public interest... Courts have the power of the pen, which is more effective than the presence of an officer in Court. If any particular issue arises for consideration before the Court, and the advocate representing the State is not able to answer, it is advised to write such doubt in the order and give time to the State or its officers to respond," Justice Gupta observed in the verdict.

The observations were part of the judgment in an appeal against an Allahabad High Court decision. The High Court had summoned the Secretary, Medical Health.

Judges must know their limits. The dignity and majesty of the court was not enhanced when an officer was

would depend upon the conclusion of this investigation, and the subsequent steps taken by the prosecution further to it," the order by a Bench of Justice I.P. Mukerji and Justice Aniruddha Roy said.

The prime accused in the case, Debanjan Deb, along with his collaborators had been "able to deceive a large section of innocent

people, lure them to take vaccination from him at a serious risk to their lives", the court observed. The inquiry "does not show that there is any deficiency... that should compel the court to order investigation by the CBI".

The court order came in response to several writ petitions filed over the past few days.

A four-year-old report said the number of yaks across the country declined by almost 24.7% between 2012 and 2019.

The total yak population in India is about 58,000. The Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir have some 26,000, followed by 24,000 in Arunachal Pradesh, 5,000 in Sikkim, 2,000 in Himachal Pradesh and about 1,000 in West

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# Pregnant women should take vaccine for safety of self, child'

COVID-19 second wave is not over yet, says V.K. Paul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Pregnant women should take the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible as we now know that the virus brings along some serious complications, including pre-term delivery, V.K. Paul, NITI Aayog (Member), Health, said on Friday.

Addressing a Health Ministry press conference, Dr. Paul said it was now established that a COVID-19 infection during pregnancy might result in rapid deterioration of the mother's health and could also affect the foetus.

"Pregnant women who develop COVID-19 are more likely to require intensive



**Pregnant women who develop COVID-19 are more likely to require intensive care than their non-pregnant counterparts**

V.K. PAUL, NITI AAYOG (MEMBER), HEALTH

care than their non-pregnant counterparts. Apart from the mother, there is risk to the child in case she contracts the infection. Pregnant women should get vaccinated.

It is very important and now the Ministry has released guidelines for the same," said Dr. Paul.

#### NTAGI recommendations

On July 2, the Health Ministry had announced inclusion of pregnant women in the ongoing vaccination drive after it accepted the recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Group

if we don't follow norms," he said.

Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry, said 80% of the new cases were from 90 districts, with maximum cases coming from districts in Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

#### From two States

"Also, more than half of the new cases are now coming from two States – Maharashtra and Kerala. This is a matter of concern. We cannot lower our guard. A new risk is being seen at tourist spots where COVID-appropriate behaviour is not being followed," he said.

Mr. Agarwal said the Health Ministry had now dispatched a six-member Central team to Kerala where Zika cases had been reported.

## 2 cases of COVID Kappa variant found in U.P.

Delta Plus variant found in 107 samples

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LUCKNOW

Two cases of the Kappa variant of COVID-19 have been detected in Uttar Pradesh, according to an official statement issued on Friday.

Genome sequencing of 109 samples was done at the King George's Medical College here in the past few days.

#### Review meeting

The Delta Plus variant of COVID-19 was found in 107 samples, while the Kappa variant was found in two samples, a statement issued after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's routine review meeting said.

"Both the variants are not

new for the State. The facility of genome sequencing is being increased," the statement added.

#### Positivity rate

At present, the daily positivity rate in the State is 0.04%.

When asked about the Kappa variant, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad said cases of this variant were also found earlier in the State.

"There is nothing to worry about. This is a variant of coronavirus and its treatment is possible," he said.

When asked in which districts this variant was found, Mr. Prasad did not divulge details and said it would create fear among people.

Punjab to lift night curfew from July 12

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

With Punjab's COVID-19 Test Positivity Rate (TPR) sliding to 0.4%, Chief Minister Captain (Retd.) Amarinder Singh on Friday ordered the lifting of the weekend and the night curfew from July 12.

He said gatherings of 100 persons indoors and 200 outdoors would be allowed. Bars, cinema halls, restaurants, spas, swimming pools, gyms, malls, sports complexes, museums and zoos can open, but staff and visitors must have taken at least one dose of the vaccine.

## Man dies after being branded with hot iron rod

He was branded in bid to cure him of tuberculosis



The victim's family members had been branding him ever since he fell ill.

since he fell ill. "Though Upper Kainsari village is only 15 km from Keonjhar district headquarter town, branding appears to be the first line of treatment for any disease in this tribal-dominated village," said Sanjib Sahoo, an activist working in the locali-

ty. Mr. Sahoo said nine persons, mostly aged below 45, had died of tuberculosis in the past 18 months in the village. Upper Kainsari village is situated close to the Gandomard iron ore mine, which is operated by the State-run Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). Iron ore mining and its transportation have had an adverse effect on the health of the tribal population. Locals have long been protesting against mining.

"Very few men reach the age of 50 in this village. Most men complain of constant cough and chest pain. Since all the villagers are tribals and do not have robust income sources, they cannot afford medical care," said

Sanjay Dehury, a resident of Nitigotha village, adjacent to Upper Kainsari.

Mohan Charan Majhi, local MLA and BJP chief whip in the State Assembly, acknowledged the health crisis prevailing around the iron ore mine. "I had written to the State Health Minister about people being affected by tuberculosis and bronchitis. A team had visited the village. Some of them were admitted to the Keonjhar district headquarter hospital. However, they were discharged after two or three days," he said.

Mr. Majhi said 15 persons in a few villages near the OMC's mine had died in the last 18 months with similar symptoms.

- 16 Authorise measure by earl for one (7)  
19 Fashionable to taste one drink primarily bland (7)  
21 Don't pay attention to part of design or execution (6)  
23 Mesh left in rocket damaged (9)  
25 Society with argument against adopting one heir (5)  
26 Car mat thrown on runway (6)  
27 Program – one that may be called Alpha, perhaps (8)  
28 Live without bishop next to river going left (6)  
29 Get back temporary relief when president finally usurps power (8)

#### ■ DOWN

- 1 Reasonable pattern of behaviour by a liberal (6)  
2 They kill two animals at home with tip of sword (9)  
3 Code about lacking compassion (5)  
4 Paint with second drink (7)  
6 Gent with brown headgear moving into the City (9)  
7 Festival ultimately grand and definitely interesting for starters (5)  
8 Generate new style for young adult (8)  
11 Available at no cost (4)  
15 Advantage of superior agency (5,4)  
17 Fashionable period, going forward had to stop (9)  
18 Ominous batting, caught by sibling (8)  
20 Let go of container on the way up – about right (4)  
21 At sea, smoker is mostly annoying (7)  
22 Riemann exemplary contributing to addition (6)  
24 Rocky hill near America is shaped like a doughnut (5)  
25 Small fruit – pointed one (5)

#### ■ ACROSS

1 Narrowly avoided collision beside a lady (4,4)

5 A rise in quantity (6)

9 Hold back and relax with shower (8)

10 Attract engineer at a particular stage in life (6)

12 Man perhaps following a narrow passage (5)

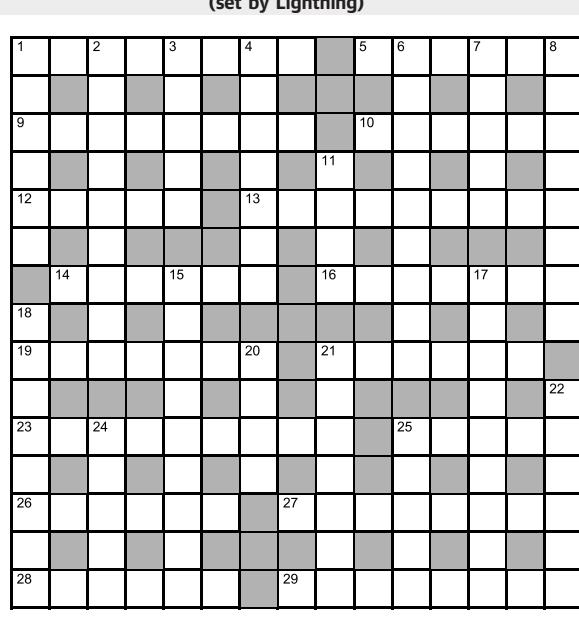
13 Saint missing a space trip arranged for each person (3,6)

14 Small hand of a timekeeper (6)

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



## TH CROSSWORD + 13296 (set by Lightning)



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## PM reviews oxygen availability

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of oxygen augmentation and availability across the country.

Officials briefed PM about the progress on installation of PSA [pressure swing adsorption] oxygen plants across the country. More than 1,500 PSA oxygen plants are coming up across the nation," said a Union government release.



A vial of Covaxin. So far, eight vaccines have got an EUL from the WHO.

WHO. I understand that Bharat Biotech is in this process and I think a decision on their case is likely in the next four to six weeks," said Dr. Swaminathan.

The EUL assesses the quality, safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines as well as risk management plans and programmatic suitability

## WHO likely to decide on Covaxin nod in 4-6 weeks

Pre-qualification a must to supply vaccines to global facilities

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization (WHO) is likely to take a decision on including Bharat Biotech's Covaxin in its list of vaccines approved for Emergency Use within four to six weeks, Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist, WHO, said at a webinar organised by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

A WHO pre-qualification, or Emergency Use Listing (EUL), is necessary for a vaccine company to supply vaccines to global facilities such as COVAX or international procurement. So far, eight vaccines have got an EUL from the WHO. "It is mandatory to supply a complete dossier listing safety, efficacy and manufacturing conditions of the vaccine to the

WHO. I understand that Bharat Biotech is in this process and I think a decision on their case is likely in the next four to six weeks," said Dr. Swaminathan.

Dr. Swaminathan said it was "frustrating" that countries were contemplating and testing booster doses for themselves when large parts of the world hadn't yet got vaccinated.

The target was to have at least 10% of the world fully vaccinated by September and 40% by December.

## 'Meghalaya spent ₹240 cr. in tackling second wave'

State spent ₹400 cr. last year: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Friday said his government has incurred an expenditure of ₹240 crore in improving the State's health infrastructure and procuring necessary equipment during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Expressing regret over the loss of lives due to COVID-19, the CM urged everyone to get vaccinated.

"Meghalaya has spent ₹240 crore, mostly for improving infrastructure and procurement of equipment such as oxygen cylinders and PPEs, as it fought the second wave of the pandemic. This is apart from the ₹6.8

crore that the State had received from the Centre for creating prefabricated structures amid the crisis," the Chief Minister said.

Mr. Sangma said two cryogenic plants, one at Jengial in the Garo Hills and the other in the State capital, are at an "advanced stage of completion".

Expressing regret over the loss of lives due to COVID-19, the CM urged everyone to get vaccinated.

"Of the 749 people who died due to COVID-19 in the past 15 months, 691 had not taken vaccine, not even one dose. Clearly, the data indicate that vaccination is necessary to save lives," he said.

## Bhima Koregaon probe panel likely to resume work in Aug.

Two-member panel may record Sharad Pawar's statement

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

After a long hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the two-member commission appointed by the Maharashtra government to probe the causes of the 2018 Bhima-Koregaon clashes is likely to resume work next month. It may record the statement of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar and other senior officials, said sources on Friday.

Commission lawyer Ashish Satpute said the recording of witnesses' statements was likely to commence again from August 2 and that Mr. Pawar's statement would be recorded as well.

In February last year, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government had granted the commission its fifth extension.

The panel, comprising former Kolkata High Court Chief Justice Justice J.N. Patel and former Chief Secretary Sumit Mullick, was set up by the erstwhile Devendra Fadnavis government in February 2018 to probe the sequence of events leading up

to the New Year's Day violence in Bhima Koregaon and the adjoining villages that left one person dead.

The commission was initially given four months to submit a report, but its tenure was extended repeatedly in order to allow it to complete the investigation.

Hearings of senior officers and Mr. Pawar were scheduled between March 30 and April 4, 2020. However, the COVID-19 outbreak compelled the commission to defer all hearings until further notice.

## SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13295

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## Instapick

**Damien Hirst:** In a departure from his provocative art – think bisected cows in tanks of formaldehyde – Damien Hirst is going floral, exhibiting 30 paintings (out of 107) of his Cherry Blossom series. The canvases with its psychedelic palette were created with “whatever I had in hand”, as the British artist told *The Guardian* recently. After being delayed twice because of COVID restrictions, the show opens at Fondation Cartier in Paris.



## Talking Point

**The Flemish Scrollers:** Dutch digital artist Dries Depoorter's new installation is using AI bots and facial recognition to monitor livestreams and call out Belgian politicians who are distracted by their phones while Parliament is in session. Once caught, the clip is uploaded on Instagram @TheFlemishScrollers, and Twitter @FlemishScroller. When are the bots getting here?

## YARN IT!

It's not about who wins, but who is watching

# Daadislova's Sports Illustrated

JANE DE SUZA

You young people are always blaming your jelly bellies on the lockdown. Look at me, I'm 82 (of course, like many pretty women, I lie about my age) and I've never been so sporty – that too, in the most competitive sports. I've been fitness-obsessed these last few

weeks – toned abs and biceps and triceps! Every single day, morning and evening. I am so proud of myself. Come over for coffee, and when the grandkids are out of the room, I can show you the really impressive ones. You can admire them too.

Now, I'm learning tennis. It started with French Open, then

Wimbledon. I've been practising the moves to perfection. Look, I move my thumb for Men's Singles and index finger for Ladies' and two last fingers bring on Doubles. If the grandkids whine for the remote, I sit on it and giggle when they hunt around. Don't ask me the players' names, my memory isn't what it used to be, and so many lovias and movas, cics and pacas ('Daadiji, stop talking about six packs,' my grandkids scold, silly things!) – Slovakia, Slovenia, Melania... all so super fit! See, I

recorded the highest jumps. Should I replay them in slow motion? And that Djoker-boy is always hugging the grass, God bless him. What about these stunning 19-year-olds? My grandkids should be inspired. All they do is eat chips and watch NFL because they want to do college in America. They are doing research on the culture, very good, very good.

Cricket, of course, I've grown up with and know so well that I only wake up when someone shouts 'Wicket!' or 'Wicked!' or maybe even 'Biscuit!' My hearing isn't what it used to be, you know. I don't know why they make these poor cricketers sweat in the scorching sun in long pants. I wrote so many letters to ICC volunteering to design their sportswear. I will go to training sessions to do measuring and fit-outs, I offered. See how these footballers dress? Very well-ventilated! Sometimes they fall and scrape their knees, poor things, I wonder how their mothers watch without crying. I wrote to Euro Cup organisers too, volunteering to give first-aid, when they get thigh muscle and stomach muscle pulls and all.

Anyway, now someone is shouting 'Goal!' or 'Goat!' or 'Foul!' or 'Bowl'? Of *pakodas* I hope, not that zero-calorie kueenowaa – tastes like horse feed! 'Daadiji,' they are complaining, 'we can't replay that jump for the third time, you must try not to fall asleep.'

Where Jane De Suza, the author of *Happily Never After*, talks about the week's quirks, quacks and hacks

## Pick of the week

**Virtual tours, workshops, and other events you just can't miss**



### Shashank's masterclass

### At the French Riviera

### Food for heart and mind

### Under the hammer

### Curious about Eilish?

### The finals update

### Time to Marvel

Shashank Khaitan debuted as a director in 2014, with *Badrinath Ki Dulhania*, incidentally his seventh screenplay. The film was nominated for the Filmfare Award, as was his next, *Badrinath Ki Dulhania*. Now the writer, director, and recently-turned producer at *Dharma Productions*, will discuss the art of filmmaking, his journey to fame, and how he used the discipline he learned in his early years as an athlete in his career, in his 2.5 hour UNLClass. ₹699, on [in.bookmyshow.com](#)

The 74th *Cannes Film Festival* opened last week with a great lineup of movies and a glamorous red carpet. Between spotting Bella Hadid in a vintage Jean Paul Gaultier gown and jury head Spike Lee in a hot-pink Louis Vuitton suit, guests caught Leos Carax's *Annette*, Paul Verhoeven's *Benedetta*, and Eva Husson's *Mothering Sunday*, to name a few. Now all eyes are on who will lift the *Palme d'Or* on Sunday. With 24 films competing, including Wes Anderson's *The French Dispatch*, competition is fierce.

Saga, in Gurugram, has introduced a nine course menu curated by two-time Michelin Star Chef Atul Kochhar. Called the Saga Experience menu, it showcases the cuisines of India that inspired the chef: crispy crab, edamame and quinoa, *bhuna mangsho*, Parsi curry, and more. At Vatika Atrium, Golf Course Road; Sunday lunch and dinner, ₹2,495. Author-journalist Geeta Shree's *Bhoot-Khela* is now available on Storytel. The app features e-books and audiobooks in 12 Indian languages. Rs 299 for a monthly subscription.

Saffronart's annual *Summer Auction* will feature two consecutive sales. *In the Ladies' Enclosure*, a 1938 painting by Amrita Sher-Gil will be the highlight of the live auction at the Mumbai gallery (on July 13), while the online sale (July 13-14) will be led by an enigmatic 1961 abstract work by VS Gaitonde, says CEO Dinesh Vazirani. Meanwhile, if books are more your thing, Prinseps' ongoing *Nationalism Book Auction* offers rare tomes from the 1920s to 1960s. Bidding closes on July 15, on [prinseps.com](#).

American singer-songwriter of 'Ocean Eyes' and 'No Time to Die' fame, is letting fans into her life. *By—Billie Eilish* is a photo-filled book published by Hachette Children's Group. Featuring pictures from her personal album, it will take readers through her childhood, her life on tour, and more. ₹1,599, on [amazon.in](#) and at leading book stores. Sports fans, check out *The 1983 World Cup Opus*, a limited-edition book set with some of the greatest moments of India's cricketing history in its pages. Starting at ₹1.83 lakh, on [opusindia.com](#).

Things are hotting up on the court and the field. As the *Wimbledon 2021 Finals* approach, the defeats are piling up — like 20-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer getting knocked out in the quarter-final and Emma Raducanu leaving the court with "difficulty breathing". As we go to print, Novak Djokovic heads into the semifinals. Over on the continent, at the *Euro Cup*, England has won their first semi-final since the 1966 World Cup, defeating Denmark 2-1, to enter the finals against Italy on Sunday.

Caroline Scheufele on the Venice Film Festival's Palme d'Or, Chopard's new line of High jewellery, and why accessible pieces that encourage micro-splurges will be key



# Red carpets and fawn pendants

LAVANYA MOHAN

The Cannes Film Festival opened its 74th edition earlier this week. The first fully-fledged film festival to be held since the pandemic began, it not only rings in the revival of cinema, but also the red carpet – albeit, a smaller, sober and greener carpet. Leading the green charge is Chopard, the luxury jeweller behind some iconic jewellery pieces, as well as the design of the Palme d'Or award.

"The story began in 1997," says Caroline Scheufele, the artistic director and co-president of Chopard, over email. "During a meeting with Pierre Viot [then president of the



Cannes Festival], he invited me to redesign it for the 50th anniversary." Given her love for cinema, she accepted the "fantastic challenge" and, as she recently shared with *Variety*, took the statue to her office in Geneva. The result: the Palme d'Or as it stands today – a piece of *haute joaillerie* in its own right, featuring the palm leaves motif (that represent the trees that line the famous Boulevard de la Croisette, as well as the Cannes coat-of-arms). The leaves, fashioned out of 118 grams of 18 carat gold, look like they've just been ruffled by a gentle breeze and are cushioned by a rock crystal in the form of an emerald-cut

(Clockwise from left) A Chopard cuff; the pendant with the sleeping fawn, Caroline Scheufele, the Palme d'Or ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

answer. There are millions of people digging up gold, often working in unsafe conditions and unfairly compensated for their work. From that moment, I was determined to embark on a mission to change not only Chopard as a company but also the entire industry," she says.

Today, Chopard sources all of its gold and diamonds through traceable routes and is working to put in place a system that can ensure the ethical mining of coloured gemstones. The theme, says Scheufele, is Paradise "where precious stones are picked like berries, and plants and animals offer their songs and spectacular colours". Seventy-four exquisite pieces come together to form this collection inspired by a lush Garden of Eden, including an elephant brooch encrusted with diamonds flanked by a solid emerald dome; ruby earrings that resemble tropical flowers; and an emerald necklace with a pendant featuring a sleeping fawn fashioned from yellow sapphires.

Post pandemic, brands are

expected to increase the number of collection releases and createlines focussed on accessible pieces to enable "micro-splurges".

## Period-proof your workout

### WELLNESS

With its recent launch in the period activewear space, Adidas has opened up a new market for India that sees few players

NIDHI ADLKHA

Not many know that during adolescence one in four girls drop out of sports owing to their period. When the team at sporting major Adidas learned of this fact two years ago, they decided to venture into the period activewear space. With the Stay In Play period leggings launched in June, the brand joins a list of several others who have been working on performance enhancement apparel for women. While period-proof underwear has dominated the market for a few years – thanks to homegrown brands like SochGreen and Lavos – not much has been spoken about performance activewear. Ahead of the India launch of Adidas' range, we take a look at it and other brands working in the segment.



### Tights @ Adidas, Germany

Speaking of their period-proof line of tights and shorts, Senior Product Manager, Kim Buerger, says the multi-layer pad construction is thin and light-weight with no outer seams. The outer layer of the tights is made from Primegreen, a recycled polyester fabric, and they are meant to be worn with a pad, tampon or cup. "The tights provide the user with an additional layer of protection and security. It is more of a mental barrier which we are trying to break as those who menstruate are usually afraid of leakage while playing or working out," she adds. Later, Adidas will be launching bike shorts, and a plus size range. ₹2,999 for the shorts and ₹4,799 for the tights.

### Running shorts @ Modibodi, Australia

To develop the Australian brand's patented Modifier Technology, founder Kristy Chong's team "conducted close to 1,000 scientific tests to get it right". This technology is now found in the gusset area of their leak-proof underpants and activewear. "Our merino wool [used in absorbent linings] is antibacterial, biodegradable, soft and breathable," says Chong. However, a small percentage of users have shared (on Reddit) that the swimwear's absorbent gusset does get wet after use. Women's range from ₹1,422.

Read the full story on [weekend.thehindu.com](#)



diamond. No two crystals are the same, which means that every trophy is one-of-a-kind. Scheufele adds that each of the pieces is crafted with consciousness. The gold is fair-mined and "five of our Chopard expert artisans devote no less than 40 hours to hand-crafting the festival's most coveted treasure in our Geneva workshop".

Chopard's focus on sourcing ethically-mined gold can be traced back to 2012, when

Scheufele met Livia Firth, the founder of Eco-Age, at the Oscars. "When Livia asked me where our gold came from, my reply was 'from the bank', but that wasn't the expected

result. She said, 'Well, then you're not being conscious'. That's when I realised that there was a problem with the way gold was being sourced. We started looking into it and found out that it was being mined in unsafe conditions and unfairly compensated for their work. From that moment, I was determined to change not only Chopard as a company but also the entire industry," she says.

Today, Chopard sources all of its gold and diamonds through traceable routes and is working to put in place a system that can ensure the ethical mining of coloured gemstones. The theme, says Scheufele, is Paradise "where precious stones are picked like berries, and plants and animals offer their songs and spectacular colours". Seventy-four exquisite pieces come together to form this collection inspired by a lush Garden of Eden, including an elephant brooch encrusted with diamonds flanked by a solid emerald dome; ruby earrings that resemble tropical flowers; and an emerald necklace with a pendant featuring a sleeping fawn fashioned from yellow sapphires.

Post pandemic, brands are

expected to increase the number of collection releases and createlines focussed on accessible pieces to enable "micro-splurges".

CM YK

(Clockwise from below) Embroiderers at the Chanakya School of craft, the gallery at Rodin Museum, Dior's collection against Eva Jospin's installation, and Karishma Swali and Monica Shah



### The feminist runway

Chiuri's design vocabulary has always reflected her feminist beliefs. Think Dior's 2016 'We Should All Be Feminist' T-shirts inspired by Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's political essay. And Eva Jospin is the latest addition to the roster of women artists the Italian designer has worked with.

Among other works of note is Dior's couture show, *The Female Divine*, in January 2020, which saw American feminist artist Judy Chicago collaborating with the Chanakya School of Craft to handcraft 21 life-size panels. Embroidered with questions such as "What if women ruled the world?" and "Would men and women be equal?", the pennants were hung in a womb-like space that also showcased a goddess sculpture.



MANISH MISHRA

Byculla (which provides women from low-income groups with the skills needed to become artisans). Their most recent collab: the Dior Couture Autumn Winter 2021-22 show four days ago.

As guests took their seats in the 40-metre-long gallery in the Musée Rodin's garden in Paris, models showcased a minimal, functional collection that drew inspiration from fairy tales, replete with cinched waists, full skirts, and silk plissé gowns trimmed with feathers. The tactile, textured clothing was offset by French artist Eva Jospin's installation – life-sized, embroidered panels reflecting a rich landscape of forests and waterfalls, on the edge of realism and daydream. But of

equal interest was the fact that the 350 square metres of silk-thread work that frescoed the walls was entirely hand-embroidered by the artisans and students at Chanakya.

**Silk walls and daydreams**  
The French luxury house had requested the atelier to look at the work – envisioned as an altar piece, but with the scale of a real forest – much like an art piece in a museum. "We spent a lot of time to understand Eva's visual language and to transform it into a journey of discovery by the juxtaposition and overlay of multiple layers that have been embroidered, painted, appliquéd or fringed,"

## Dior 2021's Byculla roots



How the luxury brand's recent Autumn Winter 2021-22 show in Paris celebrated fairy tales, French couture, and Indian craftsmanship



says Shah.

The process began earlier this year, in February, by experimenting with different techniques. Over 320 artisans worked on the project for 60 days, and over 1,80,000 hours of embroidery have gone into it. "We've used only handwoven fabrics and raw materials: a basket weave silk for the base, which we backed with an organic canvas to sustain the weight and magnitude of the panels. Both fabrics were processed using vegetable dyes," says Swali, adding that the installation titled *Chambres De Soie* (Silk Room) references both the India-inspired embroidery room at the Palazzo Colonna in Rome, and the 1929 Virginia Woolf man-

esto, *A Room of One's Own*. "Woolfe's manifesto is a compelling read – one that argues for both a literal and figurative space for women writers within a literary tradition dominated by men. The school, dedicated to women from underserved backgrounds, also embodies these values of inclusion, allowing craft knowledge to become a means of expression, freedom and independence," she shares.

### Global nod to Indian craft

Indian culture and crafts have time and again inspired global design houses, but it is not often that brands give due credit. So when Chiuri applauded the artistry of Chanakya at the show, it was a coup. At the show, she said: "By inviting Eva to experiment with the language of sewing, another collective work began in conversation with the Chanakya School. [The project] has customised over 400 colours and used up to 150 different types of stitches, while bringing together a community of women."

Swali shares that being felicitated by "Maria and Dior is a true honour for us. By acknowledging, respecting and protecting the social and environmental sustainability of traditional crafts in India, she and the brand are leading the way for a more meaningful tomorrow".

Post pandemic, the designer duo (who also heads Jade, the bridal and couture brand that works with international brands such as Gucci and Alberta Ferretti), sees the school growing as a centre of excellence for multi-dimensional learning. "Together, we can create a more inclusive tomorrow that consciously preserves communities, craft and our environment," concludes Swali.

The panels will be installed at the Musée Rodin and will be available for viewing.

### FOOD SPOT



RAHUL VERMA

I had my first burger even before I read my first Archie Comic. One of my earlier memories is of a cycled cart stopping by the place where I – and a lot of other hungry young lads – lived. The compartment at the back of the cycle was filled with flaky patties and vegetable burgers – essentially a potato patty between two small soft buns. I preferred the burgers to the patties, which were so flaky that they disintegrated when you touched them. The vendor would place one on a paper plate and squeeze some ketchup on the side. Food couldn't ever get better, I used to think, biting into the bun-and-potato.

Over the years, burgers have gone through a metamorphosis. I think my first classy burgers were at Wenger's restaurant, just above the confectionery, and then, several years later, at Nirula's in Connaught Place. Until some years ago, burgers were simple dishes – two pieces of soft bun holding together a juicy lamb or chicken patty. The buns were often speckled with sesame seeds, the insides were brushed with mayo or sometimes with thousand island sauce. A crisp lettuce leaf and rings of onion added taste and texture.

But that was then. Over the past few years, I have had various kinds of burgers, prepared with imagination and ingredients such as blue cheese, caramelised onions, imported bacon, celery slaw, fried eggs and what have you.

A foodie friend mentioned ordering burgers from a place called Burgerama. I had heard about it, too, but hadn't tried out their fare. It is a delivery chain that serves Delhi-NCR (order at burgerama.in or on Zomato; ₹215 to ₹545). I learnt later that it was the

Burgerama in Delhi-NCR offers more than just a patty in a bun

## Blue cheese in a burger



(Above) The Oink Oink burger; (below) onion rings

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

limp, though, but that could have been because of the weather.

What I really enjoyed was the bacon wrapped lamb burger. I had a large bite from it and thought the bacon had given the lamb a nice kick, and the fried egg and smoked paprika mayo had added to the taste.

The quarter pound patty of the tenderloin burger came with caramelised onion, a cheese blend, lettuce, pickle, and a blue cheese dressing.

Brainchild of three friends and the focus was on cheeseburgers. Ours a meat loving home, so when we looked at the website, the focus was on different kinds of meat. We agreed on a bender lamb burger, bacon double cheese chicken burger, and T-Rex tenderloin burger. The sides consisted of onion rings, French fries, hot wings, and galaxy bombs (Panko-crusted deep fried chocolate).

I liked the sides, especially the crispy onion rings and the crunchy onion rings. The potato fries were a bit

Burgers, clearly, are not what they used to be. For burger lovers, there's a whole new world out there. Blue cheese, anyone?

The writer is a seasoned food critic



VINITA MAKHija

The pandemic and our lifestyle changes have forced people to be waste-conscious. Fashion and its consumption, in particular, are on everyone's radar. One of the reasons why Instagram is filled with thrift and pre-loved stores, rental services are growing en masse, and Indian designer brands such as Pero, Dohdage and Doh Tak Keh are making upcycling *au courant*.

The latest venture in this space is Saritoria, envisioned by fashion entrepreneur Pernia Qureshi (who previously ran the e-commerce website, Pernia's Pop Up Shop), and husband-wife duo Omar Soomro (a marketing and business development manager at a London hedge fund) and Shehnila Soomro. A first-of-its-kind global marketplace to buy and sell pre-loved South Asian luxury designer pieces, the website showcases pieces from designers such as Sabysachi, Anamika Khanna, and Tarun Tahiliani, among others, with sellers logging in from Punjab to Tamil Nadu. The pieces are checked for authenticity and quality by a team of experts (based in Mumbai and London), before being listed for a percentage. There is also a concierge service that offers to take care of everything from cleaning, photo shoots, to listing an account.

Edited excerpts from an interview:

### Saritoria's USP beyond the sustainability tag?

**Qureshi:** No matter how well off the shopper is, everyone enjoys a good deal. Saritoria's USP is one-of-a-kind pieces. For instance, designers Abu-Sandeep used a beautiful mint green colour in one of their previous collections, which is not available in stores anymore. However, we have a *lehenga* from that collection on the site. There are so many events in a year and it doesn't make sense to invest heavily every single time. This way you can build a designer wardrobe in a cost conscious manner.

## Ready for pre-loved couture

Pernia Qureshi's new venture, Saritoria, a global e-store for couture, brings the focus on South Asian design and sustainability



The price points are premium. One would assume your customers can buy new designer wear.

**Shehnila:** The products are offered at significantly discounted prices. We are encouraging our customers to spend the same amount [as they would for a new piece] to invest in luxury pieces that can be re-used and re-sold. Shopping pre-loved lets you access pieces from previous seasons, even vintage items.

### How has the response been so far?

**Shehnila:** The first sale happened within two minutes of the website going live – [an Anamika Khanna outfit] to a customer in Tamil Nadu. We have had orders from countries such as Australia, and requests to list from the US and Canada. [Though] we haven't yet targeted the male customer, we are receiving amazing items across multiple generations for men.

Currently there is only one XXL piece on the website. Are there plans to make it more size-inclusive?

**Shehnila:** We believe in size inclusivity and have quite a number of L and XL pieces. Ultimately, however, the platform is open to anyone in the South Asian community to sell the sizes they own.

Prices between ₹3,000 and ₹60,000, saritoria.com



(Above) Qureshi, (inset) Shehnila, outfits on Saritoria

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



# Biden defends Afghan pullout

'We didn't go to Afghanistan to nation-build'

SIRAM LAKSHMAN

WASHINGTON

With U.S. troops almost completely out of Afghanistan and the Taliban making rapid territorial gains in the country, U.S. President Joe Biden said the U.S. was not in Afghanistan for nation-building purposes and that it was for the Afghans to decide their future. Mr. Biden also said the U.S. military mission would conclude by August 31.

The manner and speed with which the U.S. military is pulling out after a 20-year presence in the country has been criticised, with looming concerns about whether the current Afghan government can withstand the Taliban and the consequences for the peace, security, and the future of women and girls.

On Thursday, Mr. Biden said the U.S. had achieved what it had intended to do in Afghanistan, including preventing it from becoming a base from which the U.S. could be attacked.

"We did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build. And it's the right and the responsibility of Afghan people alone to decide their future, and how they want to run their country," he said, speaking on the troop drawdown from the East Room of



**Firm stand:** Joe Biden speaking about the Afghanistan situation at the White House on Thursday. ■ AFP

the White House. On the August 31 deadline, Mr. Biden said, "Speed is safety".

"There was never any doubt that our military performed this task efficiently and with the highest level of professionalism," he said.

Yet, American troops left Bagram Airfield last week – their largest base in Afghanistan – in the dead of night, without informing the Afghans, according to the base's new commander.

The place was looted before Afghan troops could take over.

"Let me ask those who want us to stay: How many more?" Mr. Biden said on Thursday. "How many thousands more American daughters and sons are you willing to risk?"

To those who had worked with the U.S. side in Afghanistan, such as drivers and translators and their families, Mr. Biden said, "There is a home for you in the United States, if you so choose. And we will stand with you, just as you stood with us."

"That is not true. They did not reach that conclusion," he said. The American press carried reports last month, citing unnamed sources, that the U.S. intelligence community had determined that the Afghan government could fall within six months of U.S. troop retrenchment.

When asked what level of confidence the intelligence community has that the Afghan government would not collapse, Mr. Biden said that while the Afghan leadership and government have the capacity, the forces and the equipment to sustain the government in place, whether they could generate the cohesion to continue was in question.

"The question is: will they do it? I want to make clear what I made clear to [Afghan President Ashraf] Ghani, that we are not going to walk away and not sustain their ability to maintain that force. We are. We're gonna also work to make sure we help them in terms of everything from food necessities and other things in the region," Mr. Biden said, adding that his own conclusion was that peace could be achieved only if the Afghan government finds a *modus vivendi* with the Taliban.

"And the likelihood there's going to be one unified government in Afghanistan controlling the whole country is highly unlikely," he said.

## 'Taliban now control 85% of Afghanistan'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL

The Taliban claimed on Friday to be in control of 85% of Afghanistan after seizing key border crossings with Iran and Turkmenistan following a sweeping offensive launched after the U.S. troops' exit.

Hours after U.S. President Joe Biden issued a staunch defence of the U.S. withdrawal, the Taliban said its fighters had seized two border crossings in western Afghanistan, completing an arc of territory from the Iranian border to the frontier with China. Afghanistan's Interior Ministry said efforts were under way to dislodge the insurgents from their positions.



**Tragic incident:** Rescue workers at the factory in Rupganj area outside Dhaka on Friday. ■ REUTERS

## Bangladesh factory fire leaves at least 52 dead

Many people were trapped inside

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DHAKA

A fire engulfed a food and beverage factory outside Bangladesh's capital, killing at least 52 people, many of whom were trapped inside by an illegally locked door, officials said on Friday.

The blaze began on Thursday night at the five-storey Hashem Foods Ltd. factory, in Rupganj, just outside Dhaka, sending huge clouds of black smoke billowing into the sky.

Police initially gave a toll of three dead, but then discovered piles of bodies on Friday afternoon after the fire was extinguished.

So far, 52 bodies have been recovered, but the top two floors of the factory have yet to be searched, said Debasish Bardhan, deputy director of the Fire Service

and Civil Defense. He said the main exit of the factory was locked from the inside and many of those who died were trapped.

Many workers jumped from the upper floors of the factory, and at least 26 suffered injuries, the United News of Bangladesh agency reported.

Information about how many people were in the factory and how many were missing was not immediately available.

Factory officials told AP that the company is fully compliant with international standards, but whether the exit of the factory was locked was not certain.

According to Bangladesh's factory laws, a factory cannot lock its exit when workers are inside during production hours.

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and Civil Defense. He said the main exit of the factory was locked from the inside and many of those who died were trapped.

Many workers jumped from the upper floors of the factory, and at least 26 suffered injuries, the United News of Bangladesh agency reported.

Information about how many people were in the factory and how many were missing was not immediately available.

Factory officials told AP that the company is fully compliant with international standards, but whether the exit of the factory was locked was not certain.

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## MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	52,386	-0.35
US Dollar	74.64	0.09
Gold	46,844	-2.34
Brent oil	75.51	2.76

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	728.50	+16.80
Asian Paints	3010.60	-17.70
Axist Bank	747.35	-7.05
Bajaj Auto	3995.90	-81.40
Bajaj Finserv	12854.75	520.85
Bajaj Finance	6136.15	18.35
Bharti Airtel	536.25	10.95
BPCL	456.90	-1.30
Britannia Ind	3475.95	-15.45
Cipla	959.80	9.15
Coal India	146.70	0.45
Divis Lab	4599.70	89.20
Drd Reddys Lab	5460.30	-6.45
Eicher Motors	2712.15	-17.15
Grasim Ind	1500.15	24.70
HCL Tech.	976.85	0.05
HDPC	2496.45	-15.60
HDPC Life	1502.00	-18.45
Hero MotoCorp	683.25	1.95
Hindustan	2896.80	-3.60
Hindustan Unilever	390.05	6.95
ICICI Bank	2451.45	3.90
IndusInd Bank	638.55	-3.35
Infosys	1039.95	-5.50
Indian Oil Corp	1562.90	2.15
ITC	107.30	-0.25
JSW Steel	681.55	13.30
Kotak Bank	1720.05	-12.25
L&T	1499.60	-1.10
M&M	771.55	-4.70
Maruti Suzuki	7425.70	24.50
Nestle India Ltd.	17636.00	17.10
NTPC	117.80	0.35
ONGC	117.90	0.85
PowerGrid Corp	230.25	-0.90
Reliance Ind	2071.20	-21.40
SBI Life	1019.60	-2.00
State Bank	423.75	-0.70
Shree Cement	27502.75	-79.05
Sun Pharma	667.90	1.00
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	765.95	2.65
Tata Motors	306.30	-0.05
Tata Steel	1239.35	49.60
TCS	3208.15	-50.35
Tech Mahindra	1051.75	-8.40
Titan	1720.60	-5.75
UltraTech Cement	6899.55	-2.35
UPL	814.55	0.45
Wipro	525.80	-5.20

## EXCHANGE RATES

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## BoB, STPI sign pact for supporting start-ups

MUMBAI  
Bank of Baroda (BoB) has signed a memorandum of understanding with Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) and AIC STPINEXT Initiatives to support start-ups across India under its Baroda Start-up Banking programme. As many as 15 dedicated start-up branches are operational across major start-up hubs. The bank will facilitate an array of services at preferential rates, it said.

## Federal Bank MD &amp; CEO gets 3-year extension

NEW DELHI  
Private sector lender Federal Bank on Friday said it had received approval from the RBI to reappoint Shyam Srinivasan as its MD and CEO for three years. Mr. Srinivasan had taken charge of the bank on September 23, 2010. In July 2020, the Kochi-based lender had received the Reserve Bank's nod for the reappointment of Mr. Srinivasan as MD and CEO till September 22, 2021. PTI

## Rubicon buys Cipla arm's oral liquid, nasal unit

MUMBAI  
Rubicon Research Pvt. Ltd., a speciality pharma firm backed by General Electric, has acquired Cipla Ltd.'s wholly owned arm Meditab Specialities Ltd.'s oral liquid dosage and nasal product facility in Maharashtra for an unspecified amount. The facility is CGMP compliant and Mhra (U.K.) inspected production site that enables diverse pipeline of oral liquids for Rubicon Research.

## NetConnect to hire 5,000 by end 2021

BENGALURU  
NetConnect Global (NCG), a technology services firm, will hire 5,000 technology professionals across the country by the end of 2021. The company said as part of its global expansion plans and an increased focus on new-age digital technologies such as IoT, cloud app, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, it would hire engineers with expertise in these technologies.

CM YK

# 'Revival bumpy, sentiment to improve'

Finance Ministry says food prices to blame for high inflation, working on measures to rein them in

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India's economic recovery after the ebbing of the second COVID-19 wave remains uneven, despite an uptick in several economic indicators through June, the Finance Ministry said on Friday. Consumption sentiment, it added, was likely to improve as recent relief measures announced by the government begin to kick in.

Attributing the spike in retail inflation over the last two years to higher food inflation, the Ministry said that prices were expected to cool in the short term from the 6.3% inflation mark reported in May, due to healthy monsoons, gradually rising Kharif crop sowing and unlocking by States. While this would slow food inflation, and thereby headline infla-



Reining it in: The Centre will impose stock limits and trade curbs to help contain food inflation. ■ BIJOY GHOSH

tion, the Ministry said input cost pressures and the global spurt in commodity prices remained major risks.

Consumption sentiment is expected to pick up due to recent measures such as enhanced employment support (through Employees' Provident Fund subsidies

under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana), and targeted support to the urban poor through the credit guarantee scheme for micro-finance institutions and the widening of the BharatNet's digitisation coverage.

Higher highway toll collections, power usage and re-

cord UPI transactions suggest 'India is on the move again', the Ministry said in its monthly economic review for June. "However, recovery remains uneven with indicators such as port traffic, air traffic, PMI Manufacturing and Services demonstrating lagged revival from the impact of the second wave. Latest industrial production estimates show sequential moderation in growth of... eight core industries at 16.8% [year-on-year] in May 2021, 8% lower than pre-COVID May 2019 level," it added.

E-way bill generation rose 37.1% in June, compared with May, which augurs well for GST collections in coming months, while resilient tax collections over April and May bodes well for a 'continued economic recovery' driven by capital spending,

## TCS to hire 40,000 freshers

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Largest software exporter TCS will be hiring more than 40,000 freshers from campuses in the country in the financial year 2021-22, a top executive said.

The company, the largest employer in the private sector with a base of more than 5 lakh employees, had hired 40,000 graduates from campuses last year and will do better on that number, its chief of global human resources Milind Lakkad said.

He said the pandemic-related restrictions do not pose any difficulty in hiring. "We will continue to hire and hire 40,000 or more this year in India," Mr. Lakkad told reporters.

## Firm to seek shareholder nod at AGM

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Sugar mills have exported 4.75 million tonne (MT) of the sweetener so far in the ongoing 2020-21 marketing year ending September, with maximum shipments to Indonesia, trade body AISTA said on Friday.

Mills have contracted to export 5.9 million tonnes of sugar so far as against the 6-million tonne quota assigned by the Food Ministry in January this year, All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA) said in a statement.

An additional 4,30,000 tonne of sugar has been contracted under OGL (open general licence) route without subsidy support. Moreover, sugar export to Iran has started in small quantities. About 6,982 tonnes was shipped to Iran in June, it added.

## 'Life insurers' new premium income up 4%

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The new premium income of life insurance companies rose nearly 4% to ₹30,009.48 crore in June this year, data from IRDAI showed.

All the life insurance companies had collected first year or the new business premium income worth ₹28,868.68 crore in the same month a year ago.

State-owned LIC reported 4.14% fall in new premium income in June 2021 at ₹21,796.28 crore as against ₹22,736.84 crore in the year-earlier month. For the remaining 23 private sector life insurers, the new premium in June jumped about 34% to ₹8,213.20 crore as against ₹6,131.84 crore in the year earlier.

## TII to invest ₹25 crore to support start-ups in R&D

Firm to seek shareholder nod at AGM

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Tube Investments of India Ltd. (TII) is planning to support start-ups involved in innovative research and product development.

The Murugappa Group company is mulling investment up to ₹25 crore and would seek shareholders' approval at the ensuing 13th AGM, the company said in a regulatory filing.

The investment would be made in start-ups engaged in innovative research and product development in fields or activities of interest to the company, TII said.

While interacting with analysts in February, managing director Vellayan Subbiah had said that TII would be adopting a three-pronged strategy to protect itself from the cyclical nature of the auto sector.

## WayCool Foods eyes up to ₹100-mn capex in 4 years

It targets Indian diaspora in West Asia

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

WayCool Foods & Products, an agri-commerce company, is planning a capex of ₹75-100 million over 4 years to fund its expansion and acquisition among others.

"We are planning to spend capex of ₹75-100 million for strengthening the automation in dry items, warehouses, making the IT platform scalable, developing value added food products and acquisitions," said Karthik Jayaraman, CEO & co-founder.

He also said that in the near term, the company would strengthen its network of warehouses for dry groceries, repackaging facilities in and around Tamil Nadu and Bengaluru, and



Karthik Jayaraman

distribution and collection centres. On its foray into newer markets, the CEO said that entering Maharashtra was a logical step since it was one of the strongest bases for sourcing, while West Asia had a large presence of Indian diaspora. WayCool had started working with some partners in this regard, Mr. Jayaraman added.

the Department of Economic Affairs noted. On predictions of a third wave, the Ministry said its emergence could be 'significantly buffered by expanded vaccination and meticulous observance of COVID-appropriate behaviour'.

**'Food's high weightage'**  
On inflation trends, it said retail inflation that averaged 5.9% in FY19 'fell continuously' till it reached 3.4% in FY20. It surged to 6.2% last year.

"Since the weightage of food in CPI is very high, the impact of food prices on overall CPI inflation is high," the Ministry reasoned.

The government, it said, is taking a variety of measures to rein in food inflation, including the imposition of stock limits and trade restrictions to regulate domestic availability.

## Oil prices firm as U.S. inventories decline

OPEC+ impasse fuels supply uncertainty

## REUTERS

LONDON

Oil prices rose for a second day on Friday as data showed a draw in U.S. inventories but were heading for a weekly loss amid uncertainty over global supplies after an OPEC+ impasse.

Brent crude oil futures were up 36 cents, or 0.5%, at \$74.48 a barrel by 1220 GMT. U.S. West Texas Intermediate futures were up 54 cents, or 0.7%, at \$73.48.

Stocks fell and gasoline demand reached its highest since 2019, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said, signalling increasing strength in the economy.

"A bullish EIA stock report helped the oil market rebound into the black," said Stephen Brennock of oil broker PVM. "Clearly, U.S. oil markets are tight. However, the only way to prevent further losses is for the threat of an OPEC+ price war to be contained."

Prices on both sides of the Atlantic were on track for a more than 2% weekly drop, dragged down by the collapse of output talks between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia, together known as OPEC+.

U.S. crude and gasoline

## BSE, a creator of \$3 trillion in wealth: CEO

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Leading stock exchange BSE has acted as a catalyst for investments and helped in the creation of \$3 trillion wealth since it was set up in 1875, its chief Ashish Kumar Chauhan said.

Over the years, the exchange had been able to create trust among the investor community that will help India to achieve double-digit annual growth in time to come, Mr. Chauhan added.

He further said that the success of BSE's efforts could be seen in more than 7.2 crore investor accounts, more than 4,700 listed companies and in excess of \$3 trillion of equities market capitalisation.



we are well positioned to capitalise on various urban mobility needs of our customers," he added.

"We look forward to collaborating with Bhavish and the team in the next phase of Ola's growth,"

# Berrettini pulverises Hurkacz

Djokovic stays on course for 20th Major with Shapovalov conquest

## WIMBLEDON

### AGENCIES

LONDON

With booming serves delivering 22 aces, and powerful forehands helping compile a total of 38 winners, No. 7 seed Matteo Berrettini beat No. 14 Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 6-0, 6-7(3), 6-4 at Wimbledon on Friday to enter his maiden Grand Slam singles final and the first by an Italian at SW19.

On Sunday, the 25-year-old will meet five-time champion and top seed Novak Djokovic, who beat Canadian Denis Shapovalov 7-6(3), 7-5, 7-5.

"I have no words. I need a couple of hours to understand what happened," Berrettini told the capacity crowd. "I never dreamed about this because it was too much, even for a dream."

Friday's outcome seemed to turn early against Hurkacz, who was coming off victories over eight-time Wimbledon champion Roger Federer and No. 2 Daniil Medvedev.

A key moment came less than 20 minutes in, when Hurkacz was ahead 3-2 and held a break point. That was erased by Berrettini with a service winner at 130 mph.

More than 50 minutes passed before Berrettini would drop another game, a stretch that gave him the first two sets and a 1-0 lead in the third.

He was two points from winning on four occasions in the third set, all while Hurkacz served: twice at 5-4 and twice at 6-5. But the Pole extended the contest by grab-



**One step away:** Matteo Berrettini continued his stellar run on grass, which has put him on the cusp of a Grand Slam title. ■ GETTY IMAGES

bing the tie-breaker.

Berrettini headed off the court and when play resumed, he broke to begin the fourth, and was soon back on the proper path.

Hurkacz saved Berrettini's first match point, at 5-3, with a service winner at 134 mph but the latter closed the match out on the second opportunity.

A few hours after that, Djokovic reached his 30th Grand Slam final to move within one victory of a sixth Wimbledon title and record-equaling 20th Major.

The win over Shapovalov was tense, with the World No.1 having to save 10 of 11 break points. The Canadian was the better player for much of the first set and was serving at 5-4, only to be broken. It was a pattern which repeated throughout the match, with Djokovic claw-

**Scan QR to Book COVID-19 Vaccine Slot on paytm**



### THE RESULTS

**Men: Semifinals:** 7-Berrettini (Ita) bt 14-Hurkacz (Pol) 6-3, 6-0, 6-7(3), 6-4; 1-Djokovic (Srb) bt 10-Shapovalov (Can) 7-6(3), 7-5.

ing his way back every time Shapovalov nosed ahead. The 22-year-old eventually exited in tears, but to a standing ovation. "At this stage of

my career Grand Slams are most important," said Djokovic. "Every time something on the line is historic, it motivates me."

**■ 1** Berrettini is the first Italian in history, male or female, to reach a Wimbledon singles final. Last Italian man in the singles final at a Slam was Adriano Panatta (1976 French Open)

**■ 16** The 16 games Djokovic lost against Shapovalov were the most in his 49 straight-set victories at Wimbledon

**■ 30** Djokovic has reached 30 Major singles finals, next only to Federer's 31

**■ 95** Berrettini has won 95 of 100 service games at SW19 this year and has saved 22 of 27 breakpoints, including the only two against Hurkacz

**■ 1** The Aussie can become the first women's top seed to win Wimbledon since Serena Williams in 2016

**■ While** Barty has tasted success as a junior at Wimbledon, winning the title in 2011, the Czech has never been past the fourth round, including the lone junior appearance in 2010. That year, her twin sister Kristyna took home the trophy

**■ This will only be the fifth** Wimbledon women's singles final this millennium not to feature a Williams sister. Previous: Kvitova vs Bouchard (2014), Bartoli vs Lisicki (2013), Kvitova vs Sharapova (2011), Mauresmo vs Henin (2006)

**■ The Barty-Pliskova clash will be the first** match-up between two first-time Wimbledon women's finalists since 1977 (Virginia Wade beat Betty Stove)

# Barty and Pliskova in a clash of styles

The Aussie's court craft will be up against Czech's first-strike approach

### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Ashleigh Barty will fulfil a childhood dream when she plays in Saturday's Wimbledon final, but Karolina Pliskova stands in her way of achieving a more significant title as the catch of the day.

To do so, she must overcome a World No. 1, whose craft and guile felled 2018 champion Angelique Kerber in the semifinals.

The aura of Cawley has been ever-present at the All England Club, with Barty wearing a specially-designed dress in tribute to the iconic scallop one that she wore in 1971. "It's a really special anniversary for Evonne," said Barty. "I couldn't be more proud to be in a position to

than alter it radically.

Whatever happens on Saturday, a return to the top 10 looks certain for the 29-year-old World No. 13, but she would regard her first Slam title as the catch of the day.

Barty is attempting to win her first Wimbledon title on the 50th anniversary of fellow indigenous Australian Evonne Goolagong Cawley's maiden crown.

Pliskova, who defeated No. 2 seed Aryna Sabalenka with a power-packed performance, is driven more by proving to her "brutal critics" she was right in sticking to her style of play rather

wear an outfit inspired by her. Now to kind of give myself a chance to create some history almost in a way that's a tribute to her is really exciting."

The 25-year-old put her childhood dream of playing in a senior Wimbledon final into perspective. "I wasn't sure if it would ever happen, honestly," she said. "I think Wimbledon has been an amazing place of learning."

"Probably 2018, 2019 (3rd and 4th round exits respectively) were some of my toughest weeks playing. To come away with losses in those two tournaments, I learned a hell of a lot."

For Pliskova, unlike Barty,

the pressure may weigh less heavily as her goal was to make the second week and anything after that was a bonus. Despite being behind on head-to-head meetings, the fact that it is a first Wimbledon final for both women could be a leveller.

"I mean, we have had some good matches," said Pliskova. "Of course, I lost more. But I think she has an extremely difficult game to play."

"It's going to be difficult on grass because of her slice and her game overall. She has a Grand Slam, but this is her first Wimbledon final too. I think we both have a good chance."

## Saturday showdown

Pliskova will be gunning for her maiden Grand Slam singles title in her second Major final after 2016 US Open and Barty for her second trophy after 2019 French Open



**I have had ups, downs and everything in between on this journey. To play in the final at Wimbledon on Saturday will be the best thing ever**

BARTY on the final



**It can't be any better than this. You want to play the best player in the final. Of course, I don't want anybody else but her there**

PLISKOVAS on playing Barty

MATCH STARTS AT 6.30 P.M. IST

## Clasico of the Americas

Neymar's Brazil and Messi's Argentina square off in what promises to be a high-voltage Copa final



**•** The third time the two will face off in the Copa final this century. Brazil has won the previous two (2004, 2007)

**•** Argentina is looking to go joint top with Uruguay (15 titles) while Brazil is seeking its 10th crown

**•** Messi, in his record sixth Copa, will pull level with

Head-to-Head		
	Argentina	Brazil
<b>Overall</b>	111	
<b>Won</b>	40	46
<b>Drawn</b>	25	25
<b>Goals scored</b>	165	171
<b>Top scorer</b>	Messi (5 goals)	Leonidas (8 goals)
<b>In Copa America</b>	33	
<b>Won</b>	10	15
<b>Drawn</b>	8	
<b>First meeting:</b>	20th September 1914 (Friendly), Argentina 3-0 Brazil	
<b>Last meeting:</b>	15th November 2019 (Superclasico de las Americas), Brazil 0-1 Argentina	

### A look at the teams' performance in this edition

Copa America 2021		
	Argentina	Brazil
<b>Matches</b>	6	6
<b>Won</b>	5	5
<b>Goals scored</b>	11	12
<b>Goals conceded</b>	3	2
<b>Clean sheets</b>	3	4

Chile's Sergio Livingstone for most appearances (34) in the competition. The final will also be the magician's 151st cap for his country, the most by an Argentinian

COMPILED BY AYUSH SUDARSHAN

## IN BRIEF

### 500-day countdown to 2022 Qatar WC begins

DOHA

The 500-day countdown to the 2022 FIFA World Cup started on Friday, as Qatar prepared to welcome more than a million fans for the greatest footballing show on earth. The first World Cup in the Middle East and Arab world will kick off on Nov. 21 and end on Dec. 18, 2022. AP

### Kaitano, Taylor help Zimbabwe avoid follow-on

HARARE

Zimbabwe opener Takudzwanashe Kaitano's patient 87 and a swashbuckling 81 from stand-in captain Brendan Taylor helped Zimbabwe avoid the follow-on against Bangladesh on the third day of the one-off Test on Friday. Reaching to Bangladesh's 468, the hosts were bowled out for 276.

**The scores:** Bangladesh 468 and 45/0 vs Zimbabwe 276 (Milton Shumba 41). Takudzwanashe Kaitano 87, Brendan Taylor 81, Shakib Al Hasan 4/82, Mehdy Hasan 5/82.

## Booker sparks Suns to 2-0 lead

Antetokounmpo battles in vain for the Bucks

### NBA FINALS

#### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PHOENIX

Devin Booker scored 31 points and Chris Paul added 23 on Thursday to spark Phoenix Suns to a 118-108 win and a commanding 2-0 lead over Milwaukee Bucks in the NBA Finals.

The action shifts to Milwaukee for games three and four on Sunday and Wednesday.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 42 points and added 12 rebounds, but the Bucks could not offer the 26-year-old Greek forward enough support.

Booker delivered his eighth 30-point game of the playoffs while Paul, in his first NBA Finals at age 36, added eight assists.

Bahamas big man Deandre Ayton had 10 points and 11 rebounds and Jae Crowder 11 points and 10 rebounds for the Suns.



Phoenix outscored Milwaukee 15-4 over the final 4:40 of the second quarter to seize a 56-45 half-time lead. Antetokounmpo scored 20 points in the third quarter, the most by any player in an NBA Finals quarter in 25 years, but the Suns still led 88-78 entering the fourth quarter.

The result: Phoenix Suns 118 bt Milwaukee Bucks 108 (Suns lead series 2-0).

Croatian forward Dario Saric with a torn right knee ligament.

Two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Antetokounmpo, who missed two games with a hyperextended left knee before returning in the opener, scared the Bucks when he fell to the court in the second and third quarters but he rose and continued each time.

**The result:** Phoenix Suns 118 bt Milwaukee Bucks 108 (Suns lead series 2-0).

## England keen to end drought

### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

England fans are looking forward to a first major tournament final in 55 years as their team prepares to face Italy in the Euro 2020 final at Wembley on Sunday.

Three years on from their defeat to Croatia in the World Cup semifinal, Gareth Southgate's men overcame Denmark 2-1 in extra time on Wednesday to reach their first European Championship final.

Italy was also pushed beyond 90 minutes by Spain, but won on penalties to keep its bid for a first Euro title since 1968 alive.

England stands just one game away from ending its long and painful trophy drought, which dates all the way back to the 1966 World Cup. But Italy is on a 33-match unbeaten run, reviving its reputation on the global stage after failing to even reach the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

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## TV PICKS

**England vs Pakistan:** 2nd ODI: Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.  
**Tour de France:** Eurosport (SD & HD), 3.45 p.m.  
**Wimbledon 2021:** SS Select 2 (SD & HD); 5.30 p.m.; SS Select 1 & Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.  
**Copa America 2021:** Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m. (Sunday).

## IN BRIEF



**Coach Simeone extends Atletico stay until 2024**

Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone has extended his contract until 2024. The Argentinian, who won the domestic double in 1996 during a five-year spell as player and arrived as coach in 2011, has signed until June 30, 2024. Atletico has won eight titles during his tenure.

**Hadley, Munoz lead; Lahiri way behind**

SILVIS (USA)  
Anirban Lahiri shot an even par 71 and was tied 102nd after the first round of the John Deere Classic. Chesson Hadley and Sebastián Muñoz were tied for the lead at eight-under. PTI

**Modest start by Aditi at Marathon Classic**

SYLVANIA (USA)  
Aditi Ashok shot an even par 71 in the opening round to be tied 65th in the Marathon LPGA Classic. Japan's Nasa Hataoka returned a 10-under 61 to take a four-stroke lead over Lauren Stephenson. PTI

**Shubhankar, Bhullar have their task cut out**

NORTH BERWICK (SCOTLAND)  
Shubhankar Sharma sunk four birdies but still finished on one-under 70 and tied 73rd at the Scottish Open on Thursday. Gaganjeet Bhullar also had four birdies but returned 74 and lies T-139. Englishman Jack Senior was in the lead on 64. PTI

**Junior Fed Cup athletics shifted to Sangrur**

KOCHI  
The 19th National Federation Cup junior (under-20) athletics, which was scheduled to be held at Patiala from July 31 to August 2, has been shifted to Sangrur (Punjab). The dates remain the same and the venue will be the War Hero Stadium.

## Being Lahiri's caddie will help me prepare for Paris: Chikkarangappa

## GOLF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Golfer S. Chikkarangappa says he will use the experience of being a caddie for Anirban Lahiri at Tokyo Olympics to fuel his 2024 Paris dreams, after the COVID-19 pandemic spoilt his chances to qualify for the upcoming edition.

The 27-year-old, who missed out on Olympic qualification, was offered a chance to have a close look at the competition in Tokyo when he was asked by Lahiri to be his caddie for the upcoming Games.

"It's a win-win situation for both."

"When Anirban offered me this opportunity to be his caddie, I accepted instantly," Chikkarangappa said in a release issued by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Friday.

While Lahiri will be playing his second Olympics, Udayan Mane booked his maiden berth at the Games following the withdrawal of Argentina's Emiliano Grillo.

## Much to learn

"I am really glad that Anirban is giving me this experience."

"I will get to see an Olympics live in person. The younger generation has so much to learn," Chikkarangappa said. "Yes, I won't be there as a player but this experience will be something different. This experience

## The flame makes a quiet arrival in Tokyo



**Symbol of hope:** Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, left, receives a lantern containing the Olympic Flame from Paralympian and torch relay ambassador Aki Taguchi on Friday. ■AP

Only media and officials attend welcoming ceremony

## OLYMPICS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
TOKYO

The Olympic flame arrived in Tokyo on Friday with just two weeks until the Games open, as athletes and fans mourned a "heartbreaking" decision to bar spectators from almost all venues given the pandemic situation.

**Taste of what's to follow**  
In a taste of what is to come for thousands of athletes, the public was kept away from the arrival of the flame and a welcoming ceremony was attended only by the media and officials.

As the final countdown to the July 23 opening ceremony

begins, the mood is far from the usual festive Olympic spirit.

Tokyo will be under a virus state of emergency from Sunday until August 22, putting a further dampener on an already unusual Olympics.

Given the decision, organisers said on Thursday they would bar spectators from venues in Tokyo and three surrounding areas, where most competitions will be conducted.

A handful of events will be held elsewhere in the country with some fans in attendance.

Governor Yuriko Koike received the flame in a lantern at a ceremony in an empty stadium. The nationwide

torch relay was supposed to stoke excitement about the Games, but almost half the legs have been off public roads or otherwise altered because of virus concerns.

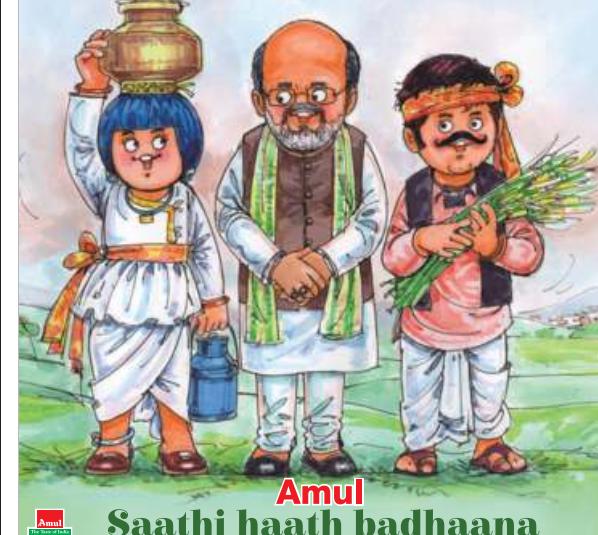
## Against the odds

Despite the disruptions, Koike said the flame's passage offered "hope" that she said torchbearers would "carry into the Olympic stadium".

When the cauldron is lit on July 23, only dignitaries and officials will be in the stands at the 68,000-capacity National Stadium in central Tokyo.

A decision on allowing spectators at the Paralympics will be taken after the Olympics end.

## Aapke munh mein ghee sahka!



**Amul**  
**Saathi haath badhaana**

daCunha/AB/751

## A good draw but it's not going to be easy: Sindhu

Have to give 100%: Sai Praneeth



**Expect the best:** Indian fans would be hoping that Sindhu and Praneeth put on a good show in Tokyo. ■FILE PHOTO

## Bhawana and Irfan undergo fitness tests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Race walkers Bhawana Jat and K.T. Irfan underwent fitness tests on Friday while another Olympic-bound athlete M. Srivishwanth will have to prove his fitness on July 21 to confirm participation in the Tokyo Games.

Bhawana and Irfan, both 20km race walkers, and long jumper Srivishwanth were told by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) to undergo tests to check their competition fitness. All the three are currently training at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) centre in Bengaluru.

"We cannot take unfit athletes...have to check when did the athletes qualify for the Olympics, they are injury-free or fit for competition," said AFI president Adille Sumariwalla.



K.T. Irfan. ■FILE PHOTO

shuttle - World championship bronze medallist Akane Yamaguchi and World No. 1 and two-time World champion Kento Momota respectively in the quarterfinal stage.

## Boe hopeful

India's doubles coach Mathias Boe is hopeful of getting good results. "It's a very even group which means even if you lose a match, you are still in the game because nobody knows what will happen," said the Dane.

"We'll focus on preparing as much as possible in the last few weeks. We will attack on the court and hopefully, we will get good results. I am positive, it's a good challenge for us," said Boe.

BAI general secretary Ajay Singhania said the roadmap was drawn and would give the Indians time to work specifically on the opponents and get prepared before they leave for Tokyo. "I wish the entire contingent all the best," he said.

## India clubbed with UAE, Oman and Kyrgyz Republic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

India has been placed in Group E alongside host UAE, Oman, and Kyrgyz Republic in the U-23 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2022 Qualifiers, to be held from October 23 to 31.

The 42 teams were drawn into 11 groups with 15 spots available at the AFC U-23 Asian Cup 2022 with Uzbekistan having already confirmed its place as the host.

While India is in Group E, Jordan will host Group F that also has Palestine and Turk-

menistan for company. Group A consists of Syria, host Qatar, Yemen and Sri Lanka, while Islamic Republic of Iran, host Tajikistan, Lebanon and Nepal will contest in Group B, according to release issued by Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

Iraq, the 2013 champion, headlines Group C which will be hosted by Bahrain with Afghanistan and Maldives also contesting.

Saudi Arabia, runner-up in 2013 and 2020, will play in Group D with Bangladesh, host Kuwait and Uzbekistan, which will participate in a friendly capacity and its results will not be included in the standings.

United Arab Emirates will face ASEAN opposition in host Singapore, Timor-Leste and the Philippines in Group H while 2018 runner-up Vietnam is with Myanmar, Hong Kong and host Chinese Taipei in Group I.

Palestine and Turkmenistan for company in Group F. Australia was drawn in Group G with China, host Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam.

Korea Republic, the winner of the 2020 edition, will face ASEAN opposition in host Singapore, Timor-Leste and the Philippines in Group H while 2018 runner-up Vietnam is with Myanmar, Hong Kong and host Chinese Taipei in Group I.

## Sarri not intimidated by Mourinho's past success

Former Chelsea managers prepare to share the Stadio Olimpico next season



Maurizio Sarri. ■REUTERS

The Portuguese, who has won 25 trophies as a coach in his career including the Champions League with Inter Milan and Porto, signed for Roma two weeks after being sacked by Tottenham.

**The first**  
Sarri won his first coaching trophy with Chelsea in the Europa League in 2019 before moving to Juventus where he won Serie A in 2000 before being dismissed.

But the 62-year-old believes he has found the right fit in Lazio, a team which has won Serie A twice, most recently in 2000.

"I chose Lazio for two reasons – a personal one and a sporting one," said the Italian coach famed for his 'Sarriball' fast-paced, possession-based style brand of attacking football at Napoli from 2015-18.

"I saw in this club the characteristics to express myself at best. In this team I see the

conditions to play the football I like.

"Lazio comes at a time when I needed this type of club, with these characteristics, which could lead me to do this job in the way that suits me best."

He added: "The club wanted me to sign a four-year contract."

"I wanted it shorter because I want to be sure in two years that I have the same energy."

"We will play in a different way, we will try to remain competitive."

Sarri takes over from Simone Inzaghi who moved to Serie A champion Inter Milan after five years in Rome.

Inzaghi beat Sarri's Juventus to lift the Italian Super Cup in 2019 and also challenged for the Serie A title in the 2019-2020 season before finishing fourth after the coronavirus disruption.

Lazio finished sixth last season.



**In anticipation:** S. Chikkarangappa is looking forward to the Olympics experience. ■FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

**When Anirban offered me this opportunity to be his caddie, I accepted instantly**

(caddying for Anirban) will help me prepare for the 2024 Olympic Games. This will help me going forward."

Chikkarangappa was India No. 2 before the second wave of COVID-19 led him to miss some tournaments, which caused his ranking to drop.

"We have the same relationship today as we did 18 years ago. We will work together and do our best to return with a medal."

Eagleton, one of India's most famous golf courses on the

## DELHI ROUND-UP

## Lalit, Vaibhav score half-centuries

Man-of-the-Match Lalit Yadav scored a 24-ball 50 and Vaibhav Rawal made 53 as ACC XI beat Sporting Club by four wickets to enter the semifinals of the RK Kapoor T20 tournament.

**The scores:** Sporting Club 187/6 in 20 overs (Ekansh Dobhal 61 n.o., Rohan Rath 47, Ashish Hooda 3/37) lost to XI 189/6 in 19.3 overs (Vaibhav Rawal 53, Lalit Yadav 50, Shahzab Ahmed 43, Pradeep Sangwan 2/36, Yogesh Kumar 2/32).

**Nikhil shines**  
Nikhil Tyagi top-scored with 67 as Sporting Club beat Venkateshwara Academy by two wickets in the 6th Harbeer memorial under-19 tournament.

**The scores:** VCA 230/5 in 40 overs (Aryan Dalal 101 n.o., Akshay Singh 85, Mayank 2/27) lost to Sporting Club 231/8 in 39.5 overs (Nikhil Tyagi 67, Tarun 49, Ronak Waghera 3/15).

## Lalit, Vaibhav score half-centuries

Jose Mourinho's trophy cabinet may be bulging, but new Lazio boss Maurizio Sarri said on Friday that counts for nothing as the former Chelsea manager prepares to share the Stadio Olimpico next season.

Mourinho will coach Roma while Sarri takes charge of city rival Lazio, both housed in the same stadium in the Italian capital.

"I can't see this great dualism with Mourinho," Sarri told a press conference in the Italian capital.

"I met him and he is a good character. He has won much more than me, has a higher pedigree than mine, even if it doesn't count for anything. In the derby we will do everything, and more, to get through the match."

**'Special One'**  
Mourinho, 58, famously dubbed himself 'the Special

One' to announce his arrival at Chelsea, which he led to a first English league title in 50 years in 2005, going on to win two more league titles, and eight trophies in total in Stamford Bridge.

CM YK