SUNDAY TIMES

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INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

Amit Shah attacks Congress claiming party had **written off northeast as a part of India** ever since Nehru gave up on Assam during the **1962 Chinese invasion**, while PM Modi has worked to unite NE with rest of India

17-yr-old girl killed in an attack by a saltwater crocodile at a riverside village in Odisha's Kendrapara. This is the **fifth human fatality** due to crocodile attack in past 4 months

A plea has been filed in a Delhi court **seeking injunction against 'Adipurush'**, saying it has depicted **Hindu gods in an "unwarranted" and "inaccurate" way** in its teaser

Fake heiress Anna Sorokin, whose deception of New York's financial elite inspired a hit Netflix series, **released from an immigration detention center** but still faces deportation from the US

OF INDIA

VOL. 31 NO. 38 | BENGALURU

PRICE ₹5

Guj: Pak boat carrying 50 kg heroin seized

The Indian Coast Guard and Gujarat anti-terrorist squad (ATS) seized a Pakistani boat off the Gujarat coast with 50kg of heroin worth Rs 350 crore in the international market. The consignment was found concealed in the boat in five gunny bags. All six crew members, who are residents of Karachi, were arrested. P14

India slams Pak for raising J&K in Germany

India hit out at Pakistan foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto for raising the J&K issue in Germany, saying the Union Territory had borne the brunt of a terrorist campaign for decades. The government also reminded Germany that all members of the global community have the responsibility to call out cross-border terrorism. TNN

Bomb explosion cripples key bridge to Crimea

A truck bomb explosion on Saturday caused the partial collapse of a bridge linking the Crimean peninsula with Russia, damaging a key supply artery for the Kremlin's faltering war effort in southern Ukraine. The explosion risked an escalation in Russia's eight-month war with President Putin ordering a probe. P15

B'LURU WATCH

Covid-19 figures for Oct 8

Cases	Deaths	Cured	Active
42	0	57	2,332

IAF to raise special cadre to handle missiles, UAVs

1st Officers For New Weapon Systems Branch By '23-End

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ANI

Air Force personnel unveil the new combat uniform during the IAF's 90th anniversary celebrations in Chandigarh on Saturday

New Delhi: With rapid technological advances in standoff weapons and armed drones changing the very nature of warfare, the IAF will now raise a separate specialised cadre of officers to handle advanced missiles, space-based systems, surveillance and combat unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

The first lot of new officers for this new Weapon Systems Branch (WSB) in the IAF, cleared by the PM-led cabinet committee on security on Thursday, will be inducted by end-2023. The branch will be headed by an Air Marshal-rank (equivalent to Lt-General) director general of weapon systems. "This is the first time since independence that a new operational branch is being created. This will essentially be for manning of four specialised streams of surface-to-surface missiles, surface-to-air missiles, remotely piloted aircraft and weapon system operators in twin and multi-crew aircraft," Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari said on Saturday. "Creation of this branch would result in savings of over Rs 3,400 crore due to reduced expenditure on flying training," he added, while addressing the IAF Day parade at Chandigarh.

In Delhi, the defence ministry said WSB's creation would entail the unification of all weapon system operators under one entity dedicated to the operational employment of all ground-based and specialist airborne weapon systems.

▶ No active pilots, P 14

Collegium in flux, only 3 back proposal to appoint SC judges

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New Delhi: CJI UU Lalit's proposal to recommend the appointment of three HC chief justices and a senior advocate as SC judges has been opposed by two collegium judges and received concurrence from two, thus taking the number of members supporting the proposal to three,

But that wafer thin majority is legally inadequate. The SC in its 1998 judgement in a Presidential reference case on 'appointments and transfers of judges' had said, "We have little doubt that if even two of the judges forming the collegium express strong views, for good reasons, that are adverse to the appointment of a particular person, the Chief Justice of India would not press for such appointment."

Since then, the collegium has not recommended a name for appointment as Supreme Court judge unless approved by four of the five members of the collegium.

▶ Two judges oppose, P 8

Custody battle over 'adopted' 1-year-old

The Bombay HC recently declined relief to the adoptive parents of a one-year-old who sought to continue to keep him with them against the claim of biological parents. The baby, allegedly given away in adoption in July 2021, was claimed by the biological parents in June this year. TNN

Uddhav, Shinde can't use Shiv Sena symbol: EC

The Election Commission on Saturday barred the Shiv Sena factions led by Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde from using the party name and its election symbol in the Andheri East assembly bypoll. In an interim order over the claims by the rival factions for control of the organisation, the EC asked them to suggest by Monday three different name choices and also as many free symbols for allocation. P8

U'khand paper leak: Retd IFS, 2 ex-officials held

In the biggest action so far in the paper leak scam case, the Uttarakhand police STF on Saturday arrested retired Indian Forest Service officer and former chief of Uttarakhand Subordinate SSC RS Rawat, exam body's ex-secretary MS Kanyal and ex-exam controller RS Pokhriyal in connection with the probe in the village panchayat development officer recruitment exam held in 2016. TNN

'Man-eater of Champaran' shot dead by police

A three-year-old male tiger that went by the tag T-104 and earned infamy as the 'Man-eater of Champaran' fell to Bihar police bullets on Saturday. It is said to have made10 human kills. It met its end following a 28-day hunt spread over more than 30 square km by police sharpshooters and foresters. P14

Rahul backs Gehlot welcome to Adani Group

Even as Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot's warm welcome to Adani Group at an investment summit raised eyebrows, Rahul Gandhi denied claims that this contradicted his stand, saying he is only against monopolies, not corporates, reports **Subodh Ghildiyal**.

▶ BJP says Rahul's stand height of hypocrisy, P 8

Rahul said the Rajasthan government has not given any preferential treatment to Adani Group, and if it did, "I will stand against it."

▶ 'All are welcome', P 8

Won't remote-control new Cong prez: Rahul

Times News Network

Tumakuru: Senior All India Congress Committee (AICC) functionary **Rahul Gandhi** on Saturday said whoever is elected the party's new president on October 17 will have a free hand in taking decisions and running the organisation and will not be remote-controlled by the Gandhi family.

"Both the nominees (Shashi Tharoor and Mallikarjun Kharge) contesting the Congress presidential election are people of stature and understanding. They have positions as well as their own perspectives. To call them remote-controlled is nothing but insulting," Rahul Gandhi said during a press conference on the sidelines of his party's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Karnataka.

On Friday, Mallikarjun Kharge in Ahmedabad rubbished talks that he would be remote-controlled and act as a proxy of the party's incumbent president Sonia Gandhi after being elected to the top post after BJP made the allegations.

▶ 'Not against firms', P 6

Bus catches fire, 12 sleeping passengers die

Nashik: Twelve people, including a 3-year-old girl, on board a Mumbai-bound luxury bus were charred to death and 39 others injured when the vehicle caught fire following a collision with a coal-laden truck at Mirchi Hotel Chowk on the Nashik-Aurangabad state highway at around 5.15am on Saturday, reports **Abhilash Botekar**.

Police said though the bus had the capacity to carry only 30 people, 55 passengers were on board and all of them were asleep when the accident occurred.

▶ Sleeping on floor, P 8

K'taka cabinet nod for SC & ST quota hike

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Karnatka on Saturday decided to issue a government order to implement its decision to increase reservation for SC & ST by 2% and 4% respectively.

The order will be issued in two or three days.

GOVT ORDER SOON

"After we discussed all options available, we decided to hike the quota through a GO in which we will reveal our implementation modalities," law and parliamentary affairs minister JC Madhuswamy said after the special cabinet meeting. The hike in reservation will benefit 103 SC and 56 ST communities.

He said the government will mount pressure on the Centre to amend the Constitution based on the cabinet decision and insert the amended legislation into the 9th Schedule of the Constitution to give it protection from legal scrutiny. "We'll take all legal measures to get the Constitution amended and ensure its implementation at any cost, CM Basavaraj Bommai said.

▶ Internal quota plea, P 6

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Firms slash minimum auto fare, but it's still above govt-fixed rate

Aggregators Have Time Till Tuesday

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Photo for representation

TRAVELLERS' TRAVAILS: Some passengers say regular auto drivers rarely come to interior areas so they are forced to rely on app-based aggregators

Bengaluru: After being slammed by commuters and facing heat from the transport department, app-based aggregators on Saturday slashed minimum fare for autos. Though they were charging over Rs 100 earlier, the reduced amount is still higher than the government-fixed fare.

The transport department had on Thursday issued notices to app-based aggregators, including Ola, Uber and Rapido, to stop auto services in three days. Many passengers said the minimum fare was reduced to around Rs 70.

For instance, Ola on Saturday was charging Rs 70-Rs 80 as minimum auto fare for 1km. While the ride fare was Rs 30-Rs 31.5, it collected 'access' fee between Rs 40 and Rs 50. Uber's minimum fare was between Rs 80-Rs 90 but there was no break-up of the structure. Rapido's app stated it was charging Rs 30 up to 2km and Rs 15 per km but average fare was around Rs 90. Earlier, Rapido had mentioned on the app that it charges Rs 55 up to 3.5km.

Officials in the transport department said they have given aggregator firms time till Tuesday. "We issued them notices on Thursday night, so they will have three working days to respond. We believe all three will send a reply saying they are complying with the fare structure fixed by the government and no action should be taken against them since a case related to aggregator rules is already pending in the high court. But we never issued an aggregator licence to them to run autos in the city. They can't collect more than government-fixed fare because it is illegal," said an official.

However, there is no clarity in the department on what is to be done if the firms don't respond to the notice or are not ready to stop auto services. Sources said all three firms are not ready to stop services and may approach the court to get a stay if the department initiates any action.

"We are going slow since a case involving these aggregators is pending in the HC so it should not be contempt of court. But how long do we turn a blind eye to these violations? Tomorrow if they run buses and pick up and drop passengers like BMTC, how will we take action? If a customer complains about overcharging, how can we act against the driver when the fare is fixed by the aggregator? If we don't take action (against aggregators), neither the transport department nor traffic police will be able to crack down on fleecing by normal autos too. Some people are asking us to increase the fare meter charge but how many commuters can afford a minimum charge of Rs 50," asked a transport official.

Aggregators said they are charging 'access charges/additional fees' apart from the meter fare since they offer doorstep pickup, tracking facility and no haggling. Some passengers said regular auto drivers rarely come to interior areas citing poor road conditions so they are forced to rely on app-based aggregators.

On November 6, 2021, the state transport authority increased the minimum fare for autos from Rs 25 (for the first 1.9km) to Rs 30 (for 2km). For every additional km, it went up from Rs 13 to Rs 15.

TOI on Thursday carried a report titled 'minimum charge for aggregator auto in city breaches Rs 100'. The department issued notices to ANI Technologies, which runs Ola, and other firms Uber and Rapido, asking them to stop auto services in three days and submit a report.

GUIDELINES FOR REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

"Union ministry of road transport and highways has issued the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines, 2020. These guidelines seek to establish a regulatory framework for aggregators by state governments to ensure that the firms are accountable and responsible for the operations executed by them

Shaik Salauddin | NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY, INDIAN FEDERATION OF APP BASED TRANSPORT WORKERS

Frequent rule tweaks delay bldg plan nod

Assn: Those Submitted 2-3 Months Ago Await Sanction

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Bengaluru: Frequent revision of rules by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to streamline sanctioning of building plans for new constructions across the city has caused more problems to the public instead of providing resolutions. Those aspiring to construct houses are being forced to wait for nearly three months to get their plans sanctioned by the agency.

Association of Consulting Civil Engineers (India) and Contractors Association have petitioned BBMP on multiple occasions to resolve the issue. Yet, there seems to be no end to the plight of citizens. "We are not against the reforms as we have been seeking streamlining of the process with competent and qualified officials assigned the task. What's worrying is the unnecessary delay in sanction of plans, which spans two to three months," Shrikant S Channal, chairperson of ACCE, Karnataka chapter, told **STOI**.

Channal said: "In July 2022, BBMP issued a circular streamlining the process of sanctioning of building plans and decentralised the powers depending on the nature of building. The assistant director of town planning (ADTP) at the zonal level was given the power to sanction the plan of a single dwelling unit up to 224sqm and anything above up to 20,000sqm was assigned to zonal joint commissioners. Citing the new order and need to incorporate the changes into the system, the town planning cell held on to the applications for one and a half months. Later, when things were stabilising, BBMP came up with yet another revised order in September 2022 allowing ADTPs to sanction plans up to 375 sqm and less than 15 metre in height. The officials immediately stopped sanctioning of plans which were already pending for over 1.5 months. Till date, the sanction of building plans has not gained momentum and those submitted two-three months ago are still awaiting approval."

The office-bearers alleged that every time there is a revision in the order, files pertaining to plan sanction are held for months, affecting citizens as well as engineers. "The construction industry has bounced back after the pandemic stress. People are resuming construction activities in large numbers. But when you hold on to proposals for months, they lose interest, which will have a cascading effect on plans to mobilise resources required for the next level. Why should citizens be punished for administrative confusion or revision in circular? If BBMP is coming out with a fresh set of rules, it should have incorporated all of them into the system well before actual introduction," rued Ajit Kumar SM, secretary, ACCE.

'Ease of doing business only on paper'

The association explained that the agency introduced 'ease of doing business' back in 2017 and fixed deadlines for approval of building plans based on the dimensions and floors. "The rule says all single dwelling units must be approved within seven days and multiple dwelling units above 15 metre within 15-30 days. There are only a few buildings which are approved and most of the plans require 50-60 days. Has BBMP punished any officer for sitting on plan sanction for so long," asked Channal.

Gangaraju, a member of ACCE, said, "BBMP has adopted digital technology to approve building plans, which is supported by only one version of an expensive software. Any recognised civil engineer must pay the Palike and obtain a key to use the software for drawing of plans. However, for three-four months, new civil engineers have not been provided with software keys. I had applied for the key four months ago and was ready to pay. But officials say they don't have the stock."

BBMP'S REVISED APPROVAL SYSTEM

Buildings	Recommendation authority	Sanctioning authority
Buildings on more than 20,000sqm, more than one floor below ground level and more than 4 floors above ground level	Town planning officials working at BBMP HQ	Chief commissioner
Buildings on more than 4,000 sqm and less than 15 metre height (basement +stilt+ground+3 floors)	Town planning officials/ assistant directors, joint directors/chief engineers at zonal level	Zonal commissioners
Buildings on more than 375sqm and less than 15m height (basement + stilt+ ground + 3 floors)	Town planning officials/ assistant directors, joint directors/chief engineers at zonal level	Joint commissioners at zonal offices
Buildings on less than 375sqm and less than 15m height (basement+ stilt+ground+3 floors)	Town planning officials at zonal level	Assistant director of town planning at zonal level

*As of Sept 2022

Photo for representation

DELAY CAUSED BY HOLIDAYS: PALIKE

Sunil, chief town planner with BBMP, clarified that the delay was largely due to a series of holidays. "Streamlining of the process has been done with the sole intention of helping the public. Whenever there are changes, the administrative system needs to incorporate them, which takes time. Also, due to a series of festive holidays, sanctioning of building plans has been delayed. We will clear all the pending plan sanctions soon." He said shortage of software keys will also be taken up with the suppliers and they will be provided to new engineers at the earliest.

Techie held for 3 hoax calls to CS office

Bengaluru: A 41-year-old software engineer was arrested late Friday night on charges of making three hoax calls earlier in the day to the chief secretary's office, stating that a bomb was planted in Vidhana Soudha and would explode any time.

Prashanth Kumar, a resident of Anantanagar in Hebbagodi, Bengaluru Rural, works as a senior software engineer with a private company in Electronics City, police said. He used his mobile phone to make the calls.

"He had randomly searched online for government office landline numbers and found those of the CS office. He made three consecutive calls and said a bomb would explode in Vidhana Soudha," sources said, adding, "Kumar spoke in English with some Kannada phrases."

CS office staff brought the matter to the notice of cops, who detained Prashant. He confessed to making the calls and was arrested. "Kumar, who is divorced, lives with his parents. His parents said he is frustrated over some personal issues," sources said. TNN

New varieties of pulses, rice at mela

Bengaluru: A field bean variety that will be available through the year, oil-rich sesame and brown-top millet are some of the attractions at this year's Krishi Mela, set to start on November 3 at Gandhi Krishi Vigyan Kendra (GKVK).

Catering to market needs and adapting to changing climatic conditions, scientists at University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru have developed these new varieties which will be unveiled at the three-day event. The focus this year will be on agricultural startups.

The mela will see the launch of new maize and rice varieties. The organisers said nine new varieties and 38 technologies will be unveiled. "Field beans (avarekayi) flood Bengaluru market only during winter (December). But people want it through the year. The latest variety has every characteristic of winter beans," said Prof K Shivaramu, agriculture extension, UAS. TNN

47% of students chose comp science programmes in ComedK 1st round

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Bengaluru: Close to half of the allotted seats in the first round of counselling in ComedK were for computer science education (CSE) and allied programmes.

As per the data provided by ComedK, 5,046 of the 11,046 seats allotted were in CSE and related programmes.

The results of the first round of ComedK counselling were announced on Saturday evening. A total of 18,589 students were eligible, of which over 15,000 participated. Of 11,000 seats allotted, around 47% chose CSE.

On Friday, the Karnataka Examination Authority released an analysis of computer science and allied programmes available for engineering aspirants this year. A total of 29 combinations — ranging from artificial intelligence, data science, machine learning, internet of things, robotics — all with very minute differences are up for grabs.

"AICTE was liberal, in a way, in granting permission to start new emerging branches unlike in previous years where a college had to have a minimum number of core branches. Keeping in mind students' interests, more colleges sought these branches. Many of these courses are identical. So it is extremely important students choose the college they want to join, with a good teaching faculty. It is better to graduate with a strong foundation in a core branch than graduating without even basic knowledge in a computer science branch," said Karisidappa, former vice-chancellor of VTU.

However, experts warn students of choosing courses based on their passion. "This is a very short-sighted approach. These students have a 50-year working span. Everyone will not have the aptitude to join a CSE course. It's a binary world, literally. Students have to be trained to choose a career based on a long-term goal and also keeping in mind their personality," said Ali Kwaja of Banjara Academy.

"I ask students to choose college over branch. If they get a good college, it doesn't matter which of these IT courses they choose," he added.

While experts feel that IT may be able to provide job opportunities to a large number of students graduating after four years, the issue is also quality education. "All industry jobs are getting IT-intensive, be it design, manufacturing, supply chain, logistics, marketing, finance, HR, oil, gas, auto, core transport, government, education, healthcare, etc. There will be many jobs but they may not be for everyone. The challenge could be that many colleges may not be equipped to offer quality education in these streams," said Prof S Sadagopan, former director of IIIT-B.

Former IIT director V Ramgopal Rao had also raised this issue of students moving only towards computer science and IT-related courses, leaving behind the core disciplines.

"IT has the largest number of jobs in the organized sector for nearly 15 years. That influences students and their parents a lot. There are jobs in other sectors but no one hears about them. There is no noise around it. The hugely successful FAAMG (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Google) make a handful (just 1 or 2) of offers with a huge salary (Rs 1 crore to Rs 2 crore). So in quantity and quality, IT scores. The solution is senior people in other industries should talk of exciting opportunities outside IT," he added.

"IT has the largest number of jobs in the organized sector for nearly 15 years. That influences students and their parents a lot. There are jobs in other fields but no one hears about them. There is no noise...

V Ramgopal Rao | FORMER IIT DIRECTOR

12th-century Kannada inscription discovered in Maha's Latur village

S Shyam Prasad

LOST & FOUND: The ancient 24-line inscription in old Kannada script and Kannada language was found a few days ago in Kasar Balkunda village of Nilanga taluk in Latur district, Maharashtra

Krishna Trimbak Gudade became an 'inscription hunter' a few years ago. He found a hero stone once, but said the credit for it went to someone else. This spurred him to find hitherto unknown inscriptions

Bengaluru: The popular 9th-century Kannada work Kavirajamarga describes 'Kannada land' as the one spread between Cauvery and Godavari rivers. Now, a newly discovered Kannada inscription from the 12th century seconds it by describing a Chalukya king ruling from Godavari basin.

The 24-line inscription in old Kannada script and Kannada language was discovered a few days ago in Kasar Balkunda village, Nilanga taluk, Latur district, Maharashtra. The discovery was made by Krishna Trimbak Gudade, a Maharashtra electricity sub-station operator.

Speaking from Latur, Gudade revealed that this is the tenth unpublished inscription he has discovered in the last three years. "Of the 10, six are in Kannada language and script; the rest are in Devanagari script," he said.

Gudade became an 'inscription hunter' a few years ago. He had discovered a hero stone once. But the credit for it was claimed by someone else, he claimed. This spurred him to discover hitherto unknown inscriptions.

All his free time is spent on visits to villages and old abandoned temples in search of inscriptions, and the latest find is the oldest he has discovered so far. The inscription mentions the date of its consecration as the Raudra Samvatsara, Thursday of Vaishaka Pournami in the third year of the reign of Kalyani Chalukya emperor Jagadekamalla II, which corresponds to May 9, 1140 CE precisely.

Ravikumar Navalgund, who deciphered the inscription, said, "The inscription states that one Mallara Bilayya consecrated a temple for Somanatha, Nandikeshwara, Keshava and Sapta Matrikas at Bedtikere Ballakunde. He then donated 25 'mattaru' (one mattaru is approximately four acres) of land and another two 'mattaru' to the temple's west for its upkeep."

Today, the temple has been renovated in a modern style and is called Teerth Mahadev Mandir. Mahadev is the only deity inside. Outside the temple, the broken image of the once Keshava deity, a hero stone and a few other images can be found. The Sapta Matrikas are no longer to be found. The inscription is also placed outside the temple.

The inscription starts with a hymn for Lord Vishnu and then a shloka for Lord Shiva. The king is referred to with the titles 'Prithvivallabha' and 'Maharajadiraja'.

The term 'Godavari Nadeveedi' (Nelevee Dinalli in modern Kannada, which can be loosely translated as 'home turf') appears in the eighth line of the inscription. "It says king Jagadekamalla II was ruling from 'Godavari'. It does not specify where exactly in the Godavari area. It is known that Jagadekamalla's capital was in Kalyana, in the current Bidar district. But we also know the empire stretched much further north. The affectionate way in which Godavari is mentioned shows that the region was very much in the core territory. Traditionally, Narmada river was the northern boundary of empires from Karnataka," Navalgund said.

No real-time info, poor upkeep of loos plague bus users at terminals

With 29 lakh people boarding its buses daily, BMTC is the city's lifeline. However, the utility's fleet is only 6,771-strong, though the city, according to global standards, needs 12,000 buses. This means passengers end up spending considerable time waiting at bus stations and inside the vehicles. STOI visited BMTC's major bus terminuses, most of which function as Traffic and Transit management Centres (TTMCs), to appraise their condition first hand

Chethan Shivakumar

Kempegowda Bus Station, Majestic

Much ails the city's busiest station, which links over 500 routes and sees a footfall of 70,000 daily. Estimated arrival time of buses is not properly displayed on boards. The road opposite platform 29(c) is damaged, and the roofing of the foot overbridge (FOB) which connects to the KSRTC terminal is missing. The subway linking the terminal and KSR Bengaluru City railway station is poorly maintained. So are the toilets.

Shantinagar

This is where the BMTC's HQ is located. But that proximity has in no way been of help. Subways at platform 1 and 2 are locked, and the display board near platform 8 is damaged. Ruthvaka KR, a regular passenger, said: "There are not enough buses after 10.30pm, causing hardship to women passengers." Malvika A, another user, said: "Most display boards are not working. We don't know when the bus will arrive."

Koramangala

Here, the toilets are locked and there is no women's waiting room. As only a few buses operate from here, there are less passengers too. Vikas Gotla, a commuter, said: "None of the buses enters the bays. Washrooms are either locked, blocked by debris or simply unusable. Parking is dingy too. With lack of security and no lights, the place is a nightmare in the evenings."

Banashankari

The terminus sees daily footfall of around 30,000. Yet, a demand to connect it with the nearby Metro station via an FOB remains on paper for long. Yathish Kumar, a passenger, said: "This is one of the most unfriendly bus stations for pedestrians. Though the frequency of buses from this terminal is not bad, staff at the help desk are not very helpful. It is very congested due to lack of space."

Shivajinagar

While there are no dedicated waiting rooms for women, the subways are not maintained. Less said about the toilets the better. The footpath behind the station has been leaking sewage due to damaged underground pipes. Tarun Upadhyay, a passenger, said: "There are no adequate buses between Shivajinagar and Koramangala. We have to wait for a bus for more than an hour. Most lights don't work at night."

Yeshwantpur

This is a two-storey bus stand with four platforms. Buses to places like Majestic operate from the first floor, but lifts at platforms 1 and 3 do not work. "Since buses to areas like Majestic have to be boarded from the first floor, the authorities should ensure the lift is working," said Shruti DK, a regular user.

TIMES VIEW

Traffic and Transit Management Centres were heralded as BMTC's innovative way of addressing two important challenges: Provide passengers comfort as they wait for buses and generate revenue. That most TTMCs lack basic facilities for passengers reflects BMTC's misplaced priorities. Not that the other goal has been achieved. Koramangala TTMC's failure to draw IT firms shows poor planning and abysmal maintenance. Building massive structures is not enough. BMTC needn't have committed monumental blunders to learn this lesson.

Kadugodi

From proper platforms and women's waiting rooms to display boards, lighting and toilets, plenty of facilities are missing at this terminal. There is no parking space and no connectivity with the upcoming Metro station. Alam Siddique, a passenger, said: "This bus stop is very crowded, there isn't much space to stand. We have to wait for the bus on the road itself and there are no seating arrangements for the elderly."

"Major complaints are to do with lack of real-time information of buses and poorly maintained toilets. In fact, most toilets are difficult to locate

Shaheen Shasa | FOUNDER MEMBER, BENGALURU BUS PRAYANIKARA VEDIKE

"A Traffic & Transit Management Centre should be at an intersection where major turning movements occur in high volume. Most TTMCs don't meet this basic criterion. In fact, this is not even part of their concept. The failure was predictable even in the beginning. But all they wanted was construction contracts

Ashwin Mahesh | URBAN MOBILITY EXPERT AND AAP MEMBER

"I will visit major bus stations in the city by next week and take action to improve the facilities

NS Nandiesha Reddy | BMTC CHAIRMAN

Text by Sonia Dutta and Namrata Sarkar

5 cops extort bizman of ₹3.2L, suspended

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Five policemen from Sadashivanagar station, including two sub-inspectors, have been suspended on charges of extorting a person accused of running a cricket betting racket.

The suspended PSIs are Mohan and Basavaraju, while the constables are Shivakumar, Nagaraj and Parashuram. According to sources, Shivakumar passed on information to Mohan and Basavaraju that a businessman in Sahakar Nagar, Kodigehalli, was running a cricket betting racket and had accepted money for a T20 match between India and Pakistan (Asia Cup) played on September 4.

Accordingly, Shivakumar and the two PSIs raided the suspect's house on September 5 night and detained him. Later, they allegedly extorted Rs 3.2 lakh from him and let him off. Shivakumar and the other two constables are said to have received the cash from him.

However, the businessman, who claimed he did not run any betting racket, approached DCP (northeast) Anoop Shetty with a complaint against the five cops. Shetty brought the matter to the notice of DCP (central) Srinivas Gowda, under whose jurisdiction Sadashivanagar police station falls. Before contacting Srinivas Gowda, Shetty carried out an investigation into the allegations and found that something had gone wrong.

"A joint inquiry by the two DCPs revealed that the five policemen had indeed taken money — Rs 3.2 lakh — from the businessman. Though the SIs claimed the businessman was into cricket betting racket and the amount was seized from him, they failed to establish it with evidence," a senior cop said.

Srinivas Gowda said the five cops are under suspension, pending departmental probe.

Youth held for raping teen

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A 24-year-old has been arrested on charges of raping his 17-year-old friend in Byatarayanapura.

Police arrested him on the basis of a complaint filed by the girl, who has also accused three of his friends of rape. Cops registered a case under Pocso Act and are yet to interrogate the other accused.

The survivor told police that the youth had clicked nude pictures of her and taken videos of their private moments. The arrested youth, a daily-wage worker, knew the girl for four years, sources said. "Last month, he clicked nude pictures of me and now he is threatening to upload them on social media if I refuse to marry him," the girl said in her complaint.

Complete roadwork by Nov 1: Min to BBMP

Bengaluru: While inspecting whitetopping works in Malleswaram, minister CN Ashwath Narayan on Saturday instructed BBMP engineers to complete the roadwork between Yeshwantpur Circle and Circle Maramma Temple by November 1. He said the stretch is one of the key junctions linking western Bengaluru with CBD areas and quick completion of work is the need of the hour. TNN

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Doc misbehaves with teen in his clinic, on the run

Bengaluru: Police have formed special teams to trace a doctor in his late 30s who went incommunicado after a 19-year-old student filed a sexual harassment complaint against him recently.

The alleged incident happened when the teen visited his clinic in Chandra Layout, west Bengaluru, in the last week of September and the first week of October seeking treatment for stomach pain.

She told police that on the night of September 28, she went to the clinic along with her mother and the doctor touched her inappropriately. "During the second visit on September 29, he touched my chin while administering glucose. On September 30, I took my brother along. But the doctor sent him outside and asked me to lie down on the bed. When he misbehaved, I resisted. He stopped when I started crying," she stated in the complaint.

She opened up about the incident when her mother asked to consult the doctor again as he was known to them. Irked by this, her brothers vandalised the clinic.

The accused is a resident of Pension Mohalla in Cottonpet and married, police said. TNN

DNA sample report alone can't be taken as gospel truth: HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: If the DNA test comes about against the accused, it will constitute clinching evidence against him for further proceedings. If it is negative i.e., favouring the accused, then the weight of other materials and evidence on record will still have to be considered for corroboration, the high court said.

Refusing to quash proceedings against a 45-year-old KSRTC conductor, who allegedly sexually assaulted a 12-year-old girl in January last year, Justice M Nagaprasanna noted the DNA test report at the best could be used as a corroborative evidence.

"Mere production of DNA sample report in court would not mean that it has to be taken as gospel truth without examination or cross-

MINOR'S RAPE CASE

examination of the doctor who has rendered such an opinion," the judge said.

On the night of January 5, 2021, the petitioner, who is also a relative, allegedly raped the girl when others in the house were asleep. A case was registered only on February 17, 2021 when a doctor confirmed that she was pregnant. Since the girl was just 12 years old, the foetus was removed and the sample sent for DNA analysis.

Pending the DNA report, police filed a chargesheet against the petitioner. During pendency of proceedings, the DNA report was submitted wherein it was opined that the sample of the foetus did not match with the petitioner's blood sample.

The petitioner approached the high court, contending that he was not responsible for the girl becoming pregnant and no such assault had happened.

If the report is favouring the accused, then the weight of other materials and evidence on record will still have to be considered for corroboration, the high court said

'Unpardonable acts'

"If what the 12-year-old child narrated before the magistrate (under section 164 of CrPC) is considered, they are all unpardonable acts on the part of the petitioner unless proved otherwise. The DNA test would exclude the petitioner as father of the child, but cannot discredit what the victim has narrated in her statement that the petitioner had forcibly committed sexual acts on her. There is no reason to disbelieve the testimony of the victim," Justice Nagaprasanna said.

The judge noted that the DNA analysis has emerged in favour of the petitioner, for him not being the biological father. "That would not absolve the petitioner in entirety for the offences so alleged. The DNA sample report given by the analyst has to be confirmed by way of evidence," the judge added.

The petitioner had sought for quashing of the proceedings against him before a special court in Mysuru. The proceedings were initiated for offences punishable under section 376(2)(i)(n) of IPC and also sections 5(j)(ii), 5(l) and 6 of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act-2012, following a complaint filed by the father of the girl.

If DKS and Siddaramaiah work together, Cong will win hands down next yr: Rahul

Says He's OK With Different Viewpoints

S Bhuvaneshwari | TNN

Tumakuru: All India Congress Committee (AICC) leader Rahul Gandhi said on Saturday that if Karnataka party president DK Shivakumar and Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah work together, the party will win the assembly elections hands down next year.

"Everyone in the party understands that to win the assembly elections next year, two of our big leaders have to work as a team, and that is exactly what is happening and that is what is going to happen," Rahul said, addressing his third press conference in the last 31 days during the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Flanked by Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar, Rahul said he is perfectly happy with their different viewpoints. "That's how it should be. Ours is not a fascist party," he said.

On who would be the chief minister if Congress wins the polls, the former AICC president said: "There is no dearth of brilliant leaders in the party. The party will follow due process and appoint one after taking the views of all stakeholders."

However, he added he is certain the Congress will win in 2023 because people are tired of the level of corruption under the BJP government. "They are also disturbed by price rise and unemployment in the state. So, our victory is imminent," he said.

TOI

REACHING OUT: AICC leader Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Tumakuru

On the BJP's allegations that all Congress leaders were out on bail, Rahul shot back: "As we know, BJP and RSS use all government institutions to attack their political rivals. This is the tactic they have been using, and this is how they topple the government..."

He also came down heavily on the BJP and RSS for "spreading hatred and violence" across the country. Rahul alleged that the National Education Policy 2020 has been specially designed to undo everything done in the past 75 years.

The yatra is in its Karnataka leg and marked its 31st day on Saturday by entering Tumukuru district, known as 'Kalpataru Nadu' (land of coconuts), from Mandya. It resumed at 6.40am and ended at Banasandra at 7pm with a five-hour break.

When asked how the rally had changed him as a person, Rahul said he believes in 'tapasya' and wants an element of suffering while interacting with people. "I didn't want the march to be easy. I wanted to do something that would make me suffer. While I am talking to my people, I can share my sufferings. That was the idea. Though it began 31 days ago for me, the learning has not yet begun."

He said the objective of Bharat Jodo Yatra is to bring India together.

"It's not for the 2024 elections. This is to combat the hatred spread by the BJP and RSS, as well as the massive concentration of wealth with a few individuals, which is destroying the Indian economy and leading to rising unemployment and price rise," he said.

Gubbi MLA set to join Cong

Gubbi MLA SR Srinivas, who was expelled from the JD(S), put an end to speculation about his future by joining the Bharat Jodo Yatra. He walked alongside Rahul Gandhi in the yatra.

Dalit leader KT Murali presented a Buddha idol to Rahul and accompanied him along with other leaders in the yatra. Rahul interacted with farmers, women, and youngsters during the course of the march on Saturday.

Break on Oct 17 for AICC president poll

Bharat Jodo Yatra will take a break at Ballari on October 17 in view of the All India Congress Committee presidential poll.

AICC general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh, said the party's central election authority has decided to set up a polling booth at the yatra camp site in Ballari to help delegates cast their ballot. "Around 40 delegates participating in the march who are eligible to vote, including Rahul Gandhi, will do so," Ramesh said, adding that voters only need an ID card to exercise their franchise.

Not against corporates but monopolies: RaGa

▶Continued from page 1

After a gap of 22 years, election to the Congress president's post will be held on October 17 and counting of votes will happen on October 19.

'No CM can refuse Adani's investment in Rajasthan'

In response to Gautam Adani's promising investments of over Rs 60,000 crore in Congress-ruled Rajasthan, Rahul said his party had not given preferential treatment to two or three industrialists and insisted he was not against corporates but monopolies.

"No chief minister can refuse Adani's Rs 60,000 crore investment in Rajasthan," Rahul said, adding: "I am not against corporates. My opposition is to two, three or four large businesses being politically assisted in monopolising every single business in this country." Rahul's clarification came a day after Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and Adani showered praise on one another at the investors' summit in the state.

'Not a fascist party'

Rahul blamed BJP for spreading hatred and violence in the country, saying he will fight anybody who does so. "We are not a fascist party. We are a party that believes in conversation and welcomes different viewpoints. We know that in order to win elections, we will have to work as a team," he said.

The Wayanad MP pointed out: "Our Constitution says that Bharat is a union of states. It means that all our languages, states and traditions have an equally important space. Spreading hatred and violence is an anti-national act..."

"I always stand for certain ideals. That, of course, disturbs BJP, RSS and other forces. Thousands of crores of media money or media energy has been spent in trying to portray me as untruthful and wrong," Rahul alleged.

Gowda attends rally after 5 months, says HDK will be CM

JD(S) supremo HD Deve Gowda and former CM HD Kumaraswamy address a public rally at Basavanagudi in Bengaluru on Saturday

Bengaluru: Former Prime Minister and JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda on Saturday predicted that his party will come to power in Karnataka and his son HD Kumaraswamy will be chief minister again.

Gowda made his first public appearance after a gap of five months owing to health issues. He took part in the valedictory of the party's Janata Mitra programme in Bengaluru. The programme was launched in July to highlight the contribution of JD(S) to the city's development.

"Take it from me. The JD(S) will come to power soon and Kumaraswamy will become CM again. Nobody should have any doubts about it," Gowda said. The former PM said he hasn't yet fully recovered but would still tour the state and build the party.

Kumaraswamy appealed to Bengalureans to vote for his party in the upcoming BBMP and assembly elections. "I will dissolve JD(S) and retire from politics if I do not solve the city's infrastructure problems," he said. TNN

'Therapist' had 15 online profiles

▶Continued from page 1

During a chat when the techie mentioned that he was stressed, she told him that she was a wellness therapist and directed him to her Instagram page. She claimed that she would provide therapy for the mind, body and soul through classes. Thereafter, she held several classes and the complainant transferred money.

However, things got messy when the techie evinced interest in meeting her. She refused and then blocked him alleging he was sending her lewd messages and pornographic content.

Following this incident, the techie started checking for her online credentials only to learn that she had 15 different profiles on Instagram and other social media platforms. He lodged a complaint with Bengaluru North CEN police station. The woman approached the court stating that the proceedings against her be quashed as it was the techie who had approached her for his well-being and had voluntarily transferred money after being satisfied with her sessions. She claimed it is only because she did not respond to his lewd requests that he had registered a complaint against her. The techie stated the first message came from her side under the name 'Rishta' and that she was a conwoman.

Justice M Nagaprasanna refused to quash proceedings against the woman and stated: "It is in public domain that so-called therapies and therapists are mushrooming on social media like Instagram, Twitter or Facebook as the case would be, wherein therapists pose themselves to be in the field of any therapy. It is also in public domain that they are all pseudo-therapists who are "Instagram influencers". The present case concerns psychosomatic therapy or wellness therapy. Therapists of the kind, are many on social media, in reality, they are not bound by ethics or not regulated by norms..."

Full report: toi.in

CM inaugurates Naga Mantapa at Isha centre

Chikkaballapura: Flagging off Isha Foundation's spiritual activities in Karnataka, chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday inaugurated 'Naga Mantapa' in the presence of Sadhguru at the upcoming Isha Yoga Centre. It is on the outskirts of Chikkaballapura, 60km from Bengaluru.

Bommai, accompanied by health minister K Sudhakar, performed arati. The mantap will be open to the public on October 10. Stressing the need to create spiritual infrastructure, Sadhguru said the 112-feet Adiyogi Shiva statue, eight Navagraha temples along with the Bhairavi temple will be set up at the centre. TNN

Cabinet asks dept to study internal quota plea

▶Continued from page 1

Seeking to allay doubts about whether the quota hike will stand legal scrutiny, Bommai said the state has strong grounds to defend it in court. In the Indira Sawhney case, he said the Supreme Court said the 50% ceiling can be breached if quota is inadequate or not proportionate to the population of any community which is far removed from the mainstream of society.

"The Nagamohan Das and Subhash Adi committees also established with data that SCs and STs have less reservation in Karnataka compared to their population and opined that the decision meets all requirements the Supreme Court has prescribed. Our decision is bound to stand in a court of law," the CM added.

The cabinet also decided to implement internal reservation among SCs and STs and directed the law department to study the demand and submit a report. "The Nagamohan Das committee, while recommending a hike in quota for SCs and STs, asked the government to consider the demand for internal reservation. The government has sought a report from the law department," he added.

Meanwhile, Prasannand Puri Swamiji of Valmiki Guru Peetha withdrew his 230-day dharna welcoming the decision to issue a GO.

The government is under pressure from the Madiga sect of the SC community to implement the 2012 A J Sadashiva Commission report that favoured internal reservation. As per the report, 101 sub-sects of SC/STs should be divided into four categories—left wing, right wing, other SCs, and touchables.

MU partially halts paper evaluation

Kevin.Mendonsa@timesgroup.com

Mangaluru: The evaluation department of Mangalore University (MU) has partially halted evaluation of answer scripts of the recent semester exam. Currently, only sixth-semester papers, depending on availability of answer sheets, are being evaluated.

The evaluation began on Monday, but the centres had not received adequate answer scripts. It's learnt that the varsity had not yet completed the answer script coding process. Lecturers part of evaluation were reportedly going to the centres and returning home without work.

In a circular, PL Dharma, registrar (evaluation) said on Saturday that evaluation will continue only for the sixth semester, depending on availability of answer scripts. Classes for the third and fifth semesters will commence on October 10. Considering the future of final-year UG students, it was decided to complete the sixth-semester evaluation at the earliest. The dates of the first and second-year UG evaluations will be notified later.

The Forum of Business Management Teachers criticised MU's decision and said they had suggested alternatives to complete sixth-semester evaluation at the earliest. The delay will hamper regular classes. "We had suggested to MU that evaluation of final-year semester should be completed in three days. However, the varsity was reluctant to follow our advice," said a forum member.

Sources said MU had even mulled over taking up home evaluation. However, evaluators raised objections that the plan was against exam sanctity.

Kodagu gets 3rd elephant camp

Madikeri: Kodagu has got one more elephant camp, the latest one being near Harangi. With this, the number of elephant camps in the hilly district has risen to three. The district already had two camps—one each in Mathigodu and Dubare.

MLA Appachu Ranjan on Saturday inaugurated the newly built arboriculture garden and the new elephant camp on the right bank of Harangi reservoir, a major tourist spot in the district. About 40 acres of land has been reserved for the project. The new camp has come up to develop tourism and to relocate excess elephants from Dubare camp, the MLA said, adding environment-friendly tourism activities will be promoted there. Elephant safari and other activities will begin in a phased manner, he added. TNN

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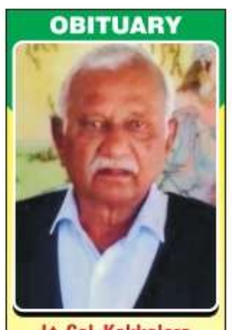

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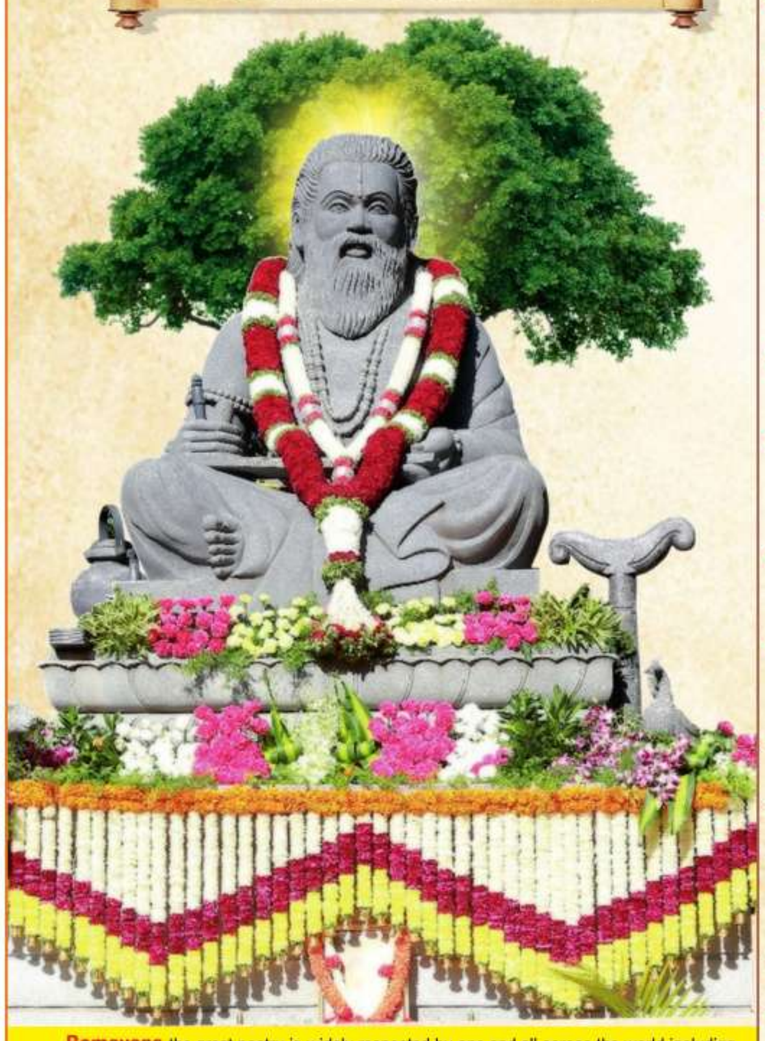

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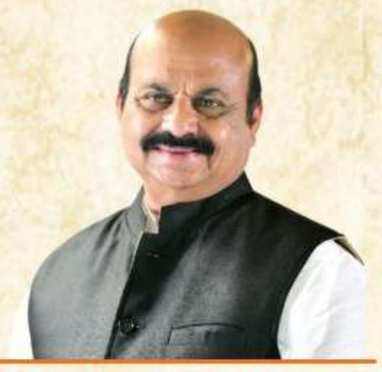

Sri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister

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Education, Training, Social Empowerment, Infrastructure and Economic Development Programmes

- A grant of Rs **8121.87** crore has been earmarked by Hon'ble Chief Minister under the Scheduled Tribe sub-scheme for the current year 2022-23 and various development projects are being implemented by all departments.
- A total grant of Rs.**1683.97** crore has been provided to the Scheduled Castes Welfare Department for the year 2022-23.
- There are **419** hostels and residential schools in the state, of which **39,918** students were being provided admission and supported for high quality education.
- A grant of Rs **225.07** crore is being allocated for scholarships for **6.10** lakh pre-metric/post-metric students.
- An incentive of Rs **100.28** crore is being given to **86,896** students who passed in first class in the first attempt in the SSLC annual examination.
- To encourage higher education among children belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Minorities and other categories, Hon'ble Chief Minister announced a new scheme in the Budget for the current year 2022-23 called **"Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Souhardha Vidyarthi Nilaya"** – a 100 capacity multi-storied complexes being constructed for the first time at Belagavi, Hubballi-Dharwad, Kalaburgi, Mangaluru and Mysuru, the educational centres of the state at a cost of Rs **250** crores.
- For the year 2022-23, steps are being taken to construct own buildings for 70 SC and 30 ST hostels within the limits of 100 Assembly constituencies with the funds provided to the Public Works Department under the SC/ST sub-plan.
- Under the **GOAL 2.0** programme, of Hon'ble Chief Minister, steps are being taken to implement the programme in association with SHGs and NGOs to create awareness among young boys and girls and women of scheduled tribe using the master classes of meta's tools and resources through **Facebook** live stations and Meta Business Coach, automated educational chatboat on **WhatsApp** platform.
- As many as **2,848** houses are being constructed in collaboration with the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation at Rs **3.75** lakh per unit for the genuinely vulnerable tribal communities such as the Jenu Kuruba and Koraga communities.
- A sum of Rs **100** crore has been provided for construction of houses for nomadic, semi-nomadic, vulnerable and hyper-vulnerable communities of Scheduled Tribes through Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation for the year 2022-23.
- Under **Bhagya Jyothi and Kuteera Jyothi** schemes of Hon'ble Chief Minister for the current year 2022-23 free electricity up to 75 units are being provided to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families in rural areas.
- It has been announced to set up outlets in urban areas to ensure competitive price for minor forest produce and handicrafts collected from tribals.
- For the first time, steps are being taken to provide financial assistance of **Rs 50,000** for the purchase of electric three-wheeler goods vehicle worth Rs **1.5 lakh** to promote self-employment and boost self-confidence among the youth belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- Additional nutritious food is being distributed to **46,711** families at a cost of Rs **52** crore under nutritious food scheme in addition to ration food grains for the tribals dwelling in forest and forest border areas.
- Disbursement of incentives under inter-caste/widow/sub-caste marriage of inter-caste/sub-castes and under the programme of marriage of children of Devadasis.
- Construction of CC Roads, drainage and community halls in the habitats of scheduled tribes.

Karnataka Sri Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Limited:

- Under the Land Ownership Scheme, **1210.34** tari/khushki/bagaytu acres of land has been purchased at a cost of Rs.**8923.50** lakhs and a total of **817** landless women agricultural labourers belonging to Scheduled Tribes have been provided with agricultural land and made them land owners.
- Under self-employment, entrepreneurship development scheme, a total of **2,373** beneficiaries have been provided benefits at a cost of Rs **4656.71** lakh.
- Under the self-employment direct loan scheme, the facility amount is being increased from Rs **50,000** to Rs **1,00,000** lakh with a financial target of Rs **300** lakh and a physical target of **300**. Of the said facility amount, Rs.**50000** is a grant-in-aid and Rs.**50,000** is a loan and the loan amount will be borne by the Corporation itself.
- Under the Prerana **(Micro Credit)** Micro Credit Scheme at a cost of Rs **952.20** lakh, a total of **3810** beneficiaries have been benefited.
- Under the **Samagra Ganga Kalyana Yojana,** a total of **1091** beneficiaries have been provided with borewells to irrigate the dry agricultural land at a cost of Rs **2312.44** lakh.
- As many as **305** solar powered street lights have been installed at a cost of Rs **189.93** lakhs in the area inhabited by nomadic, semi-nomadic communities.
- In order to promote entrepreneurship among scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women, 25 percent of the target in self-employment and other programmes is being earmarked in all corporations under the departments.
- Steps have been taken to train **300** women graduates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the prestigious IIM, Bengaluru, to facilitate them to setting up of industries.

Sri B.Sreeramulu, Hon'ble Minister for Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department and Transport, and with **Sri S.V. Ramachandrappa,** President, Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation and Member of Legislative Assembly at the departmental function.

Hearty Welcome to All:

P. S. Kantharaju, K.A.S
Director,
Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department

Kavitha M. Warangal
Managing Director,
Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribal Development Corporation

It is the duty of every citizen to protect and preserve the natural environment including forest, rivers, lakes, and wildlife.

Hearty welcome to all Honourable Union Ministers, Union Ministers of State, Ministers of Karnataka Govt., Members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Vidhana Sabha and Vidhana Parishath, Elected Representatives and Presidents of Boards/Corporations.

Chained at 17, UP woman freed at 53 with MLA's help

Mohammed.Dilshad
@timesgroup.com

Agra: Fifty-three-year-old Sapna Jain spent 36 years of her life bereft of the joys of sunlight, fresh air and freedom. Imprisoned by her father due to an alleged "mental illness", she was shrouded by darkness and shackled in chains.

Sapna, a resident of Mohammadabad village of Firozabad's Tundla, ate meals slid to her through a door and took baths with water thrown across windows. She was finally freed this week, thanks to help extended by former mayor of Agra and BJP MLA from Hathras, Anjula Mahaur.

Mahaur was informed of the case by members of local NGO Sewa Bharti. A group of women from the organisation went to examine the situation after Sapna's father, Girish Chand, passed away recently.

"We found her in a very bad condition. Members of our NGO bathed her and got her some clean clothes," said Nirmala Singh, a senior member of Sewa Bharti. MLA Mauhar, meanwhile, spoke to Sapna's family and got her shifted to a mental health facility in Agra.

21-year-old girl raped in SUV in UP's Sultanpur

Lucknow: A 21-year-old BTech student was allegedly abducted and gangraped in Sultanpur on Friday night. The survivor had reached Sultanpur late on Friday evening and got into an SUV whose driver promised to drop her home in the city. Thereafter, the accused was joined allegedly by two of his associates who gangraped the girl and left her at a deserted spot three hours later.

An FIR has been registered on the complaint of the girl, but the police were yet to arrest any of the accused.

On Friday, she boarded a train at Lucknow and got off at Simri Bazar railway station in Sultanpur around 11 pm. It was raining and there was no conveyance available, the complaint said. Stepping out of the station, she spotted an SUV whose driver offered to drop her home.

On the way, the driver was allegedly joined by two of his associates. The three then took her to a secluded place, held the girl hostage for three hours and took turns to outrage her modesty. TNN

EC bars Thackeray, Shinde camps from using Sena name

Both Factions Can Submit Three Choices

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TOI

The freeze will continue till the poll panel determines which faction is the 'real' Shiv Sena

New Delhi: Guided by the urgency to take an interim call on the ongoing Shiv Sena dispute in view of the upcoming assembly bypoll in Andheri East, the Election Commission on Saturday froze the Sena's reserved poll symbol 'bow and arrow' till such time that it determines which of the two factions – the one headed by Uddhav Thackeray or Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde – should be recognised as the 'real' Shiv Sena.

In an interim order, the poll panel directed that for the purpose of the bypoll and until the final determination of the dispute under Para 15 of the Symbols Order, neither the group led by Thackeray or the one headed by Shinde shall be permitted to use the party name 'Shiv Sena' or its 'bow and arrow' symbol. Also, both the groups shall be known by the names that they choose, which may be, if they so desire, linked to the name of their parent party 'Shiv Sena'. EC further ordered that both the factions shall be allotted different symbols that they may choose from the list of free symbols notified by EC for the purpose of the current bypolls. The separate factions led Thackeray and Shinde have been given time until 1 pm on October 10 to submit to EC three choice for names, in order of their preference, by which they may like to be recognised by the commission. Similarly, they may indicate three symbols from the EC list of free symbols, again in order of their preference, which may be allotted to their candidates.

Incidentally, the EC interim order comes after Thackeray faction, in its reply sent on Saturday to the commission – which had sought its views on Shinde faction's request for allotment of Shiv Sena poll symbol and also necessary documents of support within the legislative and organisational wings of the party – sought 'status quo', stating that the Shinde faction was not intending to field a candidate for the bypoll. A candidate from ally BJP is likely to contest from Andheri East. Both the Thackeray and Shinde factions have claimed exclusive use of the Shiv Sena name and symbol for the bypoll, besides filing documents over the last couple of months to prove the support they respectively enjoy in the legislative and organisation wings of the party.

EC justified its interim order to free the Sena party name and symbol saying that it is duty-bound to ensure that all electoral steps of the upcoming byelection are free of any confusion and contradiction and that its next step is agnostic to the possibility of either of the faction participating in the bypoll.

Recalling that the factions had highlighted that the nomination process for the bypoll has started and shall end on October 14, with one of the groups more insistent on an expeditious decision, the EC said it was evident that the time available was not adequate to ensure the due process – which involves a quasi judicial hearing that involves multiple sittings – required under Para 15 of Symbols Order.

EC order injustice: Thackeray group

Mumbai: The **Uddhav Thackeray**-led Shiv Sena on Saturday termed the Election Commission's order barring the rival factions of the party from using the party name and election symbol in the Andheri East assembly bypoll as "injustice."

The poll body should have taken a decision in a holistic manner rather than passing an interim decision for the bypoll, said Ambadas Danve, Leader of the Opposition in Maharashtra Legislative Council who owes allegiance to the Thackeray group. "This is injustice," he said. As per the EC's interim order, both the Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde factions would not be able to use the party name and election symbol in the bypoll in Mumbai on November 3. The commission asked them to suggest by Monday three name choices for their groups, and also as many free symbols.

The Commission can allocate the name and the symbol to both factions from the options submitted. PTI

We will get symbol, says Shinde faction

Mumbai: The EC verdict came as a boost for the **Eknath Shinde** faction with a moral victory against the Shiv Sena. Senior leader Deepak Kesarkar said, "In a democracy, having a majority is most important. We are confident that by the end, the bow and arrow symbol will be ours. Even now, we managed to argue our case successfully."

He added, "The Shiv Sena had let go of Hindutva and joined hands with the Congress and NCP. It lost its claim to the teachings of Bal Thackeray. That is why they are facing this day," He also claimed that many of the affidavits signed by the party workers in favour of Uddhav Thackeray, were false.

MP Prataprao Jadhav from the Shinde faction said, "Uddhav Thackeray has lost the moral right to lead the party. He left the cause of Hindutva and the marathi manoos and joined hands with the Congress and NCP. Even recently, he did not utter a word against the PFI," he said. TNN

Sitaram Jaipuria Foundation honours life savers across nation

Times News Network

New Delhi: In a bid to recognise the invaluable and inspiring work of life savers across the country, Sitaram Jaipuria Foundation on Saturday organised the first-of-its-kind healthcare awards ceremony in India – "Medical and Healthcare Excellence Awards 2022."

Out of 256 entries received, four doctors were selected across four categories, including Excellence in Medicine and Healthcare Award, Exemplary Leadership in Rural Healthcare Award, Emerging Young Leader in Medicine Award and Chairman's Special Award. The doctors who received the awards are Raman Krishna Kumar, Ashish Satav, Bhavuk Garg, Inderpaul Singh Sehgal and Prakash Narain Tandon.

Dr Randeep Guleria was given a special award for outstanding contribution to Covid Care. Speaking on the occasion, Ashok Jaipuria, the foundation's chairman and chairman and MD of Cosmo First Ltd, said, "Sitaram Jaipuria was an outstanding humanitarian who led an exemplary and inspirational life and so are our doctors who are on a continuous endeavour to safeguard the people of the nation. It is widely said that 'a doctor is a visible God on earth' as through times of pain and illness, we turn with faith to these practitioners of medicine to comfort and cure us."

Jaipuria further added, "Many a times, they are put to test at the cost of their own lives and families for the sake of humanity and societies they serve.

However, the exemplary work of the majority of these brave hearts goes unnoticed.

Their contribution cannot be thanked enough, but to recognise their talent and bring them the deserved esteem is what we can do at our best. Through medical and healthcare excellence awards, we honour their presence in our lives and this will be our continuous effort to spotlight medical talents." As a token of recognition, monetary awards worth Rs 1.2 crore were presented to the winners for their contributions. Actor and cancer survivor Sonali Bendre was the chief guest on the occasion.

Cong forgot Northeast was India, Modi united it: Shah

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PTI

Union home minister Amit Shah, BJP national president JP Nadda and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma during the inauguration of the newly constructed state BJP office in Guwahati on Saturday

Guwahati: Union home minister Amit Shah attacked Congress here on Saturday, claiming that the party had virtually written off the entire Northeast as a part of India ever since the country's first PM, Jawaharlal Nehru, gave up on Assam during the 1962 Chinese invasion, while PM Narendra Modi has worked to bridge the gap between the Northeast and the rest of India.

Laying the ground for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections at a gathering of an estimated 45,000 BJP workers of Assam, Shah, in reference to Rahul Gandhi's "Bharat Jodo Yatra", said those who want to unite India should look at northeast India, which is an example of "Bharat jodo" through peace and development brought by PM Modi.

"During the war with China in 1962, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru-ji said bye-bye Assam. Congress forgot that the entire Northeast is also a part of India," Shah said, a reference to the order to the Indian Army to retreat from a vast swathe of the region in the face of the Chinese invaders.

Shah pointed out that during its years in government Congress remained a silent spectator to the disintegration of the Northeast.

"Whenever the history of the Northeast is written, historians will be forced to etch the name of PM Narendra Modi and BJP in golden letters," Shah said.

CJI's proposal opposed by two judges on two counts

▶ Continued from page 1

An attempt was made in 2015 to recommend names with 3-2 majority, but it was aborted as the Centre remained firm that recommendation for SC judge appointment must have concurrence of at least four collegium members. Most former CJIs told TOI that they had never sent a recommendation, which had support of only three judges in the collegium, to the government.

The CJI's proposal is opposed by two judges on two counts — it is improper to seek consent for appointments to the highest court without deliberations in a physical meeting and the CJI is disabled from holding collegium meetings as he has less than a month to retire. CJI Lalit retires on November 8. The CJI's proposal was circulated among the other four collegium members instead of holding deliberations in a customary physical meeting.

The factors that could impede CJI Lalit from calling a collegium meeting is that he has less than a month to retire, a rule which he himself had framed on August 1 to disable then CJI NV Ramana from holding such meetings as he was to retire on August 26. Justice Lalit had even plainly told CJI Ramana that he would not attend such a collegium meeting even if it was called.

Justice Lalit had written the letter two days before the government wrote to CJI Ramana seeking recommendation of the name of his successor. The government's letter was delivered at CJI's office at 9.30 pm on August 3. Less than 12 hours later, CJI Ramana recommended Justice Lalit's name as his successor. Collegium meetings were held after Justice Lalit took oath as CJI on August 27.

Besides the time factor, what stands in the way of CJI Lalit from holding the collegium meeting is that the Centre has already requested him to name his successor, in this case it would be the most senior judge Justice D Y Chandrachud.

Adani, Ambani, will welcome all: Raj CM

▶ Continued from page 1

At a press conference stop of his Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul was asked about the investments announced in Gehlot's presence by Gautam Adani, "the world's second richest man", who has been the butt of his attacks as an alleged beneficiary of PM Modi's patronage. A visibly pleased Rajasthan CM thanked the leader of the Adani Group for his commitment to invest in Rajasthan, besides congratulating him for becoming the "second richest man in the world".

CM Gehlot himself lashed out at the criticism from BJP functionaries. "In such a situation, why do they (BJP) want to create a hurdle? I condemn these people. They talked about Gautam Adani yesterday (Friday). Be it Gautam Adani or any Adani, or Ambani or Amit Shah's son Jay Shah, we will welcome all of them here. We want employment, we want investment," he said.

BJP: Rahul's stand height of hypocrisy

BJP said that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's stand about top industrialists of the country marked the "height of hypocrisy" as he considers it a "sell out" when a corporate makes investments in a non-Congress ruled state but hails similar commitments in Congress-ruled state. TNN

Interestingly, AICC spokesman Jairam Ramesh tried to block the question on Adani by saying that only yatra-related queries should be asked. But Rahul intervened to say that he wanted to reply to the question, and then insisted on giving the answer in Hindi and English both. Rahul has relentlessly tried to link the growth of "Ambanis and Adani" to the crony capitalism being allegedly promoted by Modi government.

Some passengers were sleeping on floor of the bus

▶ Continued from page 1

Some were sleeping on the floor of the bus in the aisle while a few others were travelling in the driver's cabin.

The bus had left Yavatmal on Friday night for Mumbai and was coming via Nashik.

The accident occurred at the crossing of the ring road that is managed by the Nashik municipal corporation, while the Nashik-Aurangabad highway is maintained by the public works department.

RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA

On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India for following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No./ Due Date	Description	Qty. (Nos./Sets)	EMD (Rs.)
1.	12221387 03.11.2022	1.Supply of Bodyside Window Arrgt.	760 Nos.	1,96,930/-
		2.Supply of Emergency Openable Window	470 Nos.	
2.	17221167A 31.10.2022	Set of Spare Interior Fittings for LHB AC Economy Coaches	244 Sets	1,45,230/-
3.	17221249 31.10.2022	Seats for Executive Class AC Chair Car LHB Coach (56 Seater) for Tejas Rake	03 Sets	91,230/-
4.	12221369 31.10.2022	Water Tank Flap Arrgt. for MEMU/ PC 3-Phase MEDHA Coaches	489.00 Nos.	86,260/-
5.	14221125 01.11.2022	Stress Relieving, Shot Blasting, Painting and Machining & Transportation of Bogie Frame for IR-FIAT-Bogies	529 Nos.	9,73,780/-
6.	14221144 01.11.2022	Light Weight Body Filter	16514 Kgs	88,470/-
7.	14221119 02.11.2022	Fleet Graphics (02 Types)	848 Nos. 226 Nos.	20,00,000/-
8.	14221133 03.11.2022	Aluminium Chequred Sheet	30000 Kgs	2,27,980/-
9.	12221361 02.11.2022	1. Fixing arrangement of Rolling Shutter Assembly for 3-Phase MEMU/PC Coaches	413.00 Nos.	1,57,940/-
		2. Fixing arrangement of Rolling Shutter Assembly for 3-Phase MEMU/DMC Coaches	55 Nos.	
10.	01221237 03.11.2022	Security Disc.	7433 Nos.	NIL
11.	01221238 15.11.2022	Bearing	3447 Nos.	NIL
12.	01221240 03.11.2022	Rubber Spring Centring	5093 Nos.	66,710/-
13.	05221336 31.10.2022	Set of Roof Elements	2115 Sets	20,00,000/-
14.	02221276 15.11.2022	Capacitor Bank for LHB EOG Type Coaches	562 Nos.	2,85,820/-
15.	02221277 04.11.2022	End Fittings to PG11, 16, 21, 29, 36 & 48	24511 Nos.	1,91,920/-
16.	02221283 22.11.2022	Polymide Flexible Conduits PG11, 16, 21, 36 & 48	183232 Meter	4,49,750/-

1. For details and making on-line bids, visit website **http://ireps.gov.in.** Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF website **http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in.** Class IIIb digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at **http://www.cce.gov.in. 2.** Tenders will close at 14.25 Hrs. on due date and tenders will be opened at 14.30 hrs. Tenders Sr. No. 1 to 09 will be opened at RCF Kapurthala and Sr. No. 10 to 16 will be opened at Tilak Bridge, New Delhi. **3.** For queries, contact IREPS Helpdesk at 011-24102855, 011-24105180 or RCF helpdesk at 011-23378658.

Note: GST Number of RCF is 03AAAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplies made by them.

PCMM

CORRIGENDUM

Tenderers may please note the following changes in 1. Tender No. 02221211 due on 06.10.2022 for Set of Elect. Items for LHB SLRD Coaches. Due Date to be read as 17.10.2022 instead of 06.10.2022. **2.** Tender No. 14221067A due on 10.10.2022 : **i.** Quantity to be read as 615 Sets instead of 726 Sets. **ii.** EMD to be read as Rs. 3,12,060/- instead of Rs. 3,68,380/-. **iii.** Terms & Conditions : **(i)** Eligibility Criteria & Delivery Period has been revised. **(ii)** Specification & Set detail of item has been updated. **3.** Tender No. 12221164A due on 07.10.2022. Due Date to be read as 12.10.2022 instead of 07.10.2022. **All other terms & conditions will remain the same.**

PCMM

Tender No. G-RCF/122/Stores/079/2022-23 **Dated 08.10.2022**

THE NEW INDIA ASSURANCE CO. LTD.

Regd. & Head Office
87, M.G. Road, Fort, Mumbai- 400 001
CIN Number: L66000MH1919GOI000526 | IRDAI Registration Number: 190

The New India Assurance Co. Ltd. invites online offers in two bid systems from interested and eligible vendors for following tenders –

S. NO.	Tender Name	Tender No.	Last date & time of Submission
1.	Request for Proposal (RFP) For Revamping, Redesigning and Maintenance of the Corporate Website.	NIA/HO- IT /Website/10-22/01	02.11.2022, 3:30 PM

The participating vendors have to quote through e-Procurement portal. URL is **https://tenderwizard.com/NIAPROC. Tenders will be accepted through online mode only.** For further details, Addendum/Corrigendum visit our website **https://newindia.co.in**

CM (IT)

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL MANDYA-571401
ದೂ.ಸಂ:– 08232–226749 ಟಾಲ್ ಫ್ರೀ ನಂ:–1800–4253795
ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್:–08232–221617
Website: www.mandyacity.mrc.gov.in
Email: itstaff_ulb_mandya@yahoo.co.in
No:CMC/Mandya/Driver/Security-1/2/2021-22
ದಿನಾಂಕ:28–09–2022

ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (3ನೇ ಕರೆ)
(ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಮಂಡ್ಯ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ಘನತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ವಸ್ತು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಗಾಗಿ ವಾಹನ ಚಾಲಕರು, ಸೆಕ್ಯೂರಿಟಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸೂಪರ್‌ವೈಸರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಪೂರೈಸುವ ಮರುಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಆರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು /ಬಿಡ್ಡರ್‌ಗಳು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳು/ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ (www.mandyacity.mrc.gov.in) ವಿಳಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:08232–226749 ಗೆ ಕರೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅಥವಾ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಶಾಖೆಯಿಂದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮರುಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನುಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in ನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ **ದಿನಾಂಕ:15.10.2022 ಸಂಜೆ 5:00 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗಾಗಿ** ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತಆಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು **ದಿನಾಂಕ:18.10.2022 ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 11:00ಗಂಟೆಗೆ** ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 21.10.2022 ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 11:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ** ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ : 01. ವಿವರ : **ಮಂಡ್ಯ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ಘನತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ವಸ್ತು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಗಾಗಿ ವಾಹನ ಚಾಲಕರುಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಪೂರೈಸುವ ಟೆಂಡರ್.** ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್ : **CMC/Mandya/Drivers-1/2021-22/call-3.** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ : **ರೂ.94.82.** ಇಎಂಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ : **ರೂ.1,89,700/–**
ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ : 02. ವಿವರ : **ಮಂಡ್ಯ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ಘನತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ವಸ್ತು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಗಾಗಿ ಸೆಕ್ಯೂರಿಟಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸೂಪರ್‌ವೈಸರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಪೂರೈಸುವ ಟೆಂಡರ್.** ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್ : **CMC/Mandya/Security-2/ 2021-22/ call-3.** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ : **ರೂ.29.79.** ಇಎಂಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ : **ರೂ.59,600/–**

ಸಹಿ/–ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಸಹಿ/– ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಸನಿ–ಮಂಡ್ಯ/ಎಂಸಿ&ಎ/379/2022–23

Uttar Pradesh Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)
GSTIN: 09AACCU2250P1ZZ, CIN: U85310UP2018SGC102425
Address: SUDA Bhawan, 7/23, Sector-7, Gomati Nagar Extension, Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Medical Supplies Corporation Limited invites application for the following positions on Deputation/ Contractual:

Sr. No.	Designation	Maximum Age Limit (In year)	Vacancy	Category	Mode of Recruitment	Honoraria in INR (Monthly)	Essential Qualification	Post Qualification experience
1	Account officer	45	1	SC	Deputation / Contractual	47600 - 50000	Applicant must be CA (Inter)/IC WA (Inter) or M.COM	Applicant must have 03 years experience in Finance & Accounting

* Interested Candidates must send their application form in the prescribed format along with self attested relevant document by speed post/registered AD from Indian Postal Department by mentioning on the envelop " Application for the (Post Name)" to GM (AHL), SUDA Bhawan 7/23, Sector-7 Gomti Nagar Extention, Lucknow PIN:226010. Applications sent by any other mode shall not be entertained. Submission of Application Starts from September 08, 2022. * The Last Date of Submission of Application is November 07, 2022 at 05:00 PM. * Regular government (Department/Corporations/Institutions) employees with suitable experience on seniority (matrix level) are encouraged to apply on deputation. * Vacancies shall be subject to the State reservation policy of Uttar Pradesh. * Age relaxation for candidate applying on Deputation shall be in accordance to Govt. of UP Service Norms. * Please note July 01 ,2022 shall be taken as a reference date for computing age, qualification, experience etc. Application not received on prescribed format will be rejected. Application format may be download from the website: **www.upmsc.in**

For vacancy notification and other related detailed information please visit www.upmsc.in

Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

No : JDA/EE&TA to Dir.Engg.-I/2022-23/D-215 Dated : 07.10.2022

NOTICE INVITING BID

NIB No. : EE & TA to Dir.Engg.-I/17/2022-23

Bids are invited for works given below in various zones as per details given below :-

S. No.	Zone	UBN No.	Cost of Work (Lacs)	A&F	Nature of Work	Last Date
1.	EE-01	JDA2223WLOB00381	599.70	187/ 2022-23	Development Work of Road and nearby area	27.10.2022

Details are available at Procurement Portal website **www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in**, **www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** and **www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.in**.

Raj. Samwad/C/2022-23/8811 **Executive Engineer & TA to Dir.Engg-I**

E-AUCTION FOR AWARDING OF VINYL WRAPPING CONTRACT OVER TINSUKIA DIVISION

E-Auction for awarding of vinyl wrapping contract mail express trains exterior surface over Tinsukia Division for a period of 03 (Three) years. **Auction Catalogue No.:** TSK-ADVT-TRAIN-01; **Auction Start (All Lots): 12:00** hrs. on **21-10-2022; Rate Unit:** Annual Licensing Fee; **Trips/Days:** 1096; **Maximum Auto Extensions** : 10 Times.

Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Type of Contract
AA/1	ADVT-EFF-128593-22-1(Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	Awarding vinyl wrapping contract exterior surface at Mail express trains in 20503/20504 & 20505/20506 (Dibrugarh-New Delhi-Dibrugarh), 15906/15905 (Dibrugarh-Kannyakumari-Dibrugarh), 15903/15904 (Dibrugarh-Chandigarh-Dibrugarh), 15910/ 15909 (Dibrugarh-Lalgarh-Dibrugarh), 15960/ 15959 & 15962/15961 (Dibrugarh-Howrah-Dibrugarh), 15930/15929 (New Tinsukia-Tambaram-New Tinsukia), 15968/15967 (Ledo-Rangiya-Ledo) & 15928/15927 (New Tinsukia-Rangiya-New Tinsukia), 15934/15933 (New Tinsukia-Amritsar-New Tinsukia) & 22501/ 22502 (New Tinsukia-KSR Bengaluru City - New Tinsukia) Rajdhani/Mail express train over Tinsukia Division.
AA/2	ADVT-EFF-129360-22-1 (Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/3	ADVT-EFF-130039-22-1 (Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/4	ADVT-EFF-130502-22-1(Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/5	ADVT-EFF-130042-22-1(Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/6	ADVT-EFF-129361-22-1 (Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/7	ADVT-EFF-128600-22-1 (Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/8	ADVT-EFF-130041-22-1(Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	
AA/9	ADVT-EFF-129358-22-1(Advertising - Train Exterior (Full Face)	

Date & time of closing of Auction at **13:50** hrs. on **21-10-2022**. Initial Cooling off period is 30 minutes. Successive lots closing interval is 10 minutes. Lot-wise closing Time can be viewed in e-Auction module of IREPS. The auction catalogue has already been published on 30-09-2022 through IREPS website.

Sr. DCM/Tinsukia

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. 29 UBL 2022-23
Dated: 03-10-2022

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites Tenders for the following works:

Name of work	Approx. Value
Hubballi Division : -Toranagallu-Ranjitpura section CTR(P) of exisitng 52kg 90UTS rails on 52kg PSC sleepers with 60kg R260 Rails on 60kg wide base PSC sleepers with 1660 Nos per km density in SL line section from km 1/700-19/0 and 21/0-22/6 Total length of 18.900km between Toranagallu - Ranajitpura Section.	Rs. 9,98,73,413/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 31-10-2022**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination Hubballi
PUB/412/AAD/PRB/SWR/2022-23

S.W.Railways SWRRLY SWRRLY

RBI: Pvt cryptocurrencies undermine financial stability

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A Reserve Bank of India (RBI) concept note on central bank digital currency (CBDC) has flagged risks posed by private cryptocurrencies saying these digital assets undermine India's financial and macroeconomic stability because of their negative consequences for the financial sector.

"Further, a wider proliferation of cryptocurrencies has the potential to diminish monetary authorities' potential to determine and regulate monetary policy and the monetary system of the country which could pose a serious challenge to the stability of the financial system of the country. The central bank has consistently expressed its opposition to private cryptocurrencies and RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had said in June that cryptocurrencies are a clear danger and anything that derives value based on make-believe, without any underlying is just speculation under a sophisticated name.

Authorities are working on measures to regulate cryptocurrencies but the view has been that global cooperation is needed on regulating these entities as measures taken by one country would not be sufficient enough to regulate them. The issue of regulations for cryptocurrencies could figure in next year's G20 deliberations under India's presidency of the group of 20 largest economies of the world and the EU.

The RBI note said private virtual currencies sit at substantial odds to the historical concept of money. They are not commodities or claims on commodities as they have no intrinsic value. "The rapid mushrooming of private cryptocurrencies in the last few years has attempted to challenge the fundamental notion of money as we know it. Claiming the benefits of decentralisation, cryptocurrencies are being hailed as innovation that would usher in de-centralised finance and disrupt the traditional financial system," according to the note.

"The inherent design of cryptocurrencies is more geared to bypass the established and regulated intermediation and control arrangements that play a crucial role of ensuring integrity and stability of the monetary and financial ecosystem," it added.

CHINA EYES LAUNCH

CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCIES (CBDC): GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

- 10 countries have launched a CBDC, the first of which was the Bahamian Sand Dollar in 2020, the latest was Jamaica's JAM-DEX
- Currently, 17 other countries, including China and South Korea, are in the pilot stage and preparing for possible launches
- China, first large economy to pilot a CBDC in April 2020, aims for widespread domestic use of the e-CNY by 2023

Globally **60 central banks** have expressed CBDC

As of July 2022, **105 countries** exploring CBDC, covers **95%** of global GDP

FEATURES OF A CBDC

- CBDC is sovereign currency issued by central banks in alignment with their monetary policy
- It appears as a liability on the central bank's balance sheet
- Must be accepted as a medium of payment, legal tender, and a safe store of value by all citizens, enterprises, and government agencies
- Freely convertible against commercial bank money and cash
- Fungible legal tender for which holders need not have a bank account
- Expected to lower the cost of issuance of money and transactions

Source: RBI paper

Chennai biker killed in telecom trench

Chennai: A 37-year-old man was killed when his bike fell into a non-barricaded trench dug to lay cables by a private telecom company in Madurantakam near Chengalpet, 110 km south of Chennai, on Thursday night.

Friends and family of the deceased, Naseer, 37, staged a flash protest on the Chennai-Tiruchi national highway near Pavinjur village near Madurantakam on Friday demanding action against the telecom company. TNN

Plea seeks ban on Adipurush

New Delhi: A petition has been filed in Delhi's Tis Hazari court seeking a ban on Prabhas-starrer pan-India Adipurush and a stay on its recently released teaser, alleging distortion of the Ramayan and inaccurate portrayal of its characters by its makers.

The petition filed by Raj Gaurav, a lawyer, said the teaser/promo of the movie is "atrocious, wicked and diabolical" and sought a permanent injunction on the film in its present form. TNN

MISSING

A Family named Usha 58/22, Arunkumar 32/22, Kavya 20/22, Viyadya 2/22, Soumya 35/22, Sreeharilal @ Lalu, Haripriya 10/22, Sreepriya 6/22 Kaimaparambil house, Sunamicolony desom, Azhikode Village, Thrissur district where photo is given above as missing from there house at Azhikode on 03.08.2022 at 20.30 hrs.

The case is still under investigation after registering Crime 820/2022 U/S 57 of KP Act of Kodungallur Police Station in Thrissur Dist. Kerala.

If any person receives any information in regard to the aforesaid Persons, He may inform the same to the nearest Police Station or Police Control Room or any of under mentioned officers where mobile number is gives against each.

1) Deputysupdt. of Police Kodungallur - 9497940874
2) Insepector of Police, SHO, Kodungallur - 9497987143
3) Sub Inspector of Police, Kodungallur - 9497980539
4) Kodungallur Police station -0480 2800621

RO NO : 2423/F2/2022/I&PRD

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Government of India
Indian Institute of Information Technology, Una [HP]

DATE EXTENSION NOTICE

Please refer website Advt. No. IIITU/FR-IV/Professor /2022-889 dated 01, Sept.'22. "Last date to submit the application for the post of Professor is extended till **26 October 2022.** Visit Institute website **www.iiitu.ac.in** for more details." **Director**

National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTTR)
Ministry of Education, Government of India
Taramani, Chennai – 600 113

Advt.No.03/2022-23

PG ADMISSIONS 2022 – 2023

The premier national institution invites applications for admission in the following Full-Time Post Graduate programmes in Engineering for the Academic Year 2022 - 2023

1. M.E. Infrastructure Engineering and Management
2. M.E. Electronics and Communication Engineering (Industry Integrated)
3. M.E. Multimedia Technology
4. M.E. Energy Engineering

Interested Eligible Candidates with TANCET 2022 Score or GATE 2020/2021/2022 Score and good academic record can apply through the following link :
https://forms.gle/axtc2cjxR2s8nFYc8
(Also available in the website **www.nitttrc.ac.in**)
Stipend Available for GATE and TANCET Qualified Candidates (Conditions Apply).
Last Date for Submission of Online Application is on or before 21st October, 2022

SCAN QR TO APPLY ONLINE

Email: casr@nitttrc.edu.in Phone: 044-22545436/61

Indian Council of Social Science Research
(An Autonomous Institution of Ministry of Education, Govt of India)

ICSSR invites applications from the eminent social science scholars with sufficient research and administrative experience for the position of:

MEMBER- SECRETARY

The post carries the pay in the level 13-A (Rs. 131100-216600) and other admissible allowances. The appointment will be on a tenure basis for three years, extendable by another three years. The pay protection for the candidates selected on deputation will be given as per the rules.

Applications should be sent to the Chairman, ICSSR, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi 110067 within thirty days of the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News.

For details, please refer our website **www.icssr.org**

SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE
An "Institution of National Importance"
under an Act of Parliament
(Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
4, Block-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi - 110 002
Tel: 011-23702382-80, Fax: 011-23702383 www.spa.ac.in.

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Applications are invited from Indian Nationals for the **full-time regular faculty positions** of 09 Professors (Level-14), 04 Associate Professors (Level-13A1) & 16 Assistant Professors (Level-10) in the School. For details regarding qualifications, etc. please refer the SPA, New Delhi website **www.spa.ac.in**
Last Date for submission of Application is 21 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News.

REGISTRAR

सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल इंटरनेशनल स्कूल ऑफ टेक्सटाइल्स एंड मैनेजमेंट
SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
International School of Textiles & Management
Autonomous Institute, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India
1483, Avinashi Road, Peelamedu, **COIMBATORE** – 641004
Ph : 0422 – 2571675, 2592205

WANTED

Sl.No.	Name of the Post	Specialization	No. of Posts
1	Asst. Professor	Management	03
2.	Asst. Professor	Textiles & Apparel	03
3.	Asst. Professor	Business Analytics	01
4.	Lecturer	English	01
5.	Admission cum Placement & Training Officer		01

For qualification, experience, application and other details visit website: **www.svpitm.ac.in**. Last date for receipt of applications - 15 days from the date of advertisement. Director

HELP US FOR DEEPAVALI

SIVANANDA GURUKULAM
Home for Orphan Children & Elders, seeking your support
To Contribute via Cheque / DD. In Favour of :
"SIVANANDA SARASWATHI SEVASHRAM"
4/20, Kambar Street, East Tambaram, Chennai - 600059
To Contribute Online
You can Contribute via PayTM, Google Pay, PhonePe, BHIM, Amazon Pay etc to our UPI ID :
BuildHope@HDFCbank
For more ways like Credit Card, Debit Card, Netbanking, NEFT/RTGS/IMPS etc., please visit:
www.BuildHope.org/donate
Or give us a missed call at **(044) 4026 3626**
Donations are exempted from IT under section 80G.
Our Email ID: info@BuildHope.org

h-13
Ref. No: SO/II/2022-23/79/456 Date : 07.10.2022
Startup Odisha (2nd Floor, Tower-A, Odisha Startup Incubation Centre (O-Hub), Special Economic Zone, Infocity, Patia, Bhubaneswar-751024)

Invitation of application for the Internship Programme of Startup Odisha (2022-23)

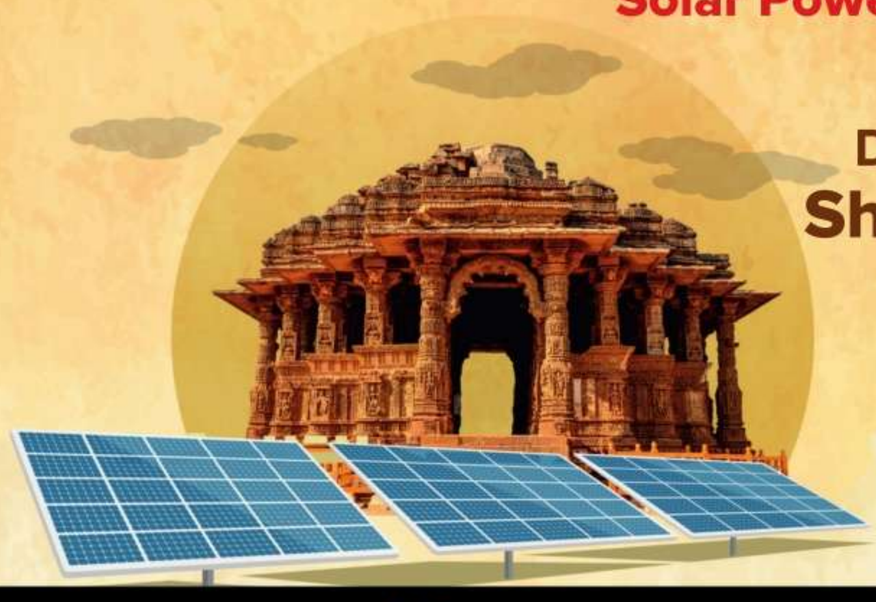
Startup Odisha invites applications from students/ scholars those who are pursuing or have completed their Graduation/ Post Graduation for the "Internship Programme of Startup Odisha (2022-2023)" for a period of 6 months to 1 year at Startup Odisha, Bhubaneswar. Interested candidates may download details of advertisement and apply/register for the internship programme by visiting the official website of Startup Odisha-**www.startupodisha.gov.in** (career menu) from 09.10.2022. The last date to register/apply for the internship programme is 28.10.2022 by 11:59 PM. The selection of the interns will be made on merit of academic performance, extra-curricular achievement, the presentation submitted in the application form and personal interview. The applicants are further advised to keep referring Startup Odisha website (**www.startupodisha.gov.in**) for any updates in reference to this advertisement.

Sd/-
(Evangelist, STARTUP ODISHA)
OIPR - 43007/11/0014/22-23

Government of Gujarat

Solar Power fuelling India's sprint towards Self Reliance

India's First 24x7 BESS based
Solar Powered Village: Modhera - 'Suryagram'



Dedication to the nation by
Shri Narendrabhai Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Date: 9th October 2022
Time: 3 PM

Venue: Delvada Khant, Mahesana-Becharaji Highway, Ta.: Becharaji, Dist.: Mahesana, Gujarat

Solarisation of Modhera Sun Temple and Town Project to provide round the clock (24 x 7) solar energy to Modhera village through 6MW Solar Power project integrated with **15MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)** set up at Village Sujjanpura, District Mahesana, approx. 6 kms away from famous Sun Temple, Modhera.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE PROJECT

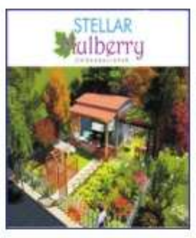
- Modhera village is the first modern village having solar based ultra-modern electric vehicle charging station
- Modhera village has India's first grid connected MWh Scale Battery Energy Storage System
- At Modhera village 1300+ houses have own rooftop solar system, whereby they are saving 60% to 100 % in electricity bill.

TIMES interact
Connecting People, Connecting Needs.

To book your ad
Logon to: ads.timesgroup.com
or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free)
Scan QR Code

real estate

FARM HOUSES



DASARA offer! Apprd Gated community plots with a WEEKEND HOME & all amenities @ Ckblpr Rs.16.99 lacs. Call 8123246624 / 7204711518

RS.80 LAKHS. Quarter Acre Plot. 1,400 sft House. 1 hour from Bengaluru. Bank loan available. Contact - 9900 855 755

FARM Land gated community MUST SEE on a 4000' High Hill Near Denkanikottai & 1.5hr drive from Attibelle/ 20 Cents at 25 Lacs, 290/Sft, 9845442142.

LAND FOR SALE

AGRICULTURAL FARM Land Near Ramanagar, 20 Guntas, 9 KM from Highway, Tar Road, 55 lakhs, Clear Title. Owner - 9900115519

35 Bigha plain land on road at DC Nagar, Agartala Tripura.Suitable for school,college industry etc. Immediate sale. Ph: 8974838776 / 9436120666

20 cents of land for sale in Belagondapalli, Hosur, opp to Taal airport contact 8217803392.owner property.

REQUIRE land for JD / Purchase for layout and apartments. Agents, please excuse. Contact 9663614614

PLOTS FOR SALE

SALE prime commercial BDA corner site HRBR layout 1st block banaswadi 3485 sqft on 80 ft main road near ring road clear title8431154749/9986202924

SALE Ideal peaceful Sea view Plot rectangular 22 k sq ft Kottakuppam Pondicherry Ph 97 90 96 59 91

Avaliable On Rent/ Sale
Industrial Plot
14500 Sq Ft
in J Block, MIDC Bhosari, Pune. with or without Machinery RCC Construction
Machine Shop 5000 Sq.ft. with Separate Storage department having with Godrej Storage Compactor & Fully Furnished
Office Space 5000 Sq.ft. with invertor Backup Electricity Sanctioned 65 HP+65 HP
Call : S. Kulkarni
9422 086 736

BANGALORE PROPERTIES

AIRPORT ROAD

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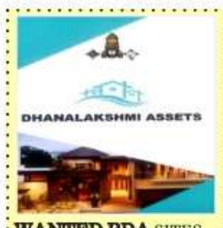
SALE BDA 30x40 Anjanapura 1st Block 67 lakh and JP Nagara 4th A Block 30x40 Near Narayan Nagar 7000/- Contact 9620041313 / 9945373839

ANJANAPURA 11th Block 40X60 South Facing BDA allotted Site for Sale, price 6800/- Sqft. Near Bannerghatta Road. Call Owner: 9980041072.

BANASHANKARI



WANTED BDA SITES IN Banashankari 6th Stage, Any Dimensions Immediate Settlement 9535575774 / 9343668888.

1710 Square Feet Independent BDA 3 Storey House FOR SALE Banashankari Second Stage Near BNM College. Genuine Buyers Call : 9845465880

BANASHANKARI 6th Stg- Surroundings BDA- Available/ Wanted- 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 Sites "BRINDAVAN ASSOCIATES" Call- 9980863245.

SALE BDA 30x40 Banasankari 6th Stage 10th Block North 70 Lakh also 7th Block 30x40, 86 Lakhs. Contact 9620041313 / 9900999969

SALE Plot at Banashankari 2nd Stage; Plot area approx. 2,300 Sq. ft. Brokers Excuse; 90199 17199

BANASWADI

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HOSKOTE

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SITE Sale. Nadapradhu Kempegowda BDA Layout 3rd Block F Sector 100ft Main Road South and North Adjacent 40X60 Two Sites: 9342552428

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How Radha came after mummy got nani's womb

With a donor womb, many women who couldn't conceive can now experience pregnancy, motherhood

Umesh.Isalkar@timesgroup.com

When Sushila Valand wraps her arms around her daughter Meenakshi and granddaughter Radha, she is holding offspring of her own womb, born 24 years apart. It's a medical miracle.

Meenakshi struggled with miscarriages and a scarred, dysfunctional uterus for some years after her marriage. Motherhood seemed closed to her until a womb transplant with Sushila's donated uterus changed her life. The operation was done at Pune's Galaxy Care Hospital in 2017, and Radha arrived a year later, on October 18, 2018. She was Asia's first and the world's 12th baby born to a uterus recipient.

"Radha has given us hope and happiness, and a purpose to our lives," Meenakshi, a 28-year-old beautician from Vadodara, said.

Beyond Surrogacy, Adoption

Five years after Meenakshi's surgery, womb transplant has become the biggest hope of many women struggling with marriage woes, deep inferiority complexes and heartbreak stemming from a dysfunctional or nonexistent uterus.

They have chosen the complex procedure over surrogacy and adoption, especially since India banned commercial surrogacy in 2021, and now allows it only in the family.

Shubhangi Ghaiwat, a police constable from Akola in Maharashtra, will undergo a uterus transplant next month. She never had her periods. "My parents took me to a doctor when my four years younger sister started her periods. I was in class 10, and the check-up revealed I could never be a mother. It was devastating."

Shubhangi said her husband married her knowing this. "But Radha's birth kindled our hopes. My mother will donate her uterus. Having our own biological child will fill the void. Besides, the surgeons have assured us the surgery is safe with no threat to life. We will go through with it." She said she would sell a piece of land for the procedure.

Long Wait For Most

Like Shubhangi, 267 women aged 18-35 years are on a waitlist at the Pune hospital. About 60% are from Maharashtra, 30% from Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and the rest from the US, the UK, the UAE, Pakistan, Yemen and Bangladesh. Another 327 unmarried women have approached the hospital but ethical guidelines mandate marriage before the procedure.

Hira Salman and her husband are Peshawar-born British citizens. Hira, who has a non-functional uterus, is on the Pune hospital's waitlist. Her Pakistani mother, who will donate her uterus, has been granted a medical visa.

"I want to have my own child and feel every step of the pregnancy, so I chose womb transplant over adoption and surrogacy," said Hira.

An Abu Dhabi woman who was born without a uterus will receive the organ from her aunt because her mother had died two years ago. Her husband said they had been looking for solutions ever since their marriage six years ago. "Surrogacy is unwelcome in our culture. Adoption is the last resort. But since our dream is to have kids of our own, I am ready to dedicate anything to fulfill it."

The couple said they picked the Pune hospital because they have faith in Indian doctors and the transplant costs a fourth of what it does abroad.

Cheaper, But Not Cheap

Doctors say the surgery costs $90,000-$100,000, or Rs 70 lakh-Rs 80 lakh, abroad, whereas the cost in India is about Rs 20 lakh. The Pune hospital's chief transplant surgeon, Dr Shailesh Puntambekar, said cost is an obstacle and there have been only 11 transplants since 2017 with three women getting pregnant.

Worldwide, only 40% of womb recipients get pregnant as the donors are in their early-50s and their uteruses may have lost the ability to implant an egg. "Currently, two women are pregnant at 12 weeks. We are very hopeful," Dr Puntambekar said.

The Pune hospital team has years of experience and 11 uterine transplants behind it. They first practised on cadavers in Tubingen, Germany, and the US, and learned the protocol from the Swedish team credited with the first transplant in 2014. They did India's first two uterus transplants on May 18 and 19, 2017, and implanted embryos in them in March 2018. It was no mean feat because until then only 25 transplants had been attempted around the world with about 10 successful post-transplant pregnancies.

Meenakshi and Hitesh Valand with their 4-year-old daughter, Radha

More than 267 women aged 18-35 years are on a waitlist at the Pune hospital. About 60% are from Maharashtra, 30% from Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and the rest from the US, the UK, the UAE, Pakistan, Yemen and Bangladesh. Another 327 unmarried women have approached the hospital but ethical guidelines mandate marriage before the procedure.

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FROM TRANSPLANT TO BIRTH

Temporary Organ

A uterus transplant is not permanent. The organ is removed after five years, or when the woman does not want any more children – whichever happens first. This is done to end the recipient's dependence on immunosuppressants or drugs that stop her body from rejecting the foreign organ.

Dr Puntambekar said two women had their uteruses removed, while two others had late rejections after one year as they could not take immunosuppressants. For example, Radha's parents Meenakshi and Hitesh wanted a second child, but the lockdown restrictions came in their way. "Getting immunosuppressants became a challenge in the two years and so I underwent a hysterectomy (uterus removal) as advised by my doctors," Meenakshi said.

Test-Tube Baby

After a successful transplant, the recipient undergoes an IVF procedure. Fertility specialists harvest her eggs, fertilise them, and preserve the resulting embryos. An embryo is implanted one year after the uterus transplant.

During the pandemic, some embryo transfers were also delayed. "The delay in embryo transfer affected the implantation in some. Two women suffered miscarriages after implantation," Dr Puntambekar said.

Caesarean Birth

Women with a transplanted uterus give birth via C-section after 34 weeks, instead of the full 40-week term, because the uterus is transplanted without nerves and they cannot feel any labour pain.

Less Pain, Quick Recovery

With laparoscopy and robotics a womb can be removed and transplanted in 5 hours now, down from 14 earlier. The surgery is less painful and the recovery faster, says Dr Puntambekar. "Around 80% of the retrieval of the uterus is done via keyhole surgery (laparoscopy). The open surgery is towards the tail-end when the surgeons must take out the organ." Most donors do not even require a blood transfusion, he said. "We make a small incision so that vessels supplying blood to the uterus are not squeezed or damaged."

Permissions And Conditions

Since uterine transplant is a live donor surgery, it needs approval from a committee formed by the state government. This committee verifies all the documents of the donor and the recipient and interviews their relatives to establish a close relationship and consent. It also confirms that the woman is married and has uterine problems.

The uterus recipient should be 18-35 years old and married, have healthy ovaries and no major illness. The donor should be less than 55 years old and healthy. She should not have attained menopause, nor have any comorbidities.

Galaxy hospital's gynaecologist Dr Milind Telang said, "We ensure that the donor has completed a family and is donating with an altruistic motive."

This Surat bazaar trades in diamonds on the street

Yagnesh.Mehta@timesgroup.com

Change is the only constant, but not in Surat's oldest diamond market at Mahidharpura. The bazaar that trades in the hardest substance in the world clings hard to its heritage. Brokers clad in white kurta-pyjamas and worn-out chappals walk in the narrow lanes of this bustling market with diamonds in their pockets. Deals worth crores are struck on the street in minutes over 'cutting chai', especially between 2pm and 6pm.

Old-World Charm

Surat's journey to becoming the global headquarters of diamond-polishing started at Mahidharpura. Over the market's 60-plus years, 'Diamond City' has expanded from 10 sq km to 470 sq km, and ultra-luxury skyscrapers have dramatically transformed its skyline. But its main trade remains rooted in tradition. It flourishes in the otla – Gujarati for verandah – of old residential buildings that double as 'conversation space'. Every day, about 5,000 diamond traders and brokers operate from the wooden desks in these otlas; each desk rents for Rs 2,000 a month.

On a busy Wednesday afternoon, diamond trader Babu Kathiriya, 62, spreads tiny white pouches on his desk in an otla. His 6ft x 4ft space has a desk and seating for two. Kathiriya was 15 when he came from Junagadh to become a diamond polisher. After 10 years' experience he became a trader.

As Kathiriya begins to empty the pouches, other traders and brokers huddle around him. Each pouch has details of the diamonds it contains – carats, colour and quality. "I bought a packet of rough pink diamonds for Rs 86,000. Now, I will get them polished, and each polished diamond will fetch lakhs depending on its colour, cut, clarity and carats," said Kathiriya.

Trading Hub, Learning Ground

Today, Surat polishes nine of every 11 diamonds in the world and drives around $25billion of India's diamond exports. Many young men join the Mahidharpura market to gain first-hand experience of diamond trading. Many others enroll at institutes in the city that offer short-term courses in diamond grading, gem identification, and jewellery retailing.

"Though Mahidharpura operates in the traditional manner, it teaches you all the tricks of the trade," said 30-year-old Paresh Gajera, who became a diamond trader like his father. "My 25-year-old cousin recently set up a jewellery unit after trading in diamonds at this market for a few years."

Market Built On Trust

The traders do not maintain bill books or computer spreadsheets. Chitthis (chits) and trust are the medium of transaction. Despite the high-value trade, you won't see cops and private security around. Although the multi-storey air-conditioned offices that traders rent have iron grilles on their doors and windows, no security issue has been reported here in years. After the day's work, the traders and brokers store their diamond pouches and cash in vaults operated by private firms at the market.

In the past, traders had the last word on a diamond's weight and quality but now certifications from reputed laboratories like Gemological Institute of America (GIA) and International Gemological Institute (IGI) are considered.

However, trust remains the bedrock of business. Traders allow brokers to keep the diamonds with them, without payment, for showing to prospective buyers.

"You can strike deals worth crores on the street here – such is the support system the market offers. A trader does not require a plush office to conduct business. It is trust alone that steers the trade," said Dinesh Navadiya, ex-regional chairman, Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

Pravin Kevadiya, a diamond broker who started out at the market around 30 years ago, has expanded his business to Belgium and Dubai. Having studied till Class 10, he now runs a firm with an annual turnover of Rs 2 crore. "I used to pay Rs 12,000 as rent every year to conduct business at an otla in Mahidharpura Bazaar. Although I have my own office now, I still visit the market frequently. You must never forget your roots," said Kevadiya.

CHITTHI PROTOCOL

Here's how deals are struck at the Mahidharpura Bazaar. Prospective buyers are shown rough diamonds. If they are interested, they get them weighed at the market. Then the seller hands over the diamonds to the buyer, who signs a 'chitthi' bearing details like the weight and value of the stone. This chitthi is an informal agreement that remains with the seller. When the buyer pays for the diamonds, the chitthi is torn in front of both parties.

INQUIZITIVE

by JOY BHATTACHARJYA

1. Which English word is derived from the Hindi word 'champu' or 'champi', literally meaning to massage or press?
2. Only one Nobel Prize is awarded outside Sweden. Which one and where?
3. Which country is currently rocked by protests against the custodial death of activist Mahsa Amini?
4. Surya Kumar Yadav just created a record by scoring his 1000th T20 international run in just 574 balls. Which Australian batter's record did he break?
5. The 'Kingdom of the Crystal Skull' was the 4th released film of which well-known film franchise put together by Steven Spielberg and George Lucas?
6. Jamnapari, Beetal, Sirohi, Marwari and Jhakrana are the better-known varieties of which domesticated Indian animal?
7. 'Wetback' is a derogatory term for an illegal immigrant. It originated from illegal Mexican immigrants crossing which river to enter the US?
8. In which Olympic Games did Nadia Comaneci become the first person in history to score a perfect 10 in a gymnastics event?
9. Which modern adventure sport is regarded to have been started on April 1, 1979 at Bristol's Clifton Bridge by five enthusiasts led by David Kirke?
10. On December 31, 1999, on whose unexpected resignation did Vladimir Putin become the acting president of the Russian Federation?

ANSWERS

1 | Shampoo
2 | Nobel Peace Prize, Norway
3 | Iran
4 | Glenn Maxwell (604)
5 | Indiana Jones
6 | Goats
7 | Rio Grande
8 | 1976 Montreal
9 | Bungee jumping
10 | Boris Yeltsin

TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS FOR THE HILLS

In 5 years, a web of ropeways could help end Shimla city's traffic woes

Anand.Bodh
@timesgroup.com

British 'Simla' was famous all over the world. Viceroy Sir John Lawrence, who made it India's summer capital, said, "I spent five months of the year there because I could serve the (East India) Company more laboriously and more effectively than if I had been in the plains."

The Shimla hills are still beautiful but the city has become crowded and its traffic messy. The local population has crossed 3 lakh, there are more than 70,000 registered vehicles, and on top of that about 40 lakh tourists troop in every year.

The rush is beyond the carrying capacity of Shimla's narrow hill roads, and several proposals have been made in the past to decongest them with better public transport. In October 2018, for instance, a Swiss firm made a presentation for a 14-km monorail service between ISBT Tutikandi and Panthaghati. Although it looked good on paper – moving 1,000 people every 20 minutes – the plan did not materialise.

But now, the Himachal Pradesh government has decided to lift some of Shimla's traffic load off the ground with a network of ropeways.

Web Of 5 Lines

The ropeway decision follows from the realisation that some of the public transport solutions that work well in the plains, such as bus rapid transit (BRT), monorail and metro, are not feasible in the hills due to geographical and geotechnical limitations. Hence, the Himachal Pradesh government had sent a proposal to the New Development Bank (NDB) for bilateral funding of the ropeway project.

The Centre's department of economic affairs recently gave in-principle approval for the ropeway project that would start from Taradevi and have infrastructure like smart parking, lifts and escalators to integrate it with the existing transport networks.

The ropeway fare would also be more or less on a par with conventional transportation to encourage local residents to use it rather than their private vehicles. The state's urban development minister, Suresh Bhardwaj, said the fare for journeys of up to 10km would be Rs 50.

"This project will benefit the public in the real sense. Besides saving travel time, it will also be beneficial from the environmental point of view," Bhardwaj said.

The almost 15-km long ropeway is likely to be built in five years, and it will reduce transport emissions in the city. The improved air quality will also have a positive impact on people's health.

Image and map: Manish Choure

An artist's impression of the proposed ropeway

The ropeway decision follows from the realisation that public transport solutions that work well in the plains, are not feasible in the hills due to geographical and geotechnical limitations

...But few takers for Dharamshala cable car

Rohit.Mullick
@timesgroup.com

Pricing could be key to the Shimla ropeway's success. While Himachal urban development minister Suresh Bhardwaj has said the fare will be Rs 50 for journeys of up to 10km, the state's Dharamshala-Mcleodganj ropeway that opened in January this year is prohibitively expensive.

The ropeway's fares, which were already high at Rs 300 and Rs 500 for one-way and return journeys, have been hiked to Rs 425 and Rs 650, respectively.

The Dharamshala ropeway was built in a public-private partnership to decongest roads and make these neighbouring Kangra towns more accessible to tourists. It connects the district headquarters with Mcleodganj, the seat of the Dalai Lama, and has reduced travel time from 35 minutes to 5 minutes.

Although 1 lakh people, mostly tourists, had used the ropeway by June, the traffic problem remains unsolved as locals hardly use it. They say the fares are too high. "The project was meant to boost tourism and decongest traffic. But it has failed on both counts," says Dharamshala-based hotelier Vijay Karan.

"Why would locals pay Rs 425 one-way for the cable car when they can cover the distance by bus for Rs 20? The company should reconsider its fares as they defeat the purpose of the ropeway, which was to decongest the roads," he added.

Rahul Dhiman, president of the Hotels and Restaurants Association of Smart City Dharamshala, said, "Even tourists find the fares steep. I think the charges should be such that they don't pinch the user." Another problem, he pointed out, is that "the ropeway opens at 10am, by which time most businessmen and shopkeepers have reached their shops. The ropeway company had offered passes at lower rates but the timings didn't suit us."

About the hike in fares, officials of Dharamshala Ropeways said they had offered introductory prices at the time of the inauguration. "The fares are comparatively lower than of ropeways elsewhere. Also, we have introduced schemes like monthly passes to encourage more local people to use the ropeway," said a senior executive who didn't want to be named.

DHARAMSHALA-MCLEODGANJ ROUTE

It is a monocable detachable gondola (MDG) system, which means each gondola is attached to a single cable for better support and propulsion. Such systems are used in Brazil, Singapore, Britain, Colombia, etc. The speed of a gondola is around **22kmph**

Ropeway length	Stations	Total gondolas
1.7km	2	18
Hourly capacity	**Travel time**	**Project cost**
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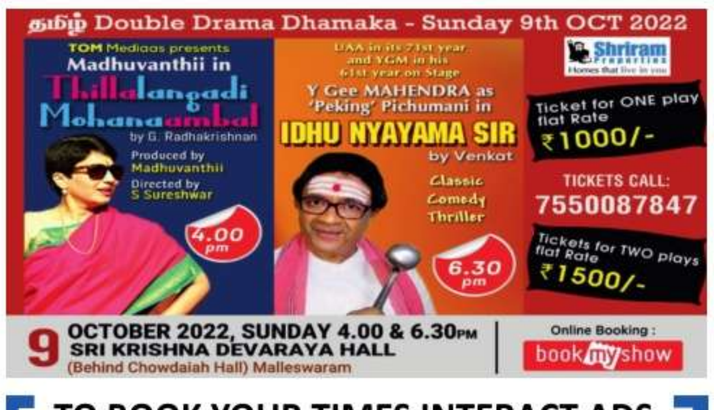

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MATCH for handsome fair Rajput boy, 5'10"/81 MBA. Has own property & business in Mumbai. Caste no bar. No divorcees please. Ph:8651036950 Email:vkrana2306@gmail.com

PUNJABI boy, March 1994/ 5'9" BE MBA, XLRI, Working with Top MNC's Bangalore Office. Affluent Family. Email: matcred123@gmail.com

NRI Pnjbi,divorced,IT Prof. Well stld at Singapore,42/172, Fair,LactoVeg.Pref:Veg,Hindu, Slim,Wkg Prof.>=5'3"Good fmly values. W'ap/c 9971852716

MBBS .MD. Doctor working at Govt Medical Hospital Chandrapur seeks Prof. Qual. girl 9860476706, 8329037965, 9561485139

KAYASTHA Manglik 34yr/6ft MS & MBA from US, working on H1B visa, seeks girl working/studying in US. Ph: 9425024489

Handsome boy,Brahmin Bharadwaj,29yrs/ 5'7", CWA,B.com-Top MNC. Seeking Educated, fair, Pure Vegetarian girl. Req Horoscope
Email at: ibkkanta@gmail.com
Call on: 9073322542 (Whatsapp)

SECOND MARRIAGE

B.E, MBA-IIML, Slim, young lukng,49/5'10",I'less div Del bsd Liberl Agrwl Dfnce fmly, top IT MNC,seeks edu,cultrd girl 38-41 Yr, hvg 1 kid ok. WA 9971662236

ISSUELESS bride invited for NRI male near Pondicherry . Second divorce 58 /176 cm. who should be trusty to stay Protracted. GSM 63857 54610.

BY LANGUAGE

TAMIL

HINDU Mudaliar Groom, Age 44, height - 5'7", HWR-Engineer, BE - ECE, Bangalore, 9886493369, rajdmohan@ outlook.com.

BY NATIONALITY

NRI/ GREEN CARD

Chaurasia, BTech IITK,MS, Phd Ucsd,37/5'11" wkng Los AngelesH1B,VisitNovEnd ,seek ready2relocate wkg girl USA/ India,erly marrg,# 9810676990

WANTED GROOMS

WANTED GROOMS

BY CASTE

AGARWAL - BISA

B.TECH Working MNC Bangalore, Jain Gotra Mittal Girl Jan 1992/5'3" seeks professional working Bangalore. Parents in Lucknow -07081007927

PQM4 Gori,slim,V.b'ful I'less divorcee, Very short marriage Garg girl 87/160,PR Executive top MNC, 25 LPA. # 9818905725 matriadi877@gmail.com

PQSM Apr 85/5'4" fair, slim b'ful Mittal BE Tech Splst B'lore 20 Lpa flxbl 2relocate Jain Maheswari Khandelwal acptd 8851412740, 9303301626

BRAHMIN

WANTED GROOM for Bangalore based Br. daughter BE IT , CCIE / Nov- 1983 / solution Architect - USA Based MNC / 36 LPA / Ph : - 9327325444

31YRS 5'7" Saruparin,B.Tec, M.Tec, PhD Env Sc. Research Associates In Reputed University In Bangalore WhatsApp : 7694833812. Preference MP, CG, Rajasthan, Gujrat, Uttrakhand, HP

ANSHIK Manglik beautiful girl, I'less Div, 33 yrs, 160 cm, PGDM, working in Gurgaon as Sr HR. Pl send details at 9625636997.

PQM4 Brahmin Maanglik fair girl, July'93/147 cm, MBA, Sr. Consultant in EY, CTC: 17 LPA, father ED in PSU, Mob: 9968605176. Caste no bar.

KKB Kanpur V.fair, B'ful Girl 31/5'3" M.Nadi, P.hd from IIT. Seeking IIT,IIM,P.hd, Civil Services, Doctor, CL-1, Professor. M/Wp- 8957662869

KAYASTHA

26/5'4" B'full Smart B.Tech C.S.E Working IT MNC Hyd 7.14 L Seeks Engg/MBA/CA Working in IT/ Bank. 7759928479 / 9431740063

28/5'6" kind-hearted, intelligent, BA.LLB ,LLM, Queen Mary London NCB. contact top services and Elite families 9425025999

SRIV girl 1988/5'4" Beautiful slim MBA Manager Pune 20 LPA. Early marriage. Upper caste acceptable #6307811758 Em: ramsri1911@gmail.com

FEB' 89 born fair 5'5"BE SR. Software Engineer in Banglore seeks BE/ plus MBA groom preferably at Bangalore.Call 7543991775 , 7739484998

KHATRI

MUMBAI based Hindu girl; simple, easy going, Punjabi khatri family. 31/5"6/ PG from London. seeking groom. neelamk99@yahoo.com

SM4 fair,slim,b'ful girl pursuing MDS, 26/5'2", Father Retd.Gazt Off.7983595583

BY COMMUNITY

RAJPUT

SM4 32/5'5" Rajput Girl Assistant Prof at IIT.Looking for a boy with a similar Profile Caste no bar. Mb- 9630003455

BY PROFESSION

DOCTORS

DOCTOR/CA/MBA/ business professional match for North indian MS(OBGY), SS, non vegetarian 92/5.2" 9820596114

SUITABLE match for Guj. Doc girl Dec'91 5'8" jain MDS (ofms). Looking for higher caste Guj. Docs MD MS MDS (ofms). 9825654826

BY RELIGION

MUSLIM

WELL Educated Bangalore Based Sunni Muslim Family is Seeks an alliance for theier Only Daughter (Divorced, Issueless), Father & Mother Govt. Employee, Divorced & Widower (Issueless) are welcome (080-69074922)

SUNNY Muslim Very Affluent Family F/5'3"/28 Slim & B'ful, B.Tec, MBA wkg MNC as M'ngr seeks alliance from well educated well settled Abroad/IND in Metro from educated, cultured Sunny f'mlies. Send B&P. ansmatrimonial@gmail.com

AFFLUENT Bangalore Based Sunni Muslim Family is looking for a Groom for their Only Engineer Daughter, Education completed from Dubai, Interested Families Please Caontact (080-69074922)

31, 5'3" Sunni Muslim girl from Kolkata, PhD in Political Science (Germany) NET cleared with JRF seeks well educated, settled groom in metro cities, 9433339124

SUNNI Muslim Ansari Good looking affluent family 1. 31, 5.6 B.com Hons.& PG from SRCC 2. 28 , 5.6 MBA (IIM) NCR seeks educated grooms biz/service India/ Abroad Mob: 9319040718

MBBS, MD(Anaesth) - 1st yr girl 27 yrs/5'8" father retd. doctor seeks MBBS & MD/MS boy Sunni 9450721552, dr.abdulmonaf@gmail.com

SUNNI Muslim girl 33/5.3. M.S (USA)working as software engineer in USA.divorcee short marriage. seek well educated wkg boy.8305858309

MD med, fair 28/5'6, reputed family of Drs in MH; seeks MD/MS Sunni shaikh/syed boy; 9518538235

SIKH

SUITABLE match for affluent family Punjabi girl 5'3" 25 yrs BA in PyEJ MSc.in Psycology B.Ed looking for a compatible well educated boy Caste no bar Call: 98808 24572

GENERAL

CASTE NO BAR

WANTED PQM, well settled match for Bangalore based Punjabi Girl, 27 years / 166 cm, presentable, charming, MA(Eng) Digital media , contact – 9980065680

DUBAI Settled B'ful Saxena working girl 37/5'4", 50 LPA, looking for a suitable boy working in Dubai. # 8447299220 Em: aloksaxena8@yahoo.co.in

SM4 Fair 5ft 42 yrs Kayastha Ph.D. (Political Sci.) Asstt. Prof. in reputed Univ. Dehradun. Father Retired Group A Officer. Mb-9412087581, Em-vks_seven@rediffmail.com

32/5'3" B'ful fair Jaat, Doing Ph.D (Finance), Father Dr.M.D. w.stt.fmly pref. well.edu.wkng Jaat Boy EM:komalchaudhary 024@gmail.com ,w/c 9310123822

MATCHES for very high status Edu. boys/girls from top industrialist/business/ NRIs/ Royal flys confidential personalized service. Cont- 9821118452

NOV 81 born, 5'5" MCA, 19LPA, Unmarried, Non Manglik, working Mumbai IT Company. Seeks Qlfd service class boy pref. 7879919771.

SM4 Kshatriya girl 1987/5'.2" B.Tech MS Com.Engg USA wrkg remotely from Hyderabad as Lead Pgmr 6304435193

MBA Management Consultant working in Europe 33yrs attractive girl seeks alliance from Europe based South Indian/Maharashtra boys. Mother Keralite Gynaecologist Father Senior Executive Tamil Iyer. 9818072571

COSMOPOLITAN

Gorgeous, Tall, Very Fair, Charming & Soft Spoken. 31yrs, Educated in Top USA College, Managing Own Successful Business, Affluent Distinguished South Delhi Bsd Family. Issueless Annulment. Looking For Cosmopolitan, Tall Min 5'10" Between 31 To 38yrs, well Established, Educated, Widely Travelled Groom From High Status Cultured Business / Industrialist Families And Extremely Well Placed Professionals. open To Relocation.
Email : myproposal3399@gmail.com
W'ap/call 9311343969

SECOND MARRIAGE

WELL settled suitable match for professionally qualified pretty girl July85/5'2, from a renowned reputed family Legally separated#8193857843, 9411809625

SUITABLE match for Marathi girl 39,5'3" MSC, MBA working as class II officer in MP Govt Caste No Bar # 9893683397

BY LANGUAGE

BENGALI

SM4 Bengali girl 36/5'3" B Tech MBA divorcee wkg MNC Mumbai high income Father Ex-GM PSU Educated good family 7506880871 WA

BRAHMIN 26/5'4" M.Sc. (Psy) working Psycologist, Prof. Tattoo artist seeks SM from Edu. Fmly 9828428567

MALAYALI

SUITABLE alliance for Menon girl 27/150 cms completed Mds Orthodontics, working,requires professionally well qualified groom.Pl.contact 9566074556.

PUNJABI

SM4 Fair & Beautiful, 5'5", B Tech, Nov 87. Convent Educated , working in MNC Bengulure. NCR based fmly. WhatsApp 8373906103

PQM for never married beautiful punjabi khatri Anshik manglik girl 34/5'8" MCA wrkg Ggn/30 LPA prof qualified job boy. 8920134768.

TELUGU

ALLIANCE invited from qualified, employed, unmarried Bangalore settled boy for telugu yadava bangalore girl 42 yrs/5'4" MCA nw, nv" whatsapp 9380397152, vijaykumarn2000@rediffmail.com

BY NATIONALITY

NRI/ GREEN CARD

SM4 for USA based never married Hindu girl Aug 85/5'3", Fair, Slim, Masters, Software professional. Contact +919979413156, Email:mandanbhushan@ gmail.com

MATCH for Jat Sikh girl 90,5'5", MSc, MBA from RIT USA, waiting for Canada pr. Boy below35, well educated and employed from USA/ Canada , WhatsApp biodata and pic to 9855552870

SEEKING an internationally educated groom for a Punjabi Khatri, US edu, career focused 29 yr girl settled in Dubai. WA Mother : +97150 9449505

PQM4 Australian born and brought up 30, 5'1" Sindhi Fellow Actuary girl from PQ overseas settled boys. Caste no-bar. Wsp: +61402138757

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ELITE BRIDES WANTED

LINGAYATH, 33, 173 cms, Management Professional, Masters. Lives in Chicago. Father is a Doctor. Family is financially well off with a good net worth. Looking for a like minded and well educated match. Contact: 6366530297

BALIJA, 28, 183 cms, Businessman, Masters. Lives in Bangalore. Belongs to an affluent business family with a good net worth. Looking for an amiable match. Contact: 6366530297

CASTE NO BAR, 33, 191 cms, Businessman, Masters. Lives in Bangalore. Belongs to an affluent business family with a good net worth. Looking for a compatible match. Contact: 6366530297

YADAV, 30, 170 cms, Software Businessman, Bachelors. Lives in Bangalore. Belongs to an affluent business family with a good net worth. Looking for an affable match. Contact: 6366530297

AGAMUDAYAR, 30, 185 cms, Associate Product Manager, Masters from a reputed Institute. Lives in Bangalore. Father is a Retired Person. Looking for a compatible match. Contact: 6366530297

NIYOGI BRAHMIN, 27, 170 cms, Businessman, Masters. Lives in USA. Belongs to an affluent business family with a good net worth. Looking for a like minded match. Contact: 6366530297

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

LINGAYATH, 26, 173 cms, Post Graduate. From a Bangalore based high profile family with very good net worth. Looking for an amiable match from the same community in Bangalore. Contact: 6366530296

ARYA VYSYA, 27, 173 cms, Businesswoman, CA from a Reputed Institute. Lives in Bangalore. Father is an affluent Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for an like minded and well educated match. Contact: 6366530296

SMARTHA BRAHMIN, 26, 163 cms, Entrepreneur, Masters from a Reputed Institute. Lives in Bangalore. Father is an affluent Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for an affable match. Contact: 6366530296

KURUHINA SHETTY, 30, 163 cms, Software Professional, Bachelors. Lives in Bangalore. Father is a Businessman. Family is affluent with a good net worth. Looking for an amiable match. Contact: 6366530296

KAPU, 27, 170 cms, Scientist Writer, Masters from a Reputed Institute. Lives in Bangalore. Father is an affluent Businessman with a good net worth. Looking for Government Employee match from the same community. Contact: 6366530296

CASTE NO BAR, 33, 170 cms, Divorced, Legal Professional, Masters. Lives in Bangalore. Father is a working Professional. Family is affluent with a good net worth. Looking for a suitable match. Contact: 6366530296

Call for Free Consultation ✆ 78239 44999

Ignore doomsters. Let's celebrate the 8-billion milestone

SWAMINOMICS

SWAMINATHAN S ANKLESARIA AIYAR

KID YOU NOT: Rising numbers also mean more brainpower to innovate and solve problems

UN World Population Prospects 2022 predicts that on November 15, global population will cross 8 billion, and during 2023, India's population will overtake China's. This has induced hang-wringing by environmentalists and some members of the ruling establishment who back population control. Billions think the world faces depleting resources and an environmental apocalypse.

Now, for the good news. The world faces increasing abundance, not scarcity. Abundance is rising much faster than population. Hence, 'Superabundance' is the title of Marian Tupy and Gale Pooley's new book. World population is up from 1 billion in 1800 to 8 billion, life expectancy has increased by 45 years, per capita consumption has skyrocketed 14 times, yet all commodities are more abundant (cheaper in real terms). As GDP rises, the commodity component of GDP keeps falling. A smartphone replaces landlines, cameras, newspapers, TVs, encyclopedias and hundreds of other items, a classic example of 'more from less'. This book devastates the alarmists that dominate modern discourse.

The book's hero is economist Julian Simon, who realised that human ingenuity is the greatest resource, not land, food, or minerals. Short-term scarcities will constantly occur, induce more investment and research into alternatives, and hence increase supply, replacing scarcity by abundance. This is how doomsayers like Malthus are constantly disproved.

Environmentalist Paul Ehrlich's 1970 book 'The Population Bomb' said the battle against hunger was lost and hundreds of millions would starve. Happily, the green revolution arrived. Today it feeds thrice the 1970 population at lower real prices.

Simon and Ehrlich had a famous wager on whether scarcity would make five metals costlier between 1980 and 1990. Ehrlich lost badly. Unsurprisingly, he claimed he would be proved right eventually, which has never happened. Astrologers and doomsters remain unrepentant and in demand despite constant fiascos.

Tupy and Pooley have innovated the concept of time-price. They say it is impossible to measure availability of all resources since we simply do not know all that the earth contains. Instead, they measure the hours of work that will earn a person enough to buy one unit of an item. For instance, the time-price for an Indian to buy enough rice for one day has fallen from 7 hours in 1960 to under one hour today. So, abundance — the technical term is 'personal resource abundance multiplier' — has risen seven-fold.

Between 1980 and 2020, world population grew 75% but time-prices of 50 key commodities fell 75%. For every percentage increase in population, global resource abundance increased 8%. That confirms Simon's thesis that people are not a burden on but creators of resources. The more people the world has, the more the number of creative brains, group experiments, and specialisations (which reduces costs remarkably).

Tupy and Pooley analyse data from 1850 onward to paint a comprehensive picture of abundance over time. Their book has lengthy technical sections — it is an expert tome, though very readable. They find abundance is rising by 4% per year, much faster than population.

Global and US living standards rose 14-fold and 24-fold respectively in the last two centuries. Abundance for 26 basic commodities for US blue-collar workers rose 5,762% between 1850 and 2018. Comparing the time-price of one hour of light in 1800 (using candles) with one hour today using LED lights, they found abundance has increased 12 million percent! A 19th century Ehrlich would have predicted that rising population would make lighting prohibitively costly for all but the rich.

High consumption has environmental side-effects. Humans can make terrible errors. What the world needs is not fewer humans but more careful analysis. The biggest hurdles can be governments, corporations, and even environmentalists who cloak inconvenient facts. Many countries block innovation and experimentation. We need political and economic freedom, transparency, and fact-based analysis.

Climate change is a huge challenge. But just seven years after the Paris climate summit, solar and wind energy have become cheaper than coal-based power. Electric vehicles may soon get cheaper than petrol-using ones (lifetime fuel and repair costs are far lower for e-cars). Tata's new e-car costs just $10,000, cheaper than any car in the US.

History shows that rising incomes create not only problems but the brainpower to solve the same problems. Acid rain has been checked, many smoggy cities have become smog-free, once-vanished fish have returned after the cleansing of rivers, forests are expanding where they once shrank. The problems are worse in poorer countries and solved fastest in rich ones. Whatever our environmental problems, population control is not the solution. A smaller population can be as stupid or misled as a large one. Population control is a moral and economic tyranny. The more our numbers, the more we can innovate. Let us celebrate the arrival of the eight billionth human being. Let us celebrate India becoming the most populous nation. ■

India owes Africa a moral duty to ensure that only high quality drugs are exported

*The deaths of 66 children in Gambia due to cough syrup made in Haryana have raised questions about India's drug regulatory regime. In an interview with **Rema Nagarajan**, public health activist **Dinesh S Thakur** and lawyer **Prashant Reddy T**, co-authors of the book 'The Truth Pill: The Myth of Drug Regulation in India', shed light on regulatory gaps and the urgent reforms needed*

FOR THE RECORD

Dinesh S Thakur

Prashant Reddy T

■ You say that you don't believe the claim that only 3% drugs produced in India are substandard. What would be your estimate and what is the basis for it?

DT: You are perhaps referring to the national drug survey conducted in 2016 by the National Institute of Biologicals under the direct supervision of the health ministry, which is also the administrative ministry responsible for the mess that is drug regulation in India. The survey was never independent, and the raw data was never publicly released. In any event, the same survey also says that 10% of all government supply is substandard. Other reports, for example from the CAG, say one in four drugs procured by the Indian Armed Forces Services Depot is substandard.

■ You have often cited a study which said Indian firms like exporting to Africa because regulation is lax there. Wouldn't the onus of the quality of drugs coming into any African country be on the regulators of those countries rather than on manufacturers?

PR: If the onus of quality is only on manufacturers, why have any regulators? The assumption obviously is that regulation is required because manufacturers cannot be trusted. When a drug is being exported, it is only fair that both countries bear the responsibility for quality. In the case of many African countries, drug regulators are not well equipped because of which WHO has tried to create procedures like pre-qualification requirements and COPP certificates. The Indian industry is well aware that these procedures are not very effective and hence, they end up supplying poor quality drugs to these countries knowing full well that they will escape any serious consequences for their actions. India owes Africa a moral duty to ensure that only the highest quality of drugs is exported to the continent.

■ In your opinion, what are the most urgent reforms needed in the regulatory regime?

PR: A lot more transparency in regulation would dramatically improve confidence in the functioning of Indian regulators. The government should publish test reports, inspections reports and files related to drug approvals in a timely manner. A second reform measure in the works since 1954 has been greater centralisation of certain regulatory functions like licensing of manufacturing so that there is greater uniformity across the country. India has a strange system of having 38 regulators (states & UTs) for a common market where drugs seamlessly travel from the jurisdiction of one regulator to another.

■ Doesn't a focus on quality issues exclusively in countries like India and in the third world play into the hands of the multinationals?

PR: As Indians we are obviously going to focus on quality issues in India, be it from Indian companies or MNCs. We have had five mass poisoning events due to adulterated cough syrup since 1972, including one in Jammu in 2020 that killed 12 children or the one in Gurgaon in 1998 which killed 33 children or the recent one in Gambia which killed 66 children. Every person worried about public health in India should question the government and hold it accountable. To be silent while innocent children are dying due to unscrupulous drug companies is unacceptable.

■ There are quality issues that are significant in terms of the impact they would have on people's health and other quality norms which seem to be an attempt to impose prohibitively costly practices. Do you acknowledge a trade-off between more and more stringent quality norms and affordability?

DT: This binary of price vs quality is the reason why India is facing this crisis of drug quality. We have always been clear that quality norms must be led by science. If the science dictates certain tests to ensure quality in the interest of human safety, those tests must be adopted regardless of price. Unfortunately, in India there is a section of activists who believe that quality must be compromised at the altar of price. I ask them, what is the point of a cheap medicine if it does not work?

■ You have said that quality issues are the main reason why doctors do not prescribe generics. Is it fair to tar the entire generics segment with the same brush (and by implication, dub all branded drugs as high quality?)

DT: Of course, not all Indian generics are bad which is why Indian doctors have some faith in those generics that they know from experience are therapeutically effective. The reason that all Indian generics are not effective is because Indian quality norms are not geared toward guaranteeing that all generics (including the branded ones) are equivalent to one another. Take for example bioequivalence and stability testing — these are basic quality measures that were not made mandatory for all Indian generics till 2017 and 2018. It's no surprise then that Indian doctors do not have faith in all generic drugs.

The mystery of why US, home to world's biggest tech cos, can't solve visa backlog

POLITICALLY INCORRECT

SHOBHAA DE

Thank the good Lord I am not a student waiting for a visa to go slog at an American university. With an absurd wait time of 430 days if you are a student applying from Delhi or Mumbai for the all-important interview appointment, had I been a vidyarthi dreaming of an Amrikan degree, my academic planning would have gone for a royal toss. Well, even without being a student, my personal visa story did bug the hell out of me. I wrongly assumed that there wouldn't be a hitch as it was a renewal application. So long could that possibly take? Two months? Three? First, the paperwork itself was daunting and needed the help of an ace professional to complete. Once we had accomplished that task and applied for the visa, we sat back and chilled, thinking this would be just a routine matter. Heck, no! I am still here.

But still the cancellation of my trip to San Francisco to speak at a forum was nothing compared to the tension and agony faced by parents and students who have slaved for years to get into their dream schools in the US after investing serious money to ensure that it happens. I know of families who have broken fixed deposits, sold jewellery, ancestral property, and taken loans to send their children for higher education to America in the hope that their precious investment would pay off down the line.

There are any number of success stories of desi students who've gone on to great glory armed with American qualifications that have inspired them. But then comes this mega letdown.

For those judgmental folks who think there is no need for Indian students to make a beeline for the US, I too have faith in our own schools and colleges, but these are personal choices that parents and children make.

Also, the problem is not just with student visas. It's an even worse scenario when it comes to the B-1 (business) and B-2 (tourism) categories with over two-year delays! Absurd, right? The visa hurdle has impacted thousands of Indians who could not attend important family reunions, graduation ceremonies, religious functions, weddings and other significant events, all because of this monumental backlog of visa applications! The official American explanation that they don't have enough staff to cope with the post-pandemic rush makes zero sense. Surely, American authorities could have prepped for just such an eventuality well in advance.

US secretary of state Anthony Blinken says he is 'extremely sensitive to the issue'. Well, we appreciate that but if some of us are getting interview dates for 2024, we are forced to wonder whether we'll be alive at the time and fit enough to travel. The delays are being euphemistically described as 'hurdles in human mobility'. You bet your bottom dollar it's that and more for those inconvenienced by the avoidable and aggravating visa debacle. Our tough-talking external affairs minister S Jaishankar has flagged the issue with the US. He pointed out the American visa's centrality to education, technology, business and family reunions while telling Indians that he is confident that the US will look at these problems "seriously and positively". But promises are small comfort to those who felt utterly let down and wondered why the American administration, which was capable of unbelievable technology leaps, could not add more India-specific desks and visa officials when they saw this disaster coming.

Amusingly enough, when we knew our trip to San Francisco was definitely off, our hosts helpfully said that by this time next year, your visa will be processed, and the invitation stands! But for this year, we have to live with the disappointment of missing the terrific trip to the West Coast. I had my travel tips and restaurant reccos in place. Then came this bummer!

As for America, they need our best brains, students and tourists for sure. So why are they making us feel as they are doing us a huge favour by letting us in! Some are speculating that this could also be their way of showing us they aren't amused by India's stand in the ongoing Ukraine war. Over to you, Joe Biden... ■

Ujjain temple revival marks a new chapter in exploration of our past

BY INVITATION

AMISH

BHAVNA

HERITAGE REVAMP: Mahakaleshwar temple and its precincts have been transformed as part of the project

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Mahakaleshwar temple project in Ujjain, one of our most ancient cities, on October 11. It is a significant event in India's journey as a civilisational state. You may wonder, why? We present to you two reasons:

The first is faith-based and devotional in content. Mahakaleshwarji is one of the great Jyotirlings dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva. Thousands and, on ritual days, lakhs of devotees gather at the temple to pray to Mahadev. The temple had faced iconoclastic attacks in the past and, in modern times, illegal encroachments around its precinct. Skanda Purana mentions the Rudrasagar lake close to the temple, which had woefully become a shrunken sewage dump.

But now this great temple is rejuvenated. The Madhya Pradesh government cleared encroachments peacefully after discussions with residents, with suitable compensation. It helped that the residents understood the fillip the local economy would receive as a result of the proposed renewal. Traffic decongestion in the core city, parisar expansion and decentralised parking, safety and security hardware and software, intelligent pedestrian circulation and crowd management protocols, coupled with artful aesthetics have combined efficiency with beauty. Green measures include e-rickshaws with adequate charging docks providing noise- and pollution-free quick transport while solar panels meet electricity demand.

Inside too, as I realised during a visit a fortnight ago, it's a breath-taking transformation. Beautiful panels using traditional techniques to depict stories of Lord Shiva are all around. Stunning life-like statues of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati with their children Lord Ganesh and Lord Kartikeya tug at your heartstrings. Sculptures and graven images of Shiv-Parvati vivah, Tripurasura vadh, Tandava swaroop and the Saptarishis beam you into a mystical state. Rudrasagar lake has been restored to its pristine form with waters from the holy Shipra River nearby. Facilities for the thronging pilgrims are state-of-the-art. It's a devotional renaissance.

A second aspect is in play in Ujjain today; a holographic repatterning that is built into the name of this great temple: Mahakaleshwar as Lord Shiva is the Great Lord of Time. Ujjain — Avanti of old — was an ancient centre for scientific research. Celebrated mathematicians and astronomers like Varahamihira, Brahmagupta and Bhaskaracharya travelled from distant regions of India and made Ujjain their home. This was because the city was considered home to the prime, or zero meridian — a reference point for calculation of time by ancient Indian mathematicians. Today, a brass strip at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich in the UK represents zero meridian.

Ujjain is also considered by early astrologers as the spot where the Tropic of Cancer — Karka Rekha — intersects with the zero meridian. During the summer solstice — longest day of the year — the sun is overhead at midday. It is the beginning of the period of Dakshinayana when the Sun God begins his journey south. It was a logical location to anchor calculation of time. No wonder the city was called the navel of the world. The Hindu lunisolar calendar — panchang — uses Ujjain as the zero meridian to this day. Most Hindu homes know the panchang as the eponymous Kaal Nirnay that keeps track of our festivals and ritual days.

In ancient times, the overhead sun on summer solstice fell directly on the shikhar (tip) of the spire atop the grand Mahakaleshwar temple. It might have diverted by now to the nearby Mangal Mandir (temple of Mars). This would occur due to the precession of the earth's axis. Remember that fascinating geography lesson from school — that the earth wobbles on its axis? Broadly though it is the same location as was described in the ancient astronomical text from the 4th century CE: Surya Siddhanta.

This re-infusion of energy into the temple precincts will hopefully also lead to a revival of our sciences and exploration of our ancient texts created in and around Avanti. In the play Julius Caesar, Brutus informs Cassius that there is a "tide in the affairs of men" that must be "taken at the flood". It "leads on to fortune". How beautifully Shakespeare captures the essence of time with those famous words. Time is an energy which, if not used, wastefully dissipates never to return. Time moves inexorably, trapping us in its inevitable forward movement. And yet, if we can seize time and pull it in the vertical direction of this moment, we can grab the baton thrust into our extended hand by our ancestors, and spur our wonderful nation into a glorious future. ■

Amish and Bhavna are authors; their latest book is 'Dharma'

INBOX

Development should trump symbolism

Apropos SA Aiyar's column 'Padyatra is fine...' (ATM, Oct 2), by suggesting that Rahul Gandhi should produce a better mix of religion and politics during his padyatra, the writer is advocating a strategy that has long outlived its utility. People want development. Moreover, the way Rahul handled the events in Rajasthan in the run-up to filing nominations for the party president's elections has given an opportunity to critics to point out that the priority ought to be Congress Jodo. People will judge the party on the stand it takes on various issues and its vision of governance.

Sandeep Nimbark, Ahmedabad

Be a LION, not a GOAT

With reference to Eashan Ghosh's 'The GOAT debate isn't just about...' (ATM, Oct 2), prizes, titles and certificates are what people always yearn for in their profession, studies and sports. However, someone not getting these stars doesn't mean they are unworthy. Anyone who makes an impact in any field and gives the right direction by leading in the right way is a truly deserving winner and can be termed as LION - Leader, Impressive, Optimistic, Noble.

Parul Bhandari, Noida

Ensure safety

Apropos Gauri Pillai's piece 'A new direction for abortion law in India...' (ATM, Oct 2), the Supreme Court order has cast a duty on the state for safety because according to UNFPA's state of the World Population Report 2022, unsafe abortions are the third leading cause of maternal mortality in India, and close to eight women die from causes related to unsafe abortions each day.

Dr LR Murmu , New Delhi

Email your letters to the editor at *sunday.times@timesgroup.com* with 'Sunday Mailbox' in the subject line. Please mention your name and city

Starry hangover: Dadasaheb Phalke awards should look beyond actors

ON SECOND THOUGHTS

AVIJIT GHOSH

Of all the honours bestowed in Indian cinema, the Dadasaheb Phalke award is the jewel in the crown. Since 1969 when it was instituted by the Union ministry for information and broadcasting, the award has been conferred, as the Directorate of Film Festivals website says, for 'outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema'. Since there's just one recipient every year, contenders include producers, directors, writers, actors, cinematographers, music directors, lyricists, singers — basically all those with a singular body of work.

In recent years, though, the committee selecting the awardee has displayed a distinct preference for actors. Since 2017, only those with acting as their primary calling have been its recipients: Vinod Khanna (2017), Amitabh Bachchan (2018), Rajinikanth (2019) and now, Asha Parekh (2020).

This trend started even before that. Between 2011-2020, the award went to actors on eight occasions. It can be justifiably argued though that other than acting, Shashi Kapoor (2014) and Manoj Kumar (2015) excelled in other arenas of filmmaking as well. Kapoor was a rare star who put his heart and money into promoting off-beat cinema. Kumar multi-tasked as an actor, producer, director, writer and editor. His best films are commercial odes to positive nationalism and patriotic consciousness. Soumitra Chatterjee (2011) and Pran (2012) were other actors to receive the award during this period. Socially conscious film director-writer K Vishwanath (2016), who also took to acting late in his career, and producer-director-lyricist Gulzar (2013) are the only exceptions to the trend.

JURY'S OUT: Since 2011, the prestigious award has gone almost entirely to actors, the latest one being Asha Parekh

Films are born out of teamwork. Yet an actor's engagement with a film (unless it is a home production) is far less than that of a director or a producer, who are fundamental to its conceptualisation and execution. Movies, as has been often said before, are essentially a director's medium.

However, their marquee value and box-office appeal makes actors far more recognised and idolised than anyone else. And to that extent, they do play a pivotal role in the "growth", if not "development" of cinema. But to privilege an actor over a producer-director is a fan's view of cinema. The award committee with its luminaries who know the medium inside out should look deeper. Other departments of filmmaking should not be ignored.

It wasn't always like this. In the early years, there was an attempt to strike a balance between different departments. It can be safely said that between 1969-2010, hardly one-third of those conferred the honour can be primarily classified as actors. In fact, between 1997 to 2010, Dev Anand was the only actor-producer-director to receive the award.

After the collapse of the studio system in the 1940s, the independent producer-director (some acted too) was the prime mover in Bombay cinema. The banners they created — Raj Kapoor's RK Films, V Shantaram's Prabhat Films, BR Chopra's BR Films, LV Prasad's Prasad Productions, to name a few — reflected their vision of life and society. Their films impacted mass sensibilities creating a larger ambience for social progress. The award recognised their work. Just like it acknowledged arthouse cinema greats such as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, and Adoor Gopalakrishnan who brought awards and acclaim to Indian cinema on the world stage.

Like its cricket and politics, films and their music reflect India's chaotic rhythm and cadence. Right from the 1950s, India has seamlessly exported its soft power through songs to other parts of South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe. The medium changed from radio with the arrival of audio and video cassettes, but the influence remained. Last year, two siblings from Tanzania became viral sensations for a lip-synced version of 'Raatan Lambiyan' (film: Shershah). The essays in 'Global Bollywood', edited by Sangita Gopal and Sujata Murti, illustrate how the song and dance routines of Indian films have impacted popular culture in various countries. Yet music directors have been largely missing from the awards in recent decades. Bhupen Hazarika — filmmaker, composer, singer — was the last to get it in 1992. That's three decades ago. Only playback singers — Asha Bhonsle (2000), and Manna Dey (2007) — and lyricists — Majrooh Sultanpuri (1993), Pradeep (1997) and Gulzar (2013) — were recipients in the years that followed.

There have been other omissions. No South-based music director has ever received the award. It's time that composers such as Ilaiyaraaja and AR Rahman are considered for it. Both are masters of their art and have pushed the frontiers of popular music creatively and globally.

It is also about time that the contribution of documentary filmmakers is acknowledged. With the popularity of non-fiction storytelling on the rise, this will be in tune with the times. ■

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Can algorithms track productivity?

Human resources is fast becoming an analytics business, as companies track and quantify work output

When Carol Kraemer joined a US-based business software company as its vice-president, she was promised excellent compensation and fully remote work.

But the first pay cheques seemed low. Her new employer, which used monitoring software on her system, paid only for the minutes when the app detected active work. All offline work — doing math problems on paper, reading printouts, thinking, etc — didn't register. Worse, she was in charge of overseeing a dozen people, but mentoring them didn't leave a digital impression. And if she forgot to turn on her time tracker, she had to appeal to be paid at all. When the tracker was on, she said, "you couldn't choose bathroom or coffee moments — you just had to wing it".

Since the dawn of modern offices, workers have orchestrated their actions by watching the clock. Now, more and more, the clock is watching them.

In the US, eight of the 10 largest private employers track productivity metrics of workers. Digital monitoring — like having employees subject to trackers, scores, idle buttons or just quiet time, are constantly accumulating records. Pauses can lead to penalties.

At companies, including JP Morgan, tracking how employees spend their days, from making phone calls to composing emails, has become routine.

UK's Barclays Bank had to scrap sending messages like "Not enough time in the zone yesterday" after they caused an uproar. Even government bodies are no different — New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority told employees they could work remotely one day a week if they agreed to full-time productivity monitoring.

Pics: Getty Images

The measurement problem

The problem often isn't that a monitoring system is in place; it's that the systems are inept at capturing offline activity, unreliable at assessing hard-to-quantify tasks, and prone to undermining the work itself.

"We're in an era of measurement, but we don't know what we should be measuring," said Ryan Fuller, former vice-president for workplace intelligence at Microsoft. Kraemer said she sometimes resorted to doing "busy work that is mindless", just to accumulate clicks. And sure enough, there are videos and guides on social media on how to outsmart the systems, such as a "mouse jiggler", which creates the appearance of activity.

The problem with productivity tracking isn't measurement but knowing what factors should be measured

No way out

Employers and makers of tracking technology say the details may need refining, but the practice of tracking has become valuable — perhaps even inevitable. Tracking, they say, allows managing a company with fairness and clarity. Slackers can be rooted out, industrious workers rewarded.

One of the creators of a productivity software said it would eventually "streamline and redefine the way people work". If technology could optimise productivity, everyone will benefit, the executives said. The company would accomplish more. Workers would perform better, then log off to live their lives.

Even employees stand to benefit, some argue. "Once you see those metrics, those insights, something changes: You realise how much time you waste doing nothing, or just multitasking and not accomplishing stuff," said Federico Mazzoli, co-creator of a tracking algorithm.

Longer hours

But for Kraemer, like many others, workdays grew longer, in part because offline work didn't count, but also because it was nearly impossible to work online with unwavering focus. Taking time to mull or bantering with colleagues turned out to be necessary to both doing her job and getting through the day, even if those moments went unpaid.

"To work 40 hours a week that's counted and paid for, you have to be in front of your computer for 55-60 hours," Kraemer said.

And though there is an option of applying separately for offline work, it's at the discretion of the manager.

Employers who had always sought to get the most out of employees, now finally have a scientific way of getting there. "The people data revolution, predicted for years, has finally arrived," as a Deloitte report had proclaimed in 2018.

— THE NEW YORK TIMES

All about that lump in your neck

Symptom
You have a swelling on the floor of your mouth that's very painful when eating.
It could be An infection of one of your salivary glands, two of which lie below the tongue. Alternatively, you may have a tiny salivary stone blocking the exit from the gland into your mouth.
Cure See a specialist for removal of the stone or ask your doctor for antibiotics for the infection.

Symptom
You have a sore throat, cough and fever. There are lumps about the size of a broad bean down the sides of your neck.
It could be Enlarged lymph nodes caused by a throat infection. These lymph nodes work overtime to prevent a throat (or ear) infection from descending into the chest.
Cure The glands usually shrink in size when your throat infection passes. Sometimes they remain for months or years and you will feel them underneath the skin.

Pic: Getty Images

— DAILY MIRROR

5 reasons to eat pomegranates

1 Pomegranates are a good source of vitamin C, which your body needs to make collagen.
2 They are also a good source of many B-complex vitamins such as vitamin B-5, folates, pyridoxine and vitamin K.
3 They contain essential minerals like calcium, copper, potassium and manganese.
4 Pomegranates are a rich source of insoluble fibres, which help to keep you fuller for longer and regulate bowel function.
5 Pomegranates contain no cholesterol or saturated fats. One hundred grams of the fruit contains only 83 calories.

Pic: Getty Images

— DAILY MIRROR

Regular exercise could protect you from severe illnesses

Conventional wisdom says the best thing you can do to stay healthy is to remain physically active. But does research back this claim?

For decades, scientists have observed that people who are fit and physically active seem to have lower rates of several respiratory tract infections. Even when people who work out do get sick, they tend to have less severe disease.

Recent research suggests this effect extends even to Covid-19. One analysis, published in August in *The British Journal of Sports Medicine*, looked at people who stayed physically active during the pandemic. People who worked out regularly during the lockdowns had a 36 per cent lower risk of hospitalisation and 43 per cent lower risk of dying from Covid-19 as compared to those who weren't active. They also had a lower likelihood of getting infected in the first place.

What the research says

The way exercise boosts immunity is by increasing the circulation of immune cells in your blood. Researchers have found that the contraction and movement of muscles release cytokines, which help direct immune cells to find and fight off infection.

Levels of cytokines and immune cells taper off two or three hours after you stop exercising but your immune system becomes more responsive and is able to catch pathogens faster over time if you work out every day. "Your immune system is primed, and it is in better fighting shape to cope with a viral load at any given time," said David Nieman, a professor of health and exercise science at Appalachian State University, US.

What the research doesn't say

But more research is needed to prove a causal link between exercising and immunity.

The problem is that exercise cannot be measured on a linear scale since people exercise in different ways. Moreover, study participants often self-report the amount and intensity of their workouts, which can often be inaccurate. It's also likely that people who work out regularly share other attributes that can help them fight infections, such as a varied diet, better access to medical care, or they may be tracking their health more closely.

There is also a huge debate about whether too much exercise makes you more susceptible to infection and illness. For instance, marathon runners often get sick after their races, while too much vigorous exercise can overstimulate cytokines.

Exercising without a break also depletes the body's glycogen stores, which for some people could lead to impaired immune function for a few hours or even days.

Still, for the average exerciser, early evidence suggests there may be a protective effect against severe illness.

— THE NEW YORK TIMES

Pic: Getty Images

'Maneater of Champaran' that killed 10 shot after 28-day hunt

3 Bullets Spell End Of T-104 In 7-Hour Op

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Patna: A three-year-old male tiger that went by the tag T-104 and earned infamy as the 'Maneater of Champaran' fell to Bihar police bullets at 3.15pm on Saturday.

It met its end following a 28-day hunt spread over 30sqkm by police sharpshooters and foresters, who were assigned the task after the animal was declared a maneater for its ferocious run along the fringes of Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR).

The hunters — a police special task force team — used stealth, surveillance, stakeouts, and many miles of stalking till they finally got him. T-104 was cut down by three bullets in a seven-hour operation by 400 men and trained elephants after it mauled a woman and her son in the morning in Ramnagar block. Its death brought joy and relief to the villages where it preyed. People were afraid to go out after dark and many have lost family members to the tiger that had developed a taste for easy prey. "The tiger had no fear. It did not try to run away when our teams, including one from Nepal's Chitwan National Park, on elephants surrounded it in a sugarcane field," said chief wildlife warden (Bihar) Prabhat Kumar Gupta, who issued the shoot-on-sight order on Friday.

Another killer tiger on prowl?

Vishwa.Mohan
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New Delhi: All human casualties around Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) in Bihar since May cannot be attributed to a lone tiger as there is perhaps one more maneater on the prowl. A number of deaths could, in fact, be attributed to the one who could still be alive, according to observers who keep a track on human-tiger conflict issues across the country.

Though the Bihar government issued a "shoot at sight" order on Friday for one tiger that was killed a day later, all boots will continue to be on ground to trace the second one and push it inside the forest safely to thwart any similar incidents in the region.

"I got an update from the field director and also interacted with international tiger conservation authority officials. Perhaps, there are two tigers. One which now caused human mortality had a track record of five people getting killed (in the past one month or so). Earlier deaths, I am told, have not been attributed to this particular animal," Rajesh Gopal, secretary general of the Global Tiger Forum, told **TOI** on Saturday.

The first person to die on the fringes of the VTR after a tiger attack was on May 8. Subsequently, there had been reports of human casualties on May 14, May 20 and July 14 before the recent ones on September 12, September 21, October 5, October 7 and October 8. One tiger has been declared maneater under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Gopal, who led several initiatives in wild tiger conservation for over 35 years and had served with the National Tiger Conservation Authority, said invoking such an order by the state was not a rarity.

"I could recall many examples — be it in Pilibhit (UP), Dudhwa (UP), Kanha (MP) and other tiger reserves... Idea is always to capture them alive. But if they go beyond control, then such animals need to be eliminated," he said.

The recent incidents around VTR reflects the larger concerns around human-tiger conflicts which in the past three years has taken 125 lives across the country against the backdrop of rise in the population of the predators.

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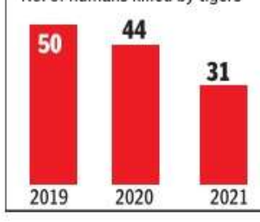
HUMAN-TIGER CONFLICTS

Tiger population doubles in 12 years...

...conflicts lead to human casualties

No. of humans killed by tigers



No. of tiger deaths

Cause	2019	2020	2021
ND	44	20	4
UNP	3	0	2
US	22	71	104

ND- natural death; **UNP-** unnatural not attributed to poaching; **US-** deaths under scrutiny; **P-** poaching

(Source: MoEFCC)

50kg of heroin worth ₹350cr seized from Pak boat in Guj, 6 held

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Gujarat anti-terrorist squad (ATS) seized a Pakistani boat, Al Sakar, with 50kg of heroin worth Rs 350 crore, off the Gujarat coast. The agencies arrested all six crew members of the boat, who are residents of Karachi in the Sindh province of Pakistan.

Officials said the operation was conducted on Friday, when ICG and ATS personnel intercepted the Pakistani boat. The heroin consignment was found concealed in the boat in five gunny bags.

ATS officials said according to their preliminary investigation, the heroin was sent by Pakistan-based drug racketeer Mohammad Kadar, who intended to use the Gujarat coast to supply the narcotic drug to north India and Punjab. An ICG release stated that on Friday night, a Pakistani boat was moving suspiciously in Indian waters, five nautical miles inside the notional International Maritime Boundary Line and 40 nautical miles from Jakhau.

PTI

Coast Guard and Gujarat ATS teams with the seized heroin on Saturday

'Active pilots won't have to be diverted to missile & other units'

▶ Continued from page 1

The WSB will have the four sub-branches: flying (weapon systems operators in twin-seat fighters like Sukhoi-30MKI fighters), remote (operational crews for RPAs and drones), intelligence (information warfare, image and signals intelligence specialists) and surface (mission commanders and operators for missiles, guided and close-in weapons). At present, units of different kinds of air defence and precision-strike missiles as well as UAVs in the IAF are largely commanded and staffed by officers (pilots and navigators) from the flying branch. These range from Russian S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems (380-km range) and Israeli low-level Spyder quick-reaction missiles (15-km range) to the indigenous BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles (290 to 450-km) and Akash area defence missiles (25-km).

"The WSB will be a fully operational and gender-neutral branch of officers who will not undergo the expensive and time-consuming flying training, especially for fighter pilots. This will save an estimated Rs 3,400 crore over several years. Active pilots will also not have to be diverted to missile and other units," an officer said. Moreover, the advent of drones, swarm drones, hypersonic weapons and space-based ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) systems have added a new dimension to war-fighting.

WSB to be gender-neutral branch of officers

Rajat.Pandit@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The IAF will raise a separate specialised cadre of officers to handle advanced missiles, space-based systems, surveillance and combat UAVs. "Creation of this branch would result in savings of over Rs 3,400 crore due to reduced expenditure on flying training," Air chief marshal V R Chaudhari said, while addressing the IAF Day parade at Chandigarh.

In Delhi, the defence ministry said Weapon Systems Branch's (WSB) creation would entail the unification of all weapon system operators under one entity dedicated to the operational employment of all ground-based and specialist airborne weapon systems. The WSB will have the four sub-branches: flying (weapon systems operators in twin-seat fighters like Sukhoi-30MKI fighters), remote (operational crews for RPAs and drones), intelligence (information warfare, image and signals intelligence specialists) and surface (mission commanders and operators for missiles, guided and close-in weapons).

IAF chief V R Chaudhari during 90th anniversary celebration of IAF in Chandigarh on Saturday

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Moreover, as the IAF chief noted on Saturday, the advent of drones, swarm drones, hypersonic weapons and space-based ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) systems have added a new dimension to war-fighting.

The advanced weapon systems being inducted into the IAF will need a cadre of specially-trained officers. There is, for instance, the plan to induct new MALE (medium-altitude, long-endurance) and HALE (high-altitude, long-endurance) UAVs. There is also the Rs 3,500 crore upgrade programme planned indigenously for over half of the around 80-90 Israeli Heron UAVs inducted by the armed forces over the years.

'Women Agniveers in IAF from next year'

The air force will conscript women into its Agniveer Vayu short-term recruitment drive from next year, while around 3,000 men will be enlisted in the new job programme by December-end, Air chief marshal VR Chaudhari announced Saturday, reports **Ajay Sura**. "This number will go up in the coming years to ensure adequate staffing...The creation of infrastructure is in progress and streamlining of trade structure is being finalised," he said at Air Force Station, Chandigarh, on the occasion of IAF's 90th foundation day. Agniveer is a job scheme for the military that defence minister Rajnath Singh announced in June. Youth soldiers, or Agniveers, in the age group 17.5-21 are recruited for four years and many of them will be compulsorily retired after completion of their tenure with no pension benefits.

Uttarkashi avalanche: 3 still missing, snowfall cuts short rescue ops

Uttarkashi/Dehradun: Inclement weather cut short rescue operations once again on Saturday morning, as heavy snowfall stopped personnel trying to retrieve bodies and trace three missing persons at Mt Draupadi ka Danda, where 26 members of Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) -- 24 trainees and 2 instructors -- died after being hit by an avalanche on Tuesday. Seven bodies were flown into Uttarkashi from the Draupadi ka Danda base camp in the morning on Army helicopters. Efforts are on to bring back the remaining 15, officials said. Four bodies, including those of the two women instructors of NIM -- Naumi Rawat and Savita Kanswal -- had been airlifted last week.

"The remains of the 15 climbers will be brought back to Uttarkashi as soon as the weather clears. Search for the three missing climbers will continue on Sunday," said Devendra Patwal, district disaster management officer, Uttarkashi. TNN

Russia gets new war general as blast damages bridge to Crimea

3 Killed; Bridge Key Link To Carry Equipment To Russian Soldiers

Moscow: A powerful explosion damaged Russia's road-and-rail bridge to Crimea on Saturday, hitting a prestige symbol of Moscow's annexation of the peninsula and the key supply route to Russian forces battling to hold territory captured in southern Ukraine. On the same day, after Moscow suffered a series of setbacks on the battlefield that triggered unprecedented criticism of its army at home, Moscow appointed a new general to lead its Ukraine offensive.

The blast on the bridge over the Kerch Strait, for which Russia did not immediately assign blame, prompted gleeful messages from Ukrainian officials.

Russian officials said three people had been killed, probably the occupants of a car travelling near a truck that blew up. Dramatic social media footage showed the bridge on fire with parts plunging into the water.

Russian investigators said they identified the owner of the truck as a resident of Russia's southern Krasnodar region, saying his place of residence was being searched.

Russia said the blast — which occurred just after 6am local time — set ablaze seven oil tankers transported by train and collapsed two car lanes of the giant road and rail structure. The bridge, inaugurated by President Vladimir Putin in 2018, is hugely important to Russia.

While some in Moscow hinted at Ukrainian "terrorism", state media continued to call it an "emergency situation." Ukraine's presidential advisor Mykhailo Podolyak earlier took to Twitter posting a picture of a long section of the bridge half-submerged. "Crimea, the bridge, the beginning," he wrote. "Everything illegal must be destroyed, everything stolen must be returned to Ukraine." The Ukrainian post office announced it was preparing to print stamps showing the "Crimean bridge — or more precisely, what remains of it".

Putin has ordered a commission to be set up to look into the blast. He also signed a decree instructing tighter security for the bridge as well as the infrastructure supplying electricity and natural gas to the peninsula.

In Moscow's third senior military appointment in the space of a week, Russia's defence ministry on Saturday named Air Force General Sergei Surovikin as the overall commander of Russian forces fighting in Ukraine.

The change follows the reported sacking earlier this week of the commanders of two of Russia's five military regions, as its forces have suffered a series of dramatic reverses in northeastern and southern Ukraine in recent weeks.

The ministry did not say who, if anyone, Surovikin was replacing. Surovikin, 55, has led Russia's Air and Space Forces since 2017. According to the ministry website, he commanded a guards division stationed in Chechnya in 2004, during Moscow's war against Islamist rebels, and was awarded a medal for his service in Syria in 2017. AGENCIES

Reuters

A TIPPING POINT? A view of the blaze on the Kerch bridge, connecting Crimea and Russia, where a truck exploded on Saturday. The bridge was inaugurated by Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2018

Trains resume on Crimea bridge, says rail operator

Rail traffic on the bridge linking Crimea to the Russian mainland resumed after a blast damaged the structure on Saturday, its operator said in a statement. Grand Service Express, which operates services between Crimea and Russia, said two trains left the peninsula in the early evening for Moscow and Saint Petersburg. "The trains will pass over the Crimean bridge," the company said on Telegram. AFP

Chip export to China: US tightens rules

Washington: The United States announced new export controls Friday aimed at restricting China's ability to buy and manufacture high-end chips with military applications, stepping up tensions between the countries.

The moves complicate Beijing's push to further its own semiconductor industry and develop advanced military systems, and come days ahead of a major party congress in China at which President Xi Jinping is expected to secure a historic third term.

The rules, announced by the US department of commerce, include export curbs on chips used in supercomputing, and tougher requirement on sale of semiconductor equipment. The aim is to prevent "sensitive technologies with military applications" from being acquired by China's military, intelligence and security services, said commerce department official Alan Estevez in a statement.

The rules were announced just days after the Pentagon added 13 more Chinese firms including drone manufacturer DJI and surveillance firm Zhejiang Dahua Technology to a blacklist of Chinese military-linked companies.

The manufacture and export of semiconductors has been a subject of competition between the two countries, as they battle for tech dominance. In August, US President Joe Biden signed into law a multibillion dollar bill boosting domestic semiconductor and other high-tech manufacturing sectors that US leaders fear risk being dominated by China. AFP

China lashes out at latest controls

Beijing: China on Saturday criticized the latest US decision to tighten export controls that would make it harder for China to obtain and manufacture advanced computing chips, calling it a violation of international economic and trade rules that will "isolate and backfire" on the US. "Out of the need to maintain its sci-tech hegemony, the US abuses export control measures to maliciously block and suppress Chinese companies," said foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning. AP

10 people killed in blast at gas station in Ireland

Ireland: Ten people, including a schoolgirl, were killed in an explosion at a petrol station in Ireland's northwest, police said on Saturday suggesting a "tragic accident" may have been to blame. The blast occurred at around 3:20pm (15.20 GMT) on Friday in the County Donegal village of Creeslough, Ireland's police, the Garda Siochana, said in a media conference Saturday. "There are 10 fatalities as a result of that explosion.

"The ten casualties are four men, three women, two teenagers — a boy and a girl — and a younger girl," said police, adding that all the victims appeared to be locals.

Based on current information, it is not expected that there will be any further casualties and there are no outstanding reports of unaccounted for persons, said the force.

Police are treating the incident with an "open mind", but said that "our information at this moment in time is pointing towards a tragic accident." Focus will turn to the causes of the incident once the search and recovery operation is completed.

Rescue efforts by Ireland's emergency services went on through the night after the blast ripped through a petrol station forecourt and a nearby apartment complex. An aerial photograph taken after the explosion showed the petrol station building destroyed. Two two-storey residential buildings behind had collapsed. AFP

Canada lets int'l students work add'l hours till Dec '23

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In an effort to address the growing problem of labour shortage, the Canadian government has decided to allow international students in the country to work off-campus for an unrestricted number of hours from November 15. This relaxation, announced on Friday by Canada's immigration minister Sean Fraser, is temporary and will end on December 31, 2023.

Currently, international students can work off-campus only for 20 hours per week while classes are in session. This restriction has often forced the students to work in entry-level or low-paying jobs, or work on the sly, which is illegal and runs the risk of being deported.

"From November 15, 2022, until December 31, 2023, international students who are in Canada and who have off-campus work authorization on their study permit will not be restricted by the 20-hour-per-week rule. Foreign nationals who have already submitted a study permit application, as of today (October 7), will also be able to benefit from this temporary change, provided their study permit application is approved," said Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Canadian government agency for immigration.

The leeway is not available to 'future' students, who furnish their study permit applications after October 7. Safeguards are also built in to ensure the leeway isn't misused. "Study permit holders are still expected to balance their study and work commitments, as those who stop studying or reduce course loads to study part-time are not eligible to work off-campus," the immigration agency added.

Canada currently has more than 5 lakh international students. From January to September 2021, nearly 115,000 Indian students were approved to study in Canada.

Josh Schachnow, an immigration lawyer and founder of Visto.ai, a tech-talent search platform said the crux was about finding the right kind of job, "the experience of which counts towards permanent residence".

Madhav Dave, whose social media bio mentions him as a supply chain management student in Ontario, has posted: "It is indeed a great opportunity but the ball is in the employer's court. Assuming that a student has to attend college at least one or two days a week, it leaves three business days and the weekend. Can an employer hire a student for 3 days a week in a decent white-collar job?"

A statement from minister Fraser read: "With the economy growing at a faster rate than employers can hire new workers, Canada needs to look at every option."

Getty Images/iStockphoto

MORE LEVERAGE

Germany to Nato: Do more against Russia

Lithuania: Nato must do more to protect itself against Russia and President Vladimir Putin, German defence minister Christine Lambrecht said on Saturday, because we "cannot know how far Putin's delusions of grandeur can go".

"One thing is certain: the current situation means we need to do more together," Lambrecht said while visiting German troops deployed in Lithuania. "The Russian war of aggression in Ukraine is getting more and more brutal and unscrupulous... Russia's threat of nuclear weapons shows that Russian authorities have no scruples."

The United States has said repeatedly that it has seen no indication that Russia is preparing to use nuclear weapons in despite what it calls Putin's "nuclear saber-rattling."

Germany deployed its first troops to Nato member Lithuania, on the border of Russia, in 2017 after Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea peninsula. It agreed to ramp up the mission significantly in June in response to Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine. Lambrecht inaugurated a permanent German command centre in Lithuania on Friday, which she said would help move a brigade of troops from Germany to Lithuania in 10 days if needed. REUTERS

Ukraine N-plant loses external power link

Berlin: Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the biggest in Europe, has lost its last remaining external power source as a result of renewed shelling and is now relying on emergency diesel generators, the UN nuclear watchdog IAEA said on Saturday.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that the plant's link to a 750-kilovolt line was cut at around 1am on Saturday. It cited official information from Ukraine as well as reports from IAEA experts at the site, which is held by Russian forces.

All six reactors at the plant are shut down but they still require electricity for cooling and other safety functions. Plant engineers have begun work to repair the damaged power line and the plant's generators — not all of which are currently being used — each have sufficient fuel for at least 10 days, the IAEA said.

"The resumption of shelling, hitting the plant's sole source of external power, is tremendously irresponsible," IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi said in a statement.

Grossi visited Kyiv on Thursday. He said he will soon travel to Russia, then make another trip to Ukraine, to further his effort to set up a "nuclear safety and security protection zone" around the plant, which he has advocated for weeks. AP

India's London mission denies changing UK tourist visa rules

Naomi Canton

London: The Indian high commission here has rejected claims from travel agents that it changed its UK tourist visa rules at the last minute, throwing the holidays of thousands of British holidaymakers into doubt, and instead maintains British applicants have always been required to present themselves in person at VFS Centres.

The mission said: "Individual applicants are, and always have been, required to submit visa applications at the VFS centres in person. There is no change in the process for individual visa applications. We've found that unauthorised agents/individuals are illegally charging fees and collecting India visa applications to submit at VFS centres, misleading applicants and misrepresenting the services they can legally provide. This matter is currently being investigated. High Commission of India emphasises that VFS Global Services is the only authorised outsourcing provider for India-related passport/visa/and consular services in the UK."

British holidaymakers who have used visa agents to procure their visas for India are being forced to cancel their holidays as agents received notice last week that all applicants have to turn up in person at VFS Centres to submit visa applications. Many had paid hundreds of pounds to these agents to avoid having to travel to VFS Centres and now cannot get appointments before their flights take off.

A spokesperson for AITO – The Specialist Travel Association, which represents 120 UK tour operators, said: "There are £10 million worth of bookings on the books of AITO operators that are at risk. The travel industry has relied on visa agents for a long time as they check it is correct and it saves people from having to travel from all over the UK to a visa centre. It is the most inefficient way to have to go and get a visa in person, and when you are there you end up waiting for hours. This will hit the economy of India badly as these tourists would have spent a lot of money in India that would have helped small niche businesses there. The key issue is there are not enough appointments."

The high commission said it was addressing shortfalls in its services whilst the Indian Association of Tour Operators has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office to request help restoring tourist e-visas for the UK.

CLEARING THE AIR

North Korea fired ballistic missile: Japan

Tokyo: North Korea appears to have fired a ballistic missile, Japanese authorities said early on Sunday, with national broadcaster NHK reporting that two missiles may have been launched.

The incident would mark the seventh such launch by North Korea since September 25, deepening concern in both Tokyo and Washington.

The projectile had already fallen, Japan's coast guard said in a statement. Public broadcaster NHK said it appeared to have landed outside Japan's exclusive economic zone.

NHK later added that a second missile appeared to have been fired, citing defence ministry sources, although no further information was immediately available.

South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported that North Korea fired an unspecified ballistic missile toward the east coast. REUTERS

Pak minister, two foreigners abducted by militants freed

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Militants on Saturday freed a senior minister and two foreigners in the Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) region in northern Pakistan following "successful" negotiations with government officials, facilitated by local clerics.

Colonel (retired) Abaidullah Baig, a minister in the GB government, and the two foreigners were abducted on Friday from Babusar Top — a mountain pass connecting the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with Gilgit-Baltistan — where the militants, belonging to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), had set up road blockades. They demanded the release of their jailed aides.

The minister was released around 3 am, said Muhammad Alamgir, station house officer of Jal area in GB's Diamer district. "A local jirga (council of elders) comprising ulemas (clerics) and officials held talks with the militants," he added.

"He (Baig) is back home and the road is open for traffic," said Mohiuddin Ahmad Wani, GB's chief secretary, adding that the minister was set free "unconditionally".

In a purported conversation with a journalist shared on social media, Baig could be heard saying the militants had two demands: the release of their accomplices from jail, and imposition of Islamic law, with no women sports activities.

Official sources said Habibur Rahman, GB's most wanted militant commander accused of the 2013 killing of 11 people — 10 of them foreign tourists — in the Nanga Parbat base camp, and about 200 of his men had blocked the road in Thak village of Chilas in Diamer on Friday, leaving travellers on both sides stranded.

Ziaullah Thakvi, a jirga member, said the militants demanded that their incarcerated fellows be released or moved to Diamer, and treated like other inmates.

Faizullah Faraq, another jirga member, said the militants belonged to the TTP and most of them were "outsiders". "I could only identify two from Diamer – Habibur Rehman and Abdul Hammed," Faraq said, adding that a majority of them were Pashtuns. The GB chief secretary, however, said it was a "local group" of militants.

A minister and the two foreigners were abducted on Friday from Babusar Top — a mountain pass connecting the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with Gilgit-Baltistan

2 Palestinian teens killed by Israeli forces

West Bank: Israeli forces killed two Palestinian teens on Saturday in clashes that erupted during an arrest raid in the occupied West Bank, Palestinian officials said, the latest incident in recent months around the flashpoint city of Jenin.

The Israeli military said security forces, on an operation to arrest a wanted gunman from the Islamic Jihad militant group, came under Palestinian fire. "Dozens of Palestinians threw explosives and Molotov cocktails at the forces and fired at them. The forces fired at armed suspects. Hits were identified," the military said.

The Palestinian health ministry said two Palestinians, aged 16 and 18, were killed and 11 were wounded. Palestinian President Mhamoud Abbas condemned the killings. Around 80 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank since Israel launched its Operation Breakwater against militants on March 31. The toll includes militants and civilians. REUTERS

AROUND THE WORLD

FREE ASSANGE: Supporters of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange form a human chain against his extradition to the US, in London, on Saturday. Demonstrators made a human chain around the British Parliament to support Assange, who is detained in Belmarsh Prison, after he has battled in British courts for years to avoid being sent to the US, where he faces 17 charges of espionage and one charge of computer misuse

Tweeting is vaguely therapeutic: Elon Musk

Tesla CEO Elon Musk has said that he finds it vaguely therapeutic to express himself on Twitter and the platform is a way to get his messages out to the public. In an interview with the Financial Times, the world's richest man said: "I play the fool on Twitter and often shoot myself in the foot and cause myself all sorts of trouble." "Aren't you entertained?" Musk replied with a roar of laughter when asked why a serious guy with serious ideas indulges in silly Twitter games that could also cost his followers dearly. According to the report, he is a serial tweeter to his more than 108 million followers "who flouts convention, revels in outrageous outbursts, fights with regulators and staff, and taunts competitors". Musk also added that Twitter is certainly an invitation to increase your pain level."

BBC controversially scraps 'Dateline London': The BBC has given a controversial burial to one of its popular current affairs programmes – Dateline London – after its remarkable 25-year run. The decision has disappointed many within and outside Britain, for the weekend half-hour programme, which discussed subjects of international interest and was aired on both domestic and world services of the BBC, commanded a viewership of 12-15 million, according to its executive producer Nick Guthrie. It was also reportedly quite inexpensive to produce.

250 pilot whales die in remote NZ island: About 250 pilot whales have died after beaching on New Zealand's remote Chatham Island where the shark risk makes attempts to refloat them too dangerous, the government said Saturday. The pilot whales, members of the dolphin family, were reported to have been stranded Friday on the northwest of the island.

The long, arduous journey for driverless trucks

Cade Metz

In March, a self-driving 18-wheeler spent more than five consecutive days hauling goods between Dallas and Atlanta. Running around the clock, it traveled more than 6,300 miles, making four round trips and delivering eight loads of freight.

The result of a partnership between Kodiak Robotics, a self-driving startup, and US Xpress, a traditional trucking company, this five-day drive demonstrated the enormous potential of autonomous trucks. A traditional truck, whose lone driver must stop and rest each day, would need more than 10 days to deliver the same freight.

But the drive also showed that the technology is not yet ready to realize its potential. Each day, Kodiak rotated a new team of specialists into the cab of its truck, so that someone could take control of the vehicle if anything went wrong. These "safety drivers" grabbed the wheel multiple times.

Tech startups like Kodiak have spent years building and testing self-driving trucks, and the trucking industry is keen to reap the benefits. At a time when the supply chain is struggling to deliver goods as efficiently as businesses and consumers now demand, autonomous trucks could alleviate bottlenecks and cut costs.

Now comes the most difficult stretch in this quest to automate freight delivery: getting these trucks on the road without anyone behind the wheel. Companies like Kodiak know the technology is a long way from the moment trucks can drive anywhere on their own. So they are looking for ways to deploy self-driving trucks solely on highways, whose long, uninterrupted stretches are easier to navigate than city streets.

"Highways are a more structured environment," said Alex Rodrigues, CEO of the self-driving-truck startup Embark. "You know where every car is supposed to be going. They're in lanes."

Restricting these trucks to the highway also plays to their strengths. "The biggest problems for long-haul truckers are fatigue, distraction and boredom," Rodrigues explained. "Robots don't have a problem with any of that."

It's a sound strategy, but even this will require years of additional development. Part of the challenge is technical. Though self-driving trucks can handle most of what happens on a highway — merging into traffic from an on-ramp, changing lanes, slowing for cars stopped on the shoulder — companies are still working to ensure they can respond to less common situations, like a sudden three-car pileup.

Rodrigues said his company has yet to perfect what he calls evasive maneuvers. "If there is an accident in the road right in front of the vehicle," he explained, "it has to stop itself quickly." For this and other reasons, most companies do not plan on removing safety drivers from their trucks until at least 2024. In many states, they will need explicit approval from regulators to do so. But deploying these trucks is also a logistical challenge — it will require significant changes in trucking industry.

In shuttling goods between Dallas and Atlanta, Kodiak's truck did not drive into either city. It drove to spots just off the highway where it could unload its cargo and refuel before making the return trip. Then traditional trucks picked up the cargo and drove "the last mile" of the delivery.

In order to deploy autonomous trucks on a large scale, companies must first build a network of these "transfer hubs." With an eye toward this future, Kodiak recently inked a partnership with Pilot, a company that operates traditional truck stops across the country. Today, these are places where truck drivers can shower and rest and grab a bite to eat. The hope is that they can also serve as transfer hubs for driverless trucks. NYT

AP

NOT A LONELY TRIP, YET

Shafali, Mandhana Star In 59-Run Win Against Bangladesh As India Book Berth In Semifinals

TOP-ORDER CLASS!

PTI

TIMELY KNOCK: Shafali Verma bats against Bangladesh at the Sylhet Stadium on Saturday

Sylhet: Shafali Verma once again showed her match-winning prowess with an attractive 55 off 44 balls as India out-batted Bangladesh by 59 runs to win their fourth match and clinch a semifinal spot in the Women's Asia Cup T20 here on Saturday.

After an indifferent batting show in the defeat to Pakistan, the 'Women In Blue' put up a much-improved performance, scoring 159/5 largely due to a 96-run opening stand between Shafali and stand-in skipper Smriti Mandhana (47 off 38 balls).

> **It was disappointing in the last match (versus Pakistan). It's good to come back after that loss, really proud of the girls. Today was a total team performance."**
> **—Smriti Mandhana**

Credit should also go to Jemimah Rodrigues, whose 35 not out off just 24 balls helped the Indian team get to a good total. Bangladesh managed 100/7 at the end of 20 overs and never looked like being in the hunt for a victory. With eight points from five games, India are on top of the seven-team table with a match left in the round-robin stage.

Having never chased a total beyond 142 in their entire T20 history, Bangladesh did try their bit but could never force the momentum against a solid Indian bowling attack which kept things tight. After a shoddy fielding effort against Pakistan, it improved by a couple of notches on the day as there were no easy runs in store. The hosts couldn't even score 50 in the first 10 overs and scoring more than 110 runs in the back-10 was virtually impossible for them.

WOMEN'S ASIA CUP

None of the Indian bowlers were off target for the better part with Sneh Rana (1/17 in 3 overs) and Deepti Sharma (2/13 in 4 overs) being parsimonious as ever. Even Shafali's loopy leg-breaks (2/10 in 4 overs) seemed unplayable.

The slowness of the track also meant that spinners could vary the pace and most of the balls were not coming onto the bat. The two openers Fargana Hoqie (30 off 40 balls) and Murshida Khatun (21 off 25 balls) could add only 45 in the first nine overs and Bangladesh actually were out of the contest at that stage.

Earlier, Shafali showed why she is one of the most destructive batters in this format as she struck five fours and two sixes. En route her fourth half-century in T20Is, Shafali also completed 1000 runs in the format. With the elegant skipper Mandhana for company, the duo added 96 in just 12 overs. Mandhana peppered the field with six crisp boundaries.

Once both Mandhana and Shafali, who tried a reverse slog, were dismissed, Bangladesh could briefly put the brakes on the scoring rate but the in-form Jemimah used her cricketing smarts to find the gaps. Jemimah and Deepti Sharma added 29 in just 2.3 overs.

Scores: India Women 159/5 (Shafali 55, Mandhana 47) beat Bangladesh Women 100/7 (Sultana 36, Shafali 2-10, Deepti 2-13) by 59 runs. PTI

Babar brilliance steers Pak to win over Kiwis

AFP

BABAR AZAM

Christchurch: Captain Babar Azam's half-century inspired Pakistan to their second win in the T20 tri-series in Christchurch on Saturday as the team coasted past New Zealand by six wickets.

Azam rode his luck in reaching 79 off 53 balls as his team took command of the series following their opening 21-run win over Bangladesh on Friday. All three sides are using the week-long tournament at Hagley Oval to prepare for the T20 World Cup in Australia.

New Zealand's 147-8 after winning the toss looked inadequate and Azam's knock took away any prospect of victory, steering the tourists to 149-4 with 10 balls to spare. The hosts paid a heavy price for a straightforward dropped catch by Glenn Phillips at point off Tim Southee's bowling when Azam was on 27.

The opener went on to post his 28th T20I half-century, the equal second most alongside Rohit Sharma, with both sitting behind Virat Kohli (33). Southee snared the early wicket of Mohammad Rizwan, who scored a match-winning unbeaten 78 against Bangladesh, and the Pakistan middle-order largely struggled aside from Shadab Khan's 34 off 22 balls.

However, Azam's presence meant his team were always in control. The result was virtually sealed when he and Haider Ali took 21 runs off the final over of Blair Tickner (2-42), the third-last of the innings. Azam said the rapid 61-run stand with Shadab for the third wicket gave an insight to a tactic they could employ at the World Cup, with the allrounder shifted up the order.

"Definitely, we have a plan to send Shadab up to charge the bowlers, to utilise his skills," Azam said. "He played very well. We planned that I would go all the way and Shadab would take a chance."

Earlier, it took late blows from middle-order batsman Mark Chapman to revive a muddled New Zealand effort with the bat. Chapman's 32 off 16 balls followed solid innings from opener Devon Conway (36 off 35) and captain Kane Williamson (31 off 30), although both struggled for timing during a 61-run stand for the second wicket.

It was another frustrating outcome for the accomplished Williamson, who has passed 50 on just two occasions in all formats over the last 18 months, a period that has encompassed 29 innings. He was clean bowled attempting a slog-sweep off spinner Mohammad Nawaz, while Chapman holed out to a slower ball from Pakistan's best bowler, paceman Haris Rauf (3-28).

Scores: Pakistan 149/4 (Babar 79*, Shadab 34, Tickner 2-42) beat New Zealand 147/8 (Conway 36, Rauf 3-28, Wasim 2-20, Nawaz 2-44) by six wickets. AFP

S&C COACH FEELS PERTH CAMP WILL HELP INDIA IN WC

Perth: India's strength and conditioning coach Soham Desai feels the team is often "rushed" into big tournaments and the ongoing preparatory camp here ahead of the T20 World Cup will give the players much needed time to unwind as well as work on specific skills.

India had their first training session here on Friday and will be playing two warm-up games on Oct 10 and 13 before they travel to Brisbane for the ICC-organised practice matches ahead of their World Cup opener against Pakistan in Melbourne on Oct 23. "The upcoming 8-10 days are very crucial for us. I can't thank the BCCI enough to get these eight days because we always feel we are rushed into the big tournaments playing so much cricket. But these eight days, we are going to gradually build ourselves both physically as well as on the skills front to lead us nicely into the first game of the World Cup," Desai told BCCI. PTI

WARNER HAILS 'GODSEND' DAVID AFTER GABBA BLITZ

Melbourne: Explosive middle-order batsman Tim David is a "godsend" for Australia and it is up to the team management to decide how to utilise him in the T20 World Cup, opener David Warner said. Singapore-born David showed what he is capable of with an incendiary 42 off 20 balls in Friday's T20 International against West Indies in Brisbane. "Now he's in our team and our set-up, it's a godsend," said Warner. "He's an incredible player. He has some serious power, so it boosts our middle order, and to come out and play like that with his height and strength, it suits us." REUTERS

SHAHEEN AFRIDI WILL BE FIT FOR WC OPENER: PCB CHIEF

Lahore: Pakistan fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has made rapid progress from a knee injury and will be "battle-ready" for the T20 World Cup opener against India, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief Ramiz Raja has said. Afridi has been sidelined since sustaining a ligament injury to his right knee during a Test in Sri Lanka in July. He missed the Asia Cup and the home series against England. "I had a chat with Shaheen and he said he hasn't felt this good in ages. So the progress is very good," Raja told the Dawn. "He said he'd be battle-ready, it's great news. Shaheen said, 'I'm already 110%, don't worry.'" REUTERS

IOC suggests 'appointed CEO' in place of elected secretary general in IOA

Sabi.Hussain@timesgroup.com

Rajkot: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has proposed far-reaching changes in the Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) constitution ahead of the December elections of the country's apex national sports body.

In a contentious roadmap, the IOC has suggested changing the position of elected secretary general of the IOA to an "appointed CEO" – to be hired by the national body's executive committee (EC). If this is put into operation, Rajeev Mehta, the current secretary general of IOA, would effectively be the last "elected" representative to the post.

ADMIN MATTERS

The IOC has also expressed its reservation over the proposed 25 percent membership of sportspersons in the IOA general assembly with voting rights, and the two-third majority required for a re-election (a simple majority of more than 50 percent of the votes validly cast should be sufficient).

The IOC's suggestions came following a meeting of its officials with that of a delegation from India on September 27 in Lausanne.

"The IOC/OCA will also propose additional elements (such as changing the position of elected secretary general into an appointed position, so that the secretary general would serve as a CEO appointed/hired by the executive committee, and including an independent ethics commission, a properly functioning athletes commission as per the IOC guidelines and safeguarding practices)," said a summary note of the joint meeting released by the IOC, a copy of which is with **TOI**.

The IOC also offered partial relief to the IOA by agreeing 'in-principle' with most of the points raised by the Delhi High Court in its decision dated August 16. It also approved the appointment of a former judge (Justice L Nageswara Rao) by the SC to work on the amendments of the IOA constitution, prepare the Electoral College and supervise the elections. The IOC's roadmap has also resulted in the State Olympic Associations (SOAs) losing their voting rights in the IOA general assembly.

Being active brings a new dimension to life

Srihari Nataraj

Running has played an important role in my life. As a warm-up in sports or just for leisure. Apart from professionally swimming, I enjoy my days being active whether it is football, cricket, basketball or tennis.

Being active puts you in a better mood, disciplines you, motivates you and leaves you wanting more. It's s a feeling like none other. The endorphins release, the days where you push yourself to get your workout in and the ones where your training day is fantastic —all of this sums up active. Being active brings a whole other dimension to life. Mass participative events like the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon play a vital part in our lives. The event motivates people of all ages and backgrounds to run for an active you.

(THE AUTHOR IS AN INDIAN SWIMMER)

Energy Drink Partner
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VEDANTA DELHI HALF MARATHON 2022

Srihari sets record, Karnataka finish on a high

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TRIUMPHANT: Karnataka swimmers who topped the heap at the National Games in Gujarat on Saturday

Bengaluru: Srihari Nataraj won the 100m freestyle gold with a new meet record on Saturday as Karnataka ended their National Games campaign on a high in Rajkot. Srihari timed 50.41 to eclipse Aaron D' Souza's 50.97 set in Kerala. Vishal Grewal (Delhi) was second in 51.41 while Anand AS of Services clocked 52.06 for the bronze.

Srihari, along with Siva S, Manavi Varma and Nina Venkatesh, helped Karnataka claim the silver medal in the mixed 4x100m medley with a time of 4:12.30. Tamil Nadu won the gold with 4;11.08 and Gujarat were third with 4:13.31. Karnataka bagged 39 medals in all — 19 gold, eight silver and 12 bronze — to top the medals tally. Kerala came a distant second with nine medals (five gold, two silver and two bronze) while Services (11 medals, four gold, four silver and three bronze) were third.

NATIONAL GAMES WRAP

NAVEEN RETAINS TITLE

Karnataka ace **Naveen John** successfully defended the men's individual time trial in the road cycling competition in Gandhinagar. With a satisfying second half in the 38km time trial, Naveen justified his decision to not travel to New Delhi for the 4,000m individual pursuit event in the velodrome at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Complex last week. "I wanted gold and focused on the road events," he said. "I did not want to finish with just the minor medals."

Naveen, who gave up his pursuit of a Master's degree in engineering to return to India a decade back, had to overcome challenges of his own today. "My racing suit, which has been with me through victories in seven National Championships, decided to give up. A safety pin came in handy, but I was not in the race mindset through the first loop of 19km," he said. "I could see the worried look on Karnataka coach Anita's face and I realised I behind gold medal pace. I reminded myself why I was here and cranked up my pace on the second loop to succeed in my mission of defending the time trial gold I won in Kerala," he said. In men's hockey action in Rajkot, Karnataka swamped hosts Gujarat 11-2 to earn a semifinal outing against Haryana, who showed Tamil Nadu the exit with a fine 3-0 victory.

Results: (finals, Karnataka only): Cycling: Men 38km individual time trial: 1. Naveen John 49:01.635. **Hockey: Men's quarterfinals:** Karnataka bt Gujarat 11-2. HT: 6-1. **Swimming: Men: 100m freestyle:** 1. Srihari Nataraj (50.41, NMR. OR: Aaron D'Souza (50.97s). **Women: 100m freestyle**: 3. Rujula S (59.17). **Mixed 4x100m medley**: 2. Karnataka (Siva S, Manavi Varma, Nina Venkatesh, Srihari Nataraj). T: 4:12.30.

Mbappe new superstar, tops earnings list at $128 million

Reuters

ON TOP: Kylian Mbappe

New York: French superstar striker Kylian Mbappe will earn a record $128 million in annual earnings to top the list of the **world's highest-paid football players,** according to a Friday Forbes magazine report.

The magazine noted Mbappe crossed the $100 million milestone at age 23 while such legends as Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo were in their 30s and at the peak of their careers when crossing that money mark for the first time. Mbappe signed a three-year contract extension in May to remain with dominant Ligue 1 side Paris-Saint Germain.

Forbes reported the deal will bring Mbappe about $110 million for his salary and season share of a signing bonus plus an estimated $18 million in annual endorsement income from such companies as Nike, Dior, Hublot and Oakley.

PSG teammate Messi, 35, ranks second at $120 million with Manchester United's Ronaldo, 37, third on $100 million. They had shared the top two spots since 2014 and still set the endorsements pace, Ronaldo at $60 million and Messi at $55 million.

In all, the top top-10 players will collect $652 million this season, an 11% jump from last year's $585 million figure. PSG forward Neymar of Brazil ranked fourth on $87 million followed in order by Mohamed Salah, on $53 million, Erling Haaland on $39 million, Robert Lewandowski at $35 million, Eden Hazard at $31 million, Andres Iniesta at $30 million and Kevin De Bruyne at $29 million. REUTERS

ANNUAL EARNINGS

1) **Kylian Mbappe** (PSG and France): **$128 million**
2) **Lionel Messi** (PSG and Argentina): **$120 million**
3) **Cristiano Ronaldo** (Manchester United and Portugal): **$100 million**
4) **Neymar** (PSG and Brazil): **$87 million**
5) **Mohamed Salah** (Liverpool and Egypt): **$53 million**

—Source: Forbes

Haaland nets 20th goal of season as City prevail

London: Erling Haaland scored his 20th goal in just 13 games this season as Manchester City routed Southampton 4-0 to lead the English Premier League on Saturday.

Haaland extended his scoring streak to 10 straight games in all competitions by netting the fourth goal in the 65th minute for City. Joao Cancelo, Phil Foden and Riyad Mahrez had already scored by the time the Norwegian, who earlier hit the woodwork and spurned a handful of other chances, finally found the net in the second half for his 15th league goal. Goals from Kai Havertz, Christian Pulisic and Armando Broja helped Chelsea to a 3-0 win over struggling Wolverhampton Wanderers at Stamford Bridge on Saturday to hand new boss Graham Potter his first home win in the Premier League. Chelsea had clinched a last-gasp win at Crystal Palace in Potter's first league game before thumping AC Milan and continued their run against Wolves, with a scoreline that reflected their dominance.

FOOTBALL

Potter made seven changes to his starting lineup with Tuesday's reverse fixture against Milan at San Siro in mind, but Chelsea showcased their strength in depth and outclassed a lacklustre Wolves side whose only win this season came against Southampton early in September. The victory took Chelsea to fourth in the standings with 16 points from eight games. **Results: EPL:** Bournemouth 2 (Billing 67, Christie 71) bt Leicester 1 (Daka 10); Chelsea 3 (Havertz 45, Pulisic 54, Broja 90) bt Wolves 0; Manchester City 4 (Cancelo 20, Foden 32, Mahrez 49, Haaland 65) bt Southampton 0; Newcastle 5 (Guimaraes 21, 56, Murphy 28, Almiron 82, Pinnock 90-og) bt Brentford 1 (Toney 54-pen). AGENCIES

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.....
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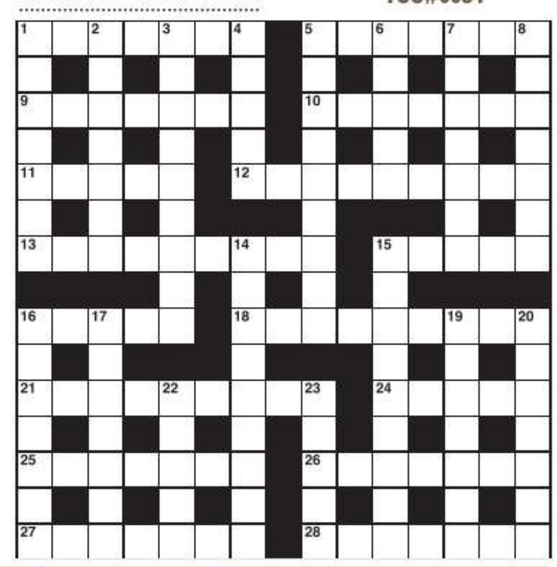
CROSSWORD No. TCC#0084



CRYPTIC CLUES

Across
1 Leisure time with a girl in a divine setting (7)
5 TV line between Britain and France (7)
9 Arching in embarrassment (7)
10 Touching sentiment (7)
11 I ring back about the shrub (5)
12 State employment (9)
13 A fetching breed of dog (9)
15 A brief for example is for the defence (5)
16 Backing a writer or a flier (5)
18 Lofty-sounding organ dies away (9)
21 Conservative member set to dismiss strikers? (6,3)
24 Material displayed by salesman in church (5)
25 Possibly ruin one get-together (7)
26 Advocate riotous living? (7)
27 Going to great lengths at either end (7)
28 Beat fellow on the line (7)

Down
1 He visits halls and barracks (7)
2 It's not bound to be distributed (7)
3 Management course (9)
4 Pulls out from America? (5)
5 Order ice after a place to eat is found (9)
6 Possibly earn a place in the sporting world (5)
7 Driving a point home? (7)
8 Member finishes the accounts (7)
14 A good watch will enable one to practise this (9)
15 Drug problem that's the talk of present era? (9)
16 Book to keep (7)
17 The smell of wine and flowers (7)
19 Cut and run (7)
20 Basic part of an electric kettle (7)
22 Produce straight lines say (5)
23 Give the old lady tea for a start (5)

QUICK CLUES

Across
1 Expressionless (7) 5 Sparkle (7) 9 Aid (7) 10 Pressing (7) 11 Additional (5) 12 Worthy of respect (9)
13 Life of idle pleasure (5,4) 15 Proficient (5)
16 Linger (5) 18 A coloured cosmetic (3-6)
21 Green coating on copper (9) 24 Follow as result (5)
25 To work (7) 26 Member of robber band (7)
27 Doubt truth of (7) 28 Lack of cordiality (7)

Down
1 Lack of harmony (7) 2 Intoxicating drink (7)
3 Decency (9) 4 Coolness in danger (5)
5 Large powerful dog (5,4) 6 Distinctive form of expression (5) 7 Shake involuntarily (7)
8 Place of seclusion (7) 14 With determination (2,7)
15 Track and field events (9) 16 Underhand (7)
17 Generosity (7) 19 Total loss of hope (7)
20 Coax by flattery (7) 22 Likeness (5) 23 Restrained (5)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC

QUICK

Terms and conditions apply

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Winners to be announced every Wednesday. Check **The Times of India** or TOICrossword.com for winners

FRANCES TIAFOE TO MEET TAYLOR FRITZ IN ALL-AMERICAN FINAL IN JAPAN OPEN

GASLY MOVES TO ALPINE TEAM TO SET UP AN ALL-FRENCH LINEUP IN FORMULA ONE

'Not making WC squad a big setback'

Sourav.M@timesgroup.com

Ranchi: India might be playing their 'second team' in the ongoing ODI series against South Africa but given the growing injury concerns in the main squad and among the standbys for T20 World Cup, the remaining two ODIs might prove to be crucial for the fringe players to break into the squad for the ICC mega event. Asked how it feels to play in an ODI series while the main team is away to take part in the World Cup, India pacer Shardul Thakur on Saturday said at the pre-match press conference ahead of the second ODI here, "Of course it's a big setback. Every player dreams of playing in World Cup, not just play but win it as well. It's okay that I'm not

CRICKET

selected this time. But there's a lot of cricket still left and also there's ODI World Cup next year. My focus will be to do well in whatever matches I play and I would love to make winning contribution."

About any outside chance of making it to the World Cup starting in a week's time on the back of some valuable contributions here, the Mumbai cricketer quipped, "If injuries happen then anyone can come at any point of time. As of now, your responsibility is to be ready whenever and wherever you are asked to play. I will be mentally ready if I'm given a callup. That's all in my hands." So far the Indian bowlers have struggled in the T20Is and first ODI in this tour but his bowling teammates had Thakur's backing. "It's not fair to criticize only the Indians. I think before questioning the consistency we should see how was the wicket and conditions," he said.

'SECOND-STRING' PACERS ON TRIAL

As Team India's Injury List Grows, Fight For Backup Fast Bowlers Gets Intense In Last Two ODIs Vs S Africa

Sourav.M@timesgroup.com

Ranchi: As the day progressed on the eve of the second One-day International here, the conditions gradually became overcast towards the late afternoon from a bright sunny morning. And about two hours before Team India was scheduled to hit the ground for the practice session early evening, the JSCA International Stadium groundstaff had to draw the covers to protect the playing area from a light

SECOND ODI

drizzle. Though it doesn't evoke fear, keeping in mind the early October weather in this part of the country, one does keep on looking for match day forecast praying to avoid any rain delay or truncated match like the first ODI in Lucknow.

Nevertheless, the weather situation on Saturday here much resembled the condition of the Indian teams – T20 World Cup as well as the 'second-string' ODI side playing the ongoing series against South Africa – at present. With each passing day, instead of the few issues with team combination being ironed out, some injury concerns are creeping up to increase the creases on team management's forehead. This series might be an insignificant one from India's point of view, given that the regulars in blue jersey have already hit the training session Down Under leading up to T20 World Cup. However, in terms of finding Jasprit Bumrah's replacement for the ICC mega event, the ODI series could have been the ideal stage. Though Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) have almost made certain that Mohammed Shami, gearing up to be match-fit at National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru following a long layoff post Covid, is their like-for-like replacement for Bumrah, Deepak Chahar has impressed with his fine bowling in the T20I series. That could have just proved to be enough for the management to think of Chahar's case if Shami misses the bus. However, Chahar, too, is in danger of missing T20 World Cup after being ruled out of the last two ODIs against the Proteas on Saturday. BCCI on Saturday announced Washington Sundar as replacement for injured Chahar in India's squad for the remaining ODIs. "The All-India Senior Selection Committee named Washington Sundar as replacement for Deepak Chahar for the remainder of the ODI series against South Africa. Mr. Chahar had a stiffness in his back after the third and final T20I against South Africa in Indore and did not feature in India's Playing XI in the first ODI in Lucknow," BCCI said in a statement. For the likes of Shardul Thakur, who had a great all-round performance in the last match, these injuries come as opportunities to knock on the selectors' door though. He will be eager to continue where he left off in Lucknow as India face a must-win situation in three-match series. As a bowling unit more compact performance is needed of the lot especially at the death. The batting, mainly the top order, and fielding need much improvement as theside missed as many as four catches in the outfield.

Live, Star Sports, 1.30 pm

PTI

FUN AND GAMES: Sanju Samson and Mohammed Siraj share a light moment during a training session at JSCA Stadium in Ranchi on Saturday

Photo courtesy: Twitter@PankajAdvani247

ON TOP OF THE WORLD: Pankaj Advani with the world billiards (150-up) trophy which he won in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday

Advani pockets 25th world title

Champion Drubs Kothari In 150-Up Billiards Final

Kuala Lumpur: India's leading cueist Pankaj Advani on Saturday claimed his 25th world title, outclassing compatriot Sourav Kothari by a 4-0 margin in the 150-up billiards final at the World Championships here on Saturday.

Advani used his cue like a magician's wand as he entertained the spectators who

CUE SPORTS

showed up in large numbers. Kothari logged a total of 72 points in the final while Advani amassed over 600 points to defend his title for the fifth time in a row. The event was last held in 2019.

In the first frame, Advani made his intentions clear from the word 'go'. He secured the first frame with a 149 break while his opponent had yet to score a point. The best-of-seven summit clash saw Advani compete fiercely to ensure he completed a billiards National-Asian-World golden trifecta in the same calendar year for a record fifth time. The second frame went Advani's way after Kothari failed to capitalise on the limited chances that he got. With a 77 break, Advani was halfway home with a 2-0 lead.

Advani's craftsmanship saw him make the tournament's highest break of 153 in the third before he put together exquisite breaks of 86 and 60 unfinished in the fourth frame to seal the deal.

An elated Advani said, "It's a dream to defend a world title five times in a row. I am truly pleased with how I've played and won every billiards event I participated in this year. Feel honoured to bring to my country yet another gold medal at the world level."

Advani's last world title came over 12 months ago in Qatar where he won the IBSF 6-Red Snooker World Cup. PTI

Harmanpreet's experiment against Pak wasn't smart

One thing this wonderful game of cricket teaches us is never to take anything for granted. Any player who thinks that he or she has to just turn up and everything will fall into place will more often than not find the game can bite back quite nastily. The greatest example is that of Sir Donald Bradmam who needed just four runs in his final Test innings to have a career average of 100. He was bowled second ball for a duck leaving him short by a fraction of achieving that phenomenal average. Not that Sir Don ever took anything for granted as he has gone on record that he faced every ball as if he was on zero. No wonder he hit hundreds, double hundreds and triple hundreds for fun.

Hopefully, the Indian women's team skipper will have learnt after the avoidable loss to Pakistan that experiments are fine after the series is sealed but to try them in the middle of a match can lead to unpleasant results. Giving some others batting time to prepare for the World Cup when the Asia Cup is going on is not the smartest thing to do and particularly as the game was against Pakistan. Instead of pretty much shutting Pakistan out of the tournament the unnecessary loss has not only allowed them a foot in the door but also perhaps the confidence that they can go all the way. Indian cricket is blessed with a pool of talent in the men's game that has allowed the absence of top players not being felt. They are up against a South African team that knows that it has to win all their remaining one dayers to give themselves a chance of qualifying for the 50 overs World Cup next October and so they have retained even the players in the squad for the T20 World Cup to stay on and win this ODI series and gain valuable points for qulifying directly.

Their skipper Temba Bavuma is not in the best of form but it will be a huge surprise if he changes the batting order like the Indian women's skipper did. TCM

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SNAP SHOTS

Tanishka sails past Irene to claim U-11 TT crown

Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav won the girls title in the Hopes (U-11) category at the State ranking table tennis tournament hosted by the Malleswaram Association in Bengaluru on Saturday. In the final, Tanishka (BTTA) downed Irene Anna Subhash 11-6, 11-6, 11-2. **Results: Hopes (U-11): Girls: Final:** Tanishka Kapil Kalbhairav bt Irene Anna Subhash 11-6, 11-6, 11-2. **Semis:** Irene bt Mihika R Udupa 11-9, 11-8, 11-6; Tanishka bt Yuktha Harsha11-5, 11-4, 11-2. **Quarters:** Irene bt Dhruti Dinakar 12-10, 11-6, 11-1; Mihika bt Srishti Dhariwal 12-10, 11-8, 8-11, 11-8; Yuktha bt Phalguni 12-10, 5-11, 11-6, 11-3; Tanishka bt Deekshita P Naick 11-1, 11-1, 11-6.

Mounts, BCBC in title race: Mounts Club and BCBC girls notched twin wins apiece to set up a winners-take-all semi-final league match on Sunday at the State Junior U-18 basketball championship. Both Mounts Club and BCBC ran out winners against Beagles BC and Southern Blues on Saturday. **Results: Semifinal league: Boys:** PPC 56 (Milind 16, Hriday 16) bt VBC Mandya 46 (Shashank Gowda 12). HT: 30-15. Beagles BC 102 (Sachin 61, Prithvi 18) bt YMMA 97 (Priyanshu 64, Dhruva 16). HT: 41-42. PPC 75 (Milind 18, Hriday 14) bt YMMA 34 (Priyanshu 16, Amjeet 12). HT: 38-23. VBC Mandya 71 (Shashank Raj 31, Shashank Gowda 12) bt Beagles BC 51(Sachin 25, Prithvi 10). HT: 42-20. **Girls:** Mounts Club 73 (Hannah 18, Nakshatra 13) bt Beagles BC 37 (Mekhala 19). HT: 39-19. BCBC 60 (Priyanka 19, Tisha 19) bt S Blues 46 (Nidhi 17, Ramya 10). HT: 36-20. Mounts Club 79 (Nakshatra 25, Nilata Reddy 14) bt S Blues 45 (Nidhi 15). HT: 31-21. BCBC 50(Priyanka 26, Tisha 11) bt Beagles BC 38 (Mekhala 11, Moumita 10). HT: 21-18.

Sai Sanjay wins: Sai Sanjay, a teenager from Salem, stormed to a brilliant victory in the MRF F2000 category while Thrissur's Diljith Shaji took the honours in the Formula LGB 1300 class as the first round of the MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Car Racing Championship in Chennai on Saturday. **Provisional results: MRF F2000 (Race-1, 10 laps):** 1. Sai Sanjay T (Salem) (15min, 47.253secs); 2. Shahan Ali Mohsin (Agra) (15:47.856); 3. Yash Aradhya S (Bengaluru) (15:51.725).
Formula LGB 1300 (Race-1, 8 laps): 1. Diljith Shaji (Thrissur, DTS Racing) (14:59.136); 2. Viswas Vijayaraj (Nellore, DTS Racing) (15:03.587); 3. Arjun S Nair (Bengaluru, Momentum Motorsports) (15:12.926).
MRF Saloons (Toyota Etios – Race 1, 8 laps): 1. Justin Singh (Gurugram) (16:32.066); 2. Diana Pundole (Pune) (16:34.812); 3. Angad Matharoo (Chandigarh) (16:41.338).

Archery trials: The Karnataka Amateur Archery Association (KAAA) will conduct trials to pick the state squad for the Junior National Championship in Panaji, Goa from November 3. Trials will be conducted at the Archery ground at the Sree Kanteerava stadium on October 13 at 8.30 am. Archers born on or after January 1, 2002 are eligible. Players are requested to register their names with the secretary, KAAA, before Oct 12. Contact: 080-2227-5656.

Uttam Singh to lead India juniors: Hockey India named the 18-member Indian junior men's team, captained by Uttam Singh, for the Sultan of Johor Cup Malaysia, scheduled from October 22 in Johor Bahru. The Indian team, which ended its campaign with a silver medal in the 2019 edition will take on Australia, Japan, South Africa, hosts Malaysia and defending champions Britain in this year's edition, which is being held after two years due to the pandemic. **India squad: Goalkeepers:** Mohith HS, Ankit Malik; Defenders: Amir Ali, Shardanand Tiwari, Rohit, Amandeep Lakra, Cyril Lugun; **Midfielders:** Vishnukant Singh, Rajinder Singh, Ankit Pal, Poovanna CB, Amandeep, Johnson Purthy; **Forwards:** Uttam Singh (captain), Angad Bir Singh, Araijeet Singh Hundal, Boby Singh Dhami, Sudeep Chirmako.

Verstappen pips Leclerc

Defending Champ Takes Pole Position At Suzuka

Suzuka (Japan): Max Verstappen gave himself a great chance to retain his Formula One world title at Sunday's Japanese Grand prix after grabbing pole in Suzuka.

The Red Bull driver topped the timesheets in qualifying with a time of 1min 29.304, just 0.010 secs ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, his nearest championship rival. Carlos Sainz was third in the other Ferrari. Verstappen then faced a nervous wait after stewards said they would investigate an on-track incident involving the Dutchman and McLaren's Lando Norris. Verstappen was given a reprimand but will remain in pole.

JAPANESE GP

He can clinch the title on Sunday if he wins the race with the fastest lap, no matter what his rivals do. He will also retain his crown if he wins and Leclerc is third or lower. "I'm not thinking about it too much, just taking it day by day," said the 25-year-old Verstappen, who has won 11 of 17 races this season. "I think what was more important is that we've had a competitive car and clearly we had today in qualifying. "I hope it's going to be the same tomorrow in the race because we do need a perfect race to be able to win it tomorrow."

Verstappen and Norris nearly crashed in qualifying when the Dutchman suddenly darted left. The McLaren driver was forced onto the grass to avoid hitting the Red Bull, with the championship leader muttering "unbelievable" over his team. Verstappen later pinned the blame on Norris, saying he should have been "more respectful". "I don't think anyone is trying to pass into that last chicane, so basically by trying to pass me you create that kind of problem," said Verstappen. Verstappen's car lost a chunk of bodywork on his last lap after he ran wide on a section of the track and onto a kerb. Leclerc was just a whisker away from claiming his third straight pole. "It was a tricky one but overall the car felt good," he said.

Grid: Front row: Max Verstappen (Red Bull), Charles Leclerc (Ferrari); **2nd row:** Carlos Sainz (Ferrari), Sergio Perez (Red Bull); **3rd row:** Esteban Ocon (Alpine), Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes); **4th row:** Fernando Alonso (Alpine), George Russell (Mercedes); **5th row:** Sebastian Vettel (Aston Martin), Lando Norris (McLaren), **6th row:** Daniel Ricciardo (McLaren), Valtteri Bottas (Alfa Romeo); **7th row:** Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri), Zhou Guanyu (Alfa Romeo); **8th row:** Mick Schumacher (Haas), Alexander Albon (Williams); **9th row:** Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri), Kevin Magnussen (Haas); **10th row:** Lance Stroll (Aston Martin), Nicholas Latifi (Williams). AGENCIES

Reuters

TOTAL CONTROL: Max Verstappen (left) after the qualifying on Saturday

Costa scores winner as Bengaluru edge NEUFC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Bengaluru FC coach Simon Grayson was lucky to start his Indian Super League campaign with a win as the team left it late and then clung on to a 1-0 win as NorthEast United FC saw their injury-time equalizer disallowed in front of thousands of fans who returned to the Sree Kanteerava stands after the Covid-19 break.

In the end, BFC rode on an Alan Costa goal to grab all the three points on offer in their opening match of the new season. With only minutes left to play, Bengaluru won a corner that substitute Javi Hernandez swung in for Costa, who nodded down and past Arindam Bhattacharja to give the Blues the lead in the 86th minute.

ISL REPORT

With four minutes added on, NorthEast United had the ball in the back of the net through Jon Gaztanaga. But after consultation with his assistant, referee Rahul Gupta disallowed the goal apparently for an offside. The NEUFC bench was furious and charged at the linesman and it ended only after the visiting coach Marco Balbul was shown the red card and ejected from his seat.

The Blues started with a combo of Sunil Chhetri-Roy Krishna-Sivasakthi. They had their first good chance when Naorem Roshan sped down the left before cutting back for Sivasakthi. The young striker's attempt to place the ball beyond Arindam Bhattacharja flew just wide. Shots from Bruno Ramires and Suresh Wangjam went wayward as Bengaluru continued to make most of the noise. Heading into the break, the Blues came close to finding the back of the net, again through Sivasakthi, but the striker's shot was deflected wide. After changing ends, the BFC coach effected a double change, bringing on Javi Hernandez and Jayesh Rane. Soon after, Bengaluru squandered yet another chance, this time, through Chhetri. Picking out a long pass from the back, Sivasakthi charged into the box and squared the ball for his captain who couldn't effect a clean connection. Grayson now got in Udanta Singh and the winger made an instant impact, with his first involvement in the game a shot that went wide of the bar.

A few moments later, Chhetri played a quick give-and-go with Udanta, but the skipper's eventual shot was on to the side netting.

After taking the lead, the Blues saw the remainder of the game through to secure three points. Bengaluru next travel to Chennai, where they face Chennaiyin FC on October 14 at the JN Stadium.

Result: Bengaluru FC 1 (Costa 86) bt North-East United 0.

Today's match: Hyderabad FC vs Mumbai City FC (Live, Star Sports, 7.30 pm).

Chethan Shivakumar

ON TARGET: BFC's Alan Costa (No. 5) celebrates after scoring

Djokovic enters final as Medvedev retires

Astana (Kazakhstan): Novak Djokovic reached the final of the ATP tournament in Astana on Saturday as opponent Daniil Medvedev surprisingly retired at the end of the second set. With the score at 4-6, 7-6 (8/6), Medvedev called it quits before the deciding set, with even Djokovic initially appearing surprised.

"I'm shocked, really," Djokovic said. "He looked completely fine, but maybe the last seven eight, points I saw him move slower. He wouldn't retire the match unless he felt he couldn't continue."

TENNIS

The 21-time Grand Slam champion will face Stefanos Tstisipas in Sunday's final as he bids for a 90th ATP title. Third seed Tsitsipas of Greec beat Andrey Rublev 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 in the other semifinal.

TIAFOE FACES FRITZ

Frances Tiafoe beat South Korea's Kwon Soon-woo 6-2, 0-6, 6-4 to set up an all-American final against Taylor Fritz at the Japan Open on Saturday. The American, who reached his first Grand Slam semifinal at the US Open in September, reached his second title-decider of the season despite a poor second set in his victory. Third-seeded Fritz downed Canada's Denis Shapovalov 6-3 6-7(5) 6-3 in the second semifinal. They traded high-quality shots throughout the match before Fritz sealed the match with an ace.

SWIATEK INTO SEMIS

World No.1 Iga Swiatek reached her 10th semifinal of the season on Friday by defeating American qualifier Caty McNally in straight sets at the Ostrava WTA tournament. French and US Open champion Swiatek triumphed 6-4, 6-4 to take her 2022 record to 59 wins against just seven defeats. The 21-year-old Pole is just one victory away from tying Caroline Wozniacki, the last player to win 60 matches in a single season in 2017. Swiatek will face either Tereza Martincova of the Czech Republic or Russia's Ekaterina Alexandrova on Saturday for a place in the final.

Results: Japan Open: Men's semis: 4-Frances Tiafoe (USA) bt Kwon Soon-woo (Kor) 6-2, 0-6, 6-4; 3-Taylor Fritz (USA) bt 7-Denis Shapovalov (Can) 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3. **ATP Astana: Semis:** 3-Stefanos Tsitsipas (Gre) bt 5-Andrey Rublev 4-6, 6-4, 6-3; 4-Novak Djokovic (Srb) bt 2-Daniil Medvedev 4-6, 7-6 (8/6) retd.
WTA Ostrava: Quarters: 1-Iga Swiatek (Pol) bt Caty McNally (USA) 6-4, 6-4; Ekaterina Alexandrova bt Tereza Martincova (Cze) 6-1, 4-6, 6-1; Barbora Krejcikova (Cze) bt Alycia Parks (USA) 7-6 (9/7), 6-3; Elena Rybakina (Kaz) bt Petra Kvitova (Cze) 7-6 (7/5), 6-4.
Monastir WTA: Quarters: Claire Liu (USA) bt 1-Ons Jabeur (Tun) 6-3, 4-6, 6-4; 5-Elise Mertens (Bel) bt Moyuka Uchijima (Jpn) 6-0, 3-6, 6-4; 3-Alize Cornet (Fra) bt Tamara Zidansek (Slo) 7-5, 7-6 (9/7); 2-Veronika Kudermetova bt Diane Parry (Fra) 6-4, 6-1. AGENCIES

Juliette for feature event

Pune: The Karthick Ganapathy-trained Juliette, to be ridden by Chotu Singh Jodha, and Bengaluru challenger Forest Flame (Sandesh Up), from the stables of Sulaiman Attaollahi, are likely to dominate the finish of the Threptin Fillies & Mares Stakes, the feature event of the races here on Sunday. First race at 1.30pm.

PUNE SELECTIONS

October Handicap (Div-II) 1200M: Hawk Of The Wind 1, Mufaza 2.
Yana Plate 2000M: Alicia 1, Multistarrer 2. Chief D'Oeuvre Plate 1400M: Lit 1, Souza 2.
October Handicap (Div-I) 1200M: Outlander 1, Divine Thoughts 2.
Threptin Fillies & Mares Stakes 1800M: Juliette 1, Forest Flame 2.
Late B Jaganath Shetty Memorial Million 2000M: It's My Time 1, Leto 2.
Rao Saheb Kedari Gold Trophy 1400M: Rhythm Of Nature 1, Cognosco 2.
Round The Clock Racing On Play RWITC-.com Plate 1200M: Nusrat 1, Tristar 2.
Day's best: Alicia.
Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8. **First Treble**: 5, 6 & 7. **Second Treble:** 6, 7 & 8.

Parantap shines in Karnataka's win

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Yashovardhan Parantap's all-round show (4-35 & 51) and Dhruv Prabhakar's half-century helped Karnataka to a one-wicket win over Saurashtra in the Vinoo Mankad U-19 cricket tournament in Kolkata on Saturday. Batting first, Saurashtra scored 268/8 in 50 overs with

CRICKET

Ansh Gosai (58), Raxit Mehta (51) and Manav Chothani (63) leading from the front. Parantap bagged four wickets while Mohsin Khan took two wickets for 34 runs. Karnataka prevailed in 49.5 overs with Parantap and Prabhakar (67) anchoring the run chase well.

Brief scores: Saurashtra: 268/8 in 50 overs (Ansh Gosai 58, Raxit Mehta 51, Manav Chothani 63, Karnav Rathod 37; Yashovardhan Parantap 4-35, Mohsin Khan 2-34) **lost to Karnataka: 270/9 in 49.5 overs** (Rohan M Yareshimi 31, Dhruv Prabhakar 67, Yashovardhan Parantap 51, Aashish Mahesh 30; Aum Kanabar 2-53, Hiten Kanbi 3-46, Maurya Ghoghari 2-47).

K'TAKA IN KNOCKOUTS

Karnataka qualified for the knockouts of the BCCI U-19 women's T20 Trophy, beating Sikkim by 10 wickets in Hyderabad. Batting first, Sikkim were all out for 32 with Vandita K Rao bagging five wickets for 2 runs. Karnataka overhauled the target in 3.1 overs. The knockouts begin in Ahmedabad on October 11.

Brief scores: Sikkim: 32 in 16.4 overs (Vandita K Rao 5-2) **lost to Karnataka: 33 for no loss in 3.1 overs** (Mithila 19n.o).

India drop two spots to 106

India have dropped down two spots, positioned at world number 106 in the latest FIFA World Rankings. Brazil have retained their top spot in the latest FIFA World Rankings issued on October 6, the final release ahead of the World Cup in Qatar in November.

India down Myanmar: India registered a hat-trick of wins in the AFC U-17 Asian Cup 2023 Qualifiers, defeating Myanmar 4-1 at Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia on Friday. India's four goals came in the first half. India will take on Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

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Pankaj Advani claims his 25th world title after outclassing compatriot Sourav Kothari 4-0 in 150 up billiards final at World Championships **P 17**

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As India prepare for must-win match against South Africa, Washington Sundar replaces injured Deepak Chahar P 17

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(Beside Manyata Tech Park)

CASAGRAND Orlena

2 & 3 BHK APTS.
1078 - 1733 sq.ft.
Total Units: **296**
Units Sold: **184**

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BIG REASONS TO BUY
- Kids-themed community
- 80+ world-class amenities & features with a 24,500 sq.ft. clubhouse
- 65% open space with lush greenery
- 2 mins to Hennur Jn. & 5 mins to Manyata Tech Park
- 100% Vaastu compliant homes

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RERA: PRM/KA/RERA/1251/446/PR/210928/004324

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Units Sold: **400**

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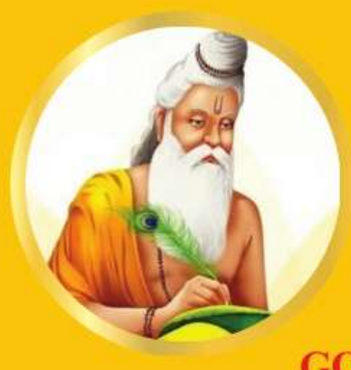
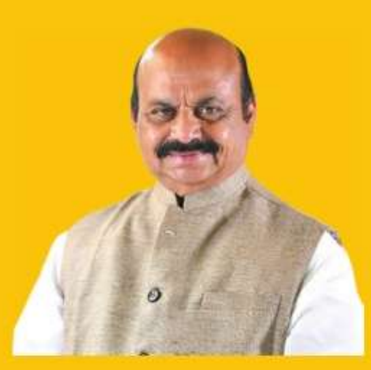
Putin-led Russian govt appoints new General, Sergey Surovikin, as commander of all its troops fighting in Ukraine after suffering losses on the southern front





SHRI NARENDRA MODI
Hon'ble Prime Minister

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Social Welfare Department & Tribal Welfare Department

SHRI BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
Hon'ble Chief Minister

HISTORICAL DECISION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

Reservation for Scheduled Castes (SC) has been increased from 15% to 17%.
Reservation for Scheduled Tribes (ST) has been increased from 3% to 7%.

- Implementation of Justice H. N. Nagamohan Das's Committee Report.
- Upholding Social Justice as promised by the Government of Karnataka.

Government of Karnataka working for the development of SC-ST communities

- Rs. 28,234 crore allotted for SCSP/TSP schemes.
- For projects of development corporations under the Social Welfare and Tribal Welfare Department, a grant of Rs. 580.19 crores was sanctioned in the budget. An additional grant of Rs. 410 crores is also sanctioned. The total amount is 990.19 crore.
- 75 units of free electricity for below-poverty-line SC/STs.
- A grant of Rs. 750 crores sanctioned to the Public Works Department, (earmarked under the SCSP/TSP scheme) to be utilized for the construction of 100 Dr B.R. Ambedkar hostels and 10 KREIS (Residential Schools) buildings.
- The unit cost under the land acquisition scheme aimed at providing land to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been increased to Rs. 20 lakhs.
- The assistance given to Scheduled Castes and Tribes under Self Employment Scheme increased to one lakh rupees. Under this scheme named after Babu Jagjeevanram, a target of assisting 100 people for each assembly constituency has been set.
- The housing subsidy for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes increased to Rs. 2 lakhs.

SHRI B. SRIRAMULU
Minister for Tribal Welfare

SHRI KOTA SRINIVAS POOJARI
Minister for Social Welfare and Backward Classes

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Farm to fame: How unique 'bridge village' in MP made medal winners

A govt doctor introduced Raibidpura to the game back in the sixties. Now, it boasts of 300-plus players, including two young women who recently won gold, silver in Italy

Ketaki.Desai@timesgroup.com

The village of Raibidpura came alive with the sound of dhols and Vande Mataram playing on loudspeakers as residents made their way onto the streets with balloons and streamers. Two young women, Kalpana Gurjar and Vidhya Patel, rode across the main village street on a makeshift float, decked up in plastic tiaras, with the Indian flag draped over their shoulders. The duo recently won a silver medal at the World Youth Bridge Transnational Championships in Salsomaggiore, Italy in the Under-26 women's category, with Kalpana also bringing home a gold in the solo category, and a proud village had gathered to celebrate their feat.

EARLY START: Raibidpura's children play the game after school

> **When I first went in 2012, only the men played. It took some convincing for them to allow the women and kids to try their hand at bridge**

Raibidpura, some 150km from Indore, has earned its title of 'India's bridge village'. Besides these two medal-winners, the village of some 5,000 people boasts 300-odd bridge players. So how did this village of kisans take to a game that is commonly associated with Gymkhana club uncles? And what's more, break the shackles of patriarchy to let women play cards? For that, one needs to go back to 1965 when the game first took root here. The credit goes to Mohammad Zia Khan, a government veterinary doctor posted in Raibidpura, says Bali Thomriya, a primary school teacher and medal-winner Kalpana's father. "Khan Saheb, as we called him, had no form of entertainment in the village. For timepass, he started teaching villagers bridge." A team was put together, and though some members were illiterate, they excelled at the complex game.

Raibidpura has been home to mostly farmers and government school teachers, but the younger generation have diversified into software and medicine. And now, professional bridge players. For the first few decades of bridge-playing, the game was limited only to middle-aged men, according to Amaresh Deshpande, who first visited the village back in 2012 after reading about the 'bridge village'. "Bridge tends to be an elite game. It is played in clubs in Delhi and Bombay. So, how did this happen?" To find out, he spent 10 days in Raibidpura. "When I saw them play bridge, I noticed three things. The first thing is that they were like a brotherhood. There is no violence or animosity; no one is throwing their cards across the table." This is quite unlike other bridge clubs in the world where there is a lot of bickering. "People are always arguing and it can be an unpleasant game," says Deshpande, pointing out that there have been divorces over the bridge table (as well as a grisly murder of a husband in Kansas in the 1940s). The second thing was that they played on the floor, something Deshpande, himself a bridge player, had never seen before.

"Lastly, only men played. I asked them about this — where are the kids and the women? They said, 'how will they play, they have to make the food'. After some convincing — and pointing that the game would die out if not taught to future generations — the first domino fell. "There was a gentleman called Devdas Verma who taught his granddaughter and her friend. After that, more and more young people started playing," says Deshpande. First, a variation called mini bridge and then the game proper began to be taught in schools and a bridge club was established courtesy Deshpande's efforts. That one day, village elders would ask two young women for advice on bridge was unimaginable at the time.

YOUNG ACES: Kalpana Gurjar and Vidhya Patel (left) show off the silver medals they won at a tournament in Italy

Kalpana and Vidhya were among this first cohort of young bridge players. "We were introduced to bridge in class 8 when Amaresh sir came in 2012. Initially, we saw that whoever was playing bridge got to travel for tournaments and we wanted to do that," laughs 21-year-old Vidhya. Kalpana adds that their passion for the game developed with time. "The more we learnt, the more interested we got. As we went for bigger tournaments, we would see how many people played and get to meet new, interesting people," says Kalpana, 23.

Tournaments have been an intrinsic part of the bridge experience in Raibidpura. Deepak Verma, a farmer and bridge player, says the first tournament a team from the village participated in was in Indore in 2003. "The villagers saw an ad for a tournament in the newspaper, wrote to them and went for it," he says. Once there, the team attracted attention because the others couldn't believe how good the contingent of farmers, dressed in their traditional attire, were at the game.

The story of bridge in Raibidpura is one of collaborative support — it takes a village, so to speak. In this case, the 'village' included many in the bridge community who contributed time, money and coaches to help the growth of the game. During the pandemic, players from Delhi gave laptops to Kalpana and Vidhya, which allowed the girls to participate in online tournaments. "During the lockdown, all we did was play," Vidhya says.

The first time bridge player Parimal Vahaliya went to Raibidpura, he saw the passion for the game firsthand. "In 2013, players from the village came to Ahmedabad to participate in the nationals and they stayed with us," he says. Then, in 2015, Vahaliya and his wife, also a bridge player, organised a summer coaching camp with young players from across the country participating, including a contingent of 11 from Raibidpura. "We would coach them for 6-7 hours a day," says Vahaliya, adding that he had recognised the potential in Kalpana and Vidhya. So, he went to their parents with an offer — send the girls to college in Ahmedabad and he would coach them for free over the weekends. The families agreed, and the rest is history.

Bridge can be a tool for social change, Deshpande points out. "I looked at some metrics — crime, health, gambling, farming techniques and wealth — and compared Raibidpura to neighbouring villages. On every level, they scored higher. It may be a leap of faith to say that bridge is the reason, but why is there such a difference between them and a village 3km away?" Thomriya adds, "Raibidpura is different from the villages around us. There is a maahaul (atmosphere) here that is more progressive."

The girls say the game has taught them everything from social skills to analytical ones and are hoping that their success propels more interest in the game. Their bridge club is being renovated and Deshpande has been making an active effort to involve young people of all castes, since the game has largely been the domain of dominant castes.

Thomriya, Kalpana's father, is very clear that while marriage may be on the horizon, his daughter will not marry into a family that expects her to stop playing bridge. Kalpana smiles when told about her father's comments. "My parents are right. And anyway, it's the kind of game that leaves you hooked."

Why your career is like a game of musical chairs

Ravi Venkatesan

Escaping setbacks at work is impossible. The idea of our professional life as a smooth upward sloping graph is delusional. Career setbacks are common and normal. Even phenomenally successful people like Apple co-founder Steve Jobs had many setbacks, let alone ordinary people like you and me. What matters is how you recover when you stumble. It is useful to think about work like the game of musical chairs where the music stops suddenly, and you are caught between chairs. Time to start again. The music can stop in so many ways. Your startup can fail. Your company can downsize or reorganise, eliminating your role. You can get a new manager who doesn't like you. Or you simply can't stand your work or workplace, and it's time to do something different. The challenge today is that we are living in a period of extreme change and so, we are likely to get caught out more often. When this happens, it can feel like a catastrophe, and it is easy to slip into depression or victimhood.

While it is no fun when you suffer a crisis, setbacks are incredibly useful and essential for reinventing ourselves. Things that hurt, teach. A setback is a crucible experience in which we develop both character and skills. Over the years, I've had many setbacks. I got a poor rank the first time I took the IIT entrance exam. It took me two attempts to break into Harvard. I've had tough performance reviews and been passed over for promotions. I've had my career stall at least a couple of times. One startup never got off the ground. None of these were happy times. But looking back, they taught me humility, grit and courage. They taught me to care less about what others think and just stay focused. My setbacks, more than my successes, forged who I am.

I would never have made the move to Microsoft in 2003 had I not lost the CEO race at my previous company; the Microsoft experience then led to a host of fantastic opportunities over time. Any number of people have become successful entrepreneurs or found something much better after losing their jobs. Sometimes when it seems like all doors are shut, we start looking and eventually find a path that leads to our true calling. This happened to me and has led to a fulfilling life in global development.

In fact, while interviewing candidates I now look for how they have dealt with setbacks and failure more than what they have claim to have achieved.

So how do you prepare for a long journey filled with uncertainty, constant change, lots of challenges and many setbacks? For starters, you need to develop a growth mindset and learn to approach life as an adventure with experiences that are designed to help you learn and develop. A growth mindset is something that you intentionally cultivate by rising to meet life's challenges.

Developing your financial and intangible assets is also essential if you are going to recover from big shocks and setbacks. Getting through a tough patch in life is much easier if you have a home and savings to cushion the shock. But even more important are your intangible assets. These include your health, close friends and family, mentors, skills, reputation, networks, character and faith. It's so much easier to recover from setbacks and make difficult transitions when you have family and friends to support you; when you have networks and reputation that help you find new opportunities; and mentors who help you think your way through the knots and open new doors. It feels impossibly harder when you are alone with no particular skills, networks, or reputation. And the time to cultivate these is NOW before you really need them.

Getty Images

> **Getting through a tough patch in life is much easier if you have a home and savings to cushion the shock. But even more important are intangible assets. These include your health, close friends and family, mentors, skills, reputation, networks, character and faith**

The final tool in your arsenal for tough times is your spirituality or faith. We are living in an age of unreason where the impossible happens more and more often. The chances are high that we will be challenged in ways we cannot imagine, and that life will not always or even largely go as we expect. Getting through these moments is easier if we believe that we are not alone, that we are connected to something larger than ourselves. "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience," said Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, an influential Jesuit priest. It is easier to deal with setbacks and tough times if you really believe this.

Venkatesan is a business leader, social entrepreneur. His recent book is 'What the Heck do I do with my Life'.

RUE-LETTE: The human cost of online gambling

With TN deciding on a ban, a look at how virtual casinos have many Indians hooked

Himanshi.Dhawan@timesgroup.com

- *Last week, a Hyderabad techie who borrowed Rs 5 lakh and then lost it in online gambling was caught after he tried to rob gold from his friend's house to repay debts*
- *In September, a Mumbai-based chartered accountant stole Rs 15 crore from his employer to fuel his online gambling addiction*
- *Earlier this year, a private bank employee was arrested by Mumbai police for allegedly siphoning off Rs 1.8 crore from the bank for online betting*

Siphoning off money from employers, faking their own kidnapping for ransom, robbery and even taking their own lives, online gamblers can be pushed to desperate lengths. While gambling for money has been a "timepass" for decades in India — inside homes or even outdoors on open lawns and street corners where men gather to pay teen patti and rummy — the pandemic has pushed, much like everything else, the games online. Add to it the availability of cheap data, an uptick in digital transactions, higher penetration of smartphones, and rapid expansion in supply and quality of games, and you have a potent mix before you.

Delhi-based psychiatrist Dr Pankaj Kumar says there has been a 15-20% increase in the number of people seeking treatment for gambling addiction after the lockdown. For most people, it starts as entertainment which grows into an addiction. Gamblers are lulled by the false belief that they can leave anytime.

Which is what happened to 17-year-old Ashwini* who started playing some games as a way to redeem reward points. He received some gifts which spurred his interest further. What started as fun and games quickly became a habit. He moved from casual gaming to playing for money, borrowing from friends and pilfering valuables from home, even managing to access his father's bank account. He withdrew small amounts over a period of a year, totalling over Rs 2 lakh. When his father confronted him, he denied it. Believing his denial, the father even approached the police. It was only then that the teen confessed to his addiction. The parents paid up the loans and believed his assurances that he would not play again. But the boy resumed soon after and started demanding money from his parents. When his father refused, he turned aggressive and beat him up. "It was only then that the father realised that his son could even kill him in this fit of rage," Dr Kumar says. The teen was brought to the doctor for help earlier this year and is now under psychiatric treatment.

Shirish Sharma

Best Practices In Other Countries

- **Self-exclusion:** Allow gamblers to be voluntarily banned from gambling activities for a duration of time
- **Responsible game design:** Many countries prescribe game standards so that companies do not use unethical practices. Other steps include responsible advertising, age-gating, putting in place daily or monthly limits on gambling

Source: ESYA centre report, E-Gaming Federation

High Stakes

Growth in Indian gamers

FY18	250 million
FY20	400 million

- **$50b:** Online real money gaming (RMG) industry in India in 2021
- **$61b:**. Estimated growth by 2025

Source: KPMG report, 2021, MHA data

Gambling releases dopamine which is what makes it addictive. Dr Manoj Sharma, professor at NIMHANS Bengaluru's SHUT (Service for Healthy Use of Technology) clinic that tackles tech de-addiction, says that people were driven by boredom and lack of work to go online during the pandemic. "Players first start with casual gaming and then progress to money games, and then to higher stakes. While every win brings a high, every loss leaves the player with a feeling of guilt, regret but also the hope that they can regain the losses by playing more. When they realise that they can't compensate for the losses, there's a sense of guilt, hopelessness, and failure which can drive them to take desperate actions."

These risks are even more in the case of minors. Some websites do not conduct know-your-customer (KYC) or other age verification checks. This allows minors easy access to these websites, exposing them to unsuitable content and enticing them to engage in illegal activities, says a study on online gaming by tech policy think tank ESYA Centre. It also notes that "gambling is associated with higher financial distress and lower financial inclusion and planning, higher rates of future unemployment and physical disability, and at its most acute, with substantially increased mortality."

A Delhi-based cloth merchant took to gambling during the lockdown. "Eventually he started diverting and selling stocks for a loss just to fuel his gambling habit," says Dr Kumar. In two years, his business was destroyed, he was in debt, and his children had to be withdrawn from a private school and sent to a government one. The family finally reached out for medical help though the trader was in denial. "It took three months, and with a combination of medication, psychotherapy, counselling sessions, his condition improved," Dr Kumar adds.

But what about the legality? While betting and gambling are illegal across India (except in some states like Sikkim and Nagaland) under the 1867 Public Gambling Act, the colonial-era law does leave room for an exception by legalising games of skill. Subsequent court orders have recognised rummy, chess and poker as games of skill rather than chance. But concerns related to gambling addiction have prompted the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu to bring in laws banning gambling for money. However, some of these bans have been successfully challenged and overturned with the courts recognising games like rummy and poker to be skill-based and legal. The Tamil Nadu and Karnataka governments have challenged this in SC where the matter is currently pending. In fact, the Tamil Nadu governor on Friday approved an ordinance to ban online gambling.

Domestic gaming companies contend that there is no uniformity in laws which differ from state to state. They also argue that while Indian companies are being subjected to taxation laws with a Bengaluru-based online gaming company being charged with the largest indirect show-cause notice in history — that of Rs 21,000 crore — companies registered outside the country are exempt from the legislative framework.

Meanwhile, advertisements for such websites continue with disclaimers. For example, in December 2020, advertisements of offshore betting websites were shown during the live-streaming of cricket matches between India and Australia. Many use cricket and Bollywood stars for endorsement. Self-regulatory organisation E-Gaming Federation (EGF) has demanded a central regulation that will protect the interests of players and industry. "We understand that gaming is an immersive experience and players can go overboard but bans are not the answer. We are seeking a soft touch regulation that will help the legit industry grow and protect players' interests too," says EGF CEO Sameer Barde. The federation has already put in place a code of conduct for its members that include age-gating, putting limits on the time and money a player spends and KYC norms so minors do not play money games. In August, the government set up a task force to frame policy for the sector.

Technology and gaming lawyer Jay Sayta says all games should be regulated. "All games — whether skill or chance based — should be regulated and taxed so that there is compliance, otherwise the industry will go underground and continue illegally."

** Name changed*

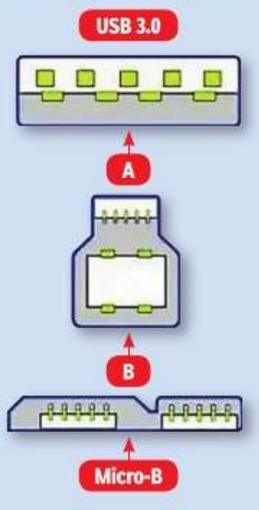
Need help for gambling addiction? Reach out to iCALL 9152987821 (Mon-Sat; 10am to 8pm)

What Europe's universal charger decision means for you

The European parliament has voted to introduce a single charging port for mobile phones, tablets and cameras by 2024, and for laptops by 2026

So, what is this universal charger?

- The acronym USB stands for Universal Serial Bus, which is an industry standard for connecting, communicating, and charging devices or accessories. There are different types of USB cables and connectors. The most common is USB-A though most Android mobile phones now come with a USB micro-B connector while some are already coming with USB-C, an oval connector that will now be the one cord that connects Europe. It's different from Apple's flat rectangular Lightning connector



How does it help?

- Besides saving you from dealing with those tangles of chargers in your drawer, the switch to USB-C is likely to save consumers money. Devices will come unbundled, and you can just keep one charger for all your devices, rather than each of them coming with a different kind of cord. It also helps cut down e-waste. One in every three chargers that is bundled with these products is never opened from its original packaging, show studies

11,000 tons a year is what unused and discarded chargers add up to in Europe

Why it's important

- The decision might not make a big dent in reducing the amount of e-waste piling up across the world but still, the decision has a symbolic significance. It sets an example of how tougher regulations can force Big Tech to change wasteful habits

Who it affects the most

- Apple will be most impacted since it uses its proprietary Lightning connector for iPhones. In the past, it has complained that the move will hurt innovation and create a lot of waste rather than cutting it since people have to dump their devices. However, it has to comply. Talk is that the iPhone 15 Ultra will come with USB-C

What about India?

- Like the EU's strict privacy regulations, this could end up becoming a de facto standard for the rest of the world because it will most likely be costly for tech companies to make products with different charging technology only for European countries. Also, India is contemplating a similar rule. An expert group consisting of various stakeholders has reportedly been set up for this purpose

Source: NYT

SUNDAY

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Shafali's Match-Winning Prowess

Scores 55 off 44 balls as India beat B'desh to clinch a semifinal spot in Asia Cup T20 P 16

VOL. 31 NO. 38 | BENGALURU

Transport min directs officials to impound aggregator autos

Govt Issues Notices To Operators

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Transport minister B Sriramulu on Saturday directed officials to seize autoickshaws of app-based aggregators. He told reporters: "We have already issued a notice to aggregators like Ola and Uber for violations and will take the next course of action in a few days."

L Hemanth Kumar, additional commissioner for transport and secretary, State Transport Authority, said: "We have given aggregators time till Tuesday to respond to our notice. We'll take action against them after that in consultation with government advocates since a case filed by aggregators is still pending in the high court."

TOI on Thursday carried a report 'Minimum charge for aggregator auto in city breaches Rs 100'. Following this, the department deemed aggregator autos 'illegal'.

The department issued notices to ANI Technologies, which runs Ola and other firms, Uber and Rapido asking them to stop auto services and submit a report in three days. The minimum fare for an autorickshaw is Rs 30 for the first 1.9km but the charges had breached Rs 100.

WILL PROTEST SEIZURE: UNION

> We're getting complaints every year but there are some technical issues. I'll take a decision after getting clarifications from aggregators. I have directed officials to seize vehicles operating despite the direction
>
> **B Sriramulu** | TRANSPORT MINISTER

> App-based aggregators are collecting high fares and reducing incentives. Autorickshaws are owned by individual drivers, not companies. If they seize vehicles of drivers, then we will protest
>
> **BV Raghavendra** | GENERAL SECRETARY, AUTO RICKSHAW DRIVERS' UNION

Auto aggregators cut minimum fares

App-based auto aggregators reportedly slashed their minimum fare from over Rs 100 to Rs 70 on Saturday, two days after the transport department declared aggregator autos 'illegal'. On Saturday, Ola was charging Rs 70-80 for a minimum auto fare of 1 km while Uber's minimum fare was between Rs 80-90. P 4

DNA report is supportive evidence: HC

If the DNA test goes against an accused, it is clinching evidence against him for further proceedings. But if it favours the accused, then other materials and evidence on record will still have to be considered for corroboration, the Karnataka high court has observed.

Refusing to quash court proceedings against a KSRTC conductor, who allegedly sexually assaulted a minor, Justice M Nagaprasanna noted that the DNA test report might be in favour of the petitioner not being the biological father but it does not absolve him of the offences alleged. P 6

Regulate therapists on social media: HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The Karnataka high court has refused to quash a cheating case filed against a social media influencer who took Rs 3.1 lakh from a city-based IT professonal she met on Tinder, a dating app, by claiming to be a wellness therapist.

The court, taking cognizance of the mushrooming of therapies and therapists on social media platforms, called upon the government to come up with regulatory measures to check such 'pseudo-therapists' who are not bound by ethics.

WELLNESS ON TINDER

CHEATING PLAINT

- Techie **meets a woman on Tinder,** she claims to be a wellness therapist
- He attends her therapy sessions, and **transfers money after each class**
- Insists he wants to meet her; **she blocks him claiming he sent her lewd messages**
- **Techie files a cheating complaint** after he realises she is no trained therapist

The drama unfolded during lockdown when the techie and the woman befriended each other on the mobile dating app.

▶ 15 online profiles, P 6

Frequent rule tweaks affect bldg plan nod

Frequent revision of rules by BBMP to streamline sanctioning of building plans for new constructions across the city has only caused more problems to the public instead of providing resolutions, reports **Niranjan Kaggere**.

Those wanting to build houses have to wait for nearly three months to get their plans sanctioned.

Sanctions of building plans submitted two-three months ago are reportedly still awaiting approval. Sunil, chief town planner with BBMP, clarified that the delay was largely due to a series of holidays. P 4

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY
YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

DDA announces Mega E-Auction (17th Phase)

of Prime Commercial (Rohini, Dwarka & other), Residential (New Rajender Nagar, Mukherjee Nagar & other), Institutional (including Religious plots), Industrial (Mangolpuri), Group Housing Plots (Rohini), Built up Shops, CNG Sites .....and many more.

167	Institutional (Leasehold including religious plots)	36	Industrial Plots (Freehold)	77	Commercial Plots (Freehold)
02	CNG Sites (Annual License fee basis)	92	Residential (62 Freehold) + OSB (30 Freehold)	50	Small Size Residential Plots (Rohini) (Freehold)
04	Group Housing (Freehold)	34	Kiosk (21) + Janak Place Shops (13) (Monthly License fee basis)	16	Mobile Tower (Monthly License fee basis)
07	ASMPCH (Ancilliary Services in Multipurpose Community Hall) (Monthly License fee basis)			130	Built-up Shops (Freehold)

100 Function Sites advertised on 27.09.2022 for E- auction and the live bidding will be on 18.10.2022

Important Dates & Events

11.10.2022	(Tuesday) Opening of Help Desk and commencement of e-Registration
11.11.2022	(Friday) (06.00 PM) Closing Time of e-Registration and online EMD submission
14.11.2022	(Monday) Online Bidding of Institutional (167), CNG /Green Fuel Sites (2), Janak Place Shops (13) and Group Housing (4)
15.11.2022	(Tuesday) Online Bidding of Resdl. (62) and (OSB) (30), Kiosks (21), Mobile Tower(16) and LPC-ASMPCH (7)
16.11.2022	(Wednesday) Online Bidding for Industrial (36) and Commercial Estates Shops (130)
17.11.2022	(Thursday) Online Bidding for Commercial Land (77), and Residential Plots of LAB Rohini- (50)

For details about Plots/Properties and procedure, kindly visit our e-auction website **www.ddaeauction.co.in** Or click the Go to **e-auction** link available at our site **www.dda.gov.in** and download the same though **"E-AUCTION OF PROPERTIES"** link available at home page of e-aution portal. Intending bidders may register themeselves/their firms online at the above site through **"REGISTER WITH US"** link. Kindly note that digital signature of all the intending bidders are mandatory to participate in e-auction of DDA. A Help Desk has been opened at the Nagrik Suvidha Kendra, Ground Floor, 'D' Block, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi which will start from **11.10.2022** to assist the intending bidders in the ongoing process of e-auction. For obtaining digital signatures and registration/training of prosepective bidders and for any other clarification on e-auction process, please contact our Help Desk No. **080-45811365/8800558944 from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm** (all working days) or at : **ddaauction@etenderwizard.com**

Sanjeev Kumar, Commissioner (LD)

For further details contact: Commissioner (LD), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023

DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The detailed term and conditions are available at **DDA website : www.dda.gov.in** or **www.tenderwizard.com/ddeauction**

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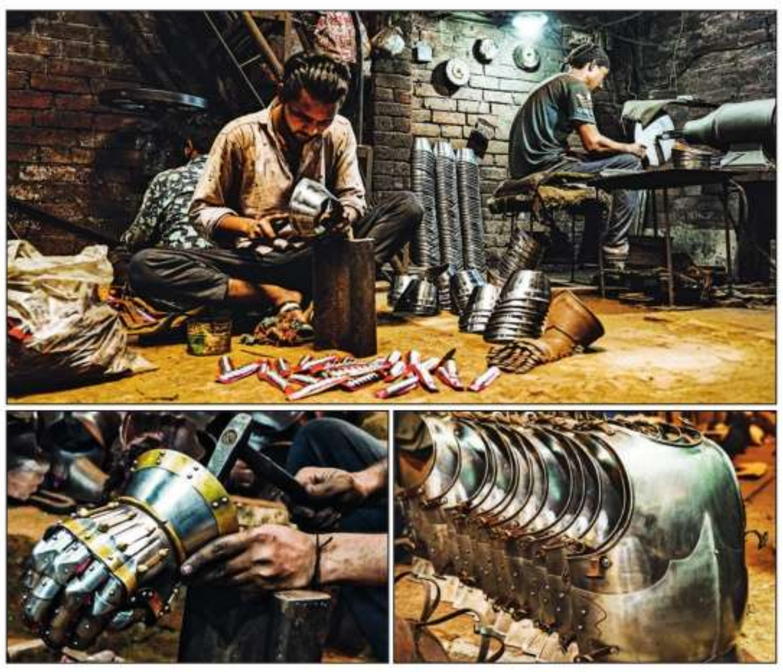
Interest in period dramas powers 'old armour' industry

What's the link between Shiva's costumes in 'Brahmastra', popular PC game 'Warhammer', Russell Crowe's 'Gladiator', and 'Game of Thrones'? Dingy factories in Meerut, Dehradun

Sandeep.Rai@timesgroup.com



In the congested bylanes of Lakhipura, located within the deep recesses of old Meerut, 45-year-old Noor Saifi gives final touches to the replica of a 16th-century steel gauntlet, an unusual sight for locals in this part of the world.

Iron breastplates designed to look like those from a bygone era are placed in a corner of the small, soot-filled room, waiting to be buffed and eventually turned into shining armour. They will be supplied as medieval armour to European, Asian, and American markets as part of a business that's suddenly seeing a "meteoric rise" with the revolution in new-age technology (aided by frenetic talk on social media), the proliferation of OTT platforms, advancements in the gaming industry and, most of all, renewed interest in period pieces, mythology and historical tales.

Many of these finely designed pieces have featured in blockbuster movies such as Russell Crowe-starrer 'Gladiator', Gerard Butler's '300', and Bollywood's own 'Brahmastra'. Several pieces are also used as ceremonial armour abroad. "But the fresh interest in our industry is something we have never seen before," a prop maker says.

Saifi is one of the many artisans residing in the walled city who work for medieval arms manufacturers and vendors in Meerut and Dehradun. These two north Indian cities are known to supply a major chunk of weapons produced by the Rs 350-crore Indian period armour industry to the rest of the world.

"Meerut has cheap labour and expert ironsmiths. There is no dearth of work here. Our workload has increased over the years and business has been booming of late," Saifi says.

Just 10km away from Lakhipura lies another facility on Parikshitgarh Road. Here, artisans are found forging beautifully engraved swords in foundries and painting exquisite dagger handles in gold and silver.

Gagan Agarwal, director of Deepeeka Exports, is personally taking care of quality checks at the site. "Foreigners are very particular about detail. Thanks to social media, information is available at everyone's fingertips now.... Authenticity is our hallmark here," he says.

In Dehradun, which is one of the country's biggest hubs for period armour, Windlass Steelcrafts has bagged a prestigious order to make replica collectibles of the British Royal Armouries Museum. Owner Sudhir Windlass, who has just returned from the UK, said he has entered into an agreement with the Tower of London authorities for this.

"These are good times as the industry is growing at almost 25% annually," Windlass said. "We hold pride in supplying ceremonial swords to the armies of close to 25 countries around the globe."

"Our props have been used in Hollywood films and period dramas on OTT platforms because of their cost-effectiveness and quality. This by itself did not generate a lot of business volume but the interest of the audience, particularly of the youth, was piqued. People have become collectors of the weapons that they see on screen," Windlass added.

The industry had first come into the limelight in 2000, when Russell Crowe's 'Gladiator' used made-in-India armour. A few years later, similar weaponry was used in '300' starring Gerard Butler and period dramas such as 'Spartacus: Blood & Sand', 'Rome', and 'Game of Thrones'.

Mohd Alaudin, director of the Meerut-based Daniyal Steelcraft, said, "Europeans are proud of their history and relive the bygone era by enacting famous battles on their original battlegrounds. There are agencies, including local museums and history schools, that keep this interest alive. They also order authentic gear to lend a real feel to the 'battle'. Of course, period dramas are also generating a lot of interest."

With advancements in technology, another sector that has given a boost to the industry is gaming. "Period films and dramas have drawn the imagination of the gaming industry like never before. These iconic shows are inspiring cinematic war games. This is fuelling demand for collectibles of such games sought after by kids and youth," said Deepeeka Exports' Gagan Agarwal, who recently tied up with Games Workshop, a Nottingham-based gaming company credited with creating popular PC games such as 'Warhammer', to make miniature figurines.

Of late, the spillover of this western influence can be felt in Bollywood too. Vijay Das, a Meerut-based consultant and research analyst for period weapons, said, "Our film industry has finally realised the role of realistic weapons in the success of their projects that represent an era where shimmering swords and fearsome cavalries on the battlefields changed the course of history. It began with 'Padmaavat' in 2018, in which props from Meerut were used. More orders came for 'Tanhaji', 'Panipat' and 'Brahmastra'. Authenticity is of utmost importance. And that is what sells."

TIMES *Special*

Join the **Times Special Readers' Club.** Scan the QR code to share your inputs. Top contributors win rewards!

Not alone but still lonely? Be your own best friend

*To help readers cope with their anxieties in these stressful times, TOI has launched **Talk it Out**, a series in which expert counsellors answer your mental health queries. This week's advice is from psychologist **Anaita Veigas***

iStock

I feel that responsibility fell on my shoulders at a very early age. I look after everyone but no one cares for me. No one even asks about my life. I feel lonely and depressed as I have no one around with whom I can share my feelings? What should I do?
— Anonymous

We often tend to neglect ourselves when we become the primary caregivers to others. One of the ways you can feel loved is by becoming your own best friend and being compassionate towards yourself. There's no other person in the whole universe who can comfort you the way that you'd want to be comforted except for you. It is best to learn to self-soothe by doing activities that bring you joy and peace. Paint, dance, write, watch a movie and give yourself a hug. Ask yourself: 'How can I best support myself now?' 'What can I do to help myself now?' and find solutions. Take frequent breaks to gather your energy and rewind. Whenever you feel burdened by the thoughts in your mind and wish to talk to someone, you could write about these thoughts. It's okay to feel sad at times. You can become aware of the feeling and then move to soothe yourself in the ways that you can. Wishing you the best!

I am a 15-year-old girl and have a younger brother aged 11 years. Our parents quarrel a lot. They debate about every little thing including groceries. This depresses me but I manage. But my brother can't bear it. He has been talking about suicide after a recent fight which took place because my father cheated on my mom. How can I help my brother?
— Anonymous

This must be so hard on both of you. Have a conversation around suicide and understand the seriousness of the issue — Is it at the thought level? Does he have a plan? Has he tried harming himself before? It is often believed that talking about suicide can encourage the person concerned. But this is not true. Rather, talking about it can make them feel heard and seen. Keep an eye out for signs such as writing a goodbye note or giving away valuables. Hide all sharp or harmful objects. Support your brother emotionally and provide a non-judgmental, listening ear. Involve your parents and help them understand the impact of their behaviour. Request them to see a therapist. In fact, you all may benefit from taking regular family therapy sessions. Jointly decide on the next step. If you don't find support within your family, seek help from extended family members and friends. Moreover, do some mindful breathing to calm down when you feel stressed and convert this pent up energy into action towards redressing the problem.

My husband of 15 years cheated on me. I cannot trust him. I keep checking his mobile and his whereabouts to track him all the time. I have two kids and can't end this marriage but I am constantly worried that he will stray again. It's taking a toll on my health. Please help!
— Anonymous

Violation of trust can result in feeling insecure in a relationship. More so, if there is no accountability and responsibility for the actions. Acknowledge and resist the urge to check your partner's phone. Remember, if someone wants to cheat, they will find a way to do so. You would only be causing yourself more stress by wanting to control what you cannot. It may be tempting to think that there's something wrong with you but it's about them and not you, irrespective of how it is presented. It's very natural to want to protect ourselves from pain and so we tend to believe in the worst. Introspect and understand what you need from yourself, your partner, and the relationship. Be frank and talk to each other about your respective feelings, the infidelity and the damage it has done. You can also work on yourself and improve your self-worth which will help you feel more secure and lead a mentally peaceful life. Trust yourself and your gut feeling but differentiate anxiety and fear from this. Try couple therapy sessions to work on the relationship if you find your partner acknowledges the cheating and wants to make amends to make things right through his actions.

TalkitOut

WANT SOME ADVICE?

Sharing can help your recovery so write to us at **talkitout@timesgroup.com** with your question, name and place. But if you wish to stay anonymous, do indicate that in your email.

You can also visit bit.ly/TOITalkItOut or scan this QR code to send in your concern.

If you need counselling, please contact the following helplines

- Aasra +91-9820466726 (24x7)
- Cooj +91 9822562522 (Mon-Fri, 1-7pm)
- iCall +91 9152987821 (Mon-Sat, 10am-8pm)
- Fortis +91 8376804102 (24x7)
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