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IN BRIEF



BJP is unleashing litany of falsehood, says Ansari

NEW DELHI
Hours after a spokesperson of the BJP demanded to know if the claims made by a Pakistani journalist that former Vice-President Hamid Ansari had shared secret information with him were true, Mr. Ansari said a "litany of falsehood" had been unleashed against him.

NEWS ► PAGE 11

Couple arrested with 45 guns at Delhi airport

NEW DELHI
The Customs Department has arrested an Indian couple at the Indira Gandhi International Airport on the charge of attempting to smuggle in 45 guns brought from France. The duo said they had earlier smuggled in 25 such guns valued at ₹12.5 lakh from Turkey.

NEWS ► PAGE 12



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Ranil becomes Acting President as Gotabaya flees to Maldives

Amid strife, political party leaders meet Speaker to demand that both quit

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the island nation and took refuge in the Maldives early on Wednesday, ahead of his promised resignation, appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe as Acting President, the Parliamentary Speaker said.

The announcement came even as protesters overran the Premier's office in Colombo, in the middle of agitations against the leader, now as unpopular as the President who appointed him two months ago amid political turbulence in the wake of a daunting economic crisis.

"We must end this fascist threat to democracy. We can't allow the destruction of state property. The President's office, the President's Secretariat and the Prime Minister's official residence must be returned to proper custody. I have ordered military commanders and the police chief to do what is necessary to restore order," Mr. Wickremesinghe said in a televised address, his first to the nation after being ap-



Field day: The police fire tear gas shells as protesters storm the compound of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's office in Colombo on Wednesday, demanding his resignation. ■ AP

pointed Acting President.

Late in the day, a gazette notification was issued by the President appointing Mr. Wickremesinghe to "exercise, perform and discharge the powers, duties and functions of the Office of President" with effect from Wednesday, during his absence from Sri Lanka.

the main state television station and briefly took over broadcasts on Wednesday.

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IN SRI LANKA, NO QUIET AFTER THE STORM ► PAGE 6
MODI GOVT. DISTANCES ITSELF FROM RAJAPAKSAS ► PAGE 10
THE RISE AND FALL OF GOTABAYA ► PAGE 13

Cannot impose 'omnibus' ban on demolitions: SC

It reiterates rule of law can't be ignored

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday wondered whether it can pass "omnibus" orders to stop demolitions by municipal authorities across the country even as senior advocate Dushyant Dave insisted that the nation should refuse to accept the bulldozer culture".

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the U.P. government, objected to Mr. Dave's submission that the demolitions targeted a certain community. On June 16, the court told the government that demolitions could happen only in accordance with the law and could not be retaliatory.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, also for the State government, said the argument on rule of law was powerful indeed". "But the factual foundation is wobbly. Can Your Lords pass an order saying a house cannot be demolished merely because it belongs to an accused," he asked.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 10



Jailed Assam college girl set to miss exam

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Regional political parties and human rights activists have appealed to the Assam government to release a college girl, jailed about two months ago for allegedly penning a pro-ULFA(I) poem, in order to let her appear for her exam.

ULFA(I) expands to the outlawed, secessionist United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) headed by Pares Baruah, who operates out of Myanmar and China.

Burashree Buragohain, a resident of Jorhat area of eastern Assam and pursuing mathematics at the town's DCB College, was picked up by the police on May 17 from Urianghat in the adjoining Golaghat district for posting "anti-national" poems on social media.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 10

Free precaution jabs at govt. centres from tomorrow

Those above 18 are eligible for the benefit for 75 days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, free precaution doses of COVID-19 vaccines will be available for all citizens above 18 years of age at government vaccination centres for 75 days from July 15, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Singh Thakur announced after the Union Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

Tweeting the decision, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said that it would further strengthen India's fight against COVID-19 and add an extra layer of safety. "I urge all those eligible to get their precaution dose at the ear-



Shot in the arm: People getting COVID vaccines as part of a vaccination camp at Chennai in Tamil Nadu. ■ RAGU R.

liest," Mr. Mandaviya added.

India's cumulative COVID-19 vaccination coverage exceeds 199.12 crore, and over 3.76 crore first dose vaccines have been administered for the 12-14 age group as on Wednesday, the Health Ministry said.

87% fully inoculated

According to government data, 96% of India's population has been administered

Oppo India gets DRI notice on 'duty evasion'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has served a show-cause notice on Oppo India demanding customs duty amounting to ₹4,389 crore, the agency said on Wednesday.

The notice proposes penalties on the company, its employees and Oppo China under provisions of the Customs Act. Oppo Mobiles India Private Ltd. is a subsidiary of the China-based Guangdong Oppo Mobile Telecommunications Corporation Ltd. It is engaged in the business of manufacturing, assembling, trading and distribution of mobile handsets and accessories in India.

The company deals in various brands of mobile phones, including Oppo, OnePlus and Realme.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 10

India ranks 135 out of 146 in Gender Gap Index

Country is worst performer in the world in 'health and survival' sub-index: report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India ranks 135 among a total of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, 2022, released by the World Economic Forum on Wednesday. The country is the worst performer in the world in the "health and survival" sub-index in which it is ranked 146.

The Global Gender Report, 2022, which includes the index, says it will now take 132 years to reach gender parity, with the gap reducing only by four years since 2021 and the gender gap closed by 68.1%. But this does not compensate for the generational loss between 2020 and 2021 as the trends leading up to 2020 showed that the gender gap was set to close within 100 years.

The gender score | India ranked 135 in gender parity out of 146 countries, according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 released by the World Economic Forum. A look at India's ranking in the four sub-indexes based on which the overall ranking was determined

India	Rank 2022*
Global gender gap index	135
Economic participation and opportunity	143
Educational attainment	107
Health and survival	146
Political empowerment	48

*out of 146 countries

ment. It measures scores on a 0-to-100 scale, which can be interpreted as the distance covered towards parity or the percentage of the gender gap that has been closed.

Other scores

India ranks 146 in health and survival, 143 in economic participation and opportunity, 107 in educational attainment and 48 in political empowerment. The report notes that India's score of 0.629 was its seventh-highest score in the past 16 years.

India also "recovered" ground since 2021 in economic participation and opportunity, though the report goes on to add that the labour force participation shrunk for both men (by -9.5 percentage points) and women (-3 percentage points).

India ranks poorly among its neighbours and is behind Bangladesh (71), Nepal (96), Sri Lanka (110), Maldives (117) and Bhutan (126). Only the performance of Iran (143), Pakistan (145) and Afghanistan (146) was worse than India in South Asia. In 2021, India

ranked 140 out of 156 nations. The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks gender parity across four key dimensions or sub-indices – economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

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A man and a young boy are playing a game of cricket in a room. The man is wearing a grey shirt and white pants, and the boy is wearing a pink shirt and blue jeans. They are using wooden mallets and a ball. In the background, there is a wooden railing and a window. The text "Also Available Online" is visible in the top right corner.



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IN BRIEF



Sisodia writes to UPSC over principal choice

NEW DELHI In a letter to Union Public Service Commission chief Manoj Soni regarding recruitment of principals for Delhi government schools, Deputy CM Manish Sisodia has asked the commission to look beyond academic and administrative abilities of the applicants. Direct recruitment of principals for Delhi government schools is happening after a decade.

Locals kill man over spat in north-east Delhi

NEW DELHI A 23-year-old man was killed by a group of locals in north-east Delhi's New Usmanpur area over an argument, the police said on Wednesday. The victim was identified as Ashu and was found with injuries. Based on the CCTV footage, the accused have been identified and efforts are on to nab them.

Uniform licence fee unfair: eatery owners

Revised rates indicate massive hike for establishments in north, east Delhi; MCD says it will bring parity

MUNEEF KHAN
NEW DELHI

With the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) bringing in uniform health trade licence fee with effect from July 1, small-scale restaurant owners in north and east Delhi are feeling the pinch as their charges have increased manifold.

For Avinash, who has been running a vegetarian restaurant in east Delhi's Ganesh Nagar for over 10 years, the revised rates mean that the licence fee will cost him five times the charges he used to pay to the erstwhile East Delhi Municipal Corporation.

His restaurant space measures up to 83 square metres (sqm), with a seating capacity of 44 persons. Mr. Avinash had earlier this year paid slightly above ₹4,000 as the annual fee for licence renewal. The rate has now been raised to ₹20,000 for restaurants with a capacity of 20 to 50 seats, according to the MCD's revised rates.



Traders protesting against the revised trade licence fee, near the BJP headquarters in Delhi on Wednesday. • R.V. MOORTHY

The health trade licence fee is a tax levied on eateries, banquet halls and hotels. The uniform rates released by the MCD, aimed at bringing parity, indicate a massive hike for establishments based in north and east Delhi.

Effect on food prices
Echoing Mr. Avinash's concern, Furqaan, another eatery owner from Ganesh Nagar, said the increase in the annual licence fee will have an effect on the food prices at his restaurant. Ved Prakash,

who owns a restaurant in Kamla Nagar, north Delhi, said there is no choice but to comply with the new rates since obtaining a health trade licence is mandatory for operating an eatery.

The EDMC's formula for calculating the annual fee was: ₹200 per annum for up to 10 sqm, ₹500 for 10-20 sqm and ₹50 per sqm for areas above 20 sqm.

Under the erstwhile North Delhi Municipal Corporation, the fee for eateries with a seating capacity of 20 to 50

persons, and those above 50, stood at ₹500.

According to the MCD's new policy, the annual licence fee for eateries with a capacity of 20 seats will be ₹10,000, while those with a seating capacity of more than 50 will have to pay ₹25,000, which are on par with the rates under the erstwhile South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC). Restaurants falling in the jurisdiction of the erstwhile SDMC have not seen any rates revision – those with 0-20 seating capacity, will continue to pay ₹10,000; 20-50 seats would pay ₹20,000 and above 50 seats will pay ₹25,000 as annual fee.

Unequal status'

"This hike will have an overall effect on how my restaurant functions and the solution is to either control our costs or increase our food prices. I am not against increasing the fee, but one should also look at the eco-

nomic status of those who eat at our restaurants before doing so," said Mr. Avinash.

"While our average monthly earning is ₹6,00,000, our profit is nearly 10%. This is a reduction when compared to our earlier margin of 15%," he said.

According to a senior MCD official, the revised rates were long overdue as councillors under the north and east corporations were rejecting proposals for fee hikes. Another MCD official underplayed the concern of the restaurant owners, adding that the hike was not a major one.

"Instead of a hike, I would call it a rationalisation of rates as there are many areas in north and east Delhi, which are similar to the posh areas in south Delhi," said the official.

Apart from the new rates, a processing fee of ₹1,000 will be charged per application, while the annual licence fee will increase by 15% every third year, the official added.

Civic body seeking tax receipts since 2004: AAP

Claim wrong, says MCD official

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday accused the Municipal Corporation of Delhi of adopting a new tactic to "extort money from Delhites" by sending notices to people across the city asking them to submit house tax receipts since 2004.

Hitting back at AAP, the Delhi BJP said the statements were "misleading".

"The BJP is looking for an opportunity to extort money through MCD by intimidating Delhites. Even L-G and BJP leaders themselves will not be able to give house tax receipts for so many years," AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak said.

The party urged L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena to revoke the decision and direct the officials concerned to initiate proceedings only against the defaulters.

Responding to AAP's allegation, a senior MCD official said it was "completely

wrong" to say that all residents in Delhi have been served with notices to produce tax receipts since 2004. The official said the civic body has issued close to 40,000 notices over the past year. The property tax department issues notices "only when there is no record of any particular financial year", the official added.

Moreover, issuing such notices is well within the ambit of the DMC Act and the taxpayers are asked to submit the tax receipts through email or WhatsApp and there is no need for them to come to office," said the senior official.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said: "Every year MCD gives 15% rebate to encourage property owners to pay taxes on time. Same rebates are being allowed now and MCD is sending notices to apprise people, but regrettably AAP leaders are misleading them".

Five held for forging passports

Their 'clients' included a prime suspect in Moosewala murder

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Transport Department on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi (IIIT-D) to conduct research and develop technologies to enhance mobility in the Capital.

The event also saw the inauguration of the Centre for Sustainable Mobility at IIIT-D. The centre seeks to help the Transport Department in identifying problem areas and define a technology roadmap toward solving problems of urban mobility in Delhi.

According to DCP (South)

Benita Mary Jaiker, the five helped several criminals, including Thapan, who is also alleged to be involved in the conspiracy behind the murder.

Lawrence gang

During interrogation, Mr.

Sarkar reportedly disclosed

that he was in touch with criminals, especially members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang

and he helped in making a fake passport for Thapan in the name of one Tilak Raj.

The police said Thapan fled to Dubai and played a crucial role in the Moosewala murder.

The accused, Rahul Sarkar, used his own residential address in making the fake passport. He also came in touch with co-accused Sidhu Paji alias Arijit Kumar, who had also asked Rahul to get an Indian passport made with a forged ID," the DCP said, adding that he used to charge ₹1,50,000 for every fake passport.

Naveen used to operate an Aadhaar centre and his nephew, Somnath, worked at the centre.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice

The Chief Administrative Officer/Const/Northern Railway, Kashmere Gate, Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work:-

Full Name of work	Providing Project Management services for the work of Redevelopment/up gradation of Luchiana Railway Station on EPC Mode.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 429.90 Lakhs
Completion period of the work	30 Months
Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs.3,65,000.00
Sale/availability of tender document on Railway Web side	Tender documents will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 08.07.2022 to 15.08.2022 upto 11.30 hrs.
Pre Bid Conference	20.07.2022 at 16.00 hrs at CAO/C office, N.Rly., K.Gate, Delhi
Last date/Time of upload of tenders	15.08.2022 upto 11.30 hrs. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site w.e.f. 01.08.2022 to 15.08.2022
Date and time of opening of tender	15.08.2022 at 11.30 hours. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.
Tender Notice No.74-W-1-1-459-WA-JUC Dated : 08.07.2022	1751/2022
Serving Customers With A Smile	

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
e-Tender Notice/22-NIT/2022-WA-JUC dated 12-07-2022
Sr. Divisional Engineer-II Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work:-

Name of work with location, cost of work and Earnest money	1. Replacement of existing stone/Brick/Slab minor bridge No. 35A, 45, 47, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 61A, 65, 65A, 67B, 68A, 61, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87A, (Total 21 Nos) on DUK section under ADEN/PNP. Approx. Cost : Rs.3,39,65,037.89/- Earnest Money : 3,19,800.00/- 2. Replacement of existing stone/Brick/Slab minor bridge No. 92B, 93, 93A, 93C, 98, 103, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 115, 117, 119, 129, 133, 135, 142, 143, 145, 151, 152, 154 and 156a, (Total 26 Nos) on DUK section under ADEN/PNP Approx. Cost : Rs.4,23,03,213.73/- Earnest Money : 3,61,500.00/-
Completion Period	12 Months
Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender.	Upto 15.00 hrs on 05.08.2022 opening of e-tender at 15.00 hrs on 05.08.2022.
Website particulars, published-tender, notice location etc complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
Similar nature of work	"Construction of Bridges/Limited Height Subway with AIR pushing/cut & cover method".
NOTE : All attachments must be self attested by the tenderers and the affidavit should be submitted in the new format attached with tender conditions as per Annexure-XIV is compulsorily.	
1737/22	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Tender Notice No. AMI/2022-23/NRCH/06 Date: 12.07.2022

Deputy Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi-110055, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1.	82221307B	Tablet Eltrombopagolamine	3740 Nos.	05.08.2022

Note:- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details.

Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items :-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	82221160	LINAGLIPTIN 5 MG	348000 Nos	04-08-2022

NOTE :- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details.
2. No Manual offer will be entertained.

Tender Notice No. Inj. Medicines Date: 13.07.2022
1744/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items :-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	09222040A	SPRING PLANK. DRAWING NO:- SK-69594.	290 NOS	05-08-22
02	07223459A	SECONDARY VERTICAL DAMPER	3057 NOS	08-08-22
03	09222287	RETROFITTABLE TWO PART SLIDING DOOR	213 SET	10-08-22
04	09222282	FLAP DOOR ARRANGEMENT	2135 NOS	10-08-22
05	09222391	SIDE BEARER SEAT DULY WELDED	1398 NOS	10-08-22
06	02211252	CARBON BRUSH FOR HITACHI TM	15000 PAIRS	10-08-22
07	09222300	CUT OFF ANGLE COCK	15395 NOS	11-08-22
08	04210013	ACE OIL (MEDIUM)	6165 LTR	11-08-22
09	09222493	POH KIT FOR KE2CSLA	3364 SET	12-08-22
10	09222132	COUPLER BODY WITH SHANK WEAR	4306 NOS	19-08-22
11	09223066	BUFFER PLUNGER ASSEMBLY	861 NOS	05-09-22

NOTE :- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details.
2. No Manual offer will be entertained.

Tender Notice No. 27/2022-23 Dated: 13.07.2022
1749/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY
INVITATION APPLICATIONS FOR EMPANELMENT OF HOSPITALS FOR NARELA & SHAMLI UNDER DELHI DIVISION

Northern Railway Delhi Division invites the offers from empanelled private hospitals with the Central Govt. Health Scheme (CGHS)/Ex-Service man contributory Health Scheme (ECHS)/Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) and other Hospitals on CGHS approved rates for recognizing them for emergency treatment of Health beneficiaries of Northern Railway Delhi Division, located at Delhi, and in Peripheral area of Northern Railway Delhi Division i.e. Narela & Shamli. The Private Hospitals have to enter into MOU with the Chief Medical Superintendent of Divisional Hospital Delhi to provide cashless medical services for the treatment of the Railway Health beneficiaries, including retired employees liberalized Health Scheme (RELHS) beneficiaries. The Conditions for Cashless Services are as under;

- 1) The Railway patient will produce a referral slip issued by Northern Railway Delhi Division authorized Medical authorities.
- 2) The authenticity of the patient will be verified as per Photograph fixed on the referral slip.
- 3) After the treatment is over, the bills will be raised to the Railway Medical authorities with whom the MOU has been signed.
- 4) The rates will be charged as per CGHS approved rates for that area/nearest areas and as per the agreements for the items not listed under CGHS rate list.

Offers should be addressed to Chief Medical Superintendent of Delhi Division. Offers should include proposal, their offered rates (CGHS/NABH/Non-NABH or Hospitals rates), letter of willingness, facilities available, Infrastructure and should reach the office of the CMS/N. Rly. Delhi Division Delhi latest by 16th August 2022 Procedure for recognition will be as per existing guidelines of Railway Board. Northern Railway Delhi Division reserve the right to accept or reject the offers received. In case of any query the same can be verified from CMS Office, Divisional Hospital, Northern Railway, S.P. Mukherjee Marg, Delhi, 110006 on any working day between 10.00 AM to 05.00 PM (Monday to Saturday). The detailed terms of advertisement are also posted on the website of Northern Railway i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in.

No. 63-Med-Hospital-Recog-DLI-2022 Dated: 13.07.2022
Chief Medical Superintendent, N.Rly. Divl. Hospital, Delhi
1755/2022

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**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

No. 2022/Track-I(P)/R-260 Tender
Subject: Publication of E-Tender Document No.TKP-2 of 2022- "Manufacture and supply of authority engineer for providing Project Management Services for Development/Re-Development/Major Up

Timings

DELDI	THURSDAY, JUL. 14
RISE	05:33 SET 19:22
RISE	20:19 SET 05:44
FRIDAY, JUL. 15	
RISE	05:34 SET 19:21
RISE	21:09 SET 06:57
SATURDAY, JUL. 16	
RISE	05:34 SET 19:21
RISE	21:50 SET 08:08

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 37 27
Safdarjung 37 27
Palam 38 28

Delhi Palam Today
33°C The weather will be warm and humid. Night will be comfortable. Spell of rain and thundershower to occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
33°C A warm and humid weather to continue. Night will be uncomfortable. Spell of rain and thundershower is likely.

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Panel revamps plan to curb pollution

Ban on BS-IV diesel four-wheelers proposed if air quality index turns 'severe'

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI
Emergency measures to control air pollution in Delhi-NCR will now be implemented based on predictions of worsening of air quality, three days in advance, rather than after the air quality deteriorates beyond a particular threshold.

The new measures also include a proposal to ban BS-IV diesel four-wheelers if the air quality index (AQI) turns "severe".

Following directions from the Supreme Court, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in NCR released a revised Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) on Wednesday.

"Actions under Stages II, III and IV shall be invoked at



Under revised GRAP, pollution-control measures will be implemented three days in advance. ■ FILE PHOTO

least three days in advance of the AQI reaching to the projected levels of that stage, based on the dynamic model and weather/meteorological forecast to be provided to the Commission," reads the revised GRAP.

On November 24, the Supreme Court had asked the CAQM to take actions under GRAP based on predictions of air quality rather than waiting for the AQI to get worse.

On November 17, *The Hindu* had reported how despite Delhi's AQI being "severe" for eight out of 10 days after Deepavali, measures under the "emergency" category of GRAP were not implemented by the authorities.

GRAP is a set of emergency measures to be taken to reduce air pollution depending on the current levels of air pollution.

The GRAP is now classified under four different stages of prediction of adverse air quality in Delhi: Stage I - 'Poor' (AQI 201-

300); Stage II - 'Very Poor' (AQI 301-400); Stage III - 'Severe' (AQI 401-450); and Stage IV - 'Severe Plus' (AQI >450).

Under Stage III, the revised GRAP says, "State governments in NCR/GNCTD may impose restrictions on BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel LMVs (4-wheeled vehicles)."

"The State governments may consider additional emergency measures like closure of schools/colleges/educational institutions, plying of vehicles on odd-even basis etc," reads a similar direction under Stage IV.

Under Stage IV, there is also a ban on plying of four-wheeler diesel LMVs, except for BS-VI vehicles and vehicles used for essential and emergency services.

Plea filed before Delhi HC to defer NEET-UG scheduled for July 17

Petition cites grave flood situation; court to hear matter today

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Several National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) aspirants moved the Delhi High Court on Wednesday seeking to postpone the examination for the year 2022, scheduled for July 17.

The petition was mentioned before a Bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad, which allowed it to be listed for hearing on Thursday, the counsel for the petitioners said.

The petitioners sought that "NEET-UG Phase 2" be conducted after considering the examination date be issued.

certain examination centres are located for certain aspirants when the nation is facing "the current grave situation caused by floods".

The plea said the distance to many exam centres range between 150 to 300 km. It also sought the establishment of a complaint redressal mechanism to decide in a time-bound manner all grievances raised in respect of the examination.

The petitioners, apart from seeking to set aside the entrance test scheduled for undergraduate medical and dental courses, sought that a fresh notification rescheduling the examination date be issued.

"This court may graciously be pleased to issue any writ/directions in the nature of Certiorari or Mandamus, directing the respondents to set aside the examination schedule July 17, 2022, of NEET-UG 2022 examination as mentioned in the notification dated April 6, 2022, issued by respondent no. 1/national testing agency," they said in their petition.

"Direct the respondents to issue a fresh notification rescheduling the date of NEET-UG 2022 exam after considering the grievances raised by the petitioners by way of written representations dated May 12, 2022, and July 8, 2022," the plea said.

Garage owner held for mowing down cashier

Victim, 46, was lying on road for 3 hours

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 23-year-old garage owner was arrested on Wednesday for mowing down a 46-year-old man in south Delhi's East of Kailash on Sunday night, the police said. The accused has been identified as Shubham Jain and the car he was driving has been seized from near his house in Uttam Nagar.

The deceased, Ranjan Kumar, a resident of Malviya Nagar, worked as a cashier at a restaurant. He was lying unattended on the road for three hours after the accident, the police said.

DCP (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said a call was received at 5:09 a.m. regarding a hit-and-run in East of Kailash, following which, the police

reached the spot and shifted Kumar to AIIMS where he succumbed to his injuries. A case under IPC Section 279 (rash driving) and 304A (causing death due to negligence) was registered.

While checking CCTV footage, the police spotted a red luxury car and contacted its owner, who said his brother had given the car to a garage for repair. This information led to Jain, said the police.

The accused allegedly told the police that he, along with his brother, Vaibhav, 27, and a female friend, was returning from Nehru Place around 2:30 a.m. when he hit Kumar, who was waiting for an auto. Warrant have been issued against the brother and friend, said the police.

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'PARKHATI'
Be it known to all that my clients Sh. Gopal Krishan Khurana & his wife Smt. Shashi Prabha Khurana both R/o C-504, Shree Ganesh Apartments, Sector-7, Plot No. 12-B, Dwarka, New Delhi, hereby give 'Parkhati' to their son Sh. Vaibhav Khurana from their properties both movable and immovable which they have acquired from their own funds and income. The conduct of Sh. Vaibhav Khurana towards their parents is very rude, arrogant, full of hatred and he never cares them in their old age. Therefore, both my above said clients disowned and debarred their son Sh. Vaibhav Khurana and he shall have no right, title, interest or claim of any kind whatsoever in their properties both movable and immovable after their demise.

Sunil Verma
Advocate
Chamber No. 379, Block-II,
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Don't expect alliances, gear up for BMC polls, Pawar tells NCP cadre

Rift among MVA allies over Uddhav's support for NDA nominee in Presidential election

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE—With a cloud of uncertainty looming over the future of the Mahavikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar on Wednesday exhorted party workers to start preparing for the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections without the expectation of alliances.

At a party meeting to plan for the polls, Mr. Pawar urged party workers to go ahead with the preparations without worrying about which parties would fight alongside the NCP.

Mr. Pawar is considered the architect of the MVA government, comprising the Shiv Sena, the NCP and the Congress – three ideologically opposed parties, after the Maharashtra



Cloud of uncertainty: The NCP president had expressed hopes of the MVA allies continuing to fight elections as a united entity. ■ FILE PHOTO

Assembly election in 2019. The NCP chief had expressed hopes of the alliance continuing to fight future elections as a united entity.

However, differences have emerged among the three partners with Mr. Thackeray declaring his support for Droupadi Murmu, the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance's candidate for the Presidential poll on July 18.

Meanwhile, the breakaway faction of the Shiv Sena, comprising 50 MLAs – including 39 Sena legislators – led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has continued its criticism of Mr. Pawar. The group had at-

tributed the 'dominance' of the NCP in the MVA government as one of the prime reasons for their rebellion.

Pawar behind split
Deepak Kesarkar, the spokesperson of the Shinde camp, has blamed Mr. Pawar for being behind "every major split within the Shiv Sena".

Mr. Kesarkar, a leader from the Konkan belt who was associated with the NCP before crossing over to the Sena, alleged that the NCP chief had "helped" current Union Minister and BJP leader Narayan Rane defect from the Sena.

"He also did the same with Chhagan Bhujbal [who quit the Sena and joined the NCP] and gave his blessings to Raj Thackeray when he broke away from the Sena," he said.

'Give fortnightly report on Malegaon trial'**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

MUMBAI
The Bombay High Court on Wednesday directed the special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court to submit a fortnightly report on the progress of the trial in the 2008 Malegaon bomb blast case.

'Trial at snail's pace'
A Division Bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and V.G. Bisheti was hearing a petition filed by Sameer Kulkarni, an accused in the case, alleging that the trial was proceeding at a snail's pace and witnesses were yet to be examined.

He refused to comment on the contents of an audio clip, said to be containing the voice of former Minister C. Ponnaiyan.

He added that Mr. Ponnaiyan himself clarified that he had not made such remarks.

High Court on the powers of the general council with regard to the party's internal affairs. He criticised the deposed coordinator, O. Panneerselvam, for the manner in which he gained entry into the premises of the party headquarters on Monday morning.

Asked how the EC would handle the matter, Mr. Shanmugam replied that it was for the EC to decide. However, he referred to the ruling of the Supreme Court and the Madras

especially those concerning the revival of the post of general secretary, the creation of the post of interim general secretary, appointment of Edappadi K. Palaniswami to the post, and the commitment to hold the election for the post of general secretary in four months. As many as 2,460 members had attended the meeting.

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IN BRIEF



Rahul pushes for relaxed norms for road scheme

KALPETA

Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi has urged the Centre to relax the norms set for the selection of roads under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana III. While the norms stipulated that the length should be preferably not less than 5 km, he said that the PMGSY portal only allowed for the inclusion of candidate roads that were at least 5 km in length, due to which a large number of roads have been rendered ineligible.

Protest blocks highway from Tirupati to Chennai

CHITTOOR

Demanding a hike in their daily wages and the prices of cloth production, more than 2,000 power loom workers, along with their family members, staged a 'rasta roka' at the tahsildar's office at Andhra Pradesh's Nagar on Wednesday, disrupting traffic on the busy Tirupati-Chennai National Highway for about two hours. The weavers demanded an increase in production cost of cotton cloth from ₹10 to ₹30. They backed off after the police assured them of a meeting with officials.

Kerala to compensate girl humiliated by Pink Police

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Government of Kerala has reportedly decided to pay ₹1.75 lakh to an eight-year-old Dalit girl as compensation for the "high-handedness" she suffered at the hands of a woman constable in Attingal, Thiruvananthapuram in 2021. The Home Department would order the constable attached to the supposedly women-friendly Pink Police unit to settle the damages. The High Court had earlier held that the officer had wronged the girl.

SC may list appeals in hijab case next week

Students have challenged Karnataka HC's verdict that wearing the clothing is not an essential practice

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday indicated that appeals challenging the Karnataka High Court's conclusion that wearing hijab was not an essential practice in Islam would be listed next week.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana was responding to an oral mentioning made by advocate Prashant Bhushan who said the case had been in limbo for months.

The petitions, filed mostly by affected girl students, raise the question whether the State can interfere if a student wears a hijab to college without causing any harm to others and under

the firm belief that it is a part of her religious observance and practice.

The students bring to the fore the issue whether a woman's dignity and the right to access to education should suffer because her dress code cannot be accommodated by the authorities of an educational institution.

The Supreme Court in the S.R. Bommai case of 1994 had observed that "religious freedom is the hallmark of pluralism and inclusiveness". The Constituent Assembly debates note how the establishment of a secular state is an act of faith, the onus on the majority community to show that they could behave towards others

in a generous, fair and just way.

The case was repeatedly mentioned in court during March and April for urgent listing. The court had assured that they would be listed. However, the appeals remain to be heard.

This, despite the fact that in February, the top court had assured the students protection of their constitutional rights and intervention at an "appropriate time".

Niha Naaz petition

One of the pending petitions filed by Niha Naaz, represented by Anas Tanwir, had raised the issue of right to privacy. Ms. Naaz had argued that the High Court judgment had created a "dichotomy of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience".

"This freedom would include the freedom to lawfully express one's identity in

the manner of their liking," the student referred to the Supreme Court judgment in Navtej Singh Johar case.

She said that students like her had expected the High Court to quash a State government order of February 5 directing college development committees to prescribe uniforms for them.

She termed the State government's order as as a "ridiculing attack" on Muslim students wearing hijab under the "guise of attaining secularism and equality on the basis of uniform". She said the state could not prescribe uniforms. The law did not require a student to be punished for not wearing a particular uniform.

Tribal villagers in border chased out for choosing 'wrong' State

People returned from makeshift relief camps after the issue was resolved

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

About 50 tribal people from a village on the Assam-Meghalaya border were chased out on Monday night for allegedly betraying the community by opting to stay with Assam.

Officials said the issue was resolved on Wednesday and the people returned to their native Upper Tarabari, a village in one of the six disputed sectors the Assam and Meghalaya governments resolved.

The 884.9 km boundary between the two States had 12 disputed sectors since Meghalaya was carved out of Assam in 1972. T

The Chief Ministers of the two States signed an agreement on March 29 in the presence of Home Minister Amit Shah, a tad more than a year after deciding to take up six "less complicated" sectors for settlement. Shared by Assam's Kamrup district and Meghalaya's West Khasi Hills district, Upper Tarabari is dominated by the Garo people.

"There were certain issues between two groups of the same community after some people wanted to be in Assam, some in Meghalaya. Many villagers came down but they went back after the issue was resolved today [Wednesday]," Kamrup's Deputy Commissioner Kailash Karthik N. told *The Hindu*.

Disputed sectors

"The village is in one of the six disputed sectors on which a deal was signed. Some parts of the village went to Meghalaya and



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma • FILE PHOTO

some parts to Assam although the revised boundary has not been demarcated yet. The clash between the two groups happened because people don't understand the complications at the local level," he said.

Nitin Rabha, a leader of the Assam-based All Rabha Students' Union, said the members of a local unit of the union helped the 50 or so villagers take refuge at Jairhat village under Boko police station in Kamrup district. Jairhat is about 10 km from Upper Tarabari.

Among those who had fled was Pitdon Sangma, the headman of Upper Tarabari. He said the pro-Meghalaya villagers had demanded ₹5,000 as fine from each family that had opted to stay with Assam.

"A majority of Upper Tarabari villagers who chose to stay with Meghalaya damaged the houses and shops of the Assam supporters besides driving them out. We are trying to talk to Garo students leaders to ensure such things do not happen again, particularly with the boundary dispute in the sector having resolved," he said.

HC quashes FIR by Himachal Pradesh police against journalist

'Did not commit act to defraud but for reality check'

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

The Himachal Pradesh High Court on Wednesday quashed criminal charges against a television journalist, who was booked for cheating and forgery, for allegedly revealing discrepancies in the process of issuing e-passes during the second wave of COVID-19 for the inter-State movement in 2021.

Justice Vivek Singh Thakur, in the order, said the petitioner did not commit any act with an intention to defraud, but for 'reality check' and verifying the working of system of online registration and generation of e-passes, regarding which it was claimed by the State that e-passes would be generated after verification of documents uploaded

with online request.

Pointing out that the journalist brought a lapse in system to the notice of higher authorities, Mr. Thakur said, "... In given facts and circumstances it cannot be said an act done by the petitioner was with intent to defraud, therefore, it was not an act done 'fraudulently'.

The act by the petitioner was never done with intention of causing wrongful gain or wrongful loss to any person nor any such attempt was ever made by the petitioner and, therefore, in absence of such essential ingredients, as defined in Section 24 of IPC, act of the petitioner cannot be termed as an act done 'dishonestly'."

"In present case, both ingredients, i.e. 'dishonesty' or 'fraudulently', which are

necessary for 'cheating' and 'cheating by personation', are missing," added the order.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, on April 25, 2021, the Himachal government issued certain directions, mentioning that inter-State movement would be monitored through the process of registration on the e-pass portal. On May 5, the government issued a notification to impose 'corona curfew' in the State from May 7.

In the notification one of the guidelines was the registration on the e-pass web portal of the government of Himachal Pradesh for any kind of inter-state movement. To investigate the e-pass registration process, the TV journalist conducted a 'reality check'.

Count potholes on NHs, Riyas tells Union Ministers

Kerala Minister flags poor upkeep

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Minister for Public Works P.A. Mohamed Riyas has taken a jab at Union Ministers who visit the State, for failing to take corrective measures to address the pathetic condition of national highways (NHs) in the State. Responding to questions in the Assembly on Wednesday, he said though the issue was raised with a Union Minister several times, no steps had been taken to carry out maintenance works on the roads.

"A lot of Union Ministers visit Kerala. They post photographs of projects which near completion. They should also spend some time in counting the number of potholes on the National Highway stretches in the State. There is a Union Minister who holds daily



P.A. Mohamed Riyas

press conferences. The National Highways have more potholes than the number of his press conferences," said Mr. Riyas.

He said that the Union government should carry out maintenance works.

Later Union Minister V. Muraleedharan hit back saying he should first count the potholes on Public Works Department roads before counting the ones on the national highways.

Memory card was accessed thrice: report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCCHI

The prosecution in the actor rape case has sought three more weeks to look into the latest forensic report on the changed hash value of the memory card and grill the police officer R. Sreelekha on her disclosures and thus complete the further investigation.

In its application filed before the Kerala High Court on Wednesday, the prosecution submitted that the hash value of the card in which the visuals of the alleged rape in 2017 were recorded had been found changed thrice, indicating it was accessed three times. Police officer R. Sreelekha has to be questioned to verify her allegation that Dileep was falsely implicated.

Kerala mission to provide 20 lakh jobs

Kudumbashree enumerators to register nearly 25 lakh in 21-40 age group

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The second phase of the Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission's project to provide jobs to 20 lakh educated unemployed is under way in Kerala.

In this phase, jobseekers whose basic details have been collected by the Kudumbashree will be registered on a digital platform.

To identify jobseekers at the local body level, the Kudumbashree had conducted a promotion campaign 'My job, my pride' and a job survey in May. Its enumerators had visited 8,44,807 households and collected basic details of 53,42,094 job-seekers.

In the second phase, the Kudumbashree will initially register those in the 21-40 age group who have under-

graduate, postgraduate, diploma, and ITI qualifications from among the 53,42,094 job-seekers it had identified during the survey. The number of job-seekers in this category, excluding those with Plus Two qualification, comes to nearly 25 lakh.

For the registration, eligible Kudumbashree women on the basis of undergraduate degrees will be selected from among those who had worked as enumerators for the survey in each ward. If no women with undergraduate qualification is found, then those with the same qualification can be selected from the Kudumbashree auxiliary groups.

A mobile app designed by Digital University Kerala and made available by the Knowledge Economy Mission will be used for the profiling. The

profiling will begin at the district levels on July 18 and be completed by July 31.

Kudumbashree Executive Director P.I. Sreevidya said the district-level training of master trainers had begun in Kasaragod on Monday. The training in all 14 districts would be completed by July 20. Two persons from each of the 152 wards in the State will attend the training for master trainers.

The training will focus on what the 'My job, my pride' campaign is all about, how to approach job-seekers and introduce them to the Knowledge Economy Mission activities, how to register the job-seekers on the Digital Workforce Management System (a platform that brings together job-seekers, employers, and skill training agencies), and how they can

get employment.

The 304 master trainers, in turn, will conduct the block-level training for enumerators who will do the ward-level profiling.

Ms. Sreevidya said QR code on fliers handed out during the job survey was used by some to register on the DWMS. However, in this phase, the Kudumbashree would facilitate the detailed profiling of the job-seekers such as their areas of interest and their skills by getting them to come to a common location in a ward and using the mobile app on their phone to register on the DWMS.

In hard to access areas such as Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe colonies, the enumerators would visit job-seekers at their doorstep and complete the profiling.

She takes objection to Dileep's plea to join case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday adjourned to July 22 hearing on a petition filed by the survivor alleging political interference and attempts to sabotage further investigation in the 2017 actor sexual assault case.

When the petition came up for hearing, the court orally observed that serious allegations had been levelled against the further investigation.

The court said it would consider whether the allegations made by the survivor in her petition were unnecessary or not at a later stage.

Justice Bechu Kurian Thomas made the oral observa-

Can't ask mother to choose between child and career: HC

Judge quashes family court order denying permission to woman to move to Poland with her daughter

SONAM SAIGAL
MUMBAI

Upholding the right of a woman to pursue her career, the Bombay High Court recently noted, "A mother cannot be asked to choose between her child and her career".

It quashed an order by the family court refusing her permission to relocate to Poland with her daughter.

A single judge Bench of Justice Bharati Dangre was hearing a petition filed by the woman assailing an order by the family court seeking permission to relocate and shift along with her minor daughter to Poland.

The couple got married in 2010 and had a daughter in 2013.

According to the wife, her mother-in-law overburdened her with domes-



Representative image • GETTY IMAGES

tic work and she was not able to focus on her job as an engineer with a private company.

She filed for dissolution of marriage in 2017 and sought to be declared sole guardian of the child in November 2020 as the child lives with her.

Owing to her excellent performance, she has got an opportunity to shift to Poland for two years and

wishes to move with her daughter and therefore filed applications to help her with all the formalities.

Opposed by husband

The application to move to Poland was strongly contested by the ex-husband, filed through advocate Ajinkya Udane. He said this was being done to sever his ties with the daughter. He said the daughter is impacted by the trauma of losing touch with her father and of being uprooted to face a completely new culture, surrounding, language and weather.

Job prospects

The order of Justice Bharati Dangre read, "I do not think that the court can refuse the job prospects to a mother, who is inclined to take up the job and she cannot be deprived of this opportunity. The option suggested by the husband that the child should be left with him and his family will take care of her is not a viable one, as the little girl has always stayed with her mother, barring for a few hours, when she was exclusively in the company of her father or his family. The petitioner has specifically undertaken that her mother will be accompanying her so that she can cater to the child while the petitioner is out for work."

Setting aside the family court order, it said, "It has failed to consider the important aspect of right to development being vested in the petitioner as she cannot be asked to choose between her child and her career."

Congress seeks probe into recruitments in Karnataka

Party calls for judicial probe to ensure lack of corruption

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Congress on Tuesday placed a demand for five separate probes into recruitments made by the BJP government since it came to power in 2019, including a judicial probe into the PSI scam, for ensuring recruitments are free from corruption and nepotism.

Addressing presspersons in Bengaluru, Priyank Kharge, former Minister and MLA, said the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which has been investigating the PSI scam, has limited the probe only to Kalaburagi and not other centres. He wanted to know from the government the time limit prescribed for completion of the probe into

tered at Annapurneshwari-nagar



Staying watchful

Inflation risks undermining growth and macroeconomic stability

The concerted efforts made by the Reserve Bank and the Union government to contain inflation appear to be having some impact, albeit marginal, in slowing the pace of price gains, the latest retail inflation data show. Price gains as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) eased almost imperceptibly to 7.01% in June, from May's 7.04%, with food price inflation slowing by a distinct 22 basis points to 7.75%. Of the 12 items comprising the food and beverages basket – almost half the weight of the CPI – the prices of pulses and edible oils both shrank from a month earlier. Prices of the key cooking medium, which had been on a boil amid a supply shock (from Ukraine and Indonesia), have cooled, helped by import duty reductions. Year-on-year inflation in oils and fats decelerated last month by a whopping 390 basis points to 9.4%, with the index shrinking 0.7% on a sequential basis. And prices of pulses contracted both from a year earlier and the preceding month. The other major positive sign of a policy measure translating to softer prices was with transportation fuels. The Centre's reduction of excise duty on petrol and diesel in May manifested in a significant easing in inflation in the transport and communication index: year-on-year, the rate slowed by 260 basis points to 6.9%, while sequentially it shrank by 120 basis points.

Still, it would be way too premature for policymakers to drop their guard. With nine of the 12 items in the food and beverages basket, representing almost 80% of the sub index and spanning cereals, milk and meat to vegetables, sugar and spices, experiencing sequential price gains, the Government would need to maintain vigil to ward off any build-up of inflationary pressures in consumers' kitchens. Year-on-year inflation in cereals, meat and milk all accelerated in June from May's pace, and price gains in vegetables still remained in double digits at 17.4%. The progress of monsoon rains give hope that the prices of farm produce may moderate in the coming months, provided the extreme rainfall and flooding seen in some States does not adversely hit crop growing regions. And while an appreciable softening in global crude oil prices in recent sessions offers some respite, the rupee's sharp depreciation against the dollar means India will continue to face the spectre of 'imported inflation' as the bill for imports, including crude, keeps rising. The decision of the GST Council to raise tariffs on a range of goods including some items of mass consumption is also bound to add upward pressure on prices. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's remarks on Tuesday reflect authorities' recognition that any let up in the fight against inflation risks undermining growth and broader macroeconomic stability.

Twin trouble

The AIADMK needs to get its house in order to mount any challenge to the DMK

Marching towards its golden jubilee, the AIADMK has dumped its five-year experiment with dual leadership and expelled O. Panneerselvam, one of its chariooteers. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, a former accidental Chief Minister with a strong political survival instinct, will now steer the party as its interim general secretary. In 2017, when a three-way split threatened his fledgling government, he prudently accepted a BJP-facilitated arrangement in which he and Mr. Panneerselvam would share equal organisational powers. Sensing such shared leadership requiring disproportionate compromises had outlived its purpose, Mr. Palaniswami plotted its dismantling. Having earned the trust of legislators during his regime through a "decentralisation of resources", he adopted the same strategy to fortify his party base. Steadfastly opposing attempts by Jayalalithaa's friend V.K. Sasikala to regain control of the AIADMK; maintaining social distance with the ruling DMK; and not ceding much ground to the BJP during seat-sharing negotiations, worked to his advantage. In contrast, Mr. Panneerselvam came across as someone reluctant to fund party colleagues; deliberately maintaining ambiguity on Ms. Sasikala's position; overtly inclined to do the BJP's bidding, and extending cordiality to DMK leaders. Many prominent leaders, who stood by him during his *'Dharma Yudham'* against Ms. Sasikala, feeling alienated, switched camps.

Yet, the transition to unitary leadership has not been smooth in a party acclimatised to being herded by supremos since its founding in October 1972. A miserably outnumbered Mr. Panneerselvam made a futile bid to retain status quo in the party, through courts, overriding the majority will of the general council and earning a judicial reprimand. Coinciding with Mr. Palaniswami's coronation, he forcibly entered the party headquarters amid violent clashes, leading to sealing of the premises. He has approached the Election Commission of India to nullify the general council's decisions. Apart from surmounting these legal challenges in time to face the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the party's incumbent custodian has to do the balancing act in dealing with strong sub-regional satraps from the Gounder, Mukkenthalor and Vanniyar communities. Getting elected within four months as general secretary by primary members with a broader segment of district secretaries endorsing his nomination, as per the amended bylaw, could help in Mr. Palaniswami's quest for supremacy. Left with fewer supporters of consequence, Mr. Panneerselvam's best known credentials remain that of a dutiful loyalist of Jayalalithaa. Mr. Panneerselvam might try to seek political legitimacy through the legal route. But other than hampering the functioning of the AIADMK for a few more months, he might achieve little. Any long-term disruption in the party, which has ruled for a record 31 years, may end up permanently altering the bipolar nature of politics in Tamil Nadu.

In Sri Lanka, no quiet after the storm

In the days ahead, new confrontations, with consequences for newly gained democratic freedom, are likely to spring up



JAYADEVA UYANGODA

Even after the fall of his official residence and the Presidential Secretariat into the hands of protesting citizens, Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa tried to defy the massive public pressure on him to resign. His attempt to leave the country from the Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo failed. According to the latest media reports, Mr. Rajapaksa and his wife fled the country in a military aircraft in the early hours of July 13. Other senior members of the Rajapaksa family are probably still in the country waiting to escape.

These dramatic events, between July 9 and July 13, are of extraordinary significance. The political family that has ruled Sri Lanka for over 15 years has been ousted from power by an uninterrupted peaceful protest movement of ordinary citizens.

A post-Rajapaksa phase

These developments have opened the doors for a new phase of post-authoritarian politics in Sri Lanka. It may well be called the post-Rajapaksa phase. The key feature of this new phase is the restoration of democracy. There is massive public demand for a return to democracy through the enactment of a new constitution. Abolishing Sri Lanka's much-hated executive presidential system of government through a comprehensive package of political reforms will have to be

a priority in the policy agenda of any new government.

Moreover, a new President, a new Prime Minister and a new government will have to work under the watchful eye of a politically active, alert and vigilant citizenry. A new generation of young political activists who have little patience with the traditional political class and political culture seems to be providing new direction to Sri Lanka's politicised citizens. In brief, in Sri Lanka's post-Rajapaksa era, there will be no room for politics as usual.

Two recent developments seem to have facilitated this mammoth change. The first is the unprecedented economic and social crises, accelerated by the economic downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic and the government's gross mismanagement of the economy. The spread of several waves of social misery caused by a catastrophic economic collapse and the government's failure to ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity, fuel, food and essential goods led to a general sense of fury against the President and his government.

The second is the spontaneous protest movement of the affected citizens demanding the immediate resignation of the President and his government. Citizen's protests have been regular since last year. They began first in rural Sri Lanka after the government's ban on the import of chemical fertilizers following a rapid drop in foreign exchange reserves. Public school-teachers and plantation workers also launched their own protests last year, demanding higher wages. In March this year, urban middle classes joined the protests amid the growing economic hard-



ships. On March 31, these protests suddenly developed into a major urban campaign around the rallying cry, 'Gota Go Home'.

Democratic demands

It is this multi-class, multi-ethnic, multi-generational social movement that became the most powerful agent of change in Sri Lanka's contemporary politics. The demands of this movement have been radically democratic in character. The movement emphasises not just a change of government, but a change in the political system as a whole. It also wants reforms in the institutions and practices of representative democracy which have been constantly abused by the political elites, particularly the Rajapaksa brothers.

The demand of the new citizen movement is not merely a return to parliamentary democracy, but a democracy that addresses deficits in representative democracy through a strong framework of checks and balances, contains effective measures to prevent corruption and abuse of political power, and enables voters' right to recall the elected representatives at every level of government. It also wants fusion of direct democratic measures to enable citizens to prevent parliament and the political class from abusing popular mandate.

After the dramatic events on Ju-

ly 9, new complexities have arisen in Sri Lanka's politics and are characterised by both excitement and anxiety. The excitement is not only because a ruling clique, which thought it was invincible, has been dislodged from power by peaceful means, but also because there is now a huge opening for re-democratisation and the cleansing of politics. Its primary authors are ordinary citizens, not the political elites. The seeds of democratisation have sprouted in the fields of quiet dissent and resistance of the citizens. This is perhaps the biggest contribution made by the nation's protesting citizens to the contemporary democratic imagination.

There is also anxiety about the capacity of the present political class as well as Parliament to fulfil the expectations of democratic reform of Sri Lankan citizens. Given the radical nature of the demands of the *aragalaya* (uprising), there are serious doubts about the capacity of political parties, Parliament and the fractured political class to carry out a programme of rapid transition from autocratic authoritarianism to a post-neoliberal democracy embodying commitments to social-democratic and republican goals.

Possible changes

Thus, in the coming weeks and months, two new contradictions with fatal consequences for Sri Lanka's newly gained democratic freedom are likely to spring up. The first is a polarisation between radical sections of the protesters and the Opposition parties in Parliament which are traditionalist and conservative and sceptical about the *aragalaya* agenda. Once the contradiction between the Ra-

japaksas and the others is temporarily sorted out by the ouster of the ruling family from power, the ball is in the parliamentary Opposition's court to work out a credible succession plan to run the government. Yet, there are signs that infighting among different parties has already begun, centred on the immediate question of who should be the next president. It has, once again, opened the doors for backroom deals and unprincipled coalitions of the corrupt.

This uncertainty is likely to give rise to a second contradiction. The chances of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe becoming the new President are strong since he will be backed by the MPs of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna, the party of the Rajapaksas. Incidentally, Mr. Wickremesinghe has of late re-invented himself as an ardent protector of Rajapaksa interests. Thus, the continuation of Rajapaksa rule under a different name is most likely to ignite a second phase of confrontation between the *aragalaya* and what would emerge as the new government.

Such a scenario has the potential to create a situation where an open confrontation between the two competing centres of political power – one represented in Parliament and the President, and the other located on the *aragalaya* site of Colombo's Galle Face – is inevitable. This new phase of the conflict will most likely be directed towards sorting out the question of political power. And history tells us that political power is an issue that has been resolved not always by peaceful means.

Jayadeva Uyangoda is Emeritus Professor of Political Science, University of Colombo

Scale up the India-South Korea bilateral partnership

There is much potential for Seoul to become the fourth pillar in New Delhi's Indo-Pacific strategy



LAKHVINDER SINGH &
ARVINDER SINGH LAMBA

Indo-Pacific turbulence has reached an all-time high, to the point where it rivals the diverse foreign policy challenges across the United States and Europe. At a time when the international rules-based order is getting increasingly contested, the options available to governments in the foreign, economic, and security policy areas (including maritime security), are under serious stress.

From drift to a shift

During the past five years, India and South Korea have experienced considerable divergence in their respective national objectives. There was a clear drift by South Korea away from multilateral security initiatives led by the United States, such as the Quad (the U.S., Australia, India and Japan); meanwhile, India has been actively participating in them.

The newly elected Korean President, Yoon Suk Yeol, has brought about a paradigm shift in South Korean foreign and security policies. He has proposed that South Korea should step up to become a "global pivotal state, anchored in liberal values and a rules-based order", that "advances freedom, peace, and prosperity through liberal democratic values and substantial cooperation". South Ko-

rea's new willingness to become a global pivotal state and play an active role in regional affairs is bound to create multiple opportunities for a multi-dimensional India-Korea partnership.

In the last few years, India and South Korea have faced serious blockades to their economic ties. Trade between the two countries was sluggish and there was no major inflow of South Korean investment into India. India and South Korea were also trying to upgrade their Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) agreement, but to no avail.

Correcting a China tilt

South Korea's strategic policy shift to correct its heavy tilt toward China is bound to bring new economic opportunities for both countries. Both nations will now be in a better position to understand and accommodate the other's trade investments and supply chain needs. The trade target of \$50 billion by 2030, which looked all but impossible a few months ago, now seems within reach.

The emerging strategic alignment is creating a new convergence of capabilities and closer synergy in new areas of economic cooperation such as public health, green growth, digital connectivity, and trade, among others.

In 2020, India and South Korea signed a Roadmap for Defence Industries Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea (ROK) deal. However, due to the lack of political and strategic alignment, nothing came of it. With the strategic shift in South Korea's defence orientation, new



doors of cooperation for defence and security have emerged. Advanced defence technologies and modern combat systems are the new domains for the next level of defence cooperation between the two countries.

Indo-Pacific outlook

South Korea's participation in additional maritime security activities in the Indian Ocean, such as the annual Malabar and other exercises with Quad countries, will further strengthen India's naval footprint in the Indo-Pacific region. During the Moon Jae-in presidency in Korea, Japan and South Korea were at loggerheads. There was little scope for strengthening the trilateral security dialogue in the region between India, South Korea and Japan. The shift in South Korean policies will enable a strong India, South Korea and Japan defence policy coordination that could effectively forge new joint regional security policies.

India has evolved excellent strategic partnerships with Japan, Vietnam and Australia. Unfortunately, so far, South Korea has not received the same level of attention from the Indian establishment. This needs to change. South Korea could be the fourth pillar in India's Indo-Pacific strategy along

with Japan, Australia, and Vietnam. This can bring about a paradigm shift in India's position and influence in the region.

The time has come for the Indian and South Korean bilateral partnership to be strategically scaled up at the political, diplomatic and security domain levels. With South Korea's emergence as a leader in critical technologies, cybersecurity and cyber-capacity building, outer space and space situational awareness capabilities, South Korea can contribute immensely to enhance India's foundational strengths in the Indo-Pacific.

However, the current emerging alignment between India and South Korea, which has the potential to bring the two countries closer together, may prove short lived if proper attention is not paid to the multi-dimensional challenges it faces. The Chinese leadership is adversely impacted by policy changes brought in by the Yoon administration. The real challenge for global geopolitics is this: can South Korea withstand the inevitable Chinese pressure and stick to its new alignment?

The U.S. factor, North Korea

As Republicans are gaining strength again in domestic politics in the U.S., we need to consider what will happen if the former U.S. President, Donald Trump, returns to power in the next elections. Mr. Trump was unconvinced about the relevance of the U.S.-Korea partnership and had discussed withdrawing U.S. forces from South Korea.

The threat of Mr. Trump at one

time to abandon the relationship with South Korea was real. This situation was prevented by Mr. Yoon's dynamism that encouraged all major powers to support South Korea's stand for stability and peace.

South Korea's peace process with North Korea has completely collapsed. In the coming days, as North Korea conducts more missile and nuclear tests, it may lead to regional tension. Any breakout of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula can derail South Korea's Indo-Pacific project.

During the Moon presidency, South Korea was forced to sign the "three no's" agreement with China. Under this agreement, Korea agreed to: no additional Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) deployment; no participation in the U.S.'s missile defence network, and no establishment of a trilateral military alliance with the U.S. and Japan.

India can help South Korea withstand Chinese pressure and North Korean threats. An independent, strong, and democratic South Korea can be a long-term partner with India, that will add significant value to India's Indo-Pacific strategy. This new partnership can have a long-term positive impact for both countries and the Indo-Pacific region. It is an opportunity that neither country can afford to miss.

Lakhvinder Singh is Director of Peace and Security Studies at the Asia Institute in Seoul, South Korea. Lt.Gen. Arvinder Singh Lamba, former Vice-chief of Army staff, Indian Army, is heading the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Notes from Colombo

Every chapter describing the ongoing events in Sri Lanka must be a lesson for political power mongers in India in particular and those of all nations in general. Though the main theme is about the island country's economic crisis, it only followed the tyrannical and irresponsible style of governance there, that was characterised by corruption, inefficiency, selfish motives, arrogance and egoism. It is no silly matter that the angst of the people in Sri Lanka prevented the perpetrators of the crimes from escaping. That India is larger and more diverse is no rod to hang on. No global diplomacy can come to help. So is the

dependence on the oft-quoted "people's mandate" in elections. All voters cannot be fooled all the time.

P.R.V. RAJA,
Pandalam, Kerala

We have to appreciate the people of Sri Lanka for their guts, determination and exemplary unity in making a 'dictator ruler' run from the pillar to the post to save his life. One is reminded of the great French Revolution in the actions of the common man. What has happened in Sri Lanka must be an eye-opener to leaders of other democracies. Once the people realise the real mindset and anti-people policies of tyrants, action rests in their hands alone.

THARCIUS S. FERNANDO,
Chennai

It is not surprising at all that the shrinking political Opposition in India has found an issue to attack the Government with (Inside pages, "Grace missing in replica of emblem, says Opposition", July 13). There are so many serious issues to focus on. When will the Opposition realise this?

G. SUBRAMANIAN,
Chennai

■ There can be no doubt that the controversy could have been averted had the proposed design of the emblem been deliberated upon by experts across the board. There should have been consensus over its design. Further, it should have been the President of India's prerogative to unveil the emblem. All in all,

confrontationist attitude of the ruling establishment is quite obvious.

S.K. CHOUDHURY,
Bengaluru

■ A structure of importance should reflect the democratic and cultural ethos of a country. Whatever fixtures installed thereon should enhance its charm to be noted for posterity. The replica is at variance with what we know it to be. The Government would do well to redo the emblem without harping on ego and prestige.

V. JOHAN DHANAKUMAR,
Chennai

■ There can be no doubt that the controversy could have been averted had the proposed design of the emblem been deliberated upon by experts across the board. There should have been consensus over its design. Further, it should have been the President of India's prerogative to unveil the emblem. All in all,

India. Only the poor depositor and tax-payer is made to suffer. Big ticket corporate loans are liberally given for political reasons, and when they fail (due to fraud or mismanagement), the system of punishing the guilty or fixing accountability in a deterrent way is almost non-existent. It is imperative that the responsibility of lending large amounts to corporates is moved away from commercial banks. It is time the political class hammers out a more prudent lending policy for public sector banks.

P. MANGALACHANDRAN,
West Ponniam, Kannur, Kerala

■ There can be no doubt that the controversy could have been averted had the proposed design of the

The President is not a mere rubber stamp

It is possible for a President to intervene on behalf of the citizenry against the tyranny of the executive



P.D.T. ACHARY

India is going to elect its new President on July 18. The new President will be sworn in on July 25. Choosing the presidential candidate is an intensely political exercise. Deep political calculations go into it. It is for this reason that the country is often taken by surprise by the choice the ruling party makes. But once the President is elected, the excitement subsides and for the next five years not much attention is paid to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

An issue of importance

Nevertheless, in the prevailing political atmosphere, the question 'what kind of President does India need?' assumes great significance. It is true that the nominee of the ruling alliance is going to be the next President. Still, the stature, the moral standing and the level of acceptability of the person are important considerations when the country chooses a new President.

Let us first take a closer look at the President who emerges from the Constitution. There was a great deal of debate in the Constituent Assembly on the President. The main question debated therein was whether India should have a directly elected President or an indirectly elected one. The Assembly opted for an indirectly elected President. There were members such as Professor K.T. Shah who strongly argued for a directly elected President. He asked a rhetorical question, which was whether the Assembly wanted the president to be a 'sort of mere gramophone of the Prime Minister'. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar said:

"Our President is merely a nominal figurehead. He has no discretion; he has no powers of administration at all."

But is the President of India a mere figurehead? Article 53 of the Constitution says that "the executive power of the Union shall be vested in the President and shall be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution." It



Dr. Rajendra Prasad taking oath as the first President of the Republic of India on January 26, 1950. C. Rajagopalachari, the Governor General, is seen seated on the chair. ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

means the President exercises these powers only on the aid and the advice of the Council of Ministers. So, it makes sense for the people to ask why we should have a President who signs on the dotted line. The way some of our Presidents have acted in the past reinforces that public perception. But we must not forget that some of our Presidents did live up to the implications of the office of the President of the Republic. So, we come back to the question of how crucial this office is to the governance of the country.

Poll method, people's role

To answer this question, we need to first take a closer look at the method of election of the President. It is an indirect election in the sense that the people do not directly elect the President. Under Article 54, the President is elected by an electoral college consisting of only the elected members of both Houses of Parliament and the elected members of the State and Union Territory Assemblies.

However, a matter of importance in this context is the vote value of Members of the Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) and the formula for its computation. The vote of an MLA, though one, is assigned a certain higher value. This value is calculated by first dividing the total population of the State (as per the 1971 Census) by the total strength of the Assembly, and then the quotient is divided by one thousand. The result is the value of a vote. Calculated this way, the vote value of an MLA in the State of

Uttar Pradesh, for example, is 208.

The point is that in the computation of the value, the population of the State figures in a significant way. In other words, the population of the country is a crucial factor in the election of the President, which means the people's presence in the process of electing the President is very much visible. This gives a wider base to the President than a mere vote by the legislators on the basis of one member, one vote. This also gives the President a greater moral authority. So, the Indian President is not and cannot be a mere rubber stamp. He does not directly exercise the executive authority of the Union, but he can disagree with the decision of the Council of Ministers, caution them, counsel them, and so on. The President can ask the Cabinet to reconsider its decisions. It is another matter that if the Cabinet, after such reconsideration, sends the same proposal back without any change, the President will have to sign it. That is because under the Cabinet system of government, it is the Cabinet which is responsible for the government's decisions. The President is in no way personally responsible for those decisions which he or she approves.

But the point to note is that the President can disagree with the decisions of the Cabinet and ask the Cabinet to reconsider them. The Constitution of India wants the President to be vigilant and responsive, and gives the freedom to him or her to take a broader view of things uninfluenced by the narrow political view of the

executive. This point becomes clearer when we take a look at the oath the President takes before entering office. The oath contains two solemn promises. First, the President shall preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. Second, the President shall devote himself or herself to the service and the well-being of the people of India. A President who makes the above promises under oath to the people cannot act, in the words of Professor K.T. Shah, as a gramophone of the Prime Minister.

But how does a President preserve, protect and defend the Constitution? It is an extremely tricky area. Experience shows that our Presidents do not normally think about their oath when the executive moves to bulldoze the rights and the liberties of citizens. There are very few democratic countries in the world where the executive has concentrated so much power in itself as in India. This trend started in the 1970s, and over the years the executive has grown into a behemoth.

A perspective

So, when the omnipotent executive moves to crush the liberty of citizens, the people do not, in the normal course, think of approaching the President who is otherwise oath-bound to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. The reason is that Presidents are not normally found interceding on behalf of aggrieved citizens even when there is an egregious violation of the rule of law and constitutional guarantees given to the citizens. There were Presidents such as Rajendra Prasad and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan who openly differed with the government on certain policy issues and could exert tremendous influence on the government. Thus, it is possible for a President to disagree with the government or intervene on behalf of the citizenry against the tyranny of the executive and persuade it to give up its ways. The solemn oath the President takes requires him or her to do it. Such persons alone can rise to the level of the President; others can only be presidential office holders. India needs Presidents, not presidential office holders.

P.D.T. Achary is former Secretary General, Lok Sabha

The Sputnik V conundrum

Why the Supreme Court could have heard the plea seeking modification of the Indian government's COVID-19 policy



ADITYA MANUBARWALA

The Supreme Court recently dismissed a plea seeking modification of the Indian government's COVID-19 policy to allow voluntary re-vaccination of persons who have been vaccinated with Sputnik V. The petitioner, a recipient of Sputnik V, is unable to go overseas since the World Health Organization (WHO) had not yet certified Sputnik V in its approved list of vaccines. The petitioner was directed to make a representation before the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in this respect.

Constitutional right to travel abroad

The court did not fully appreciate the existing constitutional jurisprudence while dismissing the writ petition. The right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution does not have a mere black-and-white legal meaning. Whilst undoubtedly referring to an individual's right to live, it means much more than the right of an individual to survival. A person must embrace all of life's facets in order to fully live. The right to live a fulfilling and respectable life is known as the right to life.

In *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India* (1978), the Supreme Court said "personal liberty" in Article 21 is "of the widest amplitude" covering "a variety of rights which go to constitute the personal liberty of man". Earlier, in *Satwant Singh Sawhney v. D. Ramarathnam Assistant Passport Officer* (1967), the right to travel abroad was read as an intrinsic part of Article 21. The Supreme Court has time and again reiterated this right to travel abroad. As recently as 2020, the Supreme Court, in *Parvez Noordin Lokhandwala v. State of Maharashtra*, held that the right to travel abroad is a part of the fundamental right to dignity and personal liberty. Interestingly, the Supreme Court in *Satish Chandra Verma v. Union of India* (2019), whilst reiterating the right to travel abroad, went on to equate it to be a basic and as genuine a human right as the right to marry and have a family. Thus, there is no doubt that it is settled jurisprudence that an Indian citizen has the freedom to go anywhere, work anywhere, and live anywhere. The only way this may be restricted is if the law forbids someone from doing so. Such a law too would be subject to scrutiny by the court under the constitutional parameters of 'reasonableness'. This well-settled Indian jurisprudence of the right to travel abroad finds

support in international law as well. Article 12 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guarantees freedom of movement, including the right of persons to choose their residence, to leave and return to a country.

Negative view towards Russia

In light of the above, the Supreme Court ought to have appreciated the fact that there is no law preventing an Indian citizen from travelling abroad for work, education or leisure. It should have equally appreciated the negative views towards Russia in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russian manufactured products, including vaccines, do not find acceptability in most parts of the world. Sputnik V was already facing a difficult rollout. The sanctions against Russia have further hindered the use and distribution of the vaccine. Sputnik V is not accepted as valid proof of immunity in the U.K. and the U.S. There are severe restrictions in the European Union (EU) for EU and non-EU citizens vaccinated with it. Thus, lakhs of Indians who wish to visit these countries cannot do so. For all practical purposes, an individual vaccinated with Sputnik V is regarded unvaccinated.

Apart from the global opinion being against the Sputnik V vaccine, the Indian vaccination programme has exacerbated the problem. Despite the National COVID Vaccination Program in India being based on epidemiological and scientific research, WHO recommendations, and international practices, the COVID-19 policy has not been changed by the government to allow for voluntary re-vaccination of persons who have received the Sputnik V vaccine and wish to go abroad. Even CoWIN prohibits any re-vaccination of persons with a different vaccine after one or two doses have been administered. Last year, an NRI employee at a Saudi Arabian company was unable to return to his job from Kerala because he had been given Covaxin, which was not yet authorised in the Gulf nation. The issue was brought before the Kerala High Court which said that the citizen's basic rights were being violated and his right to movement was being restricted.

The Supreme Court ought to have appreciated the right of an Indian to travel abroad emanating from settled jurisprudence as well as the prevailing global opinion against Russia. Furthermore, it should have taken into consideration concerns expressed by the Kerala High Court and allowed for re-vaccination of all individuals vaccinated with Sputnik desirous of travelling abroad.

Aditya Manubarwala is a Counsel practising at the Supreme Court and the Bombay High Court

STATE OF PLAY

An irresponsible act

A former DGP's YouTube video about Dileep comes at a time when the case is at a critical stage

S.R. PRAVEEN

Former DGP R. Sreelekha's YouTube channel, with a few thousand viewers for a majority of the videos, often has her talking about her experiences in service. On July 10, she posted a video about actor Dileep. She went to great lengths to whitewash the accusations against him, even accusing the police of fabricating evidence to frame Dileep in the case related to the abduction and assault of a female actor in February 2017. It is pertinent to note that she had no connection with the case.

Within a day, her allegation that a photograph of Dileep with the first accused, 'Pulsar' Suni, was photoshopped fell flat, with the photographer Bidel, who had given a statement in the court regarding it, vouching for its authenticity. Doubts were raised about her other assertions too. Her comments casting aspersions on the prosecution and the force came at a time when the case is at a critical stage. While the prosecution is planning to move contempt of court proceedings against her, her comments have drawn sharp reactions from a section of the film fraternity which has stood with the survivor.

After the popular woman actor was allegedly abducted and sexually assaulted by a group of men inside a moving vehicle on February 17, 2017, she filed a police complaint immediately. In a society where victims of sexual assault are often shamed, those behind the crime might not have expected the actor to lodge such a complaint. That act set off a chain reaction that shook the entrenched power centres of Malayalam cinema, led to the formation of the Women in Cinema Collective and forced the State Government to appoint the Justice Hema Commission to study issues of sexual harassment and gender inequality in the industry.

Although the men directly involved in the act were nabbed within a week, it was only four months later that fingers pointed to Dileep, the alleged mastermind. It was alleged that he had ordered that the assault be shot on video as revenge against her

for revealing to his then wife his affair with his co-star. His arrest a few weeks later and 85-day incarceration were unexpected, considering his clout in the industry. But thinly veiled voices of support for him have come from powerful names within the industry and outside, with the leadership of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes too being reluctant to act against him.

The case has taken many turns over the years: witnesses turned hostile, public prosecutors resigned, new witnesses made revelations, and the actor apparently attempted to delay the trial. The trial court judge has also faced allegations of bias, with the survivor and the State Government moving the Supreme Court unsuccessfully to get her replaced.

The trajectory of the case has caused apprehensions of miscarriage of justice. The repeated attempts at whitewashing the accused, even before a court verdict, through social media and at times even through sections of the mainstream media have compounded these fears. Despite the gravity of the allegations, #WithHim campaigns (in response to the #WithHer campaigns in support of the survivor) have been running on social media and some women's magazines have carried sympathetic interviews with Dileep, portraying him as a family man. The former DGP's YouTube video comes in this context.

The case and the trial are being viewed closely by those in the film fraternity supporting the survivor as well as the larger society, for a verdict favourable to the survivor could give courage to many others who are scared to speak out. The fact that many women from the film industry have spoken out after her is a testimony to the strength that her courageous act has given them. The fire that she lit should not be doused.

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DATA POINT

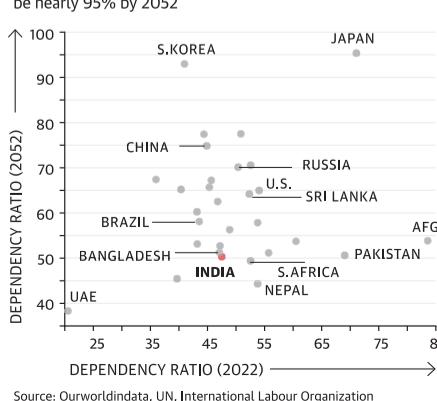
A diminishing demographic dividend

In the next 80 years, India's demographic structure is expected to, with the share of the working population declining and the share of dependent residents increasing. By 2037, the share of Indians aged 25-64 is projected to peak and then start declining by 2052, while the share of the population aged more than 65 is expected to have risen. The shift will be first recorded in the southern States, with nearly 20% of the population in Tamil Nadu and Kerala crossing the age of 60 by 2036. India is not alone in this demographic shift. Most countries are either going through the change or will see such a change in the near future. However, India is among the nations with the lowest share of the elderly receiving pension and the highest share of out-of-pocket expenditure in health. This is a double whammy given the poor monetary support and sharp increases in health-related expenses post-retirement. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan and Jasmin Nihalani

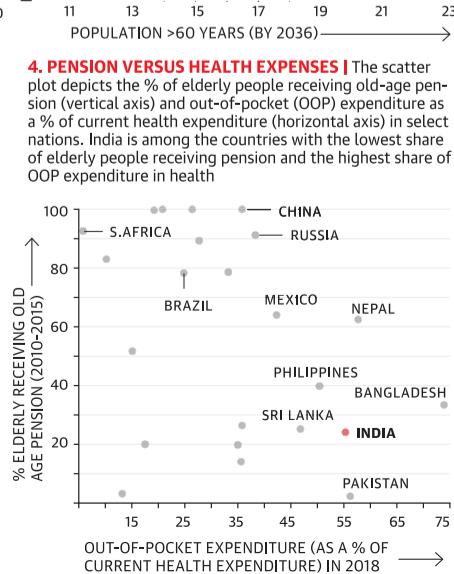
1. POPULATION SHARE | The line graph depicts the % of population in an age group over time in India. The share of the working age population will decrease, while the share of the older population is set to increase in India



3. DEPENDENCY RATIO | The scatter plot depicts the % of the dependent population (aged <15, >65) in 2022 and 2052 (projected) among select nations. The rise in the ageing population is not unique to India, with most economies facing a similar issue. In fact, for nations such as South Korea and Japan, the % share of dependent population will be nearly 95% by 2052



Source: Ourworldindata, UN, International Labour Organization



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 14, 1972

Sheikh's message to Pakistan

Srinagar, July 13: Sheikh Abdullah to-day called upon leaders of Pakistan to "prove by deeds and not by words alone" their sincerity in supporting the right of self-determination for Jammu and Kashmir. He declared "If they are really keen about Kashmiris' right for self-determination, then let them start with the area of the State under their occupation." The Sheikh was addressing a huge Martyrs' Day rally organised by the outlawed Plebiscite Front at "Shahid Mazar" here this evening. The Sheikh said: "As far as we are concerned, our watchword is self-reli

Text & Context

NEWS IN NUMBERS



Gender parity

135 India's rank in terms of gender parity out of 146 countries, an improvement of five places since last year on better performance in areas of economic participation and opportunity, according to the Gender Gap Report 2022 of the World Economic Forum released in Geneva. Iceland retained its place as the world's most gender-equal country, followed by Finland, Norway and New Zealand. Only 11 countries are ranked below India. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Congo, Iran and Chad are the worst-five. PTI

Rise in informal workers

12.6 In lakh, the number of informal workers added to the staffing industry in India in 2021-22, driven by demand in industries like fast-moving consumer goods, e-commerce and manufacturing, according to the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF) annual report. ISF is the apex body representing the manpower outsourcing industry in India. In 2020-21, the informal workforce demand grew at a modest 3.6%. The report added that digital adoption across sectors drove the demand for new employees. PTI

Oppo's duty evasion

4,389 In ₹ crore, the import duty evasion by Chinese company Oppo's India unit detected by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) which slapped the organisation with a show-cause notice, according to the Finance Ministry. During searches on Oppo India's premises, the DRI recovered documents that indicated wilful misdeclaration in the description of some imports and remittance of royalty and licence fees to various multi-national companies. PTI

Palm oil imports

5.9 In lakh tonnes, the rise in India's palm oil imports in June 2022, according to industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA). India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, imported 5.87 lakh tonnes of palm oils in June 2021. The association demanded the government to increase the quota fixed for duty-free import of crude soybean and sunflower oil under the Tariff Rate Quota system to boost domestic availability. The share of palm oil is about 50% of the country's total vegetable oil imports. PTI

U.S. inflation

9.1 In percentage, the surge in U.S. inflation in June which is a 40-year high, according to the Labour Department. Government data showed a sharp, faster-than-expected increase in the consumer price index (CPI) from the previous month driven by the significant rise in gasoline prices. The CPI spike over the past 12 months to June was the fastest increase since November 1981. This situation has strained American families, heaping pressure on President Joe Biden, whose ratings have taken a battering from the relentless rise in prices. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

In high-res: unfolding mysteries of the night sky

With the release of its first five stunning images, the James Webb Space Telescope has demonstrated an acute observational capacity and revealed aspects of the cosmos hitherto hidden from other telescopes

THE GIST

T.VENKATESWARAN

■ As light travels with a velocity of about 3,00,000 km per second, light from a distant object will take time to reach us on Earth. Hence, when we see a distant stellar object, we see it as if it were far back in time. To collect more light we need giant infrared telescopes. JWST is the biggest infrared telescope ever built.

■ The first five images released are – the deep field image of the SMACS 0723 cluster of galaxies which date back to times when the first stars were born, the Carina Nebula vividly showing the birth of new stars, the Southern Ring Nebula which details a dying star, the Stephan's quintet where we can see the cataclysmic cosmic collision of galaxies and finally the WASP-96 b, an exoplanet (a planet orbiting a distant star).

■ The spectroscopic observation of JWST reveals that there is a considerable amount of water vapour in the WASP-96 b's atmosphere. However due to the blistering heat, WASP-96 is unlikely to host life.

■ The deep field image of the SMACS 0723 cluster of galaxies has images that date back to times when the first stars were born. The images from Carina Nebula vividly show the birth of new stars. In contrast, the Southern Ring Nebula image details a dying star. In Stephan's quintet, the JWST has captured the cataclysmic cosmic collision of galaxies. By analysing the spectrum of the radiation from WASP-96 b, an exoplanet (a planet orbiting a distant star), the telescope has shown conclusively the presence of water vapour in the atmosphere of this hot, puffy gas giant planet orbiting a distant Sun-like star. With its sharp vision, more light-collecting area and ability to see in the invisible infrared regions, the JWST is sure to expand our understanding of the cosmos.

Peering back in time

About 13.8 billion years ago, through the Big Bang, our Universe emerged. The first stars and galaxies were born around 300 million years after the Big Bang. To know more about the formation of these stars and galaxies, we do not need a time machine or time travel. As light travels with a velocity of about 3,00,000 km per second, light from a distant object will take time to reach us on Earth. Hence, when we see a distant stellar object, we see it as if it were far back in time. Powerful telescopes are therefore, like time machines.

However since objects far away are dim, we need giant telescopes to collect more light. Further, light from distant objects is stretched out by the expansion of our Universe, driving the radiation from the visible range into the infrared. Therefore, to look deep back into the early phases of the Universe, we need a giant infrared telescope. JWST is the biggest infrared telescope ever built. With a 6.5-metre primary mirror, the JWST infrared telescope collects more photons than Hubble. It can see even the faintest flicker from the most distant regions of the cosmos.

Cluster of galaxies

The SMACS 0723 is a noted cluster of galaxies around 5.12 billion light-years away. Situated in the direction of the southern constellation of Volans, the image is as it appeared 4.6 billion years ago, about the same time when the Sun and the Earth evolved. The cluster has been previously studied by Hubble, Planck and Chandra space telescopes. But the rich details and features of the JWST's Near-Infrared Camera (NIRCam) are unmatched.

With a sharper vision than Hubble, many of the galaxies seen clearly in this image appear as mere blobs in Hubble's telescope. SMACS 0723 galaxy cluster is massive, which, as Einstein's general relativity theory predicts, distorts the fabric of spacetime. Like the refraction of a ray of light passing through a lens, the light from behind bends through the massive cluster. Due to this "gravitational lensing" effect, we notice that some galaxies appear distorted in an arc

shape, some are split into multiple images, and some are magnified.

The kaleidoscope of colours in the image captured by the JWST's Mid-Infrared Instrument (MIRI) are false colours (false colour refers to colour rendering methods used to display images which were recorded in the visible or non-visible parts of the electromagnetic spectrum, in colour) corresponding to a radiation wavelength. Galaxies that appear blue in this image contain stars but very little dust. The cosmic objects enveloped by dust appear red. Objects rich in hydrocarbons and other chemical compounds are green.

"A couple of galaxies are found to be at a redshift of eight, corresponding to a lookback time of -13.0 billion years, a mere -800 million years after the Big Bang. These are some of the oldest galaxies ever known" says Manoj Puravankara, Dept. of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai.

Where stars are born

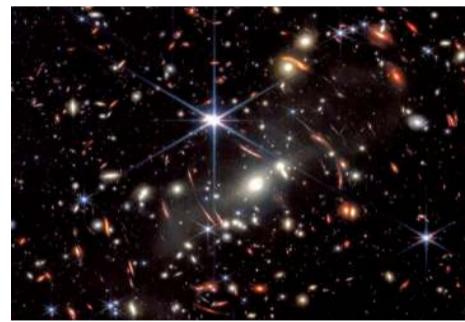
Stars and star clusters are formed inside giant gas clouds. Typically the massive interstellar clouds where new stars are formed are huge with diameters of about 100 light-years and holding nearly six million solar masses. There is enough material for making hundreds of stars out of this. Nonetheless, the density of these clouds is just 10 atoms per cubic centimetre. Stars typically have about 10^{22} (one followed by 22 zeros) atoms per cubic centimetre. While various theories explain how the dispersed mass aggregate and stars evolve, hard evidence is still lacking. The visible light is obscured by the thick dust that goes into the making of these stars and render it opaque. Shrouded in thick dust clouds, these star forming regions remained hidden to even powerful telescopes, until now.

One such stellar nursery booming with new stars is a giant interstellar gas cloud in our galaxy called NGC 3324, located in the direction of the Carina Nebula. The stunning image of an edge of the NGC 3324, dubbed Cosmic Cliff, located approximately 7,600 light-years from Earth, is home to many massive and young stars than our Sun. With the giant gas cloud condensing into new stars, this is an active star-forming region. Hot gas and dust emit infrared light. By steering its NIRCam and MIRI instruments into the highly-dense dust clouds, the JWST has revealed rich details of this star formation region.

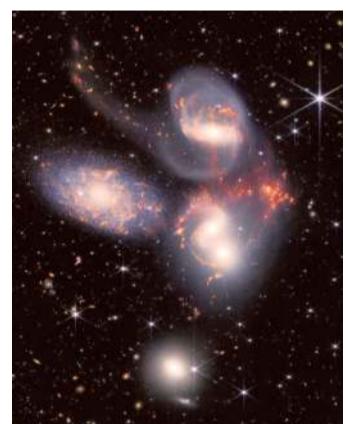
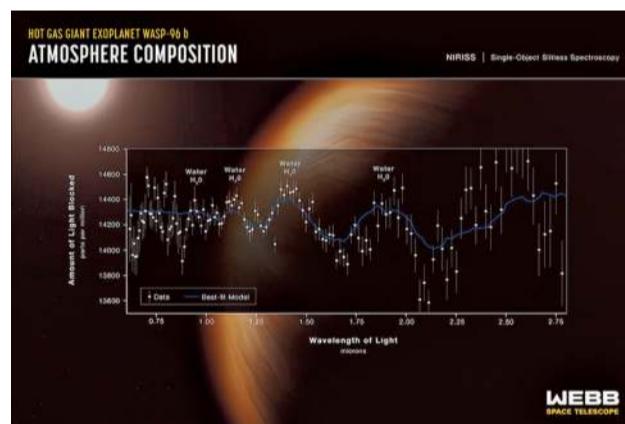
The striking image shows many exciting features in the innards of the star-forming regions. Hundreds of baby stars, previously invisible to telescopes, shine through the dust cloud. Thin gas pervades the space between the stars called the interstellar medium. When the infant stars begin to shine, they blow away the interstellar matter. The region devoid of gas appears in the image in the shape of bubbles and cavities. The mountains and valleys in the interstellar medium shaped by the radiation from the budding stars are visible, while the stars located in the centre of the bubble are off the frame. Other phenomena that one sees in the image include ionised gas and hot dust wafting away due to radiation from young stars, casing turbulence and eddies and dust swirling in the surrounding gas. What appears as a golden comet in this image are actually jet outflows from the newborn stars.

Two Indian astronomers are slated to use the JWST data to study star formation. Manoj Puravankara will be using the data obtained from Near Infrared Spectrograph (NIRSpec) and MIRI instruments to study the earliest phases of star formation, that is the protoplanetary disks – the birthplaces of planetary systems. "JWST's unprecedented sensitivity, angular resolution, and spectral resolution allow us to study various mass flows that shape and regulate the formation of stars and planetary systems" he says.

Jessy Jose, Assistant Professor from the Department of Physics, IISER Tirupati will be part of an international collaboration to study the very massive, dense molecular cloud within the central molecule zone of



Clockwise:
SMACS 0723 galaxy cluster
The Carina Nebula
The Southern Ring Nebula
Stephan's Quintet
WASP-96 b • NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION, EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY, CANADIAN SPACE AGENCY, SPACE TELESCOPE SCIENCE INSTITUTE AND THE ERO PRODUCTION TEAM



our Milky Way in order to understand the young stellar objects within it. "The NIRCam and MIRI instruments of JWST which broadly covers the wavelength range from 0.6 to 28-micron meter will enable us to characterise the very early phase of star formation" she says.

A star on its deathbed

The Eight-Burst Nebula, also known as the Southern Ring Nebula or NGC 3132, is a well-known planetary nebula in the constellation Vela, located approximately 2,500 light-years from Earth.

Despite their name, planetary nebulae have nothing to do with planets. They are gas shells formed from the cast-off outer layers of a dying star. Intermediate mass stars with a mass of 0.8 to eight times the mass of the Sun end their lives with drama. They do not die in one big explosion but go through a cycle of fits and starts. The dying star will expel its outer layer and expand, while simultaneously, its core will contract. The contracting centre will once again start to emit energy, and the star will have a lease of life. The expelled shell is pushed by this radiation and expands in space like a ring around the central star. After some time, the central star again sheds its outer layer while the remaining core contracts. Over time successive waves of expelled outer shells surround the central star-like concentric rings. The remaining core of the star ultimately becomes a faint glowing white dwarf. After trillions of years, they cool down and no longer shine, ultimately becoming black dwarfs. The near-infrared light is false coloured blue, and the mid-infrared light is red in this impressive image by the JWST. The consecutive waves of expelled shells can be clearly seen. If you look closely at the central region, a redder star shining next to a bright blue one can be seen. Astronomers knew that the Southern Ring Nebula was a binary star system. For the first time, we can clearly see the second

star hidden behind the dust clouds. Out Sun, an intermediate-mass star, will undergo a similar fate.

Cosmic waltz

Situated in the direction of the constellation Pegasus, around 290 million light-years away from Earth, is the clutch of five galaxies, each bound with the other called the Stephan's Quintet. Four of these close-knit galaxies are in a sort of dangerous waltz dance. Two of them are currently in the process of merging into one another. Studying such cataclysmic galactic interactions will help us understand how these lead to star formation, evolution, and central black holes in galaxies.

Hunt for the extra-terrestrial

Located around 1,150 light-years from Earth, WASP-96b is an exoplanet (a planet that orbits another star) orbiting a star named WASP-96. The planet has a mass half that of Jupiter and goes around the central star every 3.4 days. The light from the central star will pass through the planet's atmosphere when its edge is in the line of sight of the Earth. The molecules present in the atmosphere will first absorb the light entering the atmosphere. Then it would be remitted. By comparing the star's spectrum and the starlight passing through the planet's atmosphere, astronomers can discern the molecular composition. The spectroscopic observation of JWST reveals, for example, that there is a considerable amount of water vapour in the WASP-96 b's atmosphere.

With blistering heat, WASP-96 is unlikely to host life; However, astronomers will use the same technique to examine other exo-planets, particularly those in the habitable zone of the central star. Finding water vapour, hydrocarbons, methane, and other atmospheric elements could indirectly indicate life.

T.V. Venkateswaran is Scientist at Vigyan Prasar, Dept of Science and Technology



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On Thiruvananthapuram: then and now

How the city seems to cling on to days of yore and move at its own pace

JOAN SONY CHERIAN

Sandwiched between the Western ghats and the Arabian Sea, Thiruvananthapuram boasts of a distinct physiography with its low-lying coastal areas, its varied hills as well as its lakes and backwaters. Being the capital of Kerala, it hosts the political and administrative seat of the State. It is also one of the State's major IT hubs which by default is quickly transforming the urban space to that of a pan-Indian metropolis. Yet, with all the signs of a rapidly metamorphosing landscape, the city still seems to be moving at its own pace.

A distinct past

Thiruvananthapuram has a unique history compared to the rest of the State. Tracing its political and cultural history from the early 20th century to pre-independence, Manu. S. Pillai, in the introduction to his critically acclaimed work, *The Ivory Throne: Chronicles of the House of Travancore*, talks about the rise of Marthanda Varma, who saved Travancore 'from that destructive wave of invasive war that would engulf all else very shortly'. By dominating forces at home, Marthanda Varma set out on a path of conquest and victory at a time when the rest of the region, mainly the Kingdom of Cochin and the Zamorin's regime, was failing due to the influx of the Portuguese and the Dutch.

Pillai states that Marthanda Varma, taking a leaf out of the lessons learnt by his counterparts further north, chose to establish an amicable relationship with the colonialists which made Travancore the seat of politics it is now. "The fortunes of Kerala's last prominent princely line were inextricably intertwined in an umbilical bond with the fate of the imperial enterprise in India. So long as the sun did not set on the British Empire, Travancore would endure."

C. V. Ramanpillai through his trilogy *Marthandavarma* (1891) *Dharmaraja* (1913) and *Ramrajabhadur* (1918-19) fictionalises this intricate history of Travancore through both its internal and external conspiracies coupled with the doomed romance of warring factions.

Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's 1965 Kerala Sahitya Akademi winner *Eenipadikkal* (Rungs of the Ladder) brings us back to earth from royal

intrigues. The novel is set in Thiruvananthapuram in the backdrop of the Diwan rule in the 1920s to the election of the first communist regime in the State post-independence. We witness the political climate of that period through the eyes of a commoner who has ambitions to rise through the ranks by hook or by crook.

Thakazhi introduces us to Keshavapillai, born the son of an ordinary farmer trying to make the most of the fast-changing political landscape. Starting out as a government clerk, he proceeds to learn every trick in the book in order to go up the ladder. He forges relationships solely on the basis of their utility in his greed for social and political mobility and eventually becomes a Chief Secretary.

However, with the emergence of the communist government, he is unceremoniously ousted from his seat and quickly descends into oblivion.

The glory of Anantha

The main tourist attraction of the city, its crown jewel if you will, is the Padmanabhaswamy Temple. Even the city's name, Thiruvananthapuram translates to the 'City of Anantha', the presiding deity of the temple.

The sister of the present scion of Thiruvananthapuram, Aswathy Thirunal Gowri Lakshmi Bayi, has written a comprehensive history of the temple in *Sree Padmanabhaswamy Kshetram* (The Temple of Shri Padmanabhaswamy). The royal family of Travancore since the time of Marthanda Varma has been the traditional keeper and manager of the famed temple.

It is also one of the State's major IT hubs which is quickly transforming the urban space to that of a pan-Indian metropolis

However, ever since it was an open secret that the temple was the resting place of vast amounts of undocumented treasures, making it one of the wealthiest temples in the world, there has been general wariness around the fact that the royal family are the sole managers who have access to such wealth. Fictionalising these debates in a

fast-paced crime thriller, Ravi Subramanian's *In the name of God*, takes us around the world as officials try to trace an idol smuggling ring all in the backdrop of the bitter legal feud on whether the Padmanabhaswamy temple management should retain with the royal family or go to the State. Things come to a head when the temple itself becomes a target of the smugglers.

Beyond the past

Apart from its grand temples and their splendour, being a coastal town, the sea is fundamental to experiencing the city.

However, for those who depend on the sea for their entire existence, the experience is not quite as pleasant. Under the control of the whims and fancies of the sea, the fishing community mostly live in abject poverty. Veteran journalist Binoo. K. John's first work of fiction *The Last Song of Savio de Souza* gives us a glimpse of the lives along the coast; most of them are Christians and Muslims belonging to lower caste groups.

Through the eyes of Savio and Silvy we are taken through the festival at Vetticaud church where Savio makes his singing debut to Bheemapally where miracles happen through the blessings of the saint to the streets of the Palayam market where football goalie cum murderer of pervert men Hamid makes his living. We see how people in the 'Puram' (as the city is referred to in the novel) navigate their immediate conditions in constant search for government jobs or in extreme cases like Silvy's through the garb of the habit. The city with all its intricacies and misery comes alive in the novel almost taking on the presence of a living breathing character.

Writers like John and A. Madhavan provide unappreciated facets of the city in their works. In his novel *Krishna Parunthu* (Brahminy Kite), often considered to be his masterpiece, Madhavan tells stories about the lives of people in and around the Chalai market, the famous wholesale retail market of Thiruvananthapuram.

There is a need for writers to traverse more into the everyday life of a city which despite its one thousand protests per day still retains its aura as quiet, quaint, and dignified.

Thiruvananthapuram surely has more tales to tell and more places to be explored.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning."

"I am sorry I am late, sir. On my way, I bought an ink bottle. The salesman took his own time."

"That's all right. What do you want an ink bottle for?"

"I want to use the ink in it for my pen, sir."

"Oh! So you bought a bottle of ink. An ink bottle is a bottle that had ink in it or may be filled with ink. If you ask for a milk bottle, you will get a bottle but not milk. If you ask for a bottle of milk, you will get milk in a bottle. If you offer someone beer bottles, he may take them and remain sober. If you offer him bottles of beer and if he takes them, he may not be sober."

"Oh sir. I didn't know there was this difference between 'a beer bottle' and 'a bottle of beer'. Sir, what is the meaning of 'he whitewashed his faults'?"

"When you whitewash the walls, you cover whatever is dirty on them. After a whitewash, the walls look clean."

Metaphorically 'to whitewash' means 'to cover something wrong or bad'.

He whitewashed the whole affair.

I don't believe a word of what he said. It is all whitewash.

In Australian English, it is used in another sense also. 'To whitewash' an opponent means 'to wipe the floor with him'. 'A whitewash' is a defeat in which the loser doesn't score even a single point. When you crush your opponent, you say 'I whitewashed his faults'."

"Sir, is it 'in my heart of hearts' or 'in my hearts of hearts'?"

"It is 'in my heart of hearts'. 'In my heart of hearts' means 'in my immost feelings'."

In my heart of hearts, I think he is a fool.

He says all these things. But I know in his heart of hearts, he doesn't like me.

"Thank you, sir, I learn a great deal by discussing about such questions with you."

"We learn a great deal by discussing such questions. By the way, we discuss questions. We don't discuss about questions."

I discussed my plans with my teacher.

He discussed the programme with me.

We'll discuss the matter when we meet.

"Sir, is it alright to say 'we discussed on it'?"

"No. You discuss something. But there can be a discussion on something."

There was a discussion on the minister's forthcoming visit.

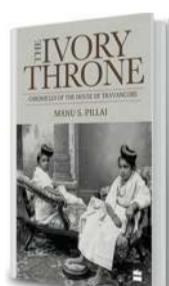
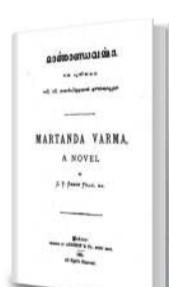
I don't see how a discussion on his private affairs will be helpful.

"Well, let's stop our discussion here."

"I have one more question, sir. How do you pronounce 'please', sir?"

"'Please' rhymes with 'tease' and 'cheese'. The 's' is pronounced 'z'. It's getting late for you. Goodbye."

"Thank you, sir. Goodbye."



THE DAILY QUIZ

July 14 is an important date in the history of France as it commemorates two incidents that happened on that date. A quiz on the Fête Nationale of the European country

1 Apart from commemorating the storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789, for what other event is the date important?

2 Who was the ruler of France when Parisian revolutionaries stormed the state prison housed in the fortress known as Bastille?

3 There were only seven prisoners when Bastille was breached. Name the infamously famous French literary figure, author of *One Hundred and Twenty Days of Sodom*, who had been imprisoned at the fortress till July 4, ten days before the rebels stormed it.

4 This founding father of the U.S. was the country's minister to France when the storming

happened. Name the future President who donated 60 francs to the widows of those killed in taking the Bastile.

5 Bastille Day features the oldest and largest regular military parade in Western Europe. When did this tradition start and when did Indian soldiers participate for the first time?

6 Which former French colony in India observes the French National day with a parade on the eve of July 14?

7 Name the celebrated work of historical fiction, and the author, which tells the story of Dr. Manette, his 18-year-long imprisonment in the Bastille in Paris, and his release?

8 What are the starting and ending points of the Bastille Day military parade in Paris?



◀ Name the celebrated French artist (name blanked out in the visual) who painted this work titled *The Fourteenth of July*.

Please send in your answers to the dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's quiz: 1. Ludo originates from this ancient cross and circle board game. **Ans: Pachisi**
2. There are 4325003 trillion configurations of this puzzle from this country but only one solution. **Ans: Rubik's Cube and Hungary**
3. This brand was started by Ole Kirk Christiansen. **Ans: Lego**
4. This game was invented by two Canadians in 1981. **Ans: Trivial Pursuit**
5. The other three tokens used in Monopoly other than Boot, Racehorse, and the Iron. **Ans: Battleship, Racing Car, and Top Hat**
6. Mr. Boddy and Dr. Black perform this same role in the U.S. and U.K. version of this game. **Ans: The murder victim in Cluedo**
7. Of the four kings in the deck, this king is clean-shaven. **Ans: King of Hearts**
8. 'With this card, you must have no other alternative cards to play that matches the colour of the card previously played' is a rule in this game. **Ans: Uno**
9. The total face value of the 100 tiles in Scrabble and the only letter with a value of 5. **Ans: 187 and 'K'**
Visual: Name this game. **Ans: Backgammon**

Early Birds: Saurabh B. Lakra| Varghese Joseph| Adya Upasana Routray

FROM PAGE ONE

Ranil becomes Acting President of Sri Lanka

They also gathered outside the Air Force headquarters, after the Sri Lanka Air Force said the President, First Lady and two bodyguards boarded an Air Force flight to the Maldives on Wednesday, in a statement confirming its services to Mr. Gotabaya, who holds the positions of Minister of Defence and Commander-in-Chief, until his resignation.

Meanwhile, political party leaders who met Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena on Wednesday requested him to ask the President and the Prime Minister to resign immediately or ask the President to sack the Prime Minister before he resigns.

Though both Sri Lanka's President and Prime Minister offered to resign following dramatic mass protests on Saturday – demonstrators stormed the President's office and home, while arsonists torched the Prime Minister's private residence – neither has stepped down, prolonging the political impasse, and fuelling anti-go-

vernment protests.

Sri Lanka's Constitution clearly lays out next steps in the event of the President's and Prime Minister's their offices falling vacant, but the process cannot begin until the leaders resign. While speculation over Mr. Gotabaya's whereabouts continues, a top official in the Maldives, who asked not to be named, citing "sensitivity" of the embattled leader's arrival, told *The Hindu* that Mr. Gotabaya would "only transit" the country.

Media reports said the Maldives' Parliamentary Speaker and former President, Mohamed Nasheed, received Mr. Gotabaya at the airport, but there was no official word from Male on the development.

Asked where the Sri Lankan leader was headed next, the source declined comment. Mr. Gotabaya's final destination remains unclear, but reports indicated he was headed to Singapore.

Oppo India gets DRI notice on 'duty evasion'

The DRI had earlier conducted searches on the office premises of Oppo India and residences of its key management employees, which led to the seizure of "incriminating" evidence indicating alleged wilful misdeclaration in description of certain items imported by the company for use in the manufacture of mobile phones.

"This mis-declaration resulted in wrongful availment of ineligible duty exemption benefits by Oppo India amounting to ₹2,981 crore. Among others, senior management employees and domestic suppliers of Oppo India were questioned, who in their voluntary statements accepted the submission of wrong description before the Customs authorities at

the time of import," the agency said.

The DRI probe revealed that Oppo India had allegedly remitted or made provisions for payment of "royalty" and "licence fee" to various multinational companies, including those based in China, in lieu of the use of proprietary technology, brand, intellectual property license, etc.

"The said 'royalty' and 'licence fees' paid by Oppo India were not being added in the transaction value of the goods imported by them, in violation of Section 14 of the Customs Act, read with Rule 10 of the Customs Valuation (Determination of Value of Imported Goods) Rules 2007. The alleged duty evasion by Oppo India is ₹1,408 crore," the agency said.

Climate Change Missions in all districts of T.N.

ARAVIND KUMAR B.
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government has established District Climate Change Missions in all 38 districts.

The missions will be headed by the Collectors as Mission Directors. The District Forest Officers will function as Climate Officers. The missions will help strengthen the government's climate response at the grassroots, said Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forest.

The missions will create strong policy support across all sectors of governance, devise strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and benchmark industries to move towards green manufacturing. They will also promote eco-friendly technologies, such as solar and wind energy technologies, biodegradable packaging and e-vehicles.

Educating local commun-

ities in the management of climate change and creating technologies for evidence-based green models for adaptation and practical models for green mobility are the other objectives of the missions.

District-level plans

The Collectors will have to prepare district-level climate change mitigation and adaptation plans, build capacity and provide inputs for low-carbon, climate-resilient development plans. Another key deliverable is strengthening the 'Meendum Manjappai' campaign against the use of single-use plastics. The Collectors will also work towards strengthening Climate Smart Villages and creating bio-shields in coastal areas.

The government has initially sanctioned ₹3.80 crore for 38 district missions which will function under the supervision of the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission.

towards gender non-conformity. I am looking forward to flying in India without compromising on my identity as a man," Mr. Harry told *The Hindu*.

The DGCA has also clarified that there were no restrictions on transgender people seeking pilot's licence and a hormone therapy alone will not preclude anyone from flying.

"I am happy about the DGCA's response. This is just a beginning and I know I have a tough battle ahead of me in a world where heteronormative attitudes prevail and there is little tolerance

and there is little tolerance

mone replacement therapy will not disqualify a candidate if there are no adverse symptoms or reactions. However, "flying duties are not permitted while the dose of hormonal treatment is being stabilised or until an adequate physiological response has been achieved and the dose no longer needs changing."

The development follows

a letter from the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to the DGCA on Monday calling its decision of denying a transgender person

a commercial pilot licence "discriminatory" and violative of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. The Ministry has also urged the regulator to lay down guidelines for licensing of transgender persons to become pilots and prepare medical standards for them.

The DGCA has clarified in a press statement that there are "no restrictions on transgender people to obtain pilot's licence and ratings", subject to certain requirements such as "age, educational qualifications, medical fitness, knowledge, experience etc".

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Ahead of monsoon session, govt. calls for all-party meeting

Agnipath scheme to be front and centre of Opposition attack in Parliament

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The government has called an all-party meeting on Sunday ahead of the monsoon session of Parliament. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu will also be meeting the floor leaders of the respective Houses.

The Opposition parties, hit by the dwindling support for their presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha, have decided to regroup and are likely to have a strategy meet on Sunday.

According to sources, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge has telephoned several Opposition leaders calling for a meeting on Sunday immediately after the government's all-party meeting. The recently announced military recruitment scheme Agnipath will be the front and centre of the Opposition's attack on the government.

The Opposition has consistently asked the government to roll back the scheme.

The election for the President will be held on the first



The all-party meeting will be held on Sunday ahead of the monsoon session of Parliament. ■ FILE PHOTO

day of the session on July 18. This will also be the last session for Mr. Naidu in his current term, which is ending on August 10. The election for the Vice-President's post will be held on August 6.

So far, both the ruling BJP and the Opposition have not named their candidates. The government is confident of winning both the elections with sizeable margins.

It will also see the rearranged Opposition equation in the Rajya Sabha. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is now the fourth largest Opposition party in the House along with the DMK.

There will be no member from the Akali Dal and only a single member from the Ba-

hujan Samaj Party (BSP). The Opposition leaders though have very little confidence in utility of the meetings called by the government and the Presiding Officers.

'No discussion'

"The Union government will not allow a discussion on any people-centric issue in Parliament. They run scared. They make a mockery of Parliament. So these pre-session meetings are a sham," Rajya Sabha Parliamentary Party leader for Trinamool Congress, Derek O'Brien, told *The Hindu*.

RJD leader Manoj K. Jha echoed similar views. "Over the years, these meetings

have been reduced to periodic rituals. The agreements that the Opposition and the government arrive at these meetings are rarely implemented during the session," Mr. Jha said.

DMK MP Tiruchi Siva said these meetings were called by the government to apprise the Opposition of its agenda and to hear about the Opposition's concerns. But both of these aims haven't been fulfilled. The government Bills are pushed at the last minute without keeping the Opposition in loop.

"In the past, our demands to send key legislation like the farm Bill to a Parliamentary Select Committee was ignored. So one definitely is sceptical about the utility of such meetings," Mr. Siva said.

Mr. Om Birla has convened the meeting of floor leaders on Saturday, while Mr. Naidu will meet the floor leaders of various parties on Sunday.

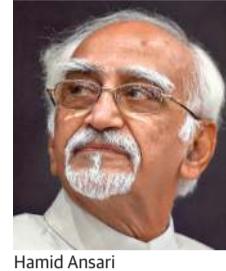
The session will meet under COVID-19 protocol. The monsoon session of Parliament begins on July 18 and will continue till August 12.

Mr. Ansari released a strongly worded statement

BJP is unleashing a 'litany of falsehood', says Ansari

Party leader raises charge over Pak. journalist's statement

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



Hamid Ansari

have been drawn by the organisers. I never invited him or met him [Mr. Mirza]."

On the accusations with regard to exposing an RAW operative, Mr. Ansari said his "work as Ambassador to Iran was at all times within the knowledge of the government of the day. The Government of India has all the information and is the only authority to tell the truth. It is a matter of record that after my stint in Tehran I was appointed India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. My work there has been acknowledged at home and abroad."

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a statement, said that "Insinuations and innuendos by a spokesperson of the BJP against Mr. Ansari and Congress president Sonia Gandhi amount to character assassination of the worst form. He alleged, "The levels that the Prime Minister and his party colleagues will stoop to debase public debate and spread their patented brand of lies is staggering. It reflects sickness of mind and lack of any form of integrity whatsoever."

Mamata meets Assam CM in Darjeeling

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Ahead of the election to the office of President, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday met her Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma in Darjeeling. The meeting took place in the presence of West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar at the Raj Bhavan.

Ms. Banerjee said there was no political discussion between them. The Trinamool Congress chairperson denied any discussion on the Presidential election.

"We should have good relations [with Assam]. There are many people from West Bengal who live in Assam and many people from Assam who live here. There are State government-to-State government links but we should also talk to each other," she said.

Mr. Sarma said he was visiting the Darjeeling hills at the invitation of Mr. Dhankhar.

While Ms. Banerjee was visiting the hills to participate in a number of events, including the swearing-in of newly elected Gorkhaland Territorial Administration members, Mr. Sarma's visit was a surprise.

Gyanvapi case: Masjid panel too seeks removal of advocate

One of the Hindu plaintiffs also filed similar application

ABHINAV LAKSHMAN
NEW DELHI

As the District Court in Varanasi continued hearing the ongoing Gyanvapi mosque-Kashi Vishwanath temple civil dispute, the Muslim side on Wednesday filed an application seeking that advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, one of the lawyers leading the Hindu side, should be barred from appearing for the plaintiffs in light of his position as a government lawyer

C We have sought that Vishnu Shankar Jain be barred from appearing for the plaintiffs in light of his position as a government lawyer

RAEES AHMED ANSARI
Lawyer for Masjid panel

government lawyer and appear against the government in a suit. This falls under malpractice and we intend to file a complaint with the Bar Council also about this."

On Tuesday, Mr. Jain had told *The Hindu*, "There is no conflict," adding that he had secured a no objection certificate from the Uttar Pradesh government on June 15.

These developments came as Mr. Jain and his father Hari Shankar Jain on Wednesday continued arguments opposing the masjid panel's application under Order VII Rule 11 of the Code of Civil Procedure, seeking a dismissal of the suit on maintainability.

Amit Malviya, head of the BJP's Information Technology cell, tweeted a 10-second clip of Mr. Kumar in which the Congress leader is heard saying: "She [Ms. Murmu] represents an evil philosophy of India and shouldn't be made an Adivasi symbol of India."

Mr. Malviya tweeted: "At a time when the NDA, led by PM Modi, has announced Smt Draupadi Murmu, a woman from Adivasi samaj, as its nominee for the President's office, a move that

will significantly empower the Tribals, Congress leader calls her evil by association! Just because she is a Tribal. Shame."

The clip shared by him, however, was a shorter version of a comment Mr. Kumar made to ANI, a news agency. In the 57-second clip, Mr. Kumar said: "It's not about Draupadi Murmu. It's not about comparing the two candidates. Yashwant Sinha ji is also a good candidate and Draupadi Murmu ji is also a decent person. But she represents a very evil philosophy of India. We should not make her a symbol of Adivasi." He goes on to ask: "Ram Nath Kovind is the President and Hathras has happened, has he said a word? The condition of Scheduled Castes has become worse, has he said a word?"

The Congress officially, however, stayed away from the bitter war of words that played out on social media, even as it accused BJP leaders of sharing a "doctored video".

The party alleged that the new rules would lead to disempowerment of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and other traditional forest dwellers and fuel conflict in tribal areas.

Ajoy Kumar's comments on Murmu trigger spat

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Ajoy Kumar triggered a controversy on Wednesday after he described the National Democratic Alliance's (NDA) Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu as a "decent person" but representing an "evil philosophy of India".

Hitting back at the Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders tweeted that the comment against Ms. Murmu represented "Congress's evil philosophy of entitlement".

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Withdraw new forest rules: Cong.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Alleging that the new forest conservation rules "violate" the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, the Congress on Wednesday wrote to the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to urge the Central government to withdraw them in public interest.

In a letter to NCST chairperson Harsh Chouhan, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) national coordinator for SC, ST, OBC and Minority departments, K. Raju, said the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) notified the new Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022, on June 29, without holding any public consultation with stakeholders.

The party alleged that the new rules would lead to disempowerment of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and other traditional forest dwellers and fuel conflict in tribal areas.

BJP govt. is sleeping over inflation, says Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is more interested in Uranus and Pluto than tackling inflationary trends, the Congress said on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference a day after the government released the latest inflation figures, party spokesperson Gourav Vallabh took a dig at Ms. Sitharaman for tweeting pictures of the galaxy taken by NASA's James Webb telescope instead of sharing her plan for containing inflation.

'Society polarised'

"She has an interest in Pluto, Jupiter and Uranus. Unfortunately, our Finance Minister is showing the way to Pluto, Uranus and Jupiter and is unable to show the way forward to our economy," Mr. Vallabh said. He also accused the Modi government of polarising society and creating divides instead of dealing with rising inflation, unemployment and a depreciating rupee.



Gourav Vallabh

Mr. Vallabh alleged that the BJP has brought about a "doom" with the "7s" – retail inflation is at 7.01%; Reserve Bank of India's projection for inflation is 7.4% for the next quarter; unemployment is at 7.8%; and the Rupee depreciated 7% versus the American dollar in the last six months.

"While these are worrying data points, the BJP government is in deep slumber," he said, adding, "What has the government done to bring relief to the common Indian as far as inflation is concerned...increasing GST (Goods and Services Tax) on items such as flour will only propel inflation."

Army foils infiltration attempt in Poonch

JAMMU

The Army on Wednesday said a major infiltration bid was foiled in the Pir Panjal valley's Poonch district in the Jammu province. "During the midnight hours, there was an infiltration attempt along Line of Control in Poonch sector. The attempt was suitably foiled by the alert troops," the Army said. An operation has been launched and the entire area cordoned off to track any infiltrators. The number of casualties is being ascertained.

Coal India Limited (A Maharatna Company)
All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in respective Subsidiary Company, CIL e-procurement portal <https://eprocure.gov.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://gem.gov.in>

of attorney for her, had announced at the end of May that they would no longer be engaging Mr. Jain, his father and their team in the case.

Advocate Raees Ahmed Ansari, one of the lawyers for the masjid panel, told *The Hindu*, "We received a copy of the application filed by Ms. Singh and filed our own application seeking that Vishnu Shankar Jain be barred from appearing for the plaintiffs in suit in light of his position as a government lawyer

Ref: 1) Tender Notification No: EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/07/2022-23 Dated: 29-06-2022

With reference to the above Tender Notification No: EE/CMP/TEND/E-Proc/07/2022-23, Dated: 29-06-2022 due to Technical Reason calendar of events has been revised as mention below.

- 1) Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: 25-07-2022 upto 4.00 PM.
 - 2) Pre Bid Meeting Document: 22-07-2022 at 4.00 PM.
 - 3) Opening of Technical Bid Document: 26-07-2022 at 4.15 PM.
 - 4) Opening of Financial Bid Document: 28-07-2022 at 4.15 PM (if possible).
- All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Chamarajpet Division, BBMP,

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE

Ms. Singh's lawyer, advocate Shivam Gaur, said they will lead arguments against the masjid panel's application separately after the Jains conclude theirs on behalf of the four other plaintiffs. The matter will be taken up next on July 14.

The interested Bidders may logon to www.mstecommerce.com for further details and registration. They may also contact M/s. M.S.T.C. Ltd., at below mentioned address for needed clarification.

Address:
M/s. M.S.T.C. Ltd., No. 19/5, 19/6, 3rd Floor, Kareem Tower, Cunningham Ham Road, Bengaluru-560052. Contact Phone Nos.: 080-22260054, 22266417, 22287356, Fax No.: 080-22256365. SMTCTC Contact Phone Nos.: +91 7760990221/225, 080-22213213 Extn-298.

DIPR/CP/LC/1344/2022-23

Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, DRM Office Complex, Tiruchirappalli - 620 001

If the date of opening of tenders happens to be a declared holiday at a later date, the tenders will be opened on the next working day at the stipulated time. The detailed Tender Notice, Tender document along with terms & conditions and if any corrigendum to tender is issued can be accessed through <https://www.reproc.gov.in>. GST will apply as per extant norms of GOI.

Follow us on : <https://twitter.com/GMSRailway>

Wear Mask **Follow Physical Distancing** **Maintain Hand Hygiene**

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE

Controller of Stores & Purchases

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE

Wear Mask **Follow Physical Distancing** **Maintain Hand Hygiene**

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Wear Mask **Follow Physical Distancing** **Maintain Hand Hygiene**

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE

Assessing juvenility a 'delicate task': SC

Two-judge Bench calls for 'meticulous psychological investigation' before arriving at the decision

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The "delicate task" of deciding whether juveniles aged between 16 and 18, accused of heinous offences such as murder, can be tried like adults should be based on "meticulous psychological investigation" rather than be left to the discretion and perfunctory "wisdom" of juvenile justice boards and children's courts across the country, the Supreme Court held in a judgment on Wednesday.

Initial assessment
Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act of 2015 requires a "preliminary assessment" to be done of the mental and physical capacity of juveniles, aged between 16 and 18, who are involved in serious crimes.

Post-2015 birth certificates on DigiLocker

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI

Birth certificates of children born after August 2015 that were issued through the Civil Registration System (CRS) portal has been integrated with DigiLocker, a government-run mobile application that acts as a document wallet. Registered users on DigiLocker will be able to access the birth certificates online.

DigiLocker is a platform to issue and verify government documents and certificates digitally.

CRS is an online system for registration of births and deaths under the operational control of the Centre. The Registrar General of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs operates the system.

Several States such as Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal register all births and deaths through the Centre's portal. Others such as Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have their own system or use the portal partially. The Union Territories such as Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu register through the Central portal but others such as Delhi, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and J&K have their own system.



The assessment is meant to gauge a child's ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he or she allegedly committed the offence.

If the Juvenile Justice Board is of the opinion that the juvenile should not be treated as an adult, it would not pass on the case to the children's court and hear the case itself. In that case, if the child is found guilty, he would be sent to juvenile care for three years.

On the other hand, if the Board decides to refer the case to the children's court for trial as an adult, the juvenile, if guilty, would even face life imprisonment.

Mental capacity'
"The report of the preliminary assessment decides the germane question of transferring the case of a

child between 16 and 18 years of age to the children's court. This evaluation of 'mental capacity and ability to understand the consequences' of the child in conflict with law can, in no way, be relegated to the status of a perfunctory and a routine task. The process of taking a decision on which the fate of the child in conflict with law precariously rests, should not be taken without conducting a meticulous

psychological evaluation," a Bench of Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and Vikram Nath observed.

The court discovered that there were neither guidelines nor a specific framework in place for conduct of the preliminary assessment.

Guidelines needed

"It appears expedient that appropriate and specific guidelines are put in place... We leave it open for the Centre and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights to consider issuing guidelines or directions in this regard," Justice Nath, who authored the judgment, ordered.

The court said the Board which conducts the assessment of the child should

have at least one child psychologist. It should further take the assistance of experienced psychologists or psychosocial workers.

The apex court's judgment came while dismissing the appeals filed by the CBI and the relative of a Class 2 child who was allegedly found murdered in the washroom of his Gurugram school in 2017.

The suspect, a Class 9 student of the same school, underwent a preliminary assessment in which it was decided that he should be tried as an adult. The Bench found that his assessment was limited to an IQ test. The apex court upheld the High Court's decision to reverse the assessment and refer the case back to the Juvenile Justice Board for a fresh 'preliminary assessment' of the now 21-year-old.

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vernment, universities, the labour movement, and think-tanks are just as culpable. This must end."

The statement alleged Uber still operated "by breaking laws, risking lives of drivers & passengers, all to win market share".

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists had this week reported on a large tranche of internal memos and emails of top officials at Uber, leaked to *The Guardian* by a lobbyist who worked for the company in several countries. The cab-hailing service had responded to the findings in these leaks by saying that they had changed how they operate as a company in recent times.

It added, "Uber has long tried to say we are not the Uber of the early days, but actors in go-

of what Uber is currently doing to its drivers makes it clear that it continues practices meant to brutally exploit drivers at sub-minimum level wages and unsafe working conditions."

'Irreparable damage'

The union added that such practices by Uber had caused "irreparable damage" to urban transportation systems and urban economies by "ripping off drivers and passengers, operating outside of the law".

It called for governments across the world to "appoint commissions of inquiry, hold Congressional / Parliamentary hearings, constitute committees of elected representatives and execute other instructional methods to hold Uber and other app companies accountable".

Hold Uber accountable, take strict action, says union

Global leaks pertaining to alleged unfair practices of the firm

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Reacting to the global leaks pertaining to alleged illegal and unfair practices of ride-hailing service Uber, the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers on Wednesday issued a statement, calling for the company to be held accountable and demanding strict action against "a company that broke laws intentionally, put lives at risk through flagrant disregard for safety to drivers and passengers, and continues to operate in dangerous and callous ways".

Mr. Salauddin, the national general secretary of the union, which is also affiliated to the International Alliance of App-based Transport Workers, said, "We expect Uber to keep sugar-coating its image, but actors in go-

vernment, universities, the labour movement, and think-tanks are just as culpable. This must end."

The statement alleged Uber still operated "by breaking laws, risking lives of drivers & passengers, all to win market share".

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Now, some SpiceJet pilots give call for 'mass sick leave'

They are unhappy over massive pay cuts, lapses in PF

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

A section of SpiceJet pilots have given a call for a "mass sick leave" on Thursday in protest against pay cuts at the airline in the past two years.

Pilot sources said that they were unhappy over massive pay cuts the airline continued to impose which amounted to a deduction equivalent of "70%" of their pre-pandemic salary. Pilots also claim that the airline has been deducting contributions towards provident fund and tax deducted at source but was not depositing them with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and the Income Tax Department. Pilots claim provident fund lapses since 2020.

Sources also said that



whether this will impact the airline's flights across its network which covers over 50 destinations.

The uproar among pilots follows a rap from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation last week which has served a show-cause on the airline underlining that the airline's weak financial status was resulting in its failure to carry out maintenance and procure spare parts from vendors resulting in "degraded" safety leading to several mid-air incidents and an accident since April.

There are similar agitations at IndiGo and GoFirst where technicians have stayed away from work since last week. A "mass sick leave" by nearly 300 cabin crew members at IndiGo resulted in 55% of its flights getting delayed on July 2.

Couple arrested with 45 guns at Delhi airport

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Customs Department has arrested an Indian couple at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport here on the charge of attempting to smuggle in 45 guns brought from France.

Those arrested have been identified as Jagjit Singh and Jaswinder Kaur, residents of Defence Colony in Haryana's Gurugram. They, along with their 18-month-old daughter, arrived at Terminal-3 on July 11 from Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. During interrogation, the duo said they had earlier smuggled in 25 such guns valued at ₹12.5 lakh from Turkey.

Customs Commissioner (Airport & General) Zubair Riaz Kamili said Mr. Jagjit's elder brother Manjit Singh was also involved in the July 11 smuggling bid. However, Mr. Manjit slipped out of the airport. The 45 "assorted brand" guns were estimated to be worth ₹22.5 lakh.

We have installed 162 GW of renewable energy capacity, says Power Minister



In 2015, India committed to ensuring that 40% of its energy would be from renewable sources by 2030. ■ FILE PHOTO

Push for wider use of genomics in all countries

WHO report calls for plugging gaps in financing, infrastructure

RAMYA KANNAN
CHENNAI

The World Health Organization's Science Council, in its first report, has called for accelerating access to genomics across the world.

The report argues that it is not justifiable ethically or scientifically for countries with lesser resources to gain

access to such technologies long after the rich countries do. The field of genomics tries to use human genetic material to study and research cures and treatments for medical conditions, and is used in a wide range of applications in animal sciences, and agriculture.

Expanding access

After the WHO constituted the Science Council of experts in April 2021 to provide guidance on the science and research strategy of the organisation, it identified ge-

nomics as the focus of its first report. The report calls for expanding access to genomic technologies, particularly in low- and middle-income nations, by addressing shortfalls in financing, laboratory infrastructure, materials, and highly trained personnel. Noting that the costs of setting up genomic technologies are definitely heading south, making them all that more affordable, it is essential to lower them further, it said.

Harold Varmus, a Nobel Laureate and former Direc-

tor of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, who also chairs the Science Council said: "It is already clear that genomics can make enormous contributions to human health, from surveying populations for infectious agents, such as the virus that causes COVID-19, to predicting and treating a wide variety of diseases, such as cancers and developmental disorders."

WHO Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan said: "Genomic technologies are driving some of the most

ground-breaking research happening today. Yet the benefits of these tools will not be fully realised unless they are deployed worldwide. Only through equity can science reach its full potential impact and improve health for everyone, everywhere."

The report also makes a series of recommendations addressing four themes – advocacy, implementation, collaboration, and associated ethical, legal and social issues – to promote wider use of genomics.

- To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site at <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>
- SCAN
- 15 America's retracting statements over time, creates doubts (8)
18 Being in the business of grabbing power, needed basic skill with words (8)
19 Game of life – wanting energy and love (5)
22 Top social rank of someone like John (9)
24 Love – an unknown and infinite thought, something like water or sand (5)
25 Turning old and contemplative, extremely gently (5)
26 Drink goes in! Starts to talk gibberish (9)
27 Bird tore like crazy (8)
28 Bird that sounds like seal (6)
- Down**
- 1 Veil's dropping occasionally, time to see face (6)
2 Traded natural oil, raced to make good profit (4,1,4,6)
3 Grieve endlessly inside after turning up for rescue operation (9)
5 Just Mr. Spooner's battle order (8)
6 Certainly not seen in online version (5)
7 Programmed training of camera (eye) of computer, basically comprehending essence of countenance (4,11)
8 Describes endless calm surrounding dead (7)
9 Endless evaluation for an oil extract used in cancer therapy (5)
16 Quiet town in Hawaii, long off north, extremely seemly for kind of communication study (9)
17 Infinitely enjoy clue about Soviet leader (5,3)
18 Outrage at small jail by the lake in Srinagar (7)
20 ...means a ___ (5)
21 Stick etc. used around husbands (6)
23 Slight effect, right away (4)

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13607

T	A	P	D	A	N	C	E	A	S	T	U	T	E
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G	U	T	S	E	U	R							
H	U	S	H	M	O	N	E						
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The rise and fall of Gotabaya Rajapaksa

The President was last of six members of the country's most influential family still clinging to power

ASSOCIATED PRESS
COLOMBO

Before he fled Sri Lanka on Wednesday amid a crushing economic crisis, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was the last of six members of the country's most influential family still clinging to power.

Mr. Gotabaya, his wife and two bodyguards flew to the city of Male, the capital of the Maldives, according to an immigration official. His departure comes four days after massive crowds broke into his official residence and occupied his seaside office, and he pledged to leave the country.

For decades, the powerful land-owning Rajapaksa family had dominated local politics in their rural southern district before Mahinda Rajapaksa was elected President in 2005. Appealing to the nationalist sentiment of the island's Buddhist-Sinhalese majority, he led Sri Lanka into a triumphant victory over ethnic Tamil rebels in 2009, ending a 26-year brutal civil war that had divided the country. His younger brother, Gotabaya, was a powerful official and military strategist in the Ministry of Defence.

Mr. Mahinda remained in office until 2015, when he lost to the Opposition led by his former aide. But the family made a comeback in 2019, when Mr. Gotabaya won the Presidential election on a



Happier days: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, right, swearing in his elder brother, Mahinda, as Sri Lanka's Prime Minister on August 9, 2020. ■ AFP

promise to restore security in the wake of the Easter Sunday terrorist suicide bombings that killed 290 people. He vowed to bring back the muscular nationalism that had made his family popular with the Buddhist majority, and to lead the country out of an economic slump with a message of stability and development.

Series of mistakes

Instead, he made a series of fatal mistakes that ushered in an unprecedented crisis.

As tourism plunged in the wake of the bombings and foreign loans on controversial development projects – including a port and an airport in the president's home region – needed to be repaid, Mr. Gotabaya didn't listen to economic advisers and

pushed through the largest tax cuts in the country's history. It was meant to spur spending, but critics warned it would slash the government's finances. Pandemic lockdowns and an ill-advised ban on chemical fertilizers further hurt the fragile economy.

The country soon ran out of money and couldn't repay its huge debts. Shortages of food, cooking gas, fuel and medicine stoked public anger at what many saw as mismanagement, corruption and nepotism.

Mr. Gotabaya's tenure was marked by policy U-turns. Critics say he has revoked more than 100 government decrees, earning him the moniker "Gazette Reverse". He abandoned democratic reforms of the

previous administration and made the Presidency more powerful, but in the final months of his Presidency agreed to return those powers to parliament.

The family's unravelling began in April, when growing protests forced three Rajapaksa relatives, including the Finance Minister, to quit their Cabinet posts and another to leave his ministerial job. In May, government supporters attacked protesters in a wave of violence that left nine dead. The anger of the protesters turned against Mr. Mahinda, who was pressured to resign as Prime Minister and took refuge on a heavily fortified naval base.

But Mr. Gotabaya refused to go, triggering chants in the streets of "Gota Go Home!"

Former Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt and Nadhim Zahawi, who was appointed Chancellor eight days ago, did not get the minimum 30 votes needed from their colleagues and were sent out of the race.

Sunak tops first round of Tory race for Downing Street

Mordaunt in second place; Hunt and Zahawi out of contest

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN
LONDON

At the end of the first round of voting for a new party leader and the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Conservative MPs on Wednesday sent six of the eight candidates to round two.

Former Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt and Nadhim Zahawi, who was appointed Chancellor eight days ago, did not get the minimum 30 votes needed from their colleagues and were sent out of the race.

Rishi Sunak, the former



Rishi Sunak
Chancellor who resigned from Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Cabinet on Tuesday last week, got 88 votes,

with Trade Minister Penny Mordaunt in second place with 67 votes.

Others who will go on to the second round, which will be held on Thursday, are Foreign Secretary Liz Truss (50 votes), former Equalities Minister Kemi Badenoch, Tom Tugendhat, who chairs the Foreign Affairs Committee in the British Parliament, and Attorney-General Suella Braverman.

In each subsequent round, the candidate with the fewest votes, will be eliminated, until a winner is declared on September 5.

China 'drives away' U.S. ship that sailed near disputed isles

REUTERS
BEIJING

A U.S. destroyer sailed near the disputed Paracel Islands in the South China Sea on Wednesday, drawing an angry reaction from Beijing, which said its military had "driven away" the ship.

The main Opposition Progressive Party of Maldives opposed the granting of free passage to Mr. Gotabaya, who faces several court cases, including allegations of war crimes.

on innocent passage imposed by China and other claimants.

The U.S. Navy said the destroyer USS *Benfold* "asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the South China Sea near the Paracel Islands, consistent with international law".

The People's Liberation Army's Southern Theatre Command said the U.S. ship's actions seriously violated China's sovereignty and security by illegally entering China's territorial waters around the Paracels, which are also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan. "The PLA's Southern Theatre Command organised sea and air forces to follow, monitor, warn and drive away" the ship, it added, showing pictures of the *Benfold* taken from the deck of the frigate the *Xianning*.

Fukushima ex-bosses told to pay \$97 bn

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO

A Tokyo court on Wednesday ordered former executives from the operator of the devastated Fukushima nuclear plant to pay 13.32 trillion yen (\$97 billion) for failing to prevent the disaster, plaintiffs said.

Four ex-bosses from the Tokyo Electric Power Company were ordered to pay the damages in a suit brought by shareholders over the nuclear disaster triggered by a tsunami in 2011. Plaintiffs emerged from the court holding banners reading "responsibility recognised".

Lawyers for the plaintiffs hailed the ruling, and said they believed it to be the largest amount of compensation ever awarded in a civil lawsuit in Japan.

Turkey, Russia, Ukraine set to meet on grain exports

REUTERS
ISTANBUL

Russian, Ukrainian and Turkish military delegations are set to meet UN officials in Istanbul on Wednesday for talks on a possible deal to resume safe exports of Ukrainian grain from the major Black Sea port of Odessa as a global food crisis worsens.

Turkey has been working with the United Nations to broker a deal after Russia's February 24 invasion of Ukraine fuelled prices for grains, cooking oils, fuel and fertilizer.

"We are working hard indeed but there is still a way to go," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters on Tuesday. "Many people are talking about it. We prefer to try and do it."

Ukraine and Russia are major global wheat suppliers, and Russia is also a

large fertilizer exporter, while Ukraine is a significant producer of corn and sunflower oil. Diplomats say details of the plan under discussion include Ukrainian vessels guiding grain ships in and out through mined port waters; Russia agreeing to a truce while shipments move; and Turkey – supported by the United Nations – inspecting ships to allay Russian fears of weapons smuggling.

The Interfax news agency quoted Pyotr Ilyichev, head of the international organisations department at the Russian Foreign Ministry, as saying that Russia wants to control and inspect vessels to rule out "arms smuggling". He added that Russia is ready to facilitate the navigation of commercial vessels to export Ukrainian grain.

Joe Biden kicks off West Asia tour in Israel

He says U.S. will continue to advance Israel's integration into the region

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEL AVIV

U.S. President Joe Biden on Wednesday kicked off a West Asia tour in Israel where both sides vowed to deepen the Jewish state's integration in the region as they face their common foe Iran.

Mr. Biden – whose first regional visit since taking office will also take him to Saudi Arabia – pledged strong backing for Israel, which has forged ties with several Arab states in recent years and hopes to do so with Riyadh as well.

"We'll continue to advance Israel's integration into the region," Mr. Biden said after Air Force One touched down at Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv to a red-carpet welcome, while underscoring Washington's "bone

deep" connection to the Jewish state.

"I'm proud to say that our relationship with the state of Israel is deeper and stronger in my view than it's ever been. With this visit, we're strengthening our connections even further," the President said.

Israel's caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid said that "we will discuss building a new security and economy architecture" with the nations of West Asia, following U.S.-brokered accords in 2020 with the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco.

"And we will discuss the need to renew a strong global coalition that will stop the Iranian nuclear programme," he added, amid ongoing efforts by world powers to salvage Iran's



Warm welcome: Israeli President Isaac Herzog looks on as PM Yair Lapid fist bumps with U.S. President Joe Biden. ■ REUTERS

frayed 2015 nuclear deal.

Mr. Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia on Friday will be the major focus of the tour, after he slammed the oil-rich kingdom over the 2018 murder of dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

The trip is seen as part of efforts to stabilise oil markets rattled by the war in Ukraine, and remains staunchly opposed to a restoration of the 2015 deal that gave Tehran sanctions relief.

After Mr. Biden landed, Israel's military showed him its new Iron Beam defence system, an anti-drone laser it claims is crucial to countering Iran's fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles.

Israel insists it will do whatever is necessary to thwart Iran's nuclear ambitions, and remains staunchly opposed to a restoration of the 2015 deal that gave Tehran sanctions relief.

Iran's President Ebrahim

Raisi warned earlier on Wednesday that if Mr. Biden's goal on the trip was to bolster Israel's security, his "efforts will not create security for the Zionists in any way".

After the Israeli military showcase, the U.S. presidential motorcade headed to Jerusalem, where Mr. Biden visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, meeting with survivors of the Nazi genocide and inscribing a note that read: "We must never, ever, forget, because hate is never defeated."

Israel has raised 1,000 flags across Jerusalem to welcome the U.S. leader, who has not reversed former President Donald Trump's controversial decision to recognise the city as the capital of the Jewish state.

Mr. Biden, 79, will also meet Palestinian leaders angered by what they describe as Washington's failure to curb Israeli aggression.

I2U2 can become a regional feature like Quad: Sullivan

'India one of the most strategically consequential countries'

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

The U.S. believes that 'I2U2', a group comprising India, Israel, the U.S., and the UAE, can become "a feature" of the West Asian region, just like the Quad is for the Indo-Pacific.

This idea was articulated by U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on board Air Force One, en route to Israel with U.S. President Joe Biden.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to meet virtually with Mr. Biden, Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Thursday.

"And we think I2U2 can become a feature of the broader region, just as the Quad has become a central pillar of the Indo-Pacific strategy of the United States," Mr. Sullivan told the travelling press as per a transcript released by the White House.

His remarks were made in response to a question on what the objective was in bringing India "into so many issues" such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, the Quad and I2U2.

I2U2, which was launched

last autumn, has been called the "West Asian Quad" by some commentators.

Mr. Sullivan said there would be a "significant" announcement around food security and agricultural technology from the I2U2 meeting, as this was an area where there was a current crisis that the four countries could come together to address.

Russian oil
With regard to price caps for Russian oil, the U.S. is engaging not just with the EU and the U.K. but also "key consuming countries" and others, including India and China, Mr. Sullivan said.

The U.S. was being "transparent, direct, and straightforward with the major consuming countries" about reducing Russian revenues while minimising economic disruptions globally, in the countries concerned, and the U.S., Mr. Sullivan said.

He indicated that the discussions were unlikely to conclude in days. The G7 group of the world's advanced economies had agreed to explore the issue of oil caps when it met last month in Germany.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
GREATER CHENNAI POLICE
TENDER NOTICE
C.No.NP/13789/2021
Date: 13-07-2022
e-tenders are invited for the following work in
Two Cover System

Request for Proposal for Selection of Contractor for "Construction of New Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) (Green Building) at Office of the Commissioner of Police, Veppery, Chennai-07" under Safe City Project (Nirbhaya fund).	EMD Amount: INR.54,47,707/-
Tender publishing date and time : 14-07-2022 at 3.30 p.m.	
Tender last date and time of submission : 04-08-2022 upto 4 p.m.	
Bid document will be available in website https://tntenders.gov.in	
Tender opening date and time : 04-08-2022 at 4.15 pm.	
Dy. Commissioner of Police, HQRS, Greater Chennai Police (Tender Inviting Authority)	

NATIONAL HYDROLOGY PROJECT
STATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (SPMU), ODISHA
HP Administrative Building, Unit-VIII, Delta Square, Bhubaneswar-751012
email: odishagwhp3@gmail.com

**SHOPPING FOR GOODS
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

BID Reference No.: NHP/OD-GW/STUDY/CENSUS/2022-23/33 Dated: 11th July 2022

The Joint Director (Geology), GWD & Procurement Officer (GW), NHP – Odisha, invites tenders through e-Procurement platform online from eligible bidders for the work:- "Census Survey of Ground water abstraction structure in 6 (six) nos. Of semi critical blocks of Odisha using android mobile application of NHP-Odisha for the year 2022-23". Bidding documents are available online on website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://tendersodisha.gov.in) which is free of cost. Bidders are advised to participate in the bidding process as per instructions given in bidding document.

Bid Reference Procurement Plan ref. no.	PP Pkg No:NHP-2021-2022-OD-798675
Bid Documents	Can be downloaded from Website https://tntendersodisha.gov.in
Price of Bid Document	Free of cost
Start Date of availability of Bid document Online	14.07.2022 at 11.30 hrs
Last Date of availability of Bid document Online	03.08.2022 at 14:00 hrs.
Start Date of e-Bid submission	27.07.2022 at 11:00 hrs.
Last date of e-Bid submission	03/08/2022 at 14:00 hrs.
Time & Date of Online opening of bids in the portal	03.08.2022 at 15:00 hrs.

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

A-391 Sd/-Joint Director (Geology), GWD & Procurement Officer (GW), SPMU, NHP - Odisha

OIPR-32407/11/0014/2233

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT
Project Circle, Chennai - 600 016.
TENDER NOTICE
Letter No. Tender Notice 03 / 2022-2023 / SDO / Dated : 12.07.2022
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu Item Rate tender through online only will be received upto 23.08.2022, 15.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer (H) Projects Circle, Chennai for bridge work in respect of Vellore (H) Projects Works Programme 2016-17.

Details of Name of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 18.07.2022 onwards in the Government website <https://tntenders.gov.in>. If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc to the tender, it will be published on the above Government website only.

DIPR/3353/Tender/2022
Superintending Engineer (H),
Projects Circle, Chennai - 16.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
TYPE OF CONTRACT: RATE TENDER SYSTEM- LUMPSUM CONTRACT
(PRE QUALIFICATION TWO COVER SYSTEM)
TENDER NOTICE NO : 10 SE/BCMC (MW)/MDU/2022-2023/Dt:12.07.2022
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, sealed tenders are invited by the Superintending Engineer, PWD Buildings (C&M) circle, (Medical works), Madurai from the Registered Contractors of PWD for the following works noted below by the undersigned up to 3.00 PM on Dated 17.08.2022. The tenders so received as stated above Prequalification application only will be opened at 3.30 PM on the same day. The tender schedule will be available for sale from 14.07.2022

MARKET WATCH

	13-07-2022	% CHANGE
Sensex	53,514	-0.69
US Dollar	79.81	-0.27
Gold	50,487	-0.18
Brent oil	98.55	-1.22

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	726.75	-5.15
Apollo Hosp	3868.30	-61.40
Asian Paints	2941.20	48.00
Axis Bank	679.90	3.70
Bajaj Auto	3860.75	12.90
Bajaj Finance	11770.20	-94.55
Bharti Airtel	5878.90	5.35
BPCL	310.50	1.85
Britannia Ind	3726.00	0.50
Cipla	953.35	17.60
Coal India	193.45	-0.45
Divis Lab	3778.80	91.35
Dr Reddys Lab	4501.60	17.90
Eicher Motors	2967.40	13.35
Grasim Ind	1399.15	19.10
HCL Tech	917.75	-10.05
HDFC	2165.05	-61.85
HDFC Bank	1357.85	33.95
HDFC Life	539.50	-0.25
Hero MotoCorp	2843.35	-32.15
Hindalco	348.90	2.00
Hind Unilever	2497.75	48.20
ICICI Bank	753.20	-6.70
IndusInd Bank	819.05	-28.00
Infosys	1444.45	5.85
ITC	294.05	1.35
JSW Steel	588.60	14.15
Kotak Bank	1742.05	23.10
L&T	1647.25	-6.50
M&M	1140.35	-6.30
Maruti Suzuki	8440.20	20.50
Nestle India Ltd.	18249.65	124.50
NTPC	148.60	1.50
ONGC	124.45	0.35
PowerGrid Corp	214.45	0.95
Reliance Ind	2377.55	-42.90
SBI Life	1139.85	0.10
State Bank	486.50	1.55
Shree Cement	19736.05	-226.05
Sun Pharma	860.15	8.55
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	762.55	6.10
Tata Motors	427.10	-3.45
Tata Steel	904.85	2.75
TCS	3038.75	-45.95
Tech Mahindra	990.05	-7.30
Titan	2111.40	-18.60
UltraTech Cement	5798.95	20.10
UPL	679.50	-0.70
Wipro	406.70	-2.45

EXCHANGE RATES		
Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 13		
CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	79.43	79.75
Euro	79.86	80.18
British Pound	94.66	95.04
Japanese Yen (100)	57.94	58.17
Chinese Yuan	11.81	11.86
Swiss Franc	81.31	81.64
Singapore Dollar	56.55	56.79
Canadian Dollar	61.12	61.36
Malaysian Ringgit	17.90	17.98
Australian Dollar	53.96	54.18

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Tata Motors unveils new variant of SUV Nexon

MUMBAI
Tata Motors has announced the unveiling of XM+(S), a new variant of its sport utility vehicle (SUV) Nexon. Placed between the XM(S) and the XZ+, this newest addition is priced from ₹9.75 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).

Signature Global files papers for ₹1,000-cr. IPO

MUMBAI
Affordable housing developer Signature Global (India) Ltd. has filed a Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with SEBI for a ₹1,000-crore public issue. The offer comprises fresh issue of up to ₹750 crore and offer for sale of (OFS) of up to ₹250 crore.

Signature Global is focussed on affordable and mid segment housing in the Delhi-NCR region. As on March 31, it had sold 23,453 residential and commercial units in the region.

Mindtree net rises 37% to ₹471.6 cr. in April-June

NEW DELHI
IT company Mindtree on Wednesday posted a 37.3% rise in net profit to ₹471.6 crore for the three months ended on June 30. Revenue for the current fiscal's first quarter came in at ₹3,121.1 crore, logging a growth of over 36% year-on-year.

"We are excited to report a strong start to FY23 with robust revenue growth, solid margin and a record order book, Debasish Chatterjee, CEO and MD , said in a statement. PTI

SBI, ICICI raise foreign currency deposit rates

NEW DELHI
SBI, ICICI Bank and IDFC First Bank have raised interest rates on foreign currency non-resident deposits.

SBI has raised the rate on one-year tenure FCNR USD deposits to 2.85% from 1.8% earlier. ICICI Bank has revised upwards FCNR by 0.15% on deposits of higher than and equal to \$3,50,000 for 12-24 months tenure to 3.5%. IDFC First Bank offers an interest rate of 3.5% in FCNR deposits ranging from 1 year to less than 5 years. PTI

CMV

India's imports from China rose to a record in first half of 2022

Exports to China slid 35%, making up only \$9.57 bn of \$67.08 bn in total trade

ANANTH KRISHNAN

BEIJING

India's imports from China reached a record \$57.51 billion in the first half of the year, according to China's trade figures released on Wednesday. Imports of Chinese goods are on track for yet another record year, and set to surpass last year's \$97.5 billion figure.

The trade imbalance is also on track for another record, with India's exports to China sliding 35% and accounting for only \$9.57 billion of the total \$67.08 billion in two-way trade.

Imports rose 34.5% in the first half from a year earlier.

Two-way trade in 2021 crossed \$100 billion for the



Record year: Two-way trade in 2021 had crossed \$100 billion for the first time, reaching \$125.6 billion. ■ REUTERS

first time, reaching \$125.6 billion, with India's imports to China sliding 35% and accounting for only \$9.57 billion of the total \$67.08 billion in two-way trade.

Trade declined in 2020 on account of the pandemic but is now significantly up from

pre-pandemic levels. India's biggest imports last year were electrical and mechanical machinery, chemicals used in industrial production, active pharmaceutical ingredients and auto components. India had also import-

June PV sales rise 19% as chip supply improves

SIAM urges govt. to lower CNG prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI



Passenger vehicle wholesales in India rose 19% year-on-year in June to 2,75,788 units on the back of improvement in semiconductor supplies, according to industry association SIAM.

Similarly, total two-wheeler wholesales increased to 13,08,764 units last month from 10,60,565 units, while three-wheeler sales grew to 26,701 units against 9,404 in June 2021.

Sales across segments rose to 16,11,300 units in June from 13,01,602 units in the same month last year.

"Recently, the government has taken significant measures to ease the inflationary pressure and help

the common man by reducing central excise duty on petrol and diesel and changing the duty structure to moderate prices of steel and plastic," SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said.

He added that the sector sought similar support on CNG prices, which had seen an 'exponential' rise in the last seven months.

Infosys to buy BASE life for €110 million

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Infosys on Wednesday said it will acquire Denmark-based BASE life science for about €110 million (₹875 crore) in an all-cash deal.

The acquisition will deepen Infosys's expertise in life sciences domain as well as strengthen its footprint across Europe.

This acquisition augments Infosys' deep life sciences expertise, and expands our footprint further in the Nordics region and across Europe, and scales our digital transformation capabilities.

"We are excited to welcome BASE life science and its team into the Infosys family," Infosys president Ravi Kumar S. said.

Revenue to rise 12-14% in FY23: ICRA



water and sanitation have seen a significant expansion in recent years.

The sharp increase in commodity prices, along with increased competition, will have an adverse impact on industry profitability, with anticipated decline in operating profitability likely at 100-200 basis points in the current fiscal, it said.

Supported by a strong order book, the industry's revenue grew 12-14% during FY2023, according to ICRA.

Construction units to see healthy revenue growth'

Revenue to rise 12-14% in FY23: ICRA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

India's construction industry is expected to witness a healthy revenue growth in the medium term, ICRA said in a report. It said the construction Gross Value Added (GVA) is expected to grow at 9-11% in FY2023, owing to the government's emphasis on infrastructure development, a robust order book, and a low base effect.

According to LinkedIn data, published in the World Economic Forum's 2022 Global Gender Gap report, the share of women founders grew 2.68 times between 2016 and 2021.

As per the report, the growth rate of women entrepreneurship was at its highest in 2020 and 2021.

Staffing sector adds 2.27 lakh contract staff'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The staffing industry added 2.27 lakh contractual employees in 2021-22, driven by demand in industries such as fast-moving consumer goods, e-commerce and manufacturing, according to a report.

In 2020-21, the contractual workforce or flexi-staff demand grew at a modest 3.6%, according to the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF) annual report.

It said FMCG, e-commerce, manufacturing, healthcare, retail, logistics, banking and energy segments drove the demand for general flexi staffing or contractual workers.

Digital adoption across sectors drove the demand for new employees, Indian Staffing Federation said in the report.

Hyundai Motor unveils upgraded Tucson SUV

Chip supplies improving, says Garg

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

South Korean auto major Hyundai Motor unveiled in India the fourth-generation Tucson SUV, the prices of which will be announced next month.

The SUV, which had sold more than seven million units globally, would be available in both petrol and diesel versions featuring two-litre engines. Select variants would also come with the option of an all-wheel drive.

MD and CEO Unsoo Kim said as the Indian automotive market continues to evolve, the company is witnessing high customer traction for its premium SUVs.

The new model would be sold through the company's 246 signature outlets spread across 125 cities.

Hyundai Motor India Di-

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It said FMCG, e-commerce, manufacturing, healthcare, retail, logistics, banking and energy segments drove the demand for general flexi staffing or contractual workers.

Digital adoption across sectors drove the demand for new employees, Indian Staffing Federation said in the report.

To a query, he added that semiconductor supplies were getting better ahead of the upcoming high-selling festive season. However, challenges such as high inflation and global geopolitical situation remain.

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male Age : Around 35-40 years, Height : 5'7", Face : Round, Complexion : Sh

Kohli still doubtful as India eyes series win

Men in Blue will be keen to keep the momentum going while Buttler & Co. will look to turn it around

INDIA IN ENG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A confident Indian team looks set to overpower England with yet another dominant show in the second ODI at the Lord's on Thursday despite Virat Kohli's dodgy groin and dismal form.

The former India captain, who is enduring a prolonged bad patch, missed the first game due to groin strain and it is still not clear if he is fit for the second game.

Kohli's poor show, however, hasn't affected the team much as it is playing extremely well in the white-ball games. After clinching the T20 series 2-1, it cantered to a convincing 10-wicket victory in the opening ODI.

Opportunity for others
While the negative aspect of Kohli's absence is not getting a solid show from country's premier batter in pressure games, on the flip side, his poor form is an opportunity for others to show that they can win games on their own or at least own the big stage like Suryakumar Yadav did in final T20I at Nottingham.

"I wasn't playing in the last T20 game and he [Kohli] didn't play today [Tuesday]. I don't have an update on his injury," was all that first match's hero Jasprit Bumrah said when asked about former skipper's availability for the second game.

Groin strain can easily aggravate into a proper tear if the player rushes himself into the thick of things.

A quick singe or a swift turnaround during a double can unknowingly worsen a player's condition if he takes field without being hundred percent fit.



Double trouble! A long bad patch and dodgy groin have combined to frustrate Kohli. ■ REUTERS

At times, some injuries are blessing in disguise for the team management in order to avoid a tough call and Kohli's groin strain could just be that.

Rohit Sharma and his men will hope that the pitch at the Lord's plays like Oval, where conditions helped them get lateral movement both in the air and off the track.

With Bumrah in the form of his life and the ever dependable Mohammed Shami ready to torment the opposition with his bagful of tricks, skipper Rohit will focus more on Shreyas Iyer and his problems facing the short ball.

The bowlers around the globe have sorted Shreyas out with short-pitched stuff and his predictable trigger movement towards the leg-



stump in an attempt to make room is no longer paying dividends.

A player of Deepak Hooda's calibre is being made to sit out in formats because of reputation of some players and hence Shreyas will feel the heat.

The conditions in Oval would have been a great

learning experience for the flamboyant Mumbaikar but the skipper himself, with a wide array of horizontal bat shots, ensured that Shreyas could just cool his heels in the confines of the Indian dressing room during the series-opener.

For Rohit, the 58-ball-76 is

some kind of reassurance

that his process has been spot-on and that he can play the high-risk pull-shot with successful percentage.

A confident captain can make bold yet prudent decisions and runs under his belt will allow Rohit to be more adventurous with his decision at the Lord's.

Formidable line-up

A batting line-up comprising Jos Buttler, Joe Root, Ben Stokes, Jonny Bairstow, Jason Roy and Liam Livingstone can scare the daylights out of any bowling attack but at the Oval, the tables turned 180 degree on a seamer-friendly conducive surface.

The Lord's has traditionally been a batting belter but when it comes to rookie bowlers like Prasidh Krishna, it will also be about adjusting to the famous slope of the Lord's ground.

There are bowlers, who prefer bowling up the slope and some the other way round. Managing the slope is key to success at Lord's but the current Indian team is on a roll and might just complete another series win with minimum fuss.

The teams (from):

England: Jos Buttler (Capt. & wk), Moeen Ali, Jonny Bairstow, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Sam Curran, Liam Livingstone, Craig Overton, Matthew Parkinson, Joe Root, Jason Roy, Phil Salt, Ben Stokes, Reece Topley and David Willey.

India: Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Shikhar Dhawan, Ishan Kishan, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Prasidh Krishna, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj and Arshdeep Singh.

Match starts at 5.30 p.m. (IST).

Bumrah regains top spot

Suryakumar surges in T20I rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

Fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah has regained the top spot in the ICC men's ODI Player Rankings after fashioning India's 10-wicket win over England with a career-best haul of six for 19 in the first game at The Oval.

In the ICC men's T20I Player Rankings, India batter Suryakumar Yadav has gained 44 slots to reach a career-best fifth position after his valiant 117 in the final match of a three-T20I series against England.

other Indian and the ninth-most in history.

Bumrah is only the second Indian fast bowler after Kapil Dev to be No. 1 in the ODI rankings. Rohit Sharma has bridged the gap with third-placed Virat Kohli to just one rating point.

In the ICC men's T20I Player Rankings, India batter Suryakumar Yadav has gained 44 slots to reach a career-best fifth position after his valiant 117 in the final match of a three-T20I series against England.



Bumrah. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Ashwin wants lbw to come into play if batters go for switch-hit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

Ace India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin feels that the batters should be adjudged leg before wicket even if the ball is pitched outside leg-stump if they miss out on a switch-hit.

Blind spot

As per current rules, a player can't be ruled leg before even if it goes onto hit the stumps in case it is pitched outside leg-stump, which is considered to be a 'blind spot' for the batters.

"My question is not whether he can play reverse sweep or not, whether it's negative bowling strategy or not (bowling outside leg-stump), my point is about lbw. It's unfair that it's not ruled lbw," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

"Let batters play the switch-hit, but give us lbw when they miss, says Ashwin ■ FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR



giving that out in all formats of the game, some parity could be retained between bowling and batting," maintained Ashwin.

The off-spinner referred to the recent fifth Test between India and England. "In this game, it was about the approach that Joe Root and [Jonny] Bairstow took. Root

played about 10 shots, where he turned around completely and attempted the reverse sweep.

"He played that 10 times but didn't connect on nine of them. On the 10th time, it got the under-edge and rolled away. Bairstow, meanwhile, kept padding the balls away," said Ashwin.

Mehuli-Shahu duo wins mixed rifle gold

+ Men's trap trio takes silver; bronze for mixed pistol team

SHOOTING WC

SPORTS BUREAU

It was another golden day for Indian shooting as Mehuli Ghosh and Shahu Tushar Mane combined to beat Eszter Meszaros and Istvan Peni of Hungary 17-13 for the mixed air rifle gold in the shooting World Cup in Changwon, Korea, on Wednesday.

The Indian pair, which had topped qualification with 634.3, asserted itself in the gold match against a top class opposition.

The men's trap team of Prithviraj Tondaiman, Vivaan Kapoor and Bhowneesh Mendiratta was beaten to the gold 6-2 by Slovakia. The Indian trio had topped qualification with 213, one point more than the Slovaks, but could not conjure up a similar effort in the gold contest.

There was more to follow, as the mixed pistol team of



Crack shots: Mehuli and Shahu with their reward. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Palak Ghulia and Shiva Narwal blanked Kazakhstan 16-0 to bag one of the two bronze medals.

Two more medals assured
India also assured itself of at least two more medals as the men's and women's air rifle teams qualified for the gold

match.

Arjun Babuta, Shahu Tushar Mane and Paarth Makhija topped the men's air rifle team in the second stage with 629.7, to set up a gold match against Korea.

The women's team of Ramita Jindal, Elavenil Valarivan, Mehuli Ghosh, which topped with 631.5 in the se-

cond stage, will also face the Koreans for the gold.

With two gold, a silver and a bronze, India jumped to the joint second spot on the medals table with China. Serbia led with three gold medals.

The results: Air rifle mixed team: 1. India (Mehuli Ghosh, Shahu Tushar Mane) 17 (634.3); 2. Hungary (Eszter Meszaros, Istvan Peni) 13 (630.3); 3. Czech Republic (Lucie Brazdova, Jiri Privratsky) 16 (628.1).

Air pistol mixed team: 1. Serbia (Zorana Arunovic, Damir Mlakic) 17 (584); 2. Greece (Anna Korakaki, Dionysios Korakakis) 13 (579); 3. India (Palak Ghulia, Shiva Narwal) 16 (574).

Trap (team): Men: 1. Slovakia (Michal Slamka, Hubert Andrezej Olejnik, Adrian Drobny) 6 (212); 2. India (Prithviraj Tondaiman, Vivaan Kapoor, Bhowneesh Mendiratta) 2 (213); 3. China (Yu Haicheng, Qi Ying, Chen Liang) 6 (207).

Women: 1. Korea (Kang Geeun, Cho Seonah, Lee Bo Na) 6 (200); 2. China (Wang Xiaojing, Zhang Ting, Wu Cuicui) 4 (205).

match.

Arjun Babuta, Shahu Tushar Mane and Paarth Makhija topped the men's air rifle team in the second stage with 629.7, to set up a gold match against Korea.

The women's team of Ramita Jindal, Elavenil Valarivan, Mehuli Ghosh, which topped with 631.5 in the se-

Indian women finish ninth

Navneet scores two in the 3-1 comeback win over Japan

HOCKEY WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

TERASSA (SPAIN)

Navneet Kaur scored a brace as the Indian women's hockey team beat Japan 3-1 to finish ninth in the FIH World Cup here on Wednesday.

Navneet scored two field goals in the 30th and 45th minutes, while Deep Grace Ekka sounded the board, from a set piece in the 38th minute, in the classification match here. Japan's goal had come from the stick of Yu Asai in the 20th minute.

After a close tussle in the first five minutes, India got a big chance to take the lead but Vandana Katariya's effort from close range was saved by Japanese goalkeeper Eika Nakamura.

India made a good start in the second quarter and got a couple of chances within a span of two minutes but goals eluded the Savita-led side.

Japan took the lead in the

20th minute when Yu Asai converted a penalty corner.

India drew parity at the stroke of the half time when Navneet found the board from a field effort.

India started on the front foot after the change of ends and earned its sixth penalty corner of the match but that was wasted.

India got another penalty corner and Ekka scored to



On target: Navneet slotted in two field goals. ■ FIH

hand her side the lead eight minutes into the second half.

In the third quarter, Sharminia Devi's goal was disallowed as the ball hit her body before Navneet made it a two-goal advantage towards the end of the quarter.

The results:

India 3 (Navneet Kaur 30, 45, Deep Grace Ekka 30) vs Japan 1 (Yu Asai 20).

Bangladesh wins second ODI, leads 2-0

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)

Bangladesh defeated the West Indies by nine wickets in the second ODI of a three-match series at the Guyana National Stadium here on Wednesday.

Bangladesh's array of spin bowling talent skittled out the West Indies for just 108, with off-spinner Mehidy Hasan (4/29) and left-arm slow bowler Nasum Ahmed (3/19) leading the rout.

In reply, opener Tamim Iqbal (50 n.o.) and No. 3 Liton Das (32 n.o.) took Bangladesh home in 20.4 overs.

The scores:

West Indies 108 in 35 overs (Keemo Paul 25 n.o., Mehidy Hasan 4/29, Nasum Ahmed 3/19) lost to Bangladesh 112/1 in 20.4 overs (Tamim Iqbal 50 n.o., Liton Das 32 n.o.).

Toss: Bangladesh. **MoM:** Nasum Ahmed. **Bangladesh leads three-match series 2-0.**

Consistency is the target, result will follow, says Neeraj

Olympic javelin champ wants to keep optimum energy and mindset till the very end

ATHLETICS

UTHRA GANESAN

NEW DELHI

With the World Athletics Championships just two days away, Neeraj Chopra is gradually getting into the competition zone. The Olympic champion has had a good beginning to his 2022 season and is inching closer to the elusive 90m mark.

"Like always, I am only thinking of going in with a free mind and aim to do my best, not bother with the distance. The competition I think will be very good and tough. All are doing consistently good and medalists have mostly been over 89m this season. I fell just six cm short (of 90m) at Stockholm. Being consistent is the target," Neeraj said on the eve of his departure from his training base in Chula Vista, USA.

His growth since then as an athlete has been phenomenal. "There is not much change in training from Europe to the USA. The percentage of workout keeps changing, but we have not added anything new. It is always said that you should not make any drastic changes

close to competition. Because any new routine will put extra load on a new set of muscles and risk injury. So sticking to what we always do," he said of his training.

And as a person: "Leader nahi ban na hai, sabke sath me chalne me maza hai (I don't want to be a leader, it's more fun if everyone moves ahead together). I feel blessed if

LIVE TELECAST

England vs India: 2nd ODI, Sony Six (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 5.30 p.m.
Golf: The Open, Eurosport (SD & HD) & Discovery Plus, 10 p.m. onwards.

IN BRIEF



Olympic medallist Amos suspended for doping

MONACO Nijel Amos, a 2012 Olympics silver medalist in the men's 800m, has been suspended ahead of the World championships after testing positive for a rare banned substance. Amos was set to race in the 800m heats of the Worlds on July 20. AP

Woods, McIlroy honoured by R&A Golf Club

ST. ANDREWS Former British Open champions Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and Paul Lawrie have become Honorary Members of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, the club said on Wednesday. REUTERS

Umesh takes maiden wicket in County cricket

LONDON Umesh Yadav claimed his maiden wicket in the County Championship, for Middlesex, against Worcestershire on the second day. Umesh bowled Taylor Cornall for 11 to return figures of 14-1-45-1. Middlesex dismissed Worcestershire for 191 and then reached 180 for six to take a lead of 177. Middlesex made 188 in its first innings. PTI

Pranavi in the lead

BENGALURU Pranavi Urs shot a two-under 67 first round to grab the lead in the ninth leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour, at the Bangalore Golf Club here on Wednesday. The 19-year-old Pranavi, a three-time winner this season, leads Seher Atwal by one shot. **The scores (top four):** 67: Pranavi Urs; 68: Seher Atwal; 71: Gauri Karhade; 72: Sneha Singh.

Gouramangi Singh joins FC Goa as assistant coach

PANAJI Former India international Gouramangi Singh has joined ISL franchise FC Goa as its assistant coach. "It's a big step in the right direction as far as my coaching career is concerned," he said. PTI

Barcelona set to sign Raphinha

BARCELONA Barcelona announced on Wednesday it has reached a deal to sign Leeds playmaker Raphinha for nearly £60 million plus add-ons, according to local media, and will also keep Ousmane Dembele at the club. AP



Djokovic to open tennis courts in Bosnia

VISOKO Novak Djokovic arrived in Bosnia on Wednesday to inaugurate tennis courts at a 'pyramid park' that he regularly visits to recharge his batteries. He is fond of a hill town of Visoko and visited the site for the first time in 2020 and called it a "paradise on earth". AP

Bopanna-Middelkoop duo exits early

Ankita Raina makes the pre-quarterfinals

INDIANS ABROAD

Rohan Bopanna, seeded No.1 with Matwe Middelkoop, was beaten 7-6(3), 6-3 by Fabrice Martin and Franco Skugor in the pre-quarterfinals of the € 597,900 ATP tennis tournament in Bastad, Sweden.

In the \$25,000 ITF women's tournament in Kazakhstan, Ankita Raina beat qualifier Ilay Yoruk 6-3, 6-0 to reach the pre-quarterfinals. **The results:**

€597,900 ATP, Bastad, Sweden: Pre-quarterfinals: Fabrice Martin (Fra) & Franco Skugor (Cro) bt Matwe Middelkoop (Ned) & Rohan Bopanna 7-6(3), 6-3.

McIlroy starts favourite for the Claret Jug

150th edition of the world's oldest golf tournament tees off today at St. Andrews

BRITISH OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ST. ANDREWS

St. Andrews hosts the 150th British Open from Thursday with Rory McIlroy starting as the favourite for the Claret Jug while a determined Tiger Woods hopes to make an impact at a venue where he has triumphed twice before.

Record crowds for the week of 290,000 are expected on Scotland's east coast for this landmark edition of the world's oldest golf tournament, which comes to the Old Course for the 30th time.

With fine weather expected to continue for much of the week, it is shaping up to be a fitting way to mark a historic British Open, even if the sport continues to be rocked by the fallout caused by the breakaway LIV Series.

LIV rebels allowed

Players who left to join the Saudi-backed tour were allowed to take part by Open organisers, just as they were at last month's U.S. Open despite both the PGA Tour and DP World Tour moving to ban the rebels.

That means four-time Ma-



Prep time: Former champion McIlroy practises on the eve of the 150th Open. • REUTERS

jor winner Brooks Koepka, Sergio Garcia, Bryson DeChambeau, Dustin Johnson and former Open champion Phil Mickelson will all tee off on Thursday.

McIlroy, though, is aiming to end an eight-year wait to

add to his four Major titles and the Northern Irishman is the favourite in the eyes of bookmakers.

"I think it's the Holy Grail of our sport."

"So not a lot of people are going to get that opportunity

to achieve that, but that's what winning an Open at St. Andrews is," McIlroy said on Tuesday.

The World No. 2 won the 2014 Open at Hoylake but missed the chance to defend his title in St. Andrews a year

I think it's the Holy Grail of our sport

— MCILROY

later after injuring an ankle playing football.

"I can't go in here thinking that this might be my time. I just have to go out and play a really good tournament," he added.

McIlroy will tee off in Thursday's first round along-side Collin Morikawa, winner of last year's Open at Royal St George's, and Xander Schauffele, who triumphed in last weekend's Scottish Open.

Lots of contenders

There is no shortage of contenders, not least among the large contingent of American stars including World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler and 2017 Open winner Jordan Spieth.

There has been some talk of the Old Course becoming too easy, 149 years on from the first Open here, but it still captivates players.

They will continue to be challenged in particular by the par-4 17th – the Road Hole is one of the toughest in golf, where players must send their tee shots over the Old Course Hotel.



Thrilled: It was a ride to remember for Vingegaard on Wednesday. • AFP

Double delight for Vingegaard

Wins the 11th stage to take the yellow jersey from Pogacar

TOUR DE FRANCE

REUTERS

SERRE CHEVALIER

Jonas Vingegaard won the 11th stage of the Tour de France, a 151.7-km gruelling Alpine trek from Albertville, to snatch the overall leader's yellow jersey from Tadej Pogacar on Wednesday.

Last year's runner-up Vingegaard attacked 4.9km from the finish to drop the defending champion, who had been attacked relentlessly by the Dane's Jumbo-Vismara team all day long.

Vingegaard never looked

back on his way to an iconic victory at top of the Col du Granon, a punishing 11.3-km climb at an average gradient of 9.2%.

Colombian Nairo Quintana took second place, 59s behind, with France's Romain Bardet finishing third, 1m and 10s off the pace.

Pogacar, who started the day 39s ahead of Vingegaard in the overall rankings, crossed the line in seventh place, 2:51 behind the winner, his face a mask of exhaustion.

Overall, Vingegaard leads Bardet by 2:16 and third-placed Pogacar by 2:22.

New Zealand seals series against Ireland

Holds its nerve as Allen and Latham scored half-centuries

NZ IN IRELAND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MALAHIDE

Finn Allen and Tom Latham scored half-centuries as New Zealand held its nerve to seal a series-clinching three-wicket win against Ireland on Tuesday. The victory gave the Kiwis an unassailable 2-0 lead.

Allen's composed 60 ensured there would not be an upset as the Black Caps won the series with one game remaining.

Michael Bracewell, Mitch-

ell Santner and Matt Henry each helped themselves to two wickets as New Zealand easily restricted Ireland.

It was only George Dockrell's ODI-best 74 from 61 balls and Adair's 27 from 15 balls that enabled Ireland to pass 200.

New Zealand's poor start to the chase was soon forgotten once Latham (55) joined

Allen in earning a half-century. A middle-order wobble put the result back in doubt until Bracewell's unbeaten 42 carried the tourists over the line again with 71 balls to spare.

The scores: Ireland 216 in 48 overs (Dockrell 74) lost to New Zealand 219/7 in 38.1 overs (Allen 60, Latham 55, Bracewell 42 n.o.).

SA pulls out of Australia ODI series

REUTERS

MELBOURNE

South Africa has withdrawn from the One-Day International series with Australia in January after host board Cricket Australia (CA) was unable to accommodate a request to reschedule.

CA said Cricket South Africa had asked to shift the series, which was scheduled for Hobart (Jan. 12), Sydney (Jan. 14) and Perth (Jan. 17).

"Unfortunately, due to

the congested international schedule including the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, there are no alternative dates available," CA said in a statement on Wednesday.

Forego points CA said South Africa had agreed that Australia would be awarded the competition points, pending approval from the International Cricket Council.

South Africa's forfeit

could affect its chances of qualifying directly for next year's one-day World Cup in India.

The Proteas are 11th in the World Cup Super League standings, with only the top seven teams apart from host India to qualify directly for the 10-team tournament.

Australia had pulled out of its Test tour of South Africa last year citing health risks amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bengal is in the top five in every format, says Arun Lal

Mentor-turned-coach looks back at his tenure with pride

Y.B. SARANGI

KOLKATA

After stepping down as the Bengal head coach, Arun Lal looked back at his stint with pride and rated the state team as one of the top five sides in the country.

Lal, who served as a mentor in the 2018-19 season before taking over as the head coach the following season, guided Bengal to the Ranji Trophy final (against Saurashtra) after 13 years in 2019-2020 and to the semifinals (where it lost to eventual champion Madhya Pradesh) in 2021-22. (Ranji Trophy was not held in 2020-21 due to the pandemic.)

Tough decision

Lal said he would miss the Bengal players. "It was a painful and tough decision. I thought about it a lot. Nine months in a year you are totally occupied 24x7... I am just tired. It's a tough job, domestic coaching is very



tough because the teams are so evenly matched all across the board," Lal told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

Someone who donned the India colours and was part of the 1989-90 Ranji Trophy winning Bengal side, Lal showered praise on the current players.

"I am so happy. The guys have shown great commitment, work ethics and the desire and have performed very well.

"If we look at the domestic circuit, out of last year's

(2019-20) four semifinalists only one team qualified for the semifinals and that was Bengal. Even the previous season's winner (Saurashtra) did not qualify. The two teams that played this year's final (Madhya Pradesh and Mumbai) did not qualify the year before.

"Even though we don't have a trophy, Bengal is in the top five in every format. We have played some phenomenal white ball cricket. Most of the job is done. When they win a trophy, I will celebrate with them."

Hoping for the best

Lal hoped that Bengal would perform even better in the coming days.

"We can carry on from here. We have some good youngsters coming up in the white ball format. Unfortunately, we are not getting too many in the red ball format. But in the red ball format the whole country is struggling, including the Indian team."

Mithun, Ashmita post upset wins

Sindhu, Prannoy, Saina advance; Kashyap, Sameer knocked out

SINGAPORE OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SINGAPORE

Indian shuttlers Mithun Manjunath and Ashmita Chaliha notched up stunning wins over illustrious rivals to hog the limelight on the second day of the Singapore Open Super 500 tournament here on Wednesday.

While Mithun recorded a 21-17, 21-15, 21-18 win over compatriot K. Srikanth, Ashmita shocked Thailand's World No. 12 Busanan Ongbamrungphan 21-16, 21-11 in women's singles.

For P.V. Sindhu and H.S. Prannoy, it was also a good day in office as the two progressed to the second round with facile wins.

Sindhu looked in complete control as she prevailed 21-15, 21-11 over Belgium's World No. 36 Lianne Tan, while Prannoy, who had reached the semifinals at Malaysia Masters last week, saw off Thailand's Sitthikom Thammasin 21-13, 21-16.

Saina Nehwal avenged her



Big scalp: Ashmita got the better of World No. 12 Busanan Ongbamrungphan. • FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

Mithun Manjunath bt K. Srikanth 21-17, 21-15, 21-18; Li Shi Feng (Chn) bt Sameer Verma 21-10, 21-13; Jonatan Christie (Ind) bt P. Kashyap 21-14, 21-15.

Women: P.V. Sindhu bt Lianne Tan (Bel) 21-15, 21-11; Saina Nehwal bt Malvika Bansod 21-18, 21-14; Ashmita Chaliha bt Busanan Ongbamrungphan (Tha) 21-16, 21-11.

Doubles: Pooja Dandu & Arathi Sara Sunil bt Hu Ling Fang & Lin Xiao Min (Tpe), walkover.

Mixed doubles: Poorvisha S. Ram & H.V. Nithin bt Mishra & Svetlana Zilberman (Isr) 21-15, 21-14.

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