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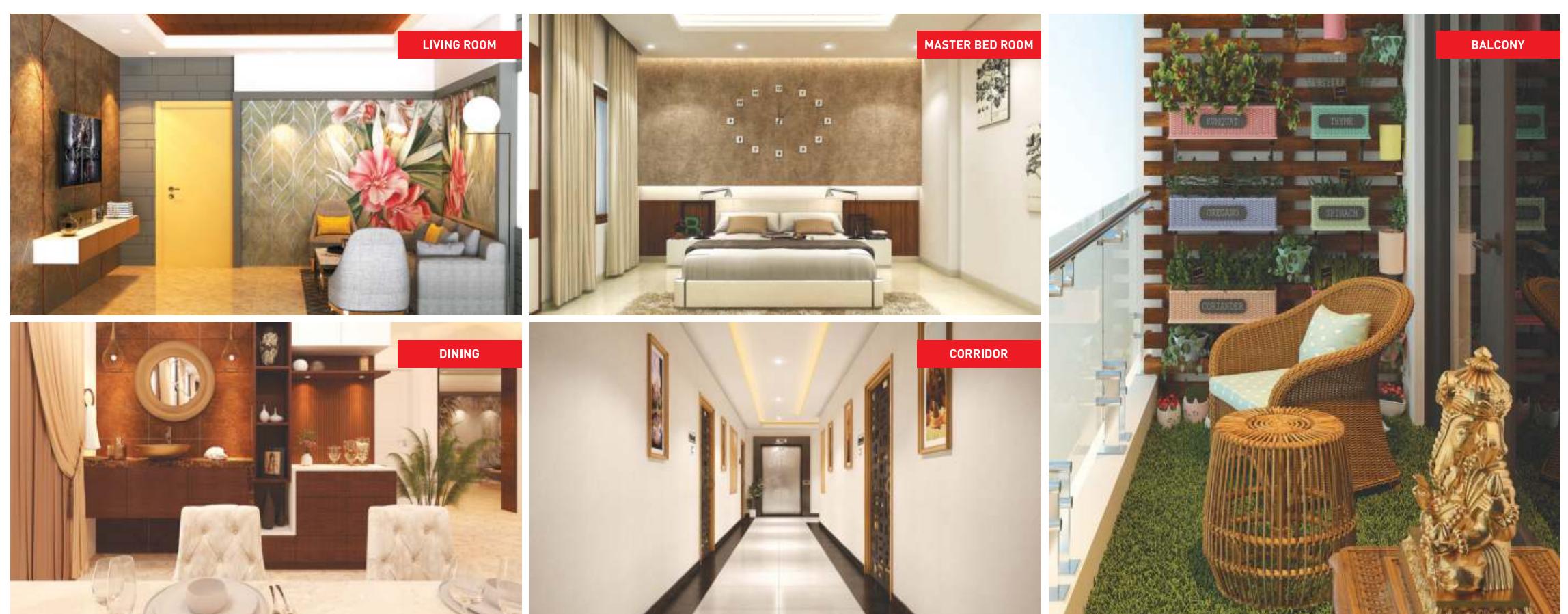
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Karishma Nair

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295 Total Selections



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### NEARBY



#### T.N. logs 1,252 COVID-19 cases, six fatalities

CHENNAI  
A total of 1,252 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tamil Nadu on Thursday. While 285 persons tested positive in Chennai, Coimbatore saw 214 cases. Six persons died in the State.

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 8

#### Will monitor elected representatives: Stalin

TIRUNELVELI  
Urging people to vote for the DMK and its allies in the urban local body polls, DMK president and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin assured them that he would monitor the work of the elected representatives.

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 8

#### Public libraries to buy international magazines

CHENNAI  
At a time Tamil magazines are struggling to stay afloat, the government has lent them a hand by subscribing to them for public libraries. It will also buy internationally renowned English magazines.

TAMIL NADU ▶ PAGE 5

FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 4 PAGES

## SC lifts stay on Haryana quota for private jobs

Court requests HC to decide on plea again within 4 weeks

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday set aside a Punjab and Haryana High Court order staying a controversial State law which provides 75% reservation for local youth in private sector jobs paying less than ₹30,000 a month.

Industry associations have said the law "affects the idea of India as an economic unit".

A Bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and P.S. Narasimha set aside the February 3 stay order of the High Court on the ground that it did not give "sufficient reasons". The Bench observed that every law passed by the legislature was presumed to be legal. An order of stay on its implementation by a court of law should be reasoned. The High Court had not given sufficient reasons for stopping the Haryana law in its tracks on February 3.

"There should be manifest illegality... This is not the way a statute ought to be dealt with... We are not on

There should be manifest illegality. This is not the way a statute ought to be dealt with... We are not on the merits, but the way in which the High Court dealt with this

JUSTICE L. NAGESWARA RAO  
Supreme Court

There is a presumption of legality in favour of a law and it is ordinarily not stayed unless the legislation is *prima facie* unconstitutional or illegal

TUSHAR MEHTA  
Solicitor-General

Reservation in private sector has no basis in the Constitution... There was no empirical study done, no data whatsoever to justify this law

DUSHYANT DAVE  
Counsel for Faridabad Industries Association

the merits, but the way in which the High Court dealt with this," Justice Rao remarked orally.

#### Not for adjournments

The top court requested the High Court to decide the writ petition filed by industrialists before it expeditiously and not later than a period of four weeks from Thursday. The parties were directed not to seek adjournments.

ments in the High Court.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court ordered the State government not to take any "coercive steps" against employers for violating the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act. Industry bodies said in court that the Act impacted 48,000 registered companies by ushering in "inspector raj".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Governor seeks talks with Mamata

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

In a bid to ease tensions between them, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday invited Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for an interaction.

"Hon'ble CM Mamata Banerjee has been urged to make it convenient for an interaction at Raj Bhavan anytime during the week ahead as lack of response to issues flagged has potential to lead to constitutional stalemate which we both are ordained by our oath to avert," the Governor said on Twitter.

Mr. Dhankhar also wrote to the Chief Minister, impressing upon her the need for a dialogue.

The Governor's initiative comes weeks after the Chief Minister blocked him on Twitter saying he was issuing tweets daily targeting her and officials of the State government to work as per his "instructions".

She has also said she had written several letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to withdraw the Governor from the State.

## Singapore PM's speech uncalled for, says India

Half of Indian MPs face charges: Lee

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

Taking a stern view of a speech by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in the island nation's Parliament, criticising the decline of "Nehru's India" to a state where almost half the Indian MPs face "criminal charges", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) summoned Singapore's High Commissioner to India Simon Wong on Thursday. Officials told Mr. Wong that Mr. Lee's comments were "uncalled for" and "unacceptable", according to government sources.

Speaking in Singapore's Parliament on February 15 on a report by the Committee of Privileges, which was looking into charges of lying by members of the country's largest Opposition party, the Workers' Party, Mr. Lee gave examples of the decline in political probity among elected politicians in India and Israel today, and



Lee Hsien Loong

even referred to the "party-gate" in the U.K. over official parties during the COVID-19 lockdown.

"While Nehru's India has become one where, according to media reports, almost half the MPs in the Lok Sabha have criminal charges pending against them, including charges of rape and murder. Though it is also said that many of these allegations are politically motivated," he said it was important to "prevent Singapore from going down the same road".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Start flights to Ukraine, govt. tells airlines

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Indian airlines have been asked to operate flights to Ukraine to cater to the increase in demand due to escalating tensions between Kiev and Moscow.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has also removed restrictions on the number of flights and seats placed under the air bubble agreement with Ukraine, it said.

The announcement came a day after the Embassy of India in Kiev said it was flooded with complaints about non-availability of flights to India from many trying to find a safe passage home.

The embassy has advised Indian nationals, particularly students, to consider leaving Ukraine and avoid non-essential travel to and within Ukraine.

While no Indian carrier currently flies to Ukraine, the Ukrainian International Airlines has direct flights to India. Air Arabia, Fly Dubai and Qatar Airways have one-stop flights to India.

RELATED REPORTS ▶ PAGE 12  
MOSCOW SEEKS SECURITY ASSURANCES ▶ PAGE 15

## I-T probe into NSE ex-MD may reveal unknown yogi's identity

Income tax officials search premises in Mumbai, Chennai

THE HINDU BUREAU  
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI



Chitra Ramkrishna

pointing Mr. Subramanian as Chief Strategic Adviser and then re-designating him as the Group Operating Officer and Adviser to the then MD of the exchange.

SEBI, as first reported by *BusinessLine*, found that Ms. Ramkrishna shared internal information of the NSE with the yogi, with whom she had been in touch for about 20 years. It was alleged that she consulted the person via email for the appraisal of employee performance and this way, Mr. Subramanian got substantial increments in quick succession. In January 2013, Mr. Subramanian was offered ₹1.68 crore for the post of Chief Strategic Adviser in the NSE, when his last-drawn salary was ₹15 lakh in a government corporation.

On February 11, SEBI issued an order levying penalties on the NSE, Ms. Ramkrishna and others for violating rules while ap-

POINTING TO THE PAST

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

A CODED PUZZLE ▶ PAGE 14

Why blame Nehru, asks Manmohan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Modi government cannot escape the responsibility for "mismanaging" the country by blaming its first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, said former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday.

In his first video message to Punjab voters ahead of the February 20 election, he criticised the Centre on a host of issues, including the farmers' stir, price rise, unemployment and foreign policy. Dr. Singh said one should be mindful of the dignity of the Prime Minister's Office.

Hitting back at Dr. Singh, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said he was more remembered for having brought India to the "fragile five" group and rampant inflation.

(With PTI inputs)

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

POINTING TO THE PAST

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

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\* Please also refer draft red herring prospectus dated February 13, 2022

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CDSL: <https://www.cdslindia.com/DP/dplist.aspx>

LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA is proposing, subject to applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, to undertake an initial public offer of its Equity Shares and has filed the draft red herring prospectus dated February 13, 2022 ("DRHP") read with the corrigendum dated February 15, 2022. The DRHP is available on the websites of SEBI at [www.sebi.gov.in](http://www.sebi.gov.in), websites of the Stock Exchanges i.e., BSE at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and NSE at [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com), respectively and is also available on the websites of the BRLMs, i.e. Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Limited at [https://investmentbank.kotak.com](http://investmentbank.kotak.com), Axis Capital Limited at [www.axiscapital.co.in](http://www.axiscapital.co.in), BofA Securities India Limited at [www.mli-mi.com](http://www.mli-mi.com), Citigroup Global Markets India Private Limited at [www.onlinelcibank.co.in/rhm/citiglobalgreen1.htm](http://www.onlinelcibank.co.in/rhm/citiglobalgreen1.htm), Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Private Limited at [www.goldmansachs.com](http://www.goldmansachs.com), ICICI Securities Limited at [www.icicisecurities.com](http://www.icicisecurities.com), JM Financial Limited at [www.nomuraholdings.com/group/asia/india/index.html](http://www.nomuraholdings.com/group/asia/india/index.html) and SBI Capital Markets Limited at [www.sbicaps.com](http://www.sbicaps.com). Potential investors should note that investment in equity shares involves a high degree of risk and for details relating to such risk, please see the section titled "Risk Factors" of the RHP when filed. Potential investors is invited to "Risk Factors" beginning on page 23 of the DRHP.

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LIC LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

ICRA/S2021-22/4816

## T.N. tells SC it doesn't want neutrino observatory

'It will damage Western Ghats'



The site for the Neutrino Observatory at Pottipuram.

sep S. Aristotle, shows the State, starting with the district officer and right up to the Chief Minister, is against the project.

The Chief Minister had met the Prime Minister in June 2021 with a request not to implement the project.

The affidavit filed by the State Environment Department, through advocate Jo-

## Campaign ends for urban local bodies polls

Voting will start at 7 a.m. on Saturday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The campaign for the single-phase ordinary elections for the urban local bodies across Tamil Nadu, scheduled for February 19, came to an end at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

Polling will start at 7 a.m. on Saturday.

Over 1.33 lakh officials will be involved in the election duty on Saturday. Over 80,000 police personnel would be deputed for ensuring security at the polling booths and the safety of Electronic Voting Machines. Twenty-one Municipal Corporations, 138 Municipalities

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# CBI concludes probe into Fathima's death

The Central agency reportedly found no evidence of harassment

R. SIVARAMAN  
R. SUJATHA  
CHENNAI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a final report closing the investigation into the death of 19-year-old Fathima Latheef at IIT-Madras hostel, concluding that it was a case of death by suicide due to homesickness and recording that the student had psychological issues, said sources. In its conclusions, the report matches with the one already submitted by the special investigation team headed by the then Additional Commissioner of Police, Central Crime Branch, C. Eswaramoorthy in 2019.

Fathima, 19, from Kollam, had joined IIT-M in July 2019 and was a first year student of M.A. Humanities. She was found dead in her Room No. 349 at Sarayu Hostel on the campus on November 9.



December 2019.

Now, the CBI, after completing the investigation, has filed a final report containing 2,000 pages in a special court for the CBI cases recently. It has concluded that Fathima ended her life because she had been homesick and had some psychological issues. It ruled out the probability of any mental harassment.

Mohammed Shah P. A., advocate for Mr. Latheef, said, "The CBI has now filed a final report stating that was a suicide – we have serious objections with this. Now, the court has issued notices to

the parents of the victim. On Wednesday, we got the chargesheet. The matter was posted to February 28. We are going to file objections pointing out certain serious lapses on investigation."

Mr. Shah said, "The enthusiasm of the warden to explain that homesickness is the reason for her death is suspect. Now, the CBI concluded that Fathima committed suicide due to homesickness. The CBI has no answer as to why she specifically mentioned the name of a professor immediately before her death and why she has not opted to write names of any other persons. Even when the CBI concludes that Fathima is having psychological issues the above question is necessarily to be answered."

**Role of teachers**  
He said the role of the teachers is highly important and no investigation with respect to their involvement was carried out by CBI. He said the

CBI conducted the investigation by taking statements of the persons in a pick and choose method to conclude that Fathima committed suicide due to homesickness.

One of the student bodies, Chinta Bar had staged a protest on the campus demanding an internal probe.

A student who participated in the protest and has since graduated said: "Initially the institute said it was cooperating. We sat on hunger strike and one of the demands was that there should be an internal investigation. The other demand was for student fraternity as a whole to tackle the issue of mental health of the students," the student said.

The institute had declined to conduct an internal inquiry citing the ongoing police investigation.

(Assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts is available on the State's health helpline 104 and Sneha's suicide prevention helpline 044-24640050).

## DMK may capture booths: AIADMK

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) has sought adequate police security at polling stations in Chennai during the civic polls on Saturday.

After submitting a representation to Commissioner of Police, the party organising secretary and former Minister D. Jayakumar said,

"As per our party cadre as well as some agencies, the ruling party cadre, with the help of rowdy elements, are planning to capture at least five booths in a ward on the day of polling."

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SUNDAY, FEB. 20	
RISE 06:30	SET 18:16
RISE 21:32	SET 09:00

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**Chennai Airport Tomorrow**  
32°C Weather will be dry. Day will be slightly warm and humid. Night will be pleasant and hazy.

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## EPFO webinar on Feb. 23

STAFF REPORTER  
CHENNAI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) will conduct pension adalat through webinar on February 23 at 2.30 p.m. at the regional office in Chennai for the beneficiaries of Employees' Pension Scheme 1995.

According to a press release, the pensioners, who have obtained pension payment order (PPO) from Regional Office, Chennai North, and Regional Office, Chennai South, and desire to get their grievances redressed can register through e-mail at pension.rochini@epfindia.gov.in quoting the subject "Pension Adalat" for EPS 1995 along with their name, PF Account Number/UAN/PPO Number. The link for the webinar will be shared to the email ID/mobile Number furnished by the pensioners.

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UK

Sun, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb

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# North Chennai longs for facilities

The issue of contaminated water supply remains unaddressed in Tondiarpet zone

SERENA JOSEPHINE M.  
CHENNAI

When demands for basic needs remain unfulfilled for years, where is the question of hoping for widespread development? This is one common line that runs on the minds of several residents of Tondiarpet zone of the Greater Chennai Corporation. The zone is home to some of the thickly populated areas in northern parts of the city.

Interactions with a cross-section of residents across the zone, which includes areas in Tondiarpet, Korukkupet, Kodungaiyur, Vyasarpadi, New and Old Washermenpet, showed how residents still long for basic needs such as potable water, proper roads and sanitation.

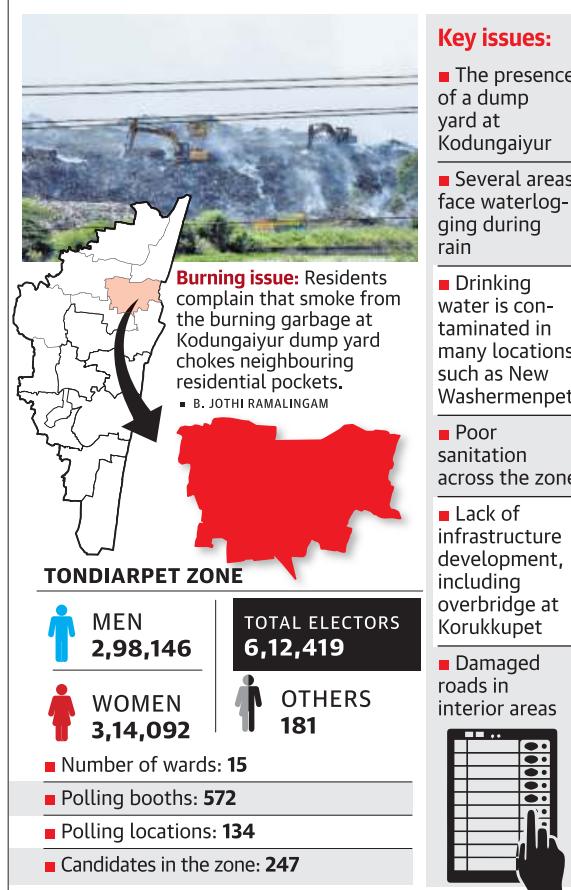
Except for the Metro Rail, there has been no major infrastructure development in this part over the years, said Mohammed Ayub, a resident of Pensioner's Lane, Old Washermenpet.

"When compared to the rest of Chennai, areas in north Chennai see no changes infrastructure-wise. We have to repeatedly raise complaints even for basic needs such as clearing the garbage. Waterlogging is one of the main issues in our area, and remains unaddressed. Areas such as Pensioner's Lane and Kathpada have been facing water-logging during rain, especially after the Metro Rail project was implemented and this remains unaddressed," Mr. Ayub said.

**Shifting of dumpyard**  
In Kodungaiyur, shifting the dump continues to be a long-pending demand of the resi-

## ZONE WATCH: TONDIARPET

A look at the various aspects that concern residents in the 15 zones of the city where urban local bodies polls are being held on February 19, after a gap of nearly a decade. The elected members of the Corporation Council have a key role in taking the issues of the public to the attention of the government and getting civic works sanctioned or completed. Residents are eagerly awaiting their elected Greater Chennai Corporation Council



dents. "Now, they have started to transport and dump garbage from areas such as Pallavaram, Tambaram, Ambattur and Villivakkam at Kodungaiyur. This is unacceptable as we have been fighting to shift the dump yard. The stench is unbearable. Politicians come here only during elections to seek votes," N.S. Ramachandra Rao, founder-president of Ever Vigilant Citizens Welfare Association.

He wondered how the dump, that now stood 40-foot tall, would be cleared and what would be done to the plastic waste that has ac-

cumulated over the decades.

Ganesan Perumal, a resident of Krishnamoorthy Nagar, said there were about five to six lakh residents in MKB Nagar, Rajarathinam Nagar, Ezhil Nagar, Nethaji Nagar, KKD Nagar, Manali and Union Carbide Colony who were affected by the presence of the dump yard.

### Bridge work delayed

A plan to construct a rail overbridge at Korukkupet – the foundation stone for which was laid in 2016 by former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa – made no headway, said R. Loganathan, State executive committee member of CPI (M). Candidates of all parties are aware that the majority of the areas lack basic amenities and suffer from poor sanitation.

In Ward 41, B. Vimala, CPI (M) candidate, said sanitation was the foremost issue followed by the need to replace old pipelines for drinking water supply, desilting of drains and laying of roads.

K. Sharmila Gandhi, DMK's candidate for Ward 34, said: "People want parks and anganwadi centres as well while waterlogging issues need to be addressed in some areas," she said.

With shifting of the dump yard at Kodungaiyur being one of the main issues, J. Dilli Babu, Congress candidate in Ward 37, said the inflow of garbage from other areas should reduce.

Malini Shanmugavinayagam, AIADMK's candidate in Ward 42, said the main issues raised by people were contaminated water, bad roads in interior areas and overflowing drains.

**Sanjay Vijayakumar**  
CHENNAI

# Apollo signs MoU with Marafon Group for hospital in Uzbekistan

The hospital at Fergana region will initially have 100 beds

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Apollo Hospitals entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Marafon Group for setting up a tertiary care hospital in Uzbekistan due to the lack of a tertiary care hospital and numerous patients travelled to India for treatment.

Dinesh Madhavan, president of Group Oncology and International, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd., said there was a huge gap in healthcare in Uzbekistan due to the lack of a tertiary care hospital and numerous patients travelled to India for treatment.

"We will be the clinical, technical and operational partner," Dr. Madhavan said. The hospital would focus on cardiac sciences, cancer, organ transplants, urology and gastrointestinal.

He told reporters that the hospital would have 100 beds initially. "As we progress, there is potential to expand to 200-plus beds," he said. With the hospital to be located in the Fergana region, he said the Apollo staff would train clinicians and nurses there.



Prathap C. Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals and Fakhriddin Ilyasov, Co-Founder, Marafon Group Uzbekistan, exchanging copies of an MoU in Chennai on Thursday. ■ S. RAGHUNATHAN

Preetha Reddy, executive Vice-Chairperson, Apollo Hospitals, said it would be part of training and skilling clinical staff, nurses and allied healthcare personnel, diagnostics and also work on e-Intensive Care Units.

Prathap C. Reddy, founder and chairman of Apollo Hospitals, said: "We are going through a pandemic...We are preparing ourselves for another debacle - non communicable diseases such as diabetes, heart attacks, strokes, infections, mental disorders and obesi-

ty. COVID-19 and NCDs have altered healthcare to some extent."

Fakhriddin Ilyasov, co-founder of Marafon Group, Uzbekistan, said the holding company had five hospitals and four diagnostic centres.

Nurillo Mamasadikov, co-founder, Marafon Group, spoke.

The hospital would provide healthcare to over 60 million persons of Uzbekistan and bordering regions of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, a press release said.

GCC removes posters, nets ₹1.68 lakh fine

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
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The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has collected a fine of ₹1.68 lakh from those responsible for defacement of walls and removed 2,086 posters across the city on Thursday.

According to a press release, 20 complaints of defacement of property were received recently. A total of 22,116 defacements had been removed after the model code of conduct came into force. Ninety-five FIRs were filed. Corporation Commissioner Gagandeep Singh Bedi has directed officials to take action against the guilty under the Tamil Nadu Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act, 1959.

## 97,000 police personnel for poll duty

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
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A total of 97,882 police personnel will be deployed on security duty for elections to 21 corporations, 138 municipalities and 489 town panchayats to be held across the State on Saturday.

According to a press release, 17,788 officers, 71,074 police personnel, 9,020 personnel of Tamil Nadu Special Police, 12,321 home guards, 2,70 ex-servicemen and retired police personnel, will be deployed for the poll duty.

# Safety inspection of Wimco Nagar Depot, Tiruvottiyur stations today

The two stations are likely to be opened by the end of this month

STAFF REPORTER  
CHENNAI

The Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety will inspect Wimco Nagar depot and Tiruvottiyur Theradi stations in the Phase I extension project of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. on Friday.

Sources said the inspection, which will start around 9.30 a.m., could last four to five hours.

"The work has been completed and hence we invited them for inspection. They will see what are the facilities available for passengers, if it is safe to use these two stations, how to handle in emergency situations and other issues.



The Tiruvottiyur Theradi Metro station is all set to be inaugurated.

■ S. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

The CMRS is likely to give clearance within a few days post inspection," a source said.

## BPCL launches fast-charging corridor for EVs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) on Thursday launched an electric vehicle fast-charging corridor on the Chennai-Tiruchi-Madurai highway. Ten of its fuel stations – five on each side – set 100 km apart, will have the facility to charge one electric car at a time.

Speaking at a press conference before formally launching the first station at Meenambakkam, BPCL Executive Director (in-charge) Retail P.S. Ravi said that around 100 such outlets would come up in the next ten months in the State. These would come up on Chennai-Bengaluru and Chennai-Salem corridors.

He said that the idea was to allay the fears of electric car owners, who did not travel long distance due to non-availability of charging stations and the lack of information as to where they would be able to charge next. "It will cost them around 50% of what a petrol car owner will spend to charge. In half an hour, they can charge to run 100 km," he said. The company, which was the first to start battery charging stations for three-wheelers, has spent between ₹15 lakh and ₹40 lakh for installing these stations.

"For now, we have charging docks for one vehicle at a time since the sector is taking baby steps everywhere," he said.

A drinking water treatment fa-

## KMC Hospital to have six-storey block by year-end

It will have 13 hybrid operation theatres

K. LAKSHMI  
CHENNAI

The Government Kilpauk Medical College Hospital will get a new block with six floors by this year end. The Public Works Department (PWD) has completed nearly 40% of the ₹149.54-crore project so far.

Spread over 2.49 lakh sq.ft., the tower block is coming up under the Tamil Nadu Health Systems Project and with the support of Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Officials of the PWD said work was in full swing. "We have built up to two floors and the third floor has been partially completed. It would have 13 hybrid operation theatres, intensive care units, facilities for emergency care and burns care," said an official.

The old block, built in the 1960s, was pulled down to begin construction of the tower block that would have 410 beds. Besides ICU beds, the building would have wards for cardiology, urology, nephrology and a poison unit. There would be laboratories and a central sterile supply department.

"We are providing other facilities for smooth functioning of the tower block and ensure a green environment. The premises will have a sewage treatment plant," the official said.

A drinking water treatment fa-



The new block under construction at the Kilpauk Medical College Hospital will have 410 beds. ■ K. PICHUMANI

cility that could provide 15,000 litres an hour would be set up for the benefit of patients and visitors. Moreover, solar panel system would be installed in the hospital to ensure uninterrupted flow of electricity during surgery or other procedures.

Solar-powered water heaters with a capacity of 3,000 litres an hour will be fitted in the new block. Six lifts and ramps will be provided. The tower block will be ready for occupation by December, said the officials.

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■ PWD OFFICIAL

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## Tribunal sets aside MGM Healthcare MD's bid to take over Appu Hotels

SANJAY VIJAYAKUMAR  
CHENNAI

Appu Hotels owns and operates Le Meridien in Chennai and Coimbatore.

Last year, The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Chennai, had

# An upscale zone with poor basic amenities

Though home to the rich and famous, Teynampet has sore spots

SUNITHA SEKAR  
CHENNAI

The Teynampet Zone of the Greater Chennai Corporation may be home to the poshest areas and powerful politicians. Yet, the residents and commuters suffer from many localities face several problems ranging from waterlogging to bad roads.

While parts of upscale neighbourhoods such as Poos Garden, R.A. Puram and Alwarpet witness waterlogging during monsoon, lower-income residential areas such as Visalakshi Thottam, Pushpa Nagar, parts of Royapettah, Thousand Lights and Choolaimedu continue to struggle with inadequate basic amenities.

Vedha Krishnan, 68-year-old resident of Subbarayan Salai in Mylapore, says she is tired of seeing politicians making empty promises for years. "The road condition is poor and even for small showers, we have waterlogging for days. The government has to remove the biometric system for providing ration. Today, I went to the shop and returned home as the system failed to recognise my thumb impression," she said. The nearby Visalakshi Thottam not only faces waterlogging but a perennial sewage issue as well which gets worse during the monsoon, says Gunamani R., a resident of the area.

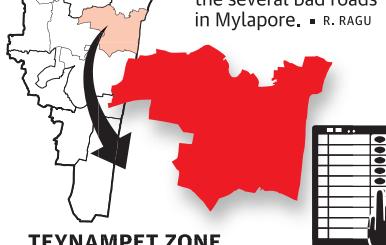
Motorists say their commute is ruined when they have to travel through parts of St. Mary's Road, Alamelumangapuram, Devanathan Street, bylanes of Thousand Lights and Choolaimedu as the roads are full of potholes. Traffic congestion too has been a perennial problem. Vivek N., a resident of Mandaveli, says, "There are barely any good

## ZONE WATCH: TEYNAMPET

A look at the various aspects that concern residents in the 15 zones of the city where urban local bodies polls are being held on February 19, after a gap of nearly a decade. The elected members of the Corporation Council have a key role in taking the issues of the public to the attention of the government and getting civic works sanctioned or completed. Residents are eagerly awaiting their elected Greater Chennai Corporation Council



**Crying for attention:** St. Mary's Road in Mandaveli is one of the several bad roads in Mylapore. ■ R. RAGU



### TEYNAMPET ZONE

MEN	TOTAL ELECTORS
3,11,603	6,39,266
WOMEN	
3,27,516	147
OTHERS	
Number of wards: 17	
Polling booths: 622	
Polling locations: 185	
Candidates in the zone: 242	

pavements in Mylapore junction that has so many senior citizens walking to the temples or shops. There are several encroachments which need to be cleared to help commuters have good access." Madhan Mohan S., DMK candidate in Ward 114, says Krishnappan, Oviyam and Arunachalam Streets have to be relaid and admits that drains are in bad

shape and the old pipes have to be changed.

Noor Jahan, a two-time councillor who is the AIADMK candidate in Ward 124, says, "Priority will be for roads as many residents have flagged this issue." T. Rajasekar, BJP candidate in Ward 110, says his focus will be to provide better access to clean drinking water and better housing.

### Key issues:

- Traffic congestion in Loyola College subway, Sterling Road, Nungambakkam High Road, Thousand Lights, Luz Church Road and Mylapore junction
- Waterlogging even during moderate showers in parts of Mylapore, Abhiramapuram, Visalakshi Thottam, Choolaimedu
- Sewage overflow during monsoon in parts of Choolaimedu, Visalakshi Thottam, Thousand Lights and Nandanam
- Poor condition of several roads and streets in Mylapore, Choolaimedu, Thousand Lights, Visalakshi Thottam and St. Mary's Road

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the Secretary of the Industries Department, a source said. However, the contents of the report have not been officially disclosed, the source added.

Professor Sultan Ahmed Ismail, a member of the State Planning Commission, submitted the 106-page report to

the Secretary of the Industries Department, a source said.

However, the contents of the report have not been officially disclosed, the source added.

# Public libraries in State to subscribe to international English magazines

The decision will benefit students preparing for competitive examinations

B. KOLAPPAN  
CHENNAI

At a time when Tamil magazines, especially literary magazines, are struggling to stay afloat, the Tamil Nadu government has lent them a hand by subscribing to them for public libraries. It has also decided to subscribe to internationally renowned English magazines for the benefit of students preparing for competitive examinations.

"The aim is to provide an opportunity for broad-based reading. Book racks should have space for specialised books along with books of arts and literature. There should be books on agriculture, environment and Tamil computing so that students can pursue a subject close to their heart. A person sitting in a district library should read maga-

zines read by a senior officer in Chennai," said T. Udayachandran, Secretary to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin.

Funds remained a problem for purchase of books. The Local Library Authorities struggled to run even their daily activities as the local bodies did not pay the library cess in full. The libraries were unable to subscribe to magazines vital for students preparing for civil services and other competitive examinations.

Mr. Udayachandran found a solution by getting funds from the Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation (TNTB&ESC). It released ₹2.35 crore for the purchase of English magazines and ₹1.01 crore for Tamil magazines for 2021-22.

Besides *The Economist*, the libraries will get *National Geographic*, *Reader's Digest*, *Economic and Political Weekly* and *Fron-*

*line*. "We are also going to review the list of magazines which are being supplied to libraries. We will include good magazines," Mr. Elamabavath said.

The government's order to buy literary magazines has taken the publishers by surprise. "I have received an order for supplying 450 copies for libraries without my applying for it. Other magazines also received similar orders. I congratulate the State government on its support to small magazines," Azhagiayasingar, editor of *Naveena Virutcham*, wrote on Facebook. Kanian Sundaram of *Kalachuvadu* said the order came as a ray of hope for publishers of small magazines that were sustained by private subscriptions. "It will encourage them to bring out the magazine," he said.

'CM has agreed to constitute a Press Council'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government has filed yet another status report in the Madras High Court stating that Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has consented to constitute a Press Council of Tamil Nadu (PCTN) as directed by a Division Bench of the court in August last. The latest report states that the process of obtaining approval from the competent authorities for the constitution of such a council would be completed within a short time, after the urban local bodies polls.

The submissions were made before the first Division Bench of Chief Minister Nath Bhandari and Justice D. Bharatha Chakravarthy before whom the case was being listed now for reporting compliance. After recording the State's submission, the judges adjourned it by four weeks.

## CINEMA • ARTS • EVENTS

### MUSIC DANCE DRAMA

Laya Madhura

Today 6 p.m. Laya Madhura Excellence Awards to Dr. T. V. Gopalakrishnan, Sri Harikanthan Venkatraman, Sri Aiyappaa Deekshithar by Sri Vagai Chandrasekhar, 7.15 p.m. Ramakrishnan Murthy, R.K. Shriramkumar, Delhi Sairam, Anirudh Athreya, Ragasudha Hall.

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7.00 p.m. Bharatanatyam By SHRADDHA S. MENON

(Disciple of Guru Lakshmi Priya Raja)

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Smt.Meenakshi Chitharanjan (Exponent & Founder Director)

Kalidiksha school of Bharatanatyam

Sri P.G. Subramanian Principal, B.V.Bhavans Rajaji Vidhyashram

This will attract the provisions of sec 194-IA of the Income Tax Act.

## SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

Authorised Official's Details - Name : V E Saravanan, Mobile No. : 9445009507, Landline No. : 044-28881037. City Case Officer for contact - Name : Name : Suresh S, Mobile No. : 9514251429, Landline No. : 044-28881054.

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of State Bank of India being the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 08.03.2022, for recovery of Rs.36,34,841/- (Rupees Thirty six lakhs thirty four thousand eight hundred and forty one only) as on 10.02.2022 with future interest and costs due to the State Bank of India, SARB, Chennai from the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned below.

**NAME & ADDRESS OF THE BORROWER AND GUARANTORS** (1) Mr. Latish Babu, S/o Mr. Srinivasulu, Plot No.28, Gopal Street, Pappa's Foundations, Vignesh Nagar, Nanmangalam, Chennai - 600 129. Also at : Flat No.52, Second Floor, Hari's Flat, Loganathan Street, Nanmangalam, Chennai - 600 117. Also at : SL Associates, No.61, Shop No.2, Madipakkam Main Road, Madipakkam, Chennai - 600 091.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES** Name of the Title Deed Holder : Mr. Latish Babu N Schedule A : All that piece and parcel of the vacant land bearing Plot No.B1, Old Patta No.3524, as per Patta Survey No.25/1/2A21, New Patta No.3893, as per New Patta Survey No.251/2. Situated at Loganathan Street, Nanmangalam Village, Solinganalur Taluk, Pallavaram SRO Chennai South Registration District, Kancheepuram Revenue District measuring to extent of 2272 belonging to Latish Babu N. Bounded on the - East by : Church & Shop, West by : Plot No B2, North by : 26 feet road (Loganathan Street), South by : Plot No's N.0 & C. Having Linear measurement - On the Western side 59.9 feet, on the Eastern side 59.9 feet, on the Southern side 36.6 feet, on the Northern side 40.0 feet.

**Schedule B** : An Undivided share of 200 Sq. ft land in the above Schedule "A" with 600 Square feet of built up area in Second floor Flat No.52 including common area. Encumbrances known to the Bank, if any : NIL.

**RESERVE PRICE : Rs.23,50,000/- | EMD : Rs.2,35,000/- | Bid increment amount : Rs.25,000/-**

Last date and time for submission of online bid application with EMD : 07.03.2022 upto 4.00 p.m.

**DATE AND TIME OF E-AUCTION : 08.03.2022**

between 1.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. with auto time extensions of 10 minutes each till sale is completed

Date and time of Inspection of Property : 25.02.2022 from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

**EMD Remittance** : EMD being the 10% of Reserve price to be transferred/deposited by bidders in his/her/their Wallet provided by M/s MSTC Ltd on its e-auction site <https://www.mstccommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> by means of NEFT.

The Auction will be conducted online through the Bank's approved Service Provider M/s MSTC Ltd at their web address : <https://www.mstccommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in State Bank of India, the Secured Creditor's website [www.sbi.co.in](http://www.sbi.co.in) & <https://www.mstccommerce.com>

This sale will attract the provisions of sec 194-IA of the Income Tax Act.

Date : 14.02.2022 Place : Chennai

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### PERSONAL

#### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Joseph K R/o No 406, F East, Bluebell Apartments, Padur, Chennai - 603103 have changed my minor son's name from Kevin Ebenezer Joseph Narayanan to Kevin Ebenezer Joseph for all purposes.

I, Rashmi R alias R Rashmiga alias Rashmiga Rameshkumar D/o Rameshkumar R/o Aditya S, R/o B4, Poos Centre Old Number 103, Poos Road Teynampet, Chennai - 600018, changed my name to Rashmiga Aditya for all purposes.

We, Mr Premal Pandya and Mrs Preethi Pandya, r/o 1015, Prestige Bella Vista, Iyappanthangal, Chennai 600056, hereby state that we have changed the name of our minor son from Rishabh Premal Pandya to Name - RISHABH Surname -PANDYA.

# 6 | Tamil Nadu [in focus]

## NUGGETS OF HISTORY

### Interesting coalition

The 1967 election that brought the DMK to power saw an interesting coalition. 'Periyar' E.V. Ramasamy, not a fan of the Congress, backed the party to support K. Kamaraj. C. Rajagopalachari, who faced strong opposition from the DMK earlier, forged an alliance with the party.

### First lady veterinarian

Sakkubai Paturi Ramachandran and N. Kalyani were the first women to enrol in Madras Veterinary College in 1948, though the college became functional in 1903. While Kalyani did not actively practise, Sakkubai became India's first lady veterinarian after her graduation in 1952. She died last month in Bengaluru.

### Maximum nominations

Philosopher and statesman Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, born in Tiruttani, is the Indian who was nominated the highest number of times for the Nobel prize. He did not win one. Between 1933 and 1966, 13 persons nominated him 27 times, according to data available in [www.nobelprize.org](http://www.nobelprize.org).

### 13th Century visit

Marco Polo, the Venetian explorer, visited the present-day Tamil Nadu in the late 13th Century. His accounts provide interesting observations, particularly about pearl diving and opulence in regions along the coast, and the first recorded details of worship at St. Thomas Cathedral Basilica.

  
Giving award for songs alone or for background score is honouring somebody's work which is half well done which, I am sure, is not the intention of our National Awards  
**ILAIYARAJA**

### Dearth of awards

Since its inception in 1953, only two Tamil films have won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film. *Marupakkam* was the first Tamil film to win the award in 1990. *Kanchivaram* won in 2007. Interestingly, both movies were directed by directors from the Malayalam film industry.

### EYE IN THE SKY

## Taking the lead in creating a drone ecosystem

The Tamil Nadu government has identified two unused airstrips to set up a drone hub for companies to establish their facilities

**T.K. ROHIT**

**W**ith the ever-increasing use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), popularly known as drones, for various applications, the Tamil Nadu government has identified two unused airstrips to set up a drone hub. It is reaching out to national and international companies to open their facilities there.

Last month, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Corporation (TNUAV), set up with an investment of ₹10 crore. This would enable the government to provide a large number of services, especially in agriculture (aerial spraying).

The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor (TANDICO), an arm of the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO), plans to convert an unused airstrip in Ulundurpet or Cholavaram into a drone hub. The State has approached the Ministry of Defence for approval, said B. Krishnamoorthy, Project Director, TANDICO. Stakeholders, including the Indian Air Force, are on board, he said.

To reduce entry barriers for drone companies, TANDICO is setting up a drone testing facility. This would either be under the Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme or other scheme to enable drone manufacturers to test their products, one



**Multiple use:** Drones are used for various applications, including land survey, which was done in Chennai in 2018. ■ K. PICHUMANI

more incentive to drone manufacturing.

#### Common facilities

The hub will have common facilities that will help the drone companies to collaborate with each other even while competing. "Since many of these are small companies, we will lease out space when they want to expand," said Wing Commander P. Madhusoodhanan, the do-

main expert consultant for TANDICO.

According to him, with the Centre unveiling the drone policy last year, the red zones – where drones cannot fly – in Tamil Nadu has shrunk drastically. Drone companies are considered aerospace and defence companies because the category provides a number of incentives. TANDICO has signed MoUs with companies such

as ARC Ventures, Vinata Aeromobility and Vinveli Group for making drones and anti-drones. Another company, Big Bang Boom Solutions, is finalising a joint venture with TANDICO.

Gokul Anandayavaraj, CEO of Vinveli, said the opportunities for drone usage are endless and once the drone hub ecosystem is up and running in the defence corridor, it would provide

immense opportunities to drone companies. The company, which counts the NSG and the Ministry of Home Affairs as its clients, has proposed to start trials of its drones for the Army.

R. Shivaraman, founder-director, Big Bang Boom Solutions that is focussed on aerospace and defence sectors, said drones could revolutionise the consumer ecosystem and product deliveries could

happen at a fraction of the time it takes for a human, while reducing pollution and fuel consumption. "Also, the government needs to frame policies, provide infrastructure to keep a tab on the drones and put in place policies for opening up the sector," he said.

Agnishwar Jayaprakash, CEO, Garuda Aerospace, which signed an agreement with TIDCO, said "Drone-based services in government departments will lead to better efficiency and faster results. These could range from project monitoring, mapping, LIDAR-based analysis, thermal-based inspection and power lines monitoring, among others."

Garuda recently signed a joint R&D collaboration with IIT Madras to take up space and additionally operate their research facility from the IIT-M Research Park and to undertake collaborative research on drones for use in oil and gas, agriculture and gas detection technologies.

Fabheads, another startup at IIT-M, is working with several drone companies to develop India's first drone-grade carbon fiber propeller blade, an element that is 100% imported today, its CEO Dhinesh Kanagaraj said. Use of drones would reduce risks to human life and health, especially in counter-insurgency and high-altitude area operations by the Army, while reducing cost.

Explaining the TNUAV Corporation, Senthil Kumar,

Director, Dr. Kalam Advanced UAV Research Centre, MIT Campus, Anna University, said the drones would be used for mapping, disaster management, land survey, mining, monitoring of work and pesticide spraying, among others.

"With a drone, around 20 acres of agricultural land can be covered in a day for spraying fertilisers or pesticides. Efficiency can be managed, farmers' lives and health can be sustained because if a person sprays pesticides, it would invariably lead to some health issues for him,"

**Last month, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Corporation set up with an investment of ₹10 crore. This would enable the government to provide a large number of services**

he said. Also, specific areas can be identified for spraying, leading to better crops which will be more organic.

"With Anna University's expertise and support, Tamil Nadu can fulfil India's market for drones," he said.

There could be a drone boom just like the Information Technology boom, he predicted. "This will also lead to several jobs – image processing jobs, IT jobs and jobs for mechanical engineers." "Using drones, the government can map out each and every area and compute property tax," he added.

### SUSTAINED SUPPORT

## Crafting brand Co-optex and Poompuhar

They help weavers and artisans showcase their products to a larger audience

**R. SUJATHA**

**S**ustained government support has over the years helped handloom weavers and traditional artisans in Tamil Nadu survive downturns and competition from powerlooms and modern manufacturers. Creating brands such as Co-optex, a weaver's cooperative, and Poompuhar has, to a large extent, helped weavers and artisans showcase their textiles and craft to a larger audience. The sector, though, requires more aid to incentivise future generations of traditional craftsmen.

To ensure a regular income to the weavers, the State began procuring and providing free school uniforms and free dhoti and saris for festivals from 1983. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic the government managed to procure the products and safeguarded the livelihood of the weavers. It is the second largest economic activity in Tamil Nadu, the first being agriculture.

Proactive steps to obtain the Geographic Indication (GI) tag for famed region-specific products such as the Toda embroidery, Thanjavur doll (*thalaiati bommai*) and Madurai sungudi saris have also helped artisans and made these products Tamil Nadu's "cultural icons".

The State is home to 1,134 handloom weavers' cooperative societies with 2.44 lakh weavers. In 2011, a decision to reope



**Policy push:** In 2011, designers were drafted to reproduce old motifs. This helped to woo customers. ■ S. SIVA SARAVANAN

within and outside the State. The organisation focuses on seven popular crafts of the State, including bronze idols and brass lamps; Papier-mâché dolls; stone carvings; and Thanjavur paintings. There is a large group of artisans who create bamboo mattresses, clay dolls and metal toys. The clay and terracotta doll manufacturers are spread across Tamil Nadu.

However, a section of artisans says their display space has dwindled in the past decade and calls for efforts to revive the art of making metal toys, once created in abundance in and around Tirunelveli.

As for Co-optex, a weaver says elections must be held to cooperative societies periodically as otherwise, they are controlled by administrative officers, who "may not represent our interests and welfare".

D. Ganesh, of the Bharatiya Janata Mazdoor Maha Sangh in Kancheepuram, said weavers engaged by the cooperatives do not get full remuneration because a part of it goes as commission to the president of the cooperative society.

He is also of the view that politically affiliated persons, "who have no idea about weaving", get elected to cooperative societies. There is also a need to create awareness among weavers of the government schemes, including those of the Union government, he felt.

registering profits, although it has now faced the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While during 2018-19 its retail sales netted ₹275.58 crore and online sales ₹1.05 crore, after the pandemic its retail business in 2020-21 stood at ₹206.21 crore against its target of ₹250 crore. The online sales rose to ₹1.86 crore while the export turnover was ₹5.72 lakh for the same period.

During last year's Pongal festival, the organisation distributed 23.32 lakh saris and 9.02 lakh dhoties. During Deepavali 2020, Co-optex supplied 22.88 lakh saris and 8.75 lakh dhoties to old age pension beneficiaries.

The Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation, synonymous with burgeoning unsold stock of silks, is now flush with novel designs and trendy outfits that even some young college students and professionals want to show off. An official said that through regular rise in the wages of the weavers the organisation was ensuring that the unique weaves of each region had been revived.

In 2019, Co-optex began

### FLYING HIGH

## How civil aviation took off in Madras

The first aeroplane was showcased on the Island Grounds

**K.R.A. NARASIAH**

**L**ong before anyone thought of aeroplanes and flying in India, in Madras, d'Angeli, the hotelier, inspired by Bleriot, had got Simpson's, the city's leading coach builders, to build him an aeroplane and tested this made-in-Madras machine in Pallavaram and then arranged a demonstration – charging entrance fees – on the Island Grounds in March 1910, just seven years after the Wright brothers flew the first plane.

He even took a passenger from the crowd. Subramania Bharati celebrated the event in his writing in the *India* journal, saying "Make in India". Actually he was the first one to use this term! (In 1904, Wilbur Wright flew in a plane for five minutes, thus conquering the sky.)

During December 1910, parties from Belgium and England came to India with some aeroplanes that they were manufacturing with an idea to showcase flying and exploit any business opportunities. Then the aircraft ready to fly cost £550, just under ₹7,500 at the existing rate, and was affordable to big landlords and businessmen of India. The first group that landed in India was from Coventry's Humber Motor Company. Bombay (Mumbai)



**Early bird:** Aavudaiyappa Chettiar owned a plane and its remains were in his gardens before they were acquired by a hotelier. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

did not respond well and the flier. The Governor and Lady Lawley watched the flight. Tyck was then presented with two medals by the Governor, gifted by the Zamindar of Sivgiri and B.O. Reynolds, who managed the arrangements. Thus Madras came on the map of aviation in India in February 1911. The machine of Tyck was a Bleriot fitted with an engine of seven cylinders, rotating around a fixed crankshaft, and the propeller was attached to the crankcase, which rotated.

In 1914, Madley, the water works engineer who designed the Rapid Filtering Station, had an aeroplane that he brought in a ship in parts and got assembled on the Island Grounds and flew in it to inspect the works at the Red Hills. G. Vlasto, a pilot, took an initiative on November 19,

1929 at the Madras Guards Institute with interested citizens. This resulted in a club incorporated on March 4, 1930, by six businessmen of Madras and an officer of the armed force.

Captain V. Sundaram was the first to get a commercial pilot's licence from the Madras Flying Club in 1937 and his wife, Usha, served as the co-pilot in many flights. Rangachari of Madras was the first medical practitioner to own a plane and known as the country's "first flying doctor".

Nattukottai Chettiar were interested in flying and Aavudaiyappa Chettiar owned a plane and the skeletal remains were in his gardens for long before it was acquired by a hotelier for restoration. Started by Alagappa Chettiar, Deccan Airways, the first private airline in the south, started its flight from Madras to Delhi through Hyderabad on July 1, 1946, with a 21-seater Dakota.

The fare structure of this airline was Madras to Hyderabad ₹65, and Hyderabad to Bangalore ₹70. Garuda was the plane and it took off for Delhi through Visakhapatnam and Nagpur. The flight was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister, O.P. Ramaswami Reddy, on June 7, 1948.

(The writer is a history enthusiast.)

# 7 | Tamil Nadu [in focus]



Instead of celebrating my birthday, it would be my privilege if September 5 is observed as Teachers' Day

DR. SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

EXPANDING FOOTPRINT

## A perfect host to companies from across the globe

With several advantages, Tamil Nadu has attracted more than 1,400 firms from many countries and has become a hub for global automakers

SANGEETHA KANDAEL

Tamil Nadu, misconceived to be a conservative land, has played a perfect host to companies from across the globe. The MNC footprint here has expanded in the past quarter century.

Today, the State is home to over 1,400 companies from many countries, including South Korea, China, Japan, the U.K., the U.S., Singapore, Australia and Denmark. Further, it has attracted investors from Germany, France and Taiwan with over 200 companies operating in the State.

Over the years, the State has also become home and hub for global automakers. Hyundai from South Korea, Nissan and Yamaha from Japan, Daimler from Germany and Renault, and Peugeot from France have made huge investments in manufacturing.

### Good infrastructure

"Tamil Nadu has many advantages over other countries and States in attracting foreign direct investment: relatively good infrastructure, including ports, plentiful qualified human resources, and well-established clusters in the automobile and IT sectors," said Young-seup Kwon, Consul-General of the Republic of Korea in Chennai.

Details provided by Guidance, the nodal agency for bringing investments into Ta-



In top gear: Hyundai Motor came with Korean suppliers, thus creating a vibrant supply chain. ■ B. VELANKANNI RAJ

mil Nadu, show the State has also emerged as a leading destination for electronics, with Taiwan, Japan and Korea, in particular, at the forefront of investments. Companies such as Delta, Pegatron, Foxconn, Flex, Toshiba, Hitachi, Panasonic and Samsung have manufacturing facilities here.

The State has also been able to attract investments in renewable energy from Danish companies such as Vestas and Cubic and the U.S.-based

companies like TPI and First Solar.

Most of these companies at a later stage brought in suppliers and other component manufacturers from their countries into Tamil Nadu. For instance, Hyundai Motor came with many globally competitive Korean suppliers, including Hyundai Mobis, Mando Automotive, and Hyundai Globis and has created a vibrant and competitive automobile supply chain and ecosystem. More

than 150 Korean companies are operating in Tamil Nadu and over 4,000 Koreans are residing, forming the biggest expatriate community in Chennai.

### Country-specific desks

Mr. Young-seup Kwon pointed out that the Korean desk of the Guidance has always been active in resolving Korean companies' difficulties,

and has been very successful in receiving more foreign and domestic investment.

A few years ago, to get more multinational firms to set up shop in the State, Guidance opened country-specific desks at its office in Chennai. These desks are the first point of contact with the countries that generate a significant quantum of outward FDI.

The team at Guidance comprises 40-plus multi-linguistic personnel skilled in investment promotion with technically sound knowledge of the operating ecosystem.

policies and regulatory updates. They are operating round the clock to ensure maximum utilisation across time zones.

### Seamless facilitation

"There has been a high level of interest among Taiwanese companies in investment opportunities in Tamil Nadu and several Taiwanese companies are keen to engage with Guidance for seamless facilitation," said Ben Wang, Director-General, Taipei Economic and Cultural Center, Chennai. It is learnt that there are over 15 Taiwan firms in the State.

The State is also home to over 200 Japanese companies and around 589 business establishments. The Japanese business establishments include the liaison office/branch office of Japanese companies in India, the Indian subsidiary of a Japanese company and business enterprises founded by Japanese nationals.

Japanese companies and establishments are producing automobile, transport equipment, machinery, electric machine and chemicals, among others.

### Japanese assistance

"There are many projects in Tamil Nadu funded by Japanese ODA (Official Development Assistance). Constructions of Chennai Metro, Chennai desalination plant, and AIIMS, Madurai, are some of the ongoing pro-

jects," said Taga Masayuki, Consul-General of Japan in Chennai.

Asked why so many Japanese companies have come up here, he said, "Availability of industrial zone/township, including those managed/supported by Japanese companies. Comparatively lower cost of labour and availability of quality engineers/professionals. Living conditions and availability of Japanese restaurants are the other key reasons for firms investing here."

**Details provided by Guidance, the nodal agency for bringing investments into Tamil Nadu, show the State has also emerged as a leading destination for electronics**

Availability of good international schools is another reason why residents and key officials of companies from these countries come and live in Tamil Nadu.

The growth of these companies has also led to creation of country-specific restaurants, bakeries and shops. Today, the State has several Korean and Japanese restaurants.

For foreign investors and for relocation investments, the State offers additional incentives as part of the Industrial Policy-2021, which include relocation benefits, a direct subsidy on its capital investment and incentives to boost the research and development innovation projects.

### A HUMBLE START

## Nobel journey that began in Madras

C.V. Raman derived inspiration to turn into a man of science at Madras University

PON VASANTH B.A.

The November 1906 issue of the then famous *The London, Edinburgh and Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science* carried a scientific paper written by an 18-year-old student from The Presidency College, Madras, heralding the arrival of a luminary in the international scientific arena.

He was Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, popularly known as C.V. Raman, who went on to become the first Asian 24 years later to win a Nobel Prize in a science field in 1930 "for his work on the scattering of light and for the discovery of the effect named after him."

Until today, Raman is technically the only Indian citizen to have received a Nobel in science (excluding economics) as the other three – Har Gobind Khorana, Subrahmanyam Chandrasekhar and Venki Ramakrishnan – had become citizens of other countries when they received the prize. The Presidency College and the University of Madras, which produced many stalwarts in those years, have the distinction of being the *alma mater* of both Raman and his nephew Chandrasekhar.

**Precocious child**  
Born in 1888 in Thiruvanaiyaval in Tiruchi, Raman, a precocious child, finished his schooling in Visakhapatnam and enrolled in The Presidency College that was part of the University of Madras for a B.A. programme in 1903 when he had just turned 14.

Reminiscing his student days during the centenary year of the college in 1940, he recalled how a professor looking at his diminutive figure in the first class he attended asked whether he really belonged to the class.

By 1907, Raman obtained his graduation and post-gradua-



Credit to alma mater: C.V. Raman inaugurating a science symposium at University Buildings in Madras on February 2, 1957, to mark the centenary celebrations. ■ THE HINDU ARCHIVES

tion from the University of Madras, securing top ranks. He then moved to Calcutta and (Kolkata) to take up the job of Assistant Accountant-General after clearing the Indian Finance Services exam, which he topped.

While his subsequent research that led to his Nobel happened in Calcutta and he spent the rest of his life largely in Bangalore (Bengaluru) with the Indian Institute of Science, and later at the Raman Research Institute, he never forgot the role played by the University of Madras and the Presidency College in his career.

He recollects how his professors, recognising his potential, allowed him to pursue his interests and experiments by absolving him from the regular work demanded by the curriculum.

"Professor Jones [his Physics Professor] believed in letting those who were capable of looking after themselves do so, with the result that during the four years I was at the Presidency College I enjoyed a measure of academic freedom which seems almost incredible," Raman had said.

He presided over the science symposium organised as part of the centenary year celebrations of the University of Madras in 1957. The account of the celebrations published two years la-

ter by the university recorded how Raman recollects sitting for his M.A. examination 50 years ago in the same hall where the celebrations took place.

He said he was proud that he was not an alumnus of any other university but the University of Madras and "whatever inspiration he had drawn to start as a man of science, he derived it within the portals of the Madras University," the publication recorded.

**A plan that never took off**  
In a book on Raman, written by A. Jayaraman, who worked under him for many years, the author says Raman bought a parcel of land in Chennai and wanted to establish a branch of his research institute here. However, this never materialised.

Eminent academic S.P. Thyagarajan, the former vice-chancellor of the University of Madras, said the university then had an excellent academic ecosystem and brain-teasing ambience that kindled the minds of students to pursue critical thinking and innovations.

The university labs used to remain open 24/7 with interested students and faculty working there.

Rita John, Professor and Head of Theoretical Physics at the university, highlighted

how Raman's expenditure on equipment for the experiments that fetched him the Nobel was just a couple of hundred rupees. She said Raman is an inspiration for students who want to achieve excellence despite limited resources.

Lamenting the erosion of the university system in general and the University of Madras in particular, Mr. Thyagarajan said a number of issues needed to be addressed urgently, in terms of faculty quality, administrative ability and financial support, should the university regain its glory and become a breeding ground for producing many like Raman.

Ms. John said it was indeed unfortunate that the university did not have anything concrete to honour Raman. "At least a plaque should be erected at the library where he worked," she said.

Mr. Thyagarajan said the government should create a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Raman's name at the university. "The G.N. Ramachandran Instrumentation Centre was set up during my tenure as Vice-Chancellor. [Ramachandran was an alumnus of the university and a student of Raman]. We wanted to set up a CoE in Raman's name, but it did not materialise," he says.

### WESTERN RAILWAY

#### RAIN WATER HARVESTING & SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

By Chief Engineer (Construction) I, Western Railway, Pratapnagar, Vaddodara-390 004 invites E-Tender for the works given below:- E-Tender No.: DyCE/CII/BR/DB-CDK-E/KW/42 Name of the Work: Providing Rain water harvesting & Sewage treatment plant including maintenance period with IGBC guidelines for achieving Green Certification at Kevadiya station in connection with Dabhoi - Chandod Gauge Conversion with extension upto Kevadiya Project. Approximate Cost Work: Rs. 126.58 Lakhs. Earnest Money to be Deposited: Rs.2,13,300/- Availability of Online Tender for Bidding: From:- 22.02.2022 To:- 08.03.2022 up to 15:00 Hrs. Note:- 1) Regarding detailed notice containing EMD, eligibility criteria, Similar Nature of work, detailed tender conditions, please visit www.iamps.gov.in Manual offers will not be considered. 7/17 Like us: <https://www.facebook.com/WesternRailway>

#### MADHYANCHAL VIDYUT VITRAN NIGAM LTD HEAD OFFICE - 4 A, GOKHALE MARG, LUCKNOW

#### TENDER NOTICE (E-TENDER)

Tenders through e-tendering system are invited from reputed firms with adequate experience for Competitive Bidding in two parts (Part I Techno Commercial Bid and Part II Price Bid) for following works:-Sl. No., Particulars, Details, E-Tendering Notice no., MEDCO/261/2021, 1. Subject Matter of work: Engagement of Agency for 10 KW/KVA/HP & Above consumers Main Meter & Double Pole Meter MRI, Bill Printing, Bill Distribution with Acknowledgement & MRI Analysis, MRI & Analysis of Meters installed on 33/11 KV Substation Feeders for 6 Distribution Zones (LESA-CIS Gomti, LESA Trans Gomti, Lucknow, Faizabad, Bareilly, Devaripatan) in MVNL for two years. 2. E-Tender fee with GST Rs. 1180/- in the form of NEFT/RTGS only. 3. Earnest money deposit Rs. 35 Lacs only in the form of Bank Guarantee or NEFT/RTGS only. 4. Estimated Contract Value: Rs. 35 Cr. For two years. 5. Manner, End Date/Time for the Submission of Bids • Manner: Online at E-Tender website <http://etender.up.nic.in>. • Bid uploading for submission and date 24-Feb-2022/13:00 Hrs. 6. Submission of Bankers Cheque/Demand Draft/UTR for Bank Transfer/BG for Tender Fee & Bid Security • Up to 24-Feb-2022 13:00. 7. Date/Time/E-Opening of Technical Bid • Up to 25-Feb-2022/15:00 Hrs. Detailed information of the tender and tender documents can be seen and downloaded from e-tender website <http://etender.up.nic.in> and MVNL website: [www.mvnl.in](http://www.mvnl.in). In case of amendment and date extension, the information shall be made available on e-tender website <http://etender.up.nic.in> and MVNL website: [www.mvnl.in](http://www.mvnl.in). Superintending Engineer (Commercial) MVNL 4-A Gokhale Marg, Lucknow. MVNL Helping No. 18001800440. "SAVE ELECTRICITY IN NATIONAL INTEREST, USE LED IN PLACE OF BULB". RO 49 dt 17.02.2022

### SBI State Bank of India STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH

Authorised Official's Details - Name : V E Saravanan, Mobile No. : 9445009507, Landline No. : 044-28881037.

City Case Officer for contact - Name : S Kavita, Mobile No. : 9445860122, Landline No. : 044-28881043.

### SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession (SI. No.1) and physical possession (SI. No.2) of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of State Bank of India being the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 15.03.2022, for the recovery of dues with future interest and costs due to the State Bank of India, SARB, Chennai from the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned below.

**SI. No.1 NAME & ADDRESS OF THE BORROWER & GUARANTOR :** (1) Mrs. Saraswathi, Plot No.12/388, Block-12, TNHB, JJ Nagar East, Mogappair East, Chennai - 600 037. (2) R Senthilvelavan, Plot No.12/388, Block-12, TNHB, JJ Nagar East, Mogappair East, Chennai - 600 037.

**AMOUNT DUE AS ON 03.01.2022 : Rs.49,26,716/- (Rupees Forty nine lakhs twenty six thousand seven hundred and sixteen only) with future interest and costs thereon.**

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY :** Name of Title Deed Holder : Mrs. Saraswathi & R Senthilvelavan

All that piece and parcel of land and building bearing Plot No.388 of Block No.12 (A1 Type) at JJ Nagar East, Mogappair Village, Chennai in the Madras Urban Development Project of Tamil Nadu Housing Board, comprised in S. No.280 part of Mogappair Village, Ambattur Taluk, Thiruvallur District measuring an extent of 468 Sq. ft. of land with a building constructed thereon in Ground and First Floor. Bounded on the - North by : Plot No.12/404, South by : Plot No.12/327 & 9' Road, East by : Plot No.12/328, West by : Plot No.12/389, Admeasuring on the - North by : 39 feet, South by : 39 feet, East by : 12 feet, West by : 12 feet. Situated within the Sub-Registration District of Konnur and Registration District of Chennai North. Encumbrances known to the Bank, if any : NIL.

**RESERVE PRICE : Rs.42,00,000/- | EMD : Rs.4,20,000/- | Bid increment amount : Rs.25,000/-**

**SI. No.2 NAME & ADDRESS OF THE BORROWER :** (1) Mr. R. Manikandan, No.6/3, Kannapar Street, Ganapathipuram, Chrompet, Near Chanaikan Amman Kovil, Chennai - 600 044. Also at : Sreevatsa Tube Corporation Pvt. Ltd., No.7, Kamaraj Park Street, Royapuram, Near Kalmandapam Police Station, Chennai - 600 013.

**AMOUNT DUE AS ON 20.11.2021 : Rs.43,49,742/- (Rupees Forty three lakhs forty nine thousand seven hundred and forty two only) with future interest and costs thereon.**

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY :** Name of Title Deed Holder : Mr. R. Manikandan

**Schedule A (Whole Property) :** A' SCHEDULE : All that piece and parcel of house site, bearing Plot Nos.1A and 1B, totally measuring an extent of 2,613 Square feet, comprised in Survey Nos.369/5A, B and C, Patta No.6064 as per Patta New Sub-division Survey Nos.369/5A2, 369/5B2 and 369/5C2, in the layout named 'Sri Saibaba Nagar Extension', approved by D.T.C.P. in L.P. 218/96, situated in No.193 Aadhanur Village, Sriperumbudur Taluk, Kancheepuram District. The Sub-division plan Pa. Mu. No.176/12-13, dated 15.2.2013, President, Aadhanur First Grade Panchayat, Kundrathur Panchayat Union. Bounded on the - North by : Plot No.2, South by : 23 feet Road, East by : 20 feet road, West by : Plot No.1, South by : 39 feet, East by : 23 feet, West by : 44 feet. The above property is situated within the Kundrathur Panchayat Union limits and within the Registration District of Chennai South and Registration Sub-District of Guduvanchery. **B' SCHEDULE :** All that piece and parcel of house site, bearing Plot No.1B, measuring an extent of 1,202 Square feet, comprised in Survey Nos.369/5A, B and C, Patta No.6064 as per Patta New Sub-division Survey Nos.369/5A2, 369/5B2 and 369/5C2, in the layout named 'Sri Saibaba Nagar Extension', approved by D.T.C.P. in L.P. 218/96, situated in No.193 Aadhanur

# I will monitor performance of elected representatives: Stalin

'DMK fulfilling poll promises despite the debt trap created by the AIADMK govt.'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
TIRUNELVELI

Appealing to the Tamil Nadu voters to ensure a resounding victory of the candidates of the DMK and its allies contesting in the urban local bodies elections, DMK president and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Thursday assured he would closely monitor the performance of the elected representatives if they take all welfare and development programmes to every nook and corner of the State.

Addressing the DMK cadre via videoconferencing from Chennai on the last day of electioneering, Mr. Stalin said the DMK government, despite the ₹5.50 lakh-crore debt trap created by the previous AIADMK government, was implementing its poll promises such as free bus



**A strong vow:** Chief Minister M.K. Stalin addressing the DMK cadre via video mode on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

travel for women in town buses, a pandemic relief of ₹4,000, supply of essential commodities and waiver of loans for self-help groups.

"As I fulfil the promises, I will make your local body representatives to execute all the schemes of our government as I will monitor them constantly," he assured.

Denying the allegations of

AIADMK leaders Edappadi K. Palaniswami and O. Panneerselvam that the DMK government had not fulfilled its poll promise, Mr. Stalin asked his predecessor to ask the people to know if the DMK's poll promises were being fulfilled in a phased manner.

"We cut the petrol price by ₹3 a litre even though the

Union government refused," he recalled adding, jewel loans of over 13 lakh families were waived. "We have achieved more in the short span of nine months than what you could not achieve in the past ten years. Our achievements have made even a Romanian business traveller campaign for our candidates," he said.

"Your rampant corruption that led to Income Tax raid even in the Secretariat took Tamil Nadu's debt of ₹1 lakh-crore in 2011 to ₹5.50 lakh-crore in 2021. Besides enduring this burden and repaying it, we are doing the best for the people," the DMK leader said.

He also criticised the AIADMK regime for "miserably failing to maintain law and order" in Tamil Nadu.

## Rahul Gandhi to release Stalin's autobiography

It will cover 23 years of his life

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

In an attempt to bring together leaders of non-BJP political parties in the country, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has invited Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to release the first part of his autobiography, *Ungalil Oruvan*.

The function, to be held at the Chennai Trade Centre on February 28, will be attended by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah.

While inaugurating the 45th book fair on Wednesday, Mr. Stalin announced that the autobiography



Rahul Gandhi

would cover the first 23 years of his life up to 1976.

"The book will cover school and college days, entry into politics, first meeting and my public speech, marriage and the days of emergency. This will be come up for sale in the book fair," he said.

## 'Voters must teach a befitting lesson to the BJP, AIADMK'

Opposition playing opportunistic politics, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) president K.S. Alagiri on Thursday appealed to people to cast their votes for the candidates of the Secular Progressive Alliance in the urban local bodies polls on February 19 so that the welfare schemes of the DMK government can be seamlessly implemented.

Mr. Alagiri said the voters must teach a befitting lesson to the BJP, "which was trying to create communal unrest in Tamil Nadu", and the AIADMK "which was steeped in corruption" in its 10-year rule. "Like Congress leader Rahul Gandhi mentioned recently in Parliament, Tamil Nadu will en-



K.S. Alagiri

sure that the BJP cannot enter the State," Mr. Alagiri said.

He said the Opposition camp was now splintered with the AIADMK, BJP, PMK contesting separately. "Those talking of alliance based on policies are now contesting separately. They do not have any ideology

and are playing only opportunistic politics. That's why they were unable to stitch an alliance. But our alliance is based on ideology the welfare of the people. This is an alliance that vehemently opposes the decisions taken by the Narendra Modi-led government illegally against Tamil Nadu.

Referring to the NEET issue, Mr. Alagiri said the DMK government had taken steps to get the Bill passed [again] and the Constitution of India will not allow the Governor to work against the wishes of an elected government. Mr. Alagiri further said the Congress candidates, who had filed their nominations going against the alliance agreement in the polls, will be removed from the party.

FROM PAGE ONE

## T.N. says 'no' in SC to neutrino observatory

A team led by Member of Parliament T.R. Balu had also met the Ministers of Industries and Forests in September last year to convey the State's stand against the project.

"The Western Ghats is considered a global biodiversity hotspot, harbouring numerous endemic species of flora and fauna... The project in question falls exactly on the hill slopes of this part of the Western Ghats, which align within it a significant tiger corridor, namely the Mathikettan-Periyar tiger corridor," the State observed.

This corridor links the Periyar Tiger Reserve along the

Though the experiments in the observatory itself would be conducted a km underground, massive blasting, activities like transport, excavations and tunnelling, would jeopardise the ecological sustainability of the zone

**Genetic dispersal**  
The proposed project area ecologically links to the eastern habitats, where the Sri Lankan Meghalamai Tiger

Reserve is located. It hosts tigers from this region and helps in genetic dispersal. Even the least disturbance would have a huge impact on tiger movement. The area, the State explained, is a significant watershed and catchment zone for the rivers Sambhal and Kottakudi.

The affidavit explained that though the experiments in the observatory itself would be conducted a kilometre underground, massive blasting, activities like transport, excavations and tunnelling, would jeopardise the ecological sustainability of the zone, deep in the Western Ghats.

The affidavit clarifies the

State's position in an appeal pending against the National Green Tribunal's decision to uphold the environmental clearance, granted by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF) to the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research for the construction of the INO.

The appeal filed by G. Sundarrajan alleged that the environmental clearance for the construction of the INO, "an underground laboratory in close proximity to the Western Ghats", would entail "large-scale blasting and tunnelling activities". The project is proposed to be set up at Pottipuram village in Theni district.

The notice said that the activities he was involved (political/election campaign) were not the intended purpose of his visit, and hence, amount to visa violation. As per the notice, Mr. Negoita

He was fascinated with the DMK's free bus travel scheme for women

WILSON THOMAS  
COIMBATORE

The Bureau of Immigration, Chennai, on Thursday served a notice on a Romanian businessman Stefan Negoita, who campaigned for the DMK in the urban civic polls in Coimbatore, directing him to appear before it on Friday. He was in India on a Business Visa.

The notice said that the activities he was involved (political/election campaign) were not the intended purpose of his visit, and hence, amount to visa violation. As per the notice, Mr. Negoita

displayed a silver anklet, which he claimed was distributed by the DMK to the voters in Coimbatore and alleged that it was only 16% valid. Tamil Nadu BJP president K. Annamalai campaigning in Coimbatore. ■ M. PERIASAMY

cum-Entrance Test (NEET), Mr. Annamalai said several students from tribal communities across the State have cleared the entrance examination. "Only through NEET, true social justice can be achieved," he asserted. During the campaign, he

on a TNSTC town bus from his hotel to my textile unit. He was fascinated with the scheme for free bus travel for women and wanted to be a part of the campaign for the party that introduced it," said Dr. Shankar, who is the State deputy secretary of the DMK's Medical Wing. Mr. Negoita told *The Hindu* that the free bus rides for women was a very important welfare scheme, as people from economically weaker sections could not afford travelling on their own vehicles. He said he joined the campaign for a single day on Wednesday.

## New Chairperson named for Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women

The panel has seven new members

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

A.S. Kumari has been named the Chairperson of the recently reconstituted Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women. The panel has seven new members.

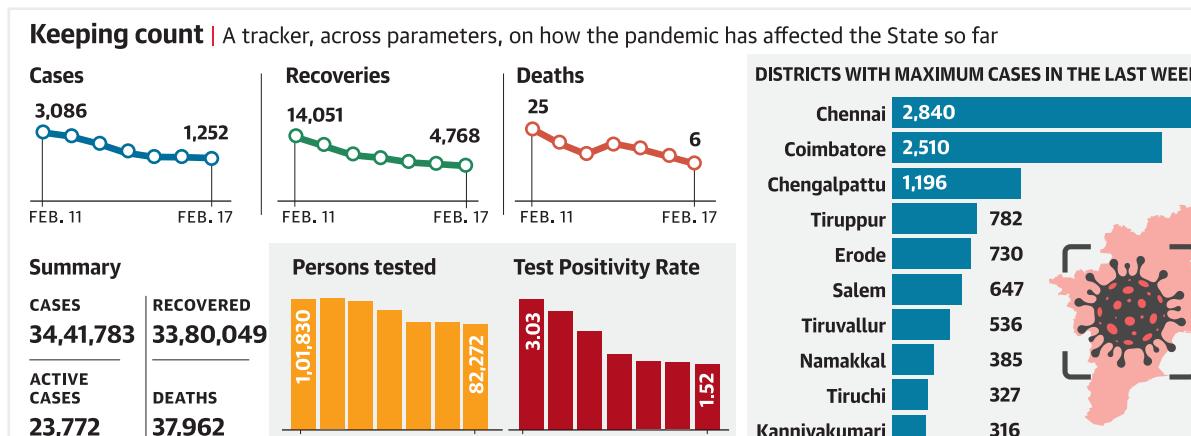
They are: Malathi Narayanasamy (Uthangarai, Krishnagiri district), P. Geetha Natarajan (Nambyiar taluk, Erode district), P. Seethapathy (Tindivanam taluk, Villupuram district), M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran (Ramanathapuram) and R. Rani, (K.K. Nagar, Tiruchirappalli district) and legislators K. Sivagama Sundari (Krishnarayapuram) and M. Varalakshmi (Chengalpattu). The Chairperson and members of the Commission would hold of-

fice for a period of three years. There is no change in the official members of the Commission.

The tenure of two legislators, nominated by the State government to the panel, would cease if they stop being Members of the Legislative Assembly or on completion of the tenure for three years, whichever applies first. "The honorarium and allowances, and other terms and conditions of services of the Chairperson and the members shall be as per the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women (Honorary, Allowances and Conditions of Service of Chairperson and Members) Rules, 2013," the notification said.

## State logs 1,252 fresh COVID-19 cases

Six persons succumbed to the virus, taking the overall toll to 37,962



tore and Chengalpattu. While 285 persons tested positive in Chennai, Coimbatore logged 214 cases, and Chengalpattu 105.

As many as 12 districts logged fewer than 10 cases each. The State has so far recorded 34,41,783 COVID-19 cases. Six persons succumbed to the virus, taking

the overall toll to 37,962. There were two deaths in Chennai and one each in Chengalpattu, Coimbatore, Tiruvallur and Tiruvannamalai.

With 4,768 persons discharged after treatment, the total recoveries stood at 33,80,049. As of date, 23,772 persons were under treat-

## Bridle is in your hands, vote for AIADMK, leaders appeal to people

The DMK, if elected, would only resort to a tyrannical rule, say OPS, EPS

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

On Thursday, the last day of the electoral campaign for elections to the urban local bodies, the AIADMK appealed to the electorate to weigh the nine-month rule of the DMK government before casting their votes.

If the DMK candidates were elected to the urban local bodies, they could be feudal lords and would only resort to a "tyrannical rule", going by their past record, AIADMK leaders said.

"Only if an appropriate bridle is used for the DMK government, they could be kept under control and Tamil Nadu could be turned into a haven of peace," the AIADMK coordinator, O. Panneerselvam, and co-coordinator Edappadi K. Pa-



**Blistering attack:** If the DMK candidates were elected, they could be feudal lords, the leaders charged. ■ B. JOHI RAMALINGAM

people to recall how the AIADMK partymen were as mayors, municipal chairpersons and presidents of town panchayats in the past.

Referring to the assurances over NEET, gold jewellery loans, education loans, a monthly assistance of ₹1,000 for cooking gas cylinders, farm loans, reduction in fuel prices made by the DMK, the AIADMK leaders alleged, "The DMK is cheating people since they have four more years."

Thalaivi Amma [late AIADMK leader Jayalalithaa] and the government that followed her path. The AIADMK government would be the government of every single person in Tamil Nadu and a true people's government," they appealed to the

## DMK using gifts, cash to win over people, alleges Annamalai

He appeals to State Election Commission to remain impartial

R. AKILESH  
COIMBATORE

Not confident of its eight months of governance, the DMK is attempting to win over people through gifts and cash ahead of the urban local bodies elections, alleged BJP State president K. Annamalai here on Thursday.

Campaigning here for the BJP candidates, he claimed, "The mentality that people will vote only after accepting cash has spread across the State." Coimbatore residents are facing issues such as pollution and traffic congestion as "contractors from large parties" in the State are "swallowing" the schemes of the Central government, he claimed.

Reiterating the party's stand on National Eligibility-



Tamil Nadu BJP president K. Annamalai campaigning in Coimbatore. ■ M. PERIASAMY

+ cum-Entrance Test (NEET), Mr. Annamalai said several students from tribal communities across the State have cleared the entrance examination. "Only through NEET, true social justice can be achieved," he asserted.

During the campaign, he

## Immigration Bureau serves notice on Romanian who campaigned for DMK

He was fascinated with the DMK's free bus travel scheme for women



Stefan Negoita from Romania campaigning for the DMK in Coimbatore. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

has a business visa valid up to January 20, 2023. Mr. Negoita is in the business of manufacturing sweaters in Romania. On Wednesday, Mr. Negoita

Negoita campaigned for the DMK. Gokul Kruba Shanker, Mr. Negoita's business partner in Coimbatore, said, "Mr. Negoita recently took a ride

## Surgical oncologist placed under suspension

He will face a departmental inquiry'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

The Directorate of Medical Education has placed Subbiah Shanmugam, head of department, surgical oncology, Government Royapettah Hospital, under suspension until further orders for being involved in "political party-related activities".

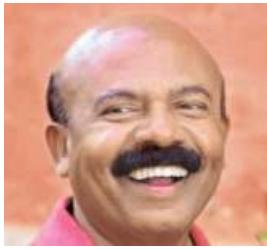
Director of Medical Education R. Narayana Babu said he was placed under suspension pending inquiry. Officials sources said the suspension came after the Directorate received complaints that he was involved in political party-related activities, which went against the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1973 (taking part in politics and elections), no government servant shall be a member of or be otherwise associated with any political party or any organisation in respect of which there is reason to believe that it has a political aspect.

Shanmugam, former national president of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, was accused of harassing an elderly woman, and a complaint was filed against him in 2020. An official pointed out that as per rule 14 of the Tamil Nadu Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1973 (taking part in politics and elections), no government servant shall be a member of or be otherwise associated with any political party or any organisation in respect of which there is reason to believe that it has a political aspect.

CM YK

M CH-CHE

IN BRIEF



Malayalam actor Kottayam Pradeep dead

KOTTAYAM Actor K.R. Pradeep, also known as Kottayam Pradeep, died following a heart attack here on Thursday. He was 61. Known for his unique style of dialogue delivery and comic roles, Pradeep played notable roles in over 60 movies. He leaves behind his wife, Maya, and children, Vishnu and Rinda.

**RT-PCR not required for Kerala, Goa travellers**

BENGALURU Passengers coming to Karnataka from Kerala and Goa no longer need a negative RT-PCR report. Following a recommendation by the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Karnataka on Thursday relaxed this rule.

## Kerala seeks review of 2014 SC verdict on Mullaperiyar dam

'Worried about people in downstream reaches of river basin'

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**

NEW DELHI Kerala has sought a "comprehensive review" of the May 2014 judgment of the Supreme Court allowing Tamil Nadu to raise the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam from 136 to 142 feet. In 2014, a five-judge Bench had quashed a law enacted by Kerala to prevent Tamil Nadu from raising the water level. Kerala is pushing for a larger Bench to reconsider the eight-year-old judgment.

In written submissions filed before the apex court, the State evoked the "pre-

# No hijab in Minority Dept. institutions too

It issues circular to implement the Karnataka HC's interim order

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

HASSAN The Department of Minority Welfare has issued a circular to the schools that come under it to implement the Karnataka High Court's interim order on the hijab issue.

Earlier, there was confusion over the applicability of the order in Minority Department-run Morari Desai Residential Schools, and Moulana Azad Model Schools that come under the department. These are schools where a maximum number of students are from the minority community.

P. Manivannan, Department Secretary, in a circular, informed the District Officers of the Department and principals of the institutes that the interim order was applicable to the institutes



Students of Kamala Nehru Memorial College staging a dharna in Shivamogga on Thursday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and hence the staff should ensure students do not wear saffron shawl, scarf, or hijab or carry any religious flag in the classrooms.

The Department runs 200 Moulana Azad Model Schools, 100 Morari Desai Residential Schools, eight Model Residential Schools, five Muslim Residential Schools and 21 pre-university colleges.

Meanwhile, several college campuses in the State saw confusion among college managements and staff as to where the High Court's interim order is to be enforced. The day also saw, like Wednesday, several hijab-clad girl students being turned away for refusing to remove the headscarf and protests by parents and students.

## Institutions move HC

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Minorities Educational Institutions Managements' Federation on Thursday moved the High Court of Karnataka questioning the legality of the February 5 Government Order (GO) on wearing uniforms prescribed by the College Development Committees and other authorities

concerned.

Appearing for the petitioner-federation, advocate G.R. Mohan requested a three-judge Bench, headed by Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, to post the petition for hearing on Friday.

However, the Bench told him that petition would be posted for hearing provided that it is in order as per the court's rules.

## Hijab row in Vijayawada

**STAFF REPORTER**

VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Loyola College in Vijayawada witnessed high drama on Thursday after two third-year students alleged that they were 'denied entry' into the waiting room before entering classrooms and these two refused to do so."

Muslim religious heads gathered at the college.

Responding to the issue, principal Fr. G.A.P. Kishore said, "It is a usual practice for students and faculty to remove the hijab in the waiting room before entering classrooms and these two refused to do so."

## Karnataka Congress demands Eshwarappa's resignation

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

BENGALURU

Escalating its demand for resignation of Karnataka Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (DRPR) Minister K.S. Eshwarappa for his controversial remarks on hoisting the saffron flag on Red Fort, the Opposition Congress resorted to a night-long dharna in both the Houses of the State legislature on Thursday.

The Congress, which has been staging a dharna in both the Houses since Wednesday demanding resignation of Mr. Eshwarappa, continued its dharna even after the Houses were adjourned

for the day on Thursday.

Congress leaders, including Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, were among those who

stayed back in the Assembly to hold the night-long dharna. They declared that the party would take its demand for Mr. Eshwarappa's resignation to the logical end.



Raising concerns: Congress members protesting against Minister Eshwarappa's remark on Thursday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

## + Marginal slant in Kochi Metro track leads to speed restriction



The area around pillar 347 of Kochi Metro has been barricaded, due to a misalignment on the track. ■ VIBHU

speed restriction has been imposed, while a detailed study is on to evaluate and plan the repair work," a Kochi Metro press release said.

**JOHN L. PAUL**  
KOCHE

Kochi Metro trains are moving with speed restrictions along the tracks on either side of the viaduct over pillar number 347, following the detection of a marginal slant of the tracks.

Kochi Metro Rail sources said the slant came to light during a routine inspection of the corridor.

"The minor misalignment in track was caused by a minor settlement of foundations at Pier No 347. This could possibly be on account of the likely changes in the properties of subsoil and bearing strata, marginally affecting the substructure, and causing the misalignment in track. A

**THE HINDU**

Air Surcharge as applicable:  
New Delhi - Rs. 15/-;  
Port Blair - Rs. 20/-

**Uttar Pradesh MSCL**

(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)  
GSTIN: 09AACCU220P1ZC CIN: U85310UP2018SC102425

Date: 16\* February, 2022

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Uttar Pradesh Medical Supply Corporation Limited, Lucknow invites online Tenders on e-Portal for Procurement of various type of medical equipments. The schedules of e-Tenders activities are as hereunder:-

S. No. Equipment Name Tender Public Date Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting Last Date of Submission of Bids Tender Ref. No., UPMSC

1. Dry Image Camera For Mobile Digital Radiography System 17.02.2022 (12:00 PM) 09.03.2022 (541)

The details of tender notice are given on website [www.upmsc.in](http://www.upmsc.in) & [www.etender.up.nic.in](http://www.etender.up.nic.in). Kindly read the tender notice before applying.

Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, U.P. General Manager (Equipment-Procurement) UPMSC Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**

E-TENDER NOTICE  
No. PCE/NWR/2021-22/09.  
Date 15.02.2022

For and on behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Engineer, North Western Railway, Engineering Department, Jaipur (Rajasthan)-302017 invites e-tenders on [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) website for supply of material as follows:-

Tender No. NWRTS20212209. (1) Item:

Manufacture and supply of Jogged Fish Plates to Drg. No. RDSO/T-5849. (2) Quantity: 6,580 Sets.

(3) Tender Value: Rs. 2,49,49,780.80

(4) Earnest money: Rs. 4,99,000/-

(5) Date of closing: 10.03.2022. Note:

The above tenders are reserved for procurement from RDSO approved vendors only.

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# National Entrance Screening Test (NEST) 2022

Admission to 5-year Integrated MSc Programmes in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics at NISER (Bhubaneswar) and UM-DAE CEBS (Mumbai) (Autonomous institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India)

The National Entrance Screening Test (NEST) is a compulsory test for admission to the 5-year Integrated MSc programme in basic sciences - Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics - at National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar and University of Mumbai - Department of Atomic Energy Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (UM-DAE CEBS), Mumbai. NEST 2022 will be conducted in around 115 towns and cities all over India on June 18, 2022 (Saturday).

The candidates admitted to the programme are eligible to receive an annual scholarship of Rs 60,000 through DISHA program of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India. In addition, the scholarship recipients receive a grant of Rs.20,000 per annum for summer internship. Candidates selected by DST for the INSPIRE-SHE programme are endorsed for INSPIRE scholarship by NISER and CEBS.

For detailed information on NEST 2022 application procedure and previous years' question papers please visit NEST 2022 website: [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in)

**Application:**  
Through ONLINE portal ONLY.  
Visit [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in) to apply.

Online portal opens on Feb. 21, 2022, & closes on May 18, 2022

**Address for correspondence :**

The Chief Coordinator, NEST 2022  
UM-DAE CEBS, Nalanda Building,  
University of Mumbai, Vidyanagar Campus,  
Kalina, Santacruz (E), Mumbai 400098, India  
E-mail: [nest@cbs.ac.in](mailto:nest@cbs.ac.in)  
Website: [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in)

**Fees structure and mode of payment :**

Male (General and OBC categories): Rs.1200/-

Male (SC and ST categories) : Rs.600/-

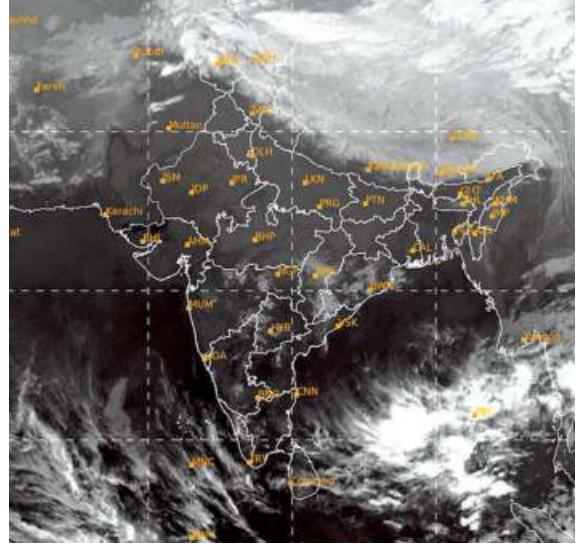
Female (all categories): Rs.600/-

Divyangjan candidates: Rs.600/-

Pay ONLY via Net banking/ Credit card/ Debit card

**WEATHER WATCH**

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; RAINFALL DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 19.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Friday:** Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Andaman Islands

**CITY** **RAIN** **MAX** **MIN** **CITY** **RAIN** **MAX** **MIN**

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...-27.5...	11.8	5...	Kozhikode	...-34.2...	24.4	...
Ahmedabad	...-32.3...	15.1	...	Kurnool	...-34.2...	22.0	...
Aizawl	...-24.0...	10.7	...	Lucknow	...-27.3...	11.4	...
Allahabad	...-28.3...	10.2	...	Madurai	...-34.2...	22.0	...
Bengaluru	...-31.0...	18.0	...	Mangaluru	...-32.8...	22.3	...
Bhopal	...-30.8...	17.4	...	Mumbai	...-29.0...	18.5	...
Bhubaneswar	...-30.8...	17.4	...	Mysuru	...-31.0...	20.2	...
Chandigarh	...-27.4...	8.3	...	New Delhi	...-27.0...	10.2	...
Chennai	...-30.0...	22.4	...	Patna	...-26.4...	12.5	...
Coimbatore	...-32.9...	20.2	...	Port Blair	...-29.3...	24.0	...
Dehradoon	...-24.8...	8.2	...	Puducherry			



## No room for bravado

As long as the virus is in wide circulation globally, India should not lower its guard

**S**ignalling the end of the third wave that began in the last days of 2021, the Government, on February 16, asked States to review and amend or end additional COVID-19 restrictions. Restrictions that hinder the free movement of people and economic activities may no longer be necessary considering that the third wave seems to be truly coming to an end, the Government noted. From less than 7,000 daily fresh cases in the fourth week of December 2021, the number of cases began rising sharply in the last days of 2021 and increased exponentially before peaking on January 20, with over 34,000 cases recorded. The decline in daily fresh cases too witnessed a sharp fall after peaking. But relying entirely on daily fresh cases might give a misleading picture as the Government revised the testing strategy on January 10, which makes only those with symptoms and certain at-risk contacts of laboratory confirmed cases eligible for a test. The sale of self-test kits soared in many cities but the reporting of results by their users was poor. In addition, the mild nature of the disease in many fully vaccinated and previously infected people might have led to complacency and a reluctance to get tested. Despite the limitations in the measurement of cases, the sustained decline in the number of cases and in the positivity rate since the third wave peaked does indicate that the third wave is nearing its end. For the first time since the third wave peaked, the seven-day average test positivity rate nationally fell below 5% on February 12; it was 3% on February 16. But 16 States still report a seven-day average test positivity above the national average; it is very high in the Union Territory of Puducherry (28.8%), Mizoram (26.2%), Odisha (19%), and Kerala (18.4%). The true indicator that India has reached the fag end of the third wave is reflected in the reduced number of hospitalisations.

The waning of the third wave caused by the extremely infectious Omicron variant should be no reason to lull India into complacency. The notion that India's enhanced surveillance, manpower and infrastructure can "fight any possible COVID-19 waves in the future" not only reeks of overconfidence but is also dangerous. Viruses continuously evolve and what shade and characteristics the next variant will have and the impact it will have even in a population which has a large proportion of people fully vaccinated and/or naturally infected is unknown. Such bravado a year ago before the deadly second wave driven by the Delta variant resulted in a large-scale loss of lives and badly impacted the livelihood of millions in India. As long as the virus is in wide circulation in a large percentage of the world population, India should not lower its guard even when all restrictions to free movement are removed and economic activity is fully restored.

## A planetary adjustment

India must prioritise the transition to energy sources that do not upset the natural balance

**P**rime Minister Narendra Modi, in perhaps his first address this year on the theme of the environment, remarked that it was not the planet that was "fragile", but people and their commitment to conserving nature. From James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis – that posited the inter-connectedness of nature – to Nobel Laureate Paul Crutzen, who warned that chemical effluents were altering the planet's atmosphere and causing harmful climate change feedback effects, many have made the case that humanity is in the Anthropocene era and is like a geological force that is shaping the planet's destiny. However, this gives the distorted sense that it is a vaguely defined 'planet' that needs protecting, a notion reinforced by apocalyptic documentaries on melting glaciers.

The truth is more complex. Man's embrace of agriculture, the dominance of wheat and rice as food crops and the clearing of forest tracts caused the first major large-scale changes to global climate though their effects were apparent only over centuries. Atmospheric changes due to the dawn of the Industrial Age and the use of fossil fuels happened, relatively speaking, in a blink of an eye. What is common to both these eras is that those who suffered the most are the poor, or those with the least agency to shield themselves from a perturbed nature. Last year, Uttarakhand saw an avalanche of rock and ice destroy two hydropower projects and cause deaths. The geology of the Himalayas, scientists have long warned, makes the region inhospitable to large mega-engineering projects and the several floods, landslides and earthquakes over the years have underlined this time and again. But while the earth rearranges itself, it does so in a manner that can be destructive and lethal to those least responsible for causing the disequilibrium. Thus, if "fragile" were to mean a brittleness needing care, then it is people and animals that need protection than a vaguely defined 'planet'. India's position of climate justice is that it cannot be denied the right to rely on polluting fossil fuel to ameliorate the living conditions of most Indians who have limited access to reliable energy. Thus, India will continue to fire coal plants, raze forests for industry and build roads in fraught geology – in other words, put the lives of millions of the vulnerable at climate-risk in the pursuit of economic development. India's commitment to net-zero is set decades into the future at 2070. Unknown unknowns characterise climate science and India, given its size and population, will be disproportionately vulnerable. It must accelerate and prioritise the transition to energy sources that are minimally perturbing to the natural balance because – and on this the science is certain – the planet, which may be in a form incomprehensible at present, will long outlast its current residents.

# India has still to get a good grip on road safety

The Centre and States need to be on the same page in improving and strengthening safety plans and infrastructure



R.K. VIJ

**L**ast year, while inaugurating a webinar on 'Vehicle Crashes and Road Safety', organised by the MIT Art Design and Technology (ADT) University, Pune, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari remarked that "the target is to reduce 50% of road accidents by 2025", adding that "we can achieve zero deaths due to road accidents by 2030". He said that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had participated in a conference in Sweden in 2020 – the Third High Level Global Conference on Road Safety for Achieving Global Goals 2030' – where it was conceptualised to have zero road fatalities in India by 2030. Therefore, there was a need to expedite the task of saving lives in accidents.

Though it is essential to remain focused in this approach and be optimistic while fixing targets, the past record of road accidents and available infrastructure to deal with road safety measures in India should not be lost sight of, particularly when the enforcement of motor vehicle-related laws is primarily the responsibility of the States.

### In numbers

Where do we stand *vis-à-vis* last decade's target? In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly, after considering the alarming situation of road accidents fatalities, adopted the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 aimed at reducing fatalities in road accidents by 50% by the year 2020, and was accepted by much of the world including India. Though a number of steps have been taken in the last decade to check road accidents, statistics published by the Ministry of Road

Transport and Highways show that the number of deaths in road accidents increased from 1,42,485 in 2011 to 1,51,113 in 2019. The Ministry is yet to publish its data for the year 2020, but the annual publication of the National Crime Records Bureau, titled *Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India* (2020) shows that 1,33,201 deaths were recorded in 2020. This reduction of accidents in 2020 was primarily due to the various lockdowns which were in force during the first wave of COVID-19, when only a limited number of motor vehicles were on the roads. However, the fatality (that is a number of deaths per 100 accidents) which was 26.9 in 2001, continued to rise from 28.63 in 2011 to 37.54 in 2020. Thus, it is evident that despite setting a target of a 50% reduction in accidental deaths, the fatalities from road accidents actually increased in the last decade.

### Court interventions

The Supreme Court of India while hearing a petition filed by Dr. S. Rajasekaran, an orthopaedic surgeon and then President of the Indian Orthopaedic Association (WP (Civil) No. 295 of 2012), on road safety, passed an order to constitute a 'Committee on Road Safety' under the chairmanship of Justice K.S. Radhakrishnan, which was notified by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on May 30, 2014.

The Court on November 30, 2017, issued a number of directives with regard to road safety that, *inter alia*, included the constitution of a State Road Safety Council, establishment of lead agency, the setting up of road safety fund, notification of a road safety action plan, the constitution of a district road safety committee, engineering improvements, the identification and rectification of black spots, the adoption of traffic calming measures, conducting road safety audits, the acquisition of road safety equipment, the establishment of trauma care centres and the inclusion of road safety educa-



THULASI KAKKAT

tion in the academic curriculum of schools. Though the Committee on Road Safety followed up every directive of the Court with States and helped in improving the overall road safety scenario, there is many a slip between the cup and the lip.

### The ground reality

The Motor Vehicles (MV) Act of 1988 was partially amended in August 2019, and some of the amended and new sections which made traffic violations more stringent, came into effect from September 1, 2019. However, most States did not increase the corresponding compounding traffic violations fee. This increase was criticised and people protested on the pretext that the (fine) paying capacity of the average Indian was still limited. Also, only a few cases of traffic violations are contested by the accused in a court of law. Therefore, the expected impact of the deterrent provisions of the amended law could not be realised on ground.

Second, the enforcement manpower that is available is insufficient to deal with the steadily increasing volume of traffic. The automation of processes is still in its infancy and limited to large cities. The number of 'hit and run' cases may decrease if the 'Intelligent Traffic Management System' is implemented on highways and other major roads. The Bureau of Police Research and Development has suggested a formula to calculate the number of traffic policemen required in any district. It is

largely based on the number of registered motor vehicles in any district. Similar ideas were suggested for traffic equipment requirements also. However, the actual enforcement staff and equipment (due to a limited road safety fund or other funds at the disposal of the police) are insufficient to effectively check traffic violations.

Third, there are inadequate funds for the rectification of black spots and the undertaking of traffic calming measures. Though more than 60% road accidents reportedly take place because of over-speeding, 'speed limit' sign boards are rarely seen or found even on State highways and major roads.

Fourth, most drivers, conductors, and other staff in transport companies (except for government corporations) do not get benefits of the organised sector. They draw a meagre salary, usually do not have a weekly off and are most often forced to work overtime. Therefore, unless their service conditions are improved, their attitude towards road safety cannot be expected to be above board.

### Unsafe roads

Fifth – and perhaps the most challenging task – is to improve the driving skills of drivers and change the casual attitude of other road users towards road safety. Even today, getting a driving licence is not a difficult task. There is no standard written and rigorous practical test. Many States do not have test driving tracks. There are no institutes for refresher training if a driving licence of a person is suspended. Though the amended Motor Vehicles Act has certain provisions in this regard, they have yet to come into force.

It has been observed that about two-thirds of victims of road fatalities are two-wheeler drivers and pillion riders, but there is not enough emphasis being given to them. Though the wearing of safety headgear is mandatory, it is not enforced strictly in all States due

to a lack of strong will. Even an amended provision that relates to 'Offences by Juveniles' is not enforced strictly. The Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), with its pan-India emergency response number, 112, has proved very useful in saving the lives of accident victims in the golden hour, but this scheme has not been implemented evenly across States.

### Better data collection

The accident data collection format of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and now a part of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) of the police, is quite cumbersome (it requires about 60 fields to be filled up). This process of data collection is quite time consuming but it is essential to identify the true cause of an accident and take remedial measures. Similarly, the main objective of the recent iRAD (Integrated Road Accident Database) Project, an initiative of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, funded by the World Bank, and under implementation, is to enrich the accident database and improve road safety in the country by collecting data from different stakeholders using the iRAD mobile and web application. Hopefully, the integration of these projects will bring some synergy and make the data collection procedure more user-friendly.

A number of steps have been taken by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and States to improve the road safety scenario in the country. Lives cannot be lost at the cost of poor enforcement of traffic laws. However, unless the States and the Centre are on the same page in improving and strengthening the infrastructure of States by enabling more funds, merely and only fixing targets will not be a pragmatic approach to reduce road accident fatalities.

*R.K. Vij is a former Special Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh. The views expressed are personal*

## Etching a trade line to bond beyond oil

An India-UAE free trade agreement will enable two-way investment flows and help achieve ambitious export targets



CHANDRAJIT BANERJEE

**I**ndia has embarked on a new journey – a new free trade agreement (FTA) journey to be precise – with renewed zeal and vigour. India's approach towards FTAs is now focusing more on gaining meaningful market access and facilitating Indian industry's integration into global value chains. As Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has repeatedly emphasised, India would no longer be signing trade agreements just to join a group, but the new approach of FTA negotiations would respond to the need of new emerging dynamics in international trade and the Indian economy.

### Focus countries

Under the revamped FTA strategy, the Government of India has prioritised at least six countries or regions to deal with, in which the United Arab Emirates (UAE) figures at the top of the list for an early harvest deal; the others are the United Kingdom, the European Union, Australia, Canada, Israel and a group of countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The early harvest deal is to be enlarged into a comprehensive FTA in due course of time. This is a very welcome move, where the Government of India can be seen actively revisiting pending FTAs, entering into fresh negotiations and also being open to interim and

### mini-trade deals.

At the same time, the UAE too announced, in September 2021, its intent to pursue bilateral economic agreements with eight countries – India, the U.K., Turkey, South Korea, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Israel, and Kenya – with the goal of concluding these agreements within one year.

### Major economic hub

The UAE has emerged as an important economic hub not just within the context of the Middle East/West Asia, but also globally. The UAE, due to its strategic location, has emerged as an important economic centre in the world. In recent years, the UAE, through its 'Vision 2021', has sought to diversify its economy and reduce its dependency on oil. Since 2012, growth has been led, according to a World Trade Organization document, by the non-hydrocarbon sectors reflecting the successful diversification of the economy. Although the UAE has diversified its economy, the hydrocarbon sector remains very important followed by services and manufacturing.

Within services, financial services, wholesale and retail trade, and real estate and business services are the main contributors'. India and the UAE established diplomatic relations in 1972. The greater push has been achieved in bilateral relations when the visit of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, to the UAE in August 2015 marked the beginning of a new strategic partnership between the two countries. Further, during the visit of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to India in January 2017 as the chief guest at In-



dia's Republic Day celebrations, it was agreed that bilateral relations were to be upgraded to a comprehensive strategic partnership. This gave momentum to launching negotiations for an India-UAE comprehensive economic partnership agreement, eventually launched in September 2021.

### Trade and investment data

As India and the UAE strive to further deepen trade and investment ties, the soon-to-be announced early harvest agreement comes at the most opportune time. The India-UAE total trade merchandise has been valued at U.S.\$52.76 billion for the first nine months of the fiscal year 2021-22, making the UAE India's third largest trading partner. The aim is to boost bilateral merchandise trade to above U.S.\$100 billion and services trade to U.S.\$15 billion in five years.

With India's newfound strength in exports as the country is on the verge of creating history by reaching the figure of U.S.\$400 billion of merchandise export, a trade agreement with an important country such as the UAE would help sustain the growth momentum. As we are witnessing a big turnaround in manufacturing, the UAE would be an attractive export

market for Indian electronics, automobiles, and other engineering products.

A trade agreement is also an enabler for two-way investment flows. The UAE's investment in India is estimated to be around U.S.\$11.67 billion, which makes it the ninth biggest investor in India. On the other hand, many Indian companies have set up manufacturing units either as joint ventures or in Special Economic Zones for cement, building materials, textiles, engineering products, consumer electronics, etc. Many Indian companies have also invested in the tourism, hospitality, catering, health, retail, and education sectors. As both the UAE and India are aggressively pursuing FTAs with several important countries, not only companies from these two countries but also multinational companies from other geographies too would find the UAE and India an attractive market to invest.

### As an export springboard

India is aiming to achieve the U.S.\$1 trillion of merchandise exports and U.S.\$1 trillion of services exports by the year 2030. A trade agreement with the UAE could well be a springboard to realise these ambitious export targets. The UAE is a party to several regional and bilateral FTAs, including with countries in the GCC.

As part of the GCC, the UAE has strong economic ties with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Oman, meaning the UAE shares a common market and a customs union with these nations. Under the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) Agreement, the UAE has free trade access to Saudi Arabia,

Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine, Syria, Libya, and Yemen.

This FTA with the UAE will pave the way for India to enter the UAE's strategic location, and have relatively easy access to the Africa market and its various trade partners which can help India to become a part of that supply chain especially in handlooms, handicrafts, textiles and pharma.

### On compliance requirements

The UAE tariff structure is bound with the GCC, and the applied average tariff rate is 5%. Therefore, the scope of addressing Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) becomes very important. The reflection of NTBs can be seen through Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) which have mostly been covered by Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). The UAE has 451 SPS notifications. The SPS notifications are mainly related to live poultry, meat, and processed food. In addition, the UAE has 534 TBT notifications, mainly related to fish, food additives, meat, rubber, electrical machinery, etc. Most of the notifications are related to consumer information, labelling, licensing or permit requirements and import monitoring and surveillance requirements. These compliances pose a challenge for Indian exporters.

The FTA agreement must try to bring more transparency and predictability in the use of NTBs so that their compliance becomes less cumbersome.

*Chandrajit Banerjee is Director General of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The views expressed are personal*

## 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.

**Bank frauds**  
It is shocking and disconcerting that corporate bank frauds are still happening despite 'abundant' internal and external audits (Inside pages, "ED initiates probe into ₹22,842-cr. bank fraud", February 17). It can be safely said that most such frauds occur after the fraudsters have gained the confidence of the banks concerned and then proceed to cause much

havoc. Slack bookkeeping can cause problems too. Such cases also highlight the difference in the way the small and large borrower is treated. In the case of a small borrower, even the slightest issue has banks sending them a flurry of warnings and notices. It is a deep mystery how big borrowers escape scrutiny. Perhaps on detecting frauds, banks ought to file criminal cases and plead for immediate arrest.

**Playing with the money of small savers is inexcusable.**  
KATURU DURGA PRASAD RAO,  
Hyderabad

**Resigned**  
It is unfortunate that Ashwani Kumar, a senior Congress leader of some stature, has chosen to quit the party even as it struggles to revive itself. He enjoyed power and occupied prestigious positions when the Congress was in power. To

now ditch the party is opportunistic. Witnessing so many leaders leaving the party after enjoying power and prestige leaves one to wonder whether there are any ethical and moral values left in Indian politics.  
KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,  
Hyderabad

**To be fair, the Congress party has had to endure overt and covert annihilation strategies deployed by the**

**mighty BJP, but the role of inner party squabbles cannot be brushed aside.** It is high time that those who matter in the Congress examine why there are still defections and resignations.  
A. VENKATASUBRAMANIAN,  
Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

**Bappi Lahiri**  
In the passing of Bappi Lahiri, the nation has lost a musician who knew the pulse of the common man and had him dance and

croon to his magical tunes. He was the master of melody. M. PRADYU, Thalikuvai, Kannur, Kerala</p

# Is the post-Cold War security order changing?

PARLEY

The Ukraine crisis has brought the unstable security architecture in Europe to the fore of U.S.-Russia ties

*After a weeks-long stand-off, Russia announced on Tuesday that it is pulling back some of its troops from areas close to Ukraine, signalling a possible de-escalation. But at the same time, it has said that its core security concerns, particularly on NATO's expansionary open-door policy, remain unaddressed. The crisis, has brought the post-Cold War European security architecture into sharp focus, and triggered debates on whether the great power rivalry is back in the continent. In a conversation moderated by Stanley Johny, P.S. Raghavan and Nandan Unnikrishnan discuss the Russia-Ukraine crisis and what it means to the post-Cold War world order. Edited excerpts:*

**Ambassador, Russia has always maintained that it has no plan to attack Ukraine. But it has also mobilised some 1,30,000 troops on the three sides of Ukraine. What is the Russian President's strategy?**

**P.S. Raghavan:** What recent events have shown is that the post-Cold War European security architecture is not complete as yet. It is not as stable as people assumed it was. And at least since 2014, since we have seen this Russia-U.S. and Russia-Europe stand-off, the questions about what is a security equilibrium in Europe have constantly arisen. What the present action has done is dramatically pushed it to the fore. Of course, this has been going on for a long time; the troops build up was first reported in the end of October 2021. And it has been going on until it reached the stage where the U.S. said Russia has troops to invade all of Ukraine.

But what is President Vladimir Putin trying to do? I think he is responding to what U.S. President [Joe] Biden did in June last year when he extended a hand to Mr. Putin and said, 'look, I want a predictable and stable relationship with Europe'. The subtext was that he wanted the U.S. to get out of needless conflicts in Europe, West Asia and elsewhere – the withdrawal from Afghanistan was one demonstration of that – to be able to focus at least externally on the single principal adversary of the U.S., which is China. And what Mr. Putin is trying to say is, 'yes, if

you want a predictable and stable relationship with Russia, Russia's security needs to be taken care of. I don't want to have to be constantly skirmishing with NATO all around my periphery'. Essentially, that's the deal that Mr. Putin is seeking.

**Mr. Unnikrishnan, Tuesday's announcement at least signals that Russia is ready to de-escalate the crisis and continue diplomatic talks. How do you look at it? Has Russia achieved anything from its mobilisation?**

**Nandan Unnikrishnan:** First, I have to address the question of whether Russia has got anything so far. It has definitely not got security guarantees. It had handed over its written documents in December and some of those have received a written response, which the Russian sources have described as inadequate. But there is a significant victory that Russia has achieved. It's not enough to diffuse the situation, but it is a victory. The U.S.-led West has at last recognised what Russia has been saying since 1994 – that the security architecture in Europe is not in accordance with what Russia considers the security architecture should be. The fact that the West is willing to address and discuss this appears to be a big victory for Russia.

Second, has the situation been diffused? I still believe that we are heading towards some kind of accommodation. The Russians used a very heavy hammer to attract attention. But do I believe that the Russians are going to invade Ukraine? I don't think so, as that defeats the purpose of acquiring a certain degree of security. The Russians may take bits and pieces of Ukraine or even half of Ukraine, but insecurity will only grow. So, the way forward is accommodation.

**Ambassador, French President Emmanuel Macron called for respecting Russian concerns and sought to revive the Normandy format talks, while Germany's Olaf Scholz, who refused to send weapons to Ukraine, said in Kiev that Ukraine's entry into NATO is not on the agenda. So, do you**



think Europe is taking a different approach towards Russia from that of the U.S.?

**PSR:** Let's remember that NATO is 28 European nations and two non-European nations – the U.S. and Canada. Europe is right next to Russia, Europe has been facing the brunt of the Soviet as well as Russian actions over the last many decades. It is obvious that Europe will look at Russia differently from the U.S. The impact of any action that NATO takes in terms of sanctions or security will first be felt in Europe, not in the U.S. So, naturally, Europe's interest is in accommodation. Europe's interest in sorting out this matter is immediate and existential, while the U.S.'s is strategic and long term.

Also, I would like to point out that what Mr. Putin has achieved is, gradually the West has moved forward more towards meeting Russia's demands. Of course, it has not gone anywhere near ensuring that Russia's demands are fully satisfied. Russia has essentially three demands. One, Ukraine and Georgia should not join NATO. Two, the Ukraine impasse should be resolved. Russia's view is that the U.S. in particular has obstructed the implementation of the Minsk agreement. And three, these mutual security guarantees that we've all been talking about. Now, increasingly, the West has been saying that Ukraine's entry into NATO is not on the cards. Of course, this is an informal statement and the Russians keep wanting a legal guarantee. But the Normandy process, which is the Russia-Germany-France-Ukraine initiative to implement the Minsk accords, is one of the fundamental demands of the Russians. And it looks like they are moving towards agreeing to that. The other point is about the mutual security guarantees. Fo-

**Mr. Putin feels that this is the most opportune moment for Russia to press forward its demands. He understands that the strategic interests of the U.S. are elsewhere currently.**

NANDAN UNNIKRISHNAN

reign Minister Sergey Lavrov told Mr. Putin in a publicly televised address that the West has already agreed to a number of guarantees [including on missile deployments and military drills].

**The Russians have been talking about their concerns since the 1990s. Why has the mobilisation come now? Why is Russia asking for these legal guarantees now? Does this mean that Mr. Putin senses a moment of weakness in the U.S.'s hold over the international order?**

**NU:** Mr. Putin feels that this is the most opportune moment for Russia to press forward its demands. I am not going to get into the question of whether he perceives the U.S. to be weak or not weak. We are aware that the U.S. still stays the pre-eminent power in the world. I think that Mr. Putin understands that the strategic interests of the U.S. are elsewhere currently: they are to deal with many domestic problems that the U.S. is going through, and at the international level, the focus is more on the Indo-Pacific. The withdrawal from Afghanistan is symptomatic of this desire to have stable relationships elsewhere in the world so that it can focus on what it considers to be its primary area of challenge, which is the Indo-Pacific. Incidentally, that's something that the Indians should also welcome. Having

understood that, I think Mr. Putin feels that this is the most opportune moment to attract attention, through maybe some provocative behaviour, and try to push forth his demands and hope that a negotiation will result in something that is mutually acceptable or, as Henry Kissinger said, something that is to their mutual dissatisfaction.

**Ambassador, what are the implications of the crisis for India?**

**PSR:** In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea. And we had this issue of territorial integrity and sovereignty. In spite of that, we found a way of not criticising the Russian action. Here, everyone should be happy with the stand we have taken because we said that we want a diplomatic solution which addresses the long-term legitimate security concerns of all sides. And that is what all countries are saying they want. Now, what we would like to see and what Mr. Putin and Mr. Biden are trying to achieve is an accommodation, and there are these off-ramps available. And if these are taken, you then reach a situation of better equilibrium in Europe between Russia and the West. That can only be good for India.

I don't think that is in the Russian psyche, being a junior partner. Therefore, I would say that it's a matter of concern for India; India should continuously monitor the situation. But at the same time, it has not reached a stage where Russia and China are in some kind of unbreakable partnership. I think they still have their differences. So, in a nutshell, I think the Russia-China relationship is something that India should closely observe.

**Both of you talked about some kind of an accommodation. Practically speaking, how can Russia's security concerns be accommodated by the West?**

**PSR:** There are three issues. If the Ukraine impasse is dealt with in the Normandy process, if Ukraine is persuaded by the West to take forward the Minsk agreements, which have been approved by the UN Security Council, that is a clear plus for the settlement of the issue. The second is the issue which I consider almost settled. What Mr. Lavrov told Mr. Putin recently are issues that will take time, but are clearly mutually beneficial. And these are not controversial. The third issue is about Ukraine joining NATO. Please note that in all this controversy Crimea has not been mentioned at all. Neither the U.S. nor Europe has said that Russia should vacate Crimea as part of the security guarantees. As long as Crimea remains with Russia, and as long as these two breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia remain [outside the control of Georgia], neither Ukraine nor Georgia can join NATO. Because one of NATO's principles before it admits a country is that the country should not have disputes over its territory. So, these three elements exist for a solution.



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Chairman of the  
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Foundation, New  
Delhi



Scan the QR code to  
listen to the full  
interview online

## NOTEBOOK

### The elusive stars

Celebrities were much more accessible before social media and OTT platforms came along

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM



The pandemic has brought forth many positive aspects for feature journalists. Sitting in my modest bedroom in Chennai, I can now have conversations with celebrities from across the world. Even interactions with celebrities in the city can be planned quickly with little logistical issues.

But all this has come with a price. The rising dominance of OTT platforms and their aggressive PR machinery has reduced the time that journalists can spend interviewing actors, directors, writers, content creators. This is probably because the production house wants as many publications and channels to cover the film or personality within the stipulated time given for promotions. The more, the merrier perhaps – and this is quite understandable given the number of print, television and online media outlets available to them.

As a consequence, in most virtual interviews, we are given only 10 minutes. This naturally provides little scope for a detailed conversation or even detailed answers. The celebrity parrots the routine "I was very excited to do this project" answer to every interviewer and before we know it, the interview is over.

This is the case with most celebrities today, but there are also some actors who prefer to stay away from the limelight. Take Tamil film star Ajith, for instance. He has a big film, *Valimai*, coming up, but he has not obliged any journalist with an interview. In fact, it has been several years since he has given an interview. His PR team, when asked, simply says, "He doesn't give interviews these days." This is the case with other big stars like Rajinikanth, Vijay and Nayanthara; it has been years since they have sat down for a long conversation about their work or state of mind.

Things were much simpler a decade ago when Twitter and social media were not all the rage. Back then, we mostly had direct access to big actors, who had the luxury of time

while promoting their projects. As a young journalist with another publication more than 10 years ago, I remember sending Ajith an SMS with an interview request. A couple of polite calls later, we met up for breakfast at a hotel in the city. After the customary greetings, he put my recorder aside. "Tell me about yourself," he said.

And so, for the next 20 minutes, I regaled the actor with stories about my family members and my neighbourhood. He then went to the kitchen counter to tell the chef, who he seemed to know from before, to prepare a special dosa for me. Once it was made, Ajith brought it to me, even as I sat there wondering what was happening. The others in the room were giving me envious glances, perhaps wondering who I was and why I was getting so much attention from the actor. After breakfast, we settled in a quiet place and he spoke to me eloquently for almost an hour about life, films, the choices he made and why he made them.

Today, Ajith is a social media sensation despite not being present on any social media platform. A couple of years ago, he called a pizza outlet to place an order. Someone uploaded the phone conversation he had with the store manager on YouTube and woke up to a million views a few days later. Every rare public appearance of his is now viral material.

Some day, I hope to have a long conversation about why he decided to go incognito. And other conversations with other actors. But for now all I have are 10-minute Zoom interviews to look forward to.

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## DATA POINT

### Hijab row: Double blow for Muslim girls

On December 30, 2021, a controversy erupted at a pre-university college in Karnataka after 12 students sought permission to wear hijabs (headscarves) in classrooms. Permission was denied to them. While six of them decided to attend classes without their hijabs, the remaining boycotted classes. Since then, many institutions in Karnataka have instituted a hijab ban. Agitations against the hijab have broken out in parts of Karnataka. As schools were closed due to the pandemic, there has been a huge drop in learning levels in Karnataka\*. Data^ also show that the school attendance levels of Muslim girl students were lower than their Hindu counterparts in all States except Kerala. Female students who don't attend school face trouble later in all aspects of life due to low awareness levels. It is in this context that Muslim girl students face a hijab ban.

By Rebecca Rose Varghese and Vignesh Radhakrishnan



Female Muslim students remove their burqa and hijab before entering the school premises in Mandy.

Attendance levels	State	Hindu (H)	Muslim (M)	Christian (C)	M minus H	M minus C	Urban Muslim (U)	Rural Muslim (R)	R-U
Haryana	91.1	59.7	89.6	-31.4	-29.9	65.1	58.8	-6.3	
Uttarakhand	92.7	73.3	NA	-19.4	NA	82.8	68.7	-14.1	
U.P.	81	63.2	NA	-17.8	NA	70.3	59.1	-11.2	
H.P.	95.8	79.7	NA	-16.1	NA	NA	78.1	NA	
Rajasthan	87.4	79.3	NA	-8.1	NA	83.7	76.4	-7.3	
M.P.	79.1	72.5	NA	-6.6	NA	75.8	69	-6.8	
Maharashtra	92.8	86.6	NA	-6.2	NA	87.5	84.2	-3.3	
Gujarat	79.7	74.6	89.8	-5.1	-15.2	78.1	67.8	-10.3	
Bihar	84.5	79.5	NA	-5	NA	90	76.7	-13.3	
Odisha	81.1	76.5	75.3	-4.6	1.2	74.5	77.9	3.4	
Jharkhand	85.8	81.3	80.7	-4.5	0.6	86.5	79.5	-7	
A.P.	92.1	87.9	87.7	-4.2	0.2	89.6	86.1	-3.5	
Karnataka	92	89	97.3	-3	-8.3	89.9	87.6	-2.3	
West Bengal	92.6	90.1	97.3	-2.5	-7.2	91.7	90.1	-1.6	
Tamil Nadu	91.7	89.4	95.9	-2.3	-6.5	90.3	86	-4.3	
Chhattisgarh	86.2	85	83.9	-1.2	1.1	83.2	88	4.8	
Telangana	93.3	92.2	88.5	-1.1	3.7	93.8	87.6	-6.2	
Kerala	98.4	99.2	99.1	0.8	0.1	99.4	99	-0.4	

**Impact on life |** The table lists the impact that schooling has on young girls from Karnataka in different aspects of their lives. For instance, the % of women in Karnataka earning more than or about the same as their husbands saw a rise from 26.8% to 51.2% as their level of education increased from no education to >11 years of education

Years of schooling	% women aged 15-19 who have begun child-bearing	% of women using sanitary napkins for menstrual protection	% of women earning more than or about the same as their husband	% of women who alone or jointly with their husband decide how their husband's cash earnings are being spent	% of women who can make decisions about the following: their own health, household purchases, visits to their family	% of women who own a mobile phone that they themselves use	% of women who agree that a husband is justified in hitting his wife	% of women who agree that a wife is justified in refusing sex with her husband
0	18.3	39.6	26.8	63.1	60.9	38.2	80.9	69.7

## FROM PAGE ONE

## SC lifts stay on Haryana quota for private jobs

An employer faces a fine of ₹10,000 to ₹2 lakh for violation of the Act. The statute covers companies, societies, trusts, limited liability partnership firms, partnership firms, and large individual employers. Many hire talents from outside Haryana.

Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for Faridabad Industries Association, opposed the Haryana government's appeal against the High Court stay.

## 'No study done'

"Reservation in private sector has no basis in the Constitution. The law impacts not only employment but the very existence of livelihood. There was no empirical study done, no data

whatsoever to justify this law," Mr. Dave asked.

He submitted that the continuation of the law's implementation, which came into effect in January 2022, would have far-reaching effects, not only in Haryana, but across India as it would not stop other States from enacting similar laws which exclude jobs to residents of other States.

"There is a presumption of legality in favour of a law and it is ordinarily not stayed unless the legislation is *prima facie* unconstitutional or illegal," Mr. Mehta argued. But the top court left it to the Punjab and Haryana High Court to decide the case finally, assuring that it had meanwhile "protected those working".

## Singapore PM's speech uncalled for, says India

The comments by the Singapore Prime Minister led to a rare controversy between the two countries that otherwise have friendly ties.

Earlier in the speech, Mr. Lee had also praised India's former Prime Minister, the late Jawaharlal Nehru, and Israel's former Prime Minister, the late David Ben-Gurion, for helping their countries gain Independence, but added that subsequent generations of politicians had allowed moral values to "slide".

While Mr. Lee did not cite any specific sources for his claim about Lok Sabha members, it is believed he was referring to a 2019 report by the Association for Democratic Reforms, which found that of 539 candidates

that won the general elections that year, as many as 233 or 43% faced criminal charges.

However, government sources said it was not expected that a foreign head of government would cite this information, that pertains to India's domestic politics, in a prepared Parliament speech.

Opposition leaders also weighed in on the issue. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said in a tweet that Prime Minister Narendra Modi "denigrates Nehru all the time inside and outside Parliament" while the Singapore Prime Minister had invoked PM Nehru "to argue how democracy should work during a parliamentary debate".

## + I-T probe may reveal unknown yogi's identity

His cost-to-company shot up to ₹4.21 crore by April 2016. Ms. Ramkrishna resigned from the NSE in 2016. Although the senior functionaries had come to know about the issues, no action was taken in this regard at that time. During the inquiry, the SEBI found that the yogi was also well known to Mr. Subramanian. They communicated through the former's email account.

"Based on the emails, it appeared that confidential data pertaining to the NSE was forwarded to the unknown person by Noticee No. 1 (Ms. Ramkrishna) and also by Noticee No.6 (Mr. Subramanian) for seeking guidance or in response to information requested by

the unknown person," said the order. The information included data pertaining to the NSE's five-year financial projections, dividend payout ratio, business plans, agenda of the Board meeting and consultations over the ratings/performance appraisals of NSE employees.

Ms. Ramkrishna, in her statements to the SEBI on April 14, 2018, said the identity of the email id holder was "Siddha Purusha/Yogi i.e. a Paramahansa who maybe largely dwelling in the Himalayan ranges"; that he was a spiritual force who had been guiding her for the past 20 years; a force whose "spiritual powers do not require them to have any such physical co-ordinates and would manifest at will".

## Why blame Nehru, Manmohan asks govt.

Dr. Singh said all those who used to attack him as being silent and running a weak and corrupt government were now exposed. He accused the BJP of following a "fake nationalism" that followed the policy of divide and rule that was adopted by the British.

The video, in which Dr. Singh also raised the issue of the security breach of PM Modi's convoy at Ferozepur last month, was played at a press conference in Chandigarh.

"A few days ago, in the name of the Prime Minister's security, an attempt was made to defame Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and the people of the State. During the farmers' agitation too, an attempt was made to defame Punjab and Punjabis," he said in his nearly 10-minute long message in Punjabi.

According to him, the government had proved to be a "complete failure" on the issue of foreign policy. He al-

soothed that Chinese troops were "occupying our pious land for the last one year but efforts are being made to bury this issue". The government did not have trust in the Constitution and "institutions are continuously being weakened". "On the one hand, people are facing problems of price rise and unemployment and on the other, the government, which has been in power for the last seven and a half years, rather than admitting their mistakes and making amends, is still blaming first PM Jawaharlal Nehru for being responsible for people's problems," he said.

"I firmly believe that the PM's post has a special dignity and by blaming history one cannot reduce one's sins," he said. While the whole world saluted the bravery and sacrifice of Punjabis, the government did not talk about any of this. "As a true Indian hailing from Punjab, all these things deeply hurt me," he said.

According to him, the government had proved to be a "complete failure" on the issue of foreign policy. He al-

## Jaishankar leaves for Germany, France; focus remains on Russia

EU counterparts to push for a tougher line from New Delhi on Moscow's actions

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

Amid new flashpoints between Russia and the United States over Ukraine, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will leave for Germany and France, where he will meet counterparts from Europe and the U.S. for a number of meetings including an EU ministerial on the Indo-Pacific.

The visit, which follows close to his visit to Australia to attend the Quad ministerial meeting, is similarly expected to be overshadowed by tensions in Eastern Europe, where despite Russian President Putin's announcement of troops withdrawal from the borders with Ukraine, NATO countries continue to warn of a possible "invasion", as the Russian government expelled a senior American diplomat from the U.S. embassy in Moscow.

Asked about India's position, the MEA spokesperson



Australia's Foreign Minister Marise Payne and S. Jaishankar at a press conference in Melbourne. FILE PHOTO

said that the government's focus remained on ensuring the safety of Indian citizens, and urged them to leave by commercial flights, if possible, but that it had no "immediate evacuation plans" or plans to send in special aircraft to fly out Indian citizens from Ukraine.

Giving details of Mr. Jaishankar's six-day programme in Europe beginning Friday, the Ministry of External Affairs said he will participate in a panel discussion on the Indo-Pacific at the Munich Security Conference (MSC),

before he travels to Paris to meet with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Sunday.

In Paris, Mr. Jaishankar will join EU Ministers and others including Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne for the "EU Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific", chaired by France, which holds the European Council Presidency at present.

As *The Hindu* reported this week, European countries are asking India to change its stance on the on-

going tensions, and are expected to push Mr. Jaishankar for a tougher line on Russia during his visit.

In Melbourne last week, India was seen to be diverging from Quad partners at the ministerial meetings, as well as in a bilateral meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on the issue of "Russian aggression" on Ukraine, an assessment India has not shared.

Asked about the differences within the Quad, that were widely commented on in Australian media, the MEA spokesperson said India continues to believe that a diplomatic solution is the way ahead.

"If the Australian media wishes to call it a split, that's their choice. I don't think that's a correct characterization of [India's position]. I think [Mr. Jaishankar] spoke clearly," Joint Secretary (External Publicity) Arindam Bagchi told presspersons on Thursday.

## SC to take up tribunal vacancy issue soon

Have some patience, CJI tells lawyers

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday assured lawyers that it will take up the issue of vacancies in key tribunals soon, while indicating that it is a problem that cannot be simplistically resolved by sending those responsible for the appointments to jail for contempt.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana asked lawyers to be patient. "Should I call the government today and send them to jail? Will they then appoint people? Have some patience. I took this up yesterday and we will take it up," the CJI told advocates who highlighted the vacancies in the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal.

This is the second consecutive day the court has dwelt on tribunal vacancies. On Wednesday, the court had said its judicial intervention saw the government make abrupt efforts to fill up vacancies in tribunals some time back and nothing after



that. The court had wondered whether the bureaucracy was taking the problem of vacancies lightly.

In September last year, a Special Bench of the Supreme Court led by the CJI had said it was "not interested in a confrontation" with the government but the court was running out of patience.

The Bench had said tribunals across the country were on the verge of collapse. Cases had been adjourned by a year. The court had even said the only three options were to close the tribunals, make the appointments itself or initiate contempt action.

## IN BRIEF



Malik appears before judicial commission

MUMBAI  
NCP leader Nawab Malik appeared on Thursday before a judicial commission that is probing corruption charges against former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh after it issued a show-cause notice to him. It was issued by the retired justice K.U. Chandwani after dismissed officer Sachin Vaze brought to his notice Mr.

Malik's comment that former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and Mr. Vaze were the masterminds behind the antilia bomb scare.

## Coal block case: assets worth ₹200 cr. attached

NEW DELHI  
The Enforcement Directorate has attached immovable and moveable assets with a current market value of ₹200 crore in connection with a coal block allocation case involving EMTA Coal Limited and its promoters. The book value of the properties, in the form of bank balances, fixed-deposits, share and mutual fund holdings, office and residential buildings, is ₹136.48 crore. The ED probe is based on an FIR registered by the CBI against the accused persons.

## Ex-chairman of ABG Shipyard questioned

NEW DELHI  
The Central Bureau of Investigation has questioned Rishi Kamlesh Agarwal, former chairman and managing director of ABG Shipyard Limited, in connection with the ₹22,842-crore bank fraud case. He has been named as one of the accused persons in the FIR registered by the CBI on February 7. As alleged, he was part of the conspiracy to commit the offence, owing to which a consortium of 28 banks suffered losses.

## India again backs diplomacy at UNSC

## 'Safety of Indians in Ukraine a priority'

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN

At a meeting at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) called by Russia to discuss the Ukraine crisis, on the seventh anniversary of the Minsk II ceasefire agreement, India called for a diplomatic solution to the tensions.

"India has been in touch with all concerned parties. It is our considered view that the issue can only be resolved through diplomatic dialogue," India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, T.S. Tirumurti, told the Security Council.

India is trying to balance its interests, given its strong relationship with both the U.S. and Russia. On Thursday, U.S. President Joe Biden had said that Russia could invade Ukraine "within the next several days."

Russia, which holds the rotating presidency of the UNSC for February, had called around the anniversary Minsk II agreement - signed in February 2015 with an aim to bring peace in the rebel-held regions of the Donbas region of Ukr

aine. The agreement was signed by Russia, Ukraine, separatist leaders and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Minsk II has not been fully implemented (its predecessor, Minsk I, broke down).

"...We urge all parties to continue to engage through all possible diplomatic channels and keep working towards the full implementation of the 'Minsk Agreements,'" Mr. Tirumurti said. He also expressed support for the Normandy Format (Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France) at the Trilateral Contact Group (comprised of representatives of Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE).

"India's interest is in finding a solution that can provide for immediate de-escalation of tensions taking into account the legitimate security interests of all countries and aimed towards securing long-term peace and stability in the region and beyond," Mr. Tirumurti said, adding that the wellbeing of more than twenty thousand Indians in Ukraine (including students) was a priority.

## Blinken, Jaishankar held honest talks on Russia: U.S.

It's reflective of close relationship we share, says Donald Lu

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN

The U.S.'s top diplomat for South and Central Asia Donald Lu has said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his American counterpart Antony Blinken had an honest discussion on Russia and Ukraine.

"On the issue of Russia and Ukraine, I can say that there was, between Secretary Blinken and External Affairs Minister Jaishankar, an open and honest discussion," Mr. Lu, the U.S. Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia said during a briefing call to discuss Mr. Blinken's travel to Asia, including for the Quad meeting in Melbourne, as well as the Biden administration's recently released Indo-Pacific Council.

**'Complex issue'**  
"I think this is reflective of the close relationship we have with one another. This is a complex issue for the United States. It's a complex issue for India as well. We share values and we talk about every issue, including the tough ones," Mr. Lu said.



Donald Lu

India, on January 31, abstained from a procedural vote at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on whether to discuss the Russia-Ukraine issue.

Russia had thanked India for its position.

The meeting, however, took place and India called for "quiet and constructive" diplomacy to resolve the tensions. The discussions between the West, led by the U.S. and Moscow, have been anything but quiet, with frequent verbal sparring from both sides.

"There was a strong consensus in that [Quad] meeting that there needs to be a diplomatic, peaceful resolution to this. One of the core tenets of the Quad is to reinforce the rules-based international order, and that is a rules-based order that applies equally in the Indo-Pacific as it does anywhere else," State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said on Wednesday.

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"There are any number of tenets to that order. One of them is that borders cannot be redrawn by force, that large countries cannot bully small countries; that only the people of a particular country can be in a position to choose their foreign policy, their partnerships, their alliances, their associations.

Those are principles that apply equally in the Indo-Pacific as they do in Europe," Mr. Price said.

## Arrest warrant issued against J&amp;K journalist

## Produce Gowhar Geelani before court by Feb. 19'

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR

A J&K court issued an arrest warrant against journalist Gowhar Nazir Geelani on Thursday.

An executive magistrate directed the Station House Officer (SHO), Heepora, Shopian, in south Kashmir, to produce Mr. Geelani before

the court by February 19. "In view of non-appearance of Gowhar Nazir Geelani after serving notice on him under Section 107/151 CRPF, dated February 03, 2022, you are directed to arrest and produce the person before this court on Feb 19, 2022, in order to maintain peace and public tranquillity in the jurisdiction of this court," an order issued by the executive magistrate said.

Mr. Geelani, who writes



Gowhar Nazir Geelani

for foreign news channels and portals and is a well-known television commentator, was first summoned by the court on February 1 over

"dissemination of information on social media that would have endangered the life of the injured individual and other persons", following a militant attack that left a police officer injured.

Officials said he has failed to present himself before the court in response to the summon so far.

Mr. Geelani is the third journalist to be arrested in the past two months in Kashmir. Earlier, Sajad Gul, a photojournalist, and Fahad

Party miffed over being neglected in decision-making process, allotment of funds

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

Unhappy over being neglected in the decision-making process and allotment of funds in government functioning, a delegation of top leadership of the Maharashtra Congress on Thursday met State Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

Party Ministers and workers have been complaining over the past few months that they receive subordinate treatment from the Ministers of the other two parties. The party is particularly

upset about its Ministries being denied adequate funds.

"When it comes to cutting expenditure, the departments handled by the Congress get priority. But when it comes to sanctioning projects, we get secondary treatment. The issue was raised several times in party meetings and ultimately it was decided that it should be raised officially with the Chief Minister," said an office-bearer.

After the meeting, Mr. Patole said the Chief Minister has agreed to personally look into the matter. The party has decided al-

so to escalate its

# ASSEMBLY POLLS

CHENNAI THE HINDU | FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2022

## GROUND REPORT

# Amid poll fever, old order unchanged in Hathras

Family members of the Dalit rape victim say the upper castes crush them like flies at the first opportunity

ANUJ KUMAR  
HATHRAS

In the Uttar Pradesh election, every time the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) talks of improved security of women and daughters, the Opposition raises the Hathras incident, where a Dalit girl was raped and killed allegedly by four upper caste men.

While the BJP has replaced its sitting MLA, the Opposition parties are trying to cash in on the political capital accrued from the incident. The lawyer of the victim's family, Seema Kushwaha, has become the national spokesperson of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and is campaigning in the region.

Pradeep Chaudhary, who shielded Rashtra Lok Dal (RLD) chief Chaudhary Jayant Singh from police batons when he went to meet the kin of the victim after the incident, has been fielded by the party from the adjoining Jat-dominated Sadabab constituency.

**Two-word Hindi slur**  
In Bolgarhi, however, the electoral noise is muted. What one overhears is an upper caste man addressing a Dalit, a cousin of the deceased, with a two-word, pointed Hindi slur. The cousin refused to talk, while his father, one of the few present during the alleged forced cremation at the dead of night, said, "There is no point speaking about it in the current atmosphere. We are waiting for the time to pass by."

In villages, said a local social activist, where the Dalit



On the lookout: Farmers guarding their fields from stray cattle in Bolgarhi. ■ ANUJ KUMAR

voter was in minority, it was silent because he didn't want to take on the might of Thakurs as they have become to signify the face of the BJP rule.

The family is still living under security cover and the brothers of the deceased said they were safe as long as they were protected by CRPF men. "We are *keeda makoda* [flies] for the upper castes in the village whom they would crush at the first opportunity," said the elder brother, pointing to the huge mounds of cattle dung outside the house. "Even the security men have complained about the stench but 'they' want to show who runs the show here."

The case, he said, had not been fast-tracked as promised and the government lawyer was using delaying tactics. "We were promised a government job and a house, but now the government

seemed to be going back on its promise," he noted. The younger brother said their life was stuck and would like to resettle somewhere in the NCR (National Capital Region). "We were offered ticket by a political party but we are not interested in politicising the issue. We just want justice for our sister," he added.

**A BSP stronghold**  
Bolgarhi falls in the Hathras reserved constituency, which has been a stronghold of the BSP. It had won the seat four times in the past six elections. The BJP has held the seat twice.

Keeping in mind the emotions of the electorate, the BJP has replaced sitting MLA Harishankar Mahor with Anjula Mahor, former Agra Mayor. Hailing from the Kori community, she is being presented as a Dalit woman who stands a good chance to become a Minister, a first for

Hathras, if the BJP returns to power. However, old-timers say she is being seen as an outsider by a section of the party cadre.

The BSP has fielded a seasoned party man, Sanjeev Kaka, while the Samajwadi Party (SP) has relied on a BSP turncoat, Brij Mohan Rahi, who finished second in 2017.

Ms. Kushwaha deflected the question on BSP supremo Mayawati's absence from the scene when the incident happened. "The BSP is the only party that can provide security and justice to not just Dalits but the Sarva Samaj."

**Caste equations**  
Local observers said the issue could not gain much currency in elections because the caste equations seem to be helping the BJP. "The victim belonged to the Valmiki community that traditionally voted for the BJP and does not seem to be shifting in large

numbers. That's why the Jatavs who are in larger numbers don't usually vote for the Valmiki candidate as they consider them pliant to Hindutva agenda of the ruling party," said a senior journalist of a Hindi newspaper, requesting anonymity.

However, former Minister and Congress heavyweight Shyam Jeevan had a different take. A Valmiki, Mr. Jeevan said the Opposition parties had done injustice to the Valmikis by putting up Jatav candidates. "The community is now anguished with the BJP and it could be seen in the way BJP candidates are avoiding campaigning in Valmiki localities in the region."

Past record notwithstanding, he felt, a chunk of Dalit vote would shift to the SP. "The SP-RLD have crushed us in the past but the idea is to control a big snake with the help of a small snake charmer. I don't see the Congress having a problem with that."

**Tough fight in Sadabab**  
In Sadabab, Mr. Chaudhary is giving a tough fight to Ramveer Upadhyay, the face of the BSP's Dalit-Brahmin social engineering who shifted to the BJP just before the polls. While Mr Chaudhary is relying on the newfound Jat-Muslim chemistry, Mr. Upadhyay is assured of support of the Brahmins and Thakurs. He is also expected to wean some of the Jatav vote bank from the BSP because of his past connections with the community and he is also known to splurge during elections. The BSP has once again made an astute tactical

choice by fielding a Brahmin Avin Sharma, son of the mentor of Mr. Upadhyay. For a change, here the BSP candidate is expected to hurt the prospects of a star BJP candidate.

Back in Boolgarhi, upper caste families have now reconciled to the fact that one of the boys was responsible for the rape and murder but insist that the other three had been falsely implicated. "The people whom you are not supposed to touch, how could you get into an affair with their girl," said Ram Pal Singh, a Thakur farmer, praising the victim's father as a simple man who respects caste hierarchy.

On the stench around the victim's house, local advocate Sanjay Tiwari said there was nothing wrong as these are designated pits around the house. "Even officials can't change their position. It is the family that has encroached on the village land."

Farmer Om Prakash Sharma, whose son is a government servant, is assured of a BJP victory because of Ram temple and Article 370. "No court can pass an order if the government was adamant on delaying a case. We should learn to give credit where it is due."

However, he disapproved of the amendment brought in by the Central government to nullify a Supreme Court order diluting stringent provisions in the SC/ST Act. "It showed that the BJP also believed in appeasement. In this region, upper castes have suffered because of the Act during the BSP rule," he said.

**Modiji's governance is only in ads; there is no governance in the country**

PRIYANKA GANDHI  
CONGRESS LEADER

## POLPPOURRI

### Mulayam campaigns for Akhilesh



LUCKNOW  
Mulayam Singh Yadav, the 82-year-old founder of the Samajwadi Party, on Thursday made his entry in the campaigning for the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election by seeking votes for his son and political successor Akhilesh Yadav. The junior Yadav, current chief of the SP and like his father a former Chief Minister, is contesting from Karhal in Mainpuri which votes on February 20. Age and ill-health have reduced Mr. Mulayam's political activity in recent years. Union Home Minister Amit Shah took a dig at Mr. Mulayam stepping out to campaign for his son.

### 'Fo Fo' train in BJP poll manifesto



GUWAHATI  
Assam-style freebies for students, commitment to protecting the State's territorial integrity and the introduction of 'Fo Fo' (Follow Foothills) train, a peripheral rail network along the

foothills of the State for boosting tourism, are some of the promises made in the BJP election manifesto for Manipur, released by BJP president J.P. Nadda on Thursday. Elections are scheduled on February 28 and March 5.

### All Sirathu is a stage



KAUSHAMBI  
As Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya campaigns for the BJP across the State, a team of theatre artistes roots for him in the Sirathu Assembly segment, where he is locked in a contest against Samajwadi Party nominee Pallavi Patel. Over a dozen artistes of the theatre group from Delhi are staging street plays here to inform the public about the work done by the BJP govt. The characters are making people aware of various welfare schemes run by the double-engine government in the State, he said. PTI

Pallavi Patel. Over a dozen artistes of the theatre group from Delhi are staging street plays here to inform the public about the work done by the BJP govt. The characters are making people aware of various welfare schemes run by the double-engine government in the State, he said. PTI

# Channi goes the distance at Bhadaur

But voters appear unwilling to buy the Congress spin on the Chief Minister

SOBHANA K. NAIR  
BHADAUR

At the last minute, just before the deadline for filing nominations, the Congress announced that Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi will contest a second seat, apart from Chamkaur Sahib, which he has won thrice since 2007. The Bhadaur constituency in Barnala district was chosen. Bhadaur is one of the nine Assembly segments under the Sangrur Lok Sabha constituency, which the Aam Aadmi Party's chief ministerial candidate Bhagwant Mann has won twice.

In the past 55 years, the Congress won the seat only in 1967 and 2012. But the party looks willing to take on the AAP on its turf. Moreover, Mr. Channi has proved that he is a serious contender for the crown.

But there is a yawning chasm between back-room strategising and ground realities. While voters are happy that their constituency is receiving attention because of Mr. Channi's candidature, they feel they have little else to thank the incumbent Congress government for. One section says Mr. Channi is an



Mr. Channi has his share of admirers, who are convinced that the Congress will pull through. ■ SOBHANA K. NAIR

"outsider" who is "here only temporarily". While they appreciate Mr. Channi's 111-day tenure as CM, they do not see it completely divorced from the four-and-a-half-year reign of former Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh (retd.). The desire for change, an overriding narrative in this Assembly election, echoes here.

**People's fear**  
They have a litany of complaints. The predominant fear is that their *aglî nasal* [next generation] faces the twin dangers of widespread drug abuse and diminishing employment opportunities.

At Talwandi village, Gurmeet Singh points out that every alternate house is

locked and its residents have migrated abroad. "Our villages are slowly emptying out, my neighbours are gone, and I too shall go whenever I manage to save enough money," he says. Mr. Gurmeet Singh is in his early 40s. His peers in the same age group agree. Buying "permanent residency" for Canada is the final goal.

"What is left here? The schools have no teachers, the hospitals have no doctors, the roads are not repaired..." his friend says. The Congress machinery is working overtime, in the seat, to ensure that the likes of Mr. Shiv Charan Singh grow in numbers, that admiration for Mr. Channi's work translates into votes. Congress workers are criss-crossing the constituency distributing pamphlets and posters. Since February 9, Mr. Channi has visited Bhadaur half-a-dozen times, holding 14-15 meetings each time.

At Jangianna village, Ajmer Singh asserts that former Congress president Rahul Gandhi does not get to decide who will become Punjab's CM. It's up to the voters here. "Yes, Mr. Channi

# Facing flak, Channi seeks to clear the air

'My statement was directed at a few individuals causing disruption in the State'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

After an uproar over his call "not to let *bhaiyas* from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar enter and rule Punjab", Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi said on Thursday that his statement was twisted.

Mr. Channi's remark invited sharp criticism from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and others who accused the Congress leader of insulting the people of U.P. and Bihar and playing divisive politics.

As the clamour against him rose, Mr. Channi, in a



clarification, said his statement was only directed at a few individuals causing disruption in the State. "My brothers & sisters from U.P. & Bihar have contributed to

wards building Punjab. We have been together for generations & I love & respect all of them like my own family members."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused Mr. Channi of playing divisive and separatist politics. Addressing a rally in Abohar, Mr. Modi said it was not only an insult to the people of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, but to Guru Ravi Das and Guru Gobind Singh as well.

He said Guru Ravi Das, whose birth anniversary was observed on Wednesday and who had millions of followers in Punjab also, was born

in Kashi, Uttar Pradesh. "Is it not an insult to Guru Ravi Das as he was from Uttar Pradesh?" he asked. "Will you throw out Sant Ravi Das also?"

The Prime Minister pointed out that Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Sikh Guru, was born in Patna Sahib. "Has he not disrespected Guru Gobind Singh?"

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar wondered if Mr. Channi knew how big Bihar's contribution had been in Punjab. "Does he even know how many people from Bihar are living in and have served Punjab," he asked.



By the fourth phase of polling, SP will have enough to form government

AKHILESH YADAV  
SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

Modiji's governance is only in ads; there is no governance in the country

PRIYANKA GANDHI  
CONGRESS LEADER

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In reference to the Advertisement No.3973/Rect-F/ER/DrRMLIMS/2022, dated 05.01.2022 and Corrigendum No.4388/Rect-F/ER/DrRMLIMS/2022, dated 01.02.2022 for faculty positions (Contractual/Deputation basis), a Corrigendum is being issued with revision of number of posts and extension of last date of online application submission to 05.03.2022. Kindly visit Institute website: [www.drrmlims.ac.in](http://www.drrmlims.ac.in) for further details.

Director

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Package-II (Microfilming)	Estimated Cost : Rs. 5 Cr. Bid Security : Rs. 10 Lakh
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Details can be seen on the websites <http://sppr.rajasthan.gov.in>, [http://](http://rsl.rajasthan.gov.in)

## IN BRIEF



## Government extends date for NEET-MDS

The Union Health Ministry on Thursday extended the date for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test for MDS courses (NEET-MDS), 2022. In a communication, the Ministry said the exam was scheduled to be held on March 6. The date of completion of compulsory rotating internship for eligibility for admission to MDS courses has been now fixed as July 31 instead of March 31.

## 'Deploy flights to bring back students in Ukraine'

NEW DELHI  
The Union government should deploy special Vande Bharat flights to evacuate over 20,000 Indian students in Ukraine in view of the growing border tensions with Russia, Rajya Sabha member and Congress MP Vivek Tankha said on Thursday. He has written to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on the subject.

# Emails between Chitra & 'yogi', a coded puzzle for investigators

Out-of-context mention of travel plans and unknown 'children' raise suspicions

PALAK SHAH  
MUMBAI

Investigators examining the email exchanges between Chitra Ramkrishna, controversial former MD and CEO of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), and an unidentified 'yogi', suspect the two may have been using a code.

The emails, which show that a 'yogi' was guiding Ms. Ramkrishna to run the NSE, have several paragraphs that seem out of place. For example, in February 2017, the guru wrote to Ms. Ramkrishna, "Keep bags ready I am planning a travel to Seychelles next month, will try if you can come with me, before Kanchan goes to London with Kanchana and Bargava and you to New Zealand with two children. 'HK is a preferred transit or Singapore for onward journey.' In case you need help, pl let me know Seshu will do the needful."

This has puzzled the investigators because there



the circuitous route was taken to hide travel details.

## Two children?

Sources in the NSE and others who have interacted with Ms. Ramkrishna personally, say she has only a daughter.

Investigators are checking if she indeed had two children or whether the use of "two children" could be a code to convey something else. Ms. Ramkrishna had appointed Anand Subramanian as a virtual second-in-command at the NSE. SEBI has said the names, Kanchan and Kanchana, in the emails refer to Mr. Subramanian and his wife, who was working with the NSE's Chennai office.

But questions arise over why the couple was to travel to London, that too on the yogi's advice, and why he wanted Ramkrishna to go to New Zealand with (whose) two children.

The Seychelles, interestingly, is an offshore tax haven, but in the context of India

it attracts little attention from authorities since Mauritius, Singapore and Switzerland have been the preferred tax havens for hiding or re-routing hot money into the country. The emails between Ms. Ramkrishna and her guru date back to a time when India had no information-sharing treaty with the Seychelles on black money.

India signed an information-sharing pact with the Seychelles only in August 2015. Thus, only a person with full knowledge of India's administrative, political and legal system could choose the Seychelles for hiding wealth, knowing it would attract less scrutiny than other larger tax havens. The Seychelles imposes no tax on companies that use the island's banks for investment or routing of money to other countries, including India. An offshore company there pays no taxes on income generated abroad.

(Palak Shah is a journalist with Business Line)

# Conviction rate in human trafficking cases declining

Activists call for robust inter-State investigations

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Twice every week, two women from Basanti in South 24 Parganas of West Bengal, visit a local non-governmental organisation at the subdivision headquarters from their village, seeking details of the investigation in the case relating to their rescue from traffickers. These women in their twenties were rescued four to five years ago, but there has been no conviction of the accused.

The conviction rate in cases of human trafficking has been on the decline, government data show. Details of cases shared in Parliament earlier this month showed that the conviction rate has been declining over the past four years, although the number of anti-human-trafficking units (AHTU) in the country has increased to 696.

The conviction rate of cases related to human trafficking dropped from 27.8% in 2016 to 10.6% in 2020. Between 2018 and 2019 the con-

viction rate in such cases increased from 19.4% to 22.5%. The data has been sourced from a reply by Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra to a question in the Rajya Sabha earlier this month.

Tafeesh, a collective action platform, said the fall in conviction rate was due to "absence of a strong and robust mechanism to investigate human trafficking cases that often span across State borders leading to acquittal of traffickers across the country".

"Though the crime is usually an organised and an inter-State one, the investigation is rarely inter-State. And since this is a case of circumstantial evidence until

and unless the chain of circumstance is shown to be completed, conviction cannot be based on such evidence. Therefore, the low conviction rate is due to the problem and fallacies in investigation," lawyer Kaushik Gupta, a member of Tafeesh, said.

**Compensation delay**  
Subhashree Raptan, an activist from Goranbose Gram Bikas Kendra, said that despite orders from Courts, more than a dozen of survivors have not been awarded compensation by the District Legal Service Authorities in South 24 Parganas alone.

"We have to understand that after their rescue, things don't miraculously fall in place for survivors. In several cases, the survivors are rescued from other States and inter-State investigation falls flat. It is the survivor that has to fight for justice, and compensation is essential for her fight," Ms. Raptan said.

## 13 die in well collapse at U.P. wedding

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LUCKNOW

Thirteen women and girls died while singing and dancing at a wedding as a concrete slab covering an abandoned village well collapsed under their weight in Uttar Pradesh, an official said on Thursday.

Ten other villagers were injured as they also fell into the well and were hospitalised in Kushinagar district on Wednesday night, said Magistrate S. Rajalingam. The well was more than 15 metres deep, said Muralidhar Singh, a rescuer.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a tweet, described the incident as heart-rending and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured.

Authorities are investigating the incident in the village, which is about 300 km east of Lucknow.

Villagers claimed that ambulances reached the spot over an hour late even after several calls. Furious over the entire episode, many people blocked the 28 B National Highway.

The roadblock was later lifted.

"I think more people could have been saved had the ambulances arrived earlier. It was dark but the police came in time and they helped in rescuing people," Pappu Kushwaha, a resident of the village, said. (With PTI inputs)



A water taxi leaves from the Belapur Jetty in Navi Mumbai on Thursday. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

## India's first water taxi service inaugurated in Maharashtra

Project connects Navi Mumbai with the main city

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

India's first water taxi service was inaugurated in Maharashtra on Thursday connecting the Navi Mumbai area to mainland Mumbai. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated the Belapur jetty while Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbanand Sonowal flagged off the service.

The ₹8.37-crore project will presently operate on three routes and the State and the Centre have shared

the expenditure. The three routes include Belapur to Ferry Wharf - the domestic cruise terminal, Belapur to Elephanta Caves and Belapur to JNPT.

In the initial stage, seven speedboats - each with a capacity of 10 to 30 passengers - and one catamaran with passenger capacity of 50 to 60 will run on these routes. The cost per person on a single journey will be between ₹820 to ₹1,200 for speed boats and ₹290 for the catamaran.

Addressing the event, Mr.

Sonowal said the Sagarmala project has offered 131 projects worth ₹1.05 lakh crore for Maharashtra. "Financial aid of ₹278 crore for 46 projects will be offered under the project," he said.

"India's first train ran between Mumbai and Thane and it expanded throughout the country gradually. What happens in Mumbai spreads across the country," said Mr. Thackeray.

He said the ease of transport is a key factor for investors to set up businesses in the region.

## India, UAE to sign trade pact today

Virtual summit to be conducted on economic ties

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
NEW DELHI

India and the United Arab Emirates will sign the first ever bilateral Free Trade Agreement between the two countries on Friday.

The FTA - Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) - is expected to be in focus during a virtual summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. A statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said the summit will provide both the leaders an opportunity to discuss "bilateral coopera-



Strengthening links: Narendra Modi and General Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. ■ FILE PHOTO

tion and exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest".

Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal had announced last week that negotiations on the trade pact had neared conclusion and that it was to be signed soon.

India-UAE trade was ex-

pected to revert to pre-pandemic level this year and touch \$60 billion in this financial year, an official said.

Officials also noted that UAE was one of the foreign countries that had displayed interest in investing in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Investment from the UAE has steadily

## Draft laws on refugee rights need revision

NHRC member says expert panel could take up task

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

Model laws on asylum and refugees that were drafted by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) decades ago but not implemented by the government could be revised by an expert committee, according to Commission member Justice M.M. Kumar's suggestion at

a recent meeting.

The NHRC held a discussion on "protection of the basic human rights of refugees and asylum seekers in India" on January 20 and many participants raised the issue of India not having a specific law for refugees and asylum-seekers, according to the minutes of the meeting that were published on Thursday.

Though India has not signed the United Nations Refugee Convention, 1951, Justice Kumar said the refu-

gees and asylum seekers were entitled to the rights in Articles 14, 20 and 21 of the Constitution. He highlighted the lack of a specific legislation governing refugees and asylum seekers.

Roshni Shanker, executive director of Migration and Asylum Project, spoke of the NHRC's contribution in drafting a domestic asylum law and a model law for refugees in the nineties, the minutes of the meeting said. She suggested the drafts needed to be updated and

converted into laws.

In his concluding remarks, Justice Kumar highlighted the need to update the two old NHRC documents regarding the domestic asylum laws and model law for refugees. He suggested constituting a panel/committee of scholars and domain experts to update these draft laws, the minutes stated.

He also stated that if such laws were enacted, it would give legal sanctity and uniformity, ensuring the protection of human rights.

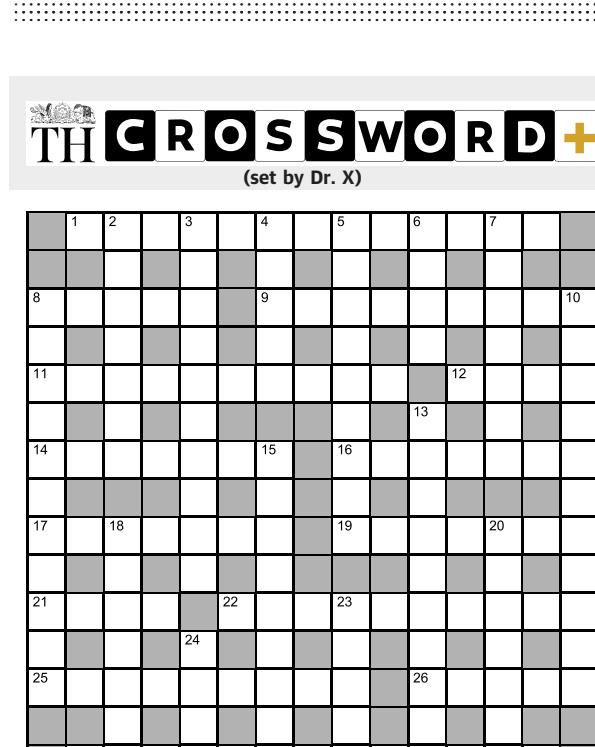
## FAITH

### The hallmark of a true yogi

The word yoga comes from the root 'yu' which means to unite. This implies that we are separated from something that is our original nature. The cause of separation is desire. We can't analyse the cause of the first desire, but we have to find the way back, pointed out Srimati Sunanda in a discourse. This means we have to withdraw from all kinds of attachments if one wants to unite with the cosmic spirit. Trying to get united with the cosmic spirit is yoga and this is possible only when there is total detachment of the consciousness of the individual from the objects in the external world.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches us that the best knowledge for all human beings in this world is to be aware that whatever act one does, it has to be done to the best of one's ability. Whatever you are capable of, one should do it with utmost sincerity of purpose. A rose gives fragrance as it is duty. This it does to whoever comes in its vicinity. It is its nature. It does not look for appreciation or recognition from those who enjoy its fragrance. It does not withdraw the fragrance when the servant is around nor does it spread it especially in the presence of the mistress. The point is that, regardless of what you are and what you do, every act has to be an inspired one. Doing what has to be done and doing it well in the right spirit of selflessness is the hallmark of a true yogi.

The paths of karma, bhakti and jnana are helpful to instill discipline at the physical, emotional and intellectual levels so that one moves towards the higher spiritual wisdom. We can reap the rich benefit in the form of the true ideal yoga practice by remaining detached. We have to shed selfishness and always remain humble in spirit.



**ACROSS**  
1 Resolve to tackle most silly darling cuddling bachelor or suffer stoically (4,3,4,2)  
8 One responsible for food poisoning quietly escapes, baffling police (1,4)  
9 Non-vegetarian mother about to consume steak heartily (4-5)  
11 Where geologists might be experiencing difficulties (2,3,5)  
12 Corrosion around left side of chain in neck ornament (4)

CMYK

SCAN TO PLAY

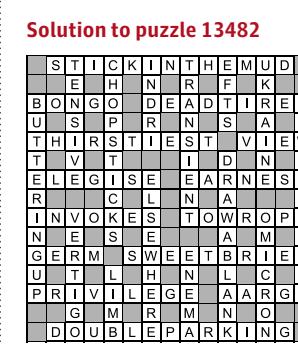


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## SUDOKU



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M CH-CHE

# Russia demands security guarantees

Moscow says it will be 'forced to respond' if no assurances come; U.S. says Ukraine invasion is imminent

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MOSCOW/KIEV

Russia announced on Thursday it could respond militarily if Washington does not meet its security demands and said it wanted all U.S. troops out of Eastern and Central Europe.

"In the absence of will on the American side to negotiate firm and legally binding guarantees on our security from the U.S. and its allies, Russia will be forced to respond, including with military-technical measures," the Foreign Ministry said. The U.S. handed back a response rejecting key Russian demands, including a ban on Ukraine joining NATO and clauses limiting Western influence in Eastern Europe and former Soviet states.

In its formal follow up on Thursday, Russia also said it insists "on the withdrawal of all U.S. armed forces in Central Europe, Eastern Europe



**High tensions:** A view of the kindergarten interior after the alleged shelling by separatist forces in Luhansk, Ukraine. • AP

and the Baltics". Moscow also made two separate announcements on Thursday that it was returning military forces to bases after completing war games that had spurred Western fears of an attack. However, NATO allies accused Russia of misleading the world with "disinformation" by saying it was returning some troops to bases. NA-

TO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance was concerned "that Russia is trying to stage a pretext for an armed attack against Ukraine."

U.S. President Joe Biden on Thursday said the threat of a Russian invasion was "very high" despite Moscow's claims of troop pull-back. The threat is "very

high, because they have not moved any of their troops out. They've moved more troops in," Mr. Biden told reporters at the White House. "We have reason to believe they're engaged in a false flag operation to have an excuse to go in." "Every indication we have is that they're prepared to go into Ukraine, attack Ukraine," he said. "My sense is it will happen in the next several days."

## Escalation in Ukraine

Meanwhile, Ukraine and Russia-backed separatists in Ukraine's eastern district of Luhansk traded allegations of an escalation in fighting on Thursday.

The Ukrainian military's command centre in the east alleged that Russian-backed forces had, "with special cynicism", fired heavy artillery at the village of Stanytsia-Luganska. "The shells hit a kindergarten," it said.

"According to preliminary data, two civilians were injured. Public infrastructure was also damaged. Half of the settlement was left without electricity."

"Over the past 24 hours, the situation on the line of contact has escalated significantly," Yan Leshchenko, head of the People's Militia in the self-declared Luhansk republic, told reporters. "The enemy, on the direct orders of the Kiev military-political leadership, is making attempts to escalate the conflict."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov described the allegation of a Ukrainian escalation as "disturbing". "This is a matter of very deep concern," he said. "We hope that our opponents from Western capitals, from Washington, from NATO, will use all their influence to warn the Kiev authorities against further escalation."

"Multiple obstructions" by the military junta that took power in August 2020 meant the conditions were no longer in place to operate in Mali, said a statement signed by France and its African and European allies.

# France to withdraw troops from Mali after 10 years

This comes after breakdown in relations with ruling junta

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

PARIS

France announced on Thursday that it would withdraw its troops from Mali over a breakdown in relations with the country's ruling junta, after nearly 10 years of fighting a jihadist insurgency that still poses a major threat to the West African nation and beyond.

The deployment has been fraught with problems for France – of the 53 French soldiers killed serving in West Africa's Sahel region, 48 died in Mali.

"Multiple obstructions" by the military junta that took power in August 2020 meant the conditions were no longer in place to operate in Mali, said a statement signed by France and its African and European allies.



Emmanuel Macron

tegy and hidden aims we do not share," President Emmanuel Macron said.

While announcing the decision, Mr. Macron made his strongest condemnation yet of the shadowy Russian mercenary group Wagner whose alleged arrival in West Africa has infuriated Paris.

In Mali, they were "essentially there to secure their own business interests and protect the junta itself," Mr. Macron added.

The announcement comes at a critical time for Mr. Macron, just days before he is expected to make a long-awaited declaration that he will stand for a second term at elections in April.

France first deployed the troops at Mali's request in 2013.

# Blinken urges Russia to declare no intention to invade Ukraine

'Moscow could fabricate an excuse to invade its neighbour'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

NEW YORK

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken challenged Russia on Thursday to make an unequivocal statement that it would not invade Ukraine and to back it up by pulling back troops.

At a UN Security Council meeting on the Ukraine crisis, the top U.S. diplomat laid out in detail how Russia could fabricate an excuse for invading its neighbour.

If it seeks peace, "the Rus-

sian government can announce today with no qualification of equivocation or defection, that Russia will not invade Ukraine, stated plainly to the world," Mr. Blinken said.

"And then demonstrate it by sending your troops, your tanks, your planes, back to their barracks," Mr. Blinken added.

At the meeting, called to discuss the showdown over Ukraine, the Secretary of State said he had invited

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to meet in Europe for talks next week, even as top U.S. officials say a Russian invasion could take place within days.

Citing U.S. intelligence, Mr. Blinken laid out a scenario in which he said Moscow could "manufacture" a pretext to invade, would then bomb Ukraine, launch cyberattacks to shut down its institutions, and send tanks and soldiers in to occupy the country.

# Zelensky admits Ukraine's NATO bid has 'stalled'

He cites resistance within the alliance

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BERLIN

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday said Kiev had little chance of joining NATO despite its ambition to do so, citing resistance within the alliance.

"We as a country would like to join NATO and have reached out to them for years," he told the German daily Bild. "But the process has stalled. There are causes and reasons for that. Not only Russia is against Ukraine joining."

Mr. Zelensky said "indivi-

dual NATO member countries support Moscow in its position", calling it an "open secret".

He declined to name the countries, saying he was still hopeful they would come around. "We don't have it easy with these countries and don't want any risks or diplomatic conflicts," he said.

Mr. Zelensky said the Ukrainian people should be able to decide whether the country joins NATO but that a referendum at this point would make little sense.

# Australia to list Hamas as terrorists

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CANBERRA

Australia on Thursday said it had added the U.S.-based far-right extremist group National Socialist Order and planned to add the entirety of the Palestinian group Hamas to its list of outlawed terrorist organisations as concerns rise about radicalised children.

The National Socialist Order, formerly known as Atomwaffen Division, joins Islamist groups Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham and Hurras al-Din in being added to the list, Home Affairs Minister Karen Andrews said.

Hamas' military wing, Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, has been listed as a terrorist organisation since 2003.

The National Socialist Order, which advocates a global "race war" and the collapse of democratic societies, joined the list on Thursday, bringing the number of outlawed groups to 28. The two Islamist groups, both active in the Syrian civil war, will be listed at a later date.

Ms. Andrews has written to State governments to finalise the listing of the Hamas as soon as possible.

"It's vital that our laws target not only terrorist acts and terrorists," she added.

Israeli PM Naftali Bennett congratulated his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison over the decision.

# Khamenei rejects claims Iran wants atomic bomb

Tehran closer to a nuclear pact: envoy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

TEHRAN

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei dismissed as "absurd" claims his country wants to acquire atomic weapons, in remarks on Thursday amid signs of a breakthrough in nuclear talks.



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

the supreme leader said.

"They have imposed sanctions on our nuclear energy, when they know very well that it is peaceful.

"They claim Iran will produce the bomb in some time, absurd words that make no sense and they know it very well themselves," said Mr. Khamenei.

"They know we are not looking for nuclear weapons, but for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

"They are pushing to produce the bomb in some time, absurd words that make no sense and they know it very well themselves," said Mr. Khamenei.

"They know we are not looking for nuclear weapons, even though it reneged on some of its nuclear commitments after the United States withdrew from the accord in 2018 under then president Donald Trump.

# In China, vice principals to curb 'bullying' menace

Recent surveys have shown a widespread problem of physical and verbal bullying in schools

ANANTH KRISHNAN

HONG KONG

Starting May 1, every primary and secondary school in China will appoint a vice principal who will be responsible for ensuring protection of students from bullying, the Chinese government said on Thursday.

The move is part of a broader plan to tackle a widespread bullying problem in schools, and comes in the wake of several high-profile cases causing nationwide concern.

New measures announced on Thursday, that

will come into effect on May 1, require that "at least one vice principal responsible for such work is appointed in each primary or secondary school," the Ministry of Education said, according to a report in the official Xinhua news agency.

**Key role** "The vice principals will assist with schools' efforts in safeguarding the rights and interests of the students and preventing juvenile delinquency, as well as participating in the safety management and law-based governance for schools," the

Ministry said, adding that "they will also play an important role in promptly identifying, preventing and addressing school bullying, raising awareness of the law and formulating relevant school protocols".

In 2017, a video that went viral showing students in a Shenzhen school brutally beating up a classmate brought attention to the problem. Reports at the time said the students were asking the child to pay "protection fees".

The students in the video, authorities later said, were "educated" and as they were

under 16 years of age, did not face any punishment. Instead, the school's vice principals were suspended.

Another case in Beijing triggered debate after a mother posted about how her son was bullied in a school toilet and had his head covered with garbage and used toilet paper. After the school played down the incident, reflecting a widespread attitude of tolerating bullying as a part of normal child behaviour, a storm of outrage led authorities to investigate the school.

That tolerance is now decreasing, spurred by cases

that have come to light and raised concerns about increasing violence.

The China Daily newspaper quoted a 2016 survey by the China Youth and Children Research Centre as "showing that school violence had escalated, and was marked with cruelty and randomness." Another survey from 2017 by the 21st Century Education Research Institute in Beijing, the website Sixth Tone reported, said "nearly half of the 1,000-plus respondents from 12 schools had at some point been subject to physical or verbal bullying."

Dy. S.E. (WB)-II  
(Ramesh Kumar Gulati)

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Phone No.:2862016, 2851000. E-mail : <a href="mailto:tamilminerals.com">tamilminerals.com</a>	
<b>NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER with forward bidding</b>	
1	Description
	Sale of Cement grade limestone (as mined) from Periyarankulam Mines.
2	Tender No. & Date
	6779/AP-B2-2022, Dated : 11.02.2022, 2022, TNMIN_228231_1
3	Tender submission end date
	16.03.2022 upto 1700 hrs
4	Technical Bid opening date
	17.03.2022 at 1700 hrs
5	Tender Fee & EMD amount
	Rs.2,000/- (Rupees Two thousand only) and EMD Rs.18,000/- (Rupees One lakh eighteen thousand only)
Note : For further details please visit <a href="https://tnitenders.gov.in">https://tnitenders.gov.in</a> DIPR/679/TENDER/2022	
GENERAL MANAGER (FINANCE)	

RAJASTHAN URJA VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED	
(An Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)	
Corporate Identity Number (CIN) : U40104RJ2015SC049738	
Regd. Office : Vidhyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur-302005	
Work Office : Sheet No. 5/A, Vidhyut Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur-302005	
E-mail : <a href="mailto:SE.PPR.UVNLU@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN">SE.PPR.UVNLU@RAJASTHAN.GOV.IN</a> ; Website : <a href="http://www.rajasthan.gov.in/rvnlu">www.rajasthan.gov.in/rvnlu</a>	
<b>NOTICE INVITING TENDER</b>	
Online bids are invited to procure 1000 MW RTC power from 01st March 2022 to 31st August 2022 on short term basis from various Generators/ State Utilities / CPPs / Distribution Licensees / SEBs/ Trading Licensees as per specification under TN-08/RUVNL/FY 2021-22. May visit website <a href="http://www.mstccommerce.com">www.mstccommerce.com</a> / <a href="http://www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvnlu">www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvnlu</a> for further details.	
RajNidhi/C2/11824 Superintending Engineer (PP)	

## MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	57,892	-0.18
US Dollar	75.11	-0.02
Gold	49,738	0.98
Brent oil	92.9	-2.55

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	734.20	-6.55
Asian Paints	3265.85	13.00
Axist Bank	782.80	-14.25
Bajaj Auto	3597.30	10.40
Bajaj Finserv	16181.20	-91.25
Bajaj Finance	7082.45	13.85
Bharti Airtel	717.00	-4.80
BPCL	373.00	-1.10
Britannia Ind	3464.10	2.10
Cipla	928.20	-4.90
Coal India	163.05	-0.80
Divis Labs	4442.20	-22.95
Dr Reddys Lab	4301.00	-15.45
Eicher Motors	2722.75	16.30
Grafix Ind	1711.25	-10.05
HCL Tech	1163.05	-4.75
HDPC	2411.80	47.95
HDFC Bank	1506.50	-9.25
HDFC Life	592.60	6.25
Hero MotoCorp	2793.45	6.65
Hindalco	532.55	3.25
Hind Unilever	2307.55	21.05
ICICI Bank	750.35	-13.70
IndusInd Bank	955.80	-12.60
Infosys	1724.80	-8.50
Indian Oil Corp	121.40	-0.10
ITC	222.65	-0.10
JSW Steel	638.20	-0.20
Kotak Bank	1817.30	-12.75
L&T	1686.70	8.00
M&M	862.25	-2.00
Maruti Suzuki	8525.45	-30.50
Nestle India Ltd.	18126.00	-97.80
NTPC	132.75	-0.45
ONGC	171.75	3.20
PowerGrid Corp	197.00	0.70
Reliance Ind	2443.50	30.55
SBI Life	1126.35	4.20
State Bank	512.95	-3.75
Shree Cement	24723.85	-192.50
Sun Pharma	862.55	-6.30
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	720.35	19.35
Tata Motors	499.95	1.50
Tata Steel	1190.95	-0.85
TCI	3784.20	-28.90
Tech Mahindra	1447.55	3.55
Titan	2493.20	5.15
UltraTech Cement	7045.95	-132.95
UPL	727.05	-8.75
Wipro	564.90	1.00

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.91	75.23
Euro	85.13	85.50
British Pound	101.92	102.36
Japanese Yen (100)	65.08	65.35
Chinese Yuan	11.82	11.87
Swiss Franc	81.31	81.67
Singapore Dollar	55.72	55.97
Canadian Dollar	58.96	59.21
Malaysian Ringgit	17.88	17.97
Australian Dollar	53.95	54.18

Source: Indian Bank

## Iraq oil imports into India hit 29-month high

**NEW DELHI** India's oil imports from Iraq surged to a 29-month high of 1.3 million barrels per day in January, data showed. **REUTERS**

# China asks India to ensure fair treatment of Chinese firms

Chinese statement follows ban on 54 apps, searches at premises of telco Huawei

ANANTH KRISHNAN  
HONG KONG

China's Ministry of Commerce on Thursday asked India "to improve its business environment" and to ensure "non-discriminatory" treatment of its firms, in the wake of a new ban on Chinese apps and recent tax probes on Chinese firms.

India, which has already banned more than 200 Chinese apps citing security concerns, this week banned a further 54 apps. The past week also saw searches at offices of Chinese telecom firm Huawei, which followed similar tax investigations into mobile maker Xiaomi.

Chinese Commerce Minis-



Seeking leeway: Chinese firms are concerned about India's investment environment, says China's Gao Feng. ■AP

try spokesman Gao Feng on Thursday said: "Indian authorities have taken... measures to suppress Chinese companies and their products in India, which have seriously damaged [their]

legitimate rights and interests". "China expressed serious concern about this," he was quoted as saying at a press conference in Beijing by the official China News Service. "The Ministry has

noticed that foreign investors, including Chinese companies, are also increasingly concerned about the investment environment in India," noting that "China and India are inseparable neighbours and important... trade partners for each other".

"The economic and trade cooperation between the two countries has strong resilience and great potential," he added.

Noting that bilateral trade reached a record \$125.7 billion in 2021, he said: "It is hoped [India] can take... measures to maintain the sound development momentum of bilateral economic and trade cooperation".

## FM bats for more support to low, middle-income nations

Minister moots multilateral initiative for global public goods

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday made a strong pitch for a multilateral initiative to support low-income and middle-income nations in meeting pandemic and climate change risks, backed by an independent and transparent governance structure.

Speaking at the first G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank governors' meeting this year, Ms. Sitharaman said a common pool of funds, with increased funding from multilateral development banks, must be made available for global public goods. The key, she said, would be to ensure that low-



Nirmala Sitharaman  
income countries are neither denied basic simple needs like PPE kits, nor should they be excluded from more expensive or complicated technological solutions.

Invoking former UN Se-

cretary General Kofi Annan's observation that global pu-

blic goods is the one missing term in all parleys about global co-operation, Ms. Sitharaman said that the criticality of such goods has now been recognised in the context of the health and climate crisis facing the world.

"The crisis for mobilising resources is acute in low-income and middle-income countries as their own fiscal space for generating that kind of increased spending on healthcare and climate change is very limited," she said. India, she noted, had put aside \$29 billion to bolster healthcare infrastructure and provide insurance to the poor and the lower-income groups in the country through the pandemic.

## SPORT

## TV PICKS

Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m.

**Australia vs Sri Lanka:** 4th T20I, Sony Six (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m.

**PVL:** Sony Ten 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m.

**India vs West Indies:** 2nd T20I, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD), 7 p.m.

**Pro Kabaddi:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m. onwards

**ISL:** Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.

**Bundesliga:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1 a.m. (Saturday)

## IN BRIEF

Takagi wins 1000m speed skating for her fourth medal

**BEIJING** Japan's Miho Takagi clinched her first gold of the Beijing Olympics on Thursday, to add three other medals she has already won, as she sailed to victory in the 1,000m speed skating. **REUTERS**

**James excels for Lakers**

**LOS ANGELES** LeBron James scored 33 points as LA Lakers beat Utah Jazz 106-101 in NBA on Wednesday.

**Other results:** Magic 109 lost to Hawks 130; Celtics 111 lost to Pistons 112; Pacers 113 bt Wizards 108; Knicks 106 lost to Nets 111; Bulls 125 bt Kings 118; Grizzlies 119 lost to Trail Blazers 123; Timberwolves 91 lost to Raptors 103; Thunder 106 lost to Spurs 114; Suns 124 bt Rockets 121; Warriors 116 lost to Nuggets 117. **AFP**

**Atletico suffers shock loss to lowly Levante**

**MADRID** Atletico Madrid slid to a 1-0 loss at home to Levante in La Liga on Wednesday.

**The result:** Atletico 0 lost to Levante 1 (Melero 54). **AFP**

**ENGAGEMENTS**

**Cricket:** Ranji Trophy, day two, Karnataka vs Railways, Guru Nanak College, 9.30 a.m.; CDCA inter-collegiate T20 tournament, Saveetha Engg. vs Bharath (1 p.m.), Sungamalai (Matt.), Medavakkam; CCA-Vasantha Chandrasekaran memorial open tournament, RKCA ground, Kovilanchery, 12.30 p.m.

## India downs HK

Lakshya, Mithun & doubles pair shine

## BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SHAH ALAM (MALAYSIA)

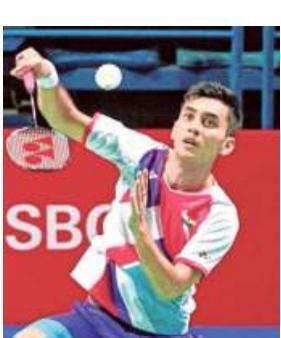
India men, led by World championship bronze medallist Lakshya Sen, secured a 3-2 win over Hong Kong in Group A in the Badminton Asia Team Championships.

The 0-5 defeat to Korea in its opening match has left India in the third spot in the group. Three-time defending champion Indonesia and Korea are currently ahead in the race to qualify from the group.

India Open winner Lakshya Sen, Mithun Manjunath and the doubles pairing of Hariharan Amsakarunan and Ruban Rethinasabapathy Kumar gave a good account of themselves in the five-match rubber.

However, the men's team will have to claim an outright win against title-holder Indonesia and Korea needs to lose to Hong Kong for India to make the knockout stage.

**The results:** India bt Hong



Lakshya set the ball rolling  
• FILE PHOTO

Kong 3-2 [Lakshya Sen bt Lee Cheuk Yiu 21-19, 21-10; Manjul Singh Khairakpam & Dingku Singh Konthoujam lost to Law Cheuk Hin & Lee Chun Hei 22-20, 15-21, 18-21]. Kiran George lost to Chan Yin Chak 13-21, 21-17, 9-21; Hariharan Amsakarunan & Ruban Rethinasabapathy Kumar bt Chow Hin Long & Lui Chun Wai 21-17, 21-16; Mithun Manjunath saw bt Jason Gunawan 21-14, 17-21, 21-11].

**Jamshedpur goes third with thrilling win over MCFC**  
**BAMBOLIM:** Jamshedpur FC clinched a thrilling 3-2 win courtesy of a Greg Stewart brace, which included a 94-minute winner against Mumbai City, to climb third in the Indian Super League table.

**The result:** Jamshedpur FC 3 (Stewart 9, 94-pen, Ritwick 30) bt Mumbai City 2 (Bheke 57, Mauricio 86-pen).

**Services men and Kerala women post wins**

**Bhubaneswar:** Services and Odisha men posted wins in the 34th Federation Cup volleyball at the KIIT indoor stadium here on Thursday. Meanwhile in the women's section, National champion Kerala defeated Odisha in straight sets.

**The results (league): Men:** Services bt Assam 25-20, 25-23, 25-23; Odisha bt Kerala 25-23, 25-19, 25-27, 27-29, 15-12; Haryana bt Karnataka 25-19, 25-21, 25-14.

**Women:** Kerala bt Odisha 25-19, 25-10, 25-10; Railways bt Himachal Pradesh 25-13, 25-14, 25-19.

**Bopanna in semifinals**  
**DOHA:** Rohan Bopanna in

## SNAPSHOTS



The hero: Jamshedpur's Greg Stewart is mobbed by teammates after scoring. ■FOCUS SPORTS/ ISL

partnership with Denis Shapovalov of Canada beat the fourth seeds Sander Gilje and Joran Vliegen of Belgium 7-6(7), 6-4 in the double quarters of the \$1,176,595 ATP tennis tournament here.

In the WTA event in Dubai, Sania Mirza and Lucie Hradecka reached the semifinals by beating Shuko Aoyama and Aleksandra Krunic in straight sets.

# Bishnoi's entry augments India's edge as it looks to sew up series

Skipper Rohit's handling of the leg-spinner is as much a good augury as his success for the home team; Pollard's men will be determined to get their act together

## WI IN INDIA

ASHWIN ACHAL

KOLKATA

Ravi Bishnoi suffered a few gaffes in his international debut, but he managed to get it together and script a happy ending.

In the early stages of the first T20I against West Indies here on Wednesday, Bishnoi fluffed a catch at long-off to give Nicholas Pooran a life. Later, when Bishnoi bowled his first over, he tested wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant with three wides.

It is to the debutant's credit that he overcame the early jitters to grab the 'Man-of-the-match' award, for a neat two for 17 spell. The spinner will enter the second outing here on Friday thoroughly confident and nerve-free.

It helped that Bishnoi had an astute captain in Rohit Sharma. Aware that the Bishnoi's stock delivery, the googly, turns a long way, Rohit stationed himself at slip for southpaw Pooran. When the right-hander Roston Chase came on strike, Rohit moved to an unorthodox leg-slip. The move may not have resulted in a wicket, but it was pleasing to note that Bishnoi and Rohit have concrete, customised plans in mind.

### Variety on offer

Bishnoi and spin partner Yuzvendra Chahal, though both classified as leg-spinners, differ in how they practise the art. Rohit alluded to the variety that Bishnoi offers, stating that he brings "something different" to the table. The skipper was clearly

pleased with Bishnoi's performance, describing him as a "very talented guy".

The team management will watch Bishnoi's progress closely, as it tries to identify a core group to do duty in the ICC T20 World Cup later this year.

This delicate team combination puzzle forced Shreyas Iyer to sit out of the first T20I. Shreyas, who only hours before the game was appointed the Kolkatta Knight Riders captain, was dropped because he cannot contribute as a bowler. The all-rounder role could be filled by Venkatesh Iyer, at least until Hardik Pandya regains full fitness and makes his return.

The finisher role, so crucial in T20s, was donned perfectly by Suryakumar Yadav. He started his knock with

three fours in the first four balls he faced. Most importantly, he took it upon himself to stay unbeaten and complete the chase.

### No fancy strokes

Suryakumar also guided Venkatesh through a tricky situation. "I told him (Venkatesh) that there was no need for fancy strokes, and to just play good shots with good intent. He batted really well," Suryakumar told the host broadcaster.

For West Indies, the disappointing tour continued with a fourth straight loss. The failures of middle-order batters Roston Chase, Rovman Powell and Akeal Hosein cost the team on Wednesday. Chase, a steady batter more suited to the long format, did prove his worth with the ball

in hand. His tight off-spin applied the skids on India, but the home side had plenty left in the tank to emerge unscathed.

### The teams (from):

**India:** Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Rishabh Pant (Vice-capt.), Ishan Kishan, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Venkatesh Iyer, Deepak Chahar, Shardul Thakur, Ravi Bishnoi, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohd. Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Avesh Khan, Harshal Patel, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Deepak Hooda, and Kuldeep Yadav

**West Indies:** Kieron Pollard (Capt.), Nicholas Pooran (Vice-capt.), Fabian Allen, Darren Bravo, Roston Chase, Sheldon Cottrell, Dominic Drakes, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Brandon King, Rovman Powell, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Kyle Mayers, and Hayden Walsh Jr.

Match starts at 7 p.m.



**Toast of the team:** The way young Bishnoi overcame a few initial gaffes and delivered big in the opening T20I was admirable. ■ PTI

## Dhull presents his credentials in the big league

His elegant century is the highlight as Tamil Nadu and Delhi share day one honours

## RANJI TROPHY

S. DINAKAR

GUWAHATI

A century on debut, an innings oozing class, and then a roar of appreciation from his teammates. Yash Dhull, the under-19 star, had arrived in the league of big boys.

His stroke-filled 113 (150b, 18x4) was the highlight on day one of the Ranji Trophy Delhi-Tamil Nadu clash at the ACA ground here on Thursday.

The feisty Lalit Yadav, combining defence with weighty blows, was on 45 as Delhi, put in, was 291 for seven at stumps.

### Pleasing sight

Dhull impressed with his balance and poise. Given the slightest width, he unleashed the square-cut. The opener also travelled deep into his crease and whipped the bowlers into vacuous spaces. And he pulled with panache.

Dhull's batting rhythm

and flow make him easy on the eye. He has a relaxed stance and times the ball through the gaps; leaning into his drives and flicking sweetly.

The ball moved around in the morning and Sandeep Warrier, taking the delivery away, had Dhruv Shorey snappet up in the slips and Himmat Singh caught behind.

Delhi was seven for two. Dhull, though, made light of the pressure and the conditions, was solid in defence and struck the ball with ease. Picking the length early, he had time to play his shots. His back-foot play and a still head caught the eye.

### Building the innings

The left-handed Nitish Rana (25) succumbed to a Mohammed delivery that left him. But then, the tall left-hander, Jonty Sidhu (71, 179b, 8x4, 2x6), batted with elegance and enterprise.

He went down on one knee for drives between



**Cut above the rest:** Dhull in full flow against Tamil Nadu on Thursday. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

point and cover as Delhi built a partnership even as the surface eased up. The Tamil Nadu pacemen were not consistent with their line and length. The stress on Delhi eased.

Dhull had a stroke of luck, though, caught off a no-ball when he could not keep a pull against Mohammed down on 97. He duly reached a hundred but eventually fell leg-before to a Mohammed off-cutter.

For Tamil Nadu, B. Aparajith, bowling his off-spin, impressed; he got southpaw Anuj Raut with one that curled away and deceived Jonty in flight for a return catch.

**IN BRIEF**

## Henry destroys SA

Pacer's seven-for puts NZ in command



**In seventh heaven!** Verreyne becomes one of Henry's seven scalps. ■ AFP

**SA IN NZ**

### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

CIRSTCHURCH

Matt Henry returned a career-best seven for 23 as New Zealand dominated day one of the first Test against South Africa here on Thursday.

Henry's bounce and movement saw South Africa fold for 95 before tea. At stumps, New Zealand had benefited from the wicket browning off in the late afternoon and was 116 for three.

Crucial to New Zealand's performance was Tom Latham winning the toss – for the first time in the nine Tests he has been captain – and putting South Africa in.

With the 10th ball of the match, Henry started the run when he had Elgar caught at third slip with a ball that nipped away, and after 49.2 overs South Africa was all out for its lowest score against New Zealand.

### SCOREBOARD

**South Africa – 1st innings:** Dean Elgar c Southee b Henry 1, Sarel Erwee c Mitchell b Jameson 10, Aiden Markram c Blundell b Henry 15, Rassie van der Dussen c Southee b Henry 8, Temba Bavuma c Conway b Southee 7, Zubayr Hamza c Blundell b Henry 25, Kyle Verreyne lbw b Henry 18, Marco Jansen (not out) 2, Kagiso Rabada c Blundell b Henry 0, Glenton Stuurman c Blundell b Henry 0, Duanne Olivier c Latham b Wagner 1; Extras (b-4, lb-4); 8; Total (in 49.2 overs): 95.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-18, 2-36, 4-37, 5-52, 6-85, 7-88, 8-88, 9-88.

**Toss:** New Zealand.

**New Zealand bowling:** Southee 12-2-33-1, Henry 15-7-23-7, Jameson 11-4-19-1, Wagner 9-2-21-1, de Grandhomme 2-11-0.

**New Zealand – 1st innings:** Tom Latham b Olivier 15, Will Young c Verreyne b Jansen 8, Devon Conway b Olivier 36, Henry Nicholls (batting) 37, Neil Wagner (batting) 2; Extras (b-5, lb-1, w-1, nb-1); 18; Total (for three wkts. in 39 overs): 116.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-18, 2-36, 4-37, 5-52, 6-85, 7-88, 8-88, 9-88.

**Toss:** New Zealand.

## Chennai Blitz puts an end to string of losses

Dents Heroes' knockouts hopes

### PVL

#### SPORTS BUREAU

Chennai Blitz ended its dismal run of four straight losses with a 15-14, 15-9, 15-14, 10-15, 12-15 win over Calicut Heroes – its first victory in five matches – in the Rupay Prime Volleyball League at the GMC Balayogi Stadium (Gachibowli), Hyderabad, on Thursday.

The combination of G.S. Akhin, Naveen Jacob Raja in defence and the attacking prowess of 'player of the match' Brazilian Bruno Da Silva and Fernando Gonzalez was just equal to the task for Blitz after the match began on an even note.

The ever-reliable Jerome Vinith, M.C. Mujeeb scored points to keep Heroes in the set.

At 12-11, Heroes won the super point to make it 13-11 only to see the scores tied 14-11 again when Bruno came up with a beautiful contact-less serve to clinch the first

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**The result:** Chennai Blitz bt Calicut Heroes 15-14, 15-9, 15-14, 10-15, 12-15.

**Friday's match:** Calicut Heroes vs Kochi Blue Spikers, 7 p.m.

This was Heroes' third loss in four games, denting its hopes of making it to the knockout phase.

**The result:** Chennai Blitz bt Calicut Heroes 15-14, 15-9, 15-14, 10-15, 12-15.

**Friday's match:** Calicut Heroes vs Kochi Blue Spikers, 7 p.m.

**Striking back:** Blitz was stretched by Heroes before pulling off a crucial win ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

set. In the second, Aaron Kourbi and Jerome came up with some impressive spikes at the start to make the score read 6-all before Chennai started dominating with Naiveen, P. Prashant picking points at will as Akhin splended with his blocks.

In the third set, Ajith Lal of Heroes finally found his rhythm but to the dismay of Heroes camp, Blitz defence didn't wilt under pressure in crunch time.

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**Striking back:** Blitz was stretched by Heroes before pulling off a crucial win ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### IN BRIEF



**Lord's puts an end to a 19th century tradition**

LONDON

Two of English cricket's oldest fixtures – Oxford v Cambridge and Eton v Harrow – will no longer be staged annually at Lord's after this year, ending a tradition stretching back almost 200 years.

Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said "will no longer be played as regular annual fixtures at Lord's after 2022". ■ PTI

**Yoddha beats Mumbai, clinches playoff spot**

BENGALURU

UP Yoddha's resolute defence helped it beat U Mumba 35-28 and clinch a playoff spot in the ProKabaddi League. Bengaluru Bulls defeated Haryana Steelers 46-24 in the second match. The playoffs will be held on Feb. 21 and 23 while the final is scheduled for Feb. 25. ■ PTI

## Coman saves Bayern's bacon

Liverpool has one foot in the quarters with win over Inter

### CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

#### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SALZBURG

French winger Kingsley Coman spared his side's blushes with a late equaliser as Bayern Munich laboured to a 1-1 draw away to Red Bull Salzburg in the Champions League last-16 first leg on Wednesday.

Coman prodded the ball in at the far post in the last minute of normal time to cancel out Junior Adamu's first-half opener and save Bayern from a first away defeat in the competition since 2017.

Bayern arrived in Austria looking to bounce back from its shock defeat to Bundesliga minnows Bochum on Saturday, but there were early signs of the same defensive wobbles which had plagued it at the weekend.

A mistake from Niklas Suelo opened up a chance for Brenden Aaronson after just a few minutes, as Salzburg snapped at the heels of the Bayern back line.

The visitors also had chances at the other end, but continued to look vulnerable and Salzburg deserved its lead on 21 minutes.

The result was harsh on Italian champion Inter, which dominated the contest at the San Siro for long periods after the break and



**Saviour:** Coman peels off on a celebratory run after prodding in Bayern's equaliser. ■ AFP

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# Text & Context

## NEWS IN NUMBERS



### Airport renaming

**13** The number of airports proposed to be renamed according to Union minister of State for finance, Dr. Bhagwat Karad. Speaking to reporters after arriving in Maharashtra's Aurangabad city on Wednesday, the minister said that a proposal to rename the Aurangabad airport after Maratha king Chhatrapati Sambhaji was sent to the Centre. Earlier, while speaking at a virtual ceremony, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had said that legislators who went to Delhi should pursue the matter of renaming the airport and get it done. PTI

### Lalu convicted again

**139** In ₹ crore, the amount RJD supremo and former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad is accused of withdrawing from the Doranda treasury. CBI court convicted the 73-year-old politician in the fifth and final case against him in the fodder scam, soon after which he was shifted to Birsa Munda Central Jail in Ranchi. He was admitted to the State-run Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), according to an official. He was taken to AIIMS New Delhi in January 2021 after his health condition deteriorated. PTI

### Repairs post-eruption

**90** In \$ million, the amount required by Tonga to repair the damages caused by an undersea volcanic eruption and ensuing tsunami that devastated the country. According to United Nations, 80% of the Pacific island nation's 105,000 people were affected by the calamity and the country needed to restore its key farming and fishing sectors. On January 15, 2022, an eruption left a thick layer of volcanic ash blanketing Tonga's main island, tainting much of its drinking water. Several small settlements were wiped out. AP

### Ukraine border build-up

**7000** The number of troops added by Russia near the Ukraine border in recent days, contrary to the claims by President Vladimir Putin that forces were being pulled back from the region. U.S. maintained that the threat from Russia is still strong, with Europe's security and economic stability in the balance. Russia has massed more than 1,50,000 troops, according to Western estimates. The Russian President signalled that he wants a peaceful path out of the crisis. AP

### Nestle profit dip

**20** The % dip in profit for the fourth quarter that ended on December 31, 2021, according to a report by Nestle India Ltd on Thursday. The company, which follows a January-December financial year, had posted a profit of ₹483 crore in the same period in 2020. Its revenue, however, from operations was up 8.9% to ₹3,739.32 crore during the period under review, as against ₹3,432 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal. Nestle India's total expenses in the October-December quarter, were up 8.2% to ₹3,022.97 crore. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

### EXPLAINER

## A miracle cure against HIV

What is the usual treatment for HIV infection? How is the latest experimental remedy different?

JACOB P KOSHY

**The story so far:** There is considerable excitement in the world of medicine after scientists reported that a woman living with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and administered an experimental treatment is likely 'cured'. Only three people so far are known to have been cured of HIV.

**What do we know about the treatment?** This week at a Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections, Colorado, United States, researchers described the case of a 60-year-old African American woman who was diagnosed with an HIV infection in 2013 and has reportedly been cured of the infection. She has been off ART treatment for almost 14 months now.

A combination of embryonic stem cells, from a donor with a rare mutation that naturally blocks the HIV virus from infecting cells, along with adult stem cells seems to have been the 'miracle' cure. The adult stem cells boosted the patient's immunity and possibly helped the cord blood cells fully integrate with the lady's immune system.

While this approach is certainly a welcome addition, stem cell therapy is a cumbersome exercise and barely accessible to most HIV patients in the world. A vaccine for HIV or a drug that eliminates the virus is still elusive and would be the long sought 'cure' for HIV/AIDS.

**What is unique about the recovery of this woman?** Only two people have reportedly been cured of HIV so far and both have relied on bone marrow transplants from donors who carried the mutation, called CCR5 delta 32, that naturally makes one immune to an HIV infection and AIDS.

Timothy Ray Brown, or the 'Berlin

patient' staved off the virus for 12 years but died of cancer in 2020. Another patient, Adam Castillejo, was the second reported case of a cure. Both men received bone marrow transplants from donors who carried a mutation that blocks HIV infection. However, the previous transplants involved adult stem cells and these cells from the bone marrow replaced their immune system. The body's natural tendency is to reject foreign stem cells and so both donors suffered side effects such as graft versus host disease where the donor's cells attack the recipient's body. Both men developed severe illnesses throughout their HIV remission but in contrast the woman was discharged from hospital within 17 days of the transplant and did not develop graft versus host disease.

**Anti-retroviral therapy has ensured that HIV/AIDS isn't always a death sentence and many with access to proper ART treatment have lifespans comparable to those without HIV.**

Her doctors theorise that it was a combination of the embryonic and adult stem cells that led to a better health outcome. However, because it's only been five-odd years of being HIV-free, it remains to be seen if the lady will live longer than Brown or Castillejo.

**Is this treatment the long-sought cure for AIDS?**

Not at all. While this approach is certainly a welcome addition to the arsenal of treatments, stem cell therapy is a cumbersome exercise and barely accessible to most HIV patients in the world. Moreover, this requires stem cells from that rare group of individuals with the beneficial mutation. Anti-retroviral therapy, through the years, has now ensured that HIV/AIDS isn't always a death sentence and many with access to proper treatment have lifespans comparable to those without HIV.

A vaccine for HIV or a drug that eliminates the virus is still elusive and would be the long sought 'cure' for HIV/AIDS.



### What is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in India?

As per the India HIV Estimation 2019 report, the estimated adult (15 to 49 years) HIV prevalence trend has been declining in India since the epidemic's peak in the year 2000 and has been stabilising in recent years. In 2019, HIV prevalence among adult males (15-49 years) was estimated at 0.24% and among adult females at 0.20% of the

population.

There were 23.48 lakh Indians living with HIV in 2019. Maharashtra had the maximum at 3.96 lakh followed by Andhra Pradesh (3.14 lakh) and Karnataka.

India's National Aids Control Organisation says that ART is "freely available" to all those who require and there are deputed centres across the country where they can be availed from.

### EXPLAINER

## A "Freedom Convoy" that is turning into a roadblock to public safety

What are the demands of Canada's protesting truckers? Why has Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the Emergencies Act?

G. L. NARAYANAN

**The story so far:** Since January 28, truckers calling themselves the "Freedom Convoy" have been staging demonstrations in the Canadian capital of Ottawa and beyond, demanding an end to a vaccine mandate imposed by Canada's federal government that requires them to be fully vaccinated when they return from the U.S.. The trucking industry, on which a major portion of the country's supply chain depends, had been spared the mandate till mid-January. What began as a cross-country, anti-mandate protest trip from the western Provinces to the capital has since attracted some support in multiple cities like Toronto, Quebec City and Winnipeg. The ambit of the convoy's demands has widened to include a call to end pandemic restrictions, to even seeking Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's resignation. The protesters have deployed multiple tools, such as blasting truck horns for upto 16 hours a day during the first 11 days; to harassing the public for disagreeing with their cause; to even brandishing racist imagery. Some Ottawa residents have reported seeing confederate flags, while there has also been a video post by a supporter hoping that this becomes "Canada's Jan. 6," in a throwback to the infamous Capitol Hill demonstrations by Trump supporters last year. For many days, a section of the protesters were also successful in

disrupting access to the Ambassador Bridge connecting Detroit, Michigan, U.S. and Windsor, Ontario – which is considered the busiest international crossing in North America.

On Monday, the Prime Minister invoked the Emergencies Act, a piece of legislation never used before, that allows the federal Government to take some sweeping measures, including those imposing prohibitions on protests; allowing law enforcement authorities to remove the trucks using force; and authorising financial institutions to freeze the accounts used to fund the protests, including the truckers' personal accounts. The Act, which will be initially in force for 30 days and needs to be approved by Parliament, covers the entire country, but the Prime Minister assured that these measures will be applied to only those cities where public order needs to be restored.

### Do the protesters have nationwide support?

The demonstrations have reportedly attracted thousands of supporters and the exact number of protesters is unknown. However, what is certainly known is that the protests represent the views of a small section of the Canadian trucker community, which reportedly employs more than 3,00,000 people. A survey in January by COVID-19 Monitor, which has regularly surveyed Canadian attitudes about the pandemic,



found that more than 70% of the respondents supported a vaccine mandate for all adults. Another polling organisation, Innovative Research Group, suggested earlier in February that more than half the respondents disapproved of the demonstrations. A survey done by another firm Leger, whose findings were made public on February 8, reported that 62% of Canadians disagreed with the message conveyed by the trucker convoy.

Around 90% of the total trucker population is vaccinated, and does not back the protests. However, the small community of protesters has attracted significant financial backing, a lot of it from the U.S., and their actions are having an outsized impact on the economy. A fundraising campaign in

January by the protest organisers on GoFundMe raised about 10 million Canadian dollars, though police action resulted in only a small portion of it actually being disbursed. The protests have also led to similar demonstrations in the U.S. and France. In total, by some estimates, the protests are costing the economy up to 300 million Canadian dollars a day.

### Where do the protests stand now?

In some parts of the country, strict police action has resulted in some protesters ending their demonstrations. The Ambassador Bridge was cleared over the weekend, with 46 people arrested and 37 vehicles seized. In the western Province of Alberta, where police arrested about a dozen protesters with rifles, handguns, body armour and ammunition, protesters have moved away from a border checkpoint, while another crossing in Manitoba was expected to reopen on Wednesday.

However, a day after the Emergencies Act was invoked, dozens of protesters in Ottawa stood their ground. In the coming days, police hope to arrest more protesters and crack down on their sources of funding, including crypto-currency accounts.

### Where do South Asian truckers stand on the protests?

South Asians, including Indians and Indian-origin Canadians, represent

around a fifth of the country's trucker population, to quote Newcom Media, a B2B publisher that has compiled more than 25 years of Census data. More than half the trucker population of major Canadian cities like Vancouver (55.9%) and Toronto (53.9%) consists of South Asian immigrants. Many of them come from India as international students and take up trucking as an occupation. Yet, not only is the "Freedom Convoy" unrepresentative of their views – with over 80% of the South Asian truckers being fully vaccinated – this section of the trucker population also feels that the Ottawa protesters are distracting

Government attention away from their real issues, like manpower shortage and low wages.

Manan Gupta, the publisher of Road Today magazine, which focuses on the South Asian trucking community in the country, tells in an interview to online publication TVO that major issues for members of the community includes wage theft; abuse of new drivers; unsafe conditions; poorly maintained trucks; lack of access to better parking spots; and lack of washrooms in pickup and delivery spots.

He adds that the convoy is not helping their cause. "If these headlines could be secured for all those other issues, I think the industry would be a better place to live and grow, and we could remove the supply-chain issues."

## THE GIST

Since January 28, truckers calling themselves the "Freedom Convoy" have been staging demonstrations in Canada, demanding an end to a vaccine mandate imposed by the Government, that requires them to be fully vaccinated when they return from the U.S..

The Government has invoked the Emergencies Act in response to these protests. It is a piece of legislation that allows the Government to take sweeping measures, like imposing prohibitions on protests and authorising financial institutions to freeze the accounts used to fund the protests.

Indians and Indian-origin Canadians, represent around a fifth of the country's trucker population and most of them do not support the protesters. They say that these protests are distracting Government attention away from real issues, like manpower shortage and low wages.



**Exemplary leader:** Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a public meeting at Tanjore on October 03, 1955. Mr. O.V. Alagesan is seen translating Mr. Nehru's speech. • HINDU ARCHIVES

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

# The gold standard for a Prime Minister

Jawaharlal Nehru's greatness is that the nation often misses his empathy, intellect and competence

## THE GIST

■ Democracy demands of a leader, especially one who is called to lead the Government, to possess three virtues to redeem his pledge. First, he must have a track record of service with humility. A commitment to the institutions of State forms the second virtue of a leader while the third virtue is the quality of the leader's legacy. Jawaharlal Nehru embodied all these three qualities.

■ A complex office like that of the Prime Minister of India requires two divergent temperaments. One, it has a front-office function wherein the incumbent must become the face of his Government and engage with the masses to draw their support and legitimacy. One must be an extrovert, articulate and full of vigour. Two, the back-office function of the Prime Minister amounts to the invisible work of reading dozens of files and making crucial decisions. Only an introvert leader who is contemplative and familiar with the complexities of governance will be able to discharge this duty.

■ Thus, a great leader has something timeless about him and he remains consequential. He cannot be deprived of the credit for the services he rendered and the values he stood for, even if the rulers of the day find his memory inconvenient or unprofitable.

D. SHYAM BABU

Since Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of the country is back in the political conversation with the current Prime Minister and his predecessor alluding to him, here is an article dated November 14, 2018 by D. Shyam Babu on Nehru's legacy.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, is now moving through an eclipse that B.R. Ambedkar experienced and yet emerged from more luminous. During his life, Ambedkar was vilified by both the left and the right, and decades after his death, he was at best ignored. Later jurists and scholars joined his followers to dust up his legacy and recognise him as a guide in political, social and constitutional matters.

That Nehru has lost State patronage is to be welcomed, for that is the only way that a great leader would be able to stand on his feet. Since his family continued to be a part of the party and the Government, any celebration of his life and work till recently was suspect. A genuine admirer of Nehru would have been mistaken for a courtier.

#### The three virtues of a leader

Democracy demands of a leader, especially one who is called to lead the Government, to possess three virtues to redeem his pledge. First, he must have a track record of service with humility. The spirit of democracy militates against our notions of 'the leader'. What it requires of him is to submit to people's will while being firmly anchored to due process. Nehru's constant engagement with the masses and his deep sense of national destiny helped him to be a class apart from his contemporary world leaders, especially in the developing world. A less competent leader would be driven either by the mob or become a dictator.

It is always tempting for a leader to flex his muscles lest he be dismissed as a weakling. Democracy affords a leader two choices: either he can assert his position even at the cost of due process to convince others and himself that he's in control, or he can submit to institutional requirements and traditions not so much as constraints on his right to rule but as a sacred obligation to be honoured. Hence, the commitment to the institutions of State forms the second virtue of a leader. That Nehru understood the indispensability of institutions above personalities is not the only measure of the man; he also recognised the need for a strong

#### Opposition for democracy to succeed.

The third virtue is the quality of the leader's legacy. Can the generations after him fall back on his ideas, traditions and exhortations that he preached and practised? It is fashionable today to ridicule Nehru's non-alignment policy and his belief in a mixed economy, but he formulated these policies not as a figment of his imagination; he tailored them to suit India's position at the time. Though this is not the place to delve into the merits of these policies, one must surmise that Nehru would have admitted to a certain wear and tear of these policies. He was also pragmatic enough to alter or jettison his policies if national interest so warranted.

Thus, Nehru was the complete Prime Minister that none of his successors can hope to be. Having witnessed more than a dozen of his successors in office over the past five decades, one is alive to the fact that no one comes even a distant second to Nehru.

#### Extrovert and introvert

Over and above any virtue, there is the matter of temperament that gives a leader his character. A complex office like that of the Prime Minister of India requires not one but two divergent temperaments, wherein lies the difficulty of being a successful Prime Minister. One, it has a front-office function wherein the incumbent must become the face of his Government and engage with the masses to explain his policies to draw their support and legitimacy, and also nudge his officials to translate people's aspirations into policy outcomes. One must be an extrovert, articulate and full of vigour to hit the campaign trail every now and then to plead with people why he and his political formation need and deserve their understanding, affections and support. Two, the back-office function of the Prime Minister amounts to the invisible and hence unsung drudgery of reading dozens of files and making crucial decisions. Only an introvert leader (an oxymoron) who is contemplative and familiar with the complexities of governance will be able to discharge this duty.

These two halves of the job expect the incumbent Prime Minister to be simultaneously an extrovert and an introvert. If a Prime Minister fails in his front-office functions, it would produce a political disaster, and a back-office failure would result in paralysed governance or misrule. India's history since Nehru is replete with instances of

Prime Ministers who were of either temperament, not both. Nehru remains the only Prime Minister to have discharged these two functions with aplomb.

Among Nehru admirers, there circulates an anecdote which testifies to his dexterity of being a part of the masses while supping with intellectual giants like Arnold Toynbee and Albert Einstein. Nehru as Prime Minister maintained a tradition of having 'personal guests of the Prime Minister' who would stay at the Prime Minister's official residence, the Teen Murti House, in New Delhi for some time. The guest would meet Nehru at breakfast and, possibly, at dinner, and he would have his own engagements. These worthies included historian Toynbee and British physicist and Nobel laureate M.S. Blackett, who advised Nehru on setting up a defence research establishment in the country.

Blackett visited India as many as eight times during Nehru's stint as Prime Minister. On one occasion, during the late 1950s, being a personal guest of the Prime Minister, Blackett met Nehru at breakfast. It was disheartening to the great physicist that he found Nehru to be distracted, weak and melancholic. Though he answered his guest's questions, Nehru was truly out of his wits, or so his guest thought.

Blackett was sceptical that Nehru could solve the problems of a vast and populous country like India, despite his intellect and commitment to national interest. It so happened that Blackett met Nehru at dinner on the same day. For every minor query, he found Nehru launching into a mini lecture, brimming with enthusiasm.

Blackett wondered aloud: how could a man who was so weak to engage in an informed conversation at breakfast be so vigorous at supper to expound on every question? Pat came the reply: "Oh, I addressed a public rally in the evening!"

A great leader has something timeless about him and he remains consequential. He cannot be deprived of the credit for the services he rendered and the values he stood for, even if his ideas and policies become passé and even if the rulers of the day find his memory inconvenient or unprofitable. Above all, people's collective memory will not allow him to fade into oblivion. Jawaharlal Nehru is one such leader that modern India produced.

D. Shyam Babu is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. Views are personal

## THE DAILY QUIZ

With the web series 'Rocket Boys' getting favourable reviews, a quiz on the life and accomplishments of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai.

1 What unusual method did Vikram, as a young boy, employ to store his thoughts and observations?

2 At 15, Vikram with assistance from the family carpenter built a working model of what in his backyard?

3 He had completed his undergraduate degree in Cambridge when WWII broke out in 1940. The prestigious university allowed him to continue his postgraduate research in India provided he studied under which eminent scientist?

4 Which famous educational institution did he and long-time collaborator Kasturba Lalbhai set up in 1961-62?

5 In 1967, Dr. Sarabhai launched a community TV programme that went on to become the longest-running show in national TV history. Name the show.

6 Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Sarabhai, the first rocket made entirely by Indians blasted off from Thumba on November 20, 1967. Name the rocket.

7 Name Dr. Sarabhai's danseuse wife and the famous academy that helped her set up.

8 Which future Bharat Ratna awardee, who worked with Dr. Sarabhai, once dubbed him the 'Mahatma Gandhi of Indian science'?

9 To mark his birth centenary in August 2019, what award did ISRO announce?

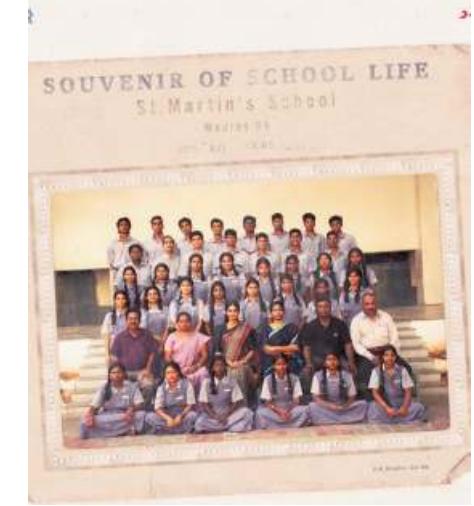


• This lander named Vikram in honour of the great man was part of which mission? • ISRO

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

Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Hakeem (then Akeem) Olajuwon by the Houston Rockets and Sam Bowie by Portland Trailblazers, 2. Wilt Chamberlain (who holds the NBA regular season record for most points scored per game in a season: 50.36 set in 1961-62 for the Philadelphia Warriors), 3. Scottie Pippen, 4. Steve Kerr (currently the coach of the Golden State Warriors), 5. Bryon Russell. 6. Dominique Wilkins of the Atlanta Hawks.

Early Birds: Ronnie Chatterjee Sanju Narwal Sejal Garg



#### IN THE LIMELIGHT

## Past forward

Why filmmakers tap into nostalgia

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

What do you do if you need to listen to a song? You would perhaps open YouTube or any of the music apps on your phone and play it.

In today's world, it will take you less than a few seconds to do that. But back in the 90s, when a certain A.R. Rahman took the country by storm with his melodies in *Roja* and the groovy beats in *Kaadhalan*, the process was much more than that. You had to find a cassette shop and a player/walkman, and fast-forward to the particular number you'd like to listen.

This process of music consumption is chronicled in a charming manner in the recent Tamil film *Mudhal Nee Mudivum Nee*, described by many '90s kids as a throwback to the past. In a note, its director-composer Darbuka Siva writes about its trending title track, "The song is a collage of sounds from various musical soundscapes that relate to nostalgia and the wonderful memories associated with it." If Chennai's 90s came alive in this film, recent Malayalam release *Hridayam*, starring Pranav Mohanlal in the lead, also took Chennaites down memory lane, featuring life in the city in the early 2000s, buzzing with engineering college students and busy roadside eateries.

Elsewhere, other people are taking a cinematic trip to the past as well. Hindi film *83*, starring Ranveer Singh in the lead, provided cricket-crazy fans in India a ticket to travel to the time they backed Kapil's Devils.

#### Back and forth

Probably the biggest reason for filmmakers to dip into the past is that it has a sureshot audience: people who have grown up through that era. With 80s and 90s kids brandishing that fact on Twitter bios and WhatsApp statuses, anything that reminds them of their adolescent days is content they'll devour. Besides, it also lets the filmmaker draw inferences from what they have seen and experienced rather than create new material; case in point, Vineeth Srinivasan drawing from his personal college experiences for *Hridayam*.

*Hridayam* went that extra mile in tapping into nostalgia; the team even sold cassettes and CDs of their album that features 15 songs! Says its music composer, Hesham Abdul Wahab, "When we spotted shops in Turkey selling cassettes and CDs, we became nostalgic about our own experiences with music, and wanted to provide that experience for listeners." Music label Think Music, which urged listeners to try out this old experience yet again, sold about 2,000 cassettes/CDs, another indication that the past fills not just the heart, but also something located close to it: the pocket. Currently, vinyl recordings of the tracks are being planned.

The emotion isn't entirely new, though it does seem to have made a comeback in recent times. If Cheran's Tamil film *Autograph* (2004), featuring the protagonist go in search of his school and college flame, clicked with most audiences, Nivin Pauly's Malayalam coming-of-age hit *Premam* (2015) chronicled several phases of the protagonist's life. Songs that have a retro flavour in them – like the Ilaiyaraaja-inspired 'Thooriga' from *Guitar Kambil Mela Nindru in Navarasa* – or dance sequences that remind us of the costumes of the past, still find a pride of place in today's cinematic world.

While most movies target the 80s and 90s, there are modern-day films that go even further back. Like Pa Ranjith's *Sarpatta Parambarai* (2021), which dealt with the thriving boxing culture present in Madras in the 1970s. Not only did it open many sections of the audiences to a sporting culture they had no clue about, it also gave its own cast members a chance to experience life during much simpler times. Actor Arya told *The Hindu*, "The minute I entered the set, it felt like time travel because I would see people wearing retro costumes and conversing in North Madras slang."

Many years later, when filmmakers make films on 2022, a time when we have already crossed three waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will probably sit back and reminisce about the times when masks, social distancing and vaccination were hot topics.

Nostalgia, surely, will always be in vogue.

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