



Mass hospitalisation continues in Eluru due to mystery illness

Page 8



PoK girls who entered Poonch by mistake returned to Pakistan

Page 10



Upbeat India eyes clean sweep in T20I series

Page 14

## NEARBY



'Jail sent back spectacles meant for Navlakha'

MUMBAI  
The Talaja Central Jail refused to accept spectacles sent for Gautam Navlakha, after the pair he was using were stolen, his partner Sahiba Husain said. "He has a very high-power number, about 6.5, and is almost blind without them," she added.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 11



By Karandeep Singh  
8826486658, 8826496658

## Farmer leaders seek non-political support

### BJP slams Opposition's 'double standards'



All ears: Farmers being addressed by various leaders ahead of the Bharat Bandh in New Delhi on Monday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Centre's charge of political hijacking of stir refuted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

On the eve of the Bharat Bandh, farmer leaders tried to find a balance between highlighting Opposition endorsement of the nationwide strike call as a sign of the widening support for their movement and refuting the government's accusation that the protests have now been hijacked by vested political interests.

"We want to thank political parties for support, but we appeal to them to leave their own flags and banners at home and stand solely in support of farmers," said Krantikari Kisan Union presi-

dent Darshan Pal while addressing a press conference called by Punjab's farmer leaders at the Singhu border on Monday.

So far, 24 political parties have come out in support of the bandh, according to farmers' groups. They include Congress and Left par-

ties, and regional outfits such as DMK, TRS, SP, BSP, RJD, Shiv Sena, NCP, SAD, Trinamool Congress, AIMIM, AAP, JMM and the Gupkar Alliance.

Ahead of the bandh, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Monday issued an advisory to all the States and

The BJP on Monday accused its rivals of "double standards". A day before the Bharat Bandh, the party cited the Opposition parties' earlier support to many provisions of the laws.

Union Law Minister Ravi

Shankar Prasad alleged that a section of farmers was caught in the grip of a few people with "vested interests".

He said the government was working to address their misgivings about the reforms. ▶ PAGE 9

ties, and regional outfits such as DMK, TRS, SP, BSP, RJD, Shiv Sena, NCP, SAD, Trinamool Congress, AIMIM, AAP, JMM and the Gupkar Alliance.

Ahead of the bandh, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Monday issued an advisory to all the States and

across the national capital. The farm union leaders said the strike will be effective from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. adding that no essential or emergency services will be disrupted.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGES 5 & 9

## SC nod for Central Vista inauguration

PM will lay foundation stone on Dec. 10



An artist's impression of the exterior of the new parliament building, with the existing one in the background. ■ FILE PHOTO

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the foundation stone laying ceremony of a new parliament building to go ahead as scheduled on December 10 after the government gave an undertaking to keep in abeyance or demolition of buildings and the shifting of trees in the Central Vista area for now.

Questions on legality

A Bench, led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, expressed displeasure with the government for "aggressively" continuing with the construction, demolition and shifting of trees even as questions concerning the legality of the Central Vista project were in court. "We thought we are dealing with

a prudent litigant and deference will be shown... We have shown deference to you and expected that you will act in a prudent manner. The same deference should be shown to the court and there should be no demolition or construction," Justice Khanwilkar addressed Solicitor General Tushar Mehta.

Mr. Mehta, after receiving instructions from the government, apologised to the court and gave an undertaking that no physical changes would be made to the area.

"I can make a statement that there will be no construction, demolition or felling of trees. Foundation stone will be laid. But no physical change," he stated.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8  
MINISTRY HOPES FOR QUICK DECISION ▶ PAGE 11

## Five terror suspects arrested in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Five terrorists – two from Punjab and three from Kashmir – have been arrested from east Delhi, the police said on Monday. The arrests exposed a nexus between Pakistan's ISI and Khalistan radicals, the police claimed.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwaha said the accused had been identified as Gurjit Singh and Sukhdeep

Singh alias Bhura, sharpshooters of wanted gangster Sukhmeet Pal Singh alias Sukh Bhikhariwal who allegedly contracted the killing of Shauarya Chakra recipient Balwinder Singh Sandhu. The three natives of Kashmir have been identified as Shabir Ahmad Gojee, Mohammed Ayub Pathan, and Riyaz Rather, who allegedly have links with Hizb-ul-Mujahideen.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## Up to Centre what happens next: farmers

Transport services, sale of fruits and vegetables may be affected due to bandh

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Elaborate traffic and security arrangements have been put in place across the national capital ahead of the Bharat Bandh on Tuesday, with Delhi Police warning of strict action against those who attempt to disrupt normalcy.

The agitating farmers are finalising their plans as well; either to move away from the Capital in case the Central government accepts their demands and decides to repeal the three controversial farm laws, or make their way towards central Delhi if it refuses to accede.

While essential services are unlikely to be disrupted, some transport services and sale of fruits and vegetables may be affected due to the bandh as several transport associations as well as traders' outfits at mandis are supporting the bandh call.

"Anybody who tries to disrupt normal movement/life



No entry: Barricades being placed at the Singhu border on Monday, ahead of the Bharat Bandh. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

or forcibly closes shops will be strongly dealt with, as per law. Delhi Police appeals to everybody not to disrupt life of common citizens and residents of Delhi," said the Delhi Police spokesperson.

Sources said maximum police force will be deployed on Tuesday along with para-military personnel. A senior police officer said that officials will be deployed at Del-

hi's borders, Jantar Mantar, Ramlila Maidan, Krishi Bhavan and other key areas.

**'Nothing will stop us'** Protesting farmers at the Singhu border said it was up to the government whether they went back home or risked clashes with security personnel as they marched towards the Delhi border to lay siege to Parliament.

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 2

### New cases at three-month low in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 1,674 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours – the lowest number of infections since August 31, when 1,358 fresh cases were reported.

The tally now stands at 5,61,732 and there are 22,486 active cases in the national capital. The death toll has reached 9,706 with 63 more fatalities reported in a single day.

The test positivity rate has further slipped to 3.15%, authorities said.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 3

## Exercising their right



Waiting their turn: Bodo men and women wait in queues to cast their votes during the first phase of the Bodoland Territorial Council election at the Jogeshpur voting centre in Kumarikara, Baska district of Assam on Monday. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

## Vijay's selfie most retweeted in 2020

Virat Kohli's was most liked tweet, trends show

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

NEW DELHI

The tweet from actor Vijay of a selfie with fans posted in February was the most retweeted one of 2020, while cricketer Virat Kohli's tweet announcing that his actor wife Anushka Sharma and he are expecting their first baby was the most liked tweet of the year, show trends released by Twitter.

"This year has been quite unusual and unique. One of the major things we witnessed was the need to con-



Actor Vijay took the selfie with his fans from atop a van in Neyveli in February. ■ TWITTER

nnect because we were physically distanced. Digital has become the most important way for people to express connection... rejoicing in celebratory moments, standing up for those communities impacted by the

pandemic, bonding over rediscovered shows, interests and memes," Manish Maheshwari, managing director, Twitter India, said.

**Lighting lamps tweet** In politics, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tweet on lighting lamps at residences was the most retweeted one; in sports, former Indian cricket captain M.S. Dhoni's tweet expressing gratitude for a letter of appreciation by Mr. Modi was the most retweeted.

IPL2020 and Dil Bechara were the top sports and movie hashtags, while 'Binod' became the most tweeted meme during the year.

Unsurprisingly, COVID-19 topped the list of topics in current affairs that Indians had most conversations about. This was followed by late actor Sushant Singh Rajput and the Hathras murder and alleged gangrape.

"In India, this year we played a very important role in three categories – informing, connecting and entertaining. Twitter became the service through which people got to know about how things are evolving, and COVID-19 became the most used hashtag on the service. Within COVID-19, there were a range of hashtags around janta curfew, wearing masks, etc.," Mr. Maheshwari said.

## SHANKAR IAS ACADEMY™

The Best IAS Academy In India SINCE 2004

### PRESTORMING™

### INDIA'S FIRST FULL FLEDGED

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

### SUPPORTED PRELIMINARY TEST SERIES

#### Why Shankar IAS Academy?

- 51 questions reflected in UPSC Prelims from Prestorming 2020 and IAS Parliament
- Orientation and Discussion for each test.
- Artificial Intelligence based analysis with All India Ranking.
- Exclusive test on Special Focus Areas like Schemes, Agriculture, etc
- 18 Current Affairs classes + 20 classes on focus areas like Environmental Organizations, Environmental Governance, International Organizations, Art and Culture Science and Technology.
- & Much More....

#### PRELIMS TEST SERIES BATCH - II

STARTING FROM 11<sup>TH</sup> DEC

DELHI BRANCH

88991 80180

Upper ground floor,  
25, Pusa Road,  
Delhi - 110060

New Delhi | Chennai | Bengaluru | Trivandrum | Madurai | Trichy | Coimbatore

www.shankariasacademy.com | www.iasparliament.com



## IN BRIEF

**Man kills partner's father in north Delhi, arrested**

A 25-year-old man, Suraj Kumar, was arrested for killing his partner's father as he was against their relationship, in north Delhi, an officer said on Monday. "On Dec. 5, a PCR call was received about a murder. The deceased has been identified as Bijender Singh (50)," said DCP (North East).

### Students' forum calls to support Bharat Bandh

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The All India Forum to Save Public Education on Monday gave a call to students across the country to support the farmers' call for Bharat Bandh on Tuesday.

The forum, which is supported by student unions and associations, has asked them to hold protests in their respective areas or campuses in solidarity with the farmers and demand the government to repeal the new farm laws.

The forum said India's struggle for Independence was led by marginalised workers and peasant masses and India has declared a war on its own people instead of addressing a democratic agitation of farmers.

"Undemocratic means like digging the highway, arresting without warrants, and false cases on peasant leaders are being employed to prevent the farmers from reaching Delhi," the students said.

It added that the NDA regime has been on a spree of privatisation since coming to power. "The NEP 2020 has commercialised education to an unprecedented extent and has sold the education sector to the corporates. It is the same corporate loot that the NDA is encouraging through the recently passed Farm Acts. By attacking the basic livelihood of the farmers of the country the regime aims to destroy the future of not just the farmers but also their children," the students said.

## At the border, farmers from Punjab and Haryana find unity in adversity

Hookah panchayat meetings make them question 'imaginary State divisions'

JATIN ANAND  
NEW DELHI

Common misgivings about the laws, which they demand be repealed aside, and their proximity at the Delhi's Singhu border for over a fortnight have brought protesting farmers from Punjab and Haryana together in more ways than one.

#### A possible goal?

Amid a sea of tractors, community kitchens and campsites stretching for kilometres, agitating farmers from both States said their newfound unity has brought them to acknowledge, and accept, shared cultural heritage they had almost forgotten, practices peculiar to their respective fields divided by State lines in the present and, in the idea of 'Greater Punjab', a possible goal for the future. The characteristic "hookah panchayat", considered native to Haryana, was created by many as having played a unifying role for agriculturalists from both States. A series of such meetings, they said, had made them question "imaginary State divisions



Farmers raise slogans against the Central government's farm laws ahead of the Bharat Bandh, at the Singhu border on Monday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

between Jatts and Jats" created "solely for political and divisive reasons."

"The Punjabi farmer has overcome his dislike of tobacco smoke from the hookah and joins us for our panchayats without fail. Old or young, Jat or Jatt, we sit and think about the greatness of undivided Punjab every day.

Maybe that is the way forward after this battle – a fight for a Greater Punjab," said Suresh Dhaka, a protester from Haryana's Sirsa

district.

#### 'Politics divide'

Manvinder Singh from Punjab's Doda district said if the last 11 days had taught him anything, it was that differences between Punjabis and Haryanis, which led to the State's division in the past were "purely political."

"The only difference between Jatt and Jat is in the way you spell either word just like there is slight difference in the languages that

we speak. We go to their hookah panchayats and they have learnt how much better their experience of tending to their fields can become if they equip their tractors with the woofers speakers that are common in Punjabi fields," Mr. Singh said. In the end, Harminder Dhillon, a farmer from Jalandhar, said farmers from both States were united by *keerat* (prayers) and *kheti* (farming).

Meanwhile, farmers said they had been discussing modalities related to the Bharat Bandh on Tuesday in addition to a march to Parliament if the government did not accede to their demands after talks on December 9 risking possible clashes with security personnel.

"All we are waiting for now is a 'yes' or 'no' from the government. There will be no more talks after Wednesday. If they say yes to our demands we will go back happily, if they say 'no', we will happily march on New Delhi to the Parliament to get ourselves heard properly," said Avtar Singh Gill from Amritsar.

## Industry associations seek solution to stand-off between govt., farmers

They say continued stalemate could lead to shutdown of units

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
GURUGRAM

With industries in Haryana hit by the ongoing agitation, several associations in the State have sought an early resolution in the stand-off between the farmers and the government.

The associations have expressed apprehension that a continued stalemate could lead to shutdown of many units.

Progress Harmony Development (PHD) Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Haryana Chapter, chairperson, Pranav Gupta said industry viewed agriculture as its part and unrest in the sector would affect the in-

dstry. He said the industry favoured a meaningful dialogue between the farmers and the government to break the deadlock and find an early solution to the issue.

He added that the economy was already struggling due to lockdown and the industry did not want agricultural sector to suffer and drag the Gross Domestic Product down. He, however, added that Bandh would further disrupt the production in the industry.

Mr. Gupta said the chamber represented around 6,000 industrial units across different sectors in Haryana and the entire sec-

tor was suffering due to the ongoing agitation. NCR Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Gurugram) president H.P. Yadav said the transportation of raw material and processed goods was hit due to the blockades and production had reduced to almost half in many units. He said auto sector was hit the hardest.

Gurgaon Industrial Association president J. N. Mangla said both farmers and the industry should find an immediate solution to the issue.

"If the agitation continues, it will create more problems for the industrial sector," said Mr. Mangla.

## Riots: HC seeks response from police on JNU student's plea

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought response from the police on a plea by JNU student and Pinjra Tod activist Devangana Kalita – arrested in a case related to the north-east Delhi riots – seeking copies of videos of protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait asked the Delhi police to file a status report in the case and posted the case for further hearing on January 7, 2021.

Ms. Kalita has sought copies of videos of protests against the CAA and other electronic data available with the police in the matter that were filed along with the chargesheet in the case. Ms. Kalita is in judicial custody in the case in which she is charged under the anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Earlier in September, the High Court had granted her bail in connection with an FIR registered on February 26, 2020 at Jafarabad police station. Ms. Kalita is facing four different FIRs connected to the anti-CAA protests in the riots and violence in Daryaganj during a protest last year.

## Kejriwal visits Singhu border to inspect arrangements at site

Punjab Chief Minister terms Delhi counterpart's trip a 'stunt'

#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday visited the Singhu border to inspect arrangements made for protesting farmers and also showed support for the Bharat Bandh.

Mr. Kejriwal said: "I have come here today to inspect all the arrangements in the area. I have seen that the toilets have been set up and sanitation has also been ensured. The water will be diverted inside with the help of water pipes and motors. I have seen living and food arrangements."

Meanwhile, farmers said they had been discussing modalities related to the Bharat Bandh on Tuesday in addition to a march to Parliament if the government did not accede to their demands after talks on December 9 risking possible clashes with security personnel.

"All we are waiting for now is a 'yes' or 'no' from the government. There will be no more talks after Wednesday. If they say yes to our demands we will go back happily, if they say 'no', we will happily march on New Delhi to the Parliament to get ourselves heard properly," said Avtar Singh Gill from Amritsar.

day in a peaceful manner.



CM Arvind Kejriwal meets protesting farmers at the Singhu border on Monday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Mr. Kejriwal thought all the demands of the farmers to be valid, why did he not get

State Amendment Laws passed in Delhi on the lines of Punjab and some other States to negate the devastating effects of the Central laws." He asked Mr. Kejriwal to back his claims of supporting the farmers' demands by opposing the farm laws openly and constitutionally, instead of "indulging in political drama for public consumption."

"I have requested the Central Government that they should listen to the demands of the farmers and bring a law to legalise the MSP. This will help all the farmers across the country," said Mr. Kejriwal.

+

**'Eye on Punjab polls'**  
"A few hours of media lime-light is all that the AAP national convener managed to get from this drama," quipped Capt. "the whole drama of supporting the Bharat Bandh and standing with the farmers was being enacted by the party with an eye on Punjab Assembly elections due in early 2022. You [Kejriwal] and your party members in Punjab had exposed your deceit and double standards back in 2017, and your wishy-washy stand on the farmers' issue now has again nailed your lies," he said.

## Sticky situation



People travel with heavy luggage on a truck in Delhi on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

## Saket, Chandni Chowk metro stations see average waiting time of 28 mins

**STAFF REPORTER**

NEW DELHI

Nearly a month into providing real-time average waiting time updates for a few stations, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has seen an average waiting time of 28 minutes to 35 minutes at stations like Saket, Chandni Chowk and Rajiv Chowk.

The DMRC had announced on November 11 that the real-time average waiting time at a few of the stations with a heavy footfall, would be provided if the waiting time went beyond 20 minutes.

On Monday, the Saket metro station

recorded an average waiting time of 35 minutes during the morning peak hour.

Peak hours on the metro network are between 8.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. while in the evening it is from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

The updates provided by the public transporter on its social media handles showed that stations like Chawri Bazaar saw a waiting time of 25 minutes during peak hours in the morning on November 12, while at Rajiv Chowk metro station the average waiting time was 21 minutes during the evening peak hours on the same day.

We are taking all necessary COVID 19 Precautionary Measures.

## WEDDING COLLECTION OFFER

**raymond**

Extra fine Pure Wool, Silk, Linen & Cotton blended Fabrics  
For Formals, Casual & Party Wears

By Economy Sales: 9212758425  
Latest Range of Designs & Colors  
GIFT PACKS AVAILABLE

BLAZER • SUIT  
SHIRT • TROUSER • JACKET

raymond PARK AVENUE ColorPlus parx

- PUNCHKUAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
- WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
- JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

**POLICE TELECOMMUNICATION HEAD QUARTER, M.P.,**  
Bhabhada Road, Bhopal-462003  
Fax No. 0755-2443674, E-mail: [sspradiompbpl@gmail.com](mailto:sspradiompbpl@gmail.com)

Third e-Tender Notice

dated: 02/12/2020

e-tenders are invited by Senior Superintendent of Police (Radio) MP Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of item	Qty	Required EMD Rs.	Tender Fee Rs.
1	Selection of System Integrator for Dial 100 Project Phase-II (2020-2025)	1 Complete Project	INR 2.5 Crores	INR 1,00,000/-

- Cost of tender documents (Tender fee) is Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lac only) which is non-refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition. Tender fee should be deposited online on website.
- The Tender should be submitted online on website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> in favor of SSP (Radio) M.P. Bhopal within scheduled date and time.
- EMD should be deposited online through the website or deposited in the form of B.G. issued by any Indian nationalized/ Scheduled Bank at this office before Bid opening.
- Tender documents also available on the website of MP Police ([www.mppolice.gov.in](http://www.mppolice.gov.in)) for the ready reference.
- This is a "Turn-Key Project".
- Schedule:**

Document download/Sale start date	02/12/2020 from 1800 Hrs.
Bid submission start date	02/12/2020 from 1830 Hrs.
Bid submission end date	22/12/2020 up to 1800 Hrs.
Bid will be opened on	23/12/2020 At 1830 Hrs.

Superintendent of Police (Radio)  
Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal

G-16129/2020

**Office of the Superintending Engineer Irrigation Works Circle Dehradun**

E-Tender Notice No. 10/SE/2020-21 Dated 04.12.2020  
E-Tender Notice

The Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Works Circle, Dehradun on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand, invites the item rate bids, in two bids system through electronic tendering, for following work from the eligible class of contractors registered with the HPPWD for the works as detailed in the tables:-

**Estimated Cost :-** Rs. 2932349/-

**Start date for downloading bid :-** 10/12/2020,

**Earnest Money:-** Rs. 73400/-

**Deadline for submission of Bid :-** 22/12/2020,

**Date of Tender Opening :-** 23/12/2020

The bidders are advised to note other details of tender from the department website [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://www.hptenders.gov.in).

**HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK:-**

HP / 4825/20-21

**Period of Completion**

1-1/2 month

**Cost of Tender (In Lac Rs)**

4000.00 + 720.00 (18% GST)

**Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement:** 07-12-2020.

**Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement:** 21-12-2020 upto 05:00 PM

**For further details please log on to:** [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://www.hptenders.gov.in)

**DIPR/UK/14167**

(R K Tiwari)  
Superintending Engineer

## Timings

DELHI

TUESDAY, DEC. 08
RISE 07:02 SET 17:25
RISE 00:00 SET 13:03
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 09
RISE 07:03 SET 17:25
RISE 00:56 SET 13:39
THURSDAY, DEC. 10
RISE 07:03 SET 17:26
RISE 01:59 SET 14:14

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	26	12
Safdarjung	26	12
Palam	24	14

## Delhi Palam Today

27°C Dense fog/smog likely during the cool morning. Pollution level would remain severe and improve gradually. Dry weather likely.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
27°C Moderate to dense fog at morning and comfortable day. Dry cool winds likely during day.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019  
All rights reserved.

## THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate inquiries about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, shall not be held responsible for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products or services. The publisher, Owner, Editor/s, Employees of this newspaper/company can be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

## IN BRIEF

## Look into plea on sewage discharge into lake: NGT

NEW DELHI  
The National Green Tribunal has directed the Delhi Development Authority to look into a plea alleging burning of garbage and discharge of untreated sewage into a lake in East Delhi. It directed DDA Vice-Chairman to ensure that action is taken to curb pollution in the Sanjay Lake park.

# Feluda test to start in Delhi in 10 days'

Government asks 47 hospitals to nominate doctors to be trained for COVID-19 vaccination process

NIKHIL M BABU  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has decided to conduct a part of the total COVID-19 tests in the city using Feluda paper strip test. It is expected to start within a week to 10 days, according to officials. The test gives faster results than RT-PCR test.

The government has also gone ahead with the training of personnel for COVID-19 vaccination drive to be conducted, once it is available.

"The government has asked 47 Delhi government hospitals to nominate two doctors each to be trained for the vaccination. These doctors will then conduct training programmes for others and help to make the whole training process faster," a Delhi government official



A healthcare worker collecting swab sample of a woman in New Delhi. • FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

told *The Hindu*.

Training will also be imparted to ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers to spread the message about the vaccine in the community, according to officials.

Also, of the total healthcare workers in the city, more than 1.5 lakh have registered with the Delhi government to get inoculated once

the vaccine is available and about 50,000-60,000 healthcare workers are expected to register with the Central government.

"These healthcare workers will be the first people getting the vaccine. Over 50,000 people being registered with the Central government are workers connected to Central government hospitals in the city. But they will be also be inoculated by the State government after they are registered," a second official said.

The Feluda paper strip test is also done in a lab and a nasopharyngeal swab will be used to conduct the test, just like the RT PCR test.

"Some microbiologists of the government were of the opinion that the test did not

add any value as we already have RT-PCR and Rapid Antigen Test. But in the end, the government decided to go ahead with it. This will increase the testing capacity, but it will not replace the RT-PCR test, which is the gold standard of testing," the official said. The official said that the test gives results within one hour, which is much faster than the RT-PCR test.

On October 22, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) had issued an advisory for the use of Feluda paper strip test.

"The government is yet to procure the Feluda paper strip test kits from TATA group or the ICMR, but we expect to do it within a week and also conduct training for the people using the kits," the official added.

## Virus treatment: HC directs govt. to follow CPCB norms for waste disposal

Court disposes of plea alleging improper disposal of used swabs

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday said it expects the city government to scrupulously follow the guidelines issued by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for handling and disposal of waste generated during diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 patients.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan's observation came after the Delhi govern-

ment said protocols are in place for handling and disposal of COVID-19 test kits and swabs and action would be taken against those not following the same.

The Delhi government had also placed on record the 'Guidelines for Handling, Treatment, and Disposal of Waste Generated during Treatment/Diagnosis/Quarantine of COVID-19 Patients', issued by the CPCB in July.

Taking note of the submis-

sion, the High Court disposed of the petition filed by a lawyer alleging improper disposal of used swabs from Rapid Antigen testing for COVID-19 at the office of the District Magistrate (South-East Delhi) at Lajpat Nagar.

Mr. Mehta said that when he had complained about the risk of widespread infection and the irregularity behind disposing off the swabs, the doctor concerned at the counter said that the swabs are of negative patients.

## 'Treat plea on regulation of powers as representation'

Volunteers misusing power: petition

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday directed authorities to treat as representation a petition seeking regulation of powers delegated to civil defence volunteers for ensuring compliance with COVID-19 norms in Delhi.

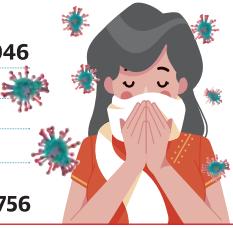
A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan asked the authorities take a decision on the plea in accordance with

law, rules, regulations and government policy.

The petition by advocate Amrita Dhawan claimed that civil defence volunteers were "misusing" the "unbridled" powers given to them under the Delhi Epidemic Diseases (Management of COVID-19) Regulations 2020. Her plea also sought direction to prevent the civil defence volunteer from wearing uniforms similar to that of the police.

## HELPLINE NUMBERS

COMMON HELPLINE — +91-11-23978046  
DELHI — 011-22307145  
GHAZIABAD — 0120 4186453  
NOIDA — 8076623612/6396776904  
GURUGRAM — 108/ 0124-2322412/  
9911519296/ 7015523417/ 9654231756



## Delhi sees lowest daily new cases in 3 months

Virus tally in Capital stands at 5,93,924

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi witnessed 1,674 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours — lowest in over three months — taking the total number of cases to 5,93,924, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

Also, 63 more deaths have been reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths to 9,706.

The last time the number of new cases was less than Monday's figure was on August 31, when the number was 1,358. Of the total cases, 5,61,732 people have recovered and there are 22,486 active cases in the city at present.

The positivity of COVID-19 cases on Monday was 3.15%, lesser than the average daily positivity in November, which was 11.65%. The overall positivity till now was 8.74%, the government bulletin also said.

Out of the total 18,813 beds available for COVID-19 treatment in the city, 67.9% were vacant, according to the bulletin.

## L-G reviews preparedness for COVID-19 vaccination

NEW DELHI  
Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Monday chaired a meeting to review preparedness for COVID-19 vaccination in Delhi at Raj Niwas. Mr. Baijal said he had issued directions regarding the completion of all required tasks related to the process in a time-bound manner so as to ensure smooth and systematic roll-out of COVID-19 vaccination in Delhi.

About 68.3% of ICU beds with ventilators for COVID-19 treatment in the city were occupied by Monday night and 50.1% of ICU beds without ventilators were full, as per Delhi government data.

In November, there were days when more than 50% of beds were occupied and about 90% of ICU beds with ventilators were full.

There were 6,292 containment zones in the city as on Monday.

The Delhi government

## Saga of Rapid Development in Paschim Bardhaman...

### Agriculture is our pride We are with the farmers

## Inauguration

- Solar Power Generation Project with 10 Megawatt capacity at Chalbalpur in Raniganj Block
- Upgradation of Baraboni water Supply Project
- Kalipahari Bus Terminus in Asansol Municipal Corporation area
- Overhead water reservoir at Tribeni Mor, Depot Para, Ghagarburi Temple, Kalla, Damra, Kalipahari, Ismail, Old SD Hospital, Indira Chawk, Gopalpur, Gutgupara and Usha gram
- Roads: Dhundabad in Salanpur Block-Khudka Tantipara, Phuljhuri Bridge-Netaji Colony and Phulberia-Lohat Mor Main Road, Madantar Village Road in Jamuria Block, Daldhali Mor Link Road-Hirapur Mor, Chinchuria Village Pancha Dam-Rabindranath Colony and Mangal Murmu's House at Taradanga village-ICDS Centre, Madhaiganj Pratappur Road in Durgapur-Faridpur Block-Jamgara village and Madarganj-Pratappur, Baktar Nagar on National Highway NO.2 in Raniganj Block-Baktar Nagar Village, Kalipahari-Andal Road in Andal Block and Old Military Road-up to Area Mor Sports Complex in Pandabeswar Block
- Renovation of Durgapur Model Lebu Welfare Centre in Durgapur Municipal Corporation area
- Renovation of Roads: Panagar-Silmarpur Road and Panagar-IIlambazar Road in Kanksa Block, Domahani Ajay Ghat-Churulia Road in Barabani Block, Muchipara-Shibpur Road in Durgapur Municipal Corporation area and from NH2 to Industrial Housing Scheme Sen Raleigh Road of Asansol Municipal Corporation
- Trilokchandrapur, Basudha, Kanchanpur, and Rajkusumpur Water Supply Projects in Kanksa Block
- Curtain Wall and Bolder Stone Apron of Kunur Bridge on Muchipara-Shibpur Road in Kanksa Block
- Coffee House in Asansol Rabindra Bhavan
- Newly constructed building of Asansol Circuit House
- Girls' Hostel on A.D.D.A Road in Asansol Municipal Corporation area
- Altogether 35 nos. Anganwadi Centre and 72 nos. Jahan Thaan in different Blocks of the District
- Renovation of Ekalavya Model Residential School in Kanksa Block
- Training Centre for Self-Help Groups in office of the Kanksa Block Development Officer
- Mini Indoor Complex in Churulia Shailabala Balika Vidyalaya in Jamuria Block
- Road and new bridge beside the existing bridge situated by the side of waterbody in Durgapur City Centre

## Laying of Foundation Stones

- Minorities Building in Asansol Municipal Corporation area
- Community Centres in Barabani and Raniganj Blocks
- Roads: From Jamdaha to New Kanchanpur in Kanksa Block, Sotogram to Madantor and Sankigram to Darbar Danga Nadi Ghat in Jamuria Block, Achhra to Panuria road in Salanpur Block, Ukhra to Arati in Durgapur-Faridpur Block and Asanbani Chati to Raniganj in Barabani Block
- Renovation of Roads: From Kanishka Rotary to William Carey crossing road under Durgapur Municipal Corporation and Ukhra to Haripur road under Asansol Municipal Corporation and NH-2 (J.K. Nagar Mor) to J.K. Nagar Market Rail crossing in Raniganj Block
- R.C.C. Box Bridge upto Tamla Nala bridge parallel to Kanishka Mor to Link road of Durgapur Municipal Corporation area
- Shelter for urban vagrants and swimming pool of national standard in Polo ground in Asansol Municipal Corporation area
- Roads: 4 in Andal Block, 3 in Durgapur-Faridpur Block, 3 in Kanksa Block, 8 in Barabani Block, 2 in Jamuria Block, 5 in Salanpur Block, 4 in Pandabeswar Block and 1 in Raniganj Block
- Renovation of Bamumara market in Kanksa Block and Raniganj market complex in Raniganj Block
- Concrete roads at Sristinagar, Dakshin Ismail and Salfia Nagar Madrasah road in Ward No. 83 under Asansol Municipal Corporation
- Community Centre at Niyamatpur in Ward No. 59 under Asansol Municipal Corporation
- 6 nos. of sitting place at Ward No. 23 of Durgapur Municipal Corporation
- Employment Training Centre at Durgapur I.T.I.

## Providing Services

- Residential Houses under Rehabilitation Scheme for the people of landslide prone Raniganj coal mine region
- Homestead Land and Financial Assistance to the people who have lost their lands for the Andal Airport Project
- Financial assistance for Purohit
- Cheques for development of the Manasah Than
- Cheques for development of the Majhi Than
- Patta
- Kanyashree
- Rupashree
- Sikshashree
- Aikyashree
- Sabuj Sathi
- Gatidhara
- Swasthya Sathi Cards for the folk artists
- Assistance under Tapasili Bandhu and Jai Johar Prakalpa
- Assistance to the farmers under Matir Sriti Scheme
- Old - age pension for the construction workers
- Mahila Samridhi Yojana
- Caste Certificates
- Trade Licence
- Sabujshree One time financial assistance for purchase of small and large implements
- Cycle fitted with Thermo-insulated box to Fishermen
- Poly Green house
- Vermicompost Pit
- Term Loan
- Direct loan to Self-Help Groups

## Dignitaries to be present

- Sri Moloy Ghatak, Hon'ble Minister, Government of West Bengal  
Smt. Chandrima Bhattacharya, Hon'ble Minister  
Government of West Bengal  
Sri Indranil Sen, Hon'ble Minister, Government of West Bengal  
Smt. Subhadra Bouri, Hon'ble Sabhadhipati  
Sri Jitendra Kumar Tiwari, Hon'ble MLA  
Sri Bishwanath Parial, Hon'ble MLA  
Sri Tapas Banerjee, Hon'ble MLA  
Sri Ujjal Chatterjee, Hon'ble MLA  
Sri Bidhan Upadhyay, Hon'ble MLA  
Sri Alapan Bandyopadhyay, Chief Secretary  
Government of West Bengal  
Sri Hari Krishna Dwivedi, Home Secretary  
Government of West Bengal  
Sri Virendra, Director General and Inspector  
General of Police, Government of West Bengal  
Sri Onkar Singh Meena, Secretary, Housing Department  
Government of West Bengal  
Smt. Vandana Yadav, Secretary, Department of Industry, Commerce & Enterprises, Government of West Bengal and Managing Director, West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation

In the presence of  
Hon'ble Chief Minister  
**Mamata Banerjee**

Inauguration of a  
Cluster of Projects,  
Laying of Foundation Stones  
and Providing Services

Date: 8 December 2020

Venue: Searsole, Raniganj

Time: 4.00 p.m.



Government of West Bengal

Groom shot at  
in Mundka

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old groom was shot at by a few men in Outer Delhi's Mundka on Sunday night during his wedding procession, the police said on Monday.

The victim has been identified as Raman, a resident of Palak village. They said they received information at 9.15 p.m. regarding a firing at a marriage ceremony near Hiran Kudna. On reaching the spot, they were told that the groom has sustained a gunshot injury and has been hospitalised. A case has been registered and manhunt launched to nab the abducting criminals.

CLASSIFIEDS MART  
TO ADVERTISE:  
[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)

EDUCATIONAL

**ANTHRO**  
Target 2022?  
Discuss all Your Problems  
& Strategy with  
**Vaid Sir in**  
YouTube Live Seminar  
on Dec20 at 6:00 pm  
Our YouTube  
Channel:  
[youtube.com/c/vaidicsdesh](https://youtube.com/c/vaidicsdesh)

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, HARIRAM RAO, DOB 05/01/1964, S/  
O late Shri BALIKARAN RAM, residing  
at 4/202, Sona Apartment,  
Kausalya Park, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016, declare that I have  
added the surname "RAO" I am now  
officially to be known as HARIRAM  
RAO for all purposes, inter alia,  
academic, legal, bank-related,  
and administrative. I may also have  
inherited the associated legal powers.  
Both the names, HARIRAM &  
HARIRAM RAO are now to be read as  
one.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of RBL Bank Ltd Mr. Manish Garg, who intends to mortgage the Commercial Ground Floor portion measuring 92.39 Sq. Mtrs. i.e. 110.5 Sq. Yds. of Residential First and Second Floor with roof right admeasuring 121.24 Sq. Mtrs. i.e. 145 Sq. Yds. of property no. II/501, II/502, II/503, II/504, II/505 area measuring 121.24 Sq. Mtrs. in Khasra no. 642, village Chandrawali alias Shahdara, Teliwara, Illoqa Shahdara Delhi with our client RBL Bank Ltd. against the financial assistance. Whereas, out of the previous chain link documents Original Certificate of Sale dated 28.08.1998, GPs dated 16.09.1998 & Sale Deed dated 22.02.1999 related to above mentioned property were misplaced.

If any person(s) having above mentioned documents or having objection regarding mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 07 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 07 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. RBL Bank Ltd. will proceed with the mortgage process.

DEEJPYOT SINGH, ADVOCATE

A-13, LGF, South Extn-II, New Delhi-49 # 011-26262610, 11, 12

## KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e -TENDER

### ABRIDGED NIT

The Director General (CIVIL), KMC invites tender online percentage rate two bid system for following works:

1. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XII/106/30/20-21

Name of work: Improvement of kerb and channel near Prem. No.-7/4 Golden Park in ward no. 106; Estimated Cost: Rs. 6,50,200.01; Earnest Money : Rs. 13,050.00;

2. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XII/106/37/20-21

Name of work: Improvement of U/G Drain near Prem. No.25/1, P.M. Sarani in ward no.106; Estimated Cost: Rs. 8,23,703.69; Earnest Money : Rs. 16,500.00; Period of Completion: 90 Days (For Sl. No. 1 & 2);

3. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XII/106/46/20-21

Name of work: Construction of U/G Drain near Prem. No.13 Purbachal Main Road in ward no.106; Estimated Cost: Rs. 5,66,987.73; Earnest Money : Rs. 11,400.00;

4. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XII/106/47/20-21

Name of work: Improvement of U/G Drain near Prem. No.47/C P.M. Sarani in ward no. 106; Estimated Cost: Rs. 6,71,869.41; Earnest Money : Rs. 13,500.00; Period of Completion: 60 Days (For Sl. Nos. 3 & 4);

5. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XIII/118/38/20-21

Name of work: Improvement of Drainage system by laying of U/G Swewr at bye lane of S. N. Roy Road near Pr. No. 172/2, 172/5 etc. in ward no. 118; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 9,70,110.31; Earnest Money : Rs. 19,500.00;

6. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XIII/118/40/20-21

Name of work: Improvement of road by through laying of hot-mix works at bye lane of S. N. Roy Road, A. G. Road, R. B. Road, Sahapur Main Road & J.K. Pal Road near Prem. No. 68, 40, 175/29, 25, 11, 179, 38/9, 13/2, 5 etc. in ward no. 118; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 9,70,894.09; Earnest Money : Rs. 19,500.00; Period of Completion: 35 Days (For Sl. No. 5 & 6);

7. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XIII/122/30/20-21

Name of work: Dev. of drainage system providing U/G sewer at Sodepur Brick Field Road (bye lane) near Pr. No. 627 in ward no. 122; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 6,06,067.51; Earnest Money : Rs. 12,200.00;

8. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XIII/122/31/20-21

Name of work: Dev. of drainage system providing U/G sewer at Sodepur Brick Field Road (bye lane) near Pr. No. 540/2 in ward no. 122; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 6,25,754.98; Earnest Money : Rs. 12,200.00; Period of Completion: 30 Days (For Sl. No. 7 to 8); Last date and Time of submission of Bid: 24/12/2020 - 11:00 A.M. (For Sl. No. 1 to 8); Date and Time of opening of Bid: 26/12/2020 - 11:00 A.M. (For Sl. No. 1 to 8); The bid forms and other details are available on and from : 08/12/2020 (5:00 P.M.) (For Sl. No. 5 to 8) from the website: <http://etender.wb.nic.in> (For Sl. No. 1 to 8);

9. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XVI/144/040/20-21

Name of work: Construction of U.G. Sewer at Srichandra Pally near Pre. No. 20 in ward no. 144; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 9,21,024.02; Earnest Money : Rs. 19,000.00;

10. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XVI/142/070/20-21

Name of work: Const. of Covered drain at Ramkantapur Udayachal near pre. no. 17/7 in ward no. 142; Estimated Cost including GST and CESS: Rs. 7,48,377.62; Earnest Money : Rs. 16,000.00; Period of Completion: 30 Days (For Sl. No. 9 & 10); Last date and Time of submission of Bid: 16/12/2020 - 12:00 Noon (For Sl. No. 9 & 10); The bid forms and other details are available on and from : 08/12/2020 (5:00 P.M.) from the website: <http://etender.wb.nic.in> (For Sl. No. 9 & 10);

11. NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/BR-XIV/131/016/2020-21/R(1st Call)

Name of work: Development of surface drain by providing

# Data of transgender prisoners to be included in reports: Centre

NCRB to include them as separate third gender in their annual publication

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) will include transgenders as a separate third gender in their annual publication of Prison Statistics India from 2020 onwards, the Delhi High Court was informed on Monday.

The victim has been identified as Raman, a resident of Palak village. They said they received information at 9.15 p.m. regarding a firing at a marriage ceremony near Hiran Kudna. On reaching the spot, they were told that the groom has sustained a gunshot injury and has been hospitalised. A case has been registered and manhunt launched to nab the abducting criminals.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Chetan Sharma informed a Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prateek that the NCRB has issued a communica-

tion to all the States and Union Territories to include data of transgender prisoners in prison statistics reports from 2020 onwards.

So far, the Prison Statistics of India (PSI), which collects annual data on prisoners across the country, has been doing it under two categories – male and female. Now, the NCRB intends to include transgenders in the gender classification of prisoners from PSI-2020 onwards.

"Accordingly, gender classification of the prisoners will be classified as Male, Female and Transgender in the PSI performance and Annexures," read a letter issued by the NCRB.

**Online training**  
The NCRB also conducted a two-day online training on 'Training of Trainers on Prison Statistics India' on December 3 and 4, in which the trainees were sensitised about the inclusion of transgender in the gender classification. In view of the

submission, the High Court disposed of a petition by law graduate Karan Tripathi, seeking recognition of transgenders as a separate third gender in the PSI. Mr. Tripathi, represented by advocate Akhil Hasija, had argued that unless the NCRB assign a proper sex to the prison inmates, who may be transgenders, there cannot be a proper guarantee of their civil rights, constitutional rights and even basic human rights.

In other parts of the city as well visibility fell to around 300 metres in the morning, the Met Department said.

# Visibility in city drops to zero for the first time this season

Delhi likely to witness dense fog today as well, says Met Dept.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Delhi woke up to a layer of dense fog on Monday, with the visibility in many areas falling to zero for the first time this season.

At Palam, the visibility dropped to zero at 6.30 a.m., causing airlines to send messages to passengers, asking them to prepare for delays due to the poor visibility.

In other parts of the city as well visibility fell to around 300 metres in the morning, the Met Department said.

The weather forecast showed that dense fog is expected on Tuesday as well.

"Mainly clear sky with dense to very dense fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures



Heavy fog engulfs the Capital resulting in poor visibility.

■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

November, with the minimum on Monday settling at 12 degrees Celsius, which is three degrees above normal. The maximum settled at 26.3 degrees Celsius, which was two degrees above normal.

## DJB blames U.P., Haryana for Yamuna frothing

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Reacting to frothing in the Yamuna, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) vice-chairman Raghav Chadha on Monday attacked Uttar Pradesh and Haryana governments for polluting the river.

"While it appears that the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are not bothered about releasing untreated wastewater into the Yamuna, I would like to put on record that the Delhi Jal Board has

been constantly working to upgrade and augment its STP (Sewage Treatment Plant) capacities so that untreated effluents are not released into the Yamuna," Mr. Chadha said.

The national capital's air quality is expected to improve on Tuesday and stay in the "very poor" category.

"Due to marginally better ventilation conditions, the AQI is likely to further improve tomorrow. The AQI is likely to stay in the middle-

## Delhi's air quality almost 'severe'

Number of fire counts in neighbouring States only 239

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi was a notch lower than the "severe" category on Monday while that of Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurugram in the "very poor" category, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to PM2.5, a chief pollutant, in Delhi was estimated to be only 1% on Monday. Also, the number of fire counts in neighbouring States were only 239, as per SAFAR.

p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours. The values for Gurugram, Ghaziabad, and Noida were 357, 438, and 422 respectively.

The surface-level winds were calm and the boundary level winds were north-western in direction on Monday in Delhi.

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to PM2.5, a chief pollutant, in Delhi was estimated to be only 1% on Monday. Also, the number of fire counts in neighbouring States were only 239, as per SAFAR.

## Mayors protest outside CM's house over funds

They demand disbursal of dues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Mayors of the three BJP-led municipal corporations of Delhi on Monday sat on protest and demonstrated at Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence demanding that the government disburse dues amounting to ₹13,000 crore to the civic bodies.

Meanwhile, AAP said: "It is very unfortunate that the MHA is initiating a rebellion in Delhi through the medium of Delhi Police. The MLAs who came to meet Mr. Kejriwal allegedly refused to meet the

delegation.

"It is very sad that whenever the Mayors of all the three civic bodies, working in the public interest, ask for time to meet the CM to release the outstanding funds of the corporations, he doesn't even meet for two minutes," Mr. Gupta alleged.

During the hearing, senior advocate Pinky Anand, representing Mr. Tiwari, argued that the summons issued against him in a defamation complaint filed by the AAP leader.

## Sisodia opposes Tiwari's plea in defamation case

HC reserves order on pleas by BJP leaders

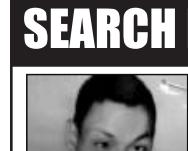
STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Mr. Sisodia had filed a defamation complaint against the BJP leader for allegedly levelling corruption charges against him in relation to Delhi government schools' classrooms.

During the hearing, senior advocate Pinky Anand, representing Mr. Tiwari, argued that the summons issued against him in a defamation case filed by the AAP leader.

Ms. Anand said the trial court's order was bad in law and it should be quashed.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING PERSON



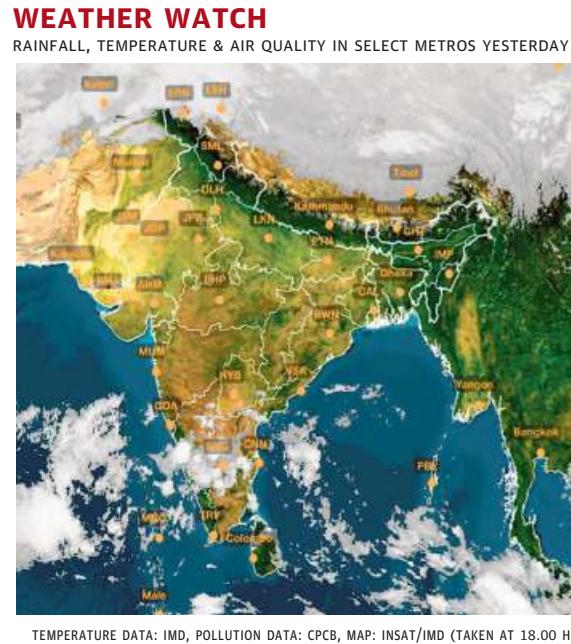
General public is hereby informed that one Person Name: Pawan, S/o Late Shri Jiwala Prashad, R/o H. No. 30/12, Gali No. 10, Jain Mandir Wali Gali, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-32. Age: 44, Height: 5'8", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Face: Long, Wearing: Yellow shirt & cream colour Pant has been missing from his house since 28.11.2020 from the area of P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi. In this regard a FIR No. 36A dated 29.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this Person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this Person kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in  
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>  
Fax: 011-24368639  
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO  
P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi  
Ph. 011-21210833, 7065036028  
DP/286/SHD/2020



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Tuesday:** Heavy rainfall/snowfall likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Muzaffarabad. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over south coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	... - 26.5	16.2	-	Zohikode	.... 0.5 ... 34.3 ... 25.4	-	-
Ahmedabad	.... 33.4	16.1	-	Kurnool	.... 30.0 ... 22.2	-	-
Izawal	.... 19.3	-	-	Lucknow	.... 26.6 ... 13.0	-	-
Allahabad	.... 30.9	13.0	-	Madurai	.... 2.8 ... 27.2 ... 23.4	-	-
Bengaluru	.... 7.6	26.2	19.4	Mangaluru	.... 36.1 ... 23.2	-	-
Bhopal	.... 30.4	14.0	-	Mumbai	.... 35.5 ... 17.8	-	-
Bhubaneswar	.... 31.7	17.6	-	Mysuru	.... 27.6 ... 20.2	-	-
Chandigarh	.... 27.4	15.4	-	New Delhi	.... 26.3 ... 12.0	-	-
Chennai	.... 7.7	29.5	22.3	Patna	.... 26.8 ... 14.4	-	-
Coimbatore	.... 2.3	26.4	22.2	Port Blair	.... 30.0 ... 25.3	-	-
Dehradoon	.... 26.7	10.0	-	Puducherry	.... 8.3 ... 26.0 ... 22.4	-	-
Gangtok	.... 12.8	7.0	-	Pune	.... 30.4 ... 12.7	-	-
Goa	.... 34.1	19.9	-	Raipur	.... 31.8 ... 15.0	-	-
Guwahati	.... 26.5	15.0	-	Ranchi	.... 28.6 ... 12.9	-	-
Hubballi	.... 29.0	20.0	-	Shillong	.... 0.6 ... 16.0 ... 7.8	-	-
Hyderabad	.... 30.7	15.5	-	Shimla	.... 17.0 ... 10.1	-	-
Impal	.... 21.1	6.6	-	Srinagar	.... 13.1 ... 4.9	-	-
Jaipur	.... 30.4	13.6	-	Thiruvananthapuram	.... 1.4 ... 33.0 ... 23.3	-	-
Kochi	.... 1.6	29.6	24.4	Tiruchi	.... 15.2 ... 26.3 ... 22.6	-	-
Kohima	.... 18.0	6.0	-	Vijayawada	.... 31.2 ... 22.4	-	-
Kolkata	.... 30.5	17.9	-	Vizakapatnam	.... 30.6 ... 22.6	-	-

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	30	159	0.30	162	157	....
Bengaluru	5	66	.85	27	....	....
Chennai	18	....	0.45	44	....	....
Delhi	15	113	174	444	379	....
Hyderabad	5	95	1.2	122	127	....
Kolkata	34	30	0.49	324	199	....
Lucknow	11	99	50	434	405	....
Mumbai	10	27	13	236	141	....
Pune	....	130	4.0	153	113	....
Vizakapatnam	19	43	0.87	87	92	....

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) of 143, indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 29

**Air Quality Code:** ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

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

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

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

## Shun arrogance, roll back laws, Gehlot tells Centre

Congress stands with farmers on MSP, mandi system'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

Taking a strong stand in support of the agitating farmers, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot asked the NDA government at the Centre on Monday to shun its "arrogance, insensitivity and adamant attitude" and roll back the agriculture sector laws.

He also extended support to the call for Bharat Bandh on December 8.

Mr. Gehlot said the Congress party stood with the farmers in ensuring that the mandi system and minimum support prices remained intact and the farmers and farmlands were saved from big corporates. "It is most worrying to see our farmers spending the nights in cold weather on roads, while the government continues to ignore their genuine demands," he tweeted.

Mr. Gehlot affirmed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi must "intervene directly," listen to the leaders of the farmer unions and resolve the impasse created by the laws that were being stoutly opposed by



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot

agriculturists.

"As more and more farmers are joining the agitation from across the country and gathering at Delhi's borders at great inconvenience to women and children, who are part of the agitation too, the government must not delay paying heed to the welfare issues of the farmers," Mr. Gehlot said.

**Arrangements discussed**  
The Chief Minister discussed the arrangements for maintaining law and order during the Bharat Bandh at a meeting with senior police officers here and appealed to all sections of the society to maintain peace. He said the 12-

day-long agitation of farmers from Punjab and Haryana had sent across a positive message, as it was completely peaceful and non-violent.

Meanwhile, the Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP), a constituent of NDA from Rajasthan, has also extended support to Bharat Bandh and announced that its workers, along with the farmers, would march to Delhi on December 12 to demand withdrawal of the farm laws. The farmers will assemble for a rally at Kotputli on Jaipur-Delhi national highway before embarking on the march.

### Beniwal's warning

RLP supremo and Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal had announced last week that he would reconsider his party's alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party if the new legislations were not withdrawn. Mr. Beniwal, who has been vocal on the subject through the social media, gave his "last warning" in a letter addressed to Home Minister and NDA chairperson Amit Shah.

## 5 JJP MLAs announce support for farmers' stir

Leadership insists legislators, party are on the same page

ASHOK KUMAR  
VIKAS VASUDEVA  
GURUGRAM/CHANDIGARH



JJP chief Dushyant Chautala

need for MLAs to resign as all legislators are supporting the farmers.

"All 90 MLAs, khaps, 36 biradaris (communities) and all Sarv Samaj in Haryana besides the Union government are with the farmers and all are praying for the speedy solution of all issues," Mr. Digvijay told journalists in Chandigarh. "For JJP, farmers and khaps are most important. The decisions of khaps are higher than anything else," he said.

### Under pressure

The JJP, with a large support base among the farmers and the rural population in the State, has been under pressure to take a firm stand on the issue. Several farmer unions in Haryana also held a dharna in Sirsa last month demanding that party leader and Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala should resign.

Rajendra Sharma, head of the Political Science Department at Maharsi Dayanand University, said that the JJP's decision to support the BJP in government formation had already hit the party hard with its support base shifting back to the Indian National Lok Dal and the agitation would cause it further harm until "it takes a stand".

JJP recently cancelled its foundation day rally in Bhiwani on December 9 citing spike in COVID-19 cases, but political analysts construe it as a possible fallout of the farmers' agitation.

## 'MSP is the right of all farmers, govt. should ensure they get it'

Ensure a peaceful Bharat Bandh, says former CM Hooda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

Former Haryana Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda has supported the Bharat Bandh called on December 8 and appealed to the public that protests should be peaceful and disciplined like the farmers movement. Mr. Hooda said the entire country and all organisations stand with the farmers.

Mr. Hooda said the demands of the farmers are completely valid and the government should accept all their demands, without any further delay. He reiterated that Minimum Support Price of crops was the right of every farmer and it was the responsibility of every government to ensure that the farmers get MSP for their crops.

The Congress will bring a no-confidence motion in the House as this government has clearly lost the trust of the public and the legislators. There is an atmosphere of political instability and mistrust of the government in the State. In

these exceptional circumstances, the Governor should call a special session while discharging his constitutional responsibilities," he stated.

### JJP criticised

Mr. Hooda said the farmers were staging a peaceful sit-in on the Delhi border with their demands for several days now but even today, Janayak Janta Party and independent MLAs are clinging to power instead of standing with the farmers.

"They are talking about the support to the farmers, but are also continuing their support to the government. This No-Confidence Motion will expose legislators who are playing a 'double-role'. Now, the legislators have to choose between the government and the farmer," the Congress leader added.

"The Congress will bring a no-confidence motion in the House as this government has clearly lost the trust of the public and the legislators. There is an atmosphere of political instability and mistrust of the government in the State. In

ter soluble. If the rice is laced with Vitamin C, it will get washed away while the rice is cleaned before cooking. It is a futile exercise to add Vitamin C to uncooked rice. In our traditional cooking practices, lemon juice is squeezed into cooked food before its consumption," said Samit Panda, a lead member of Right to Food Campaign, Odisha.

He said the move would lead to wasteful expenditure of taxpayers' money.

"Vitamin C and calcium are available in abundance in natural food. Vitamin C is wa-

ter soluble. If the rice is laced with Vitamin C, it will get washed away while the rice is cleaned before cooking. It is a futile exercise to add Vitamin C to uncooked rice. In our traditional cooking practices, lemon juice is squeezed into cooked food before its consumption," said Samit Panda, a lead member of Right to Food Campaign, Odisha.

Jayesh Joshi, secretary of Banswara-based Vaagdhar, said the exploitation of resources in the tribal areas and scientific advancements were making the lives of inhabitants difficult.

Bhanwar Singh Chanda-na, coordinating director of Udaipur's Astha Sansthan, said the tribal communities wanted to live in harmony with the nature. Tribals were adversely affected by soil erosion, climate change, malnourishment and reducing biodiversity, he said.

The conclave highlighted soil as legacy formed over thousands of years, which was to be left for the posterity.

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tribal women with indigenous seeds and soil in Banswara district. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



## Transparency is vital

Safety and efficacy data must be known before emergency-use authorisation for vaccines

**A** day after Pfizer sought the Indian regulator's nod for emergency-use authorisation for its mRNA vaccine, the Pune-based Serum Institute of India has approached the regulator for a similar nod for its vaccine, Covishield, developed by Oxford University. Unlike Pfizer, AstraZeneca, which is carrying out the phase-3 trials of the Oxford vaccine in four countries, is yet to secure a nod from any of the regulatory agencies. AstraZeneca recently gave details of the interim safety and efficacy data involving 131 COVID-19 cases in the phase-3 trials in the U.K. and Brazil. But details of the trials in India are not out yet. The unprecedented speed in taking the vaccine from the development stage to approval process in less than a year is remarkable, and perhaps necessitated by the toll the virus has taken on lives and livelihoods. But this is not without cause for concern at a time when governments are putting pressure on regulatory bodies to fast-track the entire process. Lack of transparency about vaccine safety and efficacy does no good in gaining people's confidence and willingness to get vaccinated. While Moderna, Pfizer and AstraZeneca took the extraordinary step of publicly sharing the trial protocol, the time points at which interim analysis of phase-3 trial in India will be carried out for safety and efficacy is unclear. While the U.S. FDA has clearly spelt out at least 50% efficacy and stipulated a median follow-up duration of at least two months after completion of the full vaccination regimen to assess a vaccine's benefit-risk profile for emergency-use approval, no such conditions have been mentioned by the Indian regulatory agency. The phase-3 trial of Covishield began on September 21 and completed the enrolment on November 12.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a few days ago that a vaccine would be available in the next few weeks bringing some cheer in an otherwise desolate scenario. The sooner a vaccine is available, the better it is for everyone, but pushing through an ineffective or unsafe vaccine is worse than not having one. A survey by the London-based Vaccine Confidence Project revealed that though the intent to get vaccinated was 87% in India, 34% respondents were worried about side-effects while 16% were concerned about fast-moving trials. While the Indian government is aware of vaccine hesitancy among a certain section of people, the concerns are best addressed when all stakeholders are transparent at every stage and not by merely sharing guidelines regarding vaccine safety with the States. It is important that those seeking emergency-use authorisation share the safety and efficacy data immediately.

## Rebuilding from debris

Biden will have to heal the wounds of a nation that seems to be at war with itself

**U**S. President-elect Joe Biden has officially secured enough certified results across States to cross the critical threshold of 270 electors in the Electoral College. That all but guarantees that he will be the 46th President. While there is lingering but near-zero chance of incumbent President Donald Trump overturning the results through legal challenges targeting mail-in ballots, it may be safe to assume that the Electoral College will carry out, on December 14, an uncontroversial confirmation that the Biden-Harris ticket won the 2020 presidential election, and that the Biden administration will take charge after Inauguration Day next month. However, there is little doubt that seeing the bitter 2020 election campaign through to victory is but the start of what is sure to be an arduous journey for Mr. Biden, who, at 78, will have to work tirelessly toward two goals: first, to undo the damage done over four years to domestic and international institutions, alliances, and strategic goals; and second, to heal the bitter polarisation of American politics along partisan lines, a phenomenon that appeared to peak through the harsh Trump years. At the top of the domestic policy agenda will be combating the catastrophic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., which has recorded the most infection cases globally and the highest fatalities too. The science-driven policy that Mr. Biden has promised to follow must be expediently put into action, for everything from mask-wearing mandates to an effective vaccine distribution plan. The economy will be a close second, requiring even more stimulus packages, backed by Congress, that kick-start the flagging job market and incentivise businesses to start humming with activity again.

On the international front, Mr. Biden is likely to use his first 100 days in office to explore what options there are to re-join WHO and the Paris climate change agreement. This could signal the end of the era of Trumpist isolationism on the global stage. He is also likely to train his guns on immigration reform, an area in which the Trump administration ripped a gash through the earlier paradigm of gradual adjustment to new realities. That could well include lifting Mr. Trump's executive orders restricting the issuance of new skilled worker visas and green cards, as well as limits on entry for students at universities offering mainly online courses. Family separations at the U.S.'s southern border may halt, perhaps substituted by the Obama-years policy of "catch and release", and the border wall that Mexico was supposed to pay for will be indefinitely shelved. Yet none of these reversals of Mr. Trump's policies will matter if Mr. Biden does not proactively seek to build bipartisan consensus in Congress and across the country. The fact that the U.S. was riven by hateful discourse from both sides of the political spectrum throughout the 2020 campaign suggests that Mr. Biden will have to work overtime to heal the wounds inflicted on a nation that at times appears to be at war with itself.

# A 'duet' for India's urban women

Public works could provide valuable support to the urban poor, especially if women get most of the jobs



JEAN DRÈZE

**T**he COVID-19 crisis has drawn attention to the insecurities that haunt the lives of the urban poor. Generally, they are less insecure than the rural poor, partly because fallback work is easier to find in urban areas – if only pulling a rickshaw or selling snacks. Still, the urban poor are exposed to serious contingencies, both individual (such as illness and underemployment) and collective (lockdowns, floods, cyclones, financial crises and so on).

There is, thus, a need for better social protection in urban areas. There are not many options. Universalising the Public Distribution System in urban slums would be a step forward (and it can be done under the National Food Security Act), but foodgrain rations do not take people very far. Employment-based support is one way of doing more. It has two major advantages: self-targeting, and the possibility of generating valuable assets or services.

### A simple proposal

There has been much discussion, in recent months, of a possible urban employment guarantee act. The nuts and bolts of the act, however, are not so clear, and we have little experience of relief work in urban areas. Further, it takes some optimism to expect a national urban employment guarantee act to materialise in the current political climate. A stepping stone would help.

Some time ago I had proposed

an urban employment scheme called Decentralised Urban Employment and Training (DUET). Briefly, it would work as follows (<https://bit.ly/33N41zy>). The government, State or Union, would issue "job stamps", each standing for one day of work at the minimum wage. The job stamps would be liberally distributed to approved public institutions such as universities, hostels, schools, hospitals, health centres, museums, libraries, shelters, jails, offices, departments, railway stations, transport corporations, public-sector enterprises, neighbourhood associations and urban local bodies. These institutions would be free to use the stamps to hire labour for odd jobs and small projects that do not fit easily within their existing budgets and systems. Wages, paid by the government, would go directly to the workers' accounts against job stamps certified by the employer. To avoid collusion, an independent placement agency would take charge of assigning workers to employers.

This approach would have various advantages: activating a multiplicity of potential employers, avoiding the need for special staff, facilitating productive work, among others. It would also ensure that workers have a secure entitlement to minimum wages, and possibly other benefits.

There is no dearth of possible DUET jobs. Many possibilities are mentioned in Azim Premji University's blueprint for an urban employment guarantee act (<https://bit.ly/3lSCUsU>). Further, many States have a chronic problem of dismal maintenance of public premises – DUET could provide a first line of defence against it. Some projects may require a modest provision for material expenditure, but that seems doable.

To work well, DUET would have



to include some skilled workers (masons, carpenters, electricians and such). That would widen the range of possible jobs. It would also help to impart a training component in the scheme – workers could learn skills "on the job", as they work alongside skilled workers. Roping in skilled workers, however, will take some effort: they tend to get a fair amount of work in urban areas, and to earn relatively good wages.

Aside from prompting a lot of useful and mostly enthusiastic feedback when it was placed in the public domain, the DUET proposal was the subject of a recent symposium by 'Ideas for India' (<https://bit.ly/3qycBMh>), where many eminent economists shared valuable thoughts and doubts. I am told that the Left Democratic Front in Kerala has included it in its election manifesto for the forthcoming local elections. Of course, many practical issues are likely to arise in the design of the scheme. But the idea seems worth pursuing at least.

### Women first

Here is a variant of DUET that merits special consideration – how about giving priority to women workers? I am not thinking of a minimum quota for women, like the one-third quota under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), but of an absolute

priority: as long as women workers are available, they get all the work. In fact, women could also run the placement agencies, or the entire programme for that matter.

To facilitate women's involvement, most of the work could be organised on a part-time basis, say four hours a day. A part-time employment option would be attractive for many poor women in urban areas. Full-time employment tends to be very difficult for them, especially if they have young children. Wage employment for a few hours a day would be much easier to manage. It would give them some economic independence and bargaining power within the family, and help them to acquire new skills. Remember, the economic dependence of women on men is one of the prime roots of gender inequality and female oppression in India.

Giving priority to women would have two further merits. First, it would reinforce the self-targeting feature of DUET, because women in relatively well-off households are unlikely to go (or be allowed to go) for casual labour at the minimum wage. Second, it would promote women's general participation in the labour force. India has one of the lowest rates of female workforce participation in the world. According to National Sample Survey data for 2019, only 20% of urban women in the age group of 15-59 years spend time in "employment and related activities" on an average day. This is a loss not only for women, who live at the mercy of men, but also for society as a whole, insofar as it stifles the productive and creative potential of almost half of the adult population.

I would add, on a more tentative note, that giving priority to women (and putting them in charge) may help to prevent cor-

ruption. If wages are paid directly to the workers' accounts, siphoning DUET funds off would require collusion with workers, real or dummy. Women may be more reluctant than men to participate in a scam, if only out of fear.

### Try it out

A moot question remains: will the public institutions concerned make active use of the job stamps? Think of the head of a university department who sees that the walls need white-washing. It would not take much initiative for her to reach for the job stamps and get the job done. Still, it is easier to do nothing.

This is where there is a big difference between DUET and the "service voucher" schemes that have proved so popular in some European countries. The service vouchers are much like job stamps, except that they are used by households instead of public institutions, for the purpose of securing domestic services such as cooking and cleaning. The service vouchers are not free, but they are highly subsidised, and households have an incentive to use them since that is a way of buying domestic services very cheap. In the DUET scheme, the use of job stamps relies on a sense of responsibility among the heads of public institutions, not their self-interest.

It is, thus, not easy to guess how intensively job stamps will be used. The best way to find out is to give the scheme a chance. As it happens, that can easily be done, by way of a pilot scheme in select districts or even municipalities. There is nothing to lose: if DUET does not work, we shall learn from it at least.

Jean Drèze is Visiting Professor at the Department of Economics, Ranchi University

# The ground has fallen out from beneath the farmer's feet

The Farm Acts are farmer-unfriendly and in violation of important constitutional safeguards



K.T.S. TULSI & TANESSA PURI

**A**midst the novel coronavirus pandemic, Indian farmers have marched their way to New Delhi. The reason behind the protest is a request to repeal the recently passed Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill.

### Akin to stock trading

All three of these laws are palpable attempts to turn the activity of buying and selling farm produce into a form of stock exchange trade. However, the secret to successful farming has been in the hardwork of toil, rather than the ability to operate computers and nit-pick along contractual text, both of which the Farm Acts seem to impute into the life of a farmer.

First, the Acts have been passed by the Centre. However, agriculture remains matter under the purview of the State List. The Centre has no jurisdiction to rule

over agriculture even under the Concurrent List. And so, quite clearly there is an attempt to usurp powers explicitly given to States under Entries 14, 18, 46, 28 of the State List, by the Centre. These Acts lack a legal framework in the way that they came into existence. Additionally, the Acts deprive States of their revenue via any cess or levy. Therefore, these Acts are a challenge to the separation of powers which functions as the backbone to a democracy.

### More costs possible

Second, in the way that the Acts change all kinds of farming trade into digital contractual terms reveals how there is an attempt at selling the farmer's produce in a language that the farmer himself does not know. This lack of skill, knowledge and expertise will provoke farmers into hiring middlemen, thereby, increasing the operational cost for the farmer. Additionally, when such contracts are signed with multinational companies, farmers shall either be forced into paying hefty fees to lawyers to be able to dissect such contracts for them, or, in the alternative, open the floodgates of their exploitation at any time by such companies. Legally, all of this interferes with the freedom of a farmer to carry out his own trade under Article 19(I)(f). By imposing such fetters in the way that the farmer earns his livelihood, there



is a threat under Article 21 as well. This will also deny a decent standard of living by interfering in the way that such a 'living' is earned by the farmer, impinging on Article 43 of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

### Gaps in definitions

Third, there are two particularly problematic definitions within the Acts. When these Acts define the term, "farmer", they exclude the cropper, labourer, tiller, etc. The impact of this is that certain persons involved in producing crop are systematically excluded from the purview of the Act. This shall in turn, hinder, any rights that they might have gained access to via the Acts. While defining a "farming agreement," rather than bestowing power to the farmer, a sponsor has the power to refuse the yield. The sponsor has such power in the absence of any necessity on his part to give reasons to the farmer behind such refusal. This sponsor

is also in-charge for checking legal compliance. This means that all legal blind-turns are open to legitimate exploitation by such sponsors.

Fourth, the Acts mandate trade to occur when the produce is of a "mutually acceptable quality, grade and standard." The question here is, in the battle to secure "mutual acceptance", what extent of exploitation are we willing to overlook – from environmental to labour to the farmer's own. In the attempt to secure produce of a "mutually acceptable quality", there is every possibility that the farmer might be pressured into overusing his land either by excess plantation or by excessive use of chemicals, thus making it vulnerable to becoming barren.

Moreover, the quality check in such cases is to be done by a "third party". This power has been given to a third party without any safeguards against such parties' biases or prejudices. The unashamed misuse of the farmer and his resource to merely flood the coffers of a random multi-national company is visible at a bare perusal of such a provision in the Acts.

Fifth, the Acts in their dispute resolution provisions, fail to lay down who can represent the parties involved in such a dispute. The Act goes on to then to overburden an already overworked Sub-Divisional Magistrate in the absence of such a conciliation process elucidated in the farming agreement.

No right to appeal

And, finally, the most inhumane of all provisions are those that take away the right of appeal from a farmer. The state exercising its power through multiple bureaucrats seems to have elevated itself to the status of god himself, whose decisions are immune from challenge. There is a glaring absence of any power being given to the farmer in the event that the decision delivered by the above authority is biased, a product of corruption, prejudiced or simply a manifestation of the said authority's bad mood. We must commemorate the access to justice accorded by the Constitution under Articles 14 and 21, at this juncture.

Apart from this, the Acts use multiple subjective terms such as "extraordinary circumstances" and "extraordinary price rise". Even words such as "horticultural produce" and "non-perishable agricultural foodstuffs" are used so callously that they open up a contract to multiple disputes over interpretation.

Clearly the Acts seem to defy the safeguards that the makers of the Constitution created it to stand for.

K.T.S. Tulsi is Senior Advocate and Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha. Tanessa Puri is an Associate at the Chambers of K.T.S. Tulsi

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Notes on the protest

If the farmers' protest was about the Farm Bills, what was the compulsion to canvass support from other segments of society who have no stake in the new laws? Can farmers from a geographical region claim to represent the entire farming community? The needless expansion and intensification of the agitation despite the government's offer to reconsider some of the contentious clauses, has exposed its hidden political dimensions. It is evident that intermediaries who flourished under the mandi system had forged deep commercial relationships with farmers and do not want to share the pie with other buyers of foodgrains. Dissent has no intrinsic value except when it is grounded in reason and

fairness. It can lose legitimacy if protesters overreach themselves. There is a moral hazard in romanticising every protest merely because it helps to show the government in a poor light. The Opposition that has backed the bandh call seems to forget that moral hazards can visit any government, any time. V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN, Thiruvananthapuram

**Trudeau's remarks**  
The remarks of the Canadian Premier, Justin Trudeau, on the Farm Bills and the protests of Indian farmers are unwarranted and uncalled for. How can he comment on the internal affairs of another sovereign, democratic republic? Mr. Trudeau appears to be 'ill-informed' and it is for the Indian government and the farmers to sort it out.

Has Mr. Trudeau fallen victim to the calculations of some of the Indian diaspora in Canada.  
R. SAMPATH, Chennai

■ The farmers' agitation has virtually grown into a mass movement, even attracting international attention. India is predominantly an agricultural-dependent nation, which also determines the standard of life for more than 50% of the Indian population. Farmers who toil in the sun and rain throughout the year, reap little benefits. Sadly, they are least respected in the society that partakes the fruits of their labour. The government must shed its ego and engage in constructive talks with farmers, rather than lash out at its critics.

R. SIVAKUMAR, Chennai

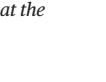
**China's new focus**  
Even as the months long India-China military stand-off continues unabated at the LAC, it is unwarranted that as part of its new Five-Year-Plan, Beijing is mulling over building a 'super hydropower station' on the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra river, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. China's claim that it is a 'legitimate right' of China is rather provocative as India, as a lower riparian state, with significantly established user rights to the waters of trans-border rivers has repeatedly voiced concerns not only at bilateral talks but also under the ambit of the institutionalised Expert Level Mechanism about Beijing's plans. Building dams on the Brahmaputra looks to be another expansionist move of China and seems to be akin to its earlier move of blocking rivers by building a series of dams along the Mekong mainstream and which affected many Southeast Asian nations. Even if India says that it will carefully monitor all developments on the Brahmaputra, only time will tell how far Beijing will take India's concerns into consideration. Apart from the fact that the dam would block silt carried by the river which could lead to an eventual reduction in agricultural productivity in Arunachal Pradesh, what is even more alarming is the untold environmental damage that building dams on the seismic-activity-and-earthquake-prone Himalayan region might cause. One cannot rule out the possibility of China's land and sea hegemony morphing into 'water weaponisation'. NALINI VIJAYARAGHAVAN, Thiruvananthapuram

**India's win**  
There is absolutely no doubt that Hardik Pandya is "raw talent" and is turning out to be an apt substitute for finisher M.S. Dhoni. Still, the real Man of the Match was T. Natarajan, who choked the marauding Aussies ("Sport" page, "India soars to series victory on Hardik's wings", December 7)..

N. MAHADEVAN, Chennai

■ The young guns have proved their worth by keeping their nerves under control to reach the target. Hardik's swashbuckling knock and the contributions from the rest of the team are laudable. It is pertinent to note that young Natarajan is turning out to be consistent with his haul of wickets. A.P. THIRUVADI, Chennai

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



# The politician in waiting

Rajinikanth's announcement will upset the calculations of the dominant parties in Tamil Nadu



VAASANTHI

After years of suspense, veteran actor and superstar Rajinikanth has finally announced that he is going to launch his own political party in January 2021, months ahead of the Assembly election in Tamil Nadu.

Just as in the movies, it looks like Mr. Rajinikanth had been waiting for a good script for his entry into politics. Timing is most important in politics. The time did seem right three years ago when he announced on December 31, 2017 that he would start a party in time and would contest all 234 constituencies in the State. That was soon after the charismatic and formidable leader of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), Jayalalithaa, had died, and when the leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Karunanidhi, was ailing, thus creating a vacuum in the political landscape of the State. Mr. Rajinikanth said his politics would be "spiritual" and that "the time had come" for him to make a mark as "democracy had undergone severe decay". He promised to provide a "clean, corruption-free government, a kind of politics that is devoid of influences of caste and religion". That, he said, was his goal and wish.

#### A script gathering dust

But three years went by and he continued to deliberate his next move, even as a change of an eon has taken place. The 2019 Lok Sabha election in Tamil Nadu was a game changer. It was the first major election in a long time that was not led by Karunanidhi and Jayalalithaa. The United Progressive Alliance, led by the DMK, won 38 out of 39 seats. This clearly showed that Karunanidhi's son, M.K. Stalin, had come into his own, emerging as a strong regional leader who had stopped the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) juggernaut from setting foot in Tamil Nadu. His victory seemed to prove that the Hindu-Hindutva BJP would not be kosher in Tamil Nadu.

The anti-BJP feeling was also clear in the by-elections to 22 Assembly



Veteran actor Rajinikanth during a press conference to announce the launch of his political party in January 2021, in Chennai. ■ PTI

constituencies that were held around the same time. That was a neck and neck race between the DMK and the AIADMK. It showed that in an election in Tamil Nadu, the fight continued to be between the two well-structured, cadre-based Dravidian parties even after the demise of their respective leaders. The leaders had died, but their vote banks remained intact. Mr. Stalin had proved that he could pull in votes on his own, and AIADMK Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami regained lost ground surmounting some initial struggles.

In all this, Mr. Rajinikanth's script for a grand entry gathered dust. He told the media in March this year that the onus was on the people to show a "resurgence", like they did in 1967 when the DMK overthrew the Congress. It appeared that he had come to realise that it is not possible for him to win an election banking on his fan base that was not homogeneous in nature. They were unlike M.G. Ramachandran's fan clubs who were bound by an ideology. He said he did not want to be Chief Minister, he wanted to limit the number of party posts, and bring the youth into politics. He wanted this message to be dis-

seminated by his fans to every nook and corner of the State. When there is a resurgence, I will come, he said. He added there was no use in him being a "vote splitter".

But there is no sign of a "resurgence" even now. So, why did he decide to make an entry at this juncture? His timing is especially interesting as only at the end of October, Mr. Rajinikanth had said that his doctors had forbade him from entering the electoral fray given his health issues. How did things change so quickly, then?

Mr. Rajinikanth was emotional. "If I win, it is the people's victory. If I fail, it is the people's loss," he said. He said that he would be happy to give his life for the people of Tamil Nadu. His followers who had said just sometime ago that the health of 'Thalaivar' (leader) was more important than power were jubilant that he had changed his mind.

#### A tough fight

Mr. Rajinikanth's decision will certainly upset the calculations of the various political parties in the State. There does exist a section that wants a change from the two dominant par-

ties. How will the contest be? Mr. Rajinikanth has never shied away from showing his admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. He has often voiced support for the decisions of the BJP government at the Centre that were considered controversial in Tamil Nadu. He was a strong votary of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019, but hit out at the Centre after the riots in Delhi. He complimented the Central government for "deftly" handling the Kashmir issue. Leaders of the BJP, a party that is in an alliance with the AIADMK, have rushed forward to congratulate him. But the actor knows well that he will be a loser in Tamil Nadu if he aligns with the BJP.

It is going to be a tough fight in the State now. The fear of Mr. Rajinikanth's entry splitting votes is indeed a worry for the AIADMK. Disgruntled members of the party may join him. But he may cut into the DMK's votes even more, including its traditional minority vote share. Some political analysts feel that this is exactly what the BJP desires. While the national party is desperate to enter Tamil Nadu, it is more keen that the DMK should not win. All attempts of a third force in the State have ended in failure so far. Mr. Rajinikanth had said in March that he would not be the chief ministerial candidate. This may please the Tamil nationalists, but how will his fans respond to this?

#### A force to reckon with

For more than 50 years, Tamil Nadu has seen and acknowledged Dravidian politics that is based on the philosophy of social justice and equality. Surveys have shown that Tamil Nadu has been far ahead of other States in many aspects of governance. Tamil pride is something that is ingrained in the soul of the State. Regardless of the question of whether Mr. Rajinikanth fits into this scheme of things, it is amazing how he has become a force to reckon with in Tamil Nadu politics just by making an announcement. Why should I come as a mere vote splitter he had asked in March. An honest introspection, still valid.

Vaasanthi is a journalist and the author of 'Amma: Jayalalithaa's journey from movie star to political queen', 'The Lone Empress: A Portrait of Jayalalithaa' and Karunanidhi: The Definitive Biography'

## Investing in India's youth

The skills development sector has grown in India, but has many challenges

ERIC FALT

With the largest youth population in the world, India faces the difficult task of educating every citizen to become a productive member of society. This goal has become harder with the pandemic: over 320 million learners have been affected and more than 5 million young people are likely to have lost their jobs. Proactive measures need to be taken to resolve this situation. Education can play a vital role in bridging this gap.

The report emphasises the need for expanding evidence-based research. High-quality research based on careful data-gathering and analytics can add value to all aspects of TVET planning and delivery but is especially useful for creating evidence behind the value of vocational education. For instance, proving the business case of apprenticeship to employers can push them to hire more apprentices. Considering that many employers are unable to find skilled candidates for jobs, promoting skills development and hiring skilled workers can make the economy stronger.

including information campaigns involving youth role models, would go a long way in improving the image of vocational education. At the same time, common myths around TVET need to be debunked. Research is now proving that TVET graduates for entry level jobs can get paid as much as university graduates, and for some jobs can even surpass them. Moreover, students from vocational streams typically take less time to find jobs as compared to university graduates.

The report emphasises the need for expanding evidence-based research. High-quality research based on careful data-gathering and analytics can add value to all aspects of TVET planning and delivery but is especially useful for creating evidence behind the value of vocational education. For instance, proving the business case of apprenticeship to employers can push them to hire more apprentices. Considering that many employers are unable to find skilled candidates for jobs, promoting skills development and hiring skilled workers can make the economy stronger.

#### An ambitious target

The new National Education Policy (NEP) aims to provide vocational education to 50% of all learners by 2025. Schools are encouraged to provide students access to vocational education from Grade 6 onwards and to offer courses that are aligned to the local economies and can benefit local communities. This will be possible only if the existing skills development systems are leveraged effectively. Hence, for the vision of the NEP to be fulfilled, a robust coordination mechanism for inter-ministerial cooperation is necessary for bringing the skills development and vocational education systems together.

This will not be an easy task but UNESCO, through its policy instruments, is committed to supporting the Indian government in capitalising on the country's demographic dividend. In these difficult times, TVET is certainly a key tool to help get the economy, and people's lives, back on track.

Eric Falt is the Director, UNESCO New Delhi and UNESCO Representative to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

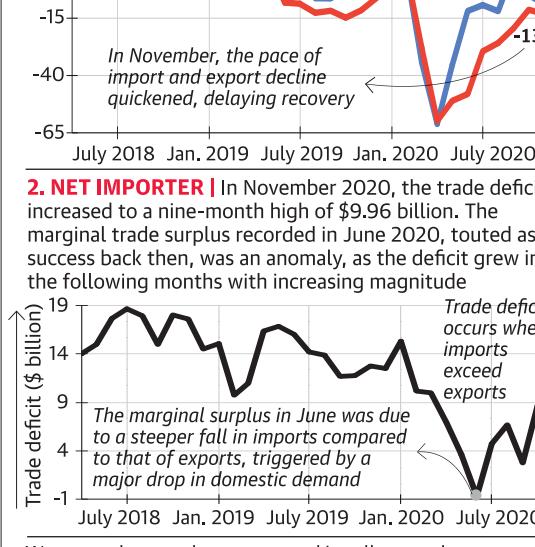
#### DATA POINT

### A lull persists in trade winds

The record contraction in exports and imports observed post the COVID-19-induced lockdown slowed down after the economy opened up, but quickened again in November. The trade deficit too reached a nine-month high. The fall in the import of machinery points to poor investment demand in the local economy, and reduction in the import of project goods\* points to possible slowdown in infrastructure creation. By Naresh Singaravelu and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**1. TRADE WOES |** Since June 2019, India's import — export growth (y-o-y) has contracted in most months. However, after the lockdown, in March and April 2020, the contraction worsened to double digits. Import and export growth remained in negative territory following the depths reached in April 2020 but the contraction had slowed down until November 2020

**2. NET IMPORTER |** In November 2020, the trade deficit increased to a nine-month high of \$9.96 billion. The marginal trade surplus recorded in June 2020, touted as a success back then, was an anomaly, as the deficit grew in the following months with increasing magnitude



\*Non-petroleum and non-gems and jewellery products

\*Includes mining, power, irrigation, industrial plant projects

Source: Commerce ministry

**3. FALL IN EXPORTS |** The tree map shows the % decline in exports in Nov. 2020 compared to Nov. 2019. For instance, the export of petroleum products shrank the most by 61% y-o-y in Nov. 2020. Exports of leather, plastic & cashew reduced the most (among non-oil and non-GJ\*)



**4. FALL IN IMPORTS |** The tree map shows the y-o-y % decline in imports in Nov. 2020. For instance, the import of silver shrank the most by 90% y-o-y in Nov. 2020, and cotton and newsprint were not far behind. The significant reduction in project goods\* points to a possible slowdown in infrastructure creation



Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

In November, the pace of import and export decline quickened, delaying recovery

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade deficit occurs when imports exceed exports

The marginal surplus in June was due to a steeper fall in imports compared to that of exports, triggered by a major drop in domestic demand

Trade

## FROM PAGE ONE

**'Seek non-political support for Bandh'**

The MHA advisory has asked the States to ensure that no violence or untoward incident takes place during the Bharat bandh. Emphasis has been laid on implementation of all COVID-19 protocol such as social distancing and mandatory use of masks," the official stated.

Mr. Pal dismissed the Centre's accusations of party politics overtaking the farmers' agenda.

"Even Kejriwal saab came this morning, but we did not give him our stage. We have been here from November 27. You cannot give even one example of the farmers taking funds from political parties, or allowing them to speak from our stage. We are very firm on

it," he said.

Taking on the government, he said, "The BJP may have its own narrative. But they must answer why we have support from such a wide section of society."

Balbir Singh Rajewal, who heads his own faction of the Bharatiya Kisan Union, pointed out that support had come from farmers, workers and traders associations, and the All India Railways Federation, as well as from the Bar Association of the Supreme Court and retired IAS Officers Associations.

Five rounds of talks had taken place between farmers and the Centre. Another round of meetings is proposed on December 9.

**SC caveats for Central Vista inauguration**

The order said, "After interacting with the Solicitor General and when the concern of the Court was expressed, on instructions, the Solicitor General stated that there will be no construction activity of any nature on the concerned site(s) nor demolition of any structure will be done, including the further translocation of tree(s) will be kept in abeyance, until the pronouncement of judgment in all these cases. We take that statement on record. In view of the above, we clarify that the authorities would be free to continue with procedural processes without altering the status of the site(s) in question in any manner, including to continue

The court said the case was listed *suo motu* on Monday as it noticed certain "developments". On November 5, the Bench reserved its judgment on the petitions challenging the redevelopment project of the Central Vista area.

The court would consider whether the project complied with land use and environmental regulations peculiar to the area that houses the Parliament and Central Secretariat buildings. The petitioners had objected to the proposed change in land usage of the Central Vista.

**5 terror suspects from Kashmir, Punjab held**

The police said the five were held after an exchange of fire in the Shakarpur area. Three sophisticated pistols were recovered from them. Heroin worth ₹8 crore, currency worth ₹1 lakh and two cars were also seized from them.

According to police, they had information that the ISI was planning killings of right-wing leaders and had activated a "Kashmir-Khalistan" desk. Pro-Khalistan radicals were using gangsters to execute killings and this was noticed in 2016-17 when eight right-wing leaders were murdered in Punjab.

"It was revealed that the ISI, along with Pakistan-based Khalistan radicals Harmeet Singh alias PhD [chief of the Khalistan Liberation Force] and Lakhbir Singh alias Rode [chief of the Khalistan Zindabad Force based in Pakistan], in furtherance of their conspiracy to revive militancy in

Punjab, have been using gangster Sukh Bhikhariwal for target killings," Mr. Kushwah observed.

Bhikhariwal, who had set up his base in a Gulf country, had executed the killing of Balwinder in October. The ISI was funding these killings through drug trafficking.

Police said Pathan was following instructions from cousin Abdul Majeed Khan, who is based in Rawalpindi and one of the senior operatives of the Hizb. Abdul introduced him to Pakistan-based operative code named "Sadakat", another senior operative of the Hizb, based in Rawalpindi.

Mr. Kushwah said, "Sadakat is said to be handling channelling of funds through narco-terrorism. Sadakat tasked them to receive a consignment of narcotics, which was infiltrated into India through Pakistan and deliver the same to his other contacts in Punjab."

**Man reunites with family after 10-month detention in Yemen**

He was among the 14 Indians held by Houthi rebels in Sana'a



**Happy reunion:** Abdul Vahab Musthaba with his family.

Abdul Vahab Musthaba was among the 14 Indians who were reportedly held by Houthi rebels in Sana'a. Released on November 28, Mr. Musthaba reunited with his wife Shanifa Beevi, sons Mohammed Shahid, Mohammed Shar and Abdul Vahab, and his 65-year-old mother Umaifa on Monday afternoon.

A second Keralite in the group, Praveen Thammakarantava of Vadakara, also returned safely on Monday.

Mr. Musthaba had left Kerala on January 29 for Oman, where he was employed with a private company as a 'jankar' captain. On February 3, he and the other Indians left Masirah Island with a convoy of three ships to the Red Sea port of Yanbu in Saudi Arabia.

The passengers were

mostly contract workers bound for Saudi Arabia, according to Mr. Musthaba. Midway, the convoy ran into rough weather and one of the vessels sank. "The passengers were rescued and we resumed the voyage," he said. But they hit rough weather again in the Red Sea one-and-a-half days later, close to the Yemen-Saudi border. Their ordeal began when they were detained on February 14 by a group that initially identified itself as the navy, he said. "But later on, it became clear that they were Houthis," he added.

Efforts to get the Indians released began once the Indian Embassy in Yemen was alerted.

The 14 men were finally released on November 28.

The passengers were

**AIIMS team collects samples in Eluru hospital**

455 afflicted with undiagnosed disease

**RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS**  
ELURU

A six-member team from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Mangalagiri, visited the Eluru Government General Hospital (GGH) on Monday and collected samples from patients suffering from an undiagnosed disease for the last three days.

The team comprised Dr. Rakesh Kakkar, Medical Superintendent and Community Medicine Specialist; Dr. Vamsidhar. C, Critical Care Specialist; Dr. Rajasekhar, Critical Care Specialist; Dr. Mangayakarasi, head, Department of Microbiology; Dr. Sathyaranayin, Epidemiologist; and Dr. Vamsi Krishna Reddy, DMS & Hospital Administrator (coordination), said BJP Rajya Sabha Member G.V.L. Narasimha Rao.

**Experts to investigate**

West Godavari district Joint Collector Himanshu Shukla said teams from AIIMS, New Delhi, the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad, the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Mumbai, the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, and experts from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) would be visiting Eluru to investigate the reasons for the out-



**Mystery affliction:** A young patient being brought to a hospital in Eluru on Sunday. ■ AP

break of the disease.

**174 under treatment**

Mr. Shukla said a total of 455 patients were admitted to the hospital with the mystery illness.

Of them, 263 were discharged, 17 cases were referred to other hospitals and one death was reported. As

many as 174 patients were undergoing treatment in hospitals, he said.

Sixty-five of the patients were aged between one and 12 years, 246 were in the 12-35 age group and 144 were over 35. Medical camps were continuing in the affected colonies, the Joint Collector said.

**Andhra Pradesh CM visits hospital, meets patients**

CM asks officials to monitor situation

**STAFF REPORTER**  
ELURU

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy visited the Government General Hospital (GGH) here on Monday and enquired about the condition of the patients suffering from symptoms of an undiagnosed disease.

Mr. Jagan directed Ministers and officials to monitor the situation round the clock. Mr. Reddy interacted with the patients and also spoke with doctors about the treatment being given to them. The Chief Minister directed officials to ensure treatment and a supply of medicines to the discharged patients.



CM Jagan Mohan Reddy interacting with a patient on Monday. ■ PTI

cases and their health condition, and the line of treatment.

Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas, Transport Minister Perni Venkataramaiah, Women Development and Child Welfare Minister Taneti Vanitha, Collector Revu Mutyalu Raju, Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Kataneni Bhaskar, Joint Collector Himanshu Shukla and other officials were also present.

**5 Kerala districts to vote in local body elections today**

Polling will be held from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Elections to 6,910 wards of 395 local bodies in five Kerala districts – Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki – will be held on Tuesday in the first phase of the 2020 local body polls.

Polling will be held from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. ensuring strict compliance to COVID-19 protocols, State Election Commissioner V. Bhaskaran said. Electors who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been recommended quarantine after 3 p.m. on Monday will be given an opportunity to visit polling booths to vote once all other voters have exercised their franchise.

"Everything is set for the elections. Postal ballot papers have been posted to special voters named in the certified lists till 3 p.m. on Monday and identified as registered electors," the Commissioner said.

The five districts have, in all, 88,26,873 voters, including 46,68,267 women, 41,58,395 men and 61 transgender voters. The electoral rolls for the five districts include 42,530 new voters and 155 NRI voters, the Commission said.

In all, 24,583 candidates are in the fray. The polling stations number 11,225 with



**All set:** Vehicles parked in front of a school to carry officials and election material to polling stations in Idukki.

**Kerala MLA withdraws plea to delay local polls**

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Kerala legislator P.C. George on Monday withdrew his petition seeking a postponement of the local body elections in the State owing to the pandemic.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao said Mr. George was free to pursue his remedies in the Kerala High

Court "relating to option of postal ballots for the senior citizens and COVID-19 suspects/affected persons."

Mr. George had urged the apex court to direct it to be postponed to March next year. The legislator had made an earlier plea before the Election Commission. A subsequent appeal to the High Court had also failed.

1,697 in urban areas and 9,528 in rural areas.

As many as 5,279 wards in 318 gram panchayats; 675 wards in 50 blocks; 107 divisions in five district panchayats; 694 wards in 20 municipalities; and 155 wards in two Corporations will go to the polls on Tuesday. The Commission has cancelled elections to two

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

wards in Panmana gram panchayat, Kollam, and one ward in Chettikulangara panchayat, Alappuzha, following the death of three candidates.

The Commission has arranged webcasting from 320 sensitive booths. Polling materials were distributed to the officials on Monday along with COVID-19 safety kits.

**Only organic farming allowed in Lakshadweep**

Islands are eyeing an expansion of business in coconut and its products

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
KOCCHI

With the entire Lakshadweep group of islands being declared an organic agricultural area, the island administration is eyeing an expansion of the traditional business in coconuts and coconut products through value addition, better marketing, and round-the-year processing.

Around 10 crore coconuts are produced on the island in 12,000 small holdings with an average size of 0.25 hectares, sources in the island administration say. The total acreage under coconuts is around 2,800 hectares.

The nuts are processed now mostly for oil and the islands being declared an organic agricultural area will give a big boost to their busi-

ness, sources add.

At the same time, there is tremendous scope for expanding the business. At present, only about 3 crore nuts are processed on the island and there is an excess of around 7 crore nuts, which are mostly sold in mainland India.

IN BRIEF



AAP to protest at ITO in support of farmers

NEW DELHI  
The Aam Aadmi Party on Monday said that it will protest peacefully at ITO intersection at 11 a.m. on Tuesday in support of Bharat Bandh by farmers. "Today the farmers of our country are in distress. I want to appeal to all the citizens of India to support their demands and to extend their support to the Bharat Bandh called by the farmers tomorrow. I want to appeal to all to join this Bandh peacefully and stand in solidarity with the farmers of our country," said AAP senior leader Gopal Rai.

**Section 144 likely to be imposed in Gujarat today**

AHMEDABAD  
To thwart attempts by the Opposition parties and farmers' outfits to enforce the Bharat Bandh in Gujarat, the government is set to impose Section 144 of the Cr.P.C. The strike call issued by the farmers would not be successful in the State, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said. He added that no one would be allowed to do politics in the name of the farmers. "Photography or videography of any unrest and its circulation on social media will attract FIR," DGP Ashish Bhatia said.

**Farmers raise slogans against BJP in Amritsar**

AMRITSAR  
A group of agitating farmers on Monday raised slogans against the BJP during the 'Bhoomi Pujan' ceremony of the party's district unit office here. A heavy contingent of the police force was deployed to avert any untoward incident. Former State BJP chief Shrawan Malik, former Ministers Anil Joshi, Laxmi Kanta Chawal, party district president Suresh Mahajan and other leaders were present. Mr. Joshi said the party always has a soft corner for farmers. PTI

# BJP slams Opposition's 'double standards'

It cites earlier support to many provisions of the new laws

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

On the eve of the Bharat Bandh called by the farmers and supported by most of the Opposition parties, the BJP on Monday accused its rivals of "double standards". It cited their earlier support to many provisions of the new laws.

Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, addressing a press conference at the BJP's national headquarters, alleged that a section of farmers was caught in the grip of a few people with "vested interests". He said the government was working to address their misgivings about the reforms.

He read out sections from the Congress's manifesto for the 2019 general election to

UPA government was also working on these changes in agriculture laws but when we implemented these, they are opposing it

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD  
Union Law Minister

note that it had promised to "repeal" the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act. Mr. Prasad said Rahul Gandhi had asked the Congress-ruled States in 2013 to take measures to allow farmers to sell their produce directly.

Nationalist Congress Party leader Sharad Pawar, who was the Agriculture Minister in the UPA government, had asked the States to amend the APMC Act and even

warned them that the Centre would not provide financial assistance in absence of the three reforms, Mr. Prasad said.

"When the Modi government enacted these provisions, all these parties are now opposing them. This exposes their shameful double standards," he said.

Farmers have been protesting on Delhi's borders demanding the repeal of the new agri-marketing laws.

Leaders of 11 parties will be meeting Mr. Kovind on Wednesday.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Scaling up their protest a day after extending support to the Bharat Bandh called by the farmers' organisations, Opposition parties on Monday said they would meet President Ram Nath Kovind and urge him to direct the government to repeal the three farm laws.

Leaders of 11 parties will be meeting Mr. Kovind on Wednesday.

Responding to the Opposition statement, Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the UPA government had done exactly what the Modi government is doing today for reforming the existing agricultural laws.

'BJP propaganda'

CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury dismissed Mr. Pawar's letter to the then Delhi Chief Minister. Mr. Pawar was only following the

(M) and the CPI, among others have extended support to the farmers' agitation.

While the Trinamool Congress did not sign the joint statement, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee has reached out to the farmers.

On Friday, Trinamool Raaja Sabha leader Derek O'Brien visited the Singhu border and met the protesting farmers.

Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, who had not spoken on the agitation so far, also announced her support on Monday morning.

Five legislators of the BJP's ally in Haryana, the Janayak Janta Party (JJP), have also come out in support of the agitation, seeking early resolution of the stand-off and demanding that the three farm laws be withdrawn.



All together: Farmers at the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border in Ghazipur on Monday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

"What are they trying to prove by circulating then Agricultural Minister Sharad Pawar's letter to the then Delhi Chief Minister? Mr. Pawar was only following the

constitutional norm of consultations, which the BJP violates with impunity," he said.

The Congress, Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Aam Aadmi Party, DMK, CPI

# Convene Parliament session: Cong.

Union government should not act as a lobbyist for corporates, party tells Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday asked the Union government to not become "lobbyists" for corporates, with former party president Rahul Gandhi terming the new farm laws as "Adani-Ambani Farm Laws".

Congress's Lok Sabha members from Punjab also staged a sit-in at Jantar Mantar, demanding an immediate session of Parliament to repeal the farm laws.

Addressing a press conference at the Congress headquarters, Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar said the Narendra Modi government would be responsible if any inconvenience was caused to people due to the

The government should not become a lobbyist for the corporates. Corporatising agriculture is not acceptable. We will not allow outsourcing of either agriculture or national security

SUNIL JAKHAR, Punjab Congress president

Bharat Bandh on Tuesday.

"The Modi government is squarely responsible for the current situation and it would be responsible for any inconvenience caused to the public during the bandh tomorrow," Mr. Jakhar said, adding that there should be a way to fix "accountability" on those who had "brought the country to this situation".

He accused the govern-

ment of following the U.S. model of acting as "lobbyists" for corporates and said that the country's food security was an integral part of national security and could not be "left at the hands of corporates".

Sharing a video of farmers protesting at the Singhu border, Mr. Gandhi tweeted, "The 'Adani-Ambani Farm Laws' have to be revoked. Nothing less is acceptable."

Congress leaders reiterated their demand for an immediate session of Parliament to repeal the laws and discuss the matter afresh.

The party's Lok Sabha members from Punjab, including senior leaders Preneet Kaur and Manish Tewari, sat on a dharna.

"It is perhaps for the first time since 1952 that the winter session has been subverted. For 12 days, farmers have been risking COVID-19 daily and braving the cold. Then there is a blanket of silence on the border row with China; the economy is officially in recession. The country needs to know but the government has undermined democracy by subverting Parliament," Mr. Tewari said.

# 'PM should show magnanimity'

Wounds will take a long time to heal, Badal writes to Modi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Five-time Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday to "show magnanimity" and immediately scrap the three controversial agriculture laws "as a first step" towards resolution of the ongoing stalemate between the farmers and the government.

"The scars of wounds already inflicted will take a long time to heal," he said in a letter to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Badal also demanded "100% procurement of farmers' produce at Minimum Support Price [fixed according to the Swaminathan Formula, C2+50] and that this be made a statutory legal

right of the farmer". He emphasised the "the need for a liberal, secular democratic approach to solving all the problems facing the country".

Mr. Badal said there was a need for making India a truly federal country. "The roots of the ongoing crisis lie in the abdication of our commitment to the federal approach," he said. "The farmers' crisis is not the only instance where this inclusive approach to nation-building has been ignored or abandoned."

**Call for consensus**

Politics of confrontation had fractured the social fabric, Mr. Badal wrote.

"Consultation, conciliation and consensus are the

foundation of any democracy. Consultative processes alone lead to consensus, and consensus alone is the recipe for avoiding confrontations like the one we see now between the government and the farmers."

**'Withdraw Acts'**

"The three Acts in question that have pushed the country into deep turmoil must be withdrawn without making the farmers and their families endure any more suffering in this biting cold. The issue does not concern farmers alone, but affects the entire economic fabric of the country, as traders, businessmen, shopkeepers, arthiyas [commission agents] and labour are also directly affected by it," he wrote.

# More sportspersons bat for farmers

Poonam Rani, Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat post messages of support

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM

A day after Haryana Olympic medallist Vijender Singh announced that he would return the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in protest against the three farm laws and support the farmers' agitation, more sportspersons across the State came out in support on Monday.

The athletes and players across the spectrum posted videos and messages on Twitter seeking early resolution of the stand-off between the farmers and the government.

Hockey player Poonam Rani, who was part of the Rio 2016 team, posted a video on Twitter appealing to all sportspersons and celebrities to support the farmers and called on the government to give farmers



In solidarity: Sportspersons marching to Rashtrapati Bhavan to return their awards. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

their due. She said she herself was a farmer's daughter and understood their pain.

**I am with farmers'**  
Bajrang Punia, a wrestler from Haryana's Jhajjar, shared a picture on Twitter proclaiming "I Am With Farmers". He also posted a

message saying farmers were forced to sit on the roads because of the government's adamant attitude.

He said every citizen of the country supported the farmers' movement. Mr. Punia has won medals at several international

events, including the World Wrestling Championship.

Vinesh Phogat, a woman wrestler, also expressed support for the farmers' movement with a couplet meaning that the farmer was tired of seeking his right and now wanted a solution.

She said the farmers were only seeking their due. Ms. Phogat is the first Indian woman wrestler to win gold in both Commonwealth and Asian Games and comes from a successful family of wrestlers, with her cousins Geeta Phogat and Babita Phogat being international wrestlers and Commonwealth Games medalists as well.

Noted Punjabi poet Surjit Patar has announced that he would return his Padma Shri in protest over farm bills.

# SP's Akhilesh Yadav detained in Lucknow

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav was on Monday detained by the police here for a few hours as they prevented him from travelling to Kannauj to attend a yatra in support of the farmers.

After the police cordoned off his residence and the party office, Mr. Yadav tried to lead a protest march and briefly staged a sit-in on the road before he was bundled into a police bus along with party colleagues.

The district administration of Kannauj said permission was denied for the 'kisan yatra' planned by the party due to security reasons and concerns over COVID-19.

Mr. Yadav, however, questioned the government's reasoning and accused it of bias. "The BJP stopped the yatra with the excuse of COVID-19. The BJP is holding all events, campaigning for elections and organising big programmes. There is no COVID-19 for them. But if the Opposition wants to raise voice for the farmers, then there is COVID-19," he told mediapersons.

<b>ANNA UNIVERSITY</b>
CHENNAI - 600 025
<b>TENDER NOTICE</b>
Tender Ref No. 25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020
Online Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for the following item for the Controller of Examinations, Anna University, Chennai - 600 025.
Sl. No.      Tender Ref. No.      Name of the Item      Qty.      Approx. cost
1.      25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020      "Gold Medals (22 Carat) for the 41 <sup>st</sup> Annual Convocation of Anna University"      69      ₹37,95,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> from 10.30 pm on 08.12.2020. The filled-in tender documents can be submitted by uploading in the website upto 03.30 pm on 22.12.2020. Other detailed tender conditions, corrigenda etc., please visit the website (<https://tntenders.gov.in>).

DIPR/4528/Tender/2020

REGISTRAR

ANNA UNIVERSITY

CHENNAI - 600 025

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Ref No. 25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020

Online Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for the following item for the Controller of Examinations, Anna University, Chennai - 600 025.

Sl. No.      Tender Ref. No.      Name of the Item      Qty.      Approx. cost

1.      25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020      "Gold Medals (22 Carat) for the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Convocation of Anna University"      69      ₹37,95,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> from 10.30 pm on 08.12.2020. The filled-in tender documents can be submitted by uploading in the website upto 03.30 pm on 22.12.2020. Other detailed tender conditions, corrigenda etc., please visit the website (<https://tntenders.gov.in>).

DIPR/4528/Tender/2020

REGISTRAR

ANNA UNIVERSITY

CHENNAI - 600 025

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Ref No. 25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020

Online Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for the following item for the Controller of Examinations, Anna University, Chennai - 600 025.

Sl. No.      Tender Ref. No.      Name of the Item      Qty.      Approx. cost

1.      25338/COE/C61/Gold Medals/2020      "Gold Medals (22 Carat) for the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Convocation of Anna University"      69      ₹37,95,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tntenders.gov.in> from 10.3

## IN BRIEF



We will not have to wait too long for vaccine: PM

**LUCKNOW** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the country will not have to wait too long for the coronavirus vaccine even as he cautioned people against laxity as far as preventive measures were concerned. "Masks and a distance of two yards is very necessary," he said. He was speaking while launching the work on the Agra Metro project via video conferencing. PTI

**Over 70% turnout in Bodoland council polls**

**GUWAHATI** More than 70% of the 1,365,207 voters turned out for the first phase of the elections to the Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam on Monday. The elections to the 40-seat council have been billed as the "semi-final" before the 2021 Assembly polls, and its outcome could decide the fate of alliances. The voting too was incident-free barring a mild cane-charge outside a booth in Udaguri district. In all, 241 candidates are in the fray.

**Odisha hands over MLA graft case to Lokayukta**

**Bhubaneswar** In a first, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday referred the corruption allegations against Pradeep Panigrahi, Gopalpur MLA, to the Odisha Lokayukta for investigation. This was the first corruption allegation referred by the State government to Lokayukta after its creation. The MLA was accused of collecting money on behalf of one Akash Kumar Pathak by giving a false promise to provide jobs in a Tata group company.

**IMA to protest against new amendment**

**NEW DELHI** The Indian Medical Association (IMA) will protest in small groups of 20 (following the COVID protocols) between noon and 2 p.m. on Tuesday, against the notification of amendment to the post-graduate ayurveda education regulations by the Central Council of Indian Medicine enabling post-graduate ayurveda surgery students to study and practise modern medicine surgical procedures and techniques.

# J&K DDC polls see 50% turnout

South Kashmir districts report single-digit polling in fourth phase

**PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR**

Jammu and Kashmir registered a 50.08% voter turnout in the fourth phase of the maiden District Development Council (DDC) election on Monday. Three districts in the volatile south Kashmir saw single-digit polling, dipping the aggregate turnout in the Kashmir Valley to just 32%.

A total of 50.08% voter turnout was registered in the fourth phase. The Kashmir division saw a 31.95% turnout, while the Jammu division witnessed 69.31%, State Election Commissioner K.K. Sharma said.

Despite the fresh spell of rain and snowfall, people, including many women, queued up outside the polling booth early in the morning, especially in Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara districts of north Kashmir.

Official figures suggest Baramulla saw the highest 47.43% turnout followed by Bandipora with 45.22% and Kupwara with 44.35%.

"We are enthusiastic about the voting on two counts. One, it will provide a new interface to improve the governance at local levels.



**Safety first:** Health staff carrying out temperature checks at a Ganderbal booth. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

Two, these polls are also about making a political statement from the Kashmir Valley to the rest of the country about what people's sentiments are," Gaffar Malik, a voter in Kupwara, said.

In contrast to north and central Kashmir, the mood among voters was subdued in the three districts of south Kashmir, which have been in the throes of militancy and protests since 2016.

"Boycotting polls is also a democratic way to express our anger," said Nazeer Joo, a resident of Shopian.

Except for Anantnag, which recorded a 27.04% polling, Kulgam, Pulwama and Shopian saw single digit polling. According to the official figures, Pulwama saw 8.73%, Pulwama 6.7% and 1.96% polling.

**Low voting in Pulwama**

The Pulwama segment, where incarcerated Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra is contesting polls, also saw a low turnout. "The sanctity of the polls have been dented by the arrest

Parra," said Sajid Mehraj, a supporter of Parra.

The Jammu region witnessed good voting. According to the SEC, Poonch saw the highest 75.42% voter turnout. "The lowest turnout in Jammu division was in Udhampur district at 59.9%," the SEC said.

Thirty-four constituencies went to the polls on Monday, 17 each in the Kashmir and the Jammu divisions. "A total of 36,452 voters, comprising 19,526 men and 16,932 women, voted," Mr. Sharma said.

# PoK sisters, who crossed over to India, return with gifts

They had inadvertently entered India after a family tiff

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR**

The Indian Army on Monday handed over two girls from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), who inadvertently crossed into Poonch on Sunday following a tiff with their family, to the Pakistan Army. Scores of netizens from across the LoC expressed gratitude for the Indian gesture.

"The girls, who had inadvertently crossed into Indian side in Poonch in the morning hours on December 6, were repatriated from the Chakan Da Bagh crossing point on Monday," defence spokesman Lt. Col. Devenender Anand said. The two carried gifts as they were dropped at the Zero Point and allowed to head home.

The two sisters identified as Laiba Zabair, 17, and Sana Zabair, 13, were from Ab-basspur village, Kahuta, near the LoC on the other side.

**'We were treated well'**  
"We strayed into this side of the LoC. We thought we would be beaten up or tor-



Sana Zabair and Laiba Zabair with the Pakistan contingent at Chakan Da Bagh on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tured. However, we were treated well and were provided with food. We never thought we would go back so early. We are so impressed by the gesture," Ms. Zabair said, just before stepping into PoK territory.

Scores of netizens from PoK took to social media, especially Facebook and Twitter in the past 24 hours, appealing to the Indian

authorities to release the girls. "They crossed the ceasefire line mistakenly. We appeal to the Indian authorities to release them," Ijaz Malik, a PoK resident, tweeted.

The release, despite frequent shelling and deaths on both sides of the LoC in the Poonch sector, was welcomed by netizens on both sides.

# Modi backs Macron in fight against terror

PM also invited French leader to Delhi

**SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to French Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron on Monday night, offering India's support to France on fighting terrorism, and also invited Mr. Macron to visit Delhi.

"The Prime Minister conveyed to President Macron his condolences for the terror attacks in France, and reiterated India's full support to France in the fight against terrorism, extremism and radicalism," said the Ministry of External Affairs, referring to a spate of deadly knife attacks in October by Islamist radicals, that Mr. Macron has vowed to stop with a tough security law.

Mr. Modi's call came days



Emmanuel Macron

after Mr. Macron said in an interview that he felt France was "lonely" in fighting for freedom of speech, referring to an ongoing spat with Turkish President Recep Erdogan who has been sharply critical of Mr. Macron for his response to the attacks.

A statement from the MEA said Mr. Modi and Mr. Macron also discussed the post-COVID-19 situation.

# SC junks Arnab's plea for CBI probe

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday refused a plea by Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami for a CBI inquiry against top Maharashtra police officials and a blanket protection to anyone related to his media company. "This is a little ambitious," Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said, allowing the petitioner to withdraw the petition.

The petition sought a direction from the top court to the Centre to "protect" Mr. Goswami and his company, a CBI probe against the Maharashtra DGP and the Mumbai Police Commissioner and quashing of all FIRs. The Bench dismissed it as withdrawn, but allowed the petitioners to move the High Court or any other court.

FIRs have been lodged against Mr. Devgan in Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Telangana for his remarks during

# Court refuses to quash FIRs against TV anchor

SC grants him protection from arrest

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to quash the criminal action initiated against TV anchor Amish Devgan for making derogatory remarks against Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti on air.

The court, however, protected him from immediate arrest, provided he cooperated with the investigation. It transferred the various FIRs registered against him to Ajmer. When senior advocate Siddharth Luthra sought permission to let his client appear via virtual court, the court told him to make his request before the appropriate court.

FIRs have been lodged against Mr. Devgan in Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Telangana for his remarks during

a programme telecast on June 15. Two were registered at Ajmer and Kota in Rajasthan, one at Bahadurpur in Hyderabad and two in Nanded and Pydhonie in Maharashtra. The Pydhonie FIR accused him of hurting religious sentiments.

**Tweets apology**

Mr. Devgan had later tweeted an apology, saying he was actually referring to Muslim ruler Alauddin Khilji and inadvertently ended up naming Chishti.

He said it was an error on his part, and thus, could not be treated as an offence. He argued that he was, in a well-orchestrated manner, made a victim of baseless

criminal complaints across the country. He said his family and his crew had received death threats.

# Leaders, anchors should speak carefully: Bench

Don't slip into hate speech, says SC

**KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday held that "persons of influence", from top government functionaries to political leaders to "creditable" TV anchors, owe a duty to society to choose their words and not slip into hate speech.

A Bench of Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and Sanjeev Khanna said the impact of hate speech depends on the person who has uttered the words.

"A speech by 'a person of influence' such as a top government or executive functionary, Opposition leader, political or social leader of following, or a credible anchor on a TV show carries a far more credibility and impact than a statement made by a common person on the street," Justice Khanna, who wrote the judgment, observed.

The verdict refused to quash the several FIRs of hate speech registered against TV host Amish Devgan, who made derogatory remarks about a Sufi saint on air. The court said he was more of a "co-participant" than a "mere host" during the show.

"Persons of influence, keeping in view their reach, impact and authority they yield on general public or the specific class to which they belong, owe a duty and have to be more responsible... They are expected to know and perceive the meaning conveyed by the words spoken or written, including the possible meaning that is likely to be conveyed," Justice Khanna reasoned.

**INTERVIEW | NEERAJ NISCHAL**

# 'Relying on vaccine alone won't do'

Efficacy in the field setting is still to be seen, says AIIMS associate professor

**BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN**

**With health experts stating that a COVID-19 vaccine could be just around the corner, Neeraj Nischal, associate professor of Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), warns that "seeing the vaccine as a magic bullet is fraught with danger". He explains that social vaccines and biological vaccines will have to go hand in hand in the long fight ahead.**

With the vaccine expected soon, how early will it aid in life going back to normal?

■ Seeing vaccines as a magic bullet is fraught with danger. It should be seen as the beginning of the end of the pandemic, but the journey is still long and will require efforts from all of us.

Social vaccines (COVID-19 appropriate behaviour) and biological vaccines (under development) will have to go hand in hand even when vaccines come. Though vaccines are promising, the outcome isn't going to change overnight. It will still be a long fight and people's participation is of utmost importance. Vaccines are always tried on healthy individuals. Efficacy in the field setting is still to be seen and vaccines offer hope, but just relying on the vaccine is not advised.

Almost all States in India are

showing a spike-fall-spike pattern. What is our best bet to safeguard against COVID-19? Has the virus mutated?

■ As of now there is no 'magic drug' that works against this virus. So our best bet to safeguard ourselves from the virus has been and will continue to be – social vaccination. COVID-19 appropriate behaviour is vital. As of now, there is no evidence of any major virus mutation. But sadly, our COVID-19 appropriate behaviour has mutated. We have lowered our guard. COVID-19 fatigue has made us careless and we are not following social barriers any more.

Everyone has to pitch in and become a COVID-19 warrior once again, as they did during the early days of the pandemic.

Now that we know more about the disease, what are the major complications to look out for?

■ Complications, if any, usually set in after one week of illness. Prolonged high fever, progressive drop in saturation and breathlessness, persistent cough and difficulty in speaking are some of the warning signs.

Apart from these, any atypical symptoms that weren't present at the start of



We have lowered our guard. COVID-19 fatigue has made us careless and we are not following social barriers any more

the disease, like a new swelling in the leg, a new onset of severe chest pain, weakness of any part of the body, etc., warrants immediate medical attention.

We are seeing post-COVID-19 lung fibrosis, persistent cough, fatigue, psychological effects like anxiety and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). It's an evolving topic and we will come to know more about this in the next 2-3 months.

Health infrastructure and manpower seem to be stretched beyond capacity with the now almost a year-long battle with the COVID-19 virus. How are hospitals and staff coping?

These are testing times for our health infrastructure. All frontline workers should be

praised for their continued effort to reduce the burden of this nagging virus. Efforts are made to ensure that the roster for all healthcare workers is made with adequate gaps between duties, so that they get enough rest. Teamwork and coordination between different healthcare professionals, and also between non-medical helper staff and the healthcare workers, is required for smooth and efficient functioning in hospitals catering to COVID-19 patients.

We try to provide psychological support to each other. The fight against this virus is far from over and we have to do our bit without getting fatigued.

What are the major myths and wrong practices that we are following?

■ Don't follow viral messages on social media and get information only from verified sources like the Healthy Ministry or ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) or AIIMS websites. Myths regarding hypoxia while using a mask is one I can think of, which is totally wrong. Irrational treatment options circulating in social media are very dangerous and should not be followed. The myth that the young and healthy are totally safe from the virus is also dangerous and can have catastrophic consequences.

# After SII, Bharat Biotech seeks DCGI approval

Committee will take a decision in two weeks, says official

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

After pharma majors Pfizer and the Serum Institute of India (SII), Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech International Ltd. on Monday sought emergency use authorisation from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for its COVID-19 vaccine, Covishield.

The vaccine is being developed with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and is undergoing Phase 3 trials in over 25 centres across India.

Bharat Biotech today [on Monday] applied for the restricted emergency use of their vaccine. The SEC (Subject Expert Committee) may look at the proposal this week itself along with applications from Serum and Pfizer, and a decision on this will be taken in two weeks," a senior official said.

Earlier in the day, SII CEO Adar Poonawalla tweeted stating: "As promised, before the end of 2020, SII has applied for emergency use authorisation for the first made-in-India vaccine, Covishield."

The Pune-based vaccine manufacturer has collaborated with Oxford University and pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca for making the vaccine and its trials at select sites. The SII has now sought emergency use authorisation, citing unmet med-

ical needs due to the pandemic and in the interest of the public at large.

A senior Health Ministry official told *The Hindu* that Covishield was logically more feasible for use and distribution in India as it stored well at 2-8 degrees Celsius. The ICMR said the SII had already manufactured 40 million doses under the at-risk manufacturing and stockpiling licence it obtained from the DCGI.

Replies to a query on whether efficacy figure of SII vaccine trials on Indian volunteers is available, V.K. Paul, head of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration, said "he had not seen the

## Sushil Modi elected to the Rajya Sabha

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PATNA

Senior Bihar BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi was elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha on Monday. The seat had fallen vacant after the death of Lok Janshakti Party leader Ram Vilas Paswan in October.

The election was scheduled to be held on December 14 but since no Opposition candidate had filed nominations, Mr. Sushil Modi was elected unopposed. His election was considered a formality as the NDA had got a majority in the Assembly in the Assembly election.

Mr. Sushil Modi is likely to be inducted into the Union Cabinet in the next expansion of the Council of Ministers.

## Assam coal traders under I-T scanner

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department conducted a search and survey operation in connection with leading coal traders of Assam, on allegations that the group indulged in out-of-books transactions involving over ₹150 crore.

In all, 21 locations in Guwahati, Digboi, Margherita and Delhi were covered since December 4. The main charges against the group were that it routed accommodation entries of over ₹23 crore and ₹62 crore in the form of non-genuine share capital and non-genuine unsecured loans through certain Kolkata-based shell companies. This was done by suppressing the net profit.

## SC orders medical seat, compensation to Telangana student

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed a private medical college to pay ₹10 lakh in compensation to a student for illegally denying her admission to a postgraduate course this academic year.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao also ordered Kamineni Academy of Medical Sciences and Research Centre in Hyderabad to allocate Mothuru Sriyahi Komundi a seat in M.S. (General Surgery) course from the management quota for 2021-22.

The judgment by Justice Rao said Ms. Komundi "lost one precious academic year for no fault of hers, for which she has to be compensated by way of an amount of ₹10 lakh to be paid by the college within a period of four weeks from today."

With this, the court has extended the application of its 2019 judgment in the S. Krishna Sradha case, which empowered courts to direct private medical colleges to not only pay compensation but also admit a student wrongly denied admission in an under-graduate course, to post-graduate medical courses too.

The student's version of events was that she had visited the college with her father on July 29 and 30, but her admission process was not completed. On the other hand, the college said she did not visit the college on these days. However, the latter's version did not hold water as the college's own affidavit in the State High Court revealed that the student and her father had visited the college on July 29 and paid the university fee.

Besides, the college had extended the last date of admission by a month and admitted another student who was 20,000 ranks below her. Justice Rao noted that there was enough time for the college to notify her, but it did not.

"The manner in which the college acted in depriving admission to Respondent No. 1 [Ms. Komundi] and giving admission to Respondent No. 5 on August 11 is deplorable. The managements of medical colleges are not expected to indulge in such illegalities in making admissions to medical courses," Justice Rao observed in the judgment.

Though the Bench agreed with the High Court's earlier conclusion that she was "intentionally and illegally denied admission for 2020-21," it did not support the High Court's direction to "create" a seat for Ms. Komundi this year. It has been repeatedly held by this court that directions cannot be issued for increasing annual intake capacity, Justice Rao observed.

## Modi calls for legal reforms

'India cannot build the coming century with laws of the last century'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

India cannot build the coming century with laws of the last century, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, stressing the significance of "reforms".

"For new facilities and systems, reforms are necessary," he noted.

Launching the construction of Agra Metro through videoconferencing, he said the laws that were beneficial in the last century, became a "burden" of the next century. For this reason, there must be continuous process for reforms, the Prime Minister said.

People often wondered why "reforms are working



New project: Narendra Modi speaking remotely from Delhi at the inauguration of the Agra Metro work on Monday. • PTI

better today" in comparison to the past. "The reason is simple. Earlier, reforms would take place in fragments, keeping some sectors and departments in mind.

Now reforms are being brought with a thought of entirety," he said.

India was not only expanding its metro rail network but also constructing

its own metro coaches and signal systems under the "Make In India" programme. It was becoming "atmanirbhar" (self-reliant) in metro network too, he said.

The Agra Metro project comprises 2 corridors with a total length of 29.4 km and connects major tourist attractions such as the Taj Mahal, the Agra Fort and Sikandra with railway stations and bus stands, the government said.

The project will benefit the 26 lakh population of Agra and also cater to more than 60 lakh tourists who visit the city every year. Its estimated cost will be ₹8,379.62 crore. It will be completed in 5 years.

## Ministry hopes for a quick decision on new Parliament

S-G assures SC that no work will commence till verdict

DAMINI NATH

NEW DELHI

The construction of a new Parliament building, set to start this month, was dedicated to 135 crore Indians and the deadline for completing the project in the 75th year of Independence, 2022, should be met, the top Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) official said on Monday.

However, the Supreme Court expressed displeasure at the government going ahead with its Central Vista redevelopment project, including construction of the new Parliament, while legal challenges to various aspects of the approvals process were yet to be decided. The government on Monday gave an undertaking to the court that it would not carry out any construction, demolition or transplantation of trees till the Court gives its verdict.

MoHUA Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra told *The Hindu* that the government's



Greener gone: Trees uprooted from near Parliament as part of the Central Vista redevelopment. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

stand was represented in detail by the Solicitor-General and he was "hopeful of a decision soon". He said the court had allowed the Ministry to go ahead with the scheduled ceremony of laying the foundation stone for the new Parliament by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday.

Mr. Mishra said all the processes regarding clearances had been followed. "The new Parliament is being constructed for 135 crore Indians and not for any individual. It is as per the future needs. The deadline of com-

pletion, by October 2022, is to mark the 75th year of Independence and should be followed," he said.

As a part of the Central Vista redevelopment project, the government has proposed construction of a new building adjacent to the British-era Parliament House. The project is esti-

mated to cost ₹971 crore and will be carried out by the Central Public Works Department's contractor, Tata Projects Ltd., and has been designed by Ahmedabad-based HCP Design, Planning and Management.

## Jail sent back spectacles meant for Navlakha, alleges partner

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The Taloja Central Jail refused to accept spectacles sent for Gautam Navlakha, after the pair he was using were stolen, his partner Sahiba Husain said.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Ms. Husain said, "Gautam lost his spectacles on November 27 but he couldn't call earlier and inform me as he had to wait for his turn to call. On November 30, when he was finally able to call he

told me he lost his pair."

"He has a very high-power number about 6.5 and is almost blind without them. So, I immediately got a new one made and sent it by Speed Post, as the jail authorities do not accept courier,

on December 3. I thought it would have reached by now so I tracked it online only to find out that it reached the jail on December 5 but was returned on December 6," Ms. Husain said.

Jail Superintendent Kaus-

tub Kurlekar said, "We do not accept any couriers, and we have not received any parcel by post. I told him if he wants another pair made, he can give us the power of his specs and we can make one for him. But he hasn't. So what can we do?"

He said, "All the accused of Elgar Parishad, whether Varvara Rao, Stan Swamy or him, they can't take care of themselves or their belongings. Is it our responsibility to take care of his specs?"



All ablaze: Policemen walking past a fire during a rally by the BJP in Siliguri on Monday. • AFP

Mr. Ghosh, who visited the hospital where injured BJP supporters were taken, said that about 50 party supporters, including some women, were injured in the violence.

According to the police, serious acts of violence were committed at Siliguri. The police personnel showed

restraint and there was no use of firearms.

The march was organised by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), and senior BJP leaders, including Mr. Ghosh and Kailash Vijayvariya, were present.

A BJP delegation met Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and informed him about the

violence. Trinamool Congress leader and Minister Gautam Deb said the protests were far from a democratic movement and what happened was most unfortunate. Similar scenes of violence were witnessed on October 8 during the BJP's march to the State Secretariat in Kolkata.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Ms. Husain said, "Gautam lost his spectacles on November 27 but he couldn't call earlier and inform me as he had to wait for his turn to call. On November 30, when he was finally able to call he

**THE ODISHA MINING CORPORATION LIMITED**  
OMC House, Bhubaneswar-751001, Odisha  
CIN: U3100OR1956SGC000313, www.omcltd.in

**NOTICE** No.14744/OMC/Personl/2020  
Date: 07/12/2020

Pursuant to Advt. No. 46/ OMC dated 26.02.2020 and subsequent Newspaper Notice No. 52/ OMC dated 12.11.2020 & OMC Website Notice No.53/ OMC dated 12.11.2020, the Online Computer Based Test (CBT) for recruitment of various Non- executive posts in OMC is scheduled from 08.12.2020 to 14.12.2020 (except on 12.12.2020 & 13.12.2020).

However, due to call for Bharat Bandh on 08.12.2020 & keeping in view of the larger interest of the candidates, the Online CBT scheduled to be held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (03 shifts), is hereby postponed until further notice. The rescheduled date for the online CBT for the candidates, shall be intimated at the earliest.

However, the Online CBTs on other dates i.e. on 09.12.2020, 10.12.2020, 11.12.2020 & 14.12.2020 shall be conducted in respect of the candidates as per the schedule.

Sd/-  
General Manager (P&A)  
CAD-876:

**BHARAT DYNAMICS LIMITED**  
(A Government of India Enterprise)  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
GACHIBOWLI, HYDERABAD-500 032.  
Ref : BDL/CC/OT/GT/012/2020-21 Dt : 08.12.2020  
e-PROCUREMENT ABRIDGED TENDER NOTICE  
Inviting Indigenous Competitive Bidding

Sl.No.	Tender ID	Description
1	62711	Supply, Installation, Commissioning of HVAC for new INVAR Non-Explosive Building
2	62801	Thermal Imaging Core

Please visit website <https://bdltenders.abprocure.com> for further details. Bids should be submitted online only.  
"Corrigendum if any shall be issued through our e-portal only and not in Newspapers".  
Addl. General Manager (Corp. Comm.)

**MAHARASHTRA METRO RAIL CORPORATION LTD.**  
(A joint venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Maharashtra)  
**PUNE METRO RAIL PROJECT**  
101, The Orion, Opposite Don Bosco Youth Centre, Koregaon Park, Pune - 411001. Telephone: 020-26051072  
E-mail: mahmetro.tenders@mail.com | www.punemetrorail.org

**Tender Notice No. P1EG-02/2020 Dt. 08.12.2020**

**NAME OF THE WORK:** Design, Engineering, Manufacture, Supply, Civil Work, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of the Rooftop and Boundary Walls mounted Solar PV projects under RESCO Model including Operation and Comprehensive Maintenance (O&M) of 5.0 MWp Solar PV project for a period of 25 years after commissioning of 10 Nos. of Elevated Stations and 2 Nos. of Depots for Pune Metro Rail Project.

**Cost of Documents:** INR 35,400/- (INR Thirty Five Thousand Four Hundred Only) incl. GST

Interested bidders may visit Pune Metro Rail website [www.punemetrorail.org](http://www.punemetrorail.org) or download the bidding documents and obtain further details regarding the tender from our e-tender portal <https://mahametrot1.tenders.in> from 16:00 hours on 08.12.2020.

**Executive Director**  
(Procurement & Contracts)  
MAHA-METRO

**BRUHAT BANGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Mahadevapura Division, Mahadevapura Zone, ITPL Main Road, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru-560 048.  
No.BBMP/EE/MD/TEND/16/2020-21 Date: 07-12-2020

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER**  
(Two Cover System) Only through E-Procurement

The Executive Engineer, Mahadevapura Division invites Item Rate tenders from eligible tenderers for the works detailed in the table given below. The Tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the works given in the table in appropriate class registered in Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike/CPWD/KPWD/Railways/MES/any State or Central Govt. organization.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Est. cost Rs. in Lakhs	EMD in Rs.
1.	Developmental works at Ward No.150 Bellandur Under P-3075 Bangalore District in Charge Minister's Discretionary Grants (Package-01)9 works.	899.91	13,50,000/- (1.00 lakh through e-payment balance Rs.12,50,000/- through BG, BG should be submit before opening of Technical bid)
2.	Developmental works at Ward No.54 Hoodi, 85 Doddanekundi and 82 Garudacharpalya Under P.3075 Bangalore District in Charge Minister's Discretionary Grants (Package-02)6 works.	599.94	9,00,000/- (1.00 lakh through e-payment balance Rs.8,00,000/- through BG, BG should be submit before opening of Technical bid)
3.	Development works at Ward No.149 Varthur Under P-3075 Bangalore District in Charge Minister's Discretionary Grants (Package-03)3 works.	299.97	4,50,000/- (1.00 lakh through e-payment balance Rs.3,50,000/- through BG, BG should be submit before opening of Technical bid)
4.	Development works at Ward No.83 Kadugudi and 84 Hageduru Under P-3075 Bangalore District in Charge Minister's Discretionary Grants (Package-04) 2 works.	199.98	3,00,000/- (1.00 lakh through e-payment balance Rs.2,00,000/- through BG, BG should be submit before opening of Technical bid)

**Calendar of events:** (1). Downloading of Tender Documents: 14-12-2020 from 4:00 p.m. (2). Pre-bid meeting: 16-12-2020 from 3:00 p.m. (3). Last Date of submission queries: 18-12-2020 with 3:00 p.m. (4). Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders: 28-12-2020 up to 4:00 p.m. (5). Date & Time for Opening Technical Bid: 29-12-2020 at 4:30 p.m. Further particulars can be obtained from the above office during working hours on working days or from website: <http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Byataranapura Division

**BRUHAT BANGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Byataranapura Division, Defence Colony, BWSSB Tank Road, Sahakaranagar, Bangalore - 560092  
No.EE/BTP/BBMP/E-PMT/11/2020-21 Date: 05.12.2020

**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDERS (IFT)**  
(Through e-Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, Byataranapura Division invites the tenders on behalf of The Commissioner, BBMP from eligible tenderers for the works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. amount put to tender (Rs. In Lakhs)	EMD (in
---------	--------------	---	---------

# Building blocks of success

American podcaster Guy Raz gives readers an in-depth look into what it takes to make a brand big, in his book *How I Built This*



NAHLA NAINAR

If you have a saleable idea, but do not know how to go about making it a successful business, Guy Raz's *How I Built This – The Unexpected Paths to Success from the World's Most Inspiring Entrepreneurs* may just be the book for you. Based on interviews conducted by the American journalist, host and creator for his National Public Radio (NPR) podcast of the same name, *How I Built*

*This is an interesting peek into what makes entrepreneurs successful.*

"Anyone who wants to learn how to develop an 'entrepreneurial mindset' and anyone interested in being inspired by creative thinkers and problem solvers, will find the book useful," says Raz in an email interview with *MetroPlus*.

Written in collaboration with writer-producer Nils Parker, *How I Built This* uses case studies from

across a wide range of people in the food industry, consumer packaged goods to the tech world, to gain insights into what makes for an successful business venture.

Raz – who has been called one of the most popular podcasters in history by the *New York Times* and reaches more than 19 million listeners a month – says that format of the book, with its emphasis on personal stories, is meant to inspire readers. "Time and again I found classic heroic journeys embedded in these case studies," he writes in the introduction.

He says successful entrepreneurs are helped not just by an idea, but also a desire to strike out on their own, an opportunity to leverage their skills and experience, and sometimes, simply a lucky break.

#### Conversational style

Readers can get the inside shop-talk about how founders of brands (among others) Carol's Daughter (cosmetics), Dell Computers, Away luggage and hip-hop fashion house FUBU got started. The diversity of his subjects' ex-

perience has actually been a boon, says Raz. "It has allowed me to show examples from a diverse range of industries and sectors and also how a wide variety of entrepreneurs from different backgrounds were able to meet their unique challenges."

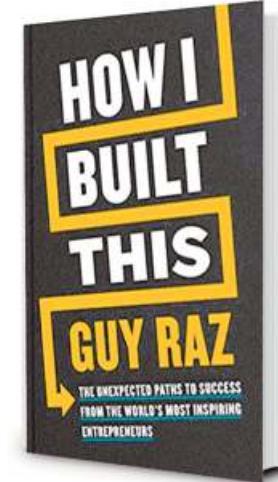
Divided into three sections – 'The Call', 'The Test' and 'The Destination', the book is written in a conversational style that manages to distill years of experience into an easily understandable paradigm.

..What I find to be most thrilling of all, most startling really, about the heroes of these stories is that their lack of subject matter expertise or institutional knowledge was never a deterrent to them. It was actually a blessing. It was freedom," he writes.

#### Broadcasting career

Raz's own journey is interesting as well. Joining NPR as an intern in 1997, he worked his way through nearly every department of the non-profit media organisation, from temporary production assistant to breaking news an-

**Divided into sections titled 'The Call', 'The Test' and 'The Destination', the book is written in a conversational style that manages to distill years of experience into an easily understandable paradigm**



chor. In the early 2000s, Raz reported from more than 50 countries, covering the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Macedonia, and the ongoing conflict in Israel and the Palestinian territories. A graduate from the Brandeis University, with a post-graduate degree in History from the Cambridge University in the UK, Raz spent a year as a Nieman Journalism Fellow at Harvard University.

He then began the podcast *How I Built This* in 2015, that narrates how major businesses of the world were founded, through in-depth interviews.

Journalism, he writes, was a way to "avoid falling into the pitfalls of running a business like my parents." But Raz eventually founded children's production house Tinkercast with his co-host Mindy Thomas in 2016.

But readers can expect something more than the usual compilation of a reporter's body of work in the printed version of *How I Built This*, says Raz.

"I have reached deep into my archive of notes and interviews that have not appeared on my programme to find new insights and stories that offer meaningful moments of inspiration for anyone looking to bring an idea into the world."

*How I Built This* by Guy Raz is available across all leading online portals.

**GAMESPOT** Odyssey lite Screenshots from the video game ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## TECH-A-BYTE



### Piece it together

Love puzzling but your top puzzling partner-in-crime is across an ocean? Google Arts and Culture has launched a new experiment which helps users partake in puzzle-piecing on the website, with their friends and family members across the world. Given puzzling has been on the rise over the lockdown, GAC has timed this release well.

The experience is simple to initiate; on the GAC experiment page, one can choose the puzzle image they wish and customise the difficulty (easy, medium or difficult). The images are digital copies of well-known artworks such as Girl with a Pearl Earring and Love is the Answer. Then you can add Google users to the puzzle party and the live experience is set once everyone joins. The puzzle pieces move on screen live as they are controlled by a given user, either singular or by group. During the fun, facts about the artist and the artworks pop up. One can up the ante by hiding the preview of the final image, too.

Check out *Puzzle Party* at [artsandculture.google.com/experiment/puzzle-party](http://artsandculture.google.com/experiment/puzzle-party)

### A year in review

Twitter has published its annual report 'The state of social intelligence' in an official blog post by Joe Rice, Lead Product Solutions and Sales Manager.

He writes, "While the uptake in digital data sources by the research industry was well underway, little could I have imagined that a global pandemic would soon accelerate these dynamics, as almost overnight the world moved online." He shares four major themes across awareness and adoption of social intelligence today: 'speed to insight' (the reduction of the use of traditional, ad hoc market research projects in favour of quicker, more cost-effective approaches that provide real-time, behavioural insights), 'an explosion of external data sources' (where the importance and value of data have grown, many companies are now monetising their own unique data sets), 'DIY meets data integration' (the primary gateway for organisations to access social data), and 'truly game-changing innovation'.

Please send feedback to Wireless stories to [techknow@thehindu.co.in](mailto:techknow@thehindu.co.in)

CM YK

cedence during the lockdown, Raz says the disruption in the technology and innovation sectors has actually helped him.

**From podcast to page**  
Guy Raz; the cover of his book ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

[Disruption in tech and innovation sectors] has allowed me to work more efficiently and rely far less on long-distance travel."

# When worlds collide

The latest intellectual property from Ubisoft, Immortals Fenyx Rising, is inspired by Breath of the Wild, and we love it

JULIAN ALMEIDA

If the last few Assassin's Creed games are anything to go by, Ubisoft has been infusing many of its games with mythology, from Ancient Egypt and Greece to the Vikings, the various mythologies surface in interesting ways. Most notably, in Assassin's Creed Odyssey and its expansions, and the way it referenced Greek Mythology. Starting as a spin-off of Odyssey and initially called Gods and Monsters, Immortals Fenyx Rising is a new game in a very familiar world.

Typhon, one of the Greek gods' deadliest foes, has broken free of his shackles, leaving several of the gods robbed of their powers. Their fate rests on the shoulders of Fenyx, a soldier chosen as their champion. Fenyx with a Phoenix named Phosphorus must defeat Typhon and his evil minions by gaining strength and the powers of the gods themselves.

Immortals is hilariously narrated by the infinitely tortured

Prometheus, the god who gave humans fire and was punished for it. He recounts the tale to an increasingly frustrated Zeus who cannot wait to skip to the end. More than once, these two have bought a chuckle making an otherwise very normal story a lot more exciting.

#### All family fun

On a side note, while I was playing Immortals, my eight-year-old daughter was sha-

dowing me over my shoulder. This made the game all the more enjoyable, especially with the character creator where she got creative with her female Fenix, and was even cheering me on as we beat down Cyclops and gorgons and learned a bit of Greek mythology on the way – minus the very violent bits. Immortals is a delightful game, and it presented a whole new world to her.

With an art style that is reminiscent of Kingdom Hearts.

The biggest giveaway is the stamina metre, which pops up every time you climb something, and everything you see can be climbed. Fenix also has powers, such as the Wings of Daedalus which lets you glide across the world, as well as those earned from the gods that help you in combat and puzzle solving. Much like Zelda's shrines, Immortals has Vaults of Tartaros where you have to solve several creative puzzles using powers like Herakles strength. The point is, if you have played Breath of the Wild, Immortals is more of that, but with the shenanigans



#### IMMORTALS FENYX RISING

DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Quebec

PUBLISHER: Ubisoft

PRICE: ₹3,999 on Playstation 4, Xbox One, PC, Nintendo Switch, Playstation 4, Stadia and Xbox Series X

of Greek gods.

The world itself is broken up into different portions, each inspired by a god that governs that area, unlocked by climbing their giant statues. Places such as the lush valley of Aphrodite are beautiful, while the others are a bit colourless. It is not an Ubisoft open-world game if there

aren't many markers on the screen from performing feats, and quests to finding treasure and battling with towering Greek monsters.

Combat wise, the game has a strong focus on aerial combat, a combination of Assassin's Creed's swordplay with sword, axe and bow attacks.

To top that off, you get

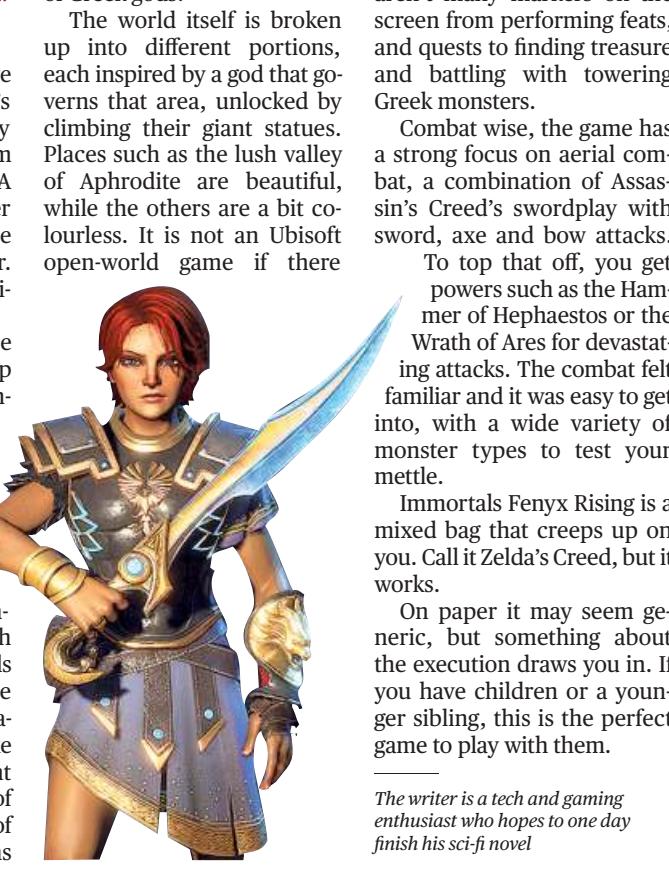
powers such as the Hammer of Hephaestos or the Wrath of Ares for devastating attacks. The combat felt

familiar and it was easy to get into, with a wide variety of monster types to test your mettle.

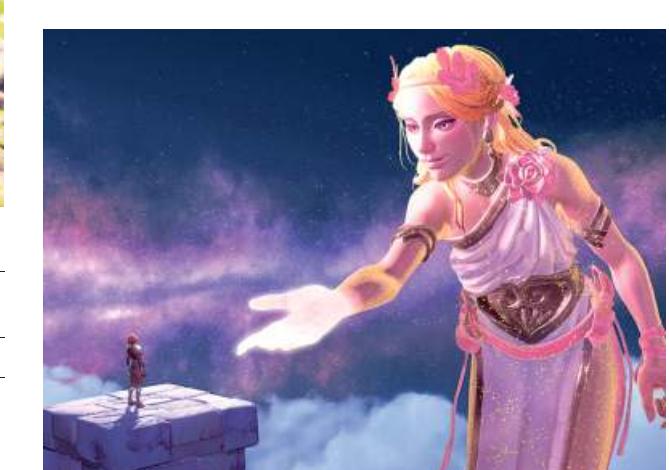
Immortals Fenyx Rising is a mixed bag that creeps up on you. Call it Zelda's Creed, but it works.

On paper it may seem generic, but something about the execution draws you in. If you have children or a younger sibling, this is the perfect game to play with them.

The writer is a tech and gaming enthusiast who hopes to one day finish his sci-fi novel



**GAMESPOT** Odyssey lite Screenshots from the video game ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



AN-NOE

### Meraki by Malini

Malini Richard is a wood artist based in Chennai. "I function out of a small studio and handcraft my own designs out of recycled wood, customising them for my clients across the country." Wall hangings, nativity scenes, Christmas cottages and customised souvenirs are all chiselled with care, and priced between ₹500 and ₹2,000.  
**Email:** malinicharles0205@gmail.com  
**Instagram:** @merakibymalini



**Deck the halls**  
(Clockwise from left) Malini's woodworked Christmas cottage; The Needle Crafter's laced towels; candle holder and wreath by Tangle; Little Heaven Decor's hangings; a snowflake tree hanging by Tangle • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# Homemade for the hearth

### ANISHA MENEZES

With all the time spent at home this year, it is inevitable that Christmas 2020, will be about home-made delicacies and handmade decor. Small, women-led businesses across India have created a mosaic across media, of ornaments, table decor and linens. From vintage embroidered baubles, to kitschy upcycled ones, tamarind string stars, to DIY Christmas scenes, there's something for every aesthetic and budget.



### Oh Scrap Madras

Oh Scrap Madras unveils its second Christmas collection, starting at ₹250 for a stuffed snowman to ₹1,300 for a festive bunting. Ohscrap also has ornaments and cushions in electric prints, all upcycled from fabric waste.

**Email:** ohsrapmadras@gmail.com  
**Instagram:** @ohscrapmadras +91 97899 81712



### Silaiwali

Afghan refugee women sew beautiful dolls out of fabric remnants from the fast fashion industry in Delhi. Their range of upcycled, handmade ornaments in shades of earthy brown with embroidered detailing, celebrate the cultural significance of the horse, camel, elephant, cow, snow leopard and deer.

₹500 to a set of two.

**Website:** www.silaiwali.com

**Instagram:** @silaiwali



### Divya Innovations

Suman John, CEO, Divya Innovations, Bengaluru manages a social enterprise with a team of artisans born with intellectual challenges. "They bring a strong work ethic and attention to detail, and earning a salary helps them feel included and accepted in their families," explains Suman. The Christmas catalogue comprises cribs and tree ornaments from recycled wood, tea light holders, coasters and trays, fabric gift bags, colourful scented and Advent candles and assorted dark chocolate in festive packaging. Gifting options start from ₹60 upwards.

**Website:** www.diyainnovations.com

**Instagram:** @diyainnovations2013

+91 9886013270

### Little Flower

Based in Kochi, Ammu Chacko is a fashion designer by profession, but also makes merry out of the mundane with her range of table and wall decor. Whether repurposing old cake boards into bells, making doily angels or using dry tamarind fibres to create rustic stars, Ammu credits the handmade projects of her childhood, for her current design aesthetic. Her candles and table arrangements can be customised; prices range from ₹90 to ₹4,500.

**Instagram:** @littleflower\_ammuchacko on Instagram +91 94460 37978

### Asone Embroidery

An embroidery artist from Nagaland, Ason Tinyo, boasts a range of handmade wall decor with exquisite detailing, replete with shimmering strands and beads. "My work is mostly inspired by the culture that I grew up in. As an embroiderer I find more reasons to be doing what I love, during this Christmas season," she says. The hoops start at ₹650.

**Email:** asoneluruo@gmail.com

**Instagram:** @asone.embroidery

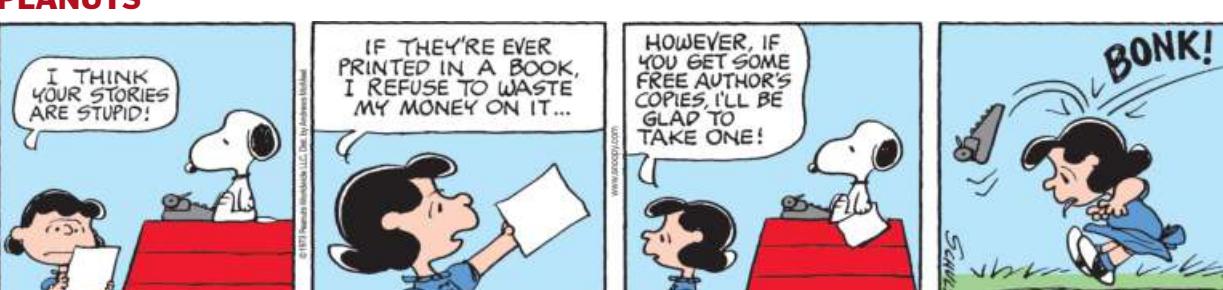


### Tangle

Pauravi Shah quit her corporate job in 2015, to fulfill her artistic destiny. Stumbling upon tons of fabric ribbon at home, she used the Japanese art form Kazanshi to form intricate patterns using ribbon petals. Her Bengaluru-based brand, Tangle, sells yarn candles, orb lights, and a constellation of fun and festive Kazanshi ornaments in reindeer, snowflake, fir tree, candle and angel motifs, from ₹50 to ₹750.

**Instagram:** @pauravi +91 8884088600

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBES



### POOCH CAFE



### HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



### TIGER



### PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# Superman in disguise

Sonu Sood talks about hosting a new documentary, *Bharat Ke Mahaveer*, and how he manages to balance his film career with social work

### ABHILASHA UNNIKRISHNAN

As an actor, Sonu Sood has gained fame and success in Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada, Punjabi and even Mandarin films. Now as a humanitarian, he has garnered love and respect from scores of people across the country. From providing transport to migrant labourers to helping them with financial assistance, Sonu has kept himself busy during the lockdown.

He is also co-host of a three-part documentary, *Bharat Ke Mahaveer*, that showcases stories of 12 people who have helped their communities during the pandemic. Hosted by Sonu Sood and Dia Mirza, the documentary gave Sonu the opportunity to discuss with the *mahaveers* (brave men and women) how they helped their communities in these testing times. "If you desire to do something good for the society, nothing can stop you. It was quite a learning experience for me as well," says Sonu over phone.

With the launch of his job portal, Pravasi Roigar, he aims to change the lives of countless people for the better. "They [migrant workers] have never had their own identity," says the actor-turned-humanitarian, while dis-

cussing the migrant crisis during the pandemic.

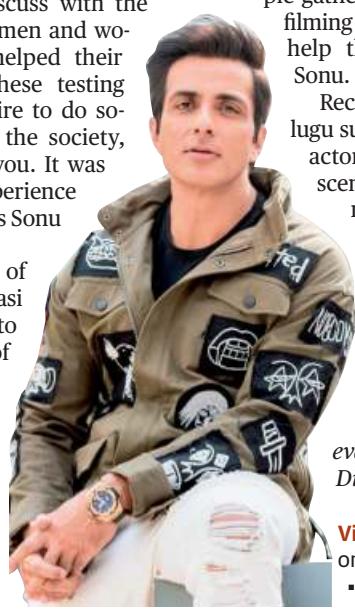
The actor says he has realised how to use social media platforms wisely to help him connect with people in dire situations. Using the platform to reach out to people who otherwise won't be able to get in touch with him, he is connected with over 2 lakh people resolving issues related to jobs, transportation and surgeries, adds Sonu. Going forward, the portal will upskill the candidates and train them to secure the job they wish to have.

The actor says that balancing his film career with social work has been challenging but a blessed experience. "People gather around the set when I am filming and tell me their problems, I help them between shots," says Sonu.

Recently, during a shoot with Telugu superstar Chiranjeevi, the two actors joked about how fight scenes felt wrong because of Sonu's off-screen persona – of a good samaritan. He recalls one such shoot where the director re-shot many scenes to invert his on-screen perception of a villain, to avoid backlash from the actor's followers.

*Bharat Ke Mahaveer* airs every Saturday and Sunday on Discovery Plus.

**Villain turned hero** Sonu Sood on helping migrant workers ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



# A labour of love

*Bhairavi the Runaway*, a Gothic novel by popular Hindi author Shivani, is now available in English

### RUTH DHANARAJ

Skeletons in the closet, a holiday romance, the inexorable allure of mystics and a tragic turn of events can be found in *Bhairavi the Runaway*, a Gothic novella by Gaura Pant.

Gaura Pant, who was popularly known by her pen name Shivani, was a prolific writer in Hindi during the early 60s and 70s. Her novels often centered around the culture and society of the times and its often hypocritical expectations of women.

A chance conversation with a colleague in the publishing industry led Priyanka Sarkar to take up the translation of *Bhairavi...* into English. "I have read quite a few of Shivani's works and in this instance, had just finished reading *Bhairavi...* We were discussing it and my friend suggested I work on an English translation of the book," says Priyanka Sarkar, a Delhi-based translator and editor.

Needless to say, Priyanka required the consent of Pant's family before starting on the project. "I worked on around 10 pages and sent it across to Ira

Pande, Gaura's daughter. Once they were satisfied and gave their approval, I went ahead with it," says Priyanka. It was a genuine interest in this genre that lead Priyanka to work on *Bhairavi*. "I am very drawn to fantasy and Gothic literature, and *Bhairavi* is a full-bodied example of this style of writing in Hindi. I was working on something I loved," says Priyanka, who took about a year to complete the translation.

In her work, Priyanka has kept to the author's original style of writing where stream of consciousness and regional language references dominate. *Bhairavi* touches on the prevailing social norms of the time – marriage as a necessary duty for parents of daughters to fulfil, especially if their child is uncommonly beautiful; the confines of caste and community and the inescapable clutches of one's fate.

*Bhairavi The Runaway* by Shivani and translated by Priyanka Sarkar is published by Simon & Schuster.

**Accessible** (Above) The book cover; (left) Priyanka Sarkar ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

+

# U.S., China dominate arms market: report

American firms accounted for 61% of sales by the 'Top 25' manufacturers, ahead of China's 15.7%

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
STOCKHOLM

U.S. and Chinese companies dominated the global arms market in 2019, while West Asia made its first appearance among the 25 biggest weapons manufacturers, a report by the SIPRI research institute said on Monday.

The U.S. arms industry accounted for 61% of sales by the world's 'Top 25' manufacturers last year, ahead of China's 15.7%, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Total sales by the 'Top 25' rose by 8.5% to \$361 billion, or 50 times the annual budget of the UN's peacekeeping operations.

## Top sellers

Six U.S. companies and three Chinese firms were in the top 10, rounded out by Britain's BAE Systems in seventh spot.

"China and the United



Race for dominance: A file photo of a military parade in Beijing. Sales of Chinese firms rose by almost 5% in 2019. ■ AFP

States are the two biggest states in terms of global arms spending, with companies cut to size," Lucie Beraud-Sudreau, director of SIPRI's arms and military expenditure programme, told AFP.

The U.S. has dominated the market for decades, but for China - whose compa-

nies' sales rose by almost 5% in 2019 - "this increase corresponds to the implementation of reforms to modernise the People's Liberation Army underway since 2015," she said.

U.S. companies Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and

General Dynamics clinched the top five spots, while China's AVIC, CETC and Norinco held spots six, eight and nine. U.S. group L3Harris Technologies was in 10th place.

"Europe remains a bit dispersed... but if you combine the European companies together you could have European companies the same size" as U.S. and Chinese manufacturers, Ms. Beraud-Sudreau noted.

Airbus (European, 13th in the ranking) and Thales (French, 14th) can meanwhile boast of having the strongest international presence - each is represented in 24 countries, ahead of U.S. Boeing.

**West Asian surprise**  
"European companies are more internationalised" than others, Ms. Beraud-Sudreau said.

For the first time, a company from the West Asia made it into the "Top 25": EDGE, of the United Arab Emirates, was formed by the consolidation of some 25 defence entities in 2019.

In 22nd spot, EDGE "is a good illustration of how the combination of high national demand for military products and services with a desire to become less dependent on foreign suppliers is driving the growth of arms companies in the Middle East," SIPRI researcher Pieter Wezeman said in the report.

SIPRI also noted that French group Dassault had shot up from 38th to 17th place, boosted by exports of its Rafale fighter jets in 2019.

Meanwhile, two Russian companies were also in the "Top 25", Almaz-Antey in 15th spot and United Shipbuilding in 25th.

# Biden picks California AG as first Latino Health Secretary

He taps disease expert Rochelle Walensky as head of CDC

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

President-elect Joe Biden has picked California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to be his health secretary, putting a defender of the Affordable Care Act in a leading role to oversee his administration's coronavirus response.

Separately, Mr. Biden picked a Harvard infectious disease expert, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, to head the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And he announced a new role for Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert.

If confirmed by the Senate, Mr. Becerra, will be the



Xavier Becerra  
first Latino to head the Department of Health and Human Services, a \$1 trillion-plus agency with 80,000 employees and a portfolio that includes drugs and vaccines, leading-edge research and health insurance programmes covering more than 130 million Americans.

Mr. Biden's selection of Mr. Becerra and Ms. Walensky was announced on Monday in a press release from the transition office. Mr. Biden also announced other top members of his health care team, though some posts remain unfilled.

Mr. Becerra, as the State of California's top lawyer, has led the coalition of Democratic states defending "Obamacare" from the Trump administration's latest effort to overturn it, a legal case awaiting a Supreme Court decision next year. Mr. Becerra was involved in steering the Obama health law through Congress in 2009 and 2010.

Mr. Giuliani was exhibiting some symptoms and was admitted on Sunday to Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The 76-year-old former New York Mayor has travelled extensively to battleground States in an effort to help Mr. Trump subvert his election loss to Joe Biden.

On numerous occasions, he has met with officials with

## Giuliani in hospital after testing positive for virus

He met officials without wearing a mask

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump says his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani has tested positive for the coronavirus, making him the latest in Trump's inner circle to contract the disease that is now surging across the U.S.

Mr. Giuliani was exhibiting some symptoms and was admitted on Sunday to Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The 76-year-old former New York Mayor has travelled extensively to battleground States in an effort to help Mr. Trump subvert his election loss to Joe Biden.

On numerous occasions, he has met with officials with

out wearing a mask.

Mr. Trump, who announced Mr. Giuliani's positive test in a Sunday afternoon tweet, wished him a speedy recovery.

"Get better soon Rudy, we will carry on!!! Mr. Trump wrote.

Mr. Giuliani did not immediately respond to a request for comment, but on Sunday evening he retweeted Mr. Trump's announcement of his diagnosis. He also tweeted thanks to a conservative writer who had said he was praying for Mr. Giuliani.

The Trump campaign said in a statement that Mr. Giuliani tested negative twice before his visits to Arizona, Michigan and Georgia.

It further weakened U.S.-backed Opposition leader

# Pak. hospital suspends staff as oxygen shortage kills patients

It went unnoticed, unsupervised and unchecked: report

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
PESHAWAR

Seven workers at a Pakistan hospital who left scores of COVID-19 patients without sufficient oxygen for hours have been suspended after several of them died, authorities said.

In 22nd spot, EDGE "is a good illustration of how the combination of high national demand for military products and services with a desire to become less dependent on foreign suppliers is driving the growth of arms companies in the Middle East," SIPRI researcher Pieter Wezeman said in the report.

SIPRI also noted that French group Dassault had shot up from 38th to 17th place, boosted by exports of its Rafale fighter jets in 2019.

Meanwhile, two Russian companies were also in the "Top 25", Almaz-Antey in 15th spot and United Shipbuilding in 25th.

the report said, adding that no backup oxygen supply had been put in place.

The hospital director was among those suspended with immediate effect.

Taimur Saleem Jhagra, a provincial Health Minister, told AFP that the authorities would hold a second detailed inquiry over the next five days. "The hospital was low on oxygen from around 8 p.m. in the evening, how come they couldn't manage to solve the issue until after 12 p.m.?" Mr. Jhagra said.

"Some of the staff were off, some were absent and there wasn't any alternate arrangements, even the emergency squad was not available," he added.

Hospital spokesman Farhad Khan told AFP on Sunday that a disruption in oxygen supplies affected some 200 people, including nearly 100 with coronavirus.

Pakistan has reported more than 4,00,000 cases of coronavirus - including over 8,000 deaths - since it arrived in late February. Intensive care units in hospitals across the country are now almost full, with provincial governments struggling to deal with the soaring caseload.

# Maduro wins legislature polls boycotted by Opposition

U.S. denounces the elections as a 'fraud and a sham'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
CARACAS

President Nicolas Maduro seized total control of Venezuela's political institutions on Sunday with a sweeping victory in legislative elections that were boycotted by the main Opposition parties.

Mr. Maduro and his left-wing allies had 67.7% of the vote with over 80% of ballots counted, while the Opposition bloc which broke the boycott had 18%, National Electoral Council president Indira Alfonzo said.

Turnout was low with just 31% of the country's 20 million electorate voting.

Sunday's predictable triumph gives Mr. Maduro's ruling Socialist Party control of an expanded 227-seat National Assembly, the only official body held by the opposition.

It further weakened U.S.-backed Opposition leader



Nicolas Maduro  
Juan Guaido, who led the boycott after calling the vote "a fraud".

by the illegitimate Maduro regime will not reflect the will of the Venezuelan people," wrote Mr. Pompeo on Twitter.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Ernesto Araujo tweeted that the vote was an "electoral farce" and an attempt by the Maduro "dictatorship" to legitimise its rule.

**Results not recognised**  
Canada and the Organisation of American States said they would not recognise the result.

"Canada will always stand with the people of Venezuela in their fight to restore democracy," Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne said.

Washington, Mr. Guaido's main ally, is leading pressure to oust Mr. Maduro with economic sanctions, including an oil embargo in force since April 2019.

# Bob Dylan sells his entire catalogue to Universal Music

Deal covers over 600 song copyrights, spanning 60 years

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
NEW YORK

Universal Music has bought the entire back catalogue of Bob Dylan's songs, it announced on Monday, in a purported nine-figure deal for one of the most prized rights' collections in music history.

The deal covers more than 600 song copyrights spanning 60 years, including *Blowin' In The Wind*, *The Times They Are a-Changin'*, *Like A Rolling Stone*, *Lay Lady Lay* and *Forever Young*,



Bob Dylan

Universal Music said in a statement.

The music company gave no financial details of the purchase but the *Financial Times* reported that it was a "nine-figure deal". The *New York Times* estimated the price at more than \$300 million.

"The deal is the most significant music publishing agreement this century and one of the most important of all time," Universal Music said in its statement.

The value of owning musical rights has soared in recent years with the surge in popularity of streaming sites such as Spotify.

# China pushes false theories about virus

In recent months, officials have suggested that it might have come from abroad

JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ

The mild-mannered German scientist never anticipated becoming a Chinese propaganda star.

But Alexander Kekulé, director of the Institute for Biosecurity Research in Halle, Germany, has been all over the state-run media in China in recent days. News outlets have taken Mr. Kekulé's research out of context to suggest that Italy, not China, is where the coronavirus pandemic began.

Photos of him have appeared on Chinese news sites under headlines reading, "China is innocent!"

Mr. Kekulé, who has re-



Blame game: A shuttered seafood market, where a number of people fell ill with the virus, on January 21, 2020. ■ AP

peatedly said that he believes the virus first emerged in China, was startled. "This is pure propaganda," he said.

Facing global anger over

their initial mishandling of the outbreak, Chinese authorities are now trying to rewrite the narrative of the pandemic by pushing theories brought by the virus. NY TIMES

**CROSSWORD**

(set by Afterdark)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9		10				
11		12				
13	14		15			
16	17		18	19		20
		21		22	23	24
25				26		
27		28				

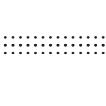
**ACROSS**

- Material from a capital; taking one away to Los Angeles by road (6)
- Force bishop to leave shelter to plough (6)
- Left state; on return had restriction (4)
- A zebra harmed on New Year's Day for country (10)
- Iceman recreated for movies (6)
- Honoured with Nobel, nerd's somehow not reading (8)

**DOWN**

- Checking a cricket skill (7)
- Proceeds, about to leave a place (5)
- Desert at America, has a burger (perhaps) counter (7)
- Sophisticated old city facing plague (6)
- Doctor sure's confused receiving Portuguese coin upfront as refund (9)
- Treacherous guys at work, perhaps stand to start strike (7)
- Fed up with primarily exorbitant lease, took a partner thoughtfully (13)
- A type of pen found in Britain, at everyone's place (9)
- Drop in temperature? Going up around chimney (7)
- Nuts and fruits (7)
- A lake, small in width as a waterbody (7)
- Best idea? Not quite but bordering (6)
- Study chapter on a gastropod (5)

Free your mind from lockdown.  
Solve puzzles on our interactive site:  
<https://qrgo.page.link/jppTn>



## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

MARKET WATCH

	07-12-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	45,427	0.77
US Dollar	73.90	-0.14
Gold	48,703	-0.23
Brent oil	48.70	-0.71

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.70	74.02
Euro	89.25	89.64
British Pound	97.84	98.27
Japanese Yen (100)	70.72	71.03
Chinese Yuan	11.27	11.32
Swiss Franc	82.61	82.97
Singapore Dollar	55.09	55.34
Canadian Dollar	57.52	57.77
Malaysian Ringgit	18.08	18.19
Australian Dollar	54.45	54.69

Source: Indian Bank

NCLT to hear Jet revival plan on Dec. 11

JAGRITI CHANDRA

NEW DELHI  
The NCLT is expected to take up Jet Airways' revival plan, prepared by the consortium led by Murari Lal Jalan and Kalrock Capital and approved by the airline's resolution professional, later this week.

The consortium has said that Jet aimed to be back in the skies by the summer of 2021 as a full-service carrier, provided its domestic slots at various airports are returned to it. These were reallocated by the government to other Indian carriers after Jet shut operations in March last year.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) is likely to hold the next hearing on December 11, when it is expected to take up the revival of Jet Airways.

"The Jet 2.0 hubs will remain in Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru like before. The revival plan proposes to support Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities by creating sub-hubs in such cities," the consortium said. It added that it would also like to take advantage of the potential of cargo services once distribution of COVID-19 vaccines starts in India.

# India bucks China's record export show

Bilateral trade deficit narrows sharply in November as India's imports of Chinese goods decline

ANANTH KRISHNAN

India's imports from China as well as its trade deficit declined sharply in November, marking an exception to a record month for Chinese exports around the world that registered the fastest growth in almost three years and underlined China's continuing recovery amid a pandemic-induced global slump.

Bilateral trade reached \$78 billion over the 11-month period, sharply lower than 2019's \$84.4 billion. China's shipments to India at the end of November accounted for \$59 billion, sliding 13% and helping narrow India's deficit to \$40 billion, from \$51.6 billion in the year-earlier period. India's annual trade deficit with its northern neighbour had shrunk by 2% in 2019 to \$56.95 billion, marking the first decline since 2005.



**Global supplier:** China's exports surged 21.1%, the fastest pace in almost three years, to a record \$268 billion last month. •AP

The slump in China's exports to India was broadly expected after data from India's Ministry of Commerce last week showed a 13.3% decline in India's overall imports in November. India's imports of electrical and non-electrical machinery -

items that have traditionally had the biggest share in China's exports to the country -- slid by 13.4%, the Centre's official data showed.

Overall, China's exports surged 21.1% in November, customs data showed, the fastest growth since February 2018, Reuters reported.

The pace of increase was almost double October's 11.4% expansion. November's exports of \$268 billion were the highest on record amid the continuing global economic slump and lockdowns in many of China's biggest trading partners.

Electrical machinery

Electrical machinery and equipment was India's biggest import from China in 2019, worth \$20.17 billion. Other major imports last year were organic chemicals (\$8.39 billion) and fertilizers (\$1.67 billion), according to data available with the Indian Embassy in Beijing. India's top exports to China in 2019 were iron ore, organic chemicals, cotton and unfinished diamonds. India was the fourth largest exporter of iron ore to China after Aus-

tralia, Brazil and South Africa.

India's exports to China were up 16% in November reaching \$19 billion after 11 months of this year, likely driven by a recovery in China's imports of iron ore, which were up 16% according to China's General Administration of Customs.

In November, China also agreed to import rice from India for the first time in three decades, with 1,00,000 tons of exports of broken rice contracted for December to February at \$300 per ton, Reuters reported. The rice purchase was a "purely commercial move" as the price was "far cheaper than that of its domestic counterparts", Jiao Shanwei, editor-in-chief of a Chinese website on grains news, told the Global Times.

Hindalco to invest ₹730 cr. in extrusion plant

Unit at Silvassa to go live in 24 months

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Hindalco Industries Ltd., belonging to the Aditya Birla Group, has announced plans to set up a 34,000-tonne extrusion plant at Silvassa with an investment of ₹730 crore. The new plant will service the market for extruded aluminium products in the western and southern regions, the company said in a statement.



Satish Pai

vival, which in turn will help raise demand for downstream products, it said. Commercial production is expected to start in 24 months. Satish Pai, MD, said, "We are seeing a revival in the economy, with demand picking up in the construction and auto sectors. This has given us the confidence to move forward."

## Quarterly return filing option for most GST payers from Jan.

92% of taxpayers, with annual revenue of up to ₹5 cr, qualify

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



Starting January 2021, 92% of taxpayers under the Goods and Services Tax regime with an annual turnover of up to ₹5 crore can opt to file their returns once a quarter instead of the present monthly system, Department of Revenue officials said on Monday.

As many as 94 lakh registered GST taxpayers can opt in for the new Quarterly filing of Return with Monthly Payment (QRMP) Scheme, under which GSTR-3B returns can be filed just once a quarter.

"The small taxpayer, from January onward, would

need to file only 8 returns (4 GSTR-3B and 4 GSTR-1 returns) instead of 16 returns at present in a financial year," an official said, adding that taxpayers can join the scheme through the GST, with a facility to opt out or opt in again in the future, if one so wishes.

While the move is expected to ease the compliance burden for indirect taxes on businesses, the Centre is also hoping to plug leakages and frauds by tightening the grant of input tax credits.

"We are also introducing the concept of providing input tax credit only on reported invoices, which could significantly curb the menace of fake invoice frauds," the official said.

Remaining 10% refunds by Jan.: IndiGo

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

IndiGo on Monday said it had refunded credit shells for 90% of passengers who had booked flights for travel during the two-month flight ban between March 25 and May 24.

The airline said it plans to refund the remaining 10% by January 31. The Supreme Court had on October 1 ruled that credit shells for tickets booked during the lockdown should be reimbursed within three weeks.

IndiGo has paid refunds to about 20 lakh customers, or about 90% claimants, a spokesperson told The Hindu.

This amount stands at ₹1,000 crore, the airline said in a statement.

'RIL, others don't need govt. nod for gas pricing'

Discretion allowed under new norms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI



Reliance Industries and other producers of natural gas will no longer need the government's approval for gas price if it is arrived at using the new guidelines for the discovery of market price, an official order said.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, last week, notified guidelines for discovery of market prices for domestically produced natural gas via e-bidding.

The companies "shall design the tender/ bid offer, including the eligibility criteria, bid parameters, evaluation criteria, tender fee, salient terms and conditions of Gas Sales Agreement and any other relevant

'HDFC Bank's digital outages credit negative'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India's action in response to weaknesses in HDFC Bank's digital infrastructure and operational resilience is credit negative because the bank is increasingly relying on digital channels to source and service its customers, Moody's said in a report.

"The recurring outages also risk hurting the bank's brand perception among a growing and increasingly digitally-savvy customer base, and increases the potential that clients switch to other banks, which would lead to a reduction in revenue and low-cost retail funding," the credit rating agency said.



THE HINDU GROUP



# Thank you, MSD!

M. S. Dhoni's 16-year journey in India blues came to end on the country's 74<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. And this journey is worthy of a subject in school, where you learn to chase your dreams. He saw them and achieved them, much to the delight of a nation that has accorded him the status of a much-loved, much-revered icon.

\*Shipping charges extra

BOOK  
YOUR COPY  
ONLINE



Visit: [publications.thehindugroup.com/bookstore/](http://publications.thehindugroup.com/bookstore/)  
For bulk booking, e-mail: [bookstore@thehindu.co.in](mailto:bookstore@thehindu.co.in) | For enquiries call: 1800 102 1878  
To subscribe to the ebook visit: [sportstar.thehindu.com/magazine/specialeditions/](http://sportstar.thehindu.com/magazine/specialeditions/)

## TV PICKS

**Australia vs India:** 3rd T20I, Sony Ten 1, 3 & Six (SD & HD), 1.35 p.m.  
**Champions League:** Sony Ten 1, 2, 3 & Six (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Wednesday)  
**ISL:** Star Sports 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 7.15 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



Williamson rises to joint second with Kohli

DUBAI  
New Zealand captain Kane Williamson on Monday moved up a rung to join his Indian counterpart Virat Kohli at the second spot in the latest ICC Test rankings for batsmen. Australia's Steve Smith, with 911 points, kept his hold on the pole position in the batting charts ahead of Kohli and Williamson, who hit a match-winning double hundred against the West Indies in Hamilton. PTI

## England's South Africa tour called off

JOHANNESBURG  
England's cricket tour of South Africa has been called off after a COVID-19 outbreak in the England touring party, both countries said on Monday. A joint announcement, which alluded to the "mental and physical health" of the players, came after the rearranged first match in the three-match series on Sunday was cancelled after two members of the England touring party tested positive for the virus. England will return having played only in the T20I series. AFP

## Pakistan squad clears fifth COVID test

CHRISTCHURCH  
The touring Pakistan squad has returned negative in a fifth round of COVID-19 tests and will now be able to leave managed isolation on Tuesday, subject to clearance from the health ministry. New Zealand Cricket said on Monday. Six members of the squad had tested positive on arrival, while two more returned positive tests later and all eight are now in quarantine. PTI



Bala Devi scores her first goal for Rangers FC

GLASGOW  
Star Indian footballer Bala Devi scored her first goal for Rangers FC in a 9-0 decimation of Motherwell FC in the Scottish Women's Premier League on Sunday. Coming off the bench in the 65th minute, Bala scored her side's last goal in the 85th minute. Bala, thus, became the first Indian woman to score in a top-tier professional league in Europe. PTI



Hall-of-Famer Ralston passes away

AUSTIN  
Austin Ralston, a five-time Grand Slam doubles champion who was one of the initial players signed to the professional World Championship Tennis tour in the 1960s and a member of the sport's Hall of Fame, has died of cancer aged 78. AP

**Smit, Saily take honours**  
AHMEDABAD  
Smit Patel and Saily Thakkar won the boys' and girls' titles in the AITA Championship series under-14 tennis tournament at Altevo-Waske tennis academy.

**The results (finals): U-14:**

**Boys:** Smit Patel bt Vraj Ghosh 6-1, 6-3. **Girls:** Saily Thakkar bt Aarushi Raval 6-4, 6-4.

# Kohli's India looks for a clean sweep

Australia, significantly weakened by the absence of a few stars, will be keen to win final T20I

## INDIA IN AUS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SYDNEY

The series pocketed and confidence restored, India will eye a clean sweep when it takes on an Australian side significantly weakened by injury blows in the third and final T20I here on Tuesday.

## Deja vu

Skipper Virat Kohli and his main protagonist of the white-ball leg, Hardik Pandya, will feel a sense of *deja vu* given that the script has panned out exactly like 2016 when the team got walloped in the ODIs but came back strongly to rout the Aussies 3-0 in the T20I series.

What will boost the Indian team's morale manifold is the fact that it had the confidence to rest both Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah and rely on a troika that hasn't collectively played even 40 games.

India's new white-ball sen-



**Guiding force:** Shikhar Dhawan's experience served India well in the second T20I as it made light of a tall chase. ■ TWITTER/BCCI

sation T. Natarajan has had a superb initiation into international cricket with the Australians finding it difficult to read him.

As Hardik put it, Natarajan's spell and the 10 runs that Australia failed to score

became the difference between winning and losing on Sunday.

The difference between India and Australia during the last game was the batting during the middle overs.

Australia lost a bit of mo-

mentum after stand-in skipper Matthew Wade was dismissed while his opposite number Kohli played some outrageous shots after the PowerPlay to up the ante.

Shreyas Iyer's induction in place of an injured Manish

## India vs. Australia in T20Is at SCG

Played 3 | India 3 | Australia 0

**2016:** India won by seven wickets

**2018:** India won by six wickets

**2020:** India won by six wickets

Pandey also worked well. The only glitch in an otherwise solid show was Yuzvendra Chahal's rare off-day.

Australia was, however, missing regular skipper Aaron Finch, David Warner, Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood.

D'Arcy Short hasn't looked the part as an opener in the two games and one would expect Marcus Stoinis and Glenn Maxwell to shoulder more responsibility.

But Australia's thin-on-experience bowlers will have to play out of their skins to stop the Indian juggernaut which has started rolling.

# Green in good touch

Fine show by Umesh and Ashwin



Umesh Yadav. ■ TWITTER/BCCI



R. Ashwin. ■ TWITTER/BCCI

raj (19-4-71-2) with the new ball. Ashwin, bowling with his cap on, had figures of 19-2-58-2.

For Australia-A, Green continued his rich vein of Sheffield Shield form with an unbeaten 114 off 173 balls with 10 fours and a six.

**Brief scores:** India-A 247 for nine decl. (Ajinkya Rahane 117 n.o., Cheteshwar Pujara 54) vs Australia-A 286 for eight in 85 overs (Cameron Green 114 batting, Tim Paine 44, Umesh Yadav 3/44, R. Ashwin 2/58, Mohd. Siraj 2/71).

# 'Defeats hurt, but my way is to always fight'

Juventus icon Buffon talks about dealing with failure and what keeps him going

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA  
KOLKATA

Widely considered one of the greatest goalkeepers to have played the game, Gianluigi Buffon said the key to his longevity under the bar is the ability to use failure as motivation.

## Optimist by nature

"To tell the truth, something I like about myself is that I always try to see the glass as half full. I am an optimist by nature."

"In my career, the defeats have really hurt because some of them have been heavy. But my way is to always fight and try to win on another night. This is what stimulates me after every loss," Buffon, who at 42 is still a part of Serie A champion Juventus' squad, told Sony Ten 2 ahead of his team's Champions League fixture against Barcelona.

## No regrets

Looking back at his long career, during which he won a record 176 caps with the Italian national team, Buffon said he has no regrets about not making it 200.

"There were many appearances I may have missed for



Gianluigi Buffon.  
■ FILE PHOTO: REUTERS



**Two of a kind:** Juventus' Ronaldo and Barcelona's Messi can single-handedly swing games. ■ REUTERS, GETTY IMAGES

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar

■ Dynamo Kiev vs Ferencvaros

■ Barcelona vs Juventus

■ PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir

■ Leipzig vs Man United (all at 1.30 a.m.)

## Top custodians

"So for me, when it was possible, it was right for the other goalkeepers to play because to achieve the best results as a team, we needed a group that was happy and satisfied."

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

that, but I think this was the right thing to do," Buffon said. When asked to name the three best goalkeepers currently, Buffon placed Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak at the top of the list.

## Needed a happy group

"So for me, when it was possible, it was right for the other goalkeepers to play because to achieve the best results as a team, we needed a group that was happy and satisfied."

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar

■ Dynamo Kiev vs Ferencvaros

■ Barcelona vs Juventus

■ PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir

■ Leipzig vs Man United (all at 1.30 a.m.)

## Top custodians

"[Jan] Oblak, Alisson [Becker] and I'll put [Gianluigi] Donnarumma, [Manuel] Neuer and [Thibaut] Courtois. And [Marc-André] ter Stegen! Okay, maybe a few more than three, but they are all great!" Buffon said.

that, but I think this was the right thing to do," Buffon said. When asked to name the three best goalkeepers currently, Buffon placed Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak at the top of the list.

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar

■ Dynamo Kiev vs Ferencvaros

■ Barcelona vs Juventus

■ PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir

■ Leipzig vs Man United (all at 1.30 a.m.)

## Top custodians

"[Jan] Oblak, Alisson [Becker] and I'll put [Gianluigi] Donnarumma, [Manuel] Neuer and [Thibaut] Courtois. And [Marc-André] ter Stegen! Okay, maybe a few more than three, but they are all great!" Buffon said.

that, but I think this was the right thing to do," Buffon said. When asked to name the three best goalkeepers currently, Buffon placed Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak at the top of the list.

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar

■ Dynamo Kiev vs Ferencvaros

■ Barcelona vs Juventus

■ PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir

■ Leipzig vs Man United (all at 1.30 a.m.)

## Top custodians

"[Jan] Oblak, Alisson [Becker] and I'll put [Gianluigi] Donnarumma, [Manuel] Neuer and [Thibaut] Courtois. And [Marc-André] ter Stegen! Okay, maybe a few more than three, but they are all great!" Buffon said.

that, but I think this was the right thing to do," Buffon said. When asked to name the three best goalkeepers currently, Buffon placed Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak at the top of the list.

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar

■ Dynamo Kiev vs Ferencvaros

■ Barcelona vs Juventus

■ PSG vs Istanbul Basaksehir

■ Leipzig vs Man United (all at 1.30 a.m.)

## Top custodians

"[Jan] Oblak, Alisson [Becker] and I'll put [Gianluigi] Donnarumma, [Manuel] Neuer and [Thibaut] Courtois. And [Marc-André] ter Stegen! Okay, maybe a few more than three, but they are all great!" Buffon said.

that, but I think this was the right thing to do," Buffon said. When asked to name the three best goalkeepers currently, Buffon placed Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak at the top of the list.

"There were many appearances I may have missed for

## Tuesday's schedule

■ Lazio vs Club Brugge; Zenit vs Dortmund (both at 11.25 p.m. IST)

■ Rennes vs Sevilla

■ Chelsea vs Krasnodar