



Mehbooba accuses  
Centre of 'murdering  
democracy' in J&K

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NIA says it did not seize  
Stan Swamy's siper,  
dismisses reports

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Afghan officials say  
34 killed in separate  
suicide bombings

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Smith's second straight  
century powers  
Australia to series win

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## NEARBY



### Nuh woman suspected of killing four daughters

PUNJAB (NUH)  
A woman in Nuh allegedly killed her four daughters, aged two months to six years, by slitting their throats, and then tried to kill herself as well. She was taken to the Civil Hospital in Mandikhara and later referred to the medical college in Nalhar. Police said that the woman was the prime suspect in the case, but her statement was yet to be recorded.

**NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4**

### Delhi's COVID count stays below 5,000

NEW DELHI  
Delhi recorded 4,906 new COVID-19 cases and 68 deaths on Sunday, according to a health bulletin issued by the city government. The bulletin added that 64,186 tests were conducted over the past 24 hours, with a positivity rate of 7.64%. The total number of cases now stands at 5,66,648.

**CITY ▶ PAGE 3**

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EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 5

## Retro Bollywood wraps Srinagar in sepia

Zoya Khan's digital art works set cult film characters against walls oozing heritage



**Old charm:** An *Umrao Jaan* moment against Srinagar's dying heritage buildings. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

### PEERZADA ASHIQ SRINAGAR

Placing characters from cult Bollywood movies, such as those played by Naseeruddin Shah and Rekha in *Umrao Jaan* and Meena Kumari and Nadira in *Pakeezah*, against the backdrop of the dying heritage bazaars of the 5,000-year-old city of Srinagar, Zoya Khan, 31, an architect and heritage enthusiast, is succeeding in putting the spotlight on the waning architectural character of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) capital.

Created over the past three years, Ms. Zoya's thematic digital art work, *Houses of Kashmir*, is fast adorning the walls of the Valley's popular hotels and homes and, at the same time, creating awareness of its lost heritage.

"I frequented the old city while being part of a team drafting Srinagar's master plan in 2017. My area of intervention was heritage. I went back to areas in 2020 and the houses I saw in 2017 did not exist, in the absence of bylaws or protection status. My works are also an attempt at cataloguing lost heritage," said Ms. Khan, who is pursuing her

## Farmers reject Centre's call for talks, say Burari is an open jail

They say they will block five entry points into Delhi

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI

Farmer groups have rejected the Home Minister's conditional invitation for talks, and refused to shift to the designated protest grounds in Burari, calling it an "open jail".

Tens of thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, are massed at the borders of Delhi, demanding the repeal of the Centre's three agricultural reform laws and withdrawal of an electricity Bill. Equipped with rations that could last for months, they have threatened to block five of the entry points into the capital if their demands are not heard.

"The Centre's condition to hold talks is an insult to farmers. We will never go to the Burari ground. It is not a ground, it is an open jail," said Surjeet Singh Phul, State president, Bharatiya Kisan Union Krantikari, speaking at a press conference held at the Singhu border point on Sunday evening.

"When a group of farmers from Uttarakhand arrived in Delhi today, they said they wanted to go to Jantar Mantar, and the Delhi police said they would be taken there.



**Demanding their rights:** Farmers seen sitting on protest in massive numbers against the farm laws at Singhu border in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA (MORE REPORTS ON PAGES 2 & 4)

### Reforms have brought new opportunities: PM

Modi says farm laws fulfilled promises

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the demands raised by farmers over the years had been met in the form of the recent agriculture reforms, which have brought new opportunities.

In his *Mann ki Baat* radio address, Mr. Modi said all political parties had been making promises to the farmers but now these promises had been fulfilled.

The PM's address came at the end of a week marked by protests by farmers in Punjab, Haryana and Delhi against the three farm Bills passed by Parliament in September.

"The agricultural reforms in the past few days have also now opened new doors of possibilities for our farmers," Mr. Modi said in the radio address.

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8**

## First case under conversion ordinance in U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh police lodged the first case under the new ordinance against unlawful conversions, a day after it was promulgated.

A First Information Report was lodged by the police in Bareilly under Sections

3 and 5 of the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020, which was promulgated on November 27 by Governor Anandiben Patel.

**Conversion for marriage**  
Bareilly police said the FIR was lodged at the Deorania

police station against a person on charges of trying to coerce a 20-year-old girl to convert her to his religion and marry him.

Sections 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code were also invoked.

The FIR was lodged on the complaint of Tikaram Rath-

ore, a resident of Sharifnagar village, late on Friday.

Mr. Rathore alleged that the accused had developed a friendship with his daughter during their education and wanted to "coerce, coax and allure her into converting".

**CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8**

## China nod for downstream dam on the Brahmaputra

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China's media reported on Sunday that authorities have given the go-ahead for a Chinese hydropower company to construct the first downstream dam on the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra river, or Yarlung Zangbo as it is known in Tibet, marking a new phase in China's hydropower exploitation with potential ramifications for India.

**DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 10**

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## Mind over matter India's mental health policy



Read Atish Mathur's  
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**TURN TO PAGE 9**



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AN-NOE



**Boiling rage:** A section of women farmers protesting at Singhu border; (right) farmers from Punjab cooking at Burari Ground on Sunday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



## Farmers continue to protest at Tikri, Singhu and Ghazipur borders

They refuse to camp at Nirankari Ground, say it is akin to being in 'open jail'

SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI

Claiming that camping at the Nirankari Ground in Burari was akin to being lodged in an open jail, farmers protesting at the Tikri, Singhu and Ghazipur borders refused to move there on Sunday.

On Friday, the Delhi Police had allowed the entry of protesting farmers into the city and designated the Nirankari ground in Burari for the same. However, on Sunday evening, only around 500 farmers were present in the north-west Delhi venue that often hosts large religious congregations and other events.

### 'We don't believe PM'

"We listened to 'Mann Ki Baat' [radio address] of Prime Minister where he supported the new agriculture laws and asked farmers to support it. But we don't believe him anymore because he was the one who supported demonetisation and rest all we know how much damage it caused to the economy. We won't be allowing him to damage the agriculture sector," said a farmer from Amritsar, Harjeet Sandhu.

The agitators said nothing less than a rollback of the controversial laws will placate them, and provided details on how they had come prepared for the "long haul".

"We have not come to Delhi to sit at Nirankari ground, we are here to make the go-



Farmers protesting on National Highway 9 near Ghazipur on Sunday. • R.V. MOORTHY

vernment accept farmers' demand and take back the new agriculture laws. We will block the National Highway and will achieve our objective, we have come here with two months' ration. We are cooking food and serving three meals for our brothers protesting at Delhi's borders," said Kishan Pal, a farmer from Patiala.

### 'Why the conditions?'

Adding that they also had adequate beddings and tents, the farmers at Burari insisted that the government should come forward with no condition and wondered why the Union Home Minister was putting conditions before holding meeting.

"We will be staying in Burari till further orders from our leaders. We have no issue in sleeping in open as we

are farmers and we never had a bed of roses. We have hundreds of langars at protest sites and we are also offering food to security persons or whosoever needs it," said Inder Singh, a farmer from Sonepat.

A senior officer said a team held a round of talks with the protesters to make them shift to the Nirankari ground, but they were unsuccessful.

"We have managed to move many protesters from the borders to the Nirankari ground but many are still at the borders. We had a talk with their leaders but the conditions they are putting up are beyond the jurisdiction of the Delhi Police. We are trying to convince them and are hopeful that things will get sorted peacefully," the officer said.

Meanwhile, on Sunday evening, a large group of farmers broke the police barricade and entered Delhi. After moving about 200 meters inside Delhi, they stopped and sat down. The police said as per their report, around 20,000 protesters were at the Singhu border, and around 30,000 protesters at the Tikri border.

"We never asked for any new agriculture law. Why is the government forcing this black law? We are protesting for the last three months but no one from the Centre came forward to talk to farmers. After we blocked Delhi's borders, the government has agreed to talk. If they can pass the law overnight, then why can't they amend it overnight?" said Gurbachan Singh, a farmer from Hoshiarpur.

## 'Address farmers' demand, find solution'

CM says Central government must talk to protesters camping along borders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said the Centre should hold talks with protesting farmers, who are camping along Delhi's borders, unconditionally and immediately.

The Aam Aadmi Party urged Home Minister Amit Shah to listen to the demands raised by the farmers and find an immediate solution.

Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said AAP is with the farmers and will fight shoulder to shoulder with them. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed these 'anti-farmer' laws, which show that the BJP has no intention to solve their [farmers] problems. The BJP is anti-farmer," Mr. Singh said.

He added that it is unfortunate that the BJP government is treating the farmers as terrorists by lathi-charging them, using water cannons, and firing tear gas shells to



Protesting farmers in Delhi on Sunday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

demic to stop the protest. By using this excuse, the BJP-ruled Central government passed these anti-farmer laws," Mr. Singh said.

AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj said: "AAP believes that Mr. Shah has shown utter irresponsibility by leaving Delhi to campaign for Hyderabad municipal election when lakhs of farmers are waiting to talk to him at the Delhi border."

He also said Mr. Shah was telling the farmers that because of their protest, the COVID-19 cases will rise in

Delhi. But at a press meet in Hyderabad on Sunday, there was massive participation of people in his [Mr. Shah] roadshow, Mr. Bharadwaj said. "How can COVID-19 spread at one gathering and not spread at another. This is utter hypocrisy," Mr. Bharadwaj added.

AAP chief spokesperson Raghav Chada alleged that Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amrinder and Mr. Modi are conspiring to destroy the farmers. He questioned why Mr. Singh did not lead the farmers of his State to protest in Delhi.

**'Centre was intolerant'**  
Party MLA and spokesperson Atishi at another press meet said the Centre was "intolerant" towards thousands of farmers sitting at the border.

"Posing conditions, the government is saying that it will not talk to the farmers unless they concede to its demands of moving to a particular place to hold a dialogue," she +

## Govt. must summon Assembly session, says Congress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Sunday said if the AAP government is really interested in the welfare of farmers, then it should immediately summon a session of the Legislative Assembly and pass a re-

solution against the law made by the Centre.

"Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal needs to clarify whether his government would implement the Bill or not. If the Delhi government is really interested in the welfare of farmers, then the

"crocodile tears" on the issue.

"Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal needs to clarify whether his government would implement the Bill or not. If the Delhi government is really interested in the welfare of farmers, then the

Delhi Congress demands that Mr. Kejriwal immediately summon the Assembly session and pass a resolution against the law made by the Centre and clearly state that anti-farmer law will not be enforced in Delhi," Ms. Lamba said.

## One-fourth real estate units in Gurugram are stressed: RERA chief

RERA ordering refund for projects which seem doomed but supporting ones that can be completed'



K.K. Khandelwal, Chairman of Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ASHOK KUMAR  
GURUGRAM

Around 70,000 real estate units - almost one-fourth of the total units being monitored by the Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRERA) in the Millennium City - across 30-odd projects are stressed for various reasons, disclosed HRERA Gurugram Chairman K.K. Khandelwal. He was speaking to *The Hindu* on a variety of issues concerning the sector and the authority.

Mr. Khandelwal said RERA was ordering refund to the unit owners for the projects that seemed doomed, but supporting those projects that could still be completed keeping in mind the interests of the large number of unit-holders.

"In many cases, the unit owners are approaching us with the appeal for refund in stressed projects since they bought units at higher rates and now the market prices have dwindled. But if we find that the project can be completed, we don't order for refund since it will harm the interests of other unit-holders and the developer. In such cases, we only order penalty for the delays. If a project is unlikely to be completed, we order refund," said Mr. Khandelwal.

He conceded that in the initial years many RERA orders were challenged in the Appellate Tribunal and the Punjab and Haryana High Court leading to delay in execution of the orders, but these were all "teething troubles" and the orders of the authority were now all executed except 703, which were pending for various reasons such as the developer being on the run. He added that it took time for the law to settle.

### 13,031 complaints

Set up on February 5, 2018, after the Haryana govern-

ment notified The Haryana Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2017 on July 28, 2017, the HRERA Gurugram has received 13,031 complaints so far and disposed of around 9,900. Mr. Khandelwal said that a majority of these complaints were regarding delay in possession and refund.

"Out of the 9,900 complaints, 7,000 odd were settled summarily and the rest required detailed hearings," said Mr. Khandelwal.

He conceded that in the initial years many RERA orders were challenged in the Appellate Tribunal and the Punjab and Haryana High Court leading to delay in execution of the orders, but these were all "teething troubles" and the orders of the authority were now all executed except 703, which were pending for various reasons such as the developer being on the run. He added that it took time for the law to settle.

Around 400 projects are registered with the authority with the total area of nearly 1.0 lakh acres (1,06,657

acres). Around 2,50,000 units are under monitoring of this authority as of now, of which 60,000 units are in the Affordable Housing segment.

### Mediation forum

With the aim to reduce petitions and expedite grievance redress, the HRERA Gurugram recently set up a mediation forum.

"We have two ways to get our orders executed. The Section 40 of the RERA Act puts the private dues of the allottees against a developer, such as penalty, compensation and the interests ordered by the authority, at par with the government dues and the same can be recovered as arrears of land revenue. We also have the powers of the Civil Court. We have the power to attach the bank accounts of the builder if a payment is not made to the allottee even after two months of the order. The money is paid to the allottee through a cheque from the bank account of the builder.

In case there is no money in the account, we can issue arrest warrants against the developer and send him to jail for three months," said Mr. Khandelwal.

He added that HRERA Gurugram had been "pioneer-ing" in many ways and delivered some "path-breaking" decisions setting up precedents for others to follow.

"Pronouncing judgment in a case pertaining to e-auction of a project by a creditor company, the HARERA ruled that the rights of the allottees are not subservient to those of the bank. The order em-

phasised that in case of failure of the banks to ensure that the funds were applied for the purpose they were granted, banks cannot be allowed to supersede the rights of the allottees," said Mr. Khandelwal.

He stressed that the RERA could intervene in all those cases where the builder had failed to fulfil its obligations towards the consumers, including lack of infrastructure, and action was initiated in case a complaint was received. He added that recently, complaints were received from flat owners about developers forcing them into signing settlement bonds to avoid delayed compensation and these were also being looked into.

Mr. Khandelwal said that several malpractices were prevalent in the real estate sector before the setting up of RERA, such as delay in possession, diversion of funds by developers, lack of quality control and unilateral changes in the layout plans by the developers, but the authority had put checks on them through a law.

"Before RERA, the consumers were fast losing trust in the developers. The RERA has reinstated the faith of the common man in the real estate sector. It is a win-win situation for both the developers and the consumers. This, I believe, is the biggest achievement of the authority," said Mr. Khandelwal.



## Air quality in city remains 'poor': SAFAR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The air quality in the Capital remained in the "poor" category on Sunday with the 24-hour average AQI based on readings from 35 monitoring stations at 256. Air quality monitoring agencies have forecast that the quality is likely to deteriorate over the next few days due to calmer winds and a fall in the temperature. The minimum temperature in the city settled at 7 degrees Celsius, which was 3 degrees below normal. The maximum settled at 26.4 degrees Celsius.

According to government-run agency, SAFAR, ventilation conditions are likely to slow down further by November 29. "Stubble fire counts with sufficient potential as estimated from SAFAR-multi-satellite products have increased to 464. Hence, the stubble burning share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is estimated as 6% for Sunday," the bulletin read.

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Ghaziabad	20:03
08:51	08:56
Moradabad	18:10
09:24	09:26
Rampur	17:37
10:13	10:15
Rudrapur City	16:40
10:45	10:48
Lal Kuan	16:17
11:21	11:23
Haldwani	15:45
<b>11:40</b>	-
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NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY		Notification No. 126/2020	
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The sudden and stricter enforcement of COVID-19 guidelines has forced a host of people to adapt and adjust. With the downsizing of marriages, many are forced to apologise to relatives for retracting invites while traders have to restrict the entry of customers

CITY TEAM  
NEW DELHI

**W**eddings have become smaller. Social distancing norms are being enforced rigorously in congested city markets. The enforcement of ₹2,000 fine for protocol violations, after an unprecedented surge in COVID-19 cases, could not have been timelier.

According to Delhi Police, close to 2,000 people were issued fines ranging from ₹500 to ₹2,000 over the past week. The maximum prosecution for COVID-19 offences, with a total of 1,501 fines, was issued on November 22. Each fine amounted to ₹500. Since these were upped to ₹2,000, 1,474 individuals were issued challans, according to police data.

**Intimate proceedings**  
Curbs on the number of people allowed at gatherings have made weddings more intimate affairs. Having invited nearly 200 guests as per previous guidelines, before it was reduced to 50 as per the new norms, some complained they were forced to book adjacent venues to accommodate everyone on their original guest list. Some of them complained they were forced to apologise to relatives for retracting invites.

Rahul Puri, multi-property general manager at The Westin, says the hotel has to continually



People throng Sadar Bazar for Deepavali shopping; a groom during a wedding procession in the Capital. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA/PTI

spread of COVID-19 still remained.

"The authorities are yet to take any action against encroachments outside shops which affect effective social distancing. Infection can be avoided by regulating entry into shops but not outside," he complained.

At 6 p.m. on Friday, there were hundreds of people at south Delhi's Sarojini Nagar market, but almost everyone was wearing masks and stood socially distanced. There were even boards put up by some shops, with their names on it, asking people to maintain "two meter distance". But there were no temperature checks to enter the market, while some people were seen spitting and there was hardly any police presence.

"Around Deepavali there was a huge rush for about three to four days. Don't know from where so many people came from," said Jitender Sachdeva, 46, owner of Mahendra Sweet House.

Mr. Sachdeva removed tables outside the shop where people used to stand and eat. "When we had tables, people used to spend more time here and also there was a rush. Now it is better," he said.

But the traders are also wary of their shops being shut down in case of violations. "Please limit your display outside your shop tomorrow. SDM Inspection team will visit our market tomorrow and take action against violators [sic]," read a message in one of the WhatsApp groups of the traders.

Karthik, who is the president of the market association said: "We are taking all measures to prevent the spread of the disease and the government is conducting COVID-19 tests every day in the market."

A garment seller, he said he would allow entry to only those who want to buy clothes to avoid crowding.

(With inputs from Jaideep Deo Bhanji, Nikhil M Babu, Saurabh Trivedi and Jatin Anand)

# CAUGHT ON THE WRONG FOOT

adapt to local regulations in response to COVID-19 but weddings are being celebrated with enthusiasm in completely different ways. The wedding segment, he says, has been key in driving revenues and helping recovery.

The big fat wedding has given way to intimate weddings, adhering to social distancing norms. As weddings become smaller affairs, quality in weddings has become even more important with precautionary measures like contact-less serving of dishes, spacing, larger tables with less chairs and designated servers for every dish," says Mr. Puri.

**Easy adapting**  
On whether guests are adhering to COVID-19 guidelines at weddings, Mr. Puri said the guests have adapted well to the new norms and are appreciative of the measures taken to address

safety and hygiene.

However, for a marketing executive employed in south Delhi, the restriction at weddings came as a bolt out of the blue. He complained of spending more time on downsizing his brother's marriage function and apologising to relatives while retracting invites than he had on the initial arrangements.

"They [the government] should have given families like mine some notice at least. Our reputations are on the line for no fault of ours," he complained, requesting anonymity.

"The only way for those stuck in the middle like my family is either to risk infection to invitees, including elderly relatives more susceptible to COVID-19 or to fold our hands and politely retract the invite citing the circumstances. My parents and I have been doing the latter since the decision was announced," he said.

Others such as a publishing professional, who had booked a prominent city hotel for a wedding, complained he had to book an adjacent hall to accommodate half of the 100 invitees at the 25<sup>th</sup> hour.

"What else could we have done except postponing the whole affair? We have had to book the hall next to the one we had originally paid for at the same price, going way beyond our budget. But the hotel management was nice enough to give us a slight discount," he said.

"Arrangements have been made to telecast the ceremony from the main hall to the other, which will mainly serve as a dinner hall. The guests in the second hall will take turns to give the bride and groom their blessings before leaving, so that only 50 people are in either hall at any given time," he explained.

As they walk a tightrope between avoiding infection and keeping business alive, market representatives said they had put several measures in place across markets. They don't want to lose business in an already ravaged year, wherein they have incurred massive losses during the lockdown.

## Measures aplenty

At north Delhi's bustling wholesale markets in Sadar Bazaar and Chandni Chowk, at least one staff member has been deputed to sanitise customers' hands. The number of individuals allowed inside shops is being regulated as well.



## Daily COVID-19 cases in the Capital continue to dip

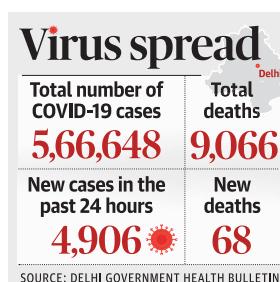
There are 35,091 active cases, 5,22,491 recoveries and 5,441 containment zones

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 4,906 new COVID-19 cases and 68 deaths on Sunday, according to a health bulletin issued by the Delhi government.

The bulletin added that 64,186 tests were conducted over the past 24 hours, with a positivity rate of 7.64%. Out of the total tests conducted, 29,839 were RT-PCR, while 34,347 were rapid antigen tests.

The total number of cases



now stands at 5,66,648, with 9,066 total deaths and 5,22,491 recoveries. There are 35,091 active cases and

5,441 containment zones. Currently, 21,337 patients are under home quarantine and out of the 18,661 hospital beds available for COVID-19 patients, 10,418 are vacant, the government said.

After peaking at 8,593 cases on November 11, the number of daily cases has been reducing in the city and Sunday was the second consecutive day that the number of cases was below 5,000 and the positivity rate below 8%.

At 68, the number of deaths was lowest since November 6, when the city recorded 64 deaths.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted "...Our doctors, nurses and all other Corona warriors are working round the clock. I urge you all to continue to observe all precautions [sic]."

Congress leader Alka Lamba, meanwhile, alleged that the State has adopted a testing model to hide the actual spread of the pandemic.

## 50% govt. employees to work from home: DDMA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority has issued work from home orders for 50% Delhi government employees associated with non-essential services. It has asked private companies to follow staggered office times.

ings and reduce presence and quantum of staffers. The order does not cover departments concerned with essential services, including health, police, home guards and civil defence, district administrations, fire, electricity and water, municipal services among others.

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26°C Mist/smoke haze in a cold morning. Dry and comfortable day likely. Pollution level may deteriorate.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
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We are taking all necessary COVID-19 Precautionary Measures

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## Two more parties floated in election-bound Assam

They will focus on Barak Valley region

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The list of new regional parties in Assam continues to expand ahead of the 2021 Assembly election.

Two parties have been formed within a fortnight since November 15, this time from the Bengali-dominated Barak Valley in southern Assam. The Assamese-dominated Brahmaputra Valley has already seen the birth of four regional parties this year, with fifth, a political platform for some tribes, in the works.

The Barak Democratic Front (BDF) was floated on November 28 by a group that had espoused statehood for the Bengali-speaking Barak Valley after the exclusion of 19.07 lakh people – a bulk of them presumed to belong to the linguistic group – from the updated National Regis-

**C** We plan to contest all the 15 seats in the Valley

PRADIP DUTTA ROY  
Chief Convener BDF

ter of Citizens in August 2019.

"The party has been formed to protest the discrimination against the people of Barak Valley. We plan to contest all the 15 Assembly seats in the Valley," said Pradip Dutta Roy, the chief convenor of BDF and the founder-president of All Cachar Karimganj Hailakandi Students' Association.

The Barak Ekta Party, formed on November 15, has also decided to contest all the 15 seats. "Our focus is on fighting for the rights of the people of Barak Valley and working to fulfil their demands," said the party's chief convener, Amit Roy.

## Nuh woman suspected of killing her four daughters

She was hospitalised after she tried to hurt herself

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PUNJAB (NUH)

A woman in Nuh allegedly killed her four daughters, aged two months to six years, by slitting their throats, and then tried to slit her own throat as well. She was taken to the Civil Hospital in Mandikheda and later referred to the medical college in Nalhar.

Police said that the woman was the prime suspect in the case, but her statement was yet to be recorded.

### 'Out of danger'

"She is out of danger. But the doctors are yet to declare her fit for statement," said Punjab Deputy Superintendent



The house in Piproli village where the murders were committed. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

of Police Vivek Chaudhary.

Her husband Khurshid Ahmed, 45, a resident of Piproli village here, said he had gone to condole deaths in a family in the village. When he returned to his single-room home around 2 a.m., he heard faint whines emanating from the room.

"I peeped inside through the cracks in the door to see

one of the girls lying in a pool of blood with her throat slit. I heard my wife Farmina crying in pain holding a knife and trying to slit her throat. I raised an alarm and soon neighbours gathered," said Mr. Ahmed, a farmer.

People broke open the door to see the four girls lying in a pool of blood on two beds with their throats slit.

Ms. Farmina, too, had injured herself with the knife.

The couple were married eight years ago.

### Second marriage

It was Ms. Farmina's second marriage. She had a daughter from the first relationship, now aged around 13 years, who was away with Ms. Farmina's former in-laws at the time of the incident.

The woman's family was not present at the village.

Superintendent of Police Narendra Bijarniya said the police were investigating the matter from all angles.

"The woman remains the prime suspect," said Mr. Bijarniya.

*Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.*

## Punjab govt. inks pact in health field

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government and International Digital Health-Artificial Intelligence Research Collaborative (IDAIR) have inked a Memorandum of Understanding for developing models of people-centric digital technologies and infrastructures in the health sector.

The MoU on behalf of Punjab was signed by Additional Chief Secretary (governance reforms) Anirudh Tewari, who said that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to centre-stage the importance of public health for the personal, social and economic well-being of citizens. "Data and artificial intelligence can play an important role in combating infectious diseases," he said.

Hussan Lal, principal secretary (Health) said the Punjab government and IDAIR will be laying the groundwork for key projects in the coming months that will include data interoperability, real time epidemiology and benchmarking of digital health solutions.

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### FORM NO. 22 General Notice in respect of Interlocutory Application IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA, DHARWAD BENCH

CRP No. 10110 / 2015  
**PETITIONER :** SMT. GHISCI BAI W/O CHAMPAL SHAH AGE: 65 YEAR, OCC: BUSINESS, PROPRIETOR M/S ABHUSHAN MARKETING INC., SHOP NO. 22/2, RAJASTHAN MEDICALS, SUBHASH ROAD, DHARWAD.  
(BY SRI Y. LAKSHMIKANT REDDY & SMT. MALATHI REDDY, ADVS.)  
- Vs -

**RESPONDENT :** M/S NIKKI OVERSEAS, BY ITS PROPRIETOR MR. BINOD KESHAN, S/O LATE SRI UMA SHANKAR KESHAN, AGE: 56 YEARS, OCC: BUSINESS, B-94, 2ND FLOOR, OKHLA INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-II, NEW DELHI-110020.  
**TO SOLE RESPONDENT :** M/S NIKKI OVERSEAS, BY ITS PROPRIETOR MR. BINOD KESHAN S/O LATE SRI UMA SHANKAR KESHAN AGE: 56 YEARS, OCC: BUSINESS, B-94, 2ND FLOOR, OKHLA INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-II, NEW DELHI-110020.

Whereas the above named petitioner has preferred I.A. No. 1/2016 as in the copy annexed hereto, praying this court to condone the delay of 37 days in filing the above petition. Petition is filed against the order dated 19.06.2015, passed in O.S.NO. 89/2013 on the file of the III ADDITIONAL SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE & CJM, DHARWAD.

Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this Court in person or through an advocate or through someone duly authorised to act for you in this matter on 12.01.2021 at 10.30 a.m. to show cause why the application should not be allowed. If you fail to appear, the application will be dealt with, heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court on 18th day of November, 2020.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT  
Sd/-  
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the public at large that, Vinay Grover, aged 31 years, S/o Radhey Shyam R/o DDA Flats, Vikas Puri, New Delhi married to Mrs. Poonam Kumar, aged 20 years, D/o Makhan Ram, R/o DDA Flats, SBS Nagar, New Delhi on 22.11.2010 by Sri Satish Kumar, Greater Noida with mutual consent, in the presence of 2 witnessess Ranjan Das & Dalip Singh. By this notice, we proceeding for registering marriage under Indian Hindu Marriage Act, 1954.

in "as is where it is" condition.

E-auction will be conducted by M/s MSTC Ltd., For further details corrigendum, if any visit www.mstccommerce.com / www.mstcindia.co.in / www.chennaiport.gov.in

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Tender Reference No : 01/ET/PAPCO/2020-21

Cost of Tender form : Rs. 1000/-

EMD Amount: Rs. 70000/-

Last Date of Receipt of Tender : 15/12/2020

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■ JENNY VARGHESE

At the beginning of 2020, no one would have expected to spend much of the year being at a standstill. Currently with the talk focusing on vaccines, there is hope that science and research will help us remain resilient and find solutions.

**Deepening interest**

Something that S. Gopalakrishnan, Executive Vice Chairman and Trustee, Infosys Science Foundation, refers to when he talks about the "tremendous and deepening interest in science because the solution to the pandemic is naturally going to come from science and research." Gopalakrishnan points out that research has never been more crucial. "There is a global effort to create a vaccine; research on how to inoculate seven billion people; effective mechanisms... there are plenty of research opportunities available."

Some of the trends that he highlights are acceleration of research, global collabora-

S. Gopalakrishnan of Infosys Science Foundation weighs in on why India's role in science and research is more crucial now than ever before

tion, and increased cooperation across industry, academia, governments, start-ups and others who are all working together. "I firmly believe," he adds, "that dependencies from a research perspective, knowledge perspective, IPR perspective also count. It has to start with research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and creating the capacity needed for a country of our size."

India, he believes, has great potential to contribute, given the talent base in the country. "One of the fastest growing segments of services to be delivered out of India is research-related. If you look around, R&D facilities of MNCs are all over the place. Indian brainpower contributes to most products being created, technological or otherwise, with Indians being situated in labs abroad or within the country." He men-

tions the LIGO India project to show that India is beginning to contribute to original research projects as well.

The attitude to research, which not many considered pursuing, is also changing, he says.

He points out that earlier people did not have the liberty to go into research, as it wasn't seen a steady stream like engineering or medicine. But now with average incomes increasing, people are looking more at social sciences, liberal arts, litera-

ture, and other specialisations including research. "The amount of money the government is allocating to research is also significantly increasing. Industries are also investing more in research and this will only accelerate, as we transition to a knowledge-based economy, in which new knowledge and innovation will drive economic growths."

**Make it cool**

Asked how research culture can be improved in India, Gopalakrishnan responds, "The first thing we need to do is to make research cool. This is one of the reasons why Infosys established the Infosys Science Foundation (ISF), which acts as a platform to identify and honour eminent scientists and research scholars across different categories."

ISF looks at furthering an understanding and liking for science and research from the grassroots, with the Infosys Prize to inspire young people. "Every society needs to ensure that the work of scientists and researchers is

Every society needs to ensure that the work of scientists and researchers is recognised, encouraged, and rewarded

recognised, encouraged, and rewarded to continue to feed innovation and progress. This is where the Infosys Prize becomes relevant."

Another reason is to create icons and role models and to show that research can be rewarding. "The idea was to also showcase the laureates as new-age heroes whose work will enable people to build a better world. Younger scholars will hopefully feel inspired and educators, parents and students may realise that a solid career in the sciences is an exciting option."

Scaling up research, however, requires resources and Gopalakrishnan points to the need for more research universities and to increase funding for research. "Today, India spends about 0.7% of GDP on research, of which 6% is from the government and 0.1% from private sources," he says, calling for this to be increased "by a considerable amount to be able to fund research work."

Yet another aspect involves ambitious goal-setting. Research is more than just publishing a paper and getting a Ph.D. "Research is to say, for example, let's find a cure for cancer or a better and more affordable medicine for diabetes, or studies on neurological disorders..." He believes that we will now be able to achieve these aspirational goals.

India has an advantage in being able to carry out research at a lower cost than elsewhere because of its low per capita income. "That's why all multinationals come to India," says Gopalakrishnan. "One is talent and second is cost."

With our academic institutions slowly upping their game, Gopalakrishnan reiterates that "in time, more of our youth will join the research community in India."

**WEBINAR**

## Kindle their curiosity

At a time when marks rule the roost, children need to be taught to learn by doing, say experts

■ MADHUVANTI S. KRISHNAN

For most students and parents alike, textbooks are synonymous with learning. In short, 'when in doubt, turn to textbooks' has become the unsaid refrain over the decades. However, there exists an alternate universe where learning can take place just as efficiently and effectively. This was the message from the recent webinar hosted by *The Hindu Education Plus* along with Pidilite Fevicleate Idea Labs. Vivek Abrol, Senior Vice-President-Arts Stationery Fabric Division, Pidilite Industries; Jyothi Prabhakar, journalist, writer, and managing editor, ParentCircle; and Srimathy Kesan, ambassador to the NASA, ESA and GCTC space camps were the speakers in the session moderated by Radhika Santhanam, Assistant Editor, *The Hindu*.

**COVID-19 effect**  
According to Prabhakar, the lockdown was a sort of blessing in disguise because children and parents got to spend time with each other. "They have learnt so much that they would not have otherwise learnt at school. The child's creative side is developed outside the school, from his/her interactions at home, with friends and peers, from the activities they are involved in..." She spoke of how kids learn by touch, feel, drawing and moments of inquisitiveness and also by finding ingenious ways to get out of being reprimanded. "This helps them learn to handle bigger problems and challenges when they grow up, by thinking on their feet. Design thinking can be inculcated simply by letting them be creative and exploring. The lockdown has effectively offered many parents this chance," she said.

Vivek Abrol spoke about how the Fevicleate Challenge helped parents keep their children engaged and stoke their creativity. "The stress is on learning by doing, craft and theme-based projects that could help them gain clarity of con-



Activity-based contest

- According to Abrol, the Fevicleate Science Labs Contest was envisaged to encourage activity-based learning. "Children can read about science concepts on their own and develop a 3D model of that concept and upload it on the site. It could be anything – from the solar system to the Chandrayan. The aim is to encourage creativity."
- The competition is open to all and last date for submission is December 31.
- For more information, visit fevicleate.com

cepts. During the last few months, we learnt from parents about their wish to bond with kids, and about the complete disconnect kids had with their parents due to the influx of all things tech. So, we realised that a crafting challenge could help them bond."

Kesan debunked several misconceptions about the need for a lab to learn science. "Science is everywhere," she said enthusiastically. "Curiosity among kids is immense. Parents must feed that, and they don't have to be a scientist; rather, they just need to equip themselves by reading. For example, the CV Raman effect can be taught with something as simple as a kaleidoscope."

**Encourage questioning**  
Asked about how inquisitive children are often told to pipe down, Prabhakar pointed out that, while teachers face immense pressure and tend to focus on completing the syllabus, parents also have a role to play in kindling curiosity. "They have to give time to kids, answer their questions patiently, unfailingly. Encourage them to ask any kind of questions at all times."

Kesan took this further saying that children should be taught without knowing that they are learning. "Teach them through play acting, using objects available around you. Teach your kids about what chlorophyll in a plant is, or about evaporation when you boil water. It's all in your house."

Abrol also agreed that parents also must be involved in their children's activities. "Stop telling them they are right or wrong at every step, as it hinders their ability to problem solve."

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

### Mukhyamantri Jankalyan (Shiksha Protasah) Yojna, Madhya Pradesh

The Government of Madhya Pradesh invites applications for the Mukhyamantri Jankalyan (Shiksha Protasah) Yojna.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to residents of Madhya Pradesh whose parent/parents are registered with the Labour Department of the Government of Madhya Pradesh. Students must be enrolled at an undergraduate/polytechnic diploma/ ITI level course in any discipline at a recognised university or institution.

**For engineering aspirants:** Students who have qualified JEE Mains exam with a rank of less than 1,50,000.

**For medical aspirants:** Students who have obtained admission to a government/private medical/dental college through NEET merit.

**For law aspirants:** Students who have qualified the CLAT examination and obtained admission to an NLU or Delhi University.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Up to 100% fee waiver

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** June 15, 2021 b4s.in/edge/MJS4

**Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC students, Gujarat**

The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of Gujarat, offers this scholarship to ensure economic welfare and empowerment of students from backward classes.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to OBC students of Gujarat, studying at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Annual family income must be less than ₹1 lakh.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Variable awards

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** December 15 b4s.in/edge/MSG9

**Pre-Matric Scholarships for ST Students Meghalaya**

The Department of Education, Government of Meghalaya, invites applications for students from the Scheduled Tribes community.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to ST students who are domiciles of Meghalaya and studying in classes IX and X. Annual family income must be less than ₹2,00,000.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Variable awards

**APPLICATION:** Online only

**DEADLINE:** January 5, 2021 b4s.in/edge/SMH4

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

**CAREERS**

## Cook up a storm



Whether it is restaurants, luxury hotels or cafes, aspiring chefs have plenty of rewarding job opportunities

■ NIKLESH SHARMA

The hospitality industry has undergone an unprecedented transformation in the last few years, triggering an increased demand for specialised chefs and bakers. Today, a chef's profession is one of the most sought-after careers for someone who is passionate about food and loves to cook.

In this interesting, rewarding and demanding profession, one gets to learn the art of preparing vegetables, meats, sweets, cakes and other delicacies. The chef is also responsible for preparing and measuring ingredients and plating the dishes. There was a time when Indian chefs had to look abroad

for job opportunities and better prospects. But, with the growth of tourism in India, there are huge opportunities within the country whether it is in stand-alone restaurants, luxury hotels, bakeries or cafes.

**Variety of courses**  
Those who want to succeed should opt for a degree or a formal course in a culinary school apart from serving an apprenticeship. There are plenty of programmes ranging from diplomas and associate degrees to Bachelor's and Master's degrees with the duration varying from one to four years. Though formal education is not a prerequisite, the specialised knowledge and skills learnt from these programmes will help hone kitchen work and stand aspiring chefs in good stead. These courses include signature culinary techniques, nutrition, pastry preparation, butchery, or knowledge of speciality and regional cuisines. Lesson plans include basic cooking, sanitation and safety.

The writer is a Chef and the founder of the Academy of Pastry and Culinary Arts.

## Study in the UK virtual fair

The British Council, the U.K.'s international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations, is hosting a 'Study UK Virtual Fair' on December 5, 2020.

Prospective students can meet representatives from over 40 institutions in the U.K. to learn more about the academic courses and programmes available. Direct interactions with officials from universities will provide the students with guidance on university selection, subject selection and ap-

plication processes and the newly introduced Graduate Route.

In addition to meeting exhibitors, students can attend seminars delivered by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and the British Council for information on living and studying in the UK and scholarships.

**On December 5 from 2:00 to 7:00 pm**

Register at <https://bit.ly/33mTzFH> or visit: [www.britishcouncil.in/studyuk/events/virtual-fair](http://www.britishcouncil.in/studyuk/events/virtual-fair)

[www.azimpemjiuniversity.edu.in/ug](http://www.azimpemjiuniversity.edu.in/ug)

**Undergraduate programmes at APU**

Azim Premji University announced admissions to its full-time, residential Undergraduate programme.

**COURSES:** Three-year B.Sc. and B.A. degrees; Four-year B.Sc.-B.Ed. Dual degree

**DEADLINE:** December 27 (for Early Admissions); Mid-April 2021 (for Regular Admissions)

**APPLICATION FORM:** [edii.nopaperforms.com/](http://edii.nopaperforms.com/)

<https://ediindia.ac.in/>

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WARANGAL – 506 004**  
(An Institution of National Importance)  
**Admission Announcement to Ph.D. Programs: 2020-21 (Session: December, 2020)**

Applications are invited from highly motivated candidates for admission into Ph.D. Programs offered in all the disciplines of Engineering, Sciences, English and Management. Research Fellowships will be offered in different disciplines as per norms of Government of India.

**1. Full Time Ph.D.:** Admissions through Interview in all disciplines of Engineering, Sciences, English and Management. Research Fellowships will be offered in different disciplines as per norms of Government of India.

**2. Part Time Ph.D.:** Admissions through Interview. Candidates working in National Laboratories, R&D organizations and Organizations, Academic Institutions etc. are eligible to apply.

Details of the programs, eligibility criteria, admission schedule and procedure to apply online application form are available at [www.admissions.nitw.ac.in](http://www.admissions.nitw.ac.in) tentatively from 1st December 2020.

**Admissions 2021**

**Indian Institute of Management Bangalore**

**Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**  
Five-year fulltime programme

Application Deadline: January 18, 2021 05:00 pm IST

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)\***  
One-year fulltime programme (EPGP)

Application Deadline: January 04, 2021 05:00 pm IST

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**  
Two-year weekend programme (PGPME)

Application Deadline: January 18, 2021 05:00 pm IST

Reservation for EWS, NC-OBC, SC, ST and PWD in accordance with the law

For more details visit: [https://www.iimb.ac.in/admissions](http://www.iimb.ac.in/admissions)

**Indian Institute of Management Bangalore**

\*IIMB is working with all the other IIMs to engage and address the concerns of the MHRD related to the programme. The final structure of the programme (Degree/Diploma) would depend upon the outcome of the said interaction.





## Reaping the whirlwind

Farmers need more than verbal assurances on continuance of MSP, guaranteed procurement

**F**armers of India have felt exploited for long. The reforms that the Centre brought in, apparently to make the agriculture sector more efficient and lucrative in the form of three ordinances in June, have had the effect of upsetting large sections of them further. Parliament passed them into Acts in September. More than 500 farmers' unions are now on a path of agitation. Thousands of farmers from the neighbouring States, stopped by the police on their way to Delhi, are camping at several points around the national capital. They have refused to move to a designated site, a condition set by the Centre for talks. The Centre has aggravated its original mistake of rushing through these laws without wide consultation and political consensus by taking a condescending attitude towards critics. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that farmers stood to benefit from the new measures, and this may well be true. The trouble is that most farmers are not convinced by the assurances and fear that their precarity will increase as a result of the changes. Farmer leaders have pointed out that the Centre has refused to address their specific concerns regarding the new laws, which they are concerned will render them helpless in the face of exploitative market forces.

At the heart of the fears is the potential end of the MSP and guaranteed government procurement of the produce. The new legal architecture allows farmers more choices in selling their produce, in theory, and creates a national market for their produce. The end of a monopoly market could theoretically lead to more efficiency, but procurement at MSP has been the backbone of India's food security edifice. If the new laws lead to a dismantling of the MSP and the *mandi* system, the farmers fear that they will have little leeway in contracts with private buyers. There are loopholes in the existing system and the case for reforms is strong. But railroading a raft of measures cannot be the way forward. If the Centre is open to legislating a guarantee of procurement at MSP, farmers could be convinced to accept the new laws. Agitating farmers are also pressing for the withdrawal of the proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020, fearing it will end subsidised electricity. While market factors must be taken into consideration, any country's agriculture sector must find an equilibrium of the interest of the producers and consumers, and account for uneven environmental factors across different regions. The apprehensions of the farmers are not unfounded. The onus is on the government to win their confidence. It must unconditionally reach out to the farmers and empathetically listen to them and not precipitate a crisis by high-handedness.

## Historic recession

India's economy needs a robust demand stimulus to avoid a protracted slump

**T**he fact that India's economy entered a technical recession in the July-September period has now been confirmed by National Statistical Office data. Provisional estimates of gross domestic product for the second quarter of the year ending in March 2021 show economic output shrank by 7.5%, following the 23.9% contraction in the first quarter. Not only has the economy shrunk for a second successive quarter, marking a recession for the first time in independent India's history, but the overall GDP figure of ₹33,14,167 crore (at 2011-12 prices) reveals output has slid back to the lowest level in 12 quarters. This one fact alone ought to give cause for serious concern, notwithstanding the apparent improvement in economic momentum that helped narrow the contraction from the preceding period's precipitous fall. Even there, a closer look at both the expenditure side and the gross value added across various industry categories leaves little room for comfort. Private consumption expenditure – the single biggest component propelling GDP with a share exceeding 50% at constant prices and edging toward 60% in current prices – continued to shrink albeit at a slower pace (-11.3%), reflecting both consumer wariness to spend amid the pandemic and the impact of lost jobs and reduced incomes. And, government consumption spending that was hitherto a bulwark and what kept the bottom from falling out in the first quarter when it grew 16%, contracted by 22% revealing the precarious state of public finances. Taken together, demand was largely missing.

And even though the contractions in gross fixed capital formation, exports and imports all narrowed, it was a puzzling almost fourfold growth in 'discrepancies' at ₹56,962 crore that limited the extent of decline in the overall GDP. In the real economy, electricity and other utility services joined agriculture in posting growth, expanding 4.4%, as the post-lockdown resumption of industrial activity lifted power and water consumption. Surprisingly, manufacturing GVA inexplicably jettisoned its correlation with official IIP data on the sector: while the latter had signalled an average contraction of 6.7% in the July-September period, GVA data from the NSO on Friday showed manufacturing rebounding to a marginal 0.6% expansion after a 39% collapse in the preceding quarter. One possible explanation for this uptick in provisional manufacturing GVA is that the year-earlier period had witnessed a contraction and the statistical effect of a low base coupled with inventory restocking likely lifted the figure. Financial, real estate and professional services, which contribute about a fourth of the GVA, widened contraction from the first quarter, shrinking 8.3%. Clearly, the financial services sector is not in good health and is an ominous portent for the economy given its crucial role in credit intermediation. The economy urgently needs a robust demand stimulus if a protracted slump is to be prevented.

# Clear the fog, draw up a clear vaccination policy

India's COVID-19 control plan of actions can be the nucleus for building a much-needed public health infrastructure



T. JACOB JOHN & M.S. SESHADEVI

**V**accines play a major role in human mastery over infectious diseases. Vaccine can induce immunity only in the vaccinated individual. So, vaccination is 'preventive medicine'. When a vaccine is rolled out as a national or global programme and increasing proportions of people are vaccinated, 'herd immunity' level increases and disease frequency decreases in the vaccinated population. That decelerates transmission of the microbe in the whole community, resulting in decreasing disease frequency even in the unvaccinated segment of population – a phenomenon called the 'herd effect' of vaccination.

### Disease burden and control

Herd immunity plus herd effect reduce the overall disease burden in the community; in other words, the disease is controlled. In epidemiology, the common word control has a specific meaning: 'deliberate reduction of disease frequency to a desired level, validated with evidence'. For evidence, disease frequencies must be documented both at baseline and on an ongoing basis, through systematic surveillance. So, control interventions include a vaccination programme and disease surveillance.

The extreme form of control is 'elimination' of transmission of the microbe in a whole country. For example, measles and rubella have been eliminated in Sri Lanka through sustained vaccination achieving high coverage. Eradication is global elimination of an infectious disease.

In summary, the hierarchy of human mastery over infectious microbes using vaccines ranges from individual protection and

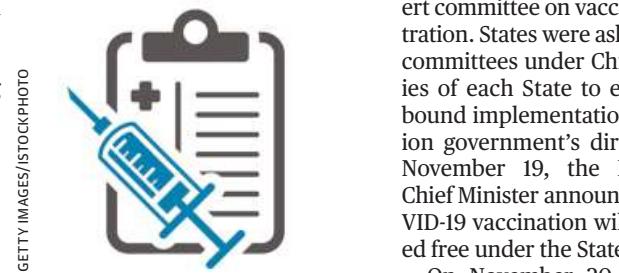
community control, to elimination and eradication.

So far, smallpox and cattle plague have been eradicated using their respective vaccines. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) was eradicated in 2003 without a vaccine, using 'non-pharmacological interventions', or NPI, systematic case detection, contact tracing and quarantine. Success was possible because virus transmission occurred only after individuals developed fever. History of travel from affected countries and fever-screening identified potentially infectious persons who were quarantined for breaking transmission chains. COVID-19 novel coronavirus transmission occurs from infected persons before the onset of fever and from infected but totally asymptomatic individuals. So, we cannot stop transmission; but with NPI (face masks, hand hygiene and avoiding crowds), we can retard transmission.

### Vaccine candidates and India

Three COVID-19 vaccines have claims of about 90-95% protective efficacy – BNT162b2 (Pfizer-BioNTech), mRNA-1273 (Moderna) and Sputnik-V (Gamaleya Institute). Hopefully they will soon get registration for general use in their respective countries of origin. Sputnik-V is under phase 2-phase 3 vaccine trials in India, by Dr. Reddy's Laboratories. Another vaccine, ChAdOx1 nCoV19 (Oxford-AstraZeneca), manufactured under licence by Serum Institute of India as Covishield, is undergoing phase 2-phase 3 trials in India. The likelihood of Sputnik-V getting registration in India is probably high, possibly before end-2020. An indigenous vaccine candidate, Covaxin (Bharat Biotech), found safe and immunogenic in phase 1 and phase 2 trials, is now under phase 3 trial. If found safe and effective, it will, hopefully, get registration in the first or second quarter of 2021.

Should vaccination be used in India as preventive medicine for individual protection, community



control or elimination? This is India's call – what is in the best interests of the country? In India's national Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP), policy is defined, vaccines procured and supplied by the Union government and vaccination implemented by State governments. So, policy development is the function of the central government – States must implement the action plan emerging from policy. States have the freedom to surpass policy limits if no fund is sought. There are precedents: Delhi used the Measles-Mumps-Rubella vaccine when the central government policy was only for Measles vaccine and Sikkim unilaterally used human papillomavirus vaccine to prevent cervical cancer in women.

### Mixed signals

A comprehensive vaccination policy is yet to emerge as evidenced by the divergent views expressed by different dignitaries. On October 22, Union Finance Minister announced NDA's Bihar election manifesto: "The NDA government in Bihar has set an example before the country in the fight against corona. It is our resolve that once the vaccine...has been cleared by the ICMR [Indian Council of Medical Research], we will make it available to the people of Bihar free of cost." Note the *faux pas* – the Drugs Controller General of India is the clearing agency, not the ICMR.

On November 3, the Union Health Secretary said in a press conference: "Union Health Ministry has asked State governments to refrain from making isolated plans for vaccine distribution. The Union government has set up an exp-

ert committee on vaccine administration. States were asked to set up committees under Chief Secretaries of each State to ensure time-bound implementation of the Union government's direction". On November 19, the Puducherry Chief Minister announced that COVID-19 vaccination will be provided free under the State Budget.

On November 20, the Union Health Minister identified the priority sequence for vaccination: health-care workers and 'corona warriors'; citizens above 65 years; those between 50 and 65; those below 50 who have co-morbidities; and finally general public; workers in essential services are missed out. This represents a preventive medicine approach. Obviously, the government has not considered a public health goal of control or elimination.

### Unanswered policy issues

Fortunately, the three front running vaccines for India – Sputnik V, Covishield, Covaxin – need only the standard cold chain available to the UIP, except that any new vaccine will require significant additional cold chain space. All vaccines in the UIP are available in the private sector too. Under the UIP, vaccines attract no user fee, but the private sector bills the beneficiary. Will this style be maintained for COVID-19 vaccines also? Will insurance companies reimburse the recipients of a vaccine in the private sector?

An important policy issue is whether vaccination should be confined to only uninfected individuals. Or should it be for all people? In the first case, how should uninfected individuals be identified? All test results of infected subjects are available on a computer data base and that is one way to identify those who were already infected. For others, should COVID-19 antibody or T-cell immunity be tested for reserving vaccination for non-immune persons?

What will be the policy for vaccinating children? Will not vaccinating teachers and students make school reopening safe? Many se-

nior citizens are protected from exposure to infection by cocooning within homes. How will they be reached at home?

If COVID-19 control is the policy objective, there will be additional questions. Experts must determine the age groups to be covered for disease control. Where will vaccination be conducted? If at fixed stations, will they be at health-care clinics or elsewhere? Will vaccination be with or without user-fee? In case of any adverse reaction, how and where will that be diagnosed and treated? India does not practise public health surveillance. How then can India monitor the control trajectory of COVID-19 over time? The COVID-19 control plan of actions can be the nucleus for building a much-needed public health infrastructure in India.

The vaccination stations should be staffed with trained personnel and supervised by medical doctors. The site must have a waiting area and a post-vaccination staying area to manage any untoward reaction during the first hour. A computerised master list with details and mobile numbers of all vaccinated subjects needs to be maintained for the purpose of post-vaccination follow up to document rare side-effects. Data management has to be meticulously planned and executed.

The central and State governments in general and Health Departments in particular have a mammoth task ahead of them. It is a big challenge to protect the life and the health of citizens, and also a huge opportunity to eliminate the novel coronavirus from India, setting an example to the rest of the world. With will and wisdom we can, and should, accomplish this.

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## Seasoned faces who could aid the return of America

In line with his agenda of restoring America's place in the world, Biden is banking on Obama-era liberal internationalists



HARSH V. PANT &  
KASHISH PARPIANI

**T**he President-elect of the United States, Joe Biden, recently announced nominations for some key national security posts. During the campaign, Mr. Biden argued for a liberal internationalist foreign policy to "once more place America at the head of the table". Whereby, Washington would reassume the role of a steward on global governance issues, lead in the advocacy of democratic values and human rights, and sustain its network of alliances from western Europe to northeast Asia. Given this restorationist agenda for "rescuing" U.S. foreign policy after Donald Trump's 'America First' conduct, most of Mr. Biden's nominations are veterans of the Barack Obama administration. However, the decision to nominate his former colleagues also seems to be a very calculated one.

### The band back together

With Mr. Trump overseeing America's withdrawal from the UN Human Rights Council and UNESCO, Mr. Biden has tapped career diplomat Linda Thomas-Greenfield to

represent Washington at the global high-table. Biden will also restate the post to cabinet rank, since Trump had it downgraded. Moreover, Ms. Thomas-Greenfield's experience as Barack Obama's Assistant Secretary of State for Africa (at the critical time of responding to the Ebola outbreak) would be particularly relevant in the U.S.'s effort to "increase trust with non-Western diplomats", at a time when China has sought to do the same to expand its influence at the UN.

From the standpoint of rekindling America's relationship with its prime allies, Mr. Biden's nomination of former Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken for Secretary of State is significant. After Mr. Trump's derision of Europe as America's "foe" and for allegedly having "ripped off" Washington on collective security, European capitals will now deal with someone who is fluent in French and considers them as partners of "first resort, not last resort." In addition, the decision to tap former Secretary of State John Kerry as Special Presidential Envoy for Climate is reflective of the high priority Mr. Biden would accord to the issue. Apart from Mr. Biden's pledge to reverse Mr. Trump's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement (which Mr. Kerry helped negotiate), he is expected to elevate the position as part of his National Security Council.

Finally, Jake Sullivan, who most



recently served as National Security Adviser to Vice-President Biden, will "take on the same title – but now to a President Biden". His appointment as the gate-keeper of Mr. Biden's national security agenda, will most definitely have bearing on Mr. Biden's pledge to rejoin the Iran nuclear deal, since Mr. Sullivan was a key player in the secret negotiations that led to the 2015 deal. During his time as the Deputy Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Mr. Sullivan also worked on the implementation of her 'Pivot to Asia' policy – arguably the early precursor to the Indo-Pacific strategy.

### The India outlook

Most analyses already predict considerable continuity when it comes to U.S.-India ties under Mr. Biden. With the nominations, that assessment gains further credence, with key members having had the experience of being part of the modern-day development of America's ties with India. Mr. Blinken for instance, was staff director on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when as its

chairman then-Senator Biden oversaw the passage of the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement. Similarly, Mr. Sullivan reportedly had been a supporter of U.S.-India ties being a central component of the 'Pivot to Asia' policy.

In addition, the Biden administration's agenda on India will hardly be different, given Mr. Trump's own continuity on the Obama years' progress on the U.S.-India portfolio. For instance, during the campaign, Mr. Biden touted two Obama-era developments to underscore Mr. Biden's commitment to U.S.-India ties. On both those developments – India's designation as 'Major Defence Partner' and the initiation of the United States-India Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI), Mr. Trump has only built on the Obama-Biden record by classifying India under the Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 and finalising the Industrial Security Annex for the actualisation of the DTTI. Hence, while Mr. Biden's top diplomat would adopt a restorationist agenda towards most partners of the U.S., in case of India, the priority will be to further build on Mr. Trump's record.

One aspect where things would depart from the Trump precedent however, is with respect to U.S. apprehensions over some of India's domestic policies. Mr. Blinken for instance, has already spoken about there being "real concerns" over India "cracking down on free-

dom of movement and freedom of speech in Kashmir, [and] some of the laws on citizenship". But he has pragmatically called for working on those "differences", even as the U.S. and India continue to "build greater cooperation and strengthen the relationship."

### Handling China

Whereas on China, Mr. Blinken has reportedly been receptive to the idea of constraining America's approach on ideological lines. Whereby, in a sign of shedding the Obama-era baggage of over prioritising cooperation with China (to even ignore its transgressions), Mr. Blinken has rallied against Mr. Trump's "signals of impunity" on Beijing's human rights record. Towards now overseeing America's reemergence to "a position of strength from which to engage China", Mr. Blinken has notably invoked Mr. Trump's 'Indo-Pacific' construct to call on India to be "a key partner in that effort".

Hence, while differences over India's domestic policies could emerge, increased attention on the China challenge by Mr. Biden's team of Obama-era liberal internationalists could inform a pragmatic approach towards New Delhi.

**Harsh V. Pant** is Director, Studies at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi, and Professor of International Relations at King's College London. **Kashish Parpiani** is Research Fellow at the ORF, Mumbai

## 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.

**Farmers' agitation**  
It is interesting to note that the farmers from Punjab and Haryana are prepared for a long innings in order to get their point of view across. Be that as it may, they seem to be obdurate in their stand against the new farm policy and it is imperative that the Union government conducts animated talks with them immediately to resolve the issue. It is important that it really communicates to the farmers on the matter.  
**S. RAMAKRISHNAYASAYEE,  
Chennai**

■ In the event of a border dispute taking place, the

government's stance is that peace talks can be held only if the enemy stops firing at the border. Here, farmers are agitating against a responsible government over rules they will be detrimental to their interests. But there seems to be an attitude of adamancy, with the government wanting them to move first to a place it has proposed. That certain political leaders are using language that indirectly identifies the farmers to be the enemies of the country is jarring. Not everything is politics.  
**MOHAN MENON,  
Arimboor, Thrissur, Kerala**

**Nagorno-Karabakh**  
The article, "Ilham Aliyev – the President who went to war" ('Profiles' page, November 22), speaks about the Nagorno-Karabakh region which seemed from Azerbaijan towards the end of the Soviet Union". In fact, only the sovereign republics of [the] USSR had the right to exit the Union, according to the Constitution of the USSR; Nagorno-Karabakh, being an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, had no such right. It was Armenia which seized Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding regions of Azerbaijan by armed force and kept them

under occupation for 27 years. The UNSC adopted four resolutions in 1993 demanding an immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Starting from September 27, 2020, Armenia, blatantly violating the ceasefire, launched another act of aggression against Azerbaijan. As a result of the counter-offensive operations, the armed forces of Azerbaijan liberated a significant portion of the occupied territories. The trilateral statement of November 10, signed by the

leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia, put an end to hostilities and set a timetable for Armenia to return the remaining occupied territories to Azerbaijan. There should be no doubt that long-awaited peace will return to our region, and with implementation of the

### CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In a front-page story headlined "Protect right of ordinary people to bail, SC tells judges" (Nov. 28, 2020), the name of the puisne judge was wrongly given as Justice Indu Malhotra. It should have been Justice Indira Banerjee.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

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# The Paris Agreement is no panacea

It is a repudiation of the principles of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' and 'the polluter must pay'



T.P. SREENIVASAN

Nothing that U.S. President Donald Trump touched turned into gold, except perhaps his business empire, but ironically, he was the alchemist who turned the Paris Agreement, once considered the product of a conspiracy hatched by the U.S. and China to change the course of negotiations away from the Rio Declaration (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (1997), into a holy grail worth pursuing. Many developing countries, including India, which hesitated to sign the Agreement because it had exempted developed countries from their mandatory obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, turned into its devout supporters the moment Mr. Trump denounced it as a hoax and announced his decision to withdraw from it. Today, the Paris Agreement is deemed as the panacea for all environmental ills when the truth is that it is a repudiation of the principles of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' and 'the polluter must pay'.

Mr. Trump was not the only one who called the Paris Agreement a hoax. Many scientists and environmentalists expressed deep disappointment when it was adopted, as the national and international actions envisaged under it were far below the optimum levels. They did not add up to limiting the rise of global temperature to below 2°C, the minimum necessary to save the globe from disastrous consequences. It merely opened a new path to protect the lifestyles of industrialised nations by denying the developing countries their right to development.

**Efforts over the years**  
The most hopeful time for global cooperation in protection of the planet was between the time of the Stockholm Conference (1972) and the time of the Rio Conference (1992). That was when mounting scientific evidence about the role of anthropogenic emissions in global warming led to political initiatives to harmonise development and environment.



Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's resounding address at Stockholm declaring poverty as the worst polluter reverberated in many conference halls. The historic consensus in Rio led to the adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was a model global instrument balancing the right to development of the developing countries and the obligations of the developed countries. A distinction was made between the "luxury emissions" of the developed countries, which were reduced mandatorily, and the survival emissions of the developed countries, which were allowed to increase. Moreover, a huge financial package was approved to develop environment-friendly technologies in developing countries.

But by the time the Conference of the Parties was held in Berlin in 1995, the developed countries had backed off from their commitments. They made a determined effort to impose mandatory cuts on developing countries. Though the G-77 was split, we managed to maintain the Rio principles with the assistance of the Chairperson, Angela Merkel.

The Kyoto Protocol enshrined the Rio principles. It fixed emission targets for developed countries and a complex set of provisions was included to satisfy their interests. But it was never ratified by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. withdrew its support in 2001. The end of the Kyoto Protocol and the abandonment of the spirit of the Rio principles were reflected in the Copenhagen Accord (2009), engineered by the U.S. and China and sold to some key countries including India on the argument that a global climate action plan would be possi-

ble only if all reductions of the greenhouse gases were made voluntary.

The basic terms of the Copenhagen Accord were brokered directly by a handful of key country leaders including the U.S., China, India and Brazil on the final day of the conference. It took another full day of tense negotiations to arrive at a procedural compromise allowing the deal to be formalised over the bitter objections of a few governments. There was a virtual revolt by the developing countries, but the Paris Agreement was virtually born in Copenhagen, and adopted later in 2015.

## A fundamental change

The Paris Agreement marked a fundamental change in the principles of Rio and for the first time brought all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change. It requires all parties to put forward their best efforts through nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead. This includes all parties to report regularly on their emissions and on their implementation efforts.

The Paris Agreement moved away from the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and all countries were placed on an equal footing by making reduction of greenhouse gas emissions voluntary. The NDCs so far submitted will not result in the desired objective of limiting increase of global warming to below 2°C. The Paris Agreement requires that all countries – rich, poor, developed, and developing – slash greenhouse gas emissions. But no language is included on the commitments the countries should make.

Nations can voluntarily set their emissions targets and incur no penalties for falling short of their targets. It sets forth a requirement for countries to announce their next round of targets every five years, but does not include a specific requirement to achieve them.

The scientific community has already rejected the Paris Agreement as a solution. Further temperature rise, even of 1.5°C, may result in catastrophic and irreversible changes. At 1.5°C, 70%-90% of coral reefs across the world would die. At 2°C, none would be left. Even a 1°C hotter planet is not a steady state, says a report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The techno-optimism that the wonders of technology will be able to find answers to the dilemma we face without our having to alter our patterns of living is a delusion. The IPCC report acknowledges that "the pathways to avoiding an even hotter world would require a swift and complete transformation not just of the global economy but of society too". This will only be possible if the world rejects nationalism and parochialism and adopts collaborative responses to the crisis. The Paris Agreement falls short of that imperative.

U.S. President-elect Joe Biden has declared that the U.S. will have the most progressive position on climate change in the nation's history. He has already laid out a clean energy and infrastructure plan, a commitment to return to the Paris Agreement, and a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. The appointment of former Secretary of State John Kerry as Climate Change Envoy is a clear indication of the importance that Mr. Biden attaches to addressing global warming issues. Having been one of the architects of the Paris Agreement, Mr. Kerry must be aware of its merits and deficiencies. It is hoped that he will also be aware of the development imperatives of the developing nations. If Mr. Kerry and Mr. Biden insist on matching cuts by the developing countries as a conditionality to return to the Paris Agreement, the whole debate of equity and climate justice will emerge, with India and the U.S. on opposing sides.

T.P. Sreenivasan, a former Ambassador, was the Vice Chairman of the first Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC from 1992 to 1995

## FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

# The political economy of journalism

The lack of a sustainable model is haunting legacy media and hurting new digital initiatives



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

Though I handle complaints and examine *The Hindu*'s compliance with its editorial values and core journalistic principles, there are compelling reasons for me to dwell on media literacy. It's important not to conflate the fortunes of the news media industry with the demands of journalism. Yet, journalism and the news media industry are linked through a complex network of political economy, which contributes to a sustainable model for credible journalism.

The plague of disinformation is not new. In 1939, the journalist-turned-educator, Clyde R. Miller, delivered a powerful lecture, 'How to detect and analyse propaganda', at New York's Town Hall. His major recommendations remain valid today. He said: "There are three ways to deal with propaganda – first, to suppress it; second, to try to answer it by counterpropaganda; third, to analyse it." He established the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) which came up with efficient tools to sift facts from propaganda. The most potent tool of IPA was media literacy. I believe that it is true for the digital era too.

The lack of a sustainable model is haunting legacy media and also hurting new digital initiatives. If the steady decline in revenue is forcing legacy media to scale down its operations in multiple ways, the lack of a model is causing existential angst to digital initiatives. There are overt and covert pressures to convert public interest media organisations into government-led media organisations.

## Bringing the curtain down

On November 24, Huffington Post closed its two country-specific news sites, HuffPost India and HuffPost Brasil. Interestingly, both India and Brazil are governed by strongmen leaders. The Editor-in-Chief of HuffPost India, Aman Sethi, tweeted: "Today is @huffpostIndia's last day. Pound for pound, story for story, reporter for reporter, this is the greatest newsroom I have worked for; and I still can't quite believe I had the privilege to lead". From its exhaustive investigations into the controversial electoral bonds scheme to a story on how the BJP turned a women's NGO, the Association of Billion Minds, into a

secretive but highly influential propaganda machine, HuffPost India established itself as a credible, investigative news platform. The wide consensus is that the death of the portal happened because the Government of India tweaked the stakeholding pattern for digital platforms in such a manner that it was nearly impossible for international players to continue to be in the news sector.

The Sinhala radio broadcast service of the BBC World Service is also being stopped. Labour MPs Grahame Morris and John McDonnell have tabled a motion in the British Parliament expressing concern over this move. They argue that the accent on digital reach is misplaced because "currently 7% of the Sinhalese population listen to the radio service each week, compared to just 0.6% who use digital services". The National Union of Journalists is also alarmed at the prospect of the closure. Its statement read: "BBC World Service radio remains an essential service in Sri Lanka, delivering credible local and international news to the population. The prospects of a government shutdown of websites and social media is real, and this has not been factored into the BBC's plans."

## Sustainability of journalism

Given the magnitude of the crisis, the Forum on Information and Democracy, an international entity founded by 11 independent organisations from different backgrounds and regions, has created a working group on the sustainability of journalism. It aims to seek structural recommendations from experts, media stakeholders, academics and jurists on how to make quality journalism sustainable. According to the Forum, "the dramatic fall in income is threatening the survival of many news media, affecting the quality of their content and, ultimately, posing a major danger to democracies". Hence, it has mandated its working group to identify "good practices (including business models, commercial cooperation and editorial partnerships), recommend a favourable regulatory environment (including an overhaul of the media economy's legislative framework and innovative funding) and propose public policies of a non-market nature (such as state funding, non-financial benefits, tax concessions and development assistance)." While we wait for the recommendations, we need a cohort of media literate readers and viewers to distinguish news from propaganda.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

# Assassination and its aftermath

The fallout of Fakhrizadeh's killing, while benefiting Israel, will add to the instability in West Asia

MOHAMMED AYOOB

Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the Iranian scientist who led Iran's nuclear weapons programme until it was disbanded, was assassinated last week. Suspicion immediately fell on Israel, which has been widely held responsible for assassinating several Iranian nuclear scientists early last decade. Three U.S. intelligence officials have said that Mossad assassinated Fakhrizadeh. Assassinations in which Israeli hands were suspected had stopped after the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) imposed strict restrictions on Iran's nuclear programme. After Iran, in retaliation for the U.S.'s withdrawal from the agreement and re-imposition of stringent sanctions, began enriching uranium and stockpiling it beyond JCPOA limits, the strategy of targeted assassinations seems to be back.

**A red flag in Israel**  
This strategy has assumed urgency with the election of Joe Biden in the U.S., who has expressed his desire to return to the JCPOA if Iran agrees to conform to its parameters. Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif declared that Iran is willing to comply with the agreement if Mr. Biden lifts sanctions. This has raised a red flag in Israeli government circles. Israel has been the most enthusiastic cheerleader for President Donald Trump's policy of putting "maximum pressure" on Tehran to force it to give up permanently its quest for nuclear enrichment, freeze its ballistic missile programme, and end its support to regional allies perceived as threatening American and Israeli interests.

The Benjamin Netanyahu government is apprehensive that Mr. Biden will imperil Israel's nuclear monopoly in West Asia. It is, therefore, working towards engineering a major confrontation between the U.S. and Iran, while Mr. Trump is still in office. Mr. Trump, because of his dislike for former President Barack Obama, may be willing to order air strikes on Iranian nuclear installations in order to pre-empt the U.S.'s return to the nuclear agreement that was the foremost achievement of Mr. Obama's foreign policy. This presumption is strengthened by reports that he was

contemplating an attack on the Natanz nuclear facility in early November but was dissuaded by his senior advisers from doing so.

The assassination of Fakhrizadeh appears to be part of a larger Israeli plan in conjunction with Saudi Arabia to force the U.S. into taking military action against Iran. Mr. Netanyahu's recent semi-clandestine trip to Saudi Arabia to meet with the Crown Prince along with the U.S. Secretary of State was aimed at cementing the anti-Iran front and putting pressure on the Trump administration to destroy Iran's nuclear installations. Riyadh considers Tehran to be its principal adversary and the primary threat to its leadership aspirations in West Asia. According to leaked U.S. diplomatic cables, the late Saudi King Abdullah exhorted Washington in 2008 to "cut off the head of the snake", a clear reference to Iran, by launching military strikes to destroy Tehran's nuclear installations. An Israeli-Saudi nexus on this issue when combined with President Trump's predilection for dramatic, even if irresponsible, actions could culminate in a major military strike on Iran before he leaves office.

**A win-win situation**  
Fakhrizadeh's assassination creates a win-win situation for Israel. If the Iranian government launches revenge attacks on Israeli targets or those of America's Arab allies, Mr. Netanyahu would be able to persuade the U.S. to attack Iran's nuclear facilities. If Iran shows restraint, Israel would have shown up the Iranian regime as weak while augmenting anti-American feelings in the country that would make it difficult for the Biden administration to resume negotiations with Tehran on reviving JCPOA. Either way, the fallout of the assassination, while benefiting Israel, will add to the instability in the region. Mr. Biden will have to decide if Israel has become an albatross around the U.S.'s neck forcing it to adopt policies and undertake actions that run counter to its larger interests in West Asia.

Mohammed Ayoob is University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations, Michigan State University

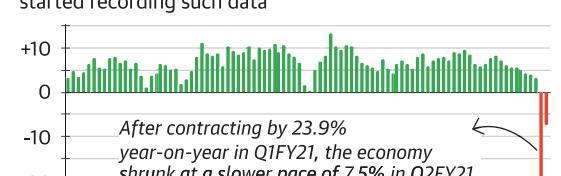


## DATA POINT

### Going into recession

has now entered a technical recession. After the massive contraction in the first quarter, the economy recovered a little in the second quarter due to pent-up demand following relaxation of lockdown rules and increased spending during the festive season. However, despite the multiple relief packages announced to tackle COVID-19, government expenditure shrunk in the second quarter. By Suman Sen and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**1. CONTRACTING AT A SLOWER PACE** | In the July-September (Q2FY2021) quarter, India's GDP contracted for the second time since 1996, the year when the country started recording such data

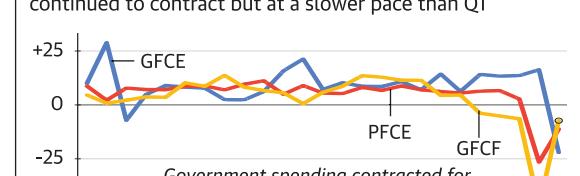


**2. NOT OUT OF THE WOODS** | Most sectors recorded a significant turnaround from the record levels of slump witnessed in the previous quarter, with the economy opening up. The recovery was substantial in the manufacturing, construction, trade, hotels, and transport sectors. However, contraction quickened in the financial, real estate, public administration, and defence sectors

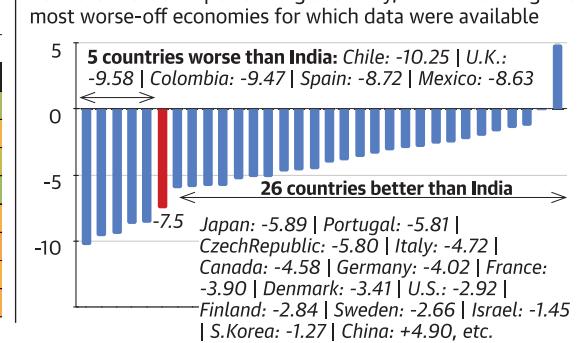
Industry	Q2FY20	Q1FY21	Q2FY21
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	+3.5	+3.4	+3.4
Mining and quarrying	-1.1	-23.3	-9.1
Manufacturing	-0.6	-39.3	+0.6
Utilities	+3.9	-7	+4.4
Construction	+2.6	-50.3	-8.6
Trade, hotels, transport, comm.	+4.1	-47	-15.6
Financial, real estate	+6	-5.3	-8.1
Public admin, defence	+10.9	-10.3	-12.2

Source: MOSPI, OECD

**3. GOVERNMENT SPENT LESS** | Growth in government spending (Govt. Final Consumption Expenditure, GFCE) decelerated to -22.1% in Q2. Both Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), which reflects consumption, and Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF), which reflects investments, continued to contract but at a slower pace than Q1



**4. AMONG THE WORST** | The Q1 contraction of 23.9% was the worst among many key economies. In Q2, while India is no more the worst-performing economy, it is still among the most worse-off economies for which data were available



Political leaders in Pakistan have been expressing concern over a recently discovered illegal import of large quantities of arms and ammunition into Pakistan. Mr. Mumtaz Daultana, President of the Council Muslim League said in a press statement that "it is indeed most intriguing to note that while officials claim to have recovered arms worth over Rs. two crores from Karachi and Rawalpindi, silence is being maintained about the source of this lethal merchandise." Pakistani newspapers have quoted Mr. Daultana as having said that "it is also very surprising that most of these arms bear the markings from countries like Russia and Czechoslovakia with which no private gunrunner can negotiate directly. The nation wants to know how these huge quantities of arms could come into the country and who are the people responsible for importing them in such large quantities." Mr. Daultana has further warned the people and the Government of Pakistan that unless stern measures were taken to recover all the arms, the total price of which is estimated at about Rs. 75 crores, the country could be plunged at any time into a devastating civil war.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOV. 30, 1920

Life of the Prophet

Under the auspices of the Tanjore Khilafat Panchayat Committee a public meeting was convened on the 24th instant at 6 P.M. in Mr. P.V. Kistnasami Baig's bungalow under the Presidency of Mr. Maulana Sahib, President, Khilafat Committee, Madura, to commemorate the birthday of Mahomed the Prophet. There was a fairly good attendance of Hindus and Mahomedans. Mr. V.V.S. Aiyer, Editor, Desabaktan, Madras, who was specially invited for the purpose delivered an interesting and highly educational lecture on the life of the Prophet and his teachings and their applicability to the present situation. He illustrated from the life of the Prophet how any man without riches, advantages of birth or high education or other prestiges, that counted much in society, could rise to an eminent position of universal usefulness by mere soulforce, purity of heart and nobility of purpose coupled with an unconquerable will and indomitable spirit that carried all obstacles before it.

## FROM PAGE ONE

**Farmers reject talks offer, say Burari is a jail**

"If you shift to the Burari grounds, then the very next day the Centre government will hold talks with you, with a high-level committee of Union Ministers at Vigyan Bhavan," said the letter.

The Punjab and Haryana farmers unions held an internal consultation on Sunday morning, and decided they would stay put at the Singhu and Tikri border crossing points. They vowed not to allow any political party on their protest stage, to defuse allegations of vested interests driving the campaign.

On his part, Mr. Shah said he was not attributing such motives to the agitation. "I never called the farmers' protest politically motivated, neither am I calling it now," he told news agency ANI in Hyderabad, where he

is campaigning for the municipal elections.

Leaders also expressed scepticism about the government's offer for talks, saying that two previous rounds of dialogue had shown that the government had nothing to offer, and there had been no concrete response to the specific concerns and demands that farmers had presented in writing.

"Instead of responding to the main demands of repealing of three black laws and the withdrawal of the Electricity Bill, 2020 the government is doing its best to move the debate to where the farmers should camp," said a statement from the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee, one of the alliances leading the protest.

**Reforms have brought new opportunities: PM**

He added, "These reforms have not only served to unshackle our farmers but also given them new rights and opportunities."

He cited the example of a farmer from Dhule in Maharashtra, Jitendra Bhojji, whose payments for his corn crop was kept pending by traders for four months. "The new farm laws passed in September came to his aid. Under this law, it was decided that all dues of the farmers should be cleared within three days of procurement, failing which, the farmer can lodge a complaint," Mr. Modi said.

The farmer was able to lodge a complaint and get his pending dues cleared within days, the Prime Minister said.

"Whichever the field, correct knowledge, free from misconceptions and rumours can act as a force multiplier for every individual," he said.

The Prime Minister cited the example of the CEO of a farmer producer organisation, Mohammad Aslam, from Baran in Rajasthan, who was spreading awareness among farmers about prices at markets through a WhatsApp group.

**Accused wanted 'medal' for 'top class' input**

Rana and Headley attended military high school together in Pakistan and were close friends. The Pakistani-Canadian citizen who was arrested in 2009 has challenged the extradition and filed a plea in the U.S. court on November 25, court records show. He was convicted for providing material support to the LeT in 2013.

Unlike Headley, Rana did not enter into a plea bargain with the U.S. and he was placed under "provisional arrest" after he walked out of prison in June as the jail term that was to end in September 2021 was commuted.

Headley, a prime accused, had entered into a plea bargain with the U.S. soon after his arrest in 2009 and he cannot be extradited to India due to the "double

jeopardy" clause which bars punishment for the same crime twice. Rana was acquitted by the jury at the Illinois court of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism in India.

On December 4, 2019, in accordance with the provisions of the Extradition Treaty between India and the U.S., the Embassy of India submitted a diplomatic note formally requesting Rana's extradition.

The federal prosecutors informed the U.S. court that "Rana cannot avail himself of the benefits afforded to Headley through Headley's negotiated plea" and "Rana's claim that the United States' decision not to extradite Headley, his co-conspirator, to India is inconsistent and bars his extradition also fails."

**First case filed under U.P. conversion ordinance**

"Despite repeated disapprovals by me and my family, he [the boy] is not listening, and is applying pressure on me and my family through abuses and death threats..." alleged Mr. Rathore.

Superintendent of Police (Rural) Bareilly Sansar Singh said a case under kidnapping the girl had been lodged against the boy earlier. "He was pressuring her to convert from her religion and marry," Mr. Singh said.

The accused is absconding and attempts were on to arrest him, said the officer.

**'Case resolved in 2019'** The woman's brother Kesarpal Rathore, however, said the case involving the accused had been resolved in 2019. His sister had also married another boy in May this year, he said.

Mr. Kesarpal said the family did not approach the police for the latest FIR, claiming that police came to their house and questioned them about the earlier case. The police then took his

father Mr. Rathore with them to the police station, Mr. Kesarpal told *The Hindu*. "Police came to our house. And said there was an old file lying [with them]. Police told me they are taking him [father] to the police station for questioning for some investigation," he said.

Mr. Kesarpal said his sister eloped with the boy in October 2019 but was located in three-four days with the help of police. The matter was closed in the Bareilly district court as the girl's family wanted to keep the matter under wraps, said Mr. Kesarpal and a police officer. "The case came to an end one year ago with the court decision," Mr. Kesarpal said, claiming that there was no contact between the boy and the girl after the settlement and her subsequent marriage.

Station Officer Deorania Daya Shankar, however, said the accused was constantly harassing and pressuring the girl and her family even after her marriage. Detailed deliberations have already been held in this regard with top naval officials by the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board and other departments concerned.

The Indian Navy had sought notification for a 97 km area as the limits of the

proposed Rambilli port to facilitate the establishment of the AOB on the 27-km stretch.

Official sources said the Visakhapatnam-based Eastern Naval Command (ENC) had requested the State government to notify the Rambilli port limits in 2016, and wide-ranging consultations had since been held with senior officials of the Navy, including its chief, recently.

The AOB is designed to support a fleet of eight to 12 nuclear-powered ballistic missile vessels and subma-

rines to be built for the Navy. The Navy plans to set up "submarine pens" (bunkers that help in hiding the submarines from spy satellites and protecting them from air attacks) in the AOB. The relevant files have been circulated among the State government departments.

The AOB is given top priority by the State government, along with the three ports mooted at Ramayapatanam, Machilipatnam and Bhavanapadu at an estimated cost of ₹10,000 crore.

In another significant development, officials are contemplating setting up ship recycling units.

**RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS**  
MACHILIPATNAM

Andhra Pradesh Transport Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) had a narrow escape when a person attacked him with a trowel at his house here on Sunday.

The Minister's followers and security guards immediately subdued the accused and handed him over to the police. The incident occurred when the Minister was participating in the 13th day ceremony of his mother Nageswaramma who passed away recently.

"I was interacting with relatives and locals over lunch. A person tried to touch my feet. Suddenly, he whopped out a sharp iron

tool and pounced on me. My security personnel came to my rescue," he said.

Superintendent of Police M. Ravindranath Babu told *The Hindu* that the accused was identified as B. Nageswara Rao, a mason. The police took him into custody and are trying to ascertain the motive. He was a TDP supporter, they said.

**Another provocative graffiti found in Mangaluru**

First message appeared on Friday; special team formed to trace accused

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MANGALURU

Mohammed the only punishment is beheading), was written in English.

**Case filed**

Soon after it was noticed, the police registered a case under the Karnataka Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act and erased it.

Police Commissioner V. Vikash Kumar said the message appears to have come up at the same time as had the earlier one. "It is a mischievous act. A search is on to find the perpetrators," he said.



**Worry lines:** The graffiti on an abandoned building on the district court premises in Mangaluru. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The earlier provocative message which said, "Do not force us to invite Laskhar-e-

Taliba and Taliban to deal with Sanghis and Marvedis # Laskhar Zindabad", was

found on the compound wall of the residential apartment in Bejai, a few metres from the Mangaluru east police station and the circuit house on Friday.

**CCTV footage inspected**  
The police have now registered a case for an offence that created enmity among communities under the Indian Penal Code and under the provisions of the Karnataka Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act. A special team has been formed to arrest the accused.

The identity of the informants will not be revealed, Mr. Vikash said and added that stringent action would be taken against those involved in the criminal act.

**CPI(M) takes serious view of KSFE raid**

'It undermines people's faith in govt.'

**G. ANAND**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The CPI(Marxist) has reportedly taken a serious view of the surprise raid by the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) on the government-run Kerala State Financial Enterprises (KSFE) offices in the State.

With more than 33 lakh customers and 600 branches, KSFE, a non-banking financial company, had a direct bearing on the lives of the people. The CPI (M) felt the attack on its trustworthiness was akin to undermining the people's faith in the government in the election year.

The inspections had caught the administration off guard and embarrassed the ruling front. The State's anti-corruption watchdog had acted as if it were at odds with the administration. The agency appeared to have played into the Opposition's "fake narrative" about entrenched corruption in State-run entities, the CPI(M) felt.

The VACB's action had to some measure undermined the party's position that the

Central law enforcement agencies had attempted to unsettle the government politically by seeking to unleash predatory investigations into Life Mission, KI-IFB, K-Fon and e-mobility projects.

The raid had added another complexity to the CPI(M)'s political messaging as it struggled to outpace other high-octane scandals that have dogged the government since the gold smuggling case broke in July.

The CPI(M) believed that the VACB had, perhaps inadvertently, promoted the cause of private chit fund firms by targeting the KSFE.

It wanted the government to examine the circumstance that necessitated the anti-corruption raid and whether credible intelligence justified the action.

The CPI(M) was equally upset that the agency had 'leaked' the news of the raid to the media without reporting the findings to the government. The party also noted that private chit firms were major advertisers who had considerable media influence.

**Hyderabad will get BJP Mayor: Shah**

We will end Nizam culture and also remove encroachments that caused floods'

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD



**New terrain:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah going to the Bhagyalakshmi temple, abutting the Charminar, in the old city of Hyderabad on Sunday. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

said. If the people gave the BJP a chance this poll, the first task would be to "remove all the encroachments" on the stormwater drains and lake beds which had caused the recent floods, he said. The Minister charged the TRS-Majlis alliance with allowing them to come up due to "appeasement" politics.

"We assure good governance in improving the civic infrastructure to make Hyderabad truly a global city and an international IT hub where youth from across the

country will get employment opportunities," he said.

Refuting the charge of Centre not releasing funds for flood relief, he claimed ₹500 crore had been released but KCR was not aware since "he does not go to the Secretariat."

The Home Minister questioned KCR on the "forgotten promises" made in the last elections like roads, water, drains and healthcare.

Earlier, Mr. Shah arrived by a special plane from New Delhi to the Begumpet airport. Party activists gave him

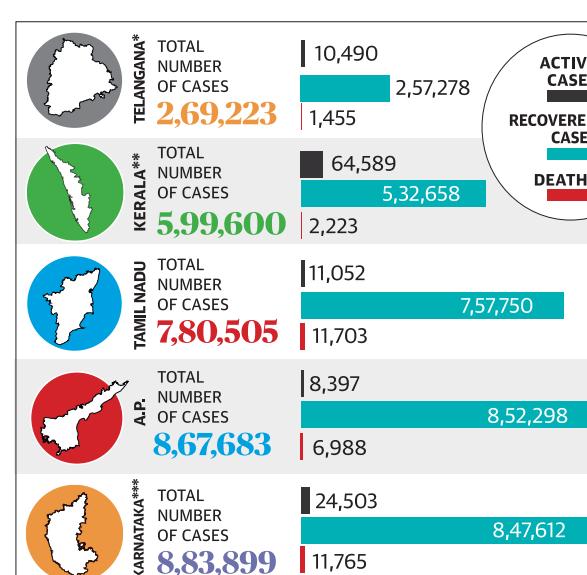
a rousing reception lining up all along the road till his motorcade reached the Bhagyalakshmi Temple at Charminar where he held prayers.

Mr. Shah then moved to Warasiguda where he participated in the road show on the last day of the campaigning for the capital's local body elections, which got national attention with the BJP getting top leaders from across the country to take part in the electioneering.

The polls are scheduled for December 1. Votes will be counted on December 4.

**Andhra Pradesh claims 1.13% positivity rate**

At 11.34%, Kerala's is much higher than other southern States; tests in Karnataka show a rate of 1.22%



**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala was on the threshold of six lakh COVID-19 cases on Sunday, with the State reporting 5,643 new cases from 49,775 samples.

The test positivity rate continued in the 9-11% range, rising to 11.34% on Sunday.

The COVID-19 toll rose to 2,223 with another 27 deaths added to the list. Thrissur accounted for six deaths, Kotyayam five, Alappuzha and Ernakulam, four each, Malappuram three, Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram two each and Wayanad, one.

The number of healthcare workers who contracted the infection was 34.

COVID-19 cases in Telan-

gala were on a decline, official data said. Four more COVID-19 patients died. Cases and tests dropped from November 20.

Campaigning for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections could raise coronavirus spread, it was feared.

The new cases included 131 from Greater Hyderabad, 82 from Medchal-Malkajgiri and 58 from Rangareddy.

Andhra Pradesh reported 620 new infections and seven deaths on Sunday.

The positivity rate of 54,710 samples tested in 24

hours was 1.13%, the lowest in six months.

Krishna and Visakhapatnam districts reported two new deaths each, while Guntur, Chittoor and West Godavari reported one each.

Karnataka on Sunday reported 1,291 new cases. Fifteen people succumbed to the virus. The Health department said the positivity rate was 1.22%. Bengaluru Urban reported 686 new cases and 10 deaths.

Another 1,459 persons tested positive in Tamil Nadu. Nine persons, including four in Chennai, died in the State.

"It was because of politics, not family matters. The inquiry should reveal what the politics is," Mr. Shivakumar told the media.

**Quit if Kurubas don't get ST, seer tells MLAs**

**BELAGAVI**  
Niranjanandapuri Swami of the Kaginele Mutt called upon all legislators from the Kuruba community to resign if the State and Union governments fail to accord Scheduled Tribe status to the community. He was speaking at a rally organised by Kuruba organisations in Bagalkot on Sunday. He said the community would hold a large rally in Bengaluru and submit a memorandum to the government on February 7.

**Girl killed in tiger attack in Telangana**

**HYDERABAD**  
Telangana's Kumram Bheem Asifabad district recorded its second death in tiger attack in less than 20 days, when a 15-year-old girl was fatally attacked by the big cat on Sunday in Penchikalpet area of the Bejjur forest block. Pasula Nirmala from Manneguda hamlet was picking cotton when the incident happened. On November 11, a youth, Sidam Vignesh, from Digida village died in tiger attack in a forest abutting Dahegaon mandal.</

# Congress flays Shah's south trip

Home Minister can travel to Hyderabad, but can't meet farmers, says party

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

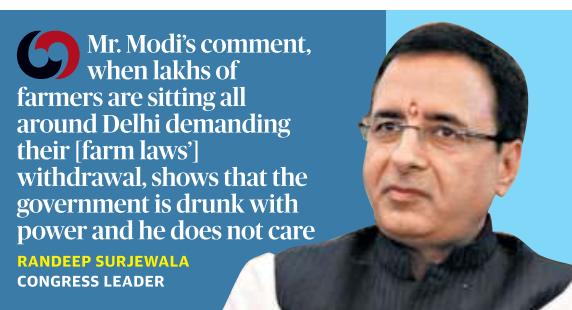
Taking a potshot at Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Congress said on Sunday that he could travel 1,200 km from Delhi to Hyderabad to campaign for the municipal polls but could not travel 15 km to the Delhi border to meet protesting farmers.

The party also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of being obdurate in the face of protests from lakhs of farmers.

In Sunday's episode of *Mann ki Baat*, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the three agricultural laws.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi asked how a fair dialogue was possible with a government which has a pre-decided stance of supporting the three laws.

"The promise was to double the income of the farmers – the Modi government



Mr. Modi's comment, when lakhs of farmers are sitting all around Delhi demanding their [farm laws] withdrawal, shows that the government is drunk with power and he does not care  
RANDEEP SURJEWALA  
CONGRESS LEADER

did increase the income but that of Adani-Ambani!"

The Congress demanded an apology from Mr. Modi and the immediate withdrawal of the farm laws.

#### 'PM's obduracy'

"Prime Minister's obduracy, Prime Minister's arrogance, Prime Minister's rigidity in dealing with 62 crore farmers and farm labourers of India is writ large by his insistence today in *Mann ki Baat* that the three anti-farmer, anti-agriculture laws forcibly

passed in an illegal and unconstitutional fashion by Parliament are correct," said party spokesperson Randeep Surjewala.

Mr. Modi's comment, when lakhs of farmers are sitting all around Delhi demanding their withdrawal, shows that the government is drunk on power and the Prime Minister does not care, Mr. Surjewala said.

"If the Home Minister of India has time to travel 1,200 km to address a public meeting in Hyderabad, why does

Shri Amit Shah not have the time to go 15 km to the border of Delhi and speak to the agitating farmers? Why is it that the Agriculture Minister has taken out a date of December 3 before which no conversation can be held? Have they consulted an astrologer? What is the sanctity of it?" he asked.

#### '12,000 FIRs'

He also pointed out that the BJP-led Manohar Lal government in Haryana had lodged 12,000 FIRs, equating farmers with terrorists. These criminal charges should be withdrawn at the earliest, he said.

The party has alleged that the three laws rob the farmers of the protection provided by the Minimum Support Price mechanism. Mr. Surjewala said, "If the Agricultural Produce Market Committees are shut, who will buy the produce at MSP?"

## CMs of Punjab, Haryana spar over protests

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

After Haryana Chief Minister (CM) Manohar Lal on Sunday said that the Punjab government will be fully responsible if there is a catastrophic situation with respect to COVID-19 in Haryana, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh hit back saying Mr. Lal should have allowed them to move quickly through to reach Delhi instead of stopping them in his State.

Mr. Manohar Lal said precautionary measures were taken by his government to ensure that the pandemic does not take catastrophic proportions.

**'Irresponsible move'**  
"In view of the pandemic, everyone should fulfil their responsibility. But it is surprising that at such a time, the Punjab government has exhibited irresponsible behaviour and created such a situation," Mr. Lal told mediapersons in Hisar.

On Mr. Lal's remark that farmers should not block Haryana's borders, Captain Amarinder pointed out that it was Haryana government that had been blocking the borders for the past three days by forcibly stopping the farmers from proceeding.

## In Colombo, Ajit Doval meets Sampanthan

Development of north and east discussed, says TNA leader

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
COLOMBO



Ajit Doval

nister Narendra Modi highlighted India's concerns about the rights of the Tamil minorities, in a virtual summit with his Sri Lankan counterpart.

A joint statement issued by New Delhi and Colombo at that time had said: "Prime Minister Modi called on the Government of Sri Lanka to address the aspirations of the Tamil people for equality, justice, peace and respect within a united Sri Lanka, including by carrying forward the process of reconciliation with the implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution."

#### New Constitution

The Rajapaksa administration has promised to draft a new Constitution, but some prominent members in the government openly oppose the Amendment and the provincial council system consequent on the Indo-Lanka Accord that was signed in 1987.

The TNA has urged the government to build on the considerable drafting work done during the former government's time in a process that involved all political parties, including Mr. Rajapaksa.

However, the meeting with Mr. Sampanthan, whose Tamil National Alliance has ten MPs in the 225-member legislature, assumes significance, coming two months after Prime Mi-

## India rejects OIC reference to Kashmir

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday 'strongly' rejected the criticism of its Kashmir policy by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Ministry of External Affairs hinted at Pakistan and said the OIC is being used by the country for its campaign against India. "We strongly and categorically reject the factually incorrect, gratuitous and unwarranted references to India in resolutions adopted by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the 47th CFM Session in Niamey, Republic of Niger, held on 27-28 November 2020," it said.

The report of the OIC Secretary General on its activities submitted to the 47th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers referred to the situation in J&K and said, "The decision of the Indian government on 5 August 2019, towards changing the demographic and geographic composition of the territory, and the continuous blockade and restrictions together with human rights abuses, had awakened renewed efforts of the international community towards a resolution of the conflict."

## Centre murdering democracy in J&K'

Why the 9 lakh troops, asks Mehbooba

PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR



Mehbooba Mufti

tigation Agency (NIA)," she alleged. She claimed that opponent voices were being dubbed as "anti-national" and booked under UAPA" by the BJP regime. "There seems to be no place for real democracy in BJP's India," she said.

"Muslims are being dubbed as Pakistanis, Sikhs as Khalistanis, students as anti-national, women protesters as anti-national. I want to ask BJP that if everyone is anti-national, who is Hindu-dustani then? BJP only?" she said.

Ms. Mufti said she stood for "dialogue, reconciliation and democracy".

"Despite being detained for 14 months, Parra decided to contest the polls for keeping the democracy alive. The next day he got a call from the National Investi-

## BJP releases manifesto in Urdu for J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

In a bid to reach out to the Urdu-speaking population in Kashmir valley, the BJP released its Urdu version of the manifesto on Sunday to garner votes in the District Development Council (DDC) polls. The party hopes to win a majority of seats from both Kashmir and Jammu divisions in the ongoing elections.

"The BJP will get the majority of seats not only in Jammu but Kashmir as well. The DDC polls are for development and prosperity. Those who have picked up the arms must shun the path and pick a pen that carries more power," said BJP national spokesperson, Shahnaaz Hussain, during a public rally. He said regional parties were scared of the BJP and had to form an alliance "because they feared the imminent loss".

Mr. Hussain said the BJP will rule the country for the next 50 years and "time has come to take J&K on the path of development".

The manifesto said J&K has been finally brought on the path of development after the revocation of Article 370.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
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## Under white cover

## Mind over matter: India's mental health policy

Months of battling a worldwide pandemic have shone a spotlight on the importance of mental health and India's approach towards an often-neglected healthcare issue.

To a child battling nerve-wracking competition, an investment banker hustling for over 100 hours a week, a woman subjected to domestic violence, and a senior citizen dealing with loneliness, mental health is as real as anything that causes the human body to bleed. However, it takes a pandemic to build a conversation around mental health in an Indian household.

For the uninitiated, mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It incorporates a wide range of issues, from clinically diagnosed mental disorders to substance abuse and addiction.

Globally, around 8,00,000 persons die by suicide each year (1 death every 40 seconds), while over 264 million people of all ages suffer from depression. According to the WHO, at least 57 million people in India are depressed – the highest in the world.

#### Issues

It has been observed that mental health issues are more prevalent in urban areas with specific disorders like schizophrenia and other psychoses, mood disorders, and neurotic or stress-related disorders being

nearly three times more prevalent in urban metros. Nearly 50% of persons with major depressive disorders reported difficulties in carrying out their daily activities. It has been estimated that by 2030, the mental health crisis is going to cost India a trillion dollars in lost productivity.

Despite these staggering numbers, there are glaring gaps in the preventive and curative care of these mental disorders. For instance, the mental health workforce amounts to less than 4,000 psychiatrists in the country.

Lack of funds is another deterrent. While the total healthcare budget increased by 7% in 2020, there was no corresponding increase in budget for the National Mental Health Programme; the allocated amount is only 0.05% of the total healthcare budget. The actual current spending to implement provisions of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 is a very small fraction of the conservative estimate of ₹94,073 crores.

#### Mental Healthcare Act, 2017

The Act ensures healthcare for people suffering from mental illness through health services funded by the Government. It decriminalises suicide, disallows sterilisation and

#### Innovative Recommendations

- A national plan for mental health literacy should be envisaged.
- Mental health should be integrated with the National Urban Health Mission and other programmes to deal with the high prevalence of mental health issues in urban areas.
- An incentive-based approach should be utilised to encourage interest in the field of psychiatry and psychology and to solve the shortage of medical professionals in the field.
- While Ayushman Bharat allows for insurance for medical treatment of the mentally unwell, financial protection in the form of allowances should be initiated.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) should be encouraged in the field of mental health.



Atish Mathur  
Top Unacademy Educator

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## CRPF officer killed, seven injured in IED blast

Ties have worsened ahead of BTC poll

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The upcoming Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) election in Assam has driven the wedge between the BJP and the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) deeper. The two parties are contesting the election to the 40-seat tribal council scheduled in two phases in December.

"Our Ministers can walk out of the alliance but we are waiting for the BJP to take the step so that all regional parties know how the BJP uses and throws out the smaller parties according to its convenience," said BPF general secretary Prabin Boru. He also said the BJP would not be able to weaken the BPF despite taking away two of its senior leaders – former Raja Sabha member Biswajit Daimary and MLA Emmanuel Mushahary.

governments are Pramila Rani Brahma, Chandan Brahma and Rhon Daimary. The

BJP's other regional ally, the Asom Gana Parishad, also has three Ministers.

"The leaders of the BPF have been challenging the BJP to drop its three Ministers in the Cabinet, besides slamming Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for trying to endanger the future of the Bodo tribal people in their own domain. The three BPF Ministers in the Sarbananda Sonowal go-

Police, Bastar. An IED went off at 8.30 p.m. near the Arabraj Metta hills under the Chintagufa police station limits of the district while an anti-Maoist operation was under way.

#### Airlifted to Raipur

The incident occurred 9 km northwest of the police station and 6 km west of the Burkpal base camp, the police said. Eight personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) 206 COBRA were injured in the blast, and were evacuated to the Chintalnar field hospital. Later, they were airlifted to Raipur, where the Assistant Commandant died at 3.30 a.m. on Sunday.

**Winter magic:** A view of Kibber village, presently inaccessible due to heavy snowfall, in Lahaul-Spiti district on Sunday. ■ PTI

## Abhishek slams BJP over 'bhaipo' jibe

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

Under relentless attack from the Opposition, particularly the BJP, Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee on Sunday broke his silence and said that no BJP leader, including Prime Minister Na-

rendra Modi, had the guts to take his name, and kept referring to him as "bhaipo" (nephew). BJP leaders have been making incessant attacks on Mr. Banerjee's nephew, referring to him as "bhaipo". They cannot take my

name and say Abhishek Banerjee. Neither the PM nor any BJP leader has the guts to take my name," Mr. Banerjee said.

The MP said he had initiated legal action against leaders like Mukul Roy, who had made direct allegations

against him. "I am taking the name and saying that Kailash Vijayvargiya is an outsider. Dilip Ghosh is a goon and a mafia. Amit Shah is an outsider," he said, daring the BJP leadership to take legal action against him.

## PM to interact with vaccine developers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to have virtual interactions with three teams that are developing vaccines for COVID-19 on Monday, a tweet by the Prime Minister's Office said on Sunday.

"Tomorrow, on 30th November 2020, PM @narendramodi will interact, via video conferencing, with three teams that are involved in developing a COVID-19 vaccine. The teams he will interact with are from Gennova Biopharma, Biological E and Dr. Reddy's," a tweet from the PMO's official Twitter handle said.

On Saturday, the Prime Minister visited the facility of the Serum Institute of India in Pune as part of efforts to get a first-hand perspective of the efforts towards readying a vaccine against COVID-19.

He also visited Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad and Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad.

## Sharma hails PM's visit to vaccine facilities

'It will lift morale of frontline warriors'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

In a departure from the Congress's sustained campaign against the BJP government's handling of the pandemic, senior Congress leader Anand Sharma hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to three facilities that are developing COVID-19 vaccines.

"Prime minister Shri Narendra Modi visit to Serum Institute, Bharat Biotech and Zydus Cadila was a recognition of Indian scientists and their work to produce the vaccine for COVID-19. That alone will lift morale of frontline warriors and reassure the nation," Mr. Sharma tweeted.

Mr. Sharma heads the Parliamentary Panel on Home Affairs, which is studying the government's response to the pandemic.

He is one of the key signatories of the 'G-23' letter

## SII calls allegation 'malicious'

Firm says volunteer is falsely blaming vaccine trial for his medical problems

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PUNE



The Serum Institute of India has said it would seek damages.

After a 'Covishield' vaccine volunteer sued the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII) and the Oxford Group over 'adverse reaction' during the vaccine trial, the SII on Sunday denied the allegations and dubbed them "malicious" and "misconceived".

The SII said it would seek damages in excess of ₹100 crore and would defend such malicious claims.

"The allegations in the notice are malicious and misconceived. While the Serum Institute of India is sympathetic with the volunteer's medical condition, there is absolutely no correlation with the vaccine trial and the medical condition of the volunteer. The volunteer is falsely laying the blame for his medical problems on the COVID vaccine trial," the SII said in a statement.

It said that the volunteer's claim was "malicious" as he had been specifically informed by the medical team that the complications that

he suffered were independent of the vaccine trial he participated in. "In spite of specifically being made aware of the same, he still chose to go public and malign the reputation of the company. It is evident that the intention behind the spreading of such malicious information is an oblique pecuniary motive," the statement added.

The 40-year-old man, who had taken part in the vaccine trial, said he suffered serious side effects, including a virtual neurological breakdown and

impairment of cognitive functions.

He sought compensation to the tune of ₹5 crore in a legal notice to the SII, AstraZeneca and the Oxford Vaccine Group, besides seeking a halt to the trial.

Alleging that the candidate vaccine was not safe, he has also sought cancelling approval for the testing, manufacture and distribution of the vaccine.

### 'DCGI is probing case'

The Drugs Controller General of India and the institutional ethics committee at the implementation site are investigating if the alleged adverse event is related to the shot administered to him.

Samiran Panda, who heads the Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases division of the Indian Council of Medical Research, said the causal link, if any, of the serious adverse events with the investigational product is objectively assessed in any clinical trial following a pre-defined scientific pathway

and within a stipulated period.

"Any hurried inquiry or inference is prone to be wrong. Both the institutional ethics committee and the DCGI are investigating the causal links, if any, between the adverse events and investigational product, which is an anti-coronavirus vaccine," Dr. Panda said.

### Legal notice

The notice given on November 21 by a law firm on behalf of the volunteer said, "Our client states that he must be compensated, in the least, for all the sufferings that he and his family have undergone and are likely to undergo in future."

"He further states that he is still far from being all right and has to be under medical care for a long time to come. Therefore, for all the trauma he is undergoing and with an uncertain future in his health, he should be given a financial compensation of ₹5 crores within two weeks from the receipt of this notice," it said.

(With PTI inputs)

## India records 41,810 fresh COVID-19 cases, 496 fatalities

Eight States contributed more than 70% of new cases: govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI



**Fight continues:** A health worker taking the nasal swab of a passenger at a railway station in Mumbai ■ AP

The Ministry said 70.97% of the fatalities reported in the past 24 hours came from eight States/UTs – Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Haryana, Punjab, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Delhi reported 89 fatalities, followed by Maharashtra (88) and West Bengal (52).

Twenty two States/UTs have recorded case fatality rates less than the national average of 1.46 %, the Ministry said.

Maharashtra recorded the maximum positive change with addition of 1,940 cases whereas Delhi recorded the maximum negative change with a decrease of 1,603 active cases," it said.

arashtra (5,965) and Delhi (4,998).

Delhi also reported the highest number of single-day recoveries, with 6,512 newly discharged cases, while 5,275 people recovered in Kerala followed by 3,937 in Maharashtra.

## No need for conversions: Uma Bharti

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BHOPAL

Senior BJP leader Uma Bharti said there is no need for religious conversions in the country, when asked about the proposed law to criminalise forcible religious conversions in Madhya Pradesh.

Speaking with reporters in Maihar, Ms. Bharti said, "There is no need for religious conversions in India because here Hindus are free to read the Quran or the Bible and visit mosques or churches."

She made the remark in reference to the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill, 2020.

The statement is being viewed as her opposition to the proposed law, with the Congress welcoming it.

"The identity of indomitable courage in politics Uma Bharti has yet again uttered the truth," said Congress leader K.K. Mishra.

## Aashiqui star Rahul Roy hospitalised

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI

Actor Rahul Roy, best known for starring in the 1990 musical blockbuster *Aashiqui*, has suffered a brain stroke and is recuperating at a hospital here, a family source said.

The 52-year-old actor, who was recently shooting in Kargil, was admitted to the intensive care unit of Nanavati Hospital two days ago due to a progressive brain stroke, the source said. "He is safe and recovering well."

Roy won the first season of the popular TV reality show *Bigg Boss* in 2006.

## NIA says it did not seize Stan Swamy's sipper

Agency dismisses reports as 'false, incorrect and mischievous'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Sunday said it has not seized human rights activist Father Stan Swamy's straw and sipper, and dismissed the reports as "false, incorrect and mischievous".

The 83-year-old priest, who suffers from Parkinson's disease, was arrested from his residence in Ranchi on October 8 for his alleged involvement in the 2017 Bhima Koregaon case.



Stan Swamy

at Taloja Jail in Mumbai.

A spokesperson said Mr. Swamy was a "hard-core activist of the banned CPI (Maoist)" and was charged with October 9, along with seven other accused, for his involvement in the Bhima Koregaon case. "After arresting accused

Stan Swamy, the NIA produced him before the Special Court in Mumbai along with a chargesheet on October 9 and never took his police custody. All the necessary legal formalities such as his medical examination etc. were duly observed. Since then, accused Stan Swamy has been in judicial custody at Taloja Central Jail. Nearly after a month, i.e. on November 6, accused Stan Swamy filed an application in the Hon'ble NIA Court at Mumbai for getting back his straw and sipper, (which he falsely claimed to have been kept by NIA). The Hon'ble Court asked the Agency to file its reply on next date, which was scheduled on November 26. NIA duly filed its reply in

the court on the scheduled date stating therein that NIA had conducted his personal search in presence of independent witnesses and no such straw and sipper were found," the NIA said in a statement.

### 'Court rejected plea'

The NIA said the court rejected Mr. Swamy's plea and issued necessary direction to the jail authorities to provide him with a straw and sipper.

"As the accused was in judicial custody, the matter was between him and the jail authorities which come under the Maharashtra State Administration. The reports claiming that NIA recovered straw and sipper from accused Stan Swamy and

sought 20 days' time from the court to respond to Stan Swamy's plea to allow him a straw and sipper in Taloja Central Jail, are false, incorrect and mischievous as NIA neither recovered any straw and sipper from the accused nor sought 20 days time to file reply in said application," the NIA said.

It further added that the accused was propagating among other cadre that the arrest of the urban CPI (Maoist) cadre from different parts of country, particularly in Maharashtra, had caused a huge irrevocable damage to the CPI (Maoist). The NIA alleged that he received funds from other Maoist cadre for furtherance of the activities of the CPI (Maoist).

The first semi-finals to be webcast will be the Chennai round. The participating teams are MOP Vaishnav, DoMS of IIT Madras, XIME, and Great Lakes Institute of Management. On December 2, two teams of IIM Trichy, BIMS and Bannariamman Institute of Technology will participate in the Coimbatore semi-finals. On December 3, three teams of IIM Kozhikode and CUSAT will participate in the Kochi semi-finals.

The webcast of the Boardroom challenge, where the shortlisted teams will present their strategies, will go on from 10.30 a.m. to noon.

Persons interested can either scan the QR code given or go to <https://bit.ly/3q61NF4>

Two teams of IIMB, IBS Bangalore and CMRIT will participate in the Bengaluru semi-finals on December 4.

Teams from Institute of Public Enterprise and three teams of ISB will participate in the Hyderabad semi-finals on December 5. At the Delhi semi-finals on December 7, two teams from IIM Kashipur will participate and on December 8, two teams each from IIMA and SPJIMR will participate in the Mumbai semi-finals.

On December 9, two teams from IIM Ranchi, XLRI and IIM Shillong will participate in the Kolkata semi-

## BLoC Boardroom Challenge semi-finals begin tomorrow

Event across 9 cities will be webcast

STAFF REPORTER  
CHENNAI

The nine-city semi-finals of the BLoC Boardroom Challenge will kick off online on December 1.

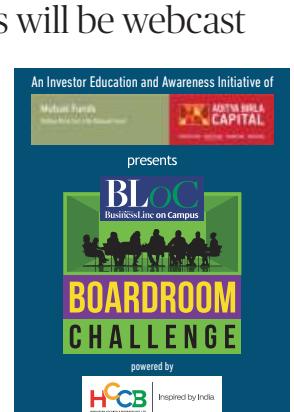
It is a one-of-a-kind competition for MBA students and B-scholars where teams will don the hat of a CXO and work together to solve a boardroom-level business problem.

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The fourth edition of the BLoC Boardroom Challenge is presented by Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC and powered by Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages. The associate sponsors are Punjab National Bank and Casagrand. The knowledge partners are BrandVectors and Potential Genesis.



mid-finals and three teams from SIBM & IIM Nagpur will participate in the Pune semi-finals on December 10.

The webcast of the Boardroom challenge, where the shortlisted teams will present their strategies, will go on from 10.30 a.m. to noon.

Persons interested can either scan the QR code given or go to <https://bit.ly/3q61NF4>

The fifth edition of the BLoC Boardroom Challenge is presented by Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC and powered by Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages. The associate sponsors are Punjab National Bank and Casagrand. The knowledge partners are BrandVectors and Potential Genesis.



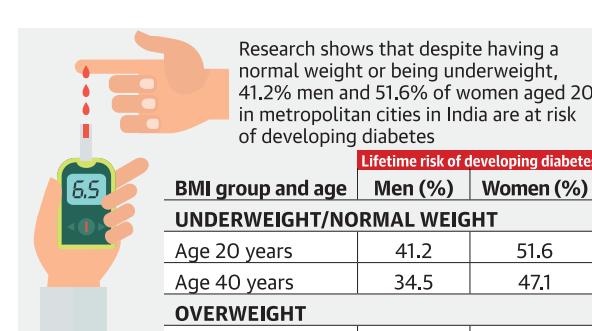
## Lifetime risk of diabetes in metros alarming: study

55% of men and 65% of women aged 20 are likely to develop the disease, it says

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN  
NEW DELHI

Disturbing new research published in *Diabetologia* (journal of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes) shows that more than half of men (55%) and some two-thirds (65%) of women aged 20 years in India will likely develop diabetes, with most of those cases (around 95%) likely to be type 2 diabetes.

The research, titled 'Lifetime risk of diabetes in metropolitan cities in India', was done by a team of authors in India, the U.K. and the



dia are much closer to estimates of lifetime risk of 20-year-olds among the black and Hispanic populations in the U.S. (above 50%), groups

considered at a higher risk than the general population. The researchers noted that urbanisation, decreasing diet quality and decreased levels of physical activity are all contributing to this hidden epidemic.

Women generally had a higher lifetime risk across the lifespan. "Remaining lifetime risk of developing diabetes declined with age, not

ed the authors. They estimated that for those currently aged 60 years and free of diabetes, around 38% of women and 28% of men would develop diabetes. Obesity had a substantial impact on these projections."

The paper said the risk was highest among obese metropolitan Indians – 86% among 20-year-old women and 87% among men.

Professor Viswanathan Mohan of the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation in Chennai and co-author of the paper said: "Despite these very high predicted lifetime risks of diabetes, it is possible to prevent or postpone diabetes by effective lifestyle modification."

On December 9, two teams from IIM Ranchi, XLRI and IIM Shillong will participate in the Kolkata se-

As we commemorate World AIDS Day tomorrow, we explore why the chatter around HIV has diminished since the 1990s

# Do you remember the red ribbon?

SOMA BASU

Last Tuesday marked the 29th death anniversary of popular British singer Freddie Mercury, who was diagnosed with HIV in 1987 and died of bronchial pneumonia from AIDS at the age of 45. He had kept his ailment private until 24 hours before he passed away on November 24, 1991. Two years later, 49-year-old tennis champion Arthur Ashe died of complications from AIDS on February 6, 1993, following a blood transfusion.

As the dreaded disease went on a high spin claiming many more celebrity (and ordinary people's) lives, we kept their memories alive to remind ourselves of how the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) enters the body, causes AIDS, impacts lives, and what we could do to protect ourselves

#### On the trodden path

In the last decade though, AIDS stopped making headlines as the health crisis it once was. The main reason for the drop in conversation is that the numbers have drastically reduced from an annual three million new cases during peak years (1992 to 2005) to 80,000-plus every year now, says J V R Prasada Rao, former Union Health Secretary, who was at the helm of India's AIDS control programme between 1997 and 2017, and authored *Celebrating Small Victories: My Journey Through Two Decades of AIDS Response*.

"HIV infection is no longer a major inhibitor of quality of life. Like asthma and diabetes, it is now understood as a lifestyle management disease," he says. He reminds us that the disease has not been eliminated nor has it found a cure through vaccine yet. But an integrated control strategy and new effective treatments with drugs have helped those who are HIV positive live an unencum-

bered life for as long as they perhaps would have without the virus.

Anandi Yuvaraj, Coimbatore-based AIDS activist concurs that aggressive prevention campaigns and improved access to scientifically-driven tests and treatment drastically reduced the HIV/AIDS infection rate in the last decade. Though trapped in stigma, AIDS saw community participation and activism and that helped to plug the mother-to-child route of transmission of HIV infection. "The ante-natal treatment protocol has evolved. Every pregnant woman mandatorily undergoes the Rapid Test and irrespective of the level of CD4 count (that checks the immunity strength in those with HIV-infection) is put on treatment," she says.

Earlier only those with higher CD4 count got priority to get the drugs while others had to wait to buy them. Now the drugs in various effective combinations are provided free to all in the Government run Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) clinics. "Also, the upgrading of blood banks, testing and quality of voluntary blood donors (following the ban on sale of blood) has ended the transmission of HIV infection through blood transfusions," adds Anandi.

#### Conversation continues

"It is imperative that we keep talking about AIDS so that everybody knows how one can and cannot be infected. Otherwise, the distance we have covered in the fight against HIV will be lost," says Rao. "Though the new infection rate is down by 65 to 75%, we have to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals set at 95% by 2030. This means we should bring down new cases to 5,000 a year if we are looking at eliminating AIDS as a public threat."

Where we need special help is the most vulnerable communities affected. "Up to 98% of new HIV infections today

#### THE NUMBERS SPEAK

Total number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) estimated at 23.49 lakhs.

87,500 new HIV infection cases in 2017.

National HIV prevalence rate is estimated at 0.22 per cent.

High prevalence States Mizoram (2.04), Manipur (1.43 per cent) and Nagaland (1.15 per cent)

Maharashtra has the highest number of PLHIV at 3.69 lakhs

69,000 AIDS-related deaths reported in 2017 (decline by 71 per cent since 2005).

Dedicated hospitals and special wards for treatment of HIV/AIDS patients have been closed. There are 570 ART centers and 1,265 linked ART centers run by National AIDS Control Programme.

Source: India HIV Estimation report of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and NACO



• GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

occurs in the sex workers, MSM (men who have sex with men), and IDUs (Injecting Drug Users)," says Yashwinder Singh, Director (Policies) of Humsafar Trust, the quarter-century-old Mumbai-based advocacy group that counsels members of LGBT community.

But the government's focus has now shifted from prevention to only treatment with the withdrawal of global and bilateral funds. With the decline in prevalence rate, the Information Education Campaigns suffered a setback and conversations around AIDS diminished.

Unlike Gen X who was fed on awareness campaigns on use of condoms (remember actor Shabana Azmi appearing in ads going around AIDS wards shaking hands and hugging people to convey that the infection is not acquired through touch but through unprotected sex), generations after have not had these conversations. This means a whole new generation (born after 2004) runs the risk of being raised on internet knowledge, downloading dating apps and hook-ups. "We need to discuss safe sex with adolescents and provide them with the right knowledge inputs," says Singh.

He wonders why condom ads are always about a man and a woman but never show two men. "Our school curriculums oppose sex education without realising how education and awareness play a crucial preventive role," he says. Since HIV infection is now mainly caused by engagement in high risk behaviours, Singh says tapping the online medium, flagging messages, rapport building, and scaling up testing is the new challenge. "Evidence for the social determinants of HIV transmission is available but effort to target the social inequalities is limited," he says.

#### Stigma busting

Dr Monica Goel, consultant physician at Mumbai's Hinduja Hospital talks of a woman she has been treating for HIV over the last eight years. The woman leaves her medical files with the doctor. "She does not keep any prescription or medical report related to her ailment at home for the fear of being caught and shamed. She has asked me not to mention her disease when she comes with a family member for her follow-up treatment," says Dr Goel.

It is the advance treatment that allows the woman to live normally in the comfort of her family and home. "She is aware of her status and no longer feels she is suffering from a life-threatening disease or is a threat to anybody else," says Dr Goel. It is now proved that low viral load and effective treatment that suppresses the virus makes the disease non-transmissible. "More testing, early detection, effective treatment and protection will remain the mainstay to end HIV-infection. We only need to replace shame and stigma with frank conversations," she adds.

#### HOW TO...

# Save YourSeLF

SUNALINI MATHEW

these are against the law and are punishable offences. Her approach in this situation is somewhere between going on the offensive and being defensive. It's a good idea to confront the perpetrator in a crowded area, where you are likely to get support. "Don't be quiet; it can get worse if you don't react. Also, if more and more women stop and question the man, he may think twice before doing anything the next time." So when you speak up, you're talking for all who are vulnerable, and are trying to prevent future attacks.

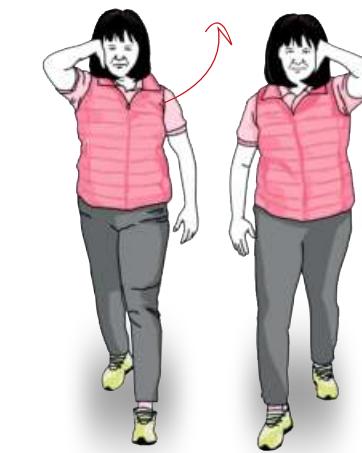
The biggest hurdles to the safety of women and others who are vulnerable, is the way boys and girls are brought up, says Aparna Rajawat, who runs the Pink Belt Mission training programmes that help women develop a sense of self and learn self-defence techniques. Since her organisation addresses men too, she talks about the importance of understanding where the bullying behaviour stems from. In her experience, this passive violence is a learnt form of suppression that begins early in life, with girls being discriminated at home, and boys being given 'right of way' in every situation.

#### Stay alert

In a less than ideal world though, Aparna says there are ways of staying safe, but the training must begin across physical, emotional, mental, digital, and legal levels. In terms of physical preparedness, she says, "Speak up. If a person touches you inappropriately or even stares you down, confront him," she says, adding that it's essential to know that

#### Developing reflexes

**Head gear:** It is the action of keeping the hand and shoulder strong and touching the ear. It is helpful to act as a barrier when your upper body, neck, and head are attacked.



**Car wiper:** Involves joining your hands together side to side with thumbs locked behind (to protect them), to be used to deflect an attacker's hands when they reach at you from the front.

■ SREEJITH R KUMAR

#### CONVERSATION WITH SELF

## Cooperation, a different understanding

Why we must love and care for our own bodies



T.T. SRINATH

I am just recovering after an orthopaedic surgery necessitated by an accidental fall, sustaining injury on my left arm.

As part of physiotherapy, to help heal and recover my left arm, I have to give the injured arm all support it requires, from my right arm.

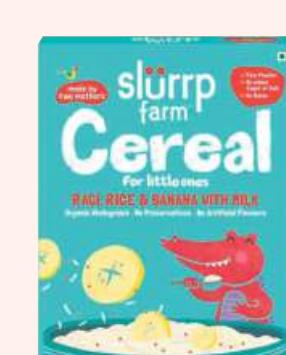
The realisation that I have gained tells how important it is for my right, and fit arm, to willingly support my left arm.

It is only with assisted support that my left arm will regain strength.

If my right arm chooses not to support my left arm, it will remain immobile.

We talk of cooperation required among people yet we do not realise as 'charity begins at home', it begins with our respecting, caring and loving our own bodies and self.

In similar fashion when we choose to eat food articles that need to be nicely mashed in the mouth, most often, we merely swallow the food item without necessarily chewing on it. This therefore puts pressure on the stomach to digest the food item which has not been properly



Ragi, Rice & Banana Cereal, Slurrp Farm

₹300 for a 200 gram pack

The blend includes ragi, jowar, rice and natural banana powder. "The advantage is the use of banana as a sweetener. The sugar comes in fructose form from the fruit. And ragi is the dominating ingredient which ensures that it is packed with calcium," says Dharshini.

The energy per 100 gram serving is 400 calories, good for underweight children, school-going children and adolescents. The carbs are 71.5 grams, important for brain development and memory function," explains Pradeepa.



Health Mix, Manna

₹104 for a 250 gram pack

The main ingredients are ragi, millet, barley, jowar, maize and pulses like fried green gram and nuts that include groundnut, cashew nut and almonds. "It is a high calorie breakfast ideal for children (age 5 and above) and adolescents," says Pradeepa. There are no added sugars, which is good.

We sent dieticians food labels from the aisles of the supermarket and online, and had them narrow down on the next best option to fresh, home-cooked morning meals

## CEREALS for breakfast

K. JESHI

What makes for a healthy breakfast? "Balanced nutrients, with about 50% carbohydrates, 20% to 30% proteins and the rest from fats," says dietitian Pradeepa Saravanan, based out of Coimbatore. A traditional breakfast of fermented, steamed foods like idli are gut-friendly, and when had with vegetable protein-based sambar made with seasonal vegetables that give fibre, is just right.

For rushed families who want to build nutritious meals, but just don't have the time, the next best option is packaged foods that are minimally processed. "Packaged breakfast cereals are made from processed grains and are often high in sugars and refined carbs," cautions Bengaluru-based dietitian Dharshini Surendran.

"Read the food label to find out how much sugar the product contains. The first two or three ingredients are the most important, as they constitute the majority of the cereal. If you see sugar in top three, avoid buying it. Cereals are not advisable for those with diabetes and other health issues," she adds. The best bet is to look at a pack where sugar (in all its different names) is not included at all. Refined oils and additives are also not good for health. The pack must have the mandatory FSSAI accreditation, and date of manufacture and expiry. The longer the shelf life, the more likely the product will have preservatives.

Do remember though that even when there are no added sugars, the elderly and those above 40 should avoid any packaged breakfast cereal as porridge. "Almost 80% of any cereal (whether rice, wheat, or rajma) is made up of carbs, which get converted to sugar," says Pradeepa. She adds that in porridge form 1 tablespoon has far more quantity than the same amount as a whole grain. The processing also means it has a high glycaemic index. "As wholegrains, we tend to consume less than as a porridge form," says Pradeepa.

If you choose to eat packaged cereal for breakfast, here are some healthier options vetted by dieticians.



Multigrain Porridge, Ammae

₹120 for a 200 gram pack

It contains a combination of 16 grains including amaranth seeds, millets, chickpeas, parboiled rice, barley, maize, soya, wheat, oats grain, horse gram, green gram and poppy seeds. It makes for a complete meal because of the combination of all these, says Dharshini. It is balanced in terms of its energy and protein content.



Timios

₹160 for a 300 gram pack

The main ingredients are whole wheat flour, natural strawberries, beetroot juice powder and cocoa powder. This is a high calorie product suitable for under-weight children and adolescents.

"The energy is 353 calories per serving of 100 grams which is good for children. They get gluten fibre, however those who are gluten intolerant should avoid it." However, the strawberries and beet powder are used in minimal amounts.



Quinoa Granola Breakfast Cereal, Urban Platter

₹500 for a 500 gram pack

Contains extruded (polished) quinoa flakes, almonds, raisins, jaggery, and pineapple flavour (in powder form). "It is good for underweight children, especially in the age group of five to 12. There are adequate nutrients and minerals which a growing child requires," says Pradeepa.



■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Dimple Kapadia talks about working with Christopher Nolan on his time-bending thriller, and why she almost ran away from the role



# 'Tenet, my second Cinderella moment'

MINI ANTHIKAD CHHIBBER

After the terrible disappointment of the semi-autobiographical and hideously expensive *Mera Naam Joker* in 1970, Raj Kapoor decided to make a teen love story. That it was inspired by *Archie* comics is possibly apocryphal, but *Bobby* (1973) tells the story of teenagers Raj (Rishi Kapoor) and Bobby. The movie was a blockbuster. Apart from the lovely songs and seductive look (Aruna Irani's back gave an award-winning performance), the female lead, 16-year-old Dimple Kapadia, became the nation's sweetheart.

When she pushed her hair from her face with floury hands (supposedly inspired by Nargis), Dimple became the girl everyone wanted to date. We know what happened next – she got married to the reigning superstar, Rakesh Khanna, had two children, separated from Khanna and returned to films. Through the '80s, '90s, noughties and 2010s, Dimple made her presence felt in 'masala' flicks as well as art-house films.

She rocked her auburn locks and champagne eyes in diverse roles, from rolling in the hay with Amil Kapoor in Feroz Khan's *Janbaaz* (1986) to Kalpana Lajmi's *Rudaali* for which she got the National Award in 1993. The millennium saw her effortlessly shining in everything from the aspirational *Dil Chahta Hai* (2001) and as the feckless Katy in *Being Cyrus* (2006) to Homi Adajania's latest, *Angezi Medium* (2020) where she plays Kareena Kapoor Khan's mum.

#### Veterans on set

From her *Bobby* days, when her knotted, polka-dotted blouses and shorts set off a craze, to everyone wanting a 'Dimple' haircut even if they did not have her crowning glory, she has always been a style icon. Her character,

Priya, in Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* – the time-bending espionage film that just might entice you to step into a theatre next week – keeps up the good work.

Priya with her fitted jackets, paisley shawls, stately saris and chunky jewellery is very much the personification of the iron fist in a beautifully-tailored velvet glove. Jeffrey Kurland, who apart from designing all the sharp suits for the gentlemen and putting the 6'3" Elizabeth Debicki in vertiginous heels, also designed for Dimple. "Everything was completely supervised by Nolan," says the actor, over the phone from Mumbai. "From the colour of my hair... he wanted to see how it would look, when it should go from auburn to brown... it was all supervised by him."

Former footballer John David Washington (of *Monster* and *BlacKkKlansman* fame) plays the protagonist, called Protagonist (yes), trying to stop the end of the world as and when we know it. "It was a fabulous experience working with him. He was so comfortable; I think that is half the battle won. He is so warm and he made me feel like I am the veteran and he is the newcomer [laughs]. As far as I am concerned it was just the opposite."

A co-production between the United Kingdom and the United States, *Tenet* features a multi-national cast, including British actors Robert Pattinson, Michael Caine and Kenneth Branagh; Debicki is Australian and Washington is American. Diversity in casting is almost a given these days, especially in action films, and Dimple says, "It is wonderful that people from all over the world are getting the opportunity to showcase their talent."

#### Nolan the maniac

Branagh, who plays a Russian oligarch Andrei Sator (with suits and an accent to match), had recently remarked about



(Clockwise from top left) Dimple with John Washington, the actor on set with Christopher Nolan, the director with Washington, and Dimple Kapadia

Nolan described *Tenet* as a classic spy story. In an interview posted by production house Warner Bros, he explains how he grew up loving spy movies, "but to make it sing to today's audiences, I wanted it to have bigger possibilities". So he brought in the concept of inversion – the idea that entropy (which dictates the movement of energy between objects) could be reversed. "It is very cinematic; it is something you have to see on the [big] screen to fully engage with it," he says.

how Nolan had promised him a bespoke working experience.

The 63-year-old Dimple concurs, describing the director as a maniac on set. "I cannot believe his energy levels, his passion for filmmaking, and the effort he puts into it. He is so focused and absorbed that you don't want to step up to him out of fear that you might distract him. The level of concentration he had on the entire shoot was absolutely amazing. That is what drove the entire crew. All of us put our best foot forward, everyone was on the same page, we had no choice but to give our best."

Dimple has been quoted admitting she was nervous before shooting. But, according to Branagh – who didn't get to share screen space with the actor, but says she has a "smashing part" in the film – both Nolan and Washington were bowled over by her. After a rehearsal, they had said, "If that is nervous, I don't know what calm is", going on to describe Dimple as being "awesomely brilliant". When I tell her this, she laughs. "My God, those are very, very kind words. But yes, I have always been a bundle of nerves and I always will be a bundle of nerves irrespective of the number of films I do. That is not changing."

Her anxiety also gave the actor her best memory on set. "Before the shoot, I was standing next to Nolan having a bad case of nerves. He gave me his hand to hold for a second. That will be my dearest, most beautiful memory of the shoot," she says.

#### Fighting nerves

Like so many of us, Dimple worships at the temple of Nolan. "The first film I watched of his was *The Prestige* (2006). And it completely blew my brain. I watched it four times and in the fourth viewing I finally made sense of it," she recalls. "I called my

nephew, who loves films and told him, 'If you want to know what cinema is, you have to watch this film.' It transports you into another world. I think that is what good cinema is all about. It grabs you and takes you to a different world. I think it is every actor's dream to work with Nolan. Thank God, I got the opportunity."

How did she get the chance of a lifetime? "There was this girl, Purvi Lavania [Vats, a Mumbai-based talent manager]. She called me and said I needed to give an audition," says Dimple. "I didn't believe it. I told my nephew that such-and-such a thing has happened and he said it is Christopher Nolan." With a bad memory for names, Dimple did not immediately put two and two together. "I said, 'Who Christopher Nolan' and he said, 'It is your favourite director!' As the audition got closer, I got nervous as ever and thought of every excuse in the book to run far away from it. Then better sense prevailed."

With Nolan coming to India for a recce, Dimple took her nephew along for the audition. "I was sure I would not get the role. So I thought he could take a picture with Nolan. But it happened; I got the role. It was my second Cinderella moment – *Bobby* was my first. It was destined."

Early reviews have been good. *Variety* magazine stated that the "wonderful Dimple Kapadia" gave "the film's wiliest performance"; closer home, stars, including Sonam Kapoor, took to social media to praise her role. Daughter Twinkle Khanna chipped in too, tweeting, "Mom is so laid-back that she refuses to do any publicity around *Tenet*, but she is incredible." Dimple, however, insists that the best thing about her character was Nolan. She says: "It is only Nolan, forget about me, I have got nothing to do with it."

*Tenet* is scheduled to be released on December 4.

## Landmark movies

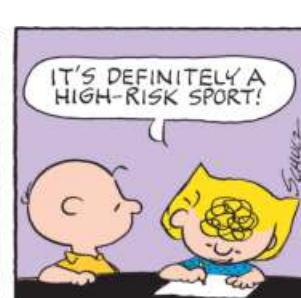
- **Bobby (1973):** This is the movie that started it all. As Bobby Braganza, the feisty granddaughter of rich boy Raj's (Rishi Kapoor) governess, she captured the nation's heart.
- **Saagar (1985):** The *Bobby* team reunited in Dimple's comeback film directed by Ramesh Sippy. As Mona, the barkeep's daughter, Dimple was memorable.
- **Prahaar (1991):** Nana Patekar's directorial debut saw Dimple play a young widow, Kiran, who tells her neighbour, Peter D'Souza (Gautam Joglekar) to follow his heart and become a commando. This brings him in contact with Patekar's Major Pratap Chauhan.
- **Dil Chahta Hai (2001):** As divorced alcoholic architect Tara Jaiswal, Dimple was riveting in Farhan Akhtar's directorial debut.
- **Cocktail (2012):** As Gautam's (Saif Ali Khan) mum, in this Homi Adajania rom-com, Dimple has fun playing the very orthodox Kavita, "man-o-pause" and all.



## POOCH CAFE



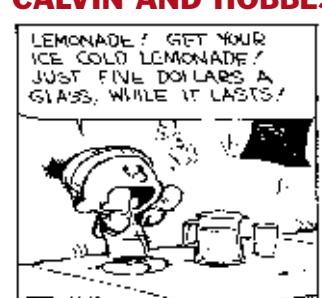
## PEANUTS



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



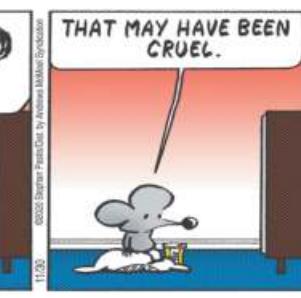
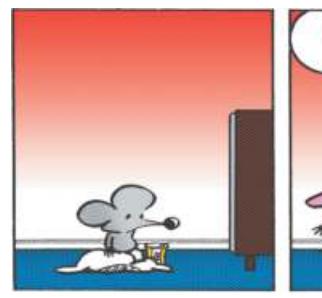
## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## TIGER



## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# 31 Afghan soldiers killed in attack on base

In a separate attack, a suicide bomber targeted the convoy of a provincial council chief, killing 3

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
GHAZNI

At least 34 people were killed on Sunday in two separate suicide bombings in Afghanistan that targeted a military base and a provincial chief, officials said.

There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attacks, which took place as Afghan government representatives and the Taliban hold face-to-face talks in Qatar for the first time to end the country's decades-long war.

In eastern Ghazni province, 31 soldiers were killed and 24 others wounded when the attacker drove a military humvee full of explosives onto an Army commando base before detonating the car bomb, according to an official in Afghanistan's National Security Council, who spoke anonymously.

Ghazni provincial health department chief, Zahir



Escalating violence: Afghan soldiers keeping watch outside a military compound after the suicide attack in Ghazni. ■ REUTERS

Shah Nikmal, also confirmed the death toll and casualty figures from the attack.

Afghanistan's Defence Ministry released a statement claiming 10 soldiers were killed and nine wounded. The Ministry also offered a different account of what happened than the official at the National Security Council, saying the vehicle exploded near the army base

after security forces opened fire on the car. It was not immediately clear why there was a discrepancy.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said a suicide bombing took place, though he did not provide further details.

The soldiers stationed at the base were responsible for conducting night raids, providing support to the ar-

my and police forces under siege, and taking part in large-scale operations against the Taliban and Islamic State group in eastern and southern provinces of Afghanistan.

The base is located in a desert region, about 5 km outside the city of Ghazni. Parts of the base and a nearby police building were partially destroyed by the powerful explosion. Windows were also blown out in buildings of the city near to where the bombing occurred.

## Surge in attacks

In southern Afghanistan, another suicide car bomber targeted the convoy of a provincial council chief in Zulmal, killing at least three people and wounding 21 others, including children, according to provincial spokesman Gul Islam Sial.

The provincial council chief, Attajan Haqbayat, sur-

vived the attack on Sunday with minor injuries, though one of his bodyguards was among those killed, said provincial police spokesman Hikmatullah Kochai.

There has been a sharp rise in violence this year and a surge of attacks by the Taliban against Afghanistan's beleaguered security forces since the start of peace talks in September. There have also been deadly attacks this month claimed by Islamic State militants in Afghanistan, including a horrific attack on Kabul University that killed 22 people.

The U.S., meanwhile, plans to withdraw an estimated 2,500 troops before January, leaving about 2,000 soldiers in Afghanistan. Afghan officials, however, have expressed concerns that a rapid reduction in American troops could strengthen the negotiating hand of the Taliban.

# Trump loses another election challenge in court

Pennsylvania's Supreme Court dismisses Republican lawsuit that sought to invalidate mail-in ballots

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

The U.S. state of Pennsylvania's Supreme Court dismissed another legal challenge to the election by supporters of President Donald Trump on Saturday, further reducing his odds of overturning the results.

A Republican lawsuit had sought to invalidate mail-in ballots in the battleground state that President-elect Joe Biden won by about 81,000 votes – or to throw out all votes and allow the State's legislature to decide the winner.



Donald Trump

The court dismissed both claims in a unanimous decision, calling the second one an "extraordinary proposition" that the court disenfranchise all 6.9 million Pennsylvanians who voted in the general election."

The lawsuit argued that a Pennsylvania law from 2019 allowing universal mail-in voting was unconstitutional.

The judges said that their November 21 challenge to the law was filed too late, coming more than a year after it was enacted and with the election results "becoming seemingly apparent."

Pennsylvania officially certified Mr. Biden's victory there on November 24. The lawsuit had also sought to

stop certification.

Saturday's decision follows a long line of similar ones, including a ruling the day before in which a federal appeals court flatly dismissed Trump's claim that the election was unfair and refused to freeze Mr. Biden's win in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Trump has refused to give up on his claims of fraud in the November 3 election despite his repeated court defeats, tweeting bizarre conspiracy theories.

On Thursday, he said for the first time that he would leave the White House if Mr.

Biden is officially confirmed the winner by the Electoral College on December 14.

But on Friday he tweeted that "Biden can only enter the White House as President if he can prove that his ridiculous '80,000,000 votes' were not fraudulently obtained."

Mr. Biden, who is to be sworn in on January 20, won 306 votes in the Electoral College to President Trump's 232.

The President-elect has said that Americans "won't stand" for attempts to derail the vote outcome.

The Nepali Army expressed confidence that "the visit will help in further strengthening and expand-



General Wei Fenghe

ing the cordial military-to-military relations between the two countries."

Gen. Wei, who is also a State Councillor, held bilateral talks with Army chief Gen. Thapa at the army headquarters here during his day-long "working visit" to Nepal, said a statement issued by the Nepal Army.

"The two held a cordial discussion on various issues of bilateral interest," it said.

Bilateral discussions were then held at the delegation-level mainly on issues pertaining to resumption of training and student exchange program and follow up on defence assistance that have been impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic," the statement said.

The Chinese Defence Minister is leading a 21-member delegation.

Earlier in the day, Home Minister Ram Bahadur Thapa welcomed Gen Wei at the Tribhuvan International Airport.

Gen. Wei told reporters that his visit is aimed at implementing bilateral understandings reached between the two governments in the past.

He said that his visit will promote military cooperation between Nepal and China, and take the existing friendly relations between the two neighbours to a new height.

"China and Nepal have

been enjoying a strong, friendly and close relationship for a long time, and I am here to take that relationship to a greater height," he said.

This is the highest-level visit from China after President Xi Jinping's two-day state visit that took place in October last year.

## India's outreach

Gen. Wei's visit comes days after India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla wrapped up his maiden two-day visit to Nepal.

In the first week of November, Indian Army chief Gen. M.M. Naravane paid a three-day visit to Nepal aimed at resetting bilateral ties that came under severe strain following a bitter border row between the two countries.

Gen. Wei's visit also comes amidst an ongoing political rift in the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP) that resurfaced following a meeting between Prime Minister Oli and his rival Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'.

China's political profile in Nepal has been on the rise in recent years with billions of dollars of investments under Beijing's multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including the building of the Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network.

Besides the investments, China's Ambassador to Nepal Hou Yanqi has made open efforts to garner support for Mr. Oli, who faced a massive rebellion in his party headed by 'Prachanda'.

In August, President Xi said that he attached great importance to the development of China-Nepal ties.

# Ethiopia launches search for Tigray leaders

PM says troops now control Mekelle

REUTERS  
ADDIS ABABA/NAIROBI

The Ethiopian government launched a manhunt on Sunday for leaders of a rebellious faction in the northern region of Tigray after announcing federal troops had taken over the regional capital Mekelle and military operations were complete.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said hospitals in Mekelle are running low on supplies such as gloves to care for the wounded, and one hospital is lacking body bags for the dead.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has been trying to quell a rebellion by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), a powerful ethnically-based party that dominated the central government for nearly three decades before Mr. Abiy came to power in 2018.

The conflict has been another test for Mr. Abiy, who is trying to hold together a patchwork of ethnic groups that make up Ethiopia's 115 million people. The flow of refugees and attacks by the TPLF on neighbouring Eritrea have also threatened to destabilize the wider Horn of Africa region.

Thousands of people are believed to have been killed and nearly 44,000 have fled to neighbouring Sudan since fighting began on November 4.

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The conflict has

## ASK US



N. SREE KANTH

**Q.** I have been working as a freelancer since November 2019 after I quit my regular job. I have been getting the payment deposited, after TDS, into my account. The total payment is equal to ₹15 lakh. Please guide me for filing ITR for FY 2019-20.

MOHAMMED ARIF

**A.** You may opt for Presumptive Tax Scheme for Professionals under section 44ADA of the Act if your profession is eligible under the scheme and gross receipts are less than ₹50 lakh. As on date, the following professions are notified viz. interior decoration, technical consulting, engineering, accounting, legal, medical, architecture.

Other professionals, as mentioned below:  
**a.** Movie artistes including a producer, editor, actor, director, music director, art director, dance director, cameraman, singer, lyricist, story writer, screenplay or dialogue writer and costume designers

**b.** Authorised representative, meaning a person who represents another person for a fee before a tribunal or any authority constituted under any law.

As your gross receipts are lower than ₹50 lakh, you may be eligible under this scheme if your profession is covered and you are required to declare a profit/gain under profession of minimum 50% of the gross receipts based on the expenses incurred in connection with your profession. You will be required to file ITR-4 and calculate tax according to the slab rates and in consideration of your other income, if any.

If your profession is not covered in the above list, you may choose to opt for Presumptive Tax under section 44AD of the Act as your gross receipts are lower than ₹2 crore. Mention your profession properly under the business codes available. Under this scheme, you will be required to declare a profit/gain of minimum 8% (other modes) and 6% (digital modes) based on the expenses incurred in connection with your profession. You will be required to file ITR-4 and calculate tax according to the slab rates and in consideration of your other income, if any. Benefits under the above schemes are maintenance of books of accounts are not compulsory and there is no need for auditing.

**Q.** I retired from the Southern Railway and get a monthly pension of about ₹40,000. I also get a monthly family pension of ₹30,000. What is the eligible amount that can be deducted from my family pension?

K.M. KRISHNA

**A.** Deduction of a sum equal to one-third of family pension received or ₹15,000, whichever is lower, can be claimed under section 57(iiia) of the Income Tax Act, 1961. In your case, you will be eligible for a deduction of ₹15,000 for AY 20-21. The same is to be declared as "Income from Other Sources" in the respective ITR as applicable to you.

**Q.** I am a 30-year-old male working in an IT firm. I plan to create an HUF. I need information on funding the HUF account.

S. VENKATESH

**A.** HUF can be funded by the members of the HUF by gifting monies into the HUF account thus forming the capital of the HUF. You may use your funds derived from any source, including salary, to gift the HUF. This does not attract any tax in either the HUF's hands or in your hands and there is no limit of gifting by members of the HUF to the HUF. However, any income derived by the HUF from the monies gifted by you by way of investments/business through the HUF will be taxed in your hands under the clubbing provisions of the Income Tax Act. However, if the HUF invests in any tax-free instrument, the returns, along with the initial investment in the instrument, can be invested in any manner and no clubbing provisions will apply, post which the tax will be charged at rates/slabs as applicable to the HUF.

(The author is partner, GSS & Associates, Chartered Accountants, Chennai)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

## LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Let me understand this! You want to start a new business but have applied for a housing loan because you figured you'd be working from home anyway, right?"

M.S.R.A. SRIHARI

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) is the backbone of the Indian economy. Just as Lord Sri Krishna, holding the Govardhana Hill, saved the entire Gokulam, the LIC holds the umbrella to protect the Indian economy from any onslaught, whatsoever.

This is not a euphemism but the stark reality. In such a situation, what are the reasons the government feels it needs an IPO by the premier insurer? In

the words of the Finance Minister: to give access to capital, unlock the embedded value of LIC, provide retail investors with a pie in the profit of LIC and bring additional discipline in the organisation. Let's delve deeper into these areas.

## Wish-fulfilling tree

The question is whether the LIC requires capital. With an average of ₹5-6 lakh crore of total

annual income, the insurer is capable of meeting the needs of successive governments by funding almost a fourth of the Centre's annual Budget outlay.

Whether it comes to providing ₹1.50 lakh crore for the Indian Railways; ₹1.25 lakh crore to Bharatmala road and highways project; bailing out private and public sector financial institutions such as UTI, GTB and Yes Bank; or boosting stock markets whenever there is a bear run – LIC has always played the sheet anchor role when it had to step up.

Hence, a stake sale may not help LIC any, but it would certainly help the market.. LIC's assets are valued at ₹32 lakh crore. But this is only the book value. The market value is simply unimaginable.

Even before an actuarial valuation is done to arrive at the embedded value of LIC, statements attributed to government officials are being circulated that about 10-25% of stake will be opened to market, the total value of which will be about ₹8-10 lakh crore.

If history is anything to go by, there have been instances of gross undervaluation of PSU

## Pie for retail

In a country where less than 2% of the population access the stock markets, unlocking the value of a mammoth financial organisation just to satiate the needs of a trivial retail investor section is an unnecessary exercise.

But, in the process, the stake fully enjoyed by India's 130-crore population in general, and 40-crore policyholders, in particular, in LIC, will shrink. The idea of a simultaneous listing of LIC on foreign stock exchanges is also doing the rounds.

## Discipline via listing?

Another question that arises is – is the LIC in need of discipline? LIC is an organisation that is almost perennially adjudged the most trusted brand; has won many an international and national award for its excellence in corporate governance;

## Don't harm the goose that lays the GOLDEN EGG

Divestment of insurance behemoth LIC needs a serious rethink considering its strategic role in the Indian economy

has received the Golden Peacock Award for years together and has obtained 'A' grade in the transparency audit conducted by the CIC.

## Efficiency of LIC

With 99.7% payments against claims, LIC has the most enviable claim-settlement record in the entire world. It had generated a surplus of ₹53,955 crore for 2019-20 of which ₹2,698 crore would be paid as dividend to the Centre. Management expenses were reduced by 3.19% for 2018-19 to ₹29,182 crore from ₹30,142 crore for 2017-18 as per the IRDAI annual report.

For the same period, private companies increased their expenses by 17.51%, from ₹18,677 crore for 2017-18 to ₹21,948 crore for 2018-19.

If we go by population figures, LIC's 40-crore policyholders could well make it comparable to the third-largest country in the world.

As per the LIC Act 1956 (which needs to be amended before listing), the insurer is more like a 'mutual benefit insurance company.' Once listed, it has to dance to the tunes of a trivial percentage of stakeholders, dumping its avowed objective of 'peoples' money

serving the public.

Whichever organisational aspect we evaluate, LIC is bound to shine. Handing over such a gigantic organisation just to attain the avowed target of ₹2.10 lakh crore via disinvestment – which amount the LIC is capable of garnering in less than a year, if left undisturbed – is akin to cutting the branch of the tree while sitting on it. This step will prove to be a sure disaster both for the public and for the government, if left unopposed.

(The writer is Associate Member of the Insurance Institute of India)



IMAGING: J.A. PREMKUMAR

## THINK INVESTOR

## Present tense, future uncertain

Emotions shouldn't come in the way of accumulating money, even though there is no predicting the future



**Remaining steadfast:** One should invest despite pandemics, natural disasters and financial crises. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

**Future uncertain** COVID-19 has shown us how swiftly our world can change. It is, therefore, not surprising that this pandemic has only accentuated our present bias. Why cut current lifestyle and save when the future is so uncertain?

Clearly, such argument can be self-defeating. True, a life-threatening virus attack or a loss of a family member would hurt. But such incidents are unlikely to make your responsibilities go away. You still have to fund your child's college education, pay your outstanding mortgage and accumulate mon-

ey for your retirement, among other goals.

While a philosophy of 'living each day' can be useful for personal growth, it cannot be extended to achieving your investment goals. You should, therefore, have an automatic investment process to ensure that your emotions do not hinder

your requirement to accumulate money, even though the future is uncertain. Hence, the need for SIPs.

But, how should you fix the amount for your SIPs? Often, most individuals set up SIPs based on the amount they can comfortably save each month. Unfortunately, this system cannot work well in the current world. Online shopping, credit cards and electronic money have made it easy for us to spend more than we should. You have to, therefore, set aside your monthly savings first and then spend the rest of your income.

## SIP amount

You can determine your investment in SIPs by applying the following steps:

First, estimate the amount you want to accumulate at the end of the time horizon for a life goal (say ₹1 crore at the end of 10 years).

Second, state the shortfall

that you are willing to take at the end of the time horizon for the goal. Suppose, you are willing to take a shortfall of 15%, an amount you believe can be bridged through other means.

Third, assume an expected post-tax return on equity and bonds. We have assumed 3.85% for bonds and 10.8% for equity.

Fourth, determine an equity multiplier. This is one divided by the maximum loss that equity markets can suffer in a year (say, 50%). So, the multiplier is 2. Finally, apply the multiplier on the shortfall you are willing to take. This will give you the accumulated value of your equity investments after 10 years, provided the investments earn the expected return.

This amount is ₹30 lakh, which is 15 lakh times 2.

Now, determine the monthly investment that will accumulate to ₹30 lakh in 10 years at 10.8% compounded annually. This is your required investment in equity SIP. Similarly,

determine the amount to invest in a recurring deposit to accumulate ₹70 lakh.

## Conclusion

What about the time when your cash flow is stressed or you fear the market has risen too much too soon? You can reduce your equity SIP for a while because you have allowed for a 15% shortfall in the end-of-the-horizon portfolio value.

You can set up your SIP on an ETF if your brokerage firm offers such facility. You can also pause such SIP if you have to. Alternatively, if you invest in an index fund or active funds, you can avail of the pause-SIP facility that some asset management firms offer.

The present is, indeed, tense and the future uncertain. Invest, nevertheless, because you have to.

(The writer offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

## PERSONAL LOAN - RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Lender	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs)		Processing fee (% of loan amount)
		Loan amount 5 lakh	Loan amount 1 lakh	
State Bank of India*	9.60-13.85	10,525-11,595	2,105-2,319	Upto 1.5%
Citi Bank	9.99-16.49	10,621-12,290	2,124-2,458	Upto 3%
HDFC Bank	10.75-21.30	10,809-13,611	2,162-2,722	Rs 2,999-25,000
Axis Bank^	12.00-24.00	11,122-14,384	2,224-2,877	1.5%-2%
ICICI Bank^^	11.25-21.00	10,934-13,527	2,187-2,705	Upto 2.25%
Indian Bank	9.05-13.65	10,391-11,544	2,078-2,309	As applicable time to time
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.75-24.00	10,809-14,384	2,162-2,877	Upto 2.5%
Canara Bank	10.20-13.90	10,673-11,608	2,135-2,322	Upto 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Punjab National Bank**	8.95-14.00	10,367-11,634	2,073-2,327	Upto 1%
Bajaj Finserv	13.00 onwards	11,377 onwards	2,275 onwards	Upto 4.13%

\*Festive Offer: 50% processing fee waiver through branches till 31.01.2021 under Xpress credit scheme & Pension Loan; 100% fee waiver for pre-approved PL through YONO app till 31.01.2021.

\*\*0.10% additional concession in applicable interest rate to customers who opt for coverage under Credit Life Insurance.

^Interest rates starting at 10.49% p.a. under festive offer.

^^Festive Offer (valid till 30.11.2020): Instant (pre-approved) personal loan interest rate starting at 10.50% p.a. & balance transfer interest rate starting at 10.75% p.a. Flat processing fee of Rs 3,999 for both.

Rates and charges as on November 24

## NEW CAR LOAN-RATES AND CHARGES

Name of Bank	Interest rate (%)	EMI (Rs)		Processing fee (% of loan amount)
		Loan amount 5 lakh	Tenure - 5 years	
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.10-7.90	9,924-10,114		Nil
Union Bank of India	7.15-7.50	9,936-10,019		Rs 1,000
Canara Bank	7.30-9.90	9,972-10,599		0.25% (Rs 1,000-5,000)
UCO Bank	7.45-7.70	10,007-10,067		Up to 1% (Max: Rs 1,500)
Punjab National Bank	7.55-7.80*	10,031-10,090		0.25

# Smith and Maxwell make it a no-contest

Warner, Finch give the team a brisk start again; Kohli, Rahul knocks go in vain as Australia seals series



Piling it on: Smith's masterclass and Maxwell's blitz piloted Australia to a mammoth total that proved beyond the reach of Kohli and his men. • AFP & AP

## INDIA IN AUS

REUTERS  
SYDNEY

Steve Smith was at his impulsive best as he scored a second successive century off 62 balls to drive Australia to a 51-run victory over India at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday, sealing the one-day series 2-0 with a match to spare.

The clash, almost a carbon copy of Australia's 66-run win in Friday's match at the same ground, was soured for the home fans by an injury to David Warner which may rule him out of the Test series around the new year.

Warner had scored a bright 83 in an opening partnership of 142 with skipper Aaron Finch (60) as Australia made light of the stifling afternoon conditions to pile on a massive 389 for four.

Four overs into India's reply after a southerly wind

had brought a dramatic drop in temperatures, however, Warner injured his adductor while fielding and had to be helped off the field.

**Not enough**  
His teammates wrapped up the match comfortably enough despite a fine innings of 89 from Virat Kohli and a 72 from wicketkeeper K.L. Rahul as India limped to 338 for nine.

"I felt good from ball one and was really able to go hard," said Man-of-the-Match Smith. "Nice to score some runs for the team and get a good total. Nice performance."

India's openers were dismissed in successive overs with only 60 runs on the board before skipper Kohli took charge and put together partnerships of 93 with Shreyas Iyer (38) and 72 with Rahul. Once the skipper departed to a flying catch by Moises Henriques off Josh

Hazlewood, Rahul took up the mantle to keep alive Indian hopes that they might just pull off their biggest ever successful run chase in ODIs.

Rahul thumped five sixes in a pugnacious innings before holing out in the deep off leg-spinner Adam Zampa.

## SCOREBOARD

### AUSTRALIA

David Warner run out 83 (77b, 7x4, 3x6), Aaron Finch c Kohli b Shami 60 (69b, 6x4, 1x6), Steve Smith c Shami b Hardik 104 (64b, 14x4, 2x6), Marnus Labuschagne c Mayank b Bumrah 70 (61b, 5x4), Glenn Maxwell (not out) 63 (29b, 4x4, 4x6), Moises Henriques (not out) 2 (1b); Extras (lb-2, w-4, nb-1); Total (for four wkts. in 50 overs): 389.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-142 (Finch, 22.5 overs), 2-156 (Warner, 25.3), 3-292 (Smith, 41.2), 4-372 (Labuschagne, 48.5).

### INDIA BOWLING

Shami 9-0-73-1, Bumrah 10-1-79-1, Saini 7-0-70-0, Chahal 9-

Earlier, the day had belonged to the Australian top order batsmen, who once again were given the opportunity to showcase their skills in the face of some lacklustre bowling. Smith needed only 64 balls for his 104 before falling to all-rounder

Hardik Pandya, bowling for the first since September last year due to a lower back injury. Glenn Maxwell's belligerent unbeaten 63 from 29 balls and a stroke-filled 70 from Marnus Labuschagne helped Australia build on the strong platform.

### AUSTRALIA BOWLING

Starc 9-0-82-0, Hazlewood 9-0-59-2, Cummins 10-0-67-3, Zampa 10-0-62-2, Henriques 7-0-34-1, Maxwell 5-0-34-1.

**Toss:** Australia; **MoM:** Smith.

**Australia won by 51 runs to take an unassailable 2-lead in three-match series.**

**Third and final ODI:** December 2, Canberra, 9.10 a.m. IST.

wkts. in 50 overs): 338.

### FALL OF WICKETS

1-58 (Dhawan, 7.4), 2-60 (Mayank, 8.3), 3-153 (Shreyas, 23.1), 4-225 (Kohli, 34.5), 5-288 (Rahul, 43.4), 6-321 (Jadeja, 46.1), 7-321 (Hardik, 46.2), 8-326 (Shami, 47.3), 9-328 (Bumrah, 48.3).

### AUSTRALIA BOWLING

Starc 9-0-82-0, Hazlewood 9-0-59-2, Cummins 10-0-67-3, Zampa 10-0-62-2, Henriques 7-0-34-1, Maxwell 5-0-34-1.

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# Rahul backs bowlers

Feels it's a learning curve for them

AMOL KARHADKAR  
MUMBAI

Despite India's bowling unit conceding 763 runs in the first two games, vice-captain K.L. Rahul backed it to the hilt.

"I wouldn't say that they're struggling. It's different conditions, different format. The pitches in the UAE were way different from the one here. The challenge is to adapt to the conditions quickly... you also have to admit that the opposition batsmen played really well," said Rahul at the virtual media interaction on Sunday.

"We haven't done a whole lot wrong. It's a learning curve for us... we have to think how we can do better when we play on such good batting wickets."

### Pandya bowls again

The only bright spot was Hardik Pandya's performance with the ball. The all-rounder, who bowled for



Rahul. • AFP

the first time after recovering from back surgery, got the important wicket of Steve Smith.

"Refreshing, isn't it! He starts bowling, takes a lot of load off the skipper and the team," Rahul said. "Knowing Hardik, he loves to get into a contest and contribute for the team. It sets up the rest of the series well."

We were outplayed, admits Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SYDNEY

India skipper Virat Kohli had no qualms conceding that the visitors were outplayed by a confident and ruthless Australia in the series-deciding second ODI here on Sunday, pinning the blame on the ineffective and inconsistent bowling by his side.

"We were completely outplayed. I think with the ball, we were not that effective, we didn't hit the areas that we wanted to consistently and they have a strong batting line-up, they know the conditions and the angles well," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

"...credit to them, they bowled much more consistently and used the dimensions well."

Kohli said the two catches which led to his and Shreyas Iyer's dismissal were the "defining moments" of the game.

# A brand new innings!

ANI  
SYDNEY

While Australia and India were fighting the onfield battle in the second ODI, there was a man who succeeded to find his life partner in the stands at Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday.



Yes, I do! The marriage proposal that won hearts.

hearted moment in the match.

Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell congratulated the couple by applauding them from the field.

# Grosjean escapes fireball after crash

Haas driver's car smashes into the barriers after the start



Lucky escape: Grosjean's car, ripped apart following a horrific crash, soon went up in flames. • REUTERS, GETTY IMAGES

# England wins series

REUTERS  
PAARL

Man-of-the-match Dawid Malan and Eoin Morgan steered England to a series-clinching, four-wicket win over South Africa in the second Twenty20 international on Sunday.

The 33-year-old scored 55 (40b, 7x4, 1x6) to help the visitors reach a modest target of 147.

Earlier, the home team found itself choked by the English bowling, especially spinner Adil Rashid who took two wickets off successive balls and finished with two for 23.

**The scores:** South Africa 146/6 in 20 overs (de Kock 30, van der Dussen 25 n.o., Linde 29, Rashid 2/23) lost to England 147/6 in 19.5 overs (Malan 55, Morgan 26 n.o., Ngidi 2/51 Shamsi 3/19).

The results: 1. Hamilton (Mercedes) 1:34.1:829; 2. Verstappen (Red Bull) +1.254; 3. Albon (Red Bull) 8.005; 4. Norris (McLaren) 11.337; 5. Sainz (McLaren) 11.787; 6. Gasly (AlphaTauri) 11.942; 7. Ricciardo (Renault) 19.368; 8. Bottas (Mercedes) 19.680; 9. Ocon (Renault) 22.803; +1 Lap: 10. Leclerc (Ferrari); 11. Kvyat (AlphaTauri); 12. Russell (Williams)

and ankles and one or more suspected broken ribs.

**The results:** 1. Hamilton (Mercedes) 1:34.1:829; 2. Verstappen (Red Bull) +1.254; 3. Albon (Red Bull) 8.005; 4. Norris (McLaren) 11.337; 5. Sainz (McLaren) 11.787; 6. Gasly (AlphaTauri) 11.942; 7. Ricciardo (Renault) 19.368; 8. Bottas (Mercedes) 19.680; 9. Ocon (Renault) 22.803; +1 Lap: 10. Leclerc (Ferrari); 11. Kvyat (AlphaTauri); 12. Russell (Williams)

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**Standings: Drivers:** 1. Hamilton 332, 2. Bottas 201, 3. Verstappen 189, 4. Ricciardo 102, 5. Perez 100; **Constructors:** 1. Mercedes 533, Red Bull 274, 3. McLaren 171, 4. Racing Point 154, 5. Renault 144.

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## TV PICKS

**ISL:** Star Sports 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 7.45 p.m.  
**Premier League:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 11 p.m. 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)  
**Serie A:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 11 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

## IN BRIEF



## Tyson-Jones fight drawn

LOS ANGELES  
Mike Tyson's return to boxing at age 54 ended in a draw with 51-year-old Roy Jones Jr. on Saturday in an eight-round exhibition battle of former heavyweight champions. Fifteen years after retiring after a 2005 loss to Kevin McBride, Tyson made his comeback with a 50-6, 44 KOs record. Jones was 66-9 with 47 KOs and had not fought since a February 2018 cruiserweight victory. AFP

## Otamendi stars for Rajnigandha Achievers

NEW DELHI  
Daniel Otamendi fired home five goals to power Rajnigandha Achievers to a thumping 8-3 victory over Achievers ONN in the final of the Baroda Cup 10-goal polo tournament at the Jaipur Polo ground here on Sunday. Mrs. Malvika Singh and Mrs. Sunny Kalan presented the trophies.

**The result (final):**  
Rajnigandha Achievers 8 (Daniel Otamendi 5, Padmanab Singh, Kuldeep Singh Rathore, Allan Shauan Michael) bt Achievers ONN 3 (Dhruv Godara 2, Abhimanyu Pathak).



KOLKATA  
Boxer Duryodhan Singh Negi (69kg), who is presently training at NIS Patiala, has tested positive for COVID-19. He is asymptomatic and has been shifted to a hospital. Negi, who took Diwali leave, was in quarantine after his return.

## Aditi finishes T-30 in Andalucia Open

ANDALUCIA  
Aditi Ashok finished the season with weekend rounds of 69-71 that saw her finish T-30 on 4-over 292 in the season-ending Andalucia Costa Del Sol Open, here. Diksha Dagar had missed the cut. Denmark's Emily Pedersen emerged the winner.

**MRF Tyres finishes 10th**  
LAS PALMAS  
Team MRF Tyres finished 10th in the final round of the FIA European Rally Championship at the Rally Islas Canarias. Craig Breen and Paul Nagle took 10th overall, 2:33.05 off the eventual winners, Adrian Fourmaux and Renaud Jamoul. Team MRF was just 0.6 seconds from Luis Monzon and José Carlos Déniz for ninth.

## Walelegn and Yehualaw finish on top of the podium

A slew of records set on what turns out to be a Super Sunday; Sable, Parul take the honours in Indian category with an impressive run

## DELHI HALF MARATHON

UTHRA GANESAN  
NEW DELHI

With a reworked route and smoother corners, the 16th edition of the Airtel Delhi Half Marathon expectedly produced new champions and course records on Sunday. Ethiopians Amedework Walelegn and Yalemzerf Yehualaw claimed the men's and women's titles respectively.

Among the Indians, National 3000m steeplechase record-holder Avinash Sable led the charge, finishing 10th overall in 1:00:30s – the first time an Indian has run under 61 minutes over the distance and smashing the Indian half-marathon record by more than three minutes and the event record by more than four minutes.

**Close finish**  
It was a close finish in the men's event with last year's runner-up Walelegn edging past compatriot and two-time defending champion Andamlak Belihu by a second in a course record time



Speed and stamina: Walelegn, Yehualaw and Sable established new marks while winning the titles, and Parul emerged the fastest among the Indian women. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

of 58.53s, the third fastest time of the year.

The top three, in fact, bettered the course record of 59.06s with Ugandan Stephen Kissi finishing third in 58.56s.

Among the elite women, Yehualaw surged ahead to win in a course record time of 1:04:46s, bettering the earlier mark of 1:06:00s by compatriot and defending champion Tsehay Gemechu, who



Speed and stamina: Walelegn, Yehualaw and Sable established new marks while winning the titles, and Parul emerged the fastest among the Indian women. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

finished fifth.

Yehualaw, who finished second last year and third at the 2020 World Championships, also set the second fastest women's time ever over the distance in 64:46s.

**Sable's record**  
The 26-year old Sable, who has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics and has been rewriting the National 3000m steeplechase records over



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the past couple of years, had last participated in a half-marathon in 2018 here, finishing second. Lack of competition this year had forced him to enter the ADHM and his decision to run an aggressive pace paid off.

**'Feels great'**  
"It's great to break the National record. I have not competed in any tournament for a year and I have been on



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practising, so I wanted to compete in an event. Coming into the race, I wanted to stay as close as possible to international runners and I am happy I was able to do that," said Sable.

The previous National record (1:03:46s) was set by Kallidasa Hirave while defending champion Srinu Bugatha held the ADHM record of 1:04:33s set last year. Bugatha came in second



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this time in 1:04:16s while Durga Bahadur Budha was third, clocking 1:04:19s.

Among the women, Sable's training partner Parul Chaudhary, second last year, won in 1:12:18s while Sanjivani Jadhav (1:13:00s) and Komal Jagdale (1:14:04s) were second and third.

**The results:**  
**Overall men:** 1. Amedework Walelegn (Eth, 00:58:53s); 2. Andamlak Belihu (Eth, 01:04:21s); 3. Stephen Kissi (Uga, 00:58:56s).



Speed and stamina: Walelegn, Yehualaw and Sable established new marks while winning the titles, and Parul emerged the fastest among the Indian women. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

**Overall women:** 1. Yalemzerf Yehualaw (Eth, 01:04:46s); 2. Ruth Chepngetich (Ken, 01:05:06s); 3. Ababel Yeshaneh (Eth, 01:05:21s).

**Indian men:** 1. Avinash Sable (01:00:30s); 2. Srinu Bugatha (01:04:16s); 3. Durga Bahadur Budha (01:04:19s).

**Indian women:** Parul Chaudhary (01:12:18s); 2. Sanjivani Jadhav (01:13:00s); 3. Komal Jagdale (01:14:04s).

## BCCI proposes curtailed season

AMOL KARHADKAR  
MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has presented State associations with four options for a truncated domestic cricket season due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The associations have been asked to revert with their preferred option by December 2.

In an email to all affiliates, accessed by *The Hindu*, BCCI secretary Jay Shah has specified the options for the senior men's domestic season:

**Option 1:** Only Ranji Tro-

phy; **Option 2:** Only Syed Mushtaq Ali T20; **Option 3:** Ranji Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali T20; **Option 4:** Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 and Vijay Hazare Trophy.

The BCCI plans to stage the tournament/s in "six bio-secure hubs". "The BCCI will have to create a total of 6 bio-secure hubs across the country. The 38 teams will be divided into 5 Elite groups and 1 Plate group. The Elite groups will consist of 6 teams each while the Plate group will have 8 teams," the email states.

The Ranji Trophy will require 67 days, Syed Mushtaq

Ali Trophy 22 days and Vijay Hazare Trophy 28 days for completion, BCCI states.

The proposed windows are January 11 to March 18 (Ranji), December 20 to January 10 (Mushtaq Ali) and January 11 to February 7 (Vijay Hazare).

According to the email, each of the six staging cities will have to have at least three digital broadcast-friendly venues. The venues that are being shortlisted include Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Puducherry, Vadodara, Surat, Nagpur, Indore, Pune, Hyderabad and Kolkata.

In the second half, both sides failed to break the deadlock as they hardly created any chances.

In the day's first match at Tilak Maidan in Vasco, Odisha FC rallied from 2-0 down to hold Jamshedpur FC. Substitute Diego Mauricio's brace earned Odisha a point after Jamshedpur striker Nerijus Valskis had scored twice for his side.

**The results:** Jamshedpur FC 2 (Valksis 12 & 27) drew with Odisha FC 2 (Mauricio 77 & 90+2).

Chennaiyin FC 0 drew with Kerala Blasters FC 0.

**MONDAY'S MATCH**  
FC Goa NorthEast United FC  
7.30 P.M.  
STAR SPORTS 2 (SD & HD) AND 3

## Gomes emerges Blasters' hero

## ISL 2020-21

SPORTS BUREAU

Chennaiyin FC was left to rue a missed penalty as it was held to a goalless draw by Kerala Blasters in an evenly fought contest at the GMC Stadium in Bambolim on Sunday.

In the 75th minute, Jakub Sylvestr's strike was guessed right by Blaster keeper Albino Gomes, who dived to his left to stop the Slovakian's strike.

The penalty was won, thanks to a brilliant run from Reagan Singh on the left as he set it up for Crivellaro inside the box. The latter was brought down by Blasters skipper Sergio Cidoncha, giving Chennaiyin a golden chance to go ahead. However, that was not to be.

Earlier, in the first half, Chennaiyin got off the blocks quickly.

In the seventh minute, Lallianzuala Chhangte produced a sizzling run on the right off a long ball and passed to Anirudh Thapa, but the latter's shot went wide.

In the 16th, Chennai had its best opportunity of the first period when Gomes slipped, providing Crivellaro a chance to fire a shot. However, Bakary Kone saved Blasters' blushes with a timely clearance.

Once the Kerala side found its rhythm in the second part of the first half, it started to dominate possession and also exerted pressure on the Chennai outfit.

At the half-hour mark, Rohit Kumar came up with the only shot on target from either team from outside the

box, but an acrobatic Chennaiyin keeper Vishal Kaith pushed the ball wide.

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**Ranji Trophy:** 1. Mushtaq Ali T20 (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 2. Ranji Trophy (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 3. Vijay Hazare Trophy (Vijay Hazare Trophy 28).

**Formula LGB 1300:** 1. Ranji Trophy (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 2. Ranji Trophy (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 3. Vijay Hazare Trophy (Vijay Hazare Trophy 28).

**Super Stock:** 1. Ranji Trophy (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 2. Ranji Trophy (Syed Mushtaq Ali 20); 3. Vijay Hazare Trophy (Vijay Hazare Trophy 28).

**Race-1 (10 laps):** 1. Mohite (19:34.316); 2. Balaji (19:36.706); 3. D'Souza (19:37.940). **Race-2 (10 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-3 (10 laps):** 1. Mohite (19:34.316); 2. Balaji (19:36.706); 3. D'Souza (19:37.940). **Race-4 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-5 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-6 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-7 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-8 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-9 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-10 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-11 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-12 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-13 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-14 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).

**Race-15 (7 laps):** 1. Mohite (15:49.069); 2. D'Souza (15:49.378); 3. Varun Anekar (Race Concepts) (16:31.373).