



NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE INDIA



TRUST *is* EVERYTHING

The Brand has been built on the core values of Trust and Transparency. We have been pioneers in instituting many fair practices within the jewellery industry. We introduced BIS Hallmarked gold to ensure purity, Rate Tags to ensure clarity in pricing, a transparent old gold exchange system and much more. We ran campaigns to educate customers about our initiatives and also built awareness around what consumers should know before buying jewellery.

Today, the Brand is synonymous with the word "TRUST".

1993 - 2003

ESTABLISHMENT PHASE

Focused on building our brand and business on the core principles of trust and transparency.

2004 - 2011

GROWTH PHASE WITHIN SOUTH INDIA

Expanded our showroom network across the various southern states of India.

2012 - 2020

PAN INDIA GROWTH

Invested significantly in building the brand across various geographies in India. Built robust systems and processes. Instituted a professionalized management team and board of directors. Became a true Pan-India player with 107 showrooms spread across 21 states. The brand also has a sizeable presence in the Middle East with 30 outlets.

137 SHOWROOMS*

21 STATES IN INDIA*

5 COUNTRIES*

WWW.KALYANJEWELLERS.NET | FOLLOW US ON

Disclaimer:

Kalyan Jewellers India Limited is proposing, subject to receipt of requisite approvals, market conditions and other considerations, an initial public offering of its equity shares and has filed a draft red herring prospectus dated August 24, 2020 ("DRHP") with the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI"). The DRHP is available on the websites of SEBI, Axis Capital Limited, Citigroup Global Markets India Private Limited, ICICI Securities Limited, SBI Capital Markets Limited and BOB Capital Markets Limited at www.sebi.gov.in, www.axiscapital.co.in, www.online.citibank.co.in/rhtm/citigroupglobalscreen1.htm, www.icicisecurities.com, www.sbicaps.com and www.bobcaps.in, respectively. Investors should note that investment in equity shares involves a high degree of risk and for details refer to the Red Herring Prospectus, including the section titled "Risk Factors" of the Red Herring Prospectus when available. Potential investors should not rely on the DRHP for any investment decision."

The Equity Shares have not been and will not be registered, listed or otherwise qualified in any other jurisdiction outside India and may not be offered or sold, and bids may not be made by persons in any such jurisdiction, except in compliance with the applicable laws of such jurisdiction. The Equity Shares have not been and will not be registered under the US Securities Act of 1933 ("U.S. Securities Act") or any state securities laws in the United States and may not be offered or sold within the United States, except pursuant to an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the registration requirements of the U.S. Securities Act and in accordance with any applicable United States state securities laws.

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BRAND
BUILT ON
THE CORE
VALUES OF
**TRUST AND
TRANSPARENCY**



KALYAN
JEWELLERS

PURITY ASSURED

All our ornaments are BIS hallmarked and are tested for purity in Karatmeters installed at our stores.



FREE LIFETIME MAINTENANCE

We assure Free Lifetime Maintenance for all our ornaments.



PRODUCT INFORMATION

The weight of all components such as metal weight, stone weight and other materials in the ornament are shown separately. The making charge and stone price are also specified.

EXCHANGE / BUY BACK

Exchange and buy back terms, specified and applicable across the showroom network.

OUR PASSIONATE, EXPERIENCED AND VISIONARY PROMOTERS,
THE RICH EXPERTISE OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS ALONG WITH
A STRONG PROFESSIONAL AND MID-LEVEL MANAGEMENT TEAM
IS THE REAL DIFFERENTIATOR

EXPERIENCED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board has very strong representation from Retail, Marketing, Regulatory, Finance and Capital Markets.

Mr. T.S. Kalyanaraman (*Chairman and Managing Director*)

Mr. T.K. Seetharam (*Whole-time Director*)

Mr. T.K. Ramesh (*Whole-time Director*)

Mr. Anish Kumar Saraf (*Managing Director at Warburg Pincus, India*)

Ms. Kishori Jayendra Udeshi (*Former Deputy Governor of RBI*)

Mr. Salil Nair (*Former CEO of Shoppers Stop*)

Mr. Anil Sadasivan Nair (*Former CEO & Managing Partner of Law & Kenneth Saatchi & Saatchi*)

Mr. Agnihotra Dakshina Murty Chavali (*Advisory Board Member - Banking and Financial Frauds, Central Vigilance Commission*)

Mr. Mahalingam Ramaswamy (*Former Managing Director of State Bank of Travancore*)

Mr. T.S. Anantharaman (*Former Chairman of Catholic Syrian Bank*)



VISIONARY PROMOTERS WITH STRONG LEADERSHIP AND **Demonstrated Track Record**

The Founder Chairman **Mr. T.S. Kalyanaraman** has **45 years** of retail experience, of which more than **25 years**

is in the Jewellery Industry. His sons

Mr. T.K. Seetharam & Mr. T.K. Ramesh are involved in the business since the Company's inception and oversee business functions & strategy.

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CPI(M)-led alliance's stand is short-sighted: Dipankar Bhattacharya
Page 9



Farmers mark 100 days of protest at the Ghazipur border
Page 10



Sri Lankan Catholics mark 'Black Sunday' for Easter victims
Page 12



Rohit's MI takes on Kohli's RCB in IPL 2021 opener in Chennai
Page 13

NEARBY



Delhi nearing end of pandemic phase: Jain

NEW DELHI

Despite the number of daily cases witnessing an upward trend over the past week, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Sunday said COVID-19 was nearing an "epidemic" phase in the city.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3



EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 2

China gives green light for first downstream dams on Brahmaputra

Nod in new five-year-plan for hydroprojects near border with India

ANANTH KRISHNAN

day, specifically mentions the building of hydropower bases on the lower reaches of the river as among the priority energy projects to be undertaken in the next five years.

The lower reaches refer to the sections of the river in Tibet before it flows into India.

Fresh exploitation

The inclusion of the projects in the draft plan suggests the authorities have given the go-ahead to begin tapping the lower reaches for the first time, which marks a new chapter in the



Channelising hydropower: A view of the Brahmaputra in Assam. China has given the green light for dams on the lower reaches of the river in Tibet, just before it enters India. ■ FILE PHOTO

hydropower exploitation of the river.

The FYP's backing for the projects also suggests that a number of long-pending proposals from Chinese hydropower companies to build dams on the lower reaches, including near the border with India, may be

given the green light.

The draft plan will be formally approved before the NPC session ends on Thursday. The final version is un-

likely to have major changes as the largely ceremonial and Communist Party-controlled legislature rarely overhauls the proposals sent before it.

SPECIAL

On the top of a list of energy construction projects for the next five years, mentioned on page 30 of the 142-page draft document in Mandarin – it has not yet been published in English – calls for "building a hydropower base on the lower reaches of Yarlung Zangbo river", along with "clean energy bases" in the upper and lower reaches of Jinsha river (the upper course of Yangtze river in

western China). Other major projects include the construction of coastal nuclear power plants and power transmission channels.

Infrastructure strategy

The high importance given to building dams on the "lower reaches" of the Yarlung Zangbo is underlined in the plan, where it is also mentioned on page 38 of the document among significant planned investments in infrastructure that serve major national strategies.

The project is also listed along with the Sichuan-Tibet railway and the national water network.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Maharashtra leads surge in cases across six States

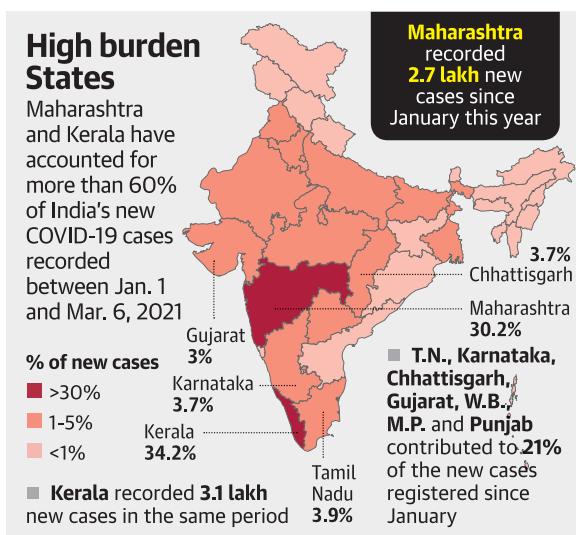
Active cases in India rise for the fifth day in a row

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu are reporting high daily COVID-19 cases with these six States collectively accounting for 84.71% of the 18,711 new cases reported in last 24 hours, said a release issued by the Health Ministry on Sunday.

The active cases registered an increase for the fifth consecutive day, going up to 1,84,523, which now comprises 1.65% of the total infections. While the country's total case count has gone up to 1,12,10,799, the number of people who have recovered from the disease also increased to 1,08,68,520. However, this translated to a drop in the recovery rate to 96.95%. The case fatality



rate, meanwhile, stands at 1.41%.

Maharashtra continues to report the highest number of daily new cases at 10,187, (With inputs from PTI)

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Modi pitches for 'Asol Paribartan'

PM takes on Trinamool Cong. at rally in Kolkata

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

KOLKATA

Promising to usher in "Asol Paribartan" (real change) through development in West Bengal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday targeted Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, saying this was not the same "Didi" who had removed the Left Front from power.

Biggest rally

Describing the public rally at the Brigade parade ground as one of the biggest he had ever addressed, Mr. Modi, in his hour-long speech, went to great lengths to explain what "Asol Paribartan" meant. "From this Brigade ground, I want to give you assurance of real change... assurance of development of Bengal, assurance of things



Show of support: BJP supporters at the Brigade parade ground in Kolkata during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting on Sunday. ■ PTI

to change in Bengal, of increasing investment in Bengal, and assurance that for youth, farmers and workers, we will work 24 hours."

Mr. Modi said that the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) government in Bengal would draw its inspiration from the 21st century".

He also spoke about why Kolkata was called the "City of joy" and said there was no

which would mean a situation where there were jobs for youth, there was no migration of youth, industries could prosper, and there would be "infrastructure of the city of the future".

Mr. Modi said that on one side, there was the Trinamool Congress, the Left parties and the Congress, and on the other there were people of the State.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Modi-Shah only syndicate in India: Mamata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday alleged that the biggest syndicate in the country was being run by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah themselves.

"Syndicate? What syndicate? India knows only one syndicate and that is Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. There is no other syndicate," Ms. Banerjee said, after addressing a rally at Siliguri in north Bengal.

The BJP leadership in the State has been accusing the Trinamool Congress of running a syndicate.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

SKM to lobby JJP MLAs, Independents to support no-confidence motion

Assembly to take up matter on March 10

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Protesting farm union leaders have urged the people of Haryana to lobby their representatives in the State Assembly to support the no-confidence motion against the BJP-JJP government on March 10. The people should threaten to "teach a lesson" to those MLAs who support the government, they said.

The Opposition Congress had sought to bring the no-confidence motion against the Manohar Lal government on the first day of the budget session on Friday. The Assembly Speaker approved the motion to be taken up for discussion on March 10.

Plea to people

In a public appeal to Haryana citizens, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha accused the State government of siding with the Centre against the farmers on the issue of the three contentious farm reform laws and attempting to suppress the movement.

"Legislators belonging to the Janmabhumi Party and Independents will be specially approached and asked to vote for the motion against the government. People would never forgive them if they do not stand up at this critical moment when the livelihood of the people is at stake," said All India Kisan Sabha Haryana vice-pre-



Haryana CM Manohar Lal

Inderjit Singh.

Memos should be submitted to Haryana legislators at their residences on March 9, said the SKM, which also provided a model letter for citizens to send to their representatives. "This BJP-JJP alliance has so far demonstrated its anti-farmer and anti-people attitude in many ways. The Haryana government is adopting an attitude of insensitivity towards the ongoing agitation regarding the three laws and the MSP guarantee. Public anger is increasing with regard to this," said the letter.

"This is the only way in which anti-people governments will learn an important lesson. If you vote in support of the government, the public will be forced to teach you a lesson in this constituency," it added.

In the 90-member Assembly, of which two seats are vacant, the BJP and the JJP have 40 and 10 members respectively, while Independent MLAs hold seven seats.

CMK

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As we celebrate Women's Day, SBI is proud to announce additional concession of **5 bps*** to women borrowers. Home Loans now start at just **6.70%*** onwards.

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■ KALA ANAND

Should Social Science embrace data or should Science embrace qualitative theories? In India, the quest for academic excellence, evidenced through quantitative exam scores, has deepened the divide between data and theory. The continuing existence of this notion confirms that our academia and industry are operating in silos and, in some verticals, are drifting farther apart.

The problems of today and the complex world of tomorrow need to be viewed from multiple lenses – of the past and future. Interestingly, Social Science and Science are distinct areas that need to come together, as one lies in the past and other in the future.

In the words of Steve Jobs, "Technology alone is not enough. It is technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our hearts sing." For years, Jobs repeatedly emphasised that, to create a better world, the focus needs to be both on humans and technology; in other words both humanities and sciences.

In today's complex global setting, critical thinking and creativity is imperative for technological advancements that also uphold pillars of equity, inclusiveness and diversity. To cite an example, as more and more countries embrace facial recognition technologies to maintain law and order, it is increasingly being discovered that some of these facilities are not designed to accommodate diverse facial features. This makes such technologies discriminatory and entire populations of diverse races



GETTY IMAGES/STOCK PHOTO

HUMANITIES in the era of coding

The interdisciplinary aspect of Social Sciences and Sciences will pave the way for education of the future

are possibly at risk of wrongful action by law enforcement agencies.

While the future of the world heavily relies on the merit of technology, humanities bring in empathy and ethics, which lead to a seamless integration of technology into lifestyles. The interdisciplinary aspect of humanities and technology paves the way for education of the future.

Perfect marriage

Scott Hartley, a venture capitalist and author of *The Fuzzy and the Techie*, calls for an urgent marriage between those who study social science and the techies.

This 2017 book cites success stories of those who obtained social science degrees and then went on to create history in Silicon Valley and other fields.

Among the few examples Hartley mentions are Peter Thiel, the co-founder of PayPal who studied philosophy and law, and Alex Karp, co-founder and CEO of Palantir, who has a law degree and a doctorate in neoclassical social theory.

He suggests that, while techies will be in demand, a specific advantage that social science graduates had was their differentiation.

According to Hartley, the humanities involves a study of

The interdisciplinary aspect of humanities and technology paves the way for education of the future.

human nature and larger societies and that this allows students to develop a diverse toolkit to analyse and decode most of the fundamental problems plaguing our societies. Thus, innovation in science and technology must be accompanied by an understanding of the human condition.

In India, the hiring trends are in favour of an interdisciplinary approach to learning. In one of his talks, Dr. Manish Gupta, Director of Google Research India, once said, "For all the tough problems that arise as we apply AI in the real world, we will need a lot of help from the ethicists, philosophers, economists, lawyers and psychologists." Hence, while STEM jobs will only gain momentum, investing in an education that only teaches computing languages and not the depth of science may not be useful in the long run.

In 2021, as the world emerges from the unprecedented challenges, problem solving will need to be viewed through an interwoven lens where innovations are anchored firmly within a framework of liberal education values. Both the social and technical bugs within discriminatory algorithms will need to be fixed. Sciences and social sciences will need to work in harmony for the world of the future, as one is incomplete without the other.

The writer is Director, Career Services, at Krea University

► SCHOLARSHIPS

■ IISER Kolkata SERB Department of Chemical Sciences Research Associateship 2021

Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata invites applications for a SERB-sponsored project titled, "Dynamical Insights into Fragmentations and Ionization of Molecules under the Influence of Intense Laser Pulses".

ELIGIBILITY: Open to candidates with a PhD in Theoretical Chemistry and experience in Quantum/Classical Dynamics.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: As per SERB norms

DEADLINE: March 15

APPLICATION: Via email
b4s.in/edge/KSBS

■ IIT Roorkee Department of Chemistry Post-Doctoral Fellowship 2021

The Department of Chemistry at IIT, Roorkee invites applications for the project "Probing the Complex Mechanism of pH low Insertion Peptides in a Model Cell Membranes Using Sum Frequency Generation Spectroscopy".

ELIGIBILITY: Open to candidates with a PhD in Physical Chemistry/Physics with experience in Laser Spectroscopy, MATLAB and LabVIEW. They must have prior post-doctoral experience. Candidates who have recently submitted their thesis are also eligible.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: ₹60,000 per month and a contingency grant of ₹50,000 per annum

DEADLINE: March 15

APPLICATION: Via email or by post to Professor and Head Department of Chemistry, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee 247667 Uttarakhand.
b4s.in/edge/RDC6

■ Rolls-Royce Unnati Scholarships for Women Engineering Students 2021

Rolls-Royce India Private Limited invites applications from girl students in engineering programmes.

ELIGIBILITY: Open to girls studying in an undergraduate engineering degree course like Aerospace, Computers, Electronics, Marine, etc. from an AICTE-recognised institution in India. Marks scored in Class X and XII board examinations should be more than 60%.

PRIZES AND REWARDS: ₹35,000

DEADLINE: March 31

APPLICATION: Online
b4s.in/edge/UINS2

CAREER OPTIONS

Building blocks to a new future

A career in construction and other allied industries presents a cornucopia of opportunities for aspirants

■ MANGESH G. KORGAONKER

Infrastructure continues to be one of the biggest contributors to our country's economy and, with the launch of the National Infrastructure Pipeline in 2019, the sector is seeing a massive push from the government and its subsidiaries. What does one need for a successful career in this field?

Options aplenty

Professionals need to be open to technological innovations as well as a formal project management policy framework. There have been several innovations such as aerial surveys, building information modelling (BIM), and radio frequency identification (RFID), which are changing how construction is carried out. Terms such as big data, analytics, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are finding applications in the construction sector. With a rapidly-changing landscape of products and methods

available, students need to stay updated on topics such as Lean Plan Do (LPD), Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM), Bentley systems digital construction software suite, software CALCON, and so on.

With regard to the formal policy framework, the Quality Council of India is creating a standard handbook on infrastructure project management knowledge and practices called the *Indian Infrastructure Book of Knowledge* (InBoK) under the aegis of the NITI Aayog. This will help in creating a certified programme, and allow project managers well-versed with the latest practices to tackle various risks that may arise during different phases of a project.

Teaching these methods and policies in construction management degree programmes will enable students to consider the whole life cycle of a project and incorporate these learnings in the projects they undertake, allowing

The writer is the Director General of the National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR)



SAVE THE DATE

■ BBA applications open

SVKM's NMIMS School of Hospitality Management (SoHM) invites applications for its BBA-Hospitality Operations & Management programme in Navi Mumbai. The course combines lectures and capstone projects with internship and industry visits.

ELIGIBILITY: Open to those who have passed 10+2 or equivalent examination with minimum 50% aggregate marks or those who have a diploma in Engineering with minimum 50% aggregate marks.

<https://sforce.co/3beaw8w>

■ Women for climate change

Supported by the British Council, Newcastle University is to announce seven fully funded scholarships for female students from South Asia interested in pursuing Master's in Climate Change.

ELIGIBILITY: Applicants must have submitted an application to study in one of the eligible Newcastle University postgraduate programmes in the eligible courses.

They should also have completed all components of an undergraduate degree that will enable them to gain entry onto a postgraduate programme at Newcastle University in September 2021. Applicant must be a passport holder and permanent resident of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. For full list, visit:

<https://bit.ly/3dln5m>

DEADLINE: March 26

<https://bit.ly/3bf0y5d>

■ Revamped EMBA

EHL has redesigned its Executive MBA (EMBA) to learn, to design, and to deliver innovative services by putting customer experience at the core of business strategy.

START DATE: Each fall semester in Singapore, as of 2021, as well as at EHL Campus Lausanne every spring intake as of 2022.

<https://info.ehl.edu/emba>

■ The culinary arts

Academy of Pastry and Culinary Arts has started a weekend certificate programme in Pastry & Bakery Arts for working professionals or hobbyists who want to enhance their skills. It will be a 12-week session conducted on Saturdays and Sundays from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.

IN FOCUS

Art and science of resource management

The skills acquired from the holistic study of economics can be successfully applied in one's role as consumer, producer, citizen or householder



■ KADAMBARI RANA

Indians have historically referred to economics as *Arthastra*; a combination of the Sanskrit words *artha*, meaning the acquisition of material wealth, pursuit of career and a home life and *shashtra* meaning treatise or book.

The English term economics, on the other hand, is derived from the ancient Greek word *Oikonomia* and was defined by Greek philosopher Aristotle as a science of household management.

The fourth century BCE work, *Arthastra*, attributed to Chanakya, is a treatise on economics, politics, military strategy, statecraft and social organisation. This internationally acclaimed text is often compared to and also studied in conjunction with *The Prince*, a 16th century BCE political treatise by Italian philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli.

These two ingenious minds belonging to the east and the west and separated by centuries of existence and different social, religious, economic and political environments continue to be studied by those who wish to enlighten themselves with the principles on which successful states function.

■ Multidisciplinary

In an earlier time, when India was considered the education capital of the world, Indian universities and ashrams fol-

lowed a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching and learning. At the time, *Arthastra* was studied in combination with politics, mathematics, human behaviour and policy making. In contrast, modern-day economics concern themselves only with the phenomenon of production and consumption of goods and services.

Students can be assisted to understand basic economic concepts such as limited resources, money, goods, services, transactions, labour time, leisure time, collaborative work, individual contributions, planning, and savings by involving them in simple tasks linked to the management of the household affairs, even early in childhood.

In school, under most education boards, economics is introduced as an independent subject in class IX. At the undergraduate level, students are not necessarily required to have studied economics at school but are certainly required to have studied Maths, since economics is considered both an art and a science.

A post-graduate in Economics can apply the skill sets acquired to many fields such as banking, finance, insurance, stock markets, sales, marketing, policy making, research, government, NGOs, journalism and in teaching. Those who have a keen interest in higher studies and research can also pursue an M.Phil. and Ph.D. after their Master's.

The writer is an independent educationist currently working on documenting her observations on children's play and learning experiences.

Timings
DELHI

MONDAY, MAR. 08	
RISE 06:39	SET 18:26
MOON 03:07	SET 13:31
TUESDAY, MAR. 09	
RISE 06:38	SET 18:26
MOON 04:02	SET 14:32
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 10	
RISE 06:37	SET 18:27
MOON 04:50	SET 15:34

Delhi Weather
max min

Delhi City 34 14

Safdarjung 34 14

Palam 33 18

Delhi Palarm Today
32°C Short spell of rain or thunderstorm may be a chance. Sky will turn mainly sunny during day.

Delhi Palarm Tomorrow
33°C A cool misty/hazy morning. Warm afternoon likely with light winds and mainly sunny sky.

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THE HINDU

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Delhi nearing end of pandemic phase: Jain

Capital reports 286 new cases with two deaths in 24 hours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



Satyendar Jain

Despite the number of daily cases witnessing an upward trend over the past week, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Sunday said COVID-19 was nearing an "endemic" phase in the Capital.

He said the positivity rate has been below 1% for over two months and not been fluctuating, which is a good sign.

"The positivity rate in November 2020 was at a high of 10-15%," he said.

"COVID-19 is nearing an endemic phase in Delhi. Experts say some cases will continue to occur in the endemic phase over the next few years, but it will not spread like it was in the pandemic phase. Delhi witnessed a swine flu outbreak around 10 years ago but still some cases are reported every year. COVID-19 is not going to end completely. We

will have to learn to live with it," Mr. Jain said.

Testing at all-time high'

He added that less than 10% of beds reserved for COVID-19 patients are occupied in the hospitals here and testing was at an all-time high. The health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Sunday said over 91,614 COVID-19 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours with a positivity rate of 0.31%.

The number of new cases was 286 and two patients

Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
6,41,101	10,921
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths
286	2

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

died due to the virus, it said. In the same period, 260 people recovered. The number of active cases in the Capital now stands at 1,803 with 937 under home isolation.

Out of the total tests conducted, 71,250 were RT-PCR and 20,364 were rapid antigen. This was the highest number of tests conducted in a single day since the pandemic began. The total cases now stand at 6,41,101 with the death toll touching 10,921 with cumulative positivity ratio of 5% and case fatality rate of 1.70%.

No foul play in Muthoot chief's death, say police

He fell to his death from fourth floor

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI



M. G. George •

Delhi police investigating the death of Muthoot group chairman, said on Sunday that there was no foul play in his death after the preliminary enquiry.

M.G. George, 72, died on Friday evening after he allegedly fell from the fourth floor of his house in southeast Delhi's East of Kailash.

A senior police officer said a crime team visited the spot where the incident happened. They have scanned all CCTVs in the house, including the one facing the entry to the terrace which Mr. George was seen entering after leaving the lift cabin.

"Mr. George was captured on the CCTV entering the terrace at 6.30 p.m. They have also found one chair next to the railing. The height of railing is around five feet. The crime and forensic team have taken measurements of the trajectory of the fall to confirm if he fell off the chair.

The location in the terrace from where he actually fell was out of CCTV range," said the officer.

He added that the police have spoken to the drivers and care takers of the house who were the first respon-

ders and found Mr. George lying on the ground floor. They informed the family members and rushed him to a hospital.

"The family said Mr. George used to stay on the first floor of the house and he often went to the terrace. We have checked the past recordings of CCTV at the terrace and nothing suspicious was found. We will try to speak to family members after the mourning period to get details of Mr. George's medical history if any," the officer said.

The family members also do not suspect any foul play, he said.

Police said that on Friday at 9.21 p.m., information was received at Amar Colony police station that Mr. George had fallen from the fourth floor of his residence.

Mothers who delivered in PCR vans to be Women's Day guests at police HQ

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Nine women, who delivered babies inside PCR vans during the lockdown, have been invited as guests to police headquarters on the occasion of International Women's Day, said officials on Sunday.

"The nine mothers have been invited by Delhi Police Commissioner as guests to our Women's Day programme tomorrow [Monday] to celebrate our association with them and the pride we got by helping them," said Delhi Police PRO Chinmay Biswal.

The police said its PCR unit took 997 pregnant women to various hospitals during the lockdown period. In nine such sensitive cases, deliveries took place in PCR vans

stance at Panchvati near Mandi Park, Palam. The team rushed to the spot where they found the woman along with her three children. They immediately called a woman, who ran a tea-stall nearby, for assistance. She checked the pregnant woman and said the delivery was imminent as the baby was half out of the mother's womb.

The staff made the necessary arrangements, and a girl child was born.

The baby, Sonia, is about one year old now, the police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (PCR) Isha Pandey, said: "The MPVs displayed exemplary conviction and commitment to duty by helping the women deliver their babies in PCR van though they are untrained for the same, thus taking the services of PCR to a higher level."

Man dies after water tanker hits his two-wheeler

Offending vehicle belongs to DJB, says victim's brother-in-law, who was riding pillion

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old man died after his two-wheeler was hit allegedly by a water tanker near the Delhi Jal Board office in south Delhi, the police said on Sunday.

The victim, Vinod Kumar, who lived with his family in Faridabad, worked at a private firm, they said.

The accident took place on March 4 at 5.30 p.m. when Kumar was returning from Gole market on

a scooter along with his brother-in-law, Promod. Vinod was riding the vehicle and as they reached near the DJB office, a water tanker hit their two-wheeler, an officer said. The victim was declared brought dead at Safdarjung hospital.

DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur said based on Promod's complaint, a case was registered under section 279 (rash driving or riding on a public way), 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life

or personal safety of other) and 304 A (causing death by negligence) of the IPC.

Notice to tanker owner
The owner of the tanker, identified as Sant Raj, has been served notice under the Motor Vehicles Act. The driver of the offending vehicle will be produced on Monday.

On Sunday, Promod told the media that the water tanker that hit them belonged to Delhi Jal Board.

The police are verifying the claims.

He said soon after the tanker hit them, they fell on the ground and Vinod sustained severe injuries on his head. "With the help of an autorickshaw driver, I rushed him to Safdarjung Hospital," he said.

Sole breadwinner
Vinod was the sole breadwinner of his family. He is survived by his wife and children, aged three and two.

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Worker cluster in Kasan back to life after a year

A large cluster in the village is abuzz with activity once again after the COVID-19-induced lockdown

ASHOK KUMAR

KASAN

A large cluster of rows of single-room accommodations, mostly inhabited by unskilled workers, on the outskirts of Kasan village adjoining the Manesar Industrial Model Township buzzed again with activities almost a year after the COVID-19-induced lockdown.

In sharp contrast to its deserted look in April last year, the place has now come alive with children playing football on the streets, all shops in the neighbourhood open and rooms freshly painted in pink. Also, the mask and social distancing seem to be things of the past.

Most of the workers are back to their previous jobs and rooms are occupied.

Manoj Kumar and his wife Gayatri, a couple from Uttar Pradesh, had gone home for Holi last year only to return in June after a call from their company. Manoj, working at a home furnishing company, earns around ₹9,000 per month with the wages having marginally increased by ₹250 in January. "We soon expect the rent to hike by



(From left) Boys playing football on the street and people sitting in front of freshly painted rows of single-room accommodations in Kasan village on Sunday. ■ ASHOK KUMAR



₹100 like the previous years," said Manoj. Ganga (52) had stayed back during the lockdown. She also got her job back in the same company in June last year.

Their companies had paid them ₹5,000 for two months during the lockdown. Though too little, any money was welcome, they said.

No more overtime*

The jobs are back, but the fall in production means no overtime for the poor workers. Pushpendra (23), a helper at an auto components factory, would make an ad-

ditional ₹2,000-2,500 per month working for extra hours earlier. However, the company's production has gone down since lockdown and there is little chance of earning from overtime now.

Jeetu, from Uttar Pradesh's Etah, said the number of workers in his company has gone down from 80 earlier to just 50. "The workers sit idle even during the routine eight-hour shift. So there is no chance of an overtime," he said. "There is not enough work back home. So all those who left during the lockdown are

back. In fact, more people have come than had gone," added Jeetu.

Ranjan (28) had earlier worked at a plywood company in Yamuna Nagar, but came to Manesar with his younger brother after the lockdown. "My earlier employer did not pay me around ₹10,000 for the month of March. Besides, the months that I spent without work left me debt-ridden. The lockdown has left me shattered," he said. He added that he walked around a 1,000 km to his village in Bihar during the lock-

down, with his friends. "It took us a week. We mostly walked at night," he recalled.

A "chawl" in the village, locally identified as "pili [yellow] building", with around 90 rooms, is also fully occupied again. Rajiv, who hails from Allahabad and is one of the inhabitants of the building, returned in November last year to find out that his earlier job in an electrical gadgets manufacturing company was gone. "It took me around a month to find a new job," he said.

Oppn. ready to take on Kejriwal govt. in budget session today

Budget likely to have special allocation for free vaccination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly's budget session is scheduled to begin on Monday. An address by Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal will be followed by the tabling of economic survey report and outcome budget of the government by Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister.

The Delhi Budget 2021-22, is scheduled to be presented on March 9, the second day of the session. Sources in the Delhi government said that the focus of the budget is likely to be on education and health with a special allocation for free COVID-19 vaccination at government hospitals.

On the education front, the government is likely to announce the opening of a

We have resolved to hold the Kejriwal government accountable for its failure to fulfil its promises to the people of Delhi

RAMVIR SINGH BIDHURI
Leader of the Opposition in Assembly

Sainik School in the city and take measures to promote yoga in the Capital.

"The government wants to increase Delhi's per capita income to the level of Singapore by 2047. The budget will focus on economic reforms and policies that will help take steps in that direction," the source said.

No question hour

Ahead of the budget session, Leader of the Opposition, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said

that the BJP had decided to adopt an aggressive strategy to take up issues during the seven-day long session. Budget session will, for the first time, witness question hour being terminated for no valid reasons. "We have resolved to hold the Kejriwal government accountable for its failure to fulfil its promises to the people of Delhi," Mr. Bidhuri said.

He added that it was unfortunate that the AAP government was overlooking all constitutional and legislative norms during the budget session. It would be the first time in the history of the House that question hour will not be held, which clearly indicates that the government was running away from answering questions being raised on its functioning and policies.

12 Delhi Metro stations on Red Line renovated

Work started in July 2019: DMRC

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on Sunday said that it had completed the renovation of 12 metro stations on the Red Line which is its oldest line to keep pace with changing times.

The DMRC said that it had started a massive renovation exercise in July 2019 to renovate 21 of its stations between Dilshad Garden and Rithala section of the Red Line. It has completed the renovation of 12 stations. "These stations of the metro network opened under its Phase-I/II. The exercise was aimed at giving an enhanced aesthetic look and upgradation of various infrastructure.

It added that renovation



The exercise was aimed at giving an enhanced aesthetic look and upgradation of various infrastructure.

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works include replacement of exterior facade with contemporary easy to maintain material, relaying dilapidated granite flooring, retro-plating of platforms, new signages as per latest specifications, replacement of analogue CCTV cameras with digital version for enhanced clarity among other works.

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Tom Joseph
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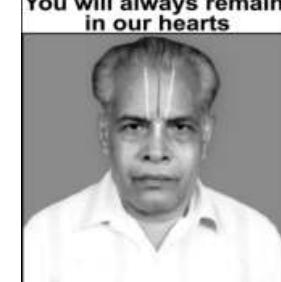
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दिनांक 05/03/2021

सीमित निविदा आमत्रण की सूचना

वित्तीय वर्ष 2020-21 में प्रतिवर्ष आमत्रिक निविदा आमत्रण योजना 2018-19 के अंतर्गत तालिकाकुसूरा उपकरणों का क्रय किया जाना है, जिनके तकनीकी स्पेशिफिकेशन संलग्न हैं। निम्न शर्तों के अधीन दिनांक 19/03/2021 तक सीमित निविदा प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है।

ASSEMBLY POLLS

DELI THE HINDU | MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2021

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



Forecast for Tuesday: Thunderstorm with lightning, hail and gusty winds are very likely in isolated parts of Uttarakhand. Lightning and gusty winds are also likely in isolated places in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	13.9	32.5	19.7	Kochikode	—	34.4	25.4
Ahmedabad	—	38.9	19.7	Kurnool	—	38.5	21.8
Aizawl	—	24.7	9.7	Lucknow	—	33.6	15.8
Allahabad	—	34.2	14.0	Madurai	—	35.8	23.1
Bengaluru	—	35.9	17.5	Mangaluru	—	35.4	21.1
Bhopal	—	34.2	16.4	Mumbai	—	33.2	23.0
Bhubaneswar	—	40.4	21.6	Mysuru	—	33.7	13.0
Chandigarh	—	30.2	17.6	New Delhi	—	32.9	16.7
Chennai	—	33.2	24.8	Patna	—	32.6	15.2
Coimbatore	—	36.1	22.4	Poorni Blair	—	31.5	24.1
Dehradun	—	29.0	11.0	Puducherry	—	32.8	21.8
Gangtok	—	12.9	8.2	Pune	—	36.5	19.9
Goa	—	33.0	24.1	Raipur	—	34.8	14.6
Guwahati	4.7	28.4	17.1	Ranchi	—	34.2	14.4
Hubballi	—	35.0	19.4	Shillong	7.2	21.0	9.6
Hyderabad	—	36.6	19.7	Shimla	2.2	13.4	6.6
Imphal	—	28.4	12.5	Srinagar	—	15.6	7.0
Jaipur	—	36.0	18.9	Tiruvananthapuram	—	34.9	24.4
Kochi	—	32.2	25.6	Tiruchi	—	36.7	23.2
Kohima	—	2.2	24.0	Vijayawada	—	36.1	22.2
Kolkata	—	34.6	22.3	Visakhapatnam	—	31.6	25.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	49	89	42	180	—	■■■■■
Bengaluru	.5	69	23	91	104	■■■■■
Chennai	22	18	—	40	.58	■■■■■
Delhi	36	105	75	.279	.301	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.2	59	26	.77	.113	■■■■■
Kolkata	17	80	20	.196	.151	■■■■■
Lucknow	14	102	42	.175	.174	■■■■■
Mumbai	32	34	63	.64	.50	■■■■■
Pune	—	9	22	.83	.78	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	10	.56	27	.69	.111	■■■■■

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI) SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

BJP, allies face vote share challenge in Assam polls

Minus the percentage of votes its former ally BPF garnered, the BJP-led alliance's 2016 vote share dips by 3.94% to 37.65%

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

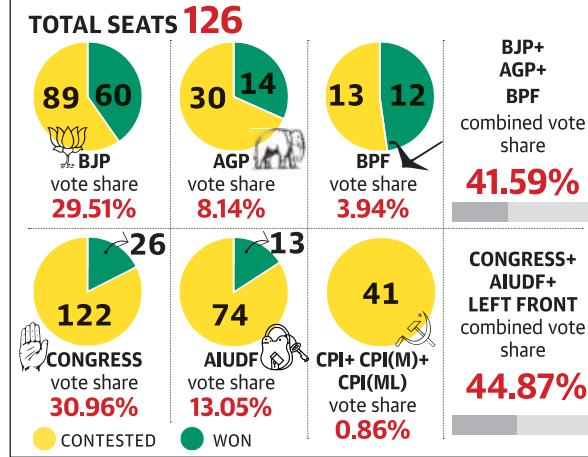
Numbers can be deceiving. But if one goes by the vote share of parties in the 2016 Assembly polls, the Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies approach mandate 2021 behind the Congress-led *Mahajot* or grand alliance.

The BJP had ahead of the three-phase polls announced its "Mission 100", targeting at least 100 of Assam's 126 Assembly seats. The party and its two regional allies - the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) - had achieved two more seats than its "Mission 84" in the 2016 polls.

The BJP has replaced the BPF with its rival United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), which hardly had any presence in the last elections. The BPF has joined the *maha-*

NUMBERS GAME

VOTE SHARE OF PARTIES IN 2016 ASSAM ELECTIONS



hajot this time.

State BJP president Ranjeet Kumar Dass had in an interview to *The Hindu* calculated the "winnability" his party

based on the feedback from an army of 4 lakh 'prishtha pramukhs' (BJP worker in charge of a page of the electoral roll containing 60 voters).

Proven poll strategy

The confidence has also come from the proven poll strategy of Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, whose seat prediction has been near-perfect in four Assembly polls till 2016, three of them when he was with Congress.

But the BJP faces more challenges than the Congress this time. Apart from the BPF, the Congress has teamed up with the minority-based All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), the CPI, CPI (Marxist) and CPI (Marxist-Leninist) to take on the BJP.

The BJP had won 60 of the 89 seats it contested in 2016, while the Congress won 26 of 122 seats. But the BJP's vote share was 1.45% less than the

Rajior Dal have also forged a regional front to prevent the BJP from retaining power. Theirs is avowedly a forum against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which the *Mahajot* is also opposing.

State Congress president Ripun Bora said the groundswell of sentiments against the CAA, price rise and misrule of the BJP has made the *Mahajot* upbeat about getting "100+ seats". "Let's see who gets how many this time, but one must remember our alliance partners had more vote share than the BJP and its allies in 2016, and there is no Modi wave this time," AIUDF president Maulana Badruddin Ajmal said.

The BJP had won 17 seats

30.96% of the Congress.

The combined vote share of the BJP, AGP and BPF in 2016 was 41.59%. Minus that of the BPF, the vote share works out to 37.65%. Adding the vote share of UPPL, which was negligible in 2016, would hardly make any difference for the BJP-led alliance.

If one adds the 2016 vote share of the BPF, the CPI, CPI (M) and CPI(ML), the *Mahajot* heads to the polls with a combined vote share of 48.81%. This includes the 13.05% mustered by the AIUDF, which had won 13 of the 74 seats it had contested. A deeper analysis reveals that the Congress-AIUDF vote share was higher in 17 seats the BJP had won in 2016. The combined vote share of the Congress and the AIUDF was also higher in two seats the AGP had won.

Denied ticket, Assam BJP Minister returns to Congress

Sum Ronghang was one of 11 MLAs sidelined by BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Snubbed by the Bharatiya Janata Party, Assam Minister Sum Ronghang returned to the Congress on Sunday.

Mr. Ronghang, who held the portfolios of Hill Areas Development, besides Mines and Minerals, was one of 11 MLAs whom the BJP denied a ticket. He joined the Congress in the presence of party general secretary Jitendra Singh and other senior leaders.

The Congress is likely to field the out-of-favour Minister from Diphu, the Assem-

by constituency in the hill district of Karbi Anglong that he represents.

On March 5, another BJP leader and a former Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) member, Bitupon Saikia joined the Congress.

Leader joins Rajior Dal

Azizur Rahman, advisor to the influential All Assam Minority Students' Union, became the Rajior Dal candidate for the Naobocha seat soon after joining the Congress on Sunday.

The announcement of his candidature followed the se-

cond list of 50 candidates that ally Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) released.

Among these seats is Naobocha, where the AJP nominated retired teacher Putali Kayastha.

The AJP also nominated Alok Ghosh, a former BJP leader, for the Mariani seat.

On Sunday, the Asom Gana Parishad too declared its first list of candidates. Among the eight names declared are party president and Agriculture Minister Atul Bora (Bokakhat seat) and Water Resources Minister Keshab Mahanta (Kaliabor).

Gandhi-led party has tied up with the Left and the Indian Secular Front in West Bengal against the BJP and the Trinamool Congress.

The TMC chief has asked the Jharkhand Chief Minister to campaign for her, the JMM leader said, adding that party chief Shibu Soren has been informed about the request.

After the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Samajwadi Party and the Shiv Sena, Ms. Ba-

njerjee had said last week that the TMC has received support from the JMM and the Nationalist Congress Party for the Assembly polls.

"In West Bengal, communication keeps happening with Mamata Banerjee as being in neighbouring States, issues are regularly discussed," a senior JMM leader said on condition of anonymity.

The TMC chief has asked the Jharkhand Chief Minister to campaign for her, the JMM leader said, adding that party chief Shibu Soren has been informed about the request.

The farmer, who supported the agitation against Centre's new farm laws, has purportedly left a suicide note, they said.

"The victim, Rajbir, hailed from a village in Hissar district. He was found hanging from a tree," Bahadurgarh City police station SHO, Vijay Kumar said.

His body was found hanging by some farmers who informed the police.

In the suicide note purportedly left behind by Rajbir, it is mentioned that the three farm laws were responsible for him to take the extreme step.

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

PM has time for rallies in Bengal but not for protesting farmers at Delhi borders'



Jayant Chaudhary addressing a kisan panchayat in Baghpat on Sunday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

organised by RLD in Dhikoli village of Baghpat.

Taking the name of a local farmer who allegedly ended his life because of bank loan and hike in electricity charges, he charged, on one hand farmers of Baghpat owe ₹1,342 crore to government

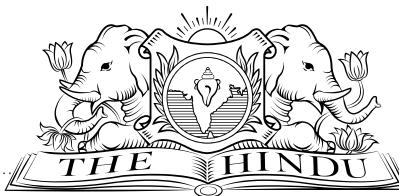
banks but on the other at least their ₹900 crore of payment is pending with sugar mills.

"The three farm laws will act as the last nail in the coffin of farmers," Mr. Chaudhary remarked.

Taking on Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, he said "the PM could sell comb to a bald person. He has time to hold rallies in Bengal, but he could not visit farmers protesting at Delhi borders."

"PM bigger than nation?" When you are in politics, he said, one should be keen to listen to his critics



Misplaced concern

SC should not allow outrage industry to shape moves to tighten OTT content regulation

It is a matter of concern that the Supreme Court chose to convert a routine hearing on a petition for anticipatory bail from an executive of the Amazon Prime Video into an occasion to call for tightening the regulatory norms for over-the-top streaming services in the country. Aparna Purohit, India Commercial Head of the content streaming platform, sought advance bail after the Allahabad High Court denied her the relief with a sweeping declaration that some offending scenes on a new series, now deleted, constituted punishable offences. Accused of hurting religious sentiments by allowing the streaming of *Tandav*, Ms. Purohit did get protection from arrest, but what is disconcerting is that the Court went through the recently notified rules for digital media and intermediaries and observed that these lacked teeth. It is quite unusual and, in fact, gratuitous, that a constitutional court should push for more stringent rules after finding that the Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, did not provide for punishment and fine. The Court's very approach is way out of line. The new rules are essentially restrictions on free speech and expression through digital media. Courts generally examine the validity of such curbs on free speech and decide whether they are reasonable or too restrictive. It is unusual that the apex court should seek to go beyond what the executive describes as 'soft-touch monitoring', and press for inclusion of punishment clauses.

The Court seems to be concerned about obscenity and uncensored content on streaming services, the ostensible reason for its incursion into regulatory territory, when there was no challenge to the new rules before it. When the matter is taken up again, the Court should bestow attention on the High Court order that gave rise to the proceedings, an order that shows extraordinary zeal to protect religious sentiment. While refusing pre-arrest bail, the High Court has made an unusual claim that the title '*Tandav*' itself could hurt the sentiments of a majority of Indians because it is associated with Lord Shiva. It has observed that alluding to Lord Ram gaining popularity on social media is a reference to the Ayodhya dispute, and, therefore, offensive. It has a sweeping claim that the Hindi film industry, in contrast to its southern counterparts, was generally disrespectful to the Hindu religion. It would be unfortunate if the judiciary lets itself be seen as departing from its record of protecting individuals harassed by those claiming that their religious or cultural sentiments have been hurt by some work of art, or even remarks or gestures by celebrities. The new norms for regulation of online content have their origin in the Supreme Court voicing concern about child pornography and content that could provoke sectarian violence. While that was a justified concern, the tendency to allow anyone professing a sense of hurt to prosecute anyone anywhere in the country should not be encouraged. The higher judiciary is expected to clamp down on the 'marketplace of outrage', not join it.

Slow and steady

Debate on pitches will continue, but India's supremacy over England was not in doubt

It was back to the tried and tested methods as India's practitioners of the slow-art, especially R. Ashwin and debutant Axar Patel, helped Virat Kohli's men clinch a 3-1 Test series triumph over England. India's innings and 25-run victory in the fourth Test at Ahmedabad, concluded a series that was largely one-sided barring England's win in the opening encounter at Chennai. Like it did in Australia, India shrugged aside the early loss and turned around its fortunes in riveting fashion. The pitches on offer, especially for the third game, may not have been ideal, tending to age faster besides providing the obvious impetus to spin. Despite the surface-tension, the strips were in no way diabolical like some of the 22-yards offered in the past, especially in the 1980s when a few pitches made batting arduous. In the latest series, after skipper Joe Root's double ton in Chennai set the stage for an England ambush, a stung India mounted a fiery comeback and ensured that the Englishmen never repeated their heroics of 1984 and 2012, when they humbled the host.

This was not just another success at home as the four Tests were invested with the larger goal of qualifying for the World Test Championship final in England from June 18 to 22. Originally scheduled to be held at Lord's, there seems to be some ambiguity as England is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic's second-wave and there is a push to have it at Southampton's bio-secure Ageas Bowl, which also has a hotel within the premises. Lord's may still conduct the premier clash but India's rival is certain – Kane Williamson's New Zealand, an opponent that stunned Kohli's men in the 2019 World Cup semifinal at Manchester. Meanwhile, it is time for limited-overs cricket to take centre-stage. India and England will play five Twenty20Is and three ODIs before the Indian Premier League commences on April 9. For now, Kohli and company besides the coaching staff led by Ravi Shastri deserve credit for a splendid performance. The flowering of Rishabh Pant, Axar, Washington Sundar and Mohammed Siraj reflects a solid bench-strength. The excellence of youth and the terrific form of Ashwin and Rohit Sharma, papered over the modest returns from Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane and Shubman Gill. India has topped the ICC Test rankings but in June under low-slung clouds and on an English pitch laced with grass and against crafty New Zealand seamers, a tougher scrutiny awaits.

Commemorating change, changing commemoration

With more awareness of other histories of struggle, India needs to ask what it wants to celebrate, on March 8 or 10



MARY E. JOHN

Among the many "international days" initiated by the United Nations, the best known is the one for women. Given its widespread institutionalisation by nation-states as well as private corporations targeting the woman consumer, many may now know something about its history. It began over a century ago as a commemoration of the struggles of women factory workers and was first organised by socialist movements as "international women's day".

From the 1920s onwards, it began to be celebrated annually by communist parties, first in the Soviet Union and then in China. Much later, the United Nations "established" International Women's Day in 1977 in the wake of the International Women's Year in 1975. In India, as elsewhere, movement-led campaigns and gatherings on March 8 spread from the 1980s.

Savitribai Phule's legacy

In the last few years, Dalit and Bahujan feminists in India have been issuing a call to use this occasion to celebrate a different legacy, that of Savitribai Phule, long ignored by upper caste histories of women's rights. Savitribai's own biography is now being gradually recovered, rescuing her from being restricted to the role of the intrepid wife of Jyotiba Phule, who is himself celebrated for his dedica-

tion to the cause of "social justice" against women's caste-differentiated enslavement. Born in 1831, Savitribai was colonial India's first woman teacher. Her death on March 10, 1897 has made it possible to commemorate her life and legacy as "our" International Women's Day. The Bahujan-feminist perspective emphasises the central importance of access to a non-Brahmin form of education for the larger agenda of transforming the gender, caste and labour structures in our society.

Shaheen Bagh, the lockdown

As we educate ourselves about alternate histories of struggle, we must also ask what it is we would want to celebrate in 2021, whether on March 8 or March 10? What has the last year given us? A year ago, the city of Delhi (where I live) was witness to horrific riots mainly targeting Muslim property and lives. Its purpose was to bring months of peaceful protests against the discriminatory Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) to a violent end, protests that had been led by Muslim women. A series of sit-ins in parks and public places in several cities, most famously on the highway abutting Shaheen Bagh, during the cold winter months from December 2019 to February 2020, were brought to a sudden halt. This was followed by the even more shocking spate of arrests of those alleged to have been the leaders of these peaceful protests, many of them young women and students, on the charges of having incited the very riots that ended the protests.

Then in March came the state's policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic – the world's largest



V.V. KRISHNAN

and strictest country-wide lockdown announced with four hours' notice. The planet was eerily drawn together by the very isolation created by efforts to control the pandemic's spread. We were treated to silent, empty streets, images of sparkling blue rivers, the smell of clean air, loud birdsong, and animals emerging from their hidden habitats. Indians glued to their screens soon received another shock as they witnessed hitherto invisible city-dwellers – migrant workers and their families – forced to walk hundreds of kilometres to their rural homes in search of food, shelter and care. Videos of women carrying bundles and small children along deserted highways and railway tracks were headline material. Everyday life became unviable for vast numbers and relief workers were hard pressed to meet their basic survival needs.

The home in focus

In the months that have elapsed since, there has been an unprecedented outpouring of writings about the effects of the pandemic and lockdown across the world. Much has been said about the "in-

equality virus", even though its worst victims have been elderly men living in some of the richest countries of the world.

One sphere in particular has come into sharp focus in these pandemic discourses, that of the home. Being "locked down" meant being "locked in" – workers who could do so had to work from home, children had to study from home, and even people who had lost their jobs had to stay at home. Overnight, the home became the centre of attention – the very sphere that feminists have long been struggling to make visible. In "normal" times, the home silently houses the labour, work and care responsible for the reproduction of society without due recognition. Many men forced to work from home by the pandemic were seeing for the first time the other kinds of "home work" that they had always taken for granted. Some were more ready to condemn domestic violence – another kind of "home work" that had been going on for ages.

Women figured prominently in the attention the home was now receiving. New questions were being asked: Would the absence of paid domestic workers in middle-class families make the men of these families more willing to take on domestic responsibilities? Would the institutions of the state finally give care work and housework the recognition due to them? Unfortunately, as life limps back to a strange new "normal", the answer appears to be no. Although women took on the greatest burdens when life was in crisis, they should not expect recognition of any kind.

But violence against women

was not confined to women's homes even during the pandemic.

New movements

From the State of Uttar Pradesh in particular, came many reports of extreme sexual assaults on, and even the murder of, Dalit girls who stepped out to work. The accounts are numbing, regardless of whether they also include information about the arrest of perpetrators. The only silver lining here (as with the Hathras rape case) has been the leadership of a new generation of Dalit women demanding accountability from the state.

This winter also witnessed the birth of a new social movement near the borders of Delhi, as farmers brushed aside pandemic protocols and arrived *en masse* to protest against the new farm laws. While media images focused on the weather-beaten faces of older men, there were also women who spoke out about their rights as women farmers. These protests are showing no sign of abating while they offer new lessons about the worlds that make possible the food we eat.

We cannot know what Savitribai would have said on March 10, 2021 to the Shaheen Bagh *dadis*, to students, mothers and farmers, to the families of the victims of violation. But we do know that nothing stopped her and her comrades – not being thrown out of the family home for breaking caste codes, nor the widespread enmity they encountered – from working for the new Satyashodhak Samaj of their dreams.

Mary E. John is at the Centre for Women's Development Studies. The views expressed are personal

Now, an expanded horizon of surveillance

'Citizen watch' gets a new meaning after the notification on the IT Rules, 2021 – the promotion of lateral surveillance



MIRA SWAMINATHAN

This year, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I.C.C), under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), launched the Cyber Crime Volunteers Program with the aim to allow citizens to register themselves as "Cyber Crime Volunteers" in the role of "Unlawful Content Flaggers". As per the official website of the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (<https://bit.ly/202yaq6>), the programme will help law enforcement agencies in identifying, reporting and in the removal of illegal/unlawful online content. The programme, which will be launched all over the country, is going to have its test run in Jammu and Kashmir and Tripura.

An explainer

This form of surveillance, which enables citizens to "watch over" one another is called lateral surveillance. The conventional understanding of the term, surveillance, is its use in the hierarchical sense, i.e. the vertical relationship between the person watching and the person being watched, which is usually the state and its citizenry. Lateral or social or peer-to-peer surveillance differs from typical

surveillance.

While surveillance of any kind shows an imbalance of power between the person who surveils, and the one under surveillance, lateral surveillance specifically ensures that the imbalance of power no longer exists. Informal watching of communities by their members has been an age-old part of society, and its members view it as a harmless activity. The problem arises when it is organised and state-sponsored.

In the 1970s, the United States had the neighborhood watch schemes which increased community policing. With the introduction of technology and development of applications such as Citizen and Nextdoor, monitoring of people and their behaviour has become easier. Further, government and private sector institutions alike collect swathes of data for supposedly 'public functions'. Specifically in the sphere of crime prevention, much like the cyber crime prevention programme, there has been a transition in the outlook from a 'punishing state' to a 'preventive state'.

Its extent in India

This is not the first time state-sponsored lateral surveillance has been implemented in India. For example, the C-Plan App in Uttar Pradesh launched for keeping a tab on anti-social elements, is designed to receive inputs from certain identified individuals in villages across the State. These



individuals have been given the responsibility to solve local problems such as providing information about simmering communal tensions or land disputes taking place in their respective villages through the mobile application.

The scope of lateral surveillance was greatly expanded during the pandemic lockdown, both with and without the introduction of technology. The Karnataka government released a PDF with the names and addresses of around 19,000 international passengers who were quarantined in Bengaluru while in the North, a woman was harassed and boycotted by her neighbours after the Delhi government marked her house with a quarantine sticker.

Tool for exclusion, suspicion

If a pattern were to be drawn, one notices that lateral surveillance is used to further emotional objectives such as community building and strengthening relationships with neighbours where emotional and social factors act as a driving force, thus creating a situation

where privacy may be undermined for the betterment of the community.

However, surveillance technologies not only act as a tool for social control but also as a tool for social exclusion. Lateral surveillance thus makes it easier to discriminate between those who conform to the social norms of the majority. For example, the LGBT community in South Korea came under the scanner after a cluster of novel coronavirus cases were reported from a particular area which had resulted in large-scale circulation of homophobic content and comments against the patients who tested positive from the community. This not only made it difficult for authorities to collect information but also increased troubles for the people belonging to the sexual minority in getting themselves tested.

State-sponsored lateral surveillance is harmful as it creates a culture of 'hate', 'fear' and 'constant suspicion' against an 'enemy'. Wherever the state identifies that it "cannot be everywhere", it deploys this mechanism. This culture places a duty on people to 'keep an eye out' for their own safety' and this heightens the fear of crime in society.

Such perceived threats have a tendency to increase intolerance, prejudice, xenophobia and casteism in our society, while also violating the fundamental right to privacy, and, consequently, the unfettered expression of free

speech and behaviour.

In policy

Despite the potential harm, the government, on February 25, notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (<https://bit.ly/3kRdw0C>) which intends to expand "due diligence" obligations by intermediaries. However, this not only substantially increases surveillance but also promotes lateral surveillance. For example provisions pertaining to user directed take downs of non-consensual sexually explicit content or 'any other' matters' and even the harsh content take down/data sharing timelines will enable intermediaries to remove or disable access to information within a short period of time of being notified by users, circumventing the "actual knowledge" doctrine given in *Shreya Singhal vs Union of India*. This will further create an incentive to take down content and share user data without sufficient due process safeguards, violating the fundamental right to privacy and freedom of expression. One wonders how long it would be before a neighbour with a "passion to serve the nation on a single platform and contribute in [the] fight against cybercrime in the country" reports you or me on a social media platform or otherwise.

Mira Swaminathan is a public policy lawyer based in Delhi. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Notes from the field

As COVID-19 cases are again on the rise in India, it is time for massive acceleration of vaccination. I suggest the following measures: involving more private hospitals for vaccination; massive publicity by the government through the media to create awareness through the services of film personalities, politicians and sports persons; removing the co-morbidity clause for those above 45 years as it consumes more time to verify this. Eventually, all adults are to be inoculated; observation time after vaccination can be reduced or even removed as we have seen that there is no major untoward event after inoculating more than 2 crore people. This will avoid crowding at the centre; vaccination camps can be conducted at industries, big apartments

and shopping malls; vaccination can be done on Sundays too, which will benefit office-goers. Finally, registration on the CoWIN database should be removed as people are of the impression that only those who are registered can get vaccinated. In fact, most people are walking in without registration.

**D.S. C.R. MOHAN,
Chennai**

■ I am 87, and therefore scared to get vaccinated. After a lot of coaxing I went to a corporate hospital in Hyderabad. To my surprise, I found nearly 150 to 200 senior citizens jostling around the registration counter. This made me feel uneasy and I returned home. Later, a friend of mine took me and a few other senior citizens to a government hospital in the Golconda area. I was surprised to find no crowds in the designated area, with the hospital

authorities having made special arrangements for seating. The vaccination was handled by a well-experienced nurse. I have been wrong about government hospitals.

**M.P. RAO,
Hyderabad**

■ I was pleasantly surprised by the impeccable arrangements made in the COVID-19 vaccination drive. In Chennai, I was vaccinated at the government-run health centre, at Palavakkam (ECR). The entire process took less than five minutes followed by an observation period of 30 minutes after the jab. The staff were very courteous and the ambience was clean. These efforts will instil more confidence in the public to use such public facilities.

**M.B. MADHUSUDANAN,
Chennai**

■ I write this as an executive committee member of the Indian Academy of Geriatrics

and also as the head and director of the department of geriatric medicine of two hospitals. The second phase of vaccination seems to be doing well. However, the more important question is about getting non-ambulant elders vaccinated. A vast majority of the elderly are either too terrified to leave the safety of their homes or are physically dependent on others for various needs.

One way to implement this may be by empowering *anganwadi* workers and palliative organisations to administer the vaccine at their homes. They may be charged a nominal fee and may be required to produce a disability certificate from their family physicians. With an efficient registration mechanism, this should not be a hurdle.

**D.R. STEVE PAUL,
Thrissur, Kerala**

■ There is now an urgent need to publish the list of

both private and government hospitals administering the vaccine in leading national and vernacular newspapers. The information will help senior citizens in particular. The same step can be done on various digital and social media platforms.

**VARUN DAMBAL,
Bengaluru**

■ Crowds of people, many of them elderly, at hospitals are decreasing the efficiency of the vaccination process. A dedicated telephone number would help reduce the complaints of recipients as well as those of younger people who accompany the elders.

The entire process needs to

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

The election page lead story titled "No titans to skipper, but many ship in storm" (March 6, 2021) was not updated for the city editions and hence carried the line: "Though the seat-sharing arrangement with the BJP has not yet been finalised, the AIADMK is expected to give nearly 25 seats." The two parties, however, reached an agreement late in the night

Railways and a question of transparency

They are in the midst of a financial distress and are faced with fundamental organisational issues



K. BALAKESARI

A surprising feature of the post-Budget discourse in Parliament and in the media these past few weeks has been the total absence of one topic: Railways. Apparently, the understated objective of doing away with a separate Budget for the Railways, namely, shifting the spotlight away from it, has been handsomely achieved. However, sweeping under the carpet the serious problems of viability facing the country's largest and most crucial transport organisation, by taking cover behind the diversions provided by other, more topical issues thrown up by the Union Budget, will not make them disappear.

Finances are out of whack

Recent public statements about the performance of the Railways on the freight front seem to suggest that all is well with the Railways. In a recent interview, the CEO and Chairman of the Railway Board highlighted the fact that freight loading in January 2021 was the highest ever. A recent press report says that the freight earnings in 2020-21 are likely to be more than in 2019-20 despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both these achievements are commendable by themselves but need to be seen in proper perspective. About the record-breaking loading in January 2021, what is relevant is the freight earnings, which during the entire year are projected to be ₹1,24,184.00 crore in the Revised Estimates for 2020-21. This is, in fact, lower than what was achieved in 2018-19 (₹1,27,432.72 crore). As for the freight revenues going past that of the last financial year, that was only to be expected, with freight traffic having a relatively free run due to cancellation of most regular passenger services due to COVID-19.

Meanwhile, an important financial performance index has been airbrushed to project a picture totally removed from reality. The Operating Ratio (OR), which is broadly the ratio of working expenses to revenues, has



been artificially kept below 100% by making less-than-required provision for pension payments during 2019-20 and 2020-21. While the official figures of OR are 98.36% for 2019-20 and 96.96% for 2020-21, the actual OR works out to 114.19% and 131.49%, respectively, if the required provision is made for pension payments. The purpose of indulging in this self-delusional exercise is not clear. Technically, the Indian Railways are well and truly in the red. Tinkering with statistics cannot alter that reality.

Perhaps for the first time ever, the Indian Railways were unable to adequately provide for the Pension Fund, both for 2019-20 and 2020-21, totalling ₹78,119 crore. The Railway Ministry has reportedly sought a loan from the Central Exchequer to meet this shortfall. While the under-provisioning for 2020-21 can be explained by the shortfall in revenues due to the pandemic, the shortfall amounting to ₹27,642 crore even during 2019-20 (when there was no COVID-19) should be a cause for serious concern. In fact, the passenger and freight earnings in 2019-20 were less than in 2018-19, indicating that a downside had started even before the outbreak of COVID-19, probably due to the economic slowdown. Railway finances are out of whack. And COVID-19 has nothing to do with it.

Immediate challenges

It is not as though all this has happened suddenly. The fact is, over the years, traffic revenues have been unable to keep pace with the increase in staff costs and pension payments. While the passenger and freight revenues increased by 84.8% from 2010-11 to 2019-20, the staff and pension costs raced ahead at almost double that rate, by 157%, in the same period. Further, while in 2010-11, the

staff plus pension costs formed 55.7% of the traffic earnings, by 2019-20, they had shot up to 77.5% of the traffic earnings. This, despite the fact that there has been a reduction of about one lakh staff on roll during this period. The spike in the staff and pension costs is largely attributable to the implementation of the Central Pay Commission recommendations, a 10-yearly feature. Being a Ministry of the Government of India, the Indian Railway's finances are bound to be subjected to another fatal body blow by the next (Eighth) Pay Commission around 2025-26. Therefore, the immediate challenges are achieving a quantum jump in the revenues, particularly on the freight front, and a drastic reduction in the number of employees, there being no way to reduce the number of pensioners in the short run.

It is in this context that the full commissioning of the two Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs), slated to be operational by 2022, assumes great urgency and importance. A related aspect is the product mix of freight that will be carried in the near future. A disturbing feature of freight traffic is the overwhelming dependence on one commodity: coal. Despite all the marketing efforts over the years, almost 50% of freight earnings are contributed by the transport of coal. With the availability of alternative sources of renewable energy such as solar at competitive prices, the dependence on coal-based thermal power plants is bound to reduce to meet the incremental energy needs. Even these are likely to be set up at the pitheads, requiring no substantial movement over the Railways system. Also, India is a signatory to the 2015 Paris Agreement, committed to achieving targeted reductions in carbon emissions in a time-bound

manner. The Railways have to therefore think seriously of a life after coal. An option that merits consideration is the adoption of the roll-on/roll-off model of transporting loaded trucks on rail on the DFCs, which apart from boosting revenues has the added advantage of reducing the overall carbon footprint.

The other major challenge facing the Railways is the burgeoning staff costs including pension. At this juncture, the reported move to go in for recruitment of 1.5 lakh staff is simply baffling. There have been suggestions to corporatise the Railways' Production Units and outsource the medical services. The government needs to firm up its policies on these crucial issues after discussions with all stakeholders. More than a year ago, a grand proposal to merge all cadres and have a single Indian Railways management cadre was announced to eliminate "departmentalism". This implies that the existing organisational set up will continue, because it will take at least 25-30 years for any beneficial impact to be felt. On the other hand, moves are afoot to invite private players to operate passenger and freight services. These are conflicting moves, akin to driving a car with one foot on the accelerator and the other on the brakes.

Need for public scrutiny

A separate Railway Budget has passed irrevocably into history. However, the need for a detailed public scrutiny of the affairs of one of the largest undertakings in the country, public or private, at least once a year has not gone away. As suggested earlier by this writer in these columns, an annual report called 'Indian Railways Report' on the lines of the annual Economic Survey should be placed in Parliament every year detailing the physical and financial performance of the Railways, identifying the challenges and plans for the future to meet the country's rail transport needs. The Railways are in the midst of an unprecedented financial distress and are faced with fundamental organisational issues. This is no time for evasiveness and obfuscation but for clarity and transparency. It is also time to confront reality.

K. Balakesari is former Member Staff, Railway Board. Email: balakesari_k@hotmail.com

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Silence is a lie

At this juncture, to defend our hard-won rights and freedoms, we need to collectively raise our voice



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

determine the federal balance. From rampant Internet shutdowns to subtle warnings, the method adopted by the Government of India is more layered, more varied and more chilling in its effect than those adopted by the State governments.

Revealing the character of the state

Hence, its loud rejection of the Freedom House report fails to impress anyone – more so because the influential Group of Ministers (GoM) has suggested draconian steps to stem 'negative narratives' on the government.

Let us examine the nature of the language used by the GoM. It is certainly not the language that is used by people who believe in dialogue, debate and dissent, the three integral elements of democracy. In my considered opinion, the language adopted by the GoM shows the character of the new Indian state. The desire of those in power is to ensure that the writ of the government, which is monochromatic and homogenising, prevails over the polyphony of democratic voices.

The question before us is to examine, critique and confront the GoM's report thoroughly. It would be futile to get into an argument about the intent of the journalists who participated in the deliberations held by the government. The divided journalistic cohort diverts our attention from the principle challenge before us: a government that wants only its voice to be heard, and is prepared to tweak rules and create new laws to 'neutralise' the negative narrative.

While rejecting the Freedom House report, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's assertion had two interesting elements. One, it said: "Discussion, debate and dissent are part of Indian democracy. The Government of India attaches highest importance to the safety and security of all residents of the country, including journalists." It did not provide answers to any of the specific charges listed by the American organisation.

Second, on the question of Internet shutdowns, the Ministry said that such shutdowns were "only temporary". Is it fair to call a 213-day shutdown in Jammu and Kashmir a temporary measure?

At this juncture, to defend our hard-won rights and freedoms, we need to collectively raise our voice, call out the excesses of the executive, the complicity of the judiciary, and avoid the unwarranted internecine attritions among journalists and journalist organisations that is hurting public interest.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

Health first, fiscal prudence later

The government can balance LPG subsidies and ensure clean fuel consumption in poorer households

KARTHIK GANESAN & ABHISHEK JAIN

Subsidised LPG prices have increased by a massive 50% in this financial year alone, consistently capturing headlines. What would be the impact of this in sustaining the gains of the government's flagship scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY)?

Since 2016, PMUY has provided LPG connections to 8 million poor households to reduce women's drudgery and indoor air pollution. Providing an upfront connection subsidy of ₹1,600, PMUY helped expand LPG coverage to more than 85% of households. In comparison, less than a third of Indian households used LPG as their main cooking fuel in 2011.

However, multiple studies assessing PMUY concluded that while access has increased, many new beneficiaries are not consuming LPG in a sustained manner. Large-scale primary surveys by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) suggest that, on average, recent PMUY beneficiaries consumed only about half the LPG compared to long-standing regular consumers. Limited uptake of LPG among poor households has two main reasons. First, the effective price of LPG is not affordable for such households, despite the subsidy. Second, many rural consumers have access to freely available biomass, making it difficult for LPG to displace it. Beyond causing indoor air pollution, biomass use for cooking contributes up to 30% to the ambient PM2.5 at the national level, more than the contribution of transport, crop residue or coal burning.

Changing prices The recent increases in the subsidised LPG price have made it more difficult for the poor to sustain LPG use. India determines domestic LPG prices based on imported LPG price (we import more than 50% of our consumption). As the pandemic set in, the LPG subsidised price began to rise, even when global LPG prices plummeted, contributing to the refiners' margins and government finances. However, now with LPG prices rising globally, a 50% reduction in the LPG subsidy budget for FY22 (versus FY21) does not bode well. The go-

vernment is either banking on low global prices (wishful thinking) or reducing its subsidy burden significantly, even while offering 1 crore new connections under Ujjwala 2.0 in FY22. The government's lack of transparency in the pricing of subsidised LPG adds further to the citizen's plight. The information about LPG price build-up and subsidy has become more difficult to obtain in recent years. As a consumer, one is no more aware of whether the subsidy reduction or global price changes are changing the subsidised LPG prices.

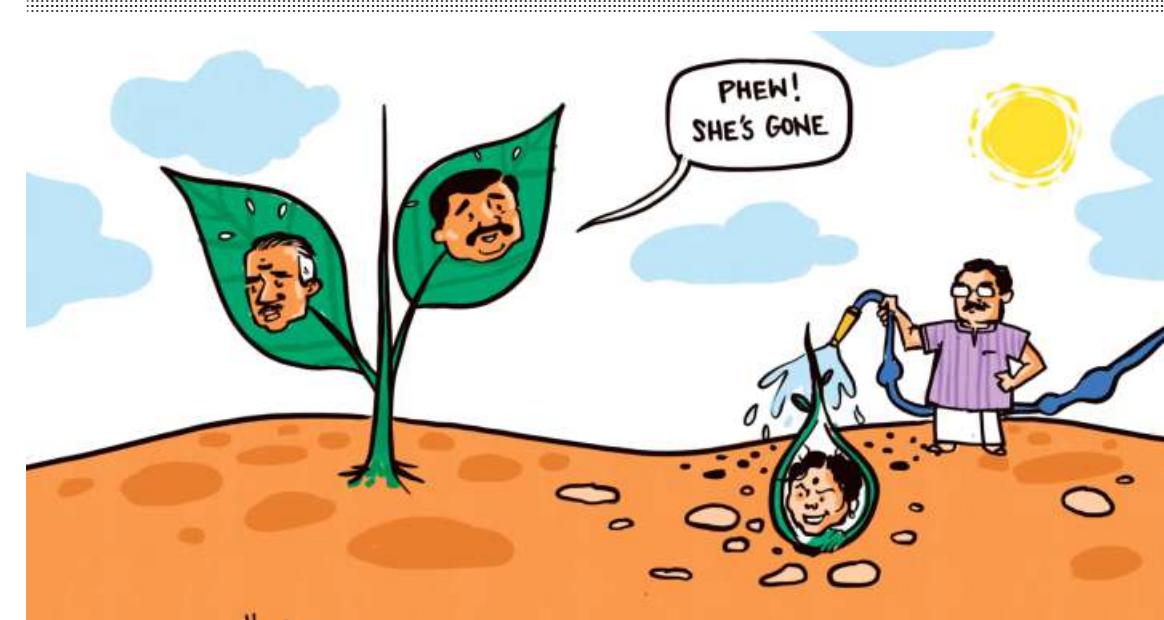
Better targeting

So, can the Central government tread a tight rope to balance LPG subsidies and ensure sustained clean fuel consumption in poorer households? The answer lies in better targeting of subsidy. Currently, the government provides a uniform subsidy per cylinder to all LPG consumers (PMUY or otherwise). Many long-term LPG users, who are also middle- and higher-income households, will continue to use LPG even at a (higher) unsubsidised price. In contrast, economically poor households need a greater subsidy to make it affordable for them to use LPG as their main cooking fuel.

One approach for such targeting is to rely on the existing LPG consumption patterns of consumers. Provide households exhibiting low consumption or a decline in LPG consumption over time with greater subsidy per cylinder to sustain health gains. Further, the subsidy levels could be dynamic with different slabs reflecting the previous year's consumption. Alongside, the de-duplication efforts to weed out households with multiple LPG connections must continue to avoid subsidy leakages.

In the post-pandemic rebuilding, the continued support to the economically poor for sustaining LPG use is not merely a fiscal subsidy but also a social investment to free-up women's productive time and reduce India's public health burden. This social investment will yield rich dividends in the years ahead through a healthier and productive population.

Karthik Ganesan and Abhishek Jain are Fellows at CEEW

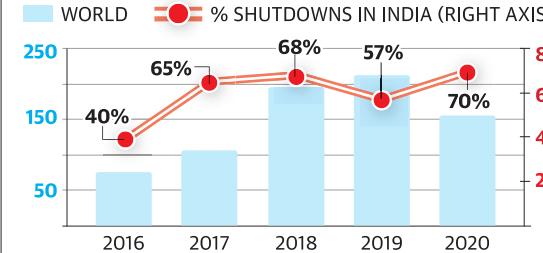


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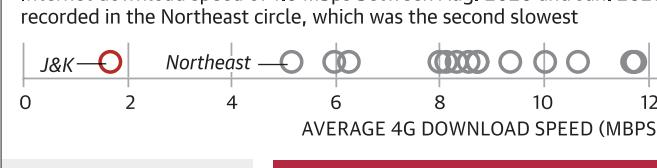
Internet denied

In 2020, over 70% of the Internet shutdowns recorded across the world by digital watchdog Access Now were from India. In 2016, India's share was just 40%. People in Jammu and Kashmir bore the brunt of the clampdowns, with Internet services being unavailable for over half of 2020. Even when available, users in the region experienced the slowest Internet speeds in the the country. By The Hindu Data Team

1. Growing share | As many as 109 Internet shutdowns were recorded in India in 2020 – 70% of all the shutdowns in the world that year. India's share in global shutdowns increased by 30% points since 2016



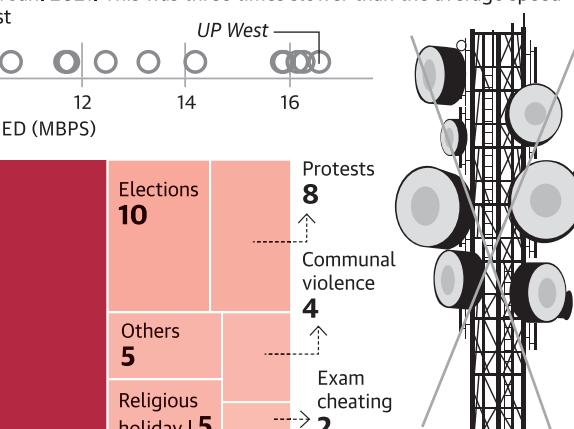
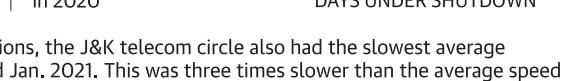
3. Slow and not steady | Besides constant Internet disruptions, the J&K telecom circle also had the slowest average Internet download speed of 1.6 Mbps between Aug. 2020 and Jan. 2021. This was three times slower than the average speed recorded in the Northeast circle, which was the second slowest



4. Shutdown reasons
According to Access Now, the highest number of Internet shutdowns in India in 2020 were due to political instability (75). Protests and elections also triggered such blackouts in some regions

2. A distant outlier

Last year, three out of every four Internet shutdowns in India were imposed in J&K. West Bengal, with three shutdowns, was a distant second. The chart plots the number of Internet shutdowns in a State against the total days of the shutdowns in 2020



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 8, 1971

E Pakistanis defy Yahya

Within half an hour of the Pakistan President, Gen. Yahya Khan's broadcast yesterday [March 7] in which he threatened to use his full martial law powers to "ensure the country's absolute integrity", East Pakistanis marched in procession through the streets. Carrying a black flag, the marchers shouted "we oppose President's declaration". Yesterday was the sixth day of a strike touched off by the President's postponement of the inauguration of the Assembly which is to write the country's Constitution. According to UNI several Dacca residents evacuated on Saturday because of the dwindling food supply to the city. Food supply from villages in the east wing had stopped since Monday. Over 300 prisoners bolted from the Central Jail in Dacca and joined the protest marches in the city. Police opened fire on the escaping prisoners, killing three. Reports from Rawalpindi quoted prison authorities having said that seven prisoners were killed out of the 325 who broke out. Prison authorities said that 30 prisoners were injured in the firing and another 16 were recaptured. Seven warders were also injured in the break-out, prison officials said. The Associated Press of Pakistan alleged that Awami League members, on the orders of Sheikh Mujibur, stormed the jail to help the prisoners escape.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 8, 1921

Indian situation

London, March 4: Lord Reading was last night entertained to dinner by the Royal Colonial Institute at Hotel Victoria. Mr. Montagu, who presided, said he was looking forward with confidence to working with Lord Reading. He said there was no future for India except as a member of the British Empire. Lord Reading's political task was to maintain and consolidate the understanding between the Government of India and the Princes of India and to lead the proud peoples of India with their racial and national consciousness to the highest destiny that awaits any country, namely, partnerships in the British Empire. Lord Reading had undertaken this task with the complete confidence of every part of the British Empire. Lord Reading, who was accorded a tremendous reception, replied briefly. He paid tribute to the interests of India. He expressed the opinion that the reason for his appointment was that he might represent the justice of Britain.

FROM PAGE ONE

China clears new dams on Brahmaputra

China's media reported in November that State-owned hydropower company POWERCHINA had signed "a strategic cooperation agreement" with the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) government to "implement hydropower exploitation in the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River".

In 2015 China operationalised its first hydropower project at Zhangmu in Tibet, while three other dams at Dagu, Jieku and Jiacha are being developed, all on the upper and middle reaches of the river. While POWERCHINA is not the first hydropower company to push for dams downstream and previous plans did not pass technical feasibility studies because of concerns over the environmental impact, the inclusion of the projects in the draft FYP suggests a high-level sanction has been given.

Mr. Yan said the 50-km section at the Great Bend alone offered the potential of 70 million kWh "which equals more than three Three Gorges power stations" and "will play a significant role in realising China's goal of reaching a carbon emissions peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality in 2060", a target mentioned by Premier Li Keqiang on Friday at the opening of the NPC and also highlighted in the draft outline.

In Bengal, Modi pitches for 'Asol Paribartan'

The PM accused the Left parties' governments of bringing in vote bank politics in the State, and using an old slogan of the Left parties "Congress kalo haath gudiye dao bhenge dao (break and grind the evil hand of Congress)", also took a swipe at the Left-Congress alliance in West Bengal. Mr. Modi said after three decades of Left rule, the people of Bengal had trusted Ms. Banerjee to bring in "paribartan" (change) but that she had betrayed its people and insulted them.

'Sister became aunt'
"Bengal chose you in the role of 'Didi' (elder sister) but you preferred being *bua* (aunt) to your *bhatija* (nephew)," Mr. Modi said, targeting the CM.

He said that the chief minister had fallen prey to the very "dynasty rule" that Ms. Banerjee had revolted against in the Congress to

form her own party. Mr. Modi went on to raise the issue of why the Chief Minister was so angry with him that he called him a "daitya" (demon). He said he had known Ms. Banerjee for quite some time and while it was the same "Didi" who had removed the Left Front from power, he said, "We hear that *Didi's* remote control is in someone else hands."

The Brigade grounds rally was an occasion for a show of strength by the BJP in the poll-bound State. Among senior leaders of the party, Bollywood actor and former Trinamool Congress MP Mithun Chakraborty was also present. The public gathering was the biggest that the BJP has witnessed in the State.

"If the lotus blooms in West Bengal, it is because of the muck your party has spread in the State," Mr. Modi said.

Modi-Shah only syndicate in India, says Mamata

Ms. Banerjee alleged that even the leaders of the BJP were "scared to raise their voice against Modi and Shah".

On Sunday, after leading an all-women's rally at Siliguri in north Bengal, the Trinamool Congress chairperson targeted the BJP government at the Centre, saying that while it accused the Trinamool of "tolobaazi" (extortion), the BJP was selling the country.

"If you are increasing the price of LPG, then why

would women and sisters not leave you?" she asked, adding that the light in the Ujjwala Scheme had faded because of the hike in LPG prices.

Ms. Banerjee also ridiculed the BJP's slogan "Sonar Bangla" (golden Bengal).

"They will make 'Sonar Bangla' by selling the assets as they have done in Delhi. The only thing that they have left is changing the name of India to Modi," Ms. Banerjee said.

Maharashtra leads surge in cases across six States

Eight States Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka and Haryana are displaying an upward trajectory in daily new cases, with the country's total active caseload currently at 1.84 lakh (1,84,523). India has also reported 100 COVID-19 deaths in the last 24 hours and six States account for 87% of the new casualties with Maharashtra registering the

highest of 47, Kerala 16 and Punjab 12 daily deaths.

This has brought the total deaths in the country due to COVID-19 up to 1,57,756. The Ministry stressed that over 70% of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research 22,14,30,507 samples have been tested up to March 6 with 7,37,830 samples being tested on Saturday.

CD scandal: complainant wants to withdraw case

He says baseless allegations hurt him; police will continue probe

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In a twist to the Karnataka CD scandal case purportedly containing former Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi's intimate moments with a woman whom he is alleged to have abused after promising a government job, the complainant, Dinesh Kallahalli, filed a petition before the police on Sunday seeking withdrawal of the case. However, the police said the probe into the case, which led to Mr. Jarkiholi's resignation as Minister, would continue.

Mr. Kallahalli, a social activist, who had earlier filed a police complaint that Mr. Jarkiholi abused the woman, submitted the petition through his advocate to withdraw the complaint on



Strong pitch: A file photo of members of the Congress staging a protest against Ramesh Jarkiholi in Bengaluru.

the grounds that the victim was being looked at as a "criminal" by social media and that he was pained by former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy's allegations that the CD scandal involved a deal to the tune of ₹5 crore.

A senior police officer, who is part of the probe, said that Mr. Kallahalli would be asked to appear before the investigating officer (IO) and record his statement to ascertain

the reasons behind his decision.

"There could be many reasons, including him being pressurised or blackmailed by someone. There is also a possibility of him trying to misuse the police for his personal use. All these aspects will be ascertained before taking a decision," the officer said.

"The case is still being treated as an non-cognisable report (NCR) and probe is on

to trace the woman. Though it is the discretion of the IO to decide on the fate of the case at the station level, the police decided to continue the probe and record the statement of the woman, who will have a crucial role to play in the case. Based on her statement, the future course of the case will be decided," a police officer said.

Earlier, Mr. Kallahalli, through his advocate Kumar Patil, submitted a five-page petition to the police requesting them to withdraw the case. "I am being targeted unnecessarily for performing my duties. It is like shooting the messenger. These baseless allegations are casting aspersions on my image. I have done my job and filed a complaint as a responsible citizen. Now, it is up to the police to decide. This does not mean that I have stepped back. I will challenge the allegations levelled against me legally and ensure that the victim gets justice," he said.

While Mr. Balachandra Jarkiholi was defending his brother, he also referred the whole event as being a honeytrap. Asked how this could be a honeytrap when he is calling the CD fake, he maintained that he was referring to two to four teams that were also planning to honeytrap. "There is a team working for honeytrap in the State."

Ramesh Jarkiholi's brother demands CBI investigation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Terming the CD that purportedly had intimate scenes of the former Minister Ramesh Jarkiholi as "fake that was created to defame the family and finish off its political career", KMF chairman and his brother Balachandra Jarkiholi on Sunday sought a CBI inquiry into the CD episode since the contents were uploaded in Russia.

Mr. Balachandra Jarkiholi told presspersons that several people and unknown hands were behind the creation of the CD, which he described as "fake". "We now have information that as many as 17 servers were booked in Russia to upload the video on YouTube, three hours prior to Dinesh Kalla-

halli approaching the police. Between ₹10 crore and ₹15 crore has been spent to book the servers to bring disrepute to the family and the BJP," he added. Further, he said, "We also have come to know that the woman in the CD has been promised ₹50 lakh and a job in Dubai. I also request you not to call her a victim because there is a conspiracy behind this."

While Mr. Balachandra was defending his brother, he also referred the whole event as being a honeytrap. Asked how this could be a honeytrap when he is calling the CD fake, he maintained that he was referring to two to four teams that were also planning to honeytrap. "There is a team working for honeytrap in the State."

IN BRIEF



Teach a lesson to the YSRCP, says Naidu

VIJAYAWADA
TDP national president N. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday said that a vote for the YSRCP would mean extending support to the government's move to establish three capitals. "People of Vijayawada know the implications of the YSRCP's game plan. They will have to teach a befitting lesson to the YSRCP in the municipal elections," Mr. Naidu said.

TTD draws up plan to save 8.68 MU per annum

VIJAYAWADA
The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is embarking on a major energy efficiency drive to save 8.68 Million Units (MU) per annum by replacing the existing ceiling fans and air-conditioners with five-star rated equipment. According to official sources, the TTD consumes 68 MU per annum for lighting, cooking and other needs, and pays approximately ₹40 crore towards electricity charges as per applicable tariff.

Free education for kids of deceased journos

HYDERABAD
TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao has expressed the government's willingness to offer free education to the children of deceased journalists in Telangana.

The boats, carrying 19 crew members, were intercepted by the Coast Guard ship Varaha seven nautical miles south-south west off Minicoy in Indian territorial waters on March 5, according to the Defence public relations office.

3 Sri Lankan boats seized by Coast Guard

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Three Sri Lankan boats – Akashra Duwa, Chatru Rani O3 and Chatru Rani O8 – that were allegedly carrying unauthorised telecommunication equipment and narcotics were seized by the Indian Coast Guard and brought to the Vizhinjam harbour here on Sunday.

The boats, carrying 19 crew members, were intercepted by the Coast Guard ship Varaha seven nautical miles south-south west off Minicoy in Indian territorial waters on March 5, according to the Defence public relations office.

Abdul Kalam's elder brother dies at 104

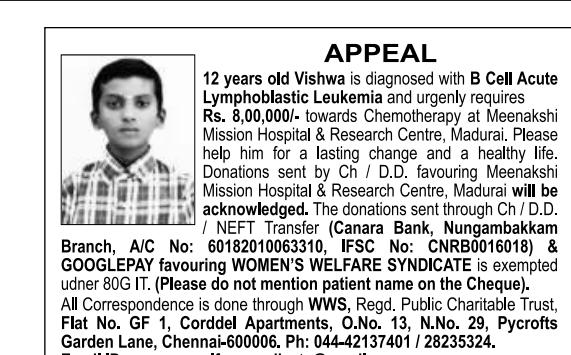
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
RAMANATHAPURAM

Mohammed Muthu Meera Lebbai Maraikeyar, the elder brother of former President of India A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, passed away at his residence in Ramanathapuram district on Sunday. He was 104.

According to family members, the centenarian, who was born in November 1916, breathed his last in the evening due to age-related issues.

Like the former President, his elder brother also lived a simple life.

The last rites would be performed on Monday.



APPEAL
12 years old Vishwa is diagnosed with B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and urgently requires Rs. 8,00,000/- towards Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Please help him for a lasting change and a healthy life. Donations sent by Ch / D.O. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged. The donations sent through Ch / D.O. / NEFT Transfer (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No: 6018201063310, IFSC No: CNB0016018) & GOOGLEPAY favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT. (Please do not mention patient name on the Cheque). All Correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. GF 1, Cordel Apartments, O.No. 13, N.No. 29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006, Ph: 044-42137401 / 28235324. Email ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

Kadapa doctor offers check-ups for ₹10

Noori Parveen wins hearts by making medical care accessible for the poor

A.D. RANGARAJAN
KADAPA

A medical practitioner in Kadapa has carved a name for herself by offering medical check-ups to the poor for a consultation fee of ₹10. Dr. Noori Parveen has become a household name for thousands of families by making medical care accessible to people who aren't able to afford the expensive consultation fees at corporate hospitals.

It all started with children hailing from lower income and socio-economic groups bringing their sick siblings to her clinic in Kadapa city. "They can hardly afford ₹250 or ₹350 as consultation fee, and I thought I should reach out. It was then that I decided to charge a flat consultation

fee of ₹10 from every patient," Dr. Parveen told *The Hindu*.

In a special interview on the eve of International Women's Day, she explained that her childhood ambition was not only to become a doctor, but also following in the footsteps of her grandfather Noor Mohammad, a

Communist leader in the 1980s, and her father Mohammad Maqbool, a businessman with a charitable bent of mind. Dr. Parveen studied up to Class IV in Challapalli of Krishna district, and then moved to Vijayawada for pursuing high school in the Urdu medium. Upon getting a medical seat under the minority quota, she joined



Helping hand: Noori Parveen at her clinic in Kadapa.

the MBBS course at the Fatima Institute of Medical Sciences (FIMS), Kadapa.

Her social welfare activities started while at college, when she and her classmates reached out to the local orphanage and old age homes, which continued even after she started her medical practice and launched the Dr. Noori's Health Care initiative. She soon became known among patients as the "₹10 doctor".

Dr. Parveen recently launched a women's health facility where gynaecology services are also offered for ₹10. "Most people with medical complications do not know whom to contact. I refer them to the concerned specialists in neurology, orthopaedics or gynaecology, again, for just ₹10," Dr. Noori explained.

CM

Cong. to push for debate on fuel prices

It will move a motion in the second phase of the Budget session, starting today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Congress will be moving an adjournment motion demanding a debate on the rising fuel prices in both Houses of Parliament, on the first day of the second part of the Budget session on Monday.

"The rising fuel prices are impacting every person. If the middle class is feeling the pinch because of the increase in their monthly transport budgets, the poor are also affected with the cascading effect of fuel price hike on essential commodities. The government needs to give a cogent explanation on why it has failed to control these prices for so long," Lok Sabha chief whip of Con-



Pressing issue: Congress workers taking out a torchlight procession in Ranchi against the fuel price hike. ■ FILE PHOTO

gress Kodikunnil Suresh told *The Hindu*.

The Congress is also in touch with the allies to have a joint opposition effort on the issue. The Opposition benches, however, will be se-

verely whittled down because of the Assembly elections. Many Trinamool, DMK and Left leaders will be skipping much of the session.

The government has informally approached the op-

position seeking to curtail the session within two weeks owing to the campaign for the Assembly elections. The issue was discussed at a strategy meeting chaired by Congress President Sonia Gandhi.

"The State elections alone should not be the reason to curtail the Parliament. If we agree once, the government will use it as an excuse for all ensuing sessions," a senior Congress party member said.

The opposition parties are also likely to protest against the new IT rules that seek to give greater control to the government on social media and regulate Over-The-Top platforms.

Panic grips displaced Rohingya in Jammu

Administration rounds up 150 immigrants during 'verification process'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Panic gripped the displaced Rohingya population in Jammu on Sunday, a day after the Jammu & Kashmir administration rounded up over 150 immigrants as part of a "verification process".

"We will go one day. It's just that the situation in Myanmar is not safe for us. The police are summoning our people [in Jammu]. Thirteen men who were asked to visit the police stations on Saturday have not returned," said Salamtullah, a Rohingya Muslim who escaped the ge-

nocide in Myanmar between 2016-17.

He said there were Rohingya families where the elders were rounded up and the children were left behind. "I thank India for the hospitality and giving us the opportunity to earn our livelihood.

But the children who are left behind after the latest drive are crying inconsolably. They should be allowed to meet their families," he said.

Another Rohingya man, whose brother-in-law was also detained, said he fears for his life if deported to Myanmar. "It's known that around

10 lakh Muslims were killed in Myanmar. The Army has even detained the Prime Minister there. We fear for our lives if deported," he said.

Scores of Rohingya were seen fleeing the camps erected in several localities of Jammu. According to official estimates, around 6,500 Rohingya are staying there.

Official sources said a verification process was started on Saturday on the directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and over 150, including children, men, women, and elderly were assembled at the

M.A.M. Stadium. Sources said many have been put up in "holding centres".

However, police sources said no one was detained on Sunday.

Congress leader Salman Nizami questioned the government's move. "In Jammu, there are 7,690 Tibetans and 5,743 Rohingya refugees. But 155 Rohingya were sent to holding centres. Why verification for Rohingya only? Just because they are Muslims? This exposes the BJP government's Islamophobic and inhumane nature!" he said on Twitter.

Haryana govt. to discuss job quota today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government is open to including suggestions from industry bodies while framing rules for a law that provides 75% reservation in the private sector to jobseekers from the State, Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala said on Sunday. The first meeting for framing the rules will be held here on Monday, he said.

Last week, Governor Satyadeo Narain Arya gave his assent to the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020, which provides 75% reservation for those who have a domicile certificate and are seeking private-sector jobs with a monthly salary of less than ₹50,000.

CPI(M)-led alliance's stand is narrow, short-sighted: CPI(ML)

We took a deliberate decision to distance ourselves from the front, it says

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The CPI(M)-led alliance has taken a "narrow, short-sighted, suicidal" political line, underestimating the BJP while targeting Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the Trinamool Congress, said CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya.

Mr. Bhattacharya told *The Hindu* that the CPI(ML) took a deliberate decision to distance itself from the CPI(M)-led front and decided to go it alone in Bengal.

"The West Bengal Assembly election should not be looked only through the prism of anti-incumbency against the Trinamool Congress government. The growth of the BJP should also not be attributed to this factor alone."

DIPANKAR BHATTACHARYA
CPI(ML) general secretary

The West Bengal Assembly election should not be looked only through the prism of anti-incumbency against the Trinamool Congress government. The growth of the BJP should also not be attributed to this factor alone

gress government. The growth of the BJP should also not be attributed to this factor alone," he said.

He said despite the aggressive stand against the State government, the CPI (M)'s own vote share is declining and their supporters

have been switching over to the BJP.

"If their policy is successful, then this would not have happened. Despite this, they are following a narrow, short-sighted, suicidal policy that the Trinamool Congress has to be removed even if the

BJP were to come to power," he added.

'No serious reflection'

Mr. Bhattacharya said even in the first joint rally of the alliance, there was no serious reflection on the working of the BJP-led Union government. "In fact, the Brigade Grounds rally was used as a launch pad for Abas Siddiqui [head of the newly formed Indian Secular Front]," he said.

He added that Mr. Siddiqui said the more the BJP is attacked the more they grow. "It is very surprising that a seasoned party like the CPI (M) gave so many seats to a newly formed party."

Rajior Dal to contest four seats against ally AJP

It announced 18 names on Saturday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

After the Congress-led *mahajot*, trouble seems to be brewing in the regional front of the newly floated Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) and Rajior Dal, which is headed by jailed rights activist Akhil Gogoi.

The Rajior Dal on Saturday evening announced its list of 18 candidates, 12 for the first phase of election on March 27 and six for the second phase on April 1. According to the list, Mr. Gogoi would be contesting the Siwasagar Assembly seat in eastern Assam.

But the party ended up naming candidates for four seats where ally AJP had already nominated its candidates. These seats are Biharpuria, Dhing, Rangapara and Thowra.

On March 5, the AJP nominated Achyut Saikia, Anjar Hussain, Ajay Tanti and Dipen Tanti for these seats. Barely 24 hours later, the Rajior Dal named Anup Saikia, Mehbob Muktab, Bijay Tirki and Dhaiyra Konwar respectively.

Mr. Konwar is the general secretary of the Krishak



Rajior Dal is headed by jailed rights activist Akhil Gogoi.

Mukti Sangram Samiti, a peasants' rights group Mr. Gogoi had founded.

Furthermore, the Rajior Dal announced the possibility of contesting the Dhemaji and Mariani seats too. The AJP has named Chittaranjan Basumatary and Rajib Kumar Hazarika for these seats.

Rajior Dal's working president, Bhasco De Saikia, said the issues over seat-sharing would be discussed with the AJP. Members of his party attributed the "misunderstanding" between the two parties to a lack of proper communication.

The party is expected to contest 10 seats in the third phase, scheduled on April 6.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI**

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its two main regional allies on Sunday reaffirmed their commitment towards the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) while making light of the reported dissidence over the denial of ticket to 15 MLAs.

The BJP is contesting the three-phase Assam Assembly elections with the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and United People's Party Liberal (UPPL), the latter replacing the Bodoland People's Front as the saffron party's ally in areas under the Bodoland Territorial Council covering 12 constituencies.

Of the 15 MLAs denied tickets, 11, including a Minister, are from the BJP, and four from the AGP.

'Successful govt.' The BJP had on March 5 announced the names of 70 candidates for the first phase of polling on March 27 and the second phase on April 1.

According to the seat-sharing agreement, the AGP would contest in a total of 26

seats and the UPPL in eight.

"Our government has been successful in all aspects. People thus believe in the BJP and the AGP, which has been a partner in the government, and our new friend UPPL that has endeared itself within three months of ruling the Bodoland Territorial Council [BTC] with us," State BJP president Ranjeet Kumar Dass told mediapersons on Sunday.

He added that the three parties and the Rabha Joutha Mancha would be able to achieve the alliance's mission of winning 100 of Assam's 126 Assembly seats.

He addressed the media along with Agriculture Minister and AGP president

Atul Bora and UPPL president Pramod Boro, who is also the Chief Executive Member of the BTC.

"Our workers will help the BJP and UPPL candidates where AGP is not contesting. Every worker wants to support candidates from his or her own party, but compromises have to be made for the greater good. We have chosen this path to defeat the unholy alliance of Congress and AIUDF (All India United Democratic Front)," Mr. Boro said.

He dismissed reports of dissidence with the party. "This happens in every election. A party has to take certain decisions keeping the overall picture in mind," he said.

According to the seat-

sharing agreement, the AGP would contest in a total of 26

In Assam, BJP and its allies reaffirm commitment to NDA

The alliance will win 100 seats with Rabha Joutha Mancha'



Joint action: Atul Bora, left, Ranjeet Dass and Pramod Boro at a press conference in Guwahati on Sunday. ■ PTI

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"Our government has been successful in all aspects. People thus believe in the BJP and the AGP, which has been a partner in the government, and our new friend UPPL that has endeared itself within three months of ruling the Bodoland Territorial Council [BTC] with us," State BJP president Ranjeet Kumar Dass told mediapersons on Sunday.

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The power of social media

The door swings both ways with what can be a powerful tool. Here's a look at what the new IT Rules for 2021 mean for the future of social media in the country

Aartee Mishra
Top Unacademy Educator

WhatsApp and Facebook to aid in identifying the "originator" of "unlawful" messages. These new laws, Information Technology Rules for 2021, will repudiate some parts of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules, 2011. These will require big social media companies to take down unlawful content within a specific time. These new rules will regularise the use and abuse of popular online platforms.

Nowadays, this is a most deliberate topic worldwide, not just in India. Various countries are taking different paths to regulate social media and big-techs. Australia is pushing companies such as Google and Facebook to share revenue with news publishers, while the UK and the European Union each set out a strict new regimen to tackle the removal of illegal content online, including terrorism material, child abuse and cyberbullying.

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Recently Union Ministers Prakash Javadekar and Ravi Shankar Prasad addressing a press conference notified new, stricter guidelines for social media intermediaries that will make it compulsory for platforms such as

redressal system for OTT platforms and digital news media portals as well. This will compel social media intermediaries to customise their global practices to cater to Indian laws. However, some experts said the rules violate freedom of speech and expression, and privacy.

Back in the day, making yourself heard meant approaching a media house. Today, airing grievances is merely a tweet away. However, social media comes with its pitfalls as well, making cyberbullying and online threats an uncomfortable reality.

Ultimately the pros and cons of social media depend on how we use it. If used right, social media can be a powerful tool for change and communication. Used the wrong way and social

Register Now



Scan the QR code to watch the free live class on 'The Power of Social Media' on March 8 at 4 PM. Use code UPSCCSE.

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Mithun Chakraborty joins BJP, Trinamool slams move

The actor was once a Rajya Sabha MP and close to Mamata

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Veteran actor Mithun Chakraborty on Sunday joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and started his new political journey with a new dialogue "Ek chobol chobi" (death in one strike).

The actor was once a Rajya Sabha member of the Trinamool Congress and close to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. He resigned from the Upper House in 2016.

He joined the BJP at rally at Brigade grounds, minutes before Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the gathering. Mr. Modi described Mr. Chakraborty as "Bengal's own son", whose life exemplified "struggle and success".

"I had never imagined that I would be sharing the dais with the biggest democracy..." Mr. Chakraborty said. He added that he had a "dream to work for the poor, down-trodden, which is seen as being fulfilled".

Mr. Chakraborty is one of West Bengal's cultural icons and has a considerable fan following across the State. He was greeted with huge

cheers at the gathering. The actor repeated a dialogue from one of his films: "Ami jol dhoro noi, bele boro noi, ami ekta cobra, jat ghokhro, ek chhobole chobi" [I am not a jol dhora (water snake), I am not bele bora (another species of non-poisonous snake), I am a cobra, I will bring death in one strike].

Later, speaking to mediapersons, the actor said he would not point fingers at anyone on why he had left the Trinamool. "I can only say it was my bad [wrong] decision... You can call me selfish but all I can say is that I want to stand by the poor

and work towards the realisation of the Prime Minister's making of 'Sonar Bangla' (golden Bengal)," said Mr. Chakraborty.

The Trinamool Congress leadership expressed disappointment over the development. Party MP Sougata Roy said Mr. Chakraborty had been a supporter of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), after which he campaigned for the Trinamool Congress in 2014, following which he was sent to the Rajya Sabha with the support of the Trinamool.

Mr. Roy wondered when Mr. Chakraborty would make a political U-turn again.

Jaishankar, Zalmay Khalilzad discuss Afghan peace talks

India has been keenly following the evolving situation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and United States special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad spoke over phone on Sunday and discussed the latest developments pertaining to the Afghan peace talks.

IN BRIEF



Stalin promises ₹1,000 a month for housewives

TIRUCHI Unveiling his 10-year vision statement for seven priority areas for the development of Tamil Nadu at a massively attended public gathering in Tiruchi, DMK president M K Stalin on Sunday assured a monthly honourarium of ₹1,000 for housewives (per ration card holder) and creation of 10 lakh jobs. He called upon the electorate to elect the DMK for consecutive terms to implement his promises.

Hawala racket: 700 entities under scanner

NEW DELHI About 700 entities that had taken the assistance of a hawala racket allegedly operated by Naresh Jain and his associates are under the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) scanner for suspected laundering of undisclosed income running into thousands of crores. The entities allegedly paid commissions to the syndicate to route funds and also send the money overseas using hundreds of shell companies.

Flight made to land due to 'rowdy' passenger

LONDON A "rowdy" Indian passenger on board an Air France flight from Ghana via Paris to New Delhi forced the plane to make an emergency landing at Bulgaria's capital here, according to a media report. The Indian, whose identity was not made public, has been detained for 72 hours, Bulgarian News Agency BTA said on Saturday. PTI

Manipur rebel 'executed' for murdering 8-year-old

IMPHAL A rebel leader identified as Nando was "executed" by a proscribed insurgent group on March 2, local media reports said on Sunday. Police believe that the execution took place somewhere in a foreign country. Reports said the kangaroo court found him guilty of kidnapping and murdering Luininga Elizabeth, an eight-year-old student and daughter of Francis Ngajokpa, who was a Cabinet Minister.

Car found near Ambani residence sent for tests

FSL will submit its report in a week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI The Mumbai Police have sent for forensic analysis the car and gelatin sticks found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence here last month, officials said on Sunday.

The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) at Kalina will check the car for any bloodstains, hair or any other clue to help identify the person who drove it and those present in the vehicle when it was parked near Mr. Ambani's residence, an official said. The lab will submit its report to the police in a week, he said.

The car, a Scorpio, with 20 gelatin sticks inside was

Farmers mark 100 days of protest

On International Women's Day, women to lead marches at stir sites; Tikait to address meet at Ghazipur

SAURABH TRIVEDI

NEW DELHI

After completing 100-days "not out century" of protest at the Ghazipur border, the farmers said they were ready for a "double century" (200 days) if the government continues to ignore their demand for a repeal of the farm laws.

"Many news channels are regularly reporting thin crowds at borders. I would like to clarify that the crowds may be thin, but the spirit of the protesters is high. Many protesters have gone back for some household work and to take care of farms, but that doesn't mean they are not with us. Thousands of protesters are on standby in western U.P. and Haryana," said Gopal Jaat, a farmer.

On International Women's Day on Monday, the protest will be led by women at all the borders. Women protesters will take charge of the stage and the speakers, too, will be women. A march has been called by women at all protest sites.

"The protest on Women's Day will be led by women protesters who are at Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur border for the past 100 days,



In solidarity: Percussionists from Kerala perform as farmers from the State arrive at a protest site in New Delhi. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

along with the men. Women have contributed equally in the fight against the farm laws... This fight is for the future of farmers and the survival of their upcoming generations," said Jaspinder Singh.

Ms. Singh added that women contribute equally to the farming community, but they don't get recognised.

Protesters said a large meeting has been called at the Ghazipur border on

Monday to discuss the strategy for the future of the protest. People from various districts of western Uttar Pradesh will attend the meeting to be addressed by Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait.

'Teach a lesson'

Meanwhile, protesting farm union leaders have urged the people of Haryana to lobby their representatives in the State Assembly to support

the no-confidence motion against the BJP-JJP government on March 10. The people should threaten to "teach a lesson" to those MLAs who supported the government, they said.

In a public appeal to Haryana citizens, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) accused the State government of supporting the Centre against the farmers on the issue of the three contentious farm laws, and attempting to sup-

press the movement.

"Legislators belonging to the JJP and independents will be specially approached and asked to vote for the motion against the government. People would never forgive them if they do not stand up at this critical moment when the livelihood of the people was at stake," said All India Kisan Sabha Haryana vice-president Inderjit Singh.

(With inputs from Priscilla Jebaraj)

Cong. will always stand by farmers, says Priyanka

'Time to take movement to the villages'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GHAZIABAD

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on Sunday that farmers should not beg for their rights and should ask for their dues firmly from the government. "It is time to take the movement that started at the Delhi borders to the villages," she said at a kisan panchayat organised by the Congress at Kaili village of Sardhana tehsil in Meerut.

This was her fifth panchayat in western Uttar Pradesh in the past one month.

Promising to fight for the farmers' cause till her last breath, Ms. Vadra, who arrived at the meeting on a tractor, said whenever a farmer faced a problem, the Congress would stand by him. "For us, it is not the politics of the vote. We are indebted to you as you are the soul of the country... Your fight is my fight. Don't lose confidence. It has been 100 days, but we will be with you for 100 weeks, 100 years," she said.

Ms. Vadra said like the colonial government, the BJP government had been exploiting farmers. "If the farm laws are good for farmers, why are lakhs of farmers protesting at the Delhi borders despite all odds?"



exploiting farmers. "If the farm laws are good for farmers, why are lakhs of farmers protesting at the Delhi borders despite all odds?"

She said the contentious farm laws were against the interests of farmers and that they would lead to a gradual closure of government-run mandis. "They will provide an opportunity for corporates to hoard and diminish the MSP regime," she said.

Taking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she said he was more concerned about the interests of his corporate friends than the farmers. "He tours different parts of the world, but has no time to visit the farmers protesting at the Delhi borders. It shows his disrespect for farmers," she said.

U.P. to launch 'focused' testing drive during Holi

Will organise a 15-day drive, says govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

With the Holi festival coming up, the Uttar Pradesh government has decided to launch a focused drive for testing migrant workers and other persons for COVID-19.

The State will run a 15-day "focused sampling" drive from March 13 to 27, said Amit Mohan Prasad, Principal Secretary, Health.

'Return home'

During Holi, many from other States and areas come back to their homes to celebrate, he said. "There is a lot of movement," Mr. Prasad added.

Those included in the fo-

cused drive would be persons returning from States with high rates of infection, those who sell colours and water guns, those working in restaurants and dhabas (eateries) and also those involved in the liquor and bhang shops, said the official in a press briefing here.

Meanwhile, the State said it had become the first in the country to administer 20 lakh doses of the vaccine.

While over 14.85 lakh shots were given in the first phase, in the second phase for persons above 60 and those between 45 and 60, doses had been administered to over 5.29 lakh persons.

Janaushadhi is helping the poor, says Modi

PM says the scheme is becoming the medium of both service and employment in the country

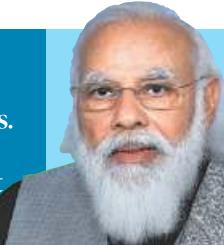
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Urging people to buy affordable medicines from Janaushadhi Kendras, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the 7,500th Janaushadhi Kendra at NEIGRIMS, Shillong through videoconference as part of his address on 'Janaushadhi Divas' celebrations.

"You are my family and your ailments are ailments of my family members. That is why I want all my countrymen to stay healthy. Janaushadhi scheme relieved the poor of high medical expenses," the Prime Minister said while interacting with the beneficiaries of the Pradhan

Janaushadhi Yojana is becoming a big friend to poor and middle class families. It is becoming the medium of both service and employment

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister



Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana.

'Service, employment'

"Janaushadhi Yojana is becoming a big friend to poor and middle class families. It is becoming the medium of both service and employment. There were not even 100 centres in India six years ago and we hope to achieve the target of 10,000 centres.

Poor and middle class families are saving about ₹3,600 crore every year on expensive medicines," he said.

Adding that the scheme was promoting "Atamnirbarta [self-reliance]" among women as more than 1,000 centres were being run by them, the Prime Minister said in order to promote the scheme, the incentive had been enhanced from ₹2.5

lakh to ₹5 lakh, with an additional incentive of ₹2 lakh, for Dalit, Adivasi women and for people from the northeast.

Demand for medicines

Mr. Modi noted that the demand for Indian-made medicines and surgery had increased.

"Production is also increasing to keep up with the increasing demand. A large number of employment opportunities are also being created. Now, 75 AYUSH medicines are also available in the Janaushadhi centres. Patients will benefit by getting AYUSH medicines at a reduced cost. The field of Ayurveda and AYUSH Medicine

will also be benefited."

Pointing out the enormous burden of medical treatment on poor families, the Prime Minister said in recent years, efforts had been made to remove all types of discrimination and treatment had been made accessible to every poor person in the country. For this, prices of essential medicines, heart stents and knee surgery-related equipment had been reduced manifold, he said.

Ayushman Yojana had ensured free treatment of up to ₹5 lakh for the country's more than 50 crore poor families. So far, more than 1.5 crore had taken advantage of it and saved about ₹30,000 crore, Mr. Modi added.

Support for Myanmar resistance rises

Organisations in Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland express solidarity with protesters

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Amid reports of the increasing crackdown on protesters in neighbouring Myanmar, organisations in Manipur and Nagaland have joined their counterparts in Mizoram in extending support to the civil disobedience movement (CDM) against the military junta.

Officials in Mizoram said more than 50 people from Myanmar, including at least eight police personnel, have crossed over fearing punitive action by the Tatmadaw – the Myanmar military – for opposing the coup that took place in February.

Four northeastern States – Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram

– not only share a 1,643-km border with Myanmar but also ethnic ties with groups across the border.

The dominant Mizo community in Mizoram are ethnically related to the Chins in the adjoining Chin State across the border. The Chins are also related to the Kuki-

vernment... The international community regardless of any political, religious or ideological affinity must step in to restore normalcy in Myanmar and save lives due to the presence of state-sponsored terrorism," Romeo Bungdon, working president of the All Manipur Tribal Union (AMTU), said in his appeal to the United Nations Security Council.

The AMTU expressed solidarity with the people of Myanmar resisting the military and condemned the overthrow of a democratically elected government, as did the Tenyimi Students' Union in Nagaland. Tenyimi is an umbrella group comprising 10 Naga communities.

"Martial law by means of military coup is direct horrendous suppression of people's participation in a go-



Taking a stand: A Myanmar citizen living in India at a protest against the military coup, in New Delhi last week. ■ REUTERS

Campaign for rights of frontline women workers

It will address MPs about their plight

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

Several trade unions, feminists and research groups and policy advocates have come together on International Women's Day to campaign for the rights of anganwadi workers, helpers and ASHAs and to highlight their plight during the pandemic to MPs.

The Frontline Workers' Solidarity Campaign will be addressing several MPs as Parliament reconvenes for the second part of the Budget Session on Monday. The drive is being spearheaded by the Feminist Policy Collective, which is a mix of individual researchers, academics, policy advocates and feminist organisations, as well as U.N. Women.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the glaring gaps in public health systems when the only force available on the ground were community-based frontline women workers. These women workers are pressed into service, sometimes appearing as the only face of the State health system in certain areas. During COVID-19, they have been pressed into additional roles. Despite the hard work they put in, their regular payments were stalled for many months, and they have not been properly compensated for the high risk and extra burden of work," reads the campaign letter.

It seeks that the health workers be enrolled into all existing social security schemes, including the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), maternity benefits under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), and free health coverage for all frontline workers and their families.



COVID-19, often without any protective equipment or remuneration for their labour. On the contrary, they had to face delays in the payment of salaries and were forced to go on protest marches to demand their basic compensation.

It is estimated that there are nearly 75 lakh frontline health workers, including 28 lakh anganwadi workers and helpers; 25 lakh mid-day meal cooks and helpers; and close to 10 lakh ASHAs.

The 12 demands laid down by the campaign include recognition of frontline health "volunteers" as workers and formalisation of their jobs. It also demands a "living wage" as remuneration for them, which is above the minimum wage of ₹18,000 per month.

All-woman crew of SCI vessel makes history

It is the first time in maritime history that a ship is being sailed by only women officers



Breaking the glass ceiling: The all-woman crew aboard the Shipping Corporation of India vessel. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

This is the first time in the world maritime history that a ship is being sailed by all women officers, it said.

Mr. Mandaviya acknowledged the contribution and sacrifice of the women seafarers who acted as the Indian ambassadors to the global maritime community and had made the nation proud, it said.

H.K. Joshi, CMD, SCI, spoke of the unabated and relentless pursuit of the SCI to realise the "paradigm shift" in the maritime sector. Shipping Secretary Sanjeev Ranjan, JNPT Chairman Sanjay Sethi, Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust, Rajiv Jaita, and DG Shipping Am-

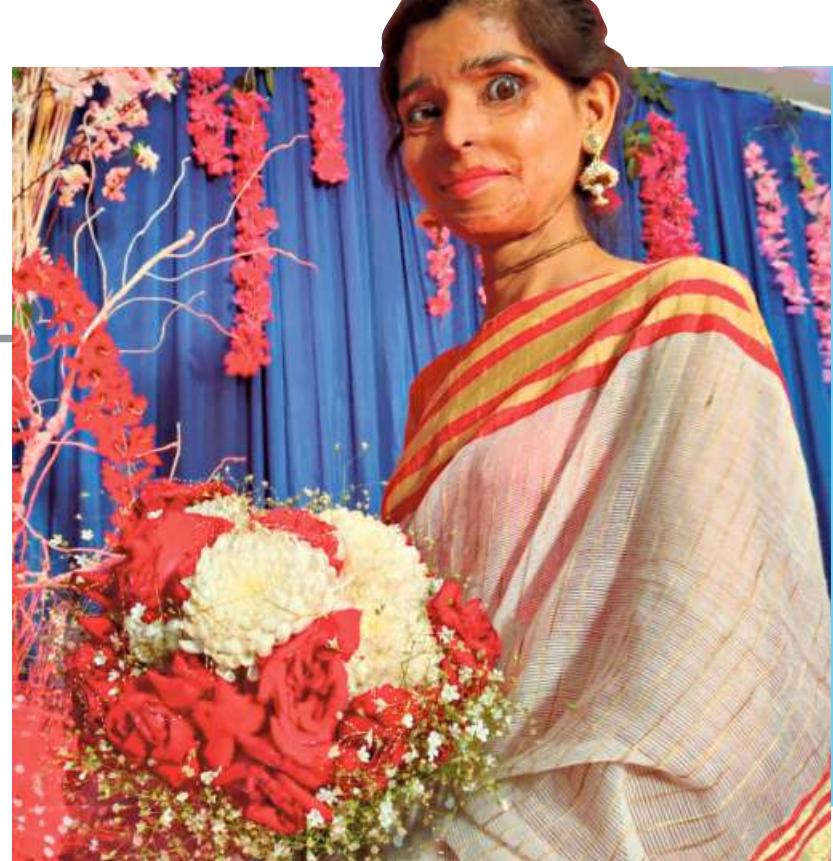
ta Kumar attended the ceremony virtually and commended the efforts of the women seafarers.

"The move demonstrated the gradual shift in the perception of seafaring as a male-oriented profession and the principles of Diversity & Inclusion that SCI upholds. The SCI has been a pioneer in employing women seafarers onboard its vessels and has implemented various initiatives including age relaxations and fee concessions to aspiring female cadets through its Maritime Training Institute to promote their integration into the maritime sector," the statement said.

Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has successfully flagged off the 'All Women Officers' Sailing' on m.t. Swarna Krishna – SCI's product carrier from JNPT Liquid Berth Jetty on March 6, 2021," the Ministry said.

The vessel was virtually flagged off by the Minister on March 6, it said.

"The Shipping Corporation of India, as part of its ongoing diamond jubilee celebrations and also to commemorate International



Her face was burnt, but not her belief in life

Ritu Saini, 25, counsellor, Chhav Foundation, Noida

The *josh* in Ritu Saini's voice is unmistakable even while talking over phone from Bhubaneshwar where she is for a friend's wedding. Ritu has spent the last seven years battling scars to hit her goals.

"I have writhed in indescribable pain, unable to eat or drink as blood oozed out of my mouth, spent sleepless nights, felt lonely lying almost caged on the hospital bed for three months. But, never for a day did I lose hope, because giving up would mean my inability to dream for my future," she says and adds, "today I am in a happy space."

Her friendly nature and communication skills make her the best guide for burn victims who walk into Chhav Foundation, a non-profit organisation, that works for the rehabilitation of acid attack survivors. Ritu has also worked at Sheroes Hangout Cafe in Agra and Lucknow and today is able to take care of her mother's treatment for breast cancer along with her four older siblings. Her father passed away two years ago and she says it was the rock solid support of her family that has taught her not to give in to despair and sorrow.

At 17, she was a State-level volleyball player, and dreamt of becoming a national sports coach or an IPS officer. But her relatives changed the course of her life over a property dispute. On May 26, 2012, when she stepped out of her home in Rohtak, Haryana, to go for her daily practice session, "Two men on a motorcycle came towards me and



Ritu Saini played her real life role in Deepika Padukone starrer *Chhapaak*

in a flash I felt I was drowning in a sea of fire," she says. The acid dissolved her facial features, neck, shoulders, breasts and hands; the flesh, tissue and bone melted and fused.

She says when she looked at herself in the mirror for the first time after months of the attack and cried inconsolably, it was her mother, who told her that she was the most beautiful child inside-out and nothing could snatch opportunities away from her. That day I stopped covering my face, she says.

Soon after, social activist Alok Dixit, the founder of Chhav Foundation, walked into her life with a job offer at Sheroes Cafe where she learned accounts and management and later shifted to the foundation's rehabilitation centre at Noida as counsellor. In between, Ritu tried to return to her first love, volleyball but her low vision forced her to hang up her sporting boots.

Four years ago, a small role in Hindi film *Akira* helped her realise that every opportunity is God-sent. She landed another acting opportunity in 2019. "This time I was playing my real life role as a counsellor of a centre that helps acid attack victims for *Chhapaak*.

Shooting with Deepika Padukone was a lifetime memory," says Ritu.

"I have learnt to enjoy my present and like anybody else carve out my future on my own strength and ability," says Ritu, who after 14 operations, skin grafting, plastic surgery and four lasers, exudes faith in life. Her eye lids, eye lashes, eyebrows are transplanted, her left eye is artificial, and she is still under treatment. "I believe what did not kill me has actually made me stronger," she says.

Ritu Saini played her real life role in Deepika Padukone starrer *Chhapaak*

I WILL SURVIVE

SOMA BASU

She shifted the focus of the dialogue

Anuja Amin, 36, child abuse educator, Ahmedabad

Anuja Amin is against the use of the "good touch and bad touch" narrative propagated as part of sex education in schools. "Who says you feel bad from a bad touch? Is it not natural for human physiology to derive pleasure from what we call the bad touch?" Instead, what she proffers now is safe and unsafe touch.

This distinction stems from her own

experiences that began when she was five. She remembers her househelp touching her over her clothes, and then carrying on as if nothing had happened. "I was also molested by our watchman who would press my breasts and say you are born to please a man, and I thought it was normal for little girls to go through this," says Anuja, who failed her school exam at 13 when the supervisor sat next to her pressing her thighs. "I was terrified that day and asked my parents to send me to a boarding school."

When she came home during the holidays, she had some of her relatives behave similarly. "Hugging your relatives or sitting in your chacha's lap are never seen as wronged expressions of love. I was always a people-pleaser who never raised objections. Nobody took my clothes off to violate me," she says.

Anuja went abroad to complete her studies. It took her some years to process the trauma of child sexual abuse.

In 2010, a Government of India study highlighting rampant child abuse in the country and that

every second child is a victim at the hands of known and unknown people, drew her attention. She returned to India for a spiritual workshop in Kerala and quit her job the same year. She broke her silence just before her wedding, and shared incidents from the past with her mother, who



was shocked, and her fiance, who was understanding and supportive.

With a part of the burden off, Anuja began researching child sexual abuse and connecting with organisations like RAHI but found little material that would help children understand consent and not be compelled to make a moral distinction between the good and the bad. In 2015, she founded Circles of Safety to educate kids and parents on the concept.

Stranger-danger is only 10% with 90% danger from people children know and trust. When a child realises the touch is not appropriate, the guilt or shame increases and that is why the need to shift the focus of the dialogue, she explains.

Anuja has designed a comprehensive sexuality education programme for Classes I to XII with age-appropriate body safety rules and other inputs. The pilot project was run in two private schools in Ahmedabad in 2019-2020. In their feedback, the teachers, parents and students said they were no longer uncomfortable discussing sex and related issues. "The pandemic year delayed the systematic implementation of the module," says

Anuja who is in the process of networking with more schools beyond Gujarat.

She calls her curriculum a preventive and rights-based model with the child at the centre. "When my three-year-old daughter says I do not want to be hugged by so and so, I understand and respect her decision," she says.

She stands strong

Nandini Murali, 57, suicide prevention activist, Madurai

Until four summers ago, Nandini Murali was a freelance writer and a cancer survivor. In April 2017, her husband, urologist Dr T R Murali, took his life, and their home became a 'crime scene'. "I died with him," she says, not just because of the tragedy, but also because she was surrounded by the morbid curiosity of those who came to 'console' her. "It seemed everybody wanted to hear a singular, tangible reason to explain his death and the police investigations made it worse," she says.

Estrangement from his side of the family was another blow. "What you see is a new me, who has shed the veil of stigma, shame, secrecy, and silence to tell my true story so that others can empathise with survivors of suicide loss."

In those moments of grief Nandini



loss were unseen and unheard. The pain of her lived experience and the culture and stigma of toxic silence propelled her to establish SPEAK (speakinitiative.org/9375493754), a suicide prevention initiative of MS Chellamuthu Trust & Research Foundation, on her husband's first death anniversary.

Carla Fine's book *No Time To Say Goodbye* inspired her, and Nandini decided to write her own. It took her two years to write *Left Behind*, a therapeutic process, part memoir, part helping hand to those who have had the same experience. The focus of both her efforts is to enable members to build resilience in a safe, supportive and non-judgemental space. The process of learning to re-live after loss is non-linear, says Nandini. "Self care for survivors is about extraordinary self-compassion that requires strength and courage," she writes. In transmuting her pain to purpose she gives out an important message: to look truth straight in the eye to be able to cope with loss and grief.

If you are in emotional, mental, or physical distress, call Sneha 044-24640050 or Aasra 9820466726

WELLNESS ON SHELF



Chocola-tea taste

Wellness brand VAHDAM India launches chocolate mint herbal tea, a Women's Day Limited Edition Blend. It contains cocoa nibs, spearmint, *shatavari*, nettle leaf, chamomile, and rooibos. The company claims this loose leaf tea has no caffeine, is vegan and PCOS-friendly.

At amazon.in; ₹499 for 100 grams

For soft hands

The Palm Care Company has launched a line of products to keep hands moisturised, yet clean. The vanilla sanitising hand cream and citron sanitising hand cream, infused with botanical oils, are non-greasy in texture. The No-Limits Hand Balm is designed for those that engage in heavy-duty activity, like gym enthusiasts and avid gamers.

At thepalmcarecompany.com; ₹275 upward

WORDS OF WISDOM

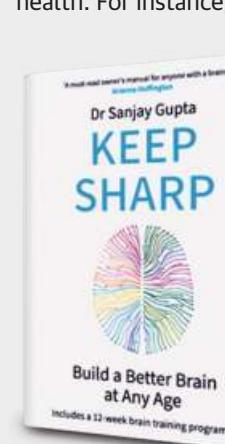
SOMA BASU

KEEP SHARP: BUILD A BETTER BRAIN AT ANY AGE

By Dr Sanjay Gupta, Hachette India

This is a book, both for the young and the old, who want to protect their brain from decline and keep it healthy and sharp. The science-driven guide by Atlanta-based neurosurgeon Dr Sanjay Gupta, also includes a 12-week plan that consists of daily practice strategies. The author provides insights from top scientists all over the world to debunk myths and help readers maintain cognitive health. For instance, he explores and explains in detail

the efficacy of so-called best diets or exercise regimens for the brain. He questions whether it is healthier to play video games that test memory and processing speed, or to engage in more social interaction. He looks at the true benefits of drugs, supplements and vitamins based on his conversations with octogenarians and nonagenarians, who show no signs of slowing down.



THIS BOOK COULD FIX YOUR LIFE

By Helen Thomson,

Hachette

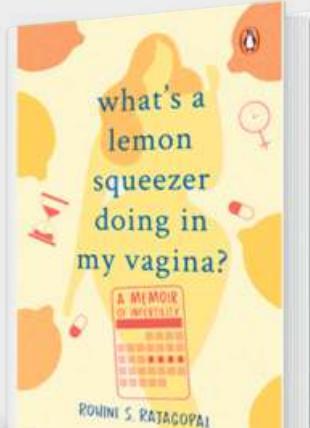
We all wish to be happy, stress-free, and successful and often try to get there with the help of spiritual and religious gurus and

discourses. In this book, award-winning science writer Helen Thomson cites scientifically-proven and evidence-based research as a way out of such self-help fads. She highlights several experiments that help to understand truths behind meditation, resilience, addiction, willpower, love, good sleep, success, dieting, antidepressants, intelligence and more. The author motivates the readers to try the experiments and see how they work to elevate the mood, conquer fears, or keep depression at bay. In short, she describes her book as a myth-buster.

WHAT'S A LEMON SQUEEZER DOING IN MY VAGINA?

By Rohini S Rajagopal, Penguin Random House

The author's five-year battle with infertility — the indignities of medical procedures, prying family and friends, the daily anxieties about the outcome of treatment with hormones — is told with alacrity and wit. Rohini's first-person account of her bumpy road to motherhood is also an eye-opener to the fact that infertility and its fall-out does not get the attention it deserves. Rohini's life in Bengaluru post-marriage was stopped in its tracks when she could not break in to the 'exclusive pregnancy club'. She says she simply dwelled on that single 'deficiency' and forgot to live normally. The lived experience was not only uncomfortable but also put tremendous financial and emotional strain on her marriage. The gnawing shame and feeling of inadequacy of not being able to bear a child stuck with her and she quit her job to write this book. She feels it will help all those who are going through similar duress.

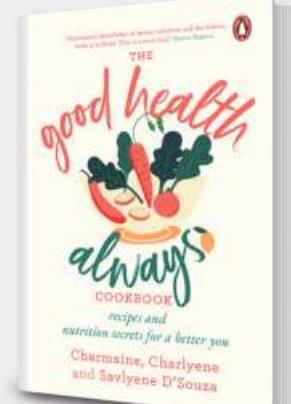


THE GOOD HEALTH ALWAYS COOKBOOK

By Charmaine, Charlyene and Savylene D'Souza, Penguin Random House

The book lists doable Ayurvedic recipes with the nutritional value of ingredients, teaching you to prepare healthy and delicious meals. Ayurvedic diets incorporate therapeutic herbs, spices and condiments in chutneys, gravies, pickles and other dishes to make the food medicinal and yet tasty and healthy. It helps heal the stomach and the gut and ensures good health the natural way always, says nutritionist Charmaine D'Souza. Of the

several she writes about, the ones made with barley rich in vitamins, fibre, iron and amino acids, are interesting and easy to prepare. The lemon barley, for instance, makes for a nice cool hydrating summer beverage and is an effective diuretic too.



This Women's Day, we talk to breadwinners who have carved their own niche on the tough streets of their cities



Aleyamma John,
fishmonger,
Thiruvananthapuram

Balancing the large aluminium vessel heavy with fresh fish on her head is a skill Aleyamma John has perfected over 45 years.

"At 26, I began selling fish door-to-door to make ends meet. After my husband, John, fell ill, it is my earning that helped raise my three daughters and son. My husband was a fisherman and we had our own boat and nets. But all that was sold to meet his medical expenses," she says.

In a chequered *kali lungi*, long blouse and a *thorthu* thrown over her shoulder,

Aleyamma is a picture of resilience. Her weatherbeaten face is wreathed in smiles as she pulls out a smaller aluminium container from the large one she keeps the fish in, turns it over and sits on it to talk about life.

Hailing from a fishing community at Vettukadu, Aleyamma recalls her mother walking from the beachside village to the city, 10 kilometres away, every day. "Many women in my generation followed in their footsteps. Rain or shine, we had to reach the city and back again. No buses would permit us to travel with our wicker baskets of fish." The day still starts early with Aleyamma making her way to the Vettukadu or Vizhinjam, near Kovalam, to buy the catch of the day. But now, she and two others take an autorickshaw to the city and then walk to the homes of their regular customers. Each of them has a route, and they sell the fish and clean it for the buyer.

"Earlier, we used to go to the Karamana river at Edapazhanji and have a bath after we were done for the day. Nowadays kind householders permit us to use the washroom on their premises

and also store the fish in an icebox. In the evening, we sit by the roadside at Vazhuthacaud to sell the fish. That is when officers stop by." Aleyamma is grateful that she was able to get her children educated and married. Her son and one son-in-law is in West Asia. "One grandson studies engineering and another works for a company in Technopark. My children never went hungry and all of them are better off than where we started from. I keep reminding them that they must save for a rainy day."

Strength and STREET CRED

TEAM METROPLUS



Alankrita Narula,
food seller, Delhi

Every morning, Alankrita Narula would slip out of her city-girl clothes and into a *salwar kameez*. She would be up at 6 am, cooking, so she could head out on to the street by 9.30 am to set up her *thela* (cart), called Balaji Parante, in a market near her apartment building in Delhi's Dwarka. After spending 13 years in advertising, Alankrita decided to quit to follow her passion. It is a cliché, she says, that rolls off the tongue easier than what it takes on ground – where pushing the cart, standing next to the fire, and working in sun and rain until 5.30 pm is not easy. She began in January 2020, mostly feeding daily wagers, Uber drivers, electricians and plumbers. "In the beginning I thought of just serving *aalo ke parathe* with *dahi* and pickle. I priced it at ₹50. In a couple of days I realised that people want a meal, and that ₹50 is too much for someone who barely earns ₹200 a day," she says. She brought her prices down to ₹20, and introduced a vegetable. Her family was nervous about how she would manage on the road, but Alankrita says she has never faced a security problem. The only problem she has is from people who came by in big cars and who bargain. "I do think I am privileged, so sometimes I wonder whether I should be out on the street. For someone else it may not be a choice, and it does make me feel a little guilty to eat into someone else's street food business."

Elardini Gautami, vegetable vendor, Hyderabad

Thirty-eight-year-old Elardini Gautami does not know to read or write. However, her determination to educate her daughters drives her to work hard. Her day begins at 6 am when she heads to a vegetable wholesale market with her husband on his two-wheeler. Once she is back, she arranges them in a push cart and off she goes.

Elardini says, "My husband is a painter. I used to work as a part-time domestic help. The earning wasn't sufficient. Especially after my daughter passed Class X we realised it would be tough for us to send her to college."

"I don't want my daughters to end up as domestic help. Pushing the cart around is not easy but then I have to do it to run my home and earn enough to pay my daughters' fees."

Elardini's elder daughter is in college and the younger one is in Class VIII. Elardini is satisfied that her daughters do well.

"I send them to a private school and want them to be able to

speak in English." She admits that her work is challenging. "When my body doesn't allow me to push the cart, I find a convenient and safe spot and sell from there. I cannot drink much water because there are no toilets. It results in headaches and body pain. Making a living from the road is a battle, but I will take it up for my daughters."

With inputs from Sunalini Mathew, Saraswathy Nagarajan, Shilpa Nair Anand and Prabalika M Borah

Raji Muthuraj, bhajji seller, Kochi

Raji Muthuraj arrives at her pushcart, parked in Vytila, Kochi, in an autorickshaw. She and her husband Muthuraj have the supplies for the day with them. Loaded in the three-wheeler are a gas cylinder and stove, various containers filled with batter and sliced onions for *vada*, boiled eggs for *bhajji*, potato mix for *bonda*, raw banana and chilli for fritters, and water, oil and milk for tea, besides utensils. They arrive at 3 pm to get ready for rush hour that starts at 4 pm. By the time they get home it is 10 pm.

An adjective Raji frequently uses is "super" – the *vada* is super, as is the tea and the crisp egg *bhajji*. Cheerful with a ready smile, Raji is popular among regulars, most of whom have been buying from her for the 10 years they have been at Vytila. "Ever since we started, 20 years ago, I have been constantly by my husband's side – day or night, rain or shine. There is no other way to do this work," she says.

She is the heart of the business, which has helped them raise and educate their four children – three girls and a boy; besides getting two of those girls married. She looks after the family's finances deciding on the investments, usually chit funds, big purchases such as the television and payment of EMIs too. "The last year has been very tough for us financially, like it has been for everybody else. The first 50 days of lockdown, business came to a standstill. We are behind on the payment of some of our chit fund investments," she says, adding, "We bought land [near Vytila] and built our house without a housing loan, with the money we earned," she says. The money also goes into travelling with family to places such as Tirupati, Madurai or Kanyakumari. "Only two things mattered in the end – the food we ate and the places we saw!"

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN AND ATHIRA M



Everyday heroes
(Clockwise from top) An ASHA worker distributing medicines; Sheeba Kuttan, Ambily Chacko
■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The face of hope

ASHA workers in Kerala, foot soldiers of the battle against COVID-19, talk about their extraordinary work

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN AND ATHIRA M

On March 27, 2020, when the country was in lockdown, Saira Beegum went into labour. Subhakumari S, an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) worker from Chavara in Kollam, stepped in to make arrangements for a safe delivery.

As Shahina Bilal turns one, Subha is as excited as her parents, Bilal and Saira, migrant labourers (called 'guest labourers' in Kerala) from Assam. With 486 houses under her purview Subha had her work cut out during the pandemic.

Since 2006, ASHA worker, a trained community of female health workers, has been acting as a link between the healthcare system and society at the grassroots level. Of the one million ASHA workers in the country, Kerala has 26,221.

"They worked alongside the police, health workers and volunteers to contain the spread of the pandemic and have been an integral part of Rapid Response Teams (RRT)."

They had to arrange for quarantine facilities, food and medicines and extend special care to the elderly, pregnant women and children. It was heartening to see how many of them went out of the way to help the people under their care," says Seena KM, senior consultant (social development), National Health Mission.

Priya V, a 38-year-old ASHA worker in Thiruvananthapuram, recalls how they were working all through the lockdown. "We would go on foot to visit houses of the elderly to give them their supplies of medicines, food, provision kits and so on. Initially, we did face problems in some places while putting up stickers on houses in which there was a patient with COVID-19 or quarantined residents. But we persevered."

Each Panchayat had its own set of challenges. Sindhu PP, an ASHA worker from Kannur, knew that migrant labourers in her ward would go hungry once the hotels were closed. So she

rushed to start a community kitchen in one of the hotels and with the help of donors provided food for the migrant labourers for three months. "Even before March, awareness sessions were conducted and we were organised into smaller teams called Rapid Response Teams," says Sindhu.

A Valsala, ASHA worker in Perinad Grama Panchayat in Kollam, asserts that awareness sessions on how to tackle the pandemic began in January when the world was awakening to the pandemic. Her journal records that it was on January 4 that a medical student from China reached her Panchayat for a wedding.

"I rushed to their house and found him wearing a mask. It was a novelty for me. As the workshops progressed, we were taught about quarantine (a new word for all of us), home isolation, oximeters etc," says Valsala, adding, "First, we made a list of all houses with relatives staying abroad. The work was carried out meticulously in stages. So by the time there was an outbreak in March with 530 residents traced as primary contacts, we were well prepared. The area was declared a containment zone and within 21 days, we were able to declare the place COVID-free."

Ushakumari S from Kottarakkara in Kollam says that the pandemic tested their resilience. The 48-year-old, with eight years of experience, was in the news for taking a COVID-19 patient, Ramla Beevi, to the hospital for the second antigen test.

According to Seena, over 750 ASHA workers have tested positive so far. "I donned a PPE kit and cleaned and fumigated the houses of COVID-19 patients since many were scared about contracting the virus. Every ASHA worker would have hundreds of such instances to talk about," says 42-year-old Rajana Mohan, district general secretary of the ASHA Workers Federation (CITU) in Kannur.

Priya asserts that their hard work during the pandemic has earned them a new-found respect. "I learnt that during a crisis, wealth and privilege do not matter. It is a shoulder to lean on that matters the most. And many a time, it was an ASHA worker who was there to support, console and motivate."

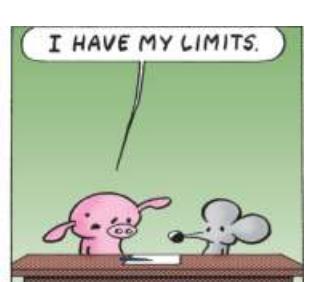
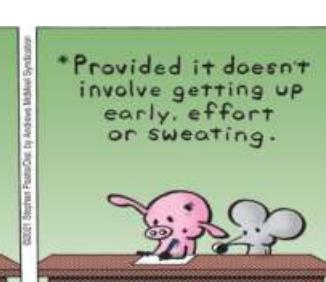
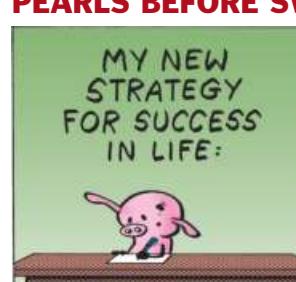


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POOCH CAFE



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



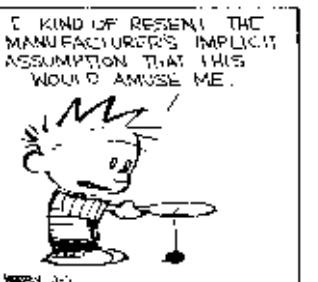
PEANUTS



TIGER



CALVIN AND HOBBES



ASK US

N. SREE KANTH

Q. I am about 81 years' old. I desire to go for either Senior Citizens Savings Scheme or single premium Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana. Will I get tax relief under section 80C for the amounts invested in these schemes subject to limit of ₹1.5 lakh. I got no explicit information from Google search. Could you please advise me?

S.N. BHADRA

A. Investment in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme is available for deduction under Section 80C subject to the limits prescribed. Investment in Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana is not covered under Section 80C.

Q. I am a salaried person who does intraday and delivery trades in equities. I am not trading in F&O. I am confused which ITR to file. Hitherto I have been filing ITR 1 because profit generated from trades were negligible. But now I want to file ITR disclosing all my income

UNNIKRISHNAN

A. Profits/losses generated from intraday trading will be treated as Income from Speculative Business and income derived from sale of equities which were delivered will be treated as short term capital gains (holding for less than one year) or long term capital gains (holding for more than 1 year) as the case may be. You are required to file ITR-3 in order to disclose your salary income, income from speculative business, capital gains and income from other sources, if any.

Q. I am a senior citizen pensioner with income from pension, family pension of my wife, interest from bank deposits . For the first time in my life, on the advise of a friend, I had invested in SWP of three mutual funds a total of ₹10 lakh only and I have received in the last financial year (2019-20) short term capital gains of ₹2,704/- only and LTCG of ₹1,546/- only (as per the financial statement provided). This forms negligible part of my income. My queries are: 1. whether I can include the STCG amount



in income from other sources and file returns in ITR - 1. I was informed that LTCG is not taxable. Please clarify as I noticed that ITR - 2 is too long and cumbersome and I am used to ITR - 1

2. Am I eligible to deduct ₹15,000 from the family pension I receive under section 57(1)(a), as informed to me recently, which I have never claimed in last few years.

D.V. MURALI MOHAN

A. Reply to Query 1: As your total income consists of Capital Gains over and above interest and pension, the applicable form for you is ITR-2. Long term capital gains derived from Equity Oriented Funds are not taxable if such gains sum up to an amount lesser than ₹1 lakh. Kindly check if the funds you have invested are in Equity Oriented Funds and treat the same accordingly.

Reply to Query 2: Under Section 57(1)(a) of the Income Tax Act, a deduction of a sum equal to 33.33% of such income or ₹15,000 whichever is less can be claimed.

Q. I am a public sector employee. For my daughter's marriage I had withdrawn PF money, after my daughter's marriage, I deposited the balance amount of my PF, as FDR in the name of my

daughter and my son, duly deducting TDS on these deposits. Both children are staying in the U.S. on H1-B visa, and are getting FDR interest annually of ₹48,000 and ₹44,000. Is it necessary to file I-T returns in India?

VENKAT RAMANA

A. Under Section 139(1) of the Income Tax Act, an individual has to file ITR if the total income exceeds the maximum amount not chargeable to tax. If your children do not have any other income in India other than the stated, they are not required to file. However, it is to be noted that the banks deduct TDS for the interest paid by them to non-resident individuals under Section 195 of the Income Tax Act, in order to claim the refund of the same, the respective ITRs are required to be filed.

(N. Sree Kanth 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.

JOYDEEP SEN

At the current juncture, when interest rates are threatening to move upwards, there is a question among investors – which funds are appropriate and which funds should one exit. Before we discuss the guidance part, let us look at some relevant facts for ease of understanding.

The 16 debt fund categories are defined by SEBI in terms of contours i.e. what a fund in that category is supposed to do. Hence, when you take a decision to invest in a fund, you can take a look at the parameters of that category and get a fair idea.

Debt funds earn their returns from two avenues: accrual and mark-to-market (MTM). Accrual is the coupon or interest that accrues on the bonds and other instruments in the portfolio.

Mark-to-market is the valuation done every day, for NAV computation, as per prices prevailing in the market for the instruments in the portfolio. Yield (interest rate) and bond prices move inversely; if yield levels move up, prices come down and the MTM impact is adverse. If interest rates in the market come down, the impact is positive.

When yields or interest rates in the market move up, the instant impact is adverse. However, over a period of time, the accrual level moves up. Fresh money coming into the fund is invested at higher yields and as securities mature, reinvestments happen at a higher yield.

The longer your investment horizon, the better. You have that much more accrual to absorb any MTM loss. Moreover, over a long period of time, market moves in cycles i.e. interest rates move up and come down, and then settle down. For example, say a debt

fund has a portfolio

of ₹100 and on a bad day, the adverse MTM impact was ₹1.5. The accrual level of the fund is, say, 6%. If you had invested in the fund just the day before, you would see minus 1.5% in your statement. If you stay invested for three months, your returns would be nil as the fund had accrued ₹6/4 = ₹1.5. Over a holding period of one year, your return is ₹6 minus ₹1.5, i.e. 4.5%.

If you have a horizon of say 10 years, the accrual will be that much stronger and the impact of MTM will be negligible. To be noted, MTM impact can be favourable also, when yield levels are coming down.

Portfolio maturity of a debt fund is the weighted average maturity of all the instruments in the portfolio. The longer the portfolio maturity, the higher is the variability to market movements. In other words, debt funds with longer maturity are more volatile and the MTM

impact – both favourable and adverse – are higher. In that sense, shorter maturity funds are defensive.

With this background, now let us come to the guidance on what to do:

Given the view that yields/interest rates are expected to gradually move up over the next year or so, it is advisable to shift from long-maturity debt funds to short-maturity ones. Having said that, if you have an adequately long investment horizon, you can stay invested even in long maturity funds. As mentioned earlier, longer-period accrual and multiple market cycles will even out the interim volatility.

If you cannot digest volatility, then you may gradually move from long maturity funds to short maturity ones. On what is adequate investment horizon, there is no hard-and-fast definition; the ballpark is, if your horizon is more-or-less equal to the

portfolio maturity, you are safe. As an example, for a fund with a portfolio maturity of three years, a horizon of three years is adequate and for 10-year maturity fund, a horizon of 10 years is desirable.

Check the portfolio quality also. If your horizon is say three years and longer, for availing of tax efficiency, there are funds in the categories of banking and PSU, corporate bond, short duration, etc. The fact sheet of the fund you intend to invest in, is available on the website of the AMC. All the details of portfolio maturity, portfolio composition, etc. is available on the fund fact sheet.

From the credit risk perspective, government securities funds are the best. However, these funds have relatively longer portfolio maturity and are more volatile. Hence a long investment horizon is imperative for G-Sec funds.

For deployment of fresh money, which does not have

the benefit of accrual as in the case of funds you had already invested in, think through the horizon you have and whether you like the initial volatility that may happen, in case yields move up and MTM is adverse. For existing investments, if it is in long maturity funds and you want to stay put for three years for tax efficiency and you are nearing three years, you can stay put.

The up-move in yields is expected to be gradual and calibrated. If you have completed three years and your corpus is already tax efficient, it is a matter of remaining horizon. If the remaining investment period is say six months or one year, you may shift to a shorter maturity one. If your remaining period is few more years, then you may stay put.

There is a common belief that in a rising interest rate scenario, Floating Rate funds are advisable as it would benefit from rising interest rates. However, it is not a one-to-one correspondence.

The explanation is technical; to put it simply, real floating rate bonds, where the coupon rate is benchmarked to say MIBOR (which moves along with RBI defined rates) are rare. These fund portfolios are constructed as "synthetic floaters".

Conclusion

If you are working with an advisor or distributor, you can take guidance. If you are DIY, you may do a review of your debt fund portfolio as per the parameters discussed above. To be noted,

the expected up-move in yields over the next one year or so would be gradual and you have the time to execute any changes.

(The writer is a corporate trainer (debt markets) and author)

The 'long' and 'short' of debt funds

The longer your investment horizon, the better



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ECONOMICS OPTIONAL by Ravindra N. Jha
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ARANI NAGA SUDHAKAR व रियाजी

का नाम A BABU RAO व राज का

ARANI NAGA SUDHAKAR व रियाजी का नाम

A N SUDHAKAR

Myanmar protesters rally after night raids

Official of Suu Kyi's party killed and several others detained during police operations

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

YANGON

Thousands of Myanmar anti-coup demonstrators defied a continued military crackdown on Sunday, following overnight raids in Yangon in which an official from Aung San Suu Kyi's party was beaten to death and several others were detained.

Myanmar has been rocked by unrest since a February 1 coup ousted civilian leader Ms. Suu Kyi from power and triggered a mass uprising opposed to the new military junta.

54 dead: UN

Wednesday was the deadliest day so far, with the United Nations saying at least 38 people were killed as security forces fired into crowds,



Taking cover: Protesters trying to protect themselves from tear gas fired by the police in Yangon on Sunday. • AFP

shooting some protesters in the head.

The UN rights office also said it has verified at least 54 deaths since the coup – though the actual number could be far higher – and more than 1,700 people have

been detained.

National League for Democracy party official Soe Win confirmed some officials were arrested in overnight police operations but the exact number is not known.

At least one community

leader connected to the ousted NLD government, 58-year-old Khin Maung Latt, was killed during a raid at Pabedan township in Yangon, Tun Kyi, from the Former Political Prisoners Society, said.

Harsh interrogation

"He was beaten and taken in a raid since last night and it seems he underwent a harsh interrogation," he told AFP.

"The dead body is being taken from Mingaladon military hospital and on the way to Yay Way cemetery."

NLD MP Sithu Maung posted on Facebook that security forces last night were also searching for the party's information officer Maung Maung but had been unable to find him.

"Maung Maung's brother was beaten by police and soldiers and his body was held in an upside-down position while he was tortured because there was no one to arrest," the parliamentarian said.

State-run media on Sunday warned ousted lawmakers involved in a group called the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw – which is claiming to be the legitimate elected government – that they are committing "high treason" and could be sentenced to death or 22 years jail.

The junta has declared group members persona non-grata and says those who communicate with them could face seven years prison.

India, China need 'enabling conditions' to settle dispute

Returning to peaceful negotiations is the way forward: Wang

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China's Foreign Minister

Wang Yi on Sunday said India and China needed "to create enabling conditions for the settlement" of the boundary dispute, even as he reiterated China's view that "the rights and wrongs" of last year's crisis were clear.



Wang Yi

ing of military commanders that followed disengagement being completed on the north and south banks of Pangong Lake, there has been no official word on the progress in the Gogra-Hot Springs area and in Demchok. There are also long-running tensions involving the blocking of patrols in Depsang, which officials said pre-dated the current crisis. De-escalation also remains, with troops still present in large numbers in depth areas beyond the LAC.

His comments came at his annual press meet along the sidelines of the on-going convening in Beijing of the National People's Congress (NPC), the ceremonial Communist Party-controlled legislature. Mr. Wang addressed China's relations with the United States, the EU, Japan and India, among other issues.

"The China-India relationship is essentially about how the world's two largest developing countries get along and pursue development and rejuvenation together," he said in response to a question on the on-going disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Mr. Wang reiterated the statement he made during a February 25 call with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar that "the boundary dispute, an issue left from history, is not whole story of the China-India relationship." "It is important that both sides manage disputes properly and, at the same time, expand and enhance cooperation to create enabling conditions for the settlement of the issue," he told reporters. "The rights and

wrongs of what happened in the border area last year are clear, so are the stakes involved. It again proves that initiating confrontation will not solve the problem. Returning to peaceful negotiation is the right way forward. China's position is very clear. We are committed to settling the boundary dispute through dialogue and consultation. At the same time, we are resolved to safeguard our sovereign rights and interests."

India's stand

India has conveyed a different message, underlining that without full disengagement along the LAC, and then de-escalation, restoring normalcy in the relationship would not be possible.

The Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday complete disengagement "would allow both sides to consider de-escalation of forces in Eastern Ladakh as that alone will lead to the restoration of peace and tranquility and provide conditions for progress in our bilateral relationship."

Since a February 20 meet-

ing of military commanders that followed disengagement being completed on the north and south banks of Pangong Lake, there has been no official word on the progress in the Gogra-Hot Springs area and in Demchok. There are also long-running tensions involving the blocking of patrols in Depsang, which officials said pre-dated the current crisis. De-escalation also remains, with troops still present in large numbers in depth areas beyond the LAC.

Mr. Wang said "it falls on both sides to solidify the existing consensus, strengthen dialogue and communication, and improve various management mechanisms to jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the border area."

"In the year ahead, we hope India will work with China to truly deliver on the important common understanding reached by our leaders that both are not threats to each other, but opportunities for each other's development," he said.

The Chinese Foreign Minister said "on many important issues, our positions are the same or close, due to similar national realities." "Therefore, China and India are each other's friends and partners, not threats or rivals," he said. "The two sides need to help each other succeed instead of undercutting each other. We should intensify cooperation instead of harbouring suspicions of each other."

Saudi-led coalition jets pound Sana'a

The raids come after Riyadh intercepted 10 drones aimed at 'civilian' targets

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

RIYADH

A Saudi-led military coalition mounted air strikes on Yemen's Houthi-controlled capital Sana'a on Sunday after it intercepted 10 drones launched by the Iran-backed rebels, state media reported.

"The military operation targets Houthi military capabilities in Sana'a and a number of other provinces," the coalition was quoted as saying by the official Saudi Press Agency.

The strikes triggered huge explosions in Sana'a and sent plumes of smoke rising

in the sky, according to an AFP correspondent and photographer at the scene. The rebels reported seven air strikes on Sana'a.

The raids come after the coalition said it intercepted 10 drones launched by the rebels on Sunday, in a sharp escalation in cross-border attacks on the kingdom.

The coalition – fighting in Yemen alongside the internationally recognised government against the insurgents – said the drones were aimed at "civilian" targets in Saudi Arabia, SPA reported, without specifying locations.

Targeting civilians in the kingdom was a "red line", the coalition said after the retaliatory strikes on Sana'a.

Spate of attacks

The Houthis have stepped up attacks on Saudi Arabia in recent weeks, while they escalate an offensive in Yemen to seize the government's last northern stronghold of Marib.

The escalation comes even after the U.S. last month delisted the Houthis as terrorists and stepped up efforts to de-escalate the six-year conflict.

The coalition added that their "victories" in Marib had prompted the rebels to step up attacks on the kingdom.

On Saturday, Yemeni government sources said fierce fighting between pro-government forces and the rebels in oil-rich Marib had left at least 90 combatants on the two sides dead over the span of 24 hours.

China warns U.S. over its Taiwan stand

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING

China's Foreign Minister warned the Biden administration on Sunday to roll back former President Donald Trump's "dangerous practice" of showing support for Taiwan, the island democracy claimed by Beijing as its own territory.

"We urge the new U.S. administration to... completely change the previous administration's dangerous practices of 'crossing the line' and 'playing with fire,'" Mr. Wang said.

At ruined Iraq church, Pope calls on Christians to forgive

He visited parts of northern Iraq that were once held by IS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

QARAQOSH

Pope Francis called on Iraq's Christians to forgive the injustices committed against them by Muslim extremists and to rebuild as he visited the wrecked shells of churches and met ecstatic crowds in the community's historic heartland, which was nearly erased by the Islamic State group's horrific reign.

At each stop in northern Iraq, the remnants of its Christian population turned out, jubilant, ululating, decked out in colorful dress, though heavy security prevented Francis from plunging into the crowd as he would normally do. Nonetheless, they seemed simply overjoyed that they had not been forgotten.

Displaced people
It was a sign of the desperation for support among an ancient community uncertain whether it can hold on. Traditionally Christian towns dotting the Nineveh Plains of the north were emptied as Christians – as



Message of peace: Pope Francis attending a prayer for victims of war at Hosh al-Bieaa Church Square in Mosul. • AP

well as many Muslims – fled the Islamic State group's onslaught in 2014. Only a few have returned to their homes since the defeat of IS in Iraq declared four years ago, and the rest remain scattered elsewhere in Iraq or abroad.

Bells rang out in the town of Qaraqosh as the Pope arrived. Speaking to a packed Church of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Francis said "forgiveness" is a key word for Christians.

"The road to a full recovery may still be long, but I ask you, please, not to grow

discouraged. What is needed is the ability to forgive, but also the courage not to give up." The Qaraqosh church has been extensively renovated after being vandalized by IS militants during their takeover of the town, making it a symbol of recovery efforts.

Pope Francis, dressed in white, took to a red carpet stage in a square in the north's main city, Mosul, surrounded by the grey hollowed-out shells of four churches, nearly destroyed in the war to oust the Islamic State group from the city.

Nepal Supreme Court scraps ruling NCP

It revives earlier political formations, which is seen as a boost for PM Sharma Oli

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court of Nepal on Sunday scrapped the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP) and revived the two original parties that had joined hands in 2018 to form the ruling party. With this decision, the original ruling alliance between the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre) has been re-established. Prime Minister Oli's faction has welcomed the decision.

A joint bench of Justices Kumar Regmi and Bami Kumar Shrestha took away the name of the ruling NCP because of a case filed by Rishi Kattel, leader of the Communist Party of Nepal. Mr. Kattel had filed a writ petition arguing that the "Nepal Communist Party" formed



K.P. Sharma Oli

following the merger of the CPN (UML) and the CPN (Maoist-Centre) in 2018 had copied his party's name.

The surprising development came in the backdrop of the first session of the reinstated House of Representatives which witnessed stormy scenes as the faction led by Co-Chair of the NCP Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and former PM Madhav Kumar Nepal walked out soon after the Lower House met. They were protesting against the tabling of a con-

troversial ordinance by the Oli government.

Bhattarai, Foreign Affairs Adviser to PM Oli.

Mr. Oli was sworn in in February 2018 after he won the election as the Chairperson of the CPN-UML in alliance with other parties, including the CPN-Maoist Centre.

Following the victory, the two major Left wing parties came together and formed a single outfit – Nepal Communist Party which had its nine-member Secretariat, 45-member Standing Committee and a Central Committee with 441 members.

The verdict has scrapped the party but the fate of the three internal organs – Secretariat, Standing Committee and the Central Committee – is not yet clear as several members of the two alliance partners had amalgamated and thrown a challenge to Mr. Oli's authority.

2 Navy men killed in attack in Pak.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KARACHI

Unidentified gunmen attacked a vehicle carrying security forces, killing two personnel of the Pakistan Navy and injuring another in the coastal district of

Gwadar in the restive Baluchistan province.

The Pakistan Navy vehicle came under indiscriminate firing on Saturday while travelling from Ganz to Jiwani in Gwadar district.

As a result of the firing,

two of the Naval personnel were killed and another man was injured.

The attack comes just two days after a roadside bomb killed five labourers in the Tandoori area, near Sibi in the province.

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ADMISSION NOTIFICATION
Applications are invited for admission to the M.A. ENGLISH (DISTANCE MODE) Programme for the academic year 2020-2021. The application form with instructions is available on the University website www.efluniversity.ac.in. The last date for receipt of filled in applications is March 20, 2021.

Sd/- REGISTRAR Ig

Sri Lankan Catholics mark 'Black Sunday'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLOMBO

Sri Lankan Roman Catholics attended Mass dressed in black on Sunday, with prayers and protests calling for justice for those killed in coordinated suicide bomb attacks on Easter Sunday two years ago.

Church bells tolled and prayers were chanted at 8.45 a.m., the time when bombs were detonated at two Roman Catholic churches and a Protestant church during Easter services on April 21, 2019.

More than 260 people, including 171 from the two Catholic churches, were killed in the attacks, which were blamed on two local Islamic extremist groups.

Swiss narrowly back proposal to ban face coverings in public

The measure will outlaw wearing of burqas and niqabs

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BERLIN

Swiss voters narrowly approved on Sunday a proposal to ban face coverings, both the niqabs and burqas worn by a few Muslim women in the country and the ski masks and bandannas used by protesters.

The measure will outlaw covering one's face in public places like restaurants, sports stadiums, public transport or simply walking in the street.

Few exceptions
It foresees exceptions at religious sites and for security or health reasons, such as

face masks people are wearing now to protect against COVID-19, as well as for traditional Carnival celebrations. Authorities have two years to draw up detailed legislation.

Two Swiss cantons, or states, Ticino and St. Gallen, already have similar legislation that foresees fines for transgressions. National legislation will put Switzerland in line with countries such as Belgium and France that have already enacted similar measures.

Experts estimate that at most a few dozen Muslim women wear full-face coverings in the country of 8.5 million people.

Supporters of the proposal argued that the full-face coverings symbolise the repression of women and said the measure is needed to uphold a basic principle that faces should be shown in a free society like Switzerland's.

In the end, 51.2% of voters supported the plan.

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Shastri takes a dig at ICC for rule change

'I cannot say how proud I am of my Indian cricket team qualifying for the WTC final against all odds'

ENGLAND IN INDIA

AMOL KARHADKAR
AHMEDABAD

A day after India set up a World Test Championship final versus New Zealand after an innings win against England in the fourth Test, India head coach Ravi Shastri strongly criticised the ICC's change of qualification rules in the middle of the pandemic.

"I cannot say how proud I am of my Indian cricket team going through this tough period and qualifying for the WTC final against all odds," Shastri said on Sunday.

"You go from No. 1 to No. 3 sitting in your bedroom, not playing cricket and then qualify as No. 1 in every department – top of the table, ICC rankings, percentage rankings. Tomorrow there might be some other workings that come and I think we'll be No. 1 in that also."

"Please don't shift the goalposts," Shastri said. "We're sitting on top of the table with 360 points. In the percentage points system, you've got to go to Australia and beat Australia. If you don't beat Australia, you come back home and beat England 4-0, you get to 500 points and you still don't qualify."

Hard work
"We have had to dig deep. We've had to go down every hole to find water. We found it and earned our stripes to

be in the final of the WTC – the biggest trophy in the world – with 520 points. So don't ask me about the next cycle, first address this cycle."

Teams being a close-knit unit in cricket's 21st century avatar has become a rarity. Over the last five months, though, with the Indian team being confined to a biosecure bubble due to COVID-19 preventive measures, many Indian players have admitted it has helped them get to know each other better. Shastri said that has been one of the biggest positives of the life in a bubble.

"When you meet more often, somewhere down the line there will be conversations regarding the game, which used to happen in our time."

"When you finish the game, you will still be sitting in the dressing room a good hour after the game, talking cricket," Shastri said.

"They have understood each other's background, mental state, where they come from, where they are in life... it allowed them to open themselves up to their colleagues a lot more, discuss personal issues more freely, win more trust from the team members."

I'm going to give a lot of credit to the Indians. They came back hard after the first Test
CHRIS SILVERWOOD
England coach



Pleased as punch: Skipper Kohli will be delighted by the way Washington, Axar, Siraj and Pant have handled tough situations. ■ SPORTZPICS/BCCI

Coach all praise for the young guns

AMOL KARHADKAR
AHMEDABAD

Shastri's take on the youngsters who stood out during the Test series against England.

Rishabh Pant

There is no greater sight in cricket than seeing a naturally brilliant match-winner playing to potential. I think in the last two months what he has done, to win matches for India, there will be players who won't do it in

a lifetime and wouldn't have done it in a lifetime.

Washington Sundar

He has unbelievable composure and temperament. He was an opening batsman in under-19, but to see that kind of body language, unfazed by the best bowlers in the world in the toughest situations in Brisbane, Chennai and Ahmedabad was unreal. This was an even better innings than the one in

Brisbane. He should be batting in the top-4 for Tamil Nadu. I would like to have a word with the selectors or DK (captain Dinesh Karthik).

Axar Patel

Seasoned campaigner. I won't call him a youngster. He has been around with the Indian team for years. He has been very unlucky with injuries. When Ashwin, Jadeja and Axar play together, it'll be some fun, especially in India.

IPL 2021 Schedule



Date	Teams	Time	Venue
April 9	MI (H) vs. RCB (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 10	CSK (H) vs. DC (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 11	SRH (H) vs. KKR (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 12	RR (H) vs. PBKS (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 13	KKR (H) vs. MI (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 14	SRH (H) vs. RCB (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 15	RR (H) vs. DC (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 16	PBKS (H) vs. CSK (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 17	MI (H) vs. SRH (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 18	RCB (H) vs. KKR (A)	3.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 18	DC (H) vs. PBKS (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 19	CSK (H) vs. RR (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 20	DC (H) vs. MI (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 21	PBKS (H) vs. SRH (A)	3.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 21	KKR (H) vs. CSK (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 22	RCB (H) vs. RR (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 23	PBKS (H) vs. MI (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 24	RR (H) vs. KKR (A)	7.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 25	CSK (H) vs. RCB (A)	3.30 p.m.	Mumbai
April 25	SRH (H) vs. DC (A)	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
April 26	PBKS (H) vs. KKR (A)	7.30 p.m.	Ahmedabad

For the first time in an edition in India, the teams will play only at neutral venues. The move is to negate the home advantage owing to limited venues to be used in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

All teams will play at four out of the six venues in the league stage

Five of the eight franchises will host the matches, but none of them will feature in their home-town

In the league stage, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru will host 10 matches each, and Ahmedabad and Delhi eight each. Ahmedabad will host the playoffs, including the final

The initial stage of the tournament, to be held in Mumbai and Chennai, will not have any spectators

There will be more double-headers this time (11), with two sides featuring in two day games (3.30 p.m.) and six teams playing three day games

Each team will travel only thrice to minimise the risk of COVID-19

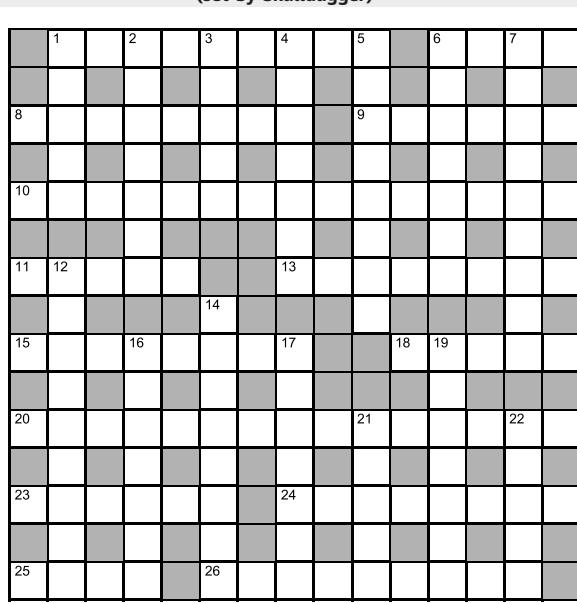


THE FINAL WILL BE HELD ON MAY 30 AT AHMEDABAD (7.30 P.M.)

TH CROSSWORD + 13189

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ACROSS

- 1 Enlightens polite hipsters every so often (9)
- 6 Cloak for head (4)
- 8 Strongman almost pulverised small unit (8)
- 9 Don sackcloth and ashes and tear around Peru (6)
- 10 Rodeo that cowmen bulldozed signified return to reality (4,4,2,5)
- 11 Innards of farm animals, livestock primarily (5)

- 13 Current government controlling houses (8)
15 Illicit drawings German institute acquired after manipulating tariff (8)
18 Snake seen off and on in tree (5)
20 Collect donations from unorthodox Pharaoh's student (4,3,3,5)
23 First cake Alice baked for gluten-intolerant chap (6)
24 Dramatic skits ran in old language (8)
25 Small matter for an associate of Dick and Harry (4)
26 Prince alluded to being held in high esteem (9)
- DOWN
- 1 Kind of optimistic attitude exhibited by 50% of canids (dogs) (3-2)
2 Run-down vicars without energy, guts (7)
3 Slow and dignified mythical ship at bottom of lake (5)
4 Lecture in future minister's preparatory cut short (7)
5 Cynical of advanced experimentation into using sound waves (8)
6 Paint splatter under accountant's head (7)
7 Regret informal night surrounded by money (9)
12 Meant to wander under steadfast sky (9)
14 Post-date suggestion involving throwing back booze and animated chat with Penny (8)
16 Mussolini's system for division to leave Hungary after France advanced (7)
17 Repent at leisure if you act thus, proverbially (2,5)
19 Rude gesture by queen in pool (7)
21 Wingless wasp's colour (5)
22 Diana bewitched water nymph (5)

SUDOKU

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6							8	
	5	7			2	3		
7			2	8				
				6				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13188

R	O	N	A	T	I	N	L	I	S	E	D
A	C	N	E	A	P	E	S				
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M	Y	U	D	T	C	T	I				
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R	I	U	S	I	N	E					
T	E	N	T	E	N	E					
I	S	T	E	N	E	E					
O	N	E	S	E	N	E					
C	O	R	A	N	E	E					
A	R	A	T	I	S	E					
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L	R	A	S	V	I	S					
U	R	A	O	N	A	R					
E	C	C	I	L	N	A					
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Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

A unique honour

Hanuman fits into the description of the jnani who is also a great devotee that Krishna extols in the Gita as one very dear to Him, pointed out Asuri Sri Madhavachariar in a discourse. Hanuman successfully completes the mission entrusted to him. He sees Sita and allays her fears. He even gains audience with Ravana and advises him. He returns to Rama to give him the good news about Sita's whereabouts. Rama is overwhelmed to hear about Sita and at Hanuman's achievements. Feeling indebted to Hanuman and filled with extreme gratitude, He starts thinking about how to reward Hanuman. With these feelings Rama then embraces Hanuman, a gesture that is not for many a devotee. In addition, He addresses Hanuman as a Mahatma in this context. This is a term of honour reserved for only great souls.

Later, at the end of Rama avatar, when Rama takes all the people of Ayodhya to Vaikunta, and also wishes that Hanuman should accompany Him, Hanuman declines this offer. Hanuman does not wish for any other Purushartha, except the honour to sing Rama's glories. What a great fortune for Hanuman to have served the Lord thus? This sentiment is also expressed by azhwars in their hymns. By His grace, they should never ever forget His sacred feet. Nammazhwar is explicit in stating that Vaikunta does not appeal to him as much as delighting in the worship of the Lord's archa form. Nothing could be more enjoyable than revelling in His gunas that have a sweetness that increases with meditation.

Andal's strong involvement with the Lord is a sure guide to the jivatmas about what to seek and how to seek from the Lord. He should accept their sole desire to serve Him and to sing His glories at all times. No other desire should remain in their thoughts. This is their only Parama Purushartha.



Smashing success: Marin got past Sindhu in just 35 minutes.

Women: Carolina Marin (Esp) bt P.V. Sindhu 21-12, 21-5.

Men: Viktor Axelsen (Den) bt Kunlavut Vitidsarn (Tha) 21-16, 21-6.

The results (finals):

Real salvages draw at Atletico

EURO LEAGUES

TV PICKS

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
ISL: Star Sports 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
Vijay Hazare Trophy: Star Sports 2HD & 3, 9 a.m.

IN BRIEF



Djokovic owns Federer's No. 1-ranking record

PARIS Novak Djokovic will set a new landmark on Monday of 311 weeks as World No. 1, surpassing Roger Federer. Djokovic reclaimed the top ranking from Nadal in February 2020 and finished as year-end No. 1 for the sixth time, tying the mark set by Pete Sampras. He is currently in his fifth different spell atop the rankings. AFP



Kvitova drubs Muguruza, takes Qatar title

DOHA Petra Kvitova thrashed Garbine Muguruza 6-2, 6-1 to win her second Qatar Open title on Saturday. It was her 28th career title from 38 finals. Kvitova has won 20 career matches in Doha, the most by any player, passing Svetlana Kuznetsova and Caroline Wozniacki on 19. AFP

Lalrinsanga Tlau clinches WBC youth world title

NEW DELHI Indian boxer Lalrinsanga Tlau defeated Ghana's Eric Quarmp to claim the WBC youth World super featherweight title in an eight-round contest in Aizawl on Saturday. The 21-year-old won an unanimous decision, being scored 80-72, 80-72, 80-72 by judges. PTI



On a roll: Wolvaardt and Lee, left, put on 169 for the first wicket while medium-pacer Shabnim Ismail claimed three wickets. ■ BCCI



Rawat, Sangwan script sensational turnaround

Their unbeaten stand hauls Delhi past Uttarakhand and into quarterfinals

HAZARE TROPHY

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

Just when Uttarakhand had reasons to believe it had done enough to seal the last quarterfinal spot in Vijay Hazare Trophy, Delhi's seventh-wicket pair of Anuj Rawat and skipper Pradeep Sangwan produced an electrifying unbeaten 143-run stand to snatch it away on Sunday.

Looking down and almost out, Delhi owed its dramatic revival to Rawat (95 not out, 85b, 7x4, 6x2) and Sangwan (58 not out, 49b, 6x4, 2x6) who turned the match on its head in the space of 16 overs and took the host home with nine deliveries to spare at the Ferozeshah Kotla. The victory gave Delhi a place in the quarterfinals against Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday.

Given her brilliant work on the field – three catches, including that of Mithali, and one direct-hit run out – not to forget her elegant batting – 80 off 110 balls – the 21-year-old Wolvaardt was the stand-out performer.

However, for her nippy bowling that fetched her three wickets, medium-pacer Shabnim Ismail was adjudged Player-of-the-Match. After being reduced to 146 for six in 32.3 overs in its chase of 288 – with Nitish Rana out for 81 (88b, 10x4, 1x6) – Delhi was staring at defeat. Till this stage, Uttarakhand appeared a worthy winner.

Barring the last 16 overs, Uttarakhand proved that it was neither intimidated by

Delhi's reputation nor the quality of its resources.

The visiting team started the innings with flair and ended with a flourish. Left-handed Kamal Singh (77, 29b, 11x4, 1x6) and Jay Bista (31, 29b, 4x4) gave a 88-run start in 13.5 overs by taking on new-ball bowlers Kulwant Khejriwal and Simjeet Singh.

Mid-innings solidity

Kunal Chandela (62, 83b, 6x4), who played a stellar role in Delhi reaching the Ranji Trophy final in the 2017-18 season, punished his former teammates while providing mid-innings solidity.

After Delhi pulled Uttarakhand back through Nitish Rana (2/40) and Lalit Yadav (2/27), it was Saurabh Rawat (44, 23b, 4x4, 3x6) who provided the last-over flourish for Uttarakhand. Off-left-arm medium-pacer Sangwan, Rawat hit 24 runs off five deliveries – 6, 6, 4, 6, 2 – before being yorked.

The scores: Uttarakhand 287/8 in 50 overs (Kamal Singh 77, Kunal Chandela 62, Saurabh Rawat 44) lost to Delhi 289 for six in 48.3 overs (Anuj Rawat 95 n.o., Nitish Rana 81, Pradeep Sangwan 58 n.o.).

Monday's fixtures (quarterfinals): Gujarat v Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka v Kerala.



The hero: Delhi owed its dramatic revival to Anuj Rawat who scored an unbeaten 95. ■ FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

Vinesh wins gold

Reclaims number one rank

WRESTLING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ROME

Star Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat claimed her second gold medal in as many weeks with a dominant win in the Matteo Pellicone ranking series event here on Sunday and reclaimed the top rank in her category.

The 26-year-old World bronze medallist and only Indian woman wrestler to qualify for Tokyo Games, Vinesh blanked Canada's Diana Mary Helen Weicker 4-0 in the 53kg title clash.

Vinesh did not concede a single point at this tournament, winning two of her three bouts by pinning her rivals while getting injury walkouts in the other two in the eight-woman field.

Sarita Mor had won a silver in the 57kg on Saturday.



Vinesh Phogat. ■ FILE PHOTO

SA women begin well

Wolvaardt has a field day as tourists run away with first ODI

SA IN INDIA

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
LUCKNOW

Laura Wolvaardt did everything except win the Player-of-the-Match award, as South Africa women posted a resounding eight-wicket victory over India in the first One-Day International here on Sunday.

Opting to bowl, South Africa turned the tide after India had reached 101 for three in 25 overs.

Skipper Mithali Raj anchored the Indian innings nicely with 50 off 85 balls. Harmanpreet Kaur was in good form, making 40 off 41 balls.

She looked good for more before an ambitious off-drive saw her getting caught on the boundary.

The Indians rued the in-

dian enthusiasm looked to have waned.

Captain Sune Luus said she was proud of her team for beating India in India by such a big margin, and setting the tempo for the five-match series.

Given her brilliant work on the field – three catches, including that of Mithali, and one direct-hit run out – not to forget her elegant batting – 80 off 110 balls – the 21-year-old Wolvaardt was the stand-out performer.

However, for her nippy bowling that fetched her three wickets, medium-pacer Shabnim Ismail was adjudged Player-of-the-Match.

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SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Jemimah Rodrigues c Lee b Kapp 1 (1lb), Smriti Mandhana c Trisha b Khaka 14 (20b, 3x4), Punam Raut c Khaka b Shabnim 10 (29b, 1x4), Mithali Raj c Wolvaardt b Shabnim 50 (85b, 4x4, 1x6), Harmanpreet Kaur c Shabnim b Luus 40 (41b, 6x4), Deepi Sharma b Mlaib 27 (46b, 3x4), Sushma Verma c Wolvaardt b Mlaib 1 (2b), Jhulan Goswami c Wolvaardt b Shabnim 4 (71b), Monica Patel run out 4 (24b), Poonam Yadav (not out) 9 (21b), Rajeshwari Gayakwad (not out) 0 (Ob); Extras (b-1, lb-4, w-12); 17; Total (for nine wkts. in 50 overs): 177.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-16 (Smriti, 4.3 overs), 2-18 (Jemimah, 5.4), 3-40 (Punam, 13.4), 4-102 (Harmanpreet, 25.2), 5-154 (Mithali, 37.5), 6-155 (Deepi, 39.3), 7-158 (Sushma, 41.2), 8-160 (Jhulan, 49.2), 9-175 (Monica, 49.5).

SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING

Shabnim 10-3-28-3, Kapp 9-1-25-1, Khaka 10-1-29-1, Mlaib 10-1-41-2, Luus 5-0-23-1, de Klerk 6-0-26-0.

SOUTH AFRICA

Lizelle Lee (not out) 83 (122b, 11x4, 1x6), Laura Wolvaardt lbw b Jhulan 80 (110b, 12x4), Sune Luus c Deepi b Jhulan 1 (9b), Lara Goodall (not out) 0 (Ob); Extras (b-1, lb-4, w-12); 17; Total (for nine wkts. in 50 overs): 177.

EXTRAS (b-4, lb-8, w-2): 14; Total (for two wkts. in 40.1 overs): 178.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-169 (Wolvaardt, 37.1), 2-177 (Luus, 39.6).

INDIA BOWLING

Jhulan 10-1-38-2, Monica 4-20-0, Rajeshwari 8-0-34-0, Deepi 4-1-25-0, Poonam 10-0-34-0, Harmanpreet 4-1-0-15-0.

Toss: South Africa; Player-of-the-match: Shabnim Ismail.

SOUTH AFRICA won by eight wickets with 9.5 overs to spare to take a 1-0 lead in five-match series.

Second ODI: March 9, 9 a.m.

Guptill stars as New Zealand claims T20 series

Conway and Phillips chip in as home team posts a seven-wicket victory

AUSTRALIA IN NZ

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WELLINGTON

A century opening stand by Martin Guptill and Devon Conway saw New Zealand clinch the Twenty20 series against Australia here on Sunday.

Set 143 for victory in the fifth and final match, New Zealand won by seven wickets with 27 balls to spare and took the series 3-2.

After being comprehensively outplayed in games three and four when batting second, New Zealand captain Kane Williamson knew he had to be innovative to win the series after he lost the toss and was told to bowl first.

He put an emphasis on



Foot on the pedal: Guptill dispersed the Aussie attack as New Zealand raced to the target. ■ AP

spin with his slow bowlers sending down 12 overs, the most for New Zealand in a Twenty20 match, and they

took four of the eight wickets.

Of the spin brigade, Ish Sodhi finished with three for

24 in his four overs, Hong Kong-born Mark Chapman, bowling for the first time for New Zealand, took one for 9

in two overs and Mitchell Santner conceded only 21 runs from his four.

Guptill, who had been out of form going into the series, silenced his critics with a masterful 71, including seven 4s and four 6s, while Conway contributed 36 with the pair putting on 106 for the first wicket.

New Zealand stumbled slightly when Kane Williamson went first ball but a Guptill single denied Riley Meredith the hat-trick.

Glenn Phillips blasted New Zealand home with five fours and two sixes to be unbeaten on 34.

The scores: Australia 142/8 in 20 overs (A. Finch 36, M. Wade 44, M. Stoinis 26; I. Sodhi 3/24) lost to New Zealand 143/3 in 15.3 overs (D. Conway 36, M. Guptill 71, G. Phillips 34).

Delhi Audit triumphs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Vijay Sharma and Rajeev Sharma helped Delhi Audit down Ministry of Defence

3-0 in the final of the inter-Ministry badminton tournament at the AIIMS Gymkhana here on Sunday.

The results (final):

Delhi Audit bt Ministry of Finance 3-0 (Vijay Sharma bt Somveer Singh 21-10, 21-21, 21-6; Rajeev Sharma bt Amit Yadav 21-10, 21-13; Vijay Sharma & Rajeev Sharma bt Somveer Singh & Vikram 21-12, 21-14).

Third place:

Ministry of Finance bt Ministry of Communication & IT 3-0 (Sachin Rawat bt Amit Sharma 21-11, 21-11; Saurabh Abhinav Prakash 21-9, 21-10; Sachin & Saurabh abt Amit & Abhinav 21-12, 21-7).

Fourth place:

MCA bt Ministry of Environment & Forests 3-0 (Rajiv Sharma bt Arunima 21-11, 21-11; Saurabh Abhinav Prakash 21-10, 21-10; Arunima & Saurabh abt Rajiv Sharma 21-12, 21-12).

The results (final):

Zane Khan (USA) bt Saketh Myneni 7-6(3), 6-3.

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