



India's COVID-19 toll touches 62,724, third highest in the world  
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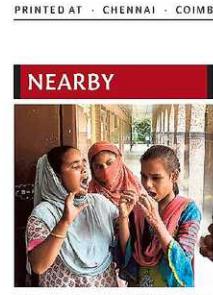
UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres slams India for coal subsidies  
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Members of CSK contingent test positive for COVID-19 in Dubai  
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Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe resigns citing health reasons  
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City sees over 1,800 cases for second straight day  
NEW DELHI  
Delhi recorded 1,808 fresh COVID-19 cases on Friday, taking the tally to over 1.69 lakh, while the death toll rose to 4,389. This is the second consecutive day when the Capital recorded over 1,800 new cases.

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Police defend move to enter JMI campus  
NEW DELHI  
The Delhi police on Friday defended before the High Court its decision to enter Jamia Millia Islamia during the violence that occurred in December last year, saying it was done to control the "aggravated form of unlawful assembly".

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Major reshuffle in Delhi Police  
NEW DELHI

A major reshuffle in Delhi Police on Friday saw Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Rajesh Deo, one of the officers heading an SIT investigating the north-east Delhi riots, being transferred to the legal cell of the Delhi police. His replacement has not been announced yet.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

## States can apply to UGC for extension of exam deadline: SC

Their powers under DM Act do not extend to promotions without tests, it says

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

States are empowered under the Disaster Management Act to override the University Grants Commission (UGC) exam guidelines in order to protect human lives amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Supreme Court held on Friday.

A three-judge Bench, led by Justice Ashok Bhushan, upheld the power of a State and its disaster management authority to countermand the revised UGC guidelines of July 6 to conduct the final year and terminal semester examinations by September 30.

**Saving lives paramount'**  
"In case of a disaster, the priority of all authorities under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 is to imme-

**When the State Disaster Management Authority and State government take a decision that for mitigation or prevention of disaster it is not possible to hold physical examination in the State, the decision is within the four corners of Disaster Management Act, 2005**

SUPREME COURT BENCH

dately combat the disaster and contain it to save human life. Saving of life of human being is given paramount importance," Justice Bhushan, who authored the 160-page judgment for the Bench, emphasised.

But the court held that the powers of the States under the Disaster Management Act do not extend to promoting students on the sole basis of their internal assessment without taking exams.

"When the State Disaster Management Authority and State government take a decision that for mitigation or prevention of disaster it is not possible to hold physical examination in the State, the decision is within the four corners of Disaster Management Act, 2005. However, their decision that students should be promoted without appearing in the final year examination is not within the domain of the Act," the

Bench, including Justices R. Subhash Reddy and M.R. Shah, concluded.

In future, if any State found it impossible to conduct the exams by September 30 and wanted to postpone them, it could apply to the UGC, which would consider the request and decide at the earliest, the court directed.

Justice Bhushan, however, disagreed that the revised UGC guidelines was "unreasonable" and a violation of the right to life of students and examiners.

The July 6 guidelines were based on the recommendations of the R.C. Kuhad Expert Committee, the court pointed out.

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ALL SAFETY MEASURES IN PLACE, SAYS POKHRIYAL ▶ PAGE 9

Six States move SC on NEET, JEE

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Ministers of six non-BJP States on Friday moved the Supreme Court against the conduct of JEE and NEET amid the pandemic, saying lakhs of young students should not fall prey to the Centre's "knee-jerk" and "haphazard" plans, which will prove "worse than the disease itself".

The National Testing Agency had notified JEE (Main) between September 1 to 9. NEET (UG) is scheduled for September 13.

The Ministers – Moloy Ghatak (West Bengal), Rameshwar Oraon (Jharkhand), Amarjeet Bhagat (Chhattisgarh), Uday Ravindra Samant (Maharashtra), Raghu Sharma (Rajasthan) and Balbir Singh Sidhu (Punjab) – moved the court through lawyer Sunil Fernandes.

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## 'Realism should shape India's China policy'

Jaishankar bats for peace in new book



S. Jaishankar

ministration, and the consequences of the Iraq war now no longer made it necessary to hide its light". He sees China's 18th Party Congress in 2012, when Xi Jinping came to power, as marking the start of another new era for China's relations with India and the world.

The challenge India now faces, in his view, is "to manage a more powerful neighbour while ensuring its own rise", and "in doing so, there must be an understanding on our part that this search for equilibrium is an infinite process".

"Some issues may be amenable to an early resolution but others may not," he writes. "Today, the bottom line for the relationship is clear: peace and tranquillity must prevail on the border if the progress made in the last three decades is not to be jeopardized. The border and the future of ties cannot be separated."

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## MPs to be asked to take COVID-19 test 3 days before session

Monsoon session starts on Sept. 14

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Friday that Members of Parliament will be requested to get themselves

tested for COVID-19 at least 72 hours before the start of the monsoon session of Parliament that gets underway on September 14.

The session that was delayed because of the pandemic will now start in the second week of September and conclude on October 1.

Apart from MPs, anyone who enters the Parliament complex, including officials from Ministries, personal staff of Ministers, journalists covering the session and employees of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha secretariats, will also have to get themselves tested for the virus be-

fore the start of the session.

These decisions were taken after Mr. Birla chaired a meeting of officials from both Houses of Parliament, Health Ministry, Defence Research and Development Organisation and other agencies to finalise the arrangements for the up-

coming session.

"Seating arrangement in both Houses [Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha] will be based on guidelines of the Health Ministry on COVID-19. Comprehensive arrangements have been made for holding the session," Mr. Birla said after the meeting.

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## Police, public order, Central cadre under J&K L-G +

Union govt. notifies functions of Lieutenant-Governor and Council of Ministers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Friday notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) that specify the functions of the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) and the Council of Ministers.

According to the transaction of business rules, "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption" will fall under the executive functions of the L-G, implying that the Chief Minister or the Council of Ministers will have no say in their functioning.

The rules notified by Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla say that proposals or matters which affect or are likely to affect peace and tranquillity or the interest of any minority community, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Backward Classes "shall essentially be submitted to the Lieutenant Governor through the Chief Secre-

tary, under intimation to the Chief Minister, before issuing any orders".

The Council of Ministers, led by the CM, will decide service matters of non-All India Services officers, proposal to impose new tax, land revenue, sale grant or lease of government property, reconstituting departments or offices and draft legislation.

However, in case of difference of opinion between the L-G and a Minister, when no agreement could be reached even after a month, the "decision of the Lieutenant Governor shall be deemed to have been accepted by the Council

of Ministers", the rules note. On August 6, 2019, Parliament read down Article 370 of the Constitution revoking the special status of J&K and bifurcated and downgraded the State into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, with the former having a Legislative Assembly.

The erstwhile State has been under Central rule since June 2018 and the elected Assembly was dissolved in November the same year. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, while introducing the legislation in Parliament last year, said J&K's Statehood would be restored soon.

J&K has been without a Chief Minister since June 2018. According to the requirements of the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, fresh elections will be held after the delimitation exercise is completed next year.

The rules state that "any matter which is likely to bring the Government of the Union

territory into controversy with the Central Government or with any State Government" shall, as soon as possible, be brought to the notice of the L-G and the CM by the Secretary concerned through the Chief Secretary.

### 39 departments

Under the rules, there will be 39 departments in the UT, such as school education, agriculture, higher education, horticulture, election, general administration, home, mining, power, Public Works Department, tribal affairs and transport.

The rules say all communications received from the Centre, including those from the Prime Minister and other Ministers, other than those of a routine or unimportant character, shall, as soon as possible after their receipt, be submitted by the Secretary to the Chief Secretary, the Minister in charge, the Chief Minister and the L-G for information.

## Caught unawares



When the heavens open: Heavy rain lashed parts of Delhi on Friday causing traffic jams and waterlogging across the city. The weatherman has predicted light rain for Saturday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Man blows ₹2 crore on lewd live chats

SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Friday arrested an accountant of a Karol Bagh-based jeweller for spending ₹2 crore from the account of his employer on lewd live chats and adult content on a mobile application.

The Economic Offences Wing of Delhi Police arrested Mahesh Chand Badola, 42, a resident of north Delhi's Burari, on a complaint by MC Jewels Private Ltd. Badola allegedly transferred over ₹2 crore last year towards recharging his account on Chinese-owned Bigo Live, which is among the 59 apps banned by India recently.

During the hearing, the

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday stayed the airing of a show titled 'Bindas Bol' that would have aired at 8 p.m. on Friday on Sudarshan News. The show's trailer claimed Muslims are engaged in a conspiracy to 'infiltrate' the civil service.

Justice Navin Chawla passed the interim decision after some former and current students of Jamia Millia Islamia approached the court with an urgent petition to stay the airing of the programme.

The trailer of the show shared on August 25 by Suresh Chavhanekar, Editor-in-Chief of Sudarshan News, has gone viral on social media.

## HC stays airing of show on 'Muslim conspiracy'

Notice issued to Sudarshan News, I&B Ministry tells court; next hearing on Sept. 7



ber 7. It ordered the Ministry to decide on the notice issued in the meantime and place its decision before the court.

In the petition, the students claimed Mr. Chavhanekar has openly engaged in hate speech and defamation against students of Jamia Millia Islamia and the Muslim community.

The petition said the trailer showed Mr. Chavhanekar claiming the success of Jamia students in this year's Civil Services Examination as representing a "conspiracy to infiltrate the civil service by Muslims".

Advocate Shadan Farasat, representing the students, said Mr. Chavhanekar has "openly incited his target non-Muslim audience by fomromising that 'jihadis'

from Jamia Millia Islamia would soon hold positions of authority and power such as Collector and Secretary".

**Hate speech'**  
The proposed broadcast and trailer also constitute hate speech and criminal defamation and is an offence under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, argued the advocate.

Reacting to the trailer, the official Twitter handle of Indian Police Service Association posted on August 27, "A news story targeting candidates in civil services on the basis of religion is being promoted by Sudarshan TV. We condemn the communal and irresponsible piece of journalism."

RELATED STORY ▶ PAGE 10

## 40-year-old man killed for inquiring about missing minor son; 2 arrested

The accused were drinking, got 'irritated' with man's plea

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man looking for his son was allegedly killed by two persons who got "irritated" with him for continuously asking about the boy in south-east Delhi's Pul Prahladpur, police said on Friday. The accused have been arrested.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) R.P. Meena said the accused, brothers Dheeraj and Rakesh Arora, are Gramin Seva drivers. They allegedly hit Jaiprakash Kumar Meena with an iron rod, injuring him fatally. Police said that on Thursday night, patrolling staff on Maa Anand Mai Marg found a pregnant woman crying next to a man [the victim],

Krishan lying in a pool of blood, with locals gathered around them. They rushed the man to hospital but he succumbed to his injuries.

When questioned, the woman said she and her husband were looking for their 7-year-old son Rahul who had gone missing a few minutes earlier and that two men hit her husband with a rod.

During investigation, a security guard in the area told the police that he saw a man running around the time Krishan was attacked and that the man often used to sleep inside a Gramin Seva vehicle. "Based on the information, a man who was sleeping inside the vehicle was held and later identified as Rakesh," DCP Meena said.

During interrogation, Rakesh revealed the involvement of his brother Dheeraj, who was then arrested.

The brothers said they were sitting inside the vehicle and drinking when Krishan came and started asking about his missing son. "He asked the same thing repeatedly, which irritated them. As tempers flared, Dheeraj caught hold of him and Rakesh fished out an iron rod from a Gramin Seva vehicle parked nearby and hit him on the head. When his wife started shouting for help, both of them ran away," said the DCP. While Krishan's search met with a brutal end, his missing son was later found and returned to the distraught mother.

## IN BRIEF

**AAP demands expulsion of BJP MLA, burns effigy**  
NEW DELHI  
AAP on Friday protested near BJP headquarters here against BJP MLA Kunwar Pranav Singh for allegedly "abusing" the people of Uttarakhand and also burnt the latter's effigy. The police had put up barricades in front of the headquarters.

**SDMC flags off mosquito terminator train in city**  
NEW DELHI  
The SDMC flagged off a mosquito terminator train from the New Delhi Railway station on Friday, said officials. The train is meant to keep a check on the spread of mosquito breeding in areas around railway tracks and it will spray insecticide on either side of the tracks.

**Minor found dead in Palwal was gang-raped**

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM**  
The 10-year-old girl, who was found murdered on the outskirts of a village in Palwal here earlier this week, was gang-raped, the police said on Friday.

The two accused had allegedly lured the girl with a ₹20 note to buy guavas. The duo followed her to the outskirts of the village and after walking some distance, one of them pushed her inside the fields. The two then took turns to rape her and strangled her, said DSP (Hodal) Balvir Singh.

The accused was produced before the court on Friday and remanded to custody for a day. The police will recreate the crime scene during his custody to gather evidence and seek details about his accomplice. Both the accused belong to the victim's village.

## Malls, shops in Haryana to remain shut on Mondays and Tuesdays

Officials attribute increase in COVID-19 cases in Gurugram to social gatherings

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM**

Sudden spike has been registered in the number of COVID-19 cases in the Millennium City this week, mostly due to holding of social and family gatherings, said Gurugram Chief Medical Officer, Virender Yadav on Friday. In a related development, the shopping malls and shops, except those dealing in essential services, will remain shut on Mondays and Tuesdays in the State instead of over the weekend.



The State Disaster Management Authority has reconsidered its order to shut down malls over the weekend. • MANOJ KUMAR

and family gatherings, saying that people from the same family or locality were found infected. Supporting his assertion, Mr. Yadav said that seventeen people were found infected in a house in Jacobpura and ten National Security Guard commandos had also tested positive. The officer informed that the positivity rate was 6.77% and the mortality rate was 1.15% for the district. A total of 1,58,528 people have been

tested so far and the number of tests conducted per million is 1,11,310. In August, 54,694 tests have been conducted, including 29, 691 antigen tests. The rate of infection for antigen tests is 2%, but it is around 6% for RT-PCR test.

### Camps for testing

Mr. Yadav said around 100 camps would be held to conduct tests. He made an appeal to the shopkeepers, especially those in Sadar

Bazar, to come forward for the tests. Mr. Yadav said there were no cases reported in industrial sector and factories. Meanwhile, State Disaster Management Authority reconsidered its earlier order to shut down shopping malls and shops, except those dealing in essential goods and services, over the weekend and fixed it for Mondays and Tuesdays. The liquor vends, however, will stay out of the purview of the order and remain open.

### Huge relief

The government's decision to shut commercial establishments on the weekend had met strong opposition from the business community saying that it would ruin their business. Lalit Rawat, manager, Metropolis Shopping Mall, welcomed the decision saying it was a huge relief for the shopkeepers.

## Reaction was proportionate to gravity of threat in Jamia'

Police defend before HC decision to enter varsity in December

**STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI**

The police on Friday defended before the Delhi High Court its decision to enter the Jamia Millia Islamia during the violence that occurred in December last year, saying it was done to control the "aggravated form of unlawful assembly".

Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi, appearing for Delhi Police, said: "The nature of the gathering was a criminal mob... they were free of all inhibitions. They moved with the force to commit any crime. Proportionate to the gravity of the threat, there was a reaction from police".

### 'Repeated pleas to crowd'

Mr. Lekhi said the police's reaction was preceded by repeated pleas to the crowd to exercise restraint and go back, and after informing the crowd that they are part of an unlawful assembly".



This request was made by a Joint Commissioner of Police, a senior officer in the force, Mr. Lekhi said, adding that "he too was attacked".

The ASG said despite multiple warnings, the mob continued to march and instead of retreating, took a parallel road to reach Mathura Road. "A demand for more force was made in view of the large mob," he said.

"The violent mob armed with sticks, stones, bricks, started targeting public vehicles and properties...The

police finding no other way to control the mob, at the end used tear gas and moderate force," he said.

The ASG said when the mob was pushed back, they "strategically entered the Jamia campus and used it as cover started pelting stones at the police" for one and half hours. Hence there was "good cause" for the police to enter the Jamia campus to contain the violence, ASG Lekhi said.

### Next hearing

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Praetek Jalan have adjourned the hearing for September 18.

The court was hearing a batch of petitions, moved by lawyers, students of JMI, residents of Okhla in south Delhi, seeking setting up of a judicial commission to look into the Jamia violence and registration of FIRs against the erring police officers.

## Second chance for final-year students

Next phase of OBE to start from Sept. 14

**STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI**

Timings  
DELHI

SATURDAY, AUG. 29	
RISE 05:58	SET 18:46
RISE 16:24	SET 01:59
SUNDAY, AUG. 30	
RISE 05:59	SET 18:45
RISE 17:13	SET 02:57
MONDAY, AUG. 31	
RISE 05:59	SET 18:44
RISE 17:56	SET 03:56

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	33	27
Safdarjung	33	27
Palam	35	28

**Delhi Palam Today**  
35°C One or two spell of light rain with cloudy sky likely. Comfortable morning and humid day.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
34°C Short spell of light rain likely at some places with cloudy sky and moderate winds.

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## Deferment of NEET-JEE: Cong. members held for protesting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Friday held a protest outside the Education Ministry demanding that the NEET-JEE exams be deferred as holding them during a pandemic would put the lives of students at risk. Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar and other party workers were detained by the Delhi police.

The party's students' wing, the NSUI, also continued its hunger strike over the same issue.

Mr. Kumar said that COVID-19 cases have been witnessing a record spike across the country, and it would not be prudent to hold these exams now. He said that "the Modi-led government seems to be least bothered about the risk involved and the inconveniences the students would face if the NEET-JEE exams are held. Many students, who want to take the exams are either in containment zones, flood-affected areas or remote places and it would be very difficult for them to attend the exams if they are held now".

NSUI national president Neeraj Kundan said: "We will stop this *satyagraha* only when the Centre accepts our demands."

## Officials sought Centre's 'guidance' to hike tests despite CM's decision

Services department, which appoints Delhi govt. officials, is under the L-G's ambit

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Despite Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's announcement to double COVID-19 testing in Delhi, Principal Secretary of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Department of the Delhi government wrote in a note to seek "guidance" from an expert committee and Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on "whether scaling up of testing is to be done", according to official documents.

"Further guidance may be kindly sought from the expert committee/MHA on the following aspects – in light of the current COVID-19 situation and trajectory of cases in Delhi whether scaling up of testing is to be done and if so, to what extent," a note written by the Principal Secretary (H&FW) Vikram Dev Dutt on Wednesday read.

The decision to increase testing had become controversial with the Delhi government on Thursday alleging that the MHA was putting pressure on Delhi government officials to not increase the number of tests in the city, a claim which was rubbished by the MHA, which termed it "false and baseless".

"Submitted for kind information and further orders. The above has been communicated separately to MHA and Dr. V.K. Paul, member of NITI Aayog," the note further read.

In Delhi, the services department, which appoints Delhi government officials, is not under the State government but is under the ambit of Lt. Governor, who is appointed by the Central



A girl weeping while being taken for COVID-19 test at Adarsh Nagar in the Capital on Friday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

government. In the past also, the Delhi government has locked horns with the Central government over officials and the Centre's involvement in decisions of the State government.

**Uptick in cases**  
As Delhi has been witnessing an uptick in the COVID-19 cases, the Chief Minister dated August 27, 2020, which is addressed to Union Home Secretary, to the effect that MHA is putting pressure on Delhi government officials not to increase testing in Delhi is false and baseless."

On Friday, addressing reporters, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain commented on the issue: "CM did a

meeting three days ago and said that testing should be doubled. But from the [Union] Home Ministry, pressure was put on officers to not do the [increased] testing. Permission was sought from here to the Home Ministry whether to [increase] tests or not. If increase, then how much."

On Thursday, in a letter written in Hindi to Secretary of MHA, Mr. Jain had said, "Some [Delhi government] officials have said Home Ministry [Centre] is putting pressure on Delhi government officials to not increase testing."

Responding to the allegation, the MHA had said: "The allegation raised in the letter of the Delhi Health Minister dated August 27, 2020, which is addressed to Union Home Secretary, to the effect that MHA is putting pressure on Delhi government officials not to increase testing in Delhi is false and baseless."

Mr. Dutt did not respond to multiple calls and messages on Friday.

## Major reshuffle in Delhi Police, DCP (Crime) shifts to legal cell

Rajesh Deo was heading the SIT investigating Feb. riots

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A major reshuffle was on Friday ordered in the Delhi Police department among ranks of Special Commissioner of Police, Joint Commissioner of Police and Deputy Commissioner of Police.

According to an official order, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Rajesh Deo, who was one of the officers heading a special investigation team investigating the north-east Delhi riots, will look after the legal cell of Delhi Police. He had been given an additional charge of the legal cell, but now he will look after it in a full-fledged manner.

"At present, no one has

At present, no one has been assigned as replacement of Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime). Rajesh Deo. It will be discussed, and if required, an officer will be brought in his place

SENIOR POLICE OFFICER

been assigned as replacement of Mr. Deo. It will be discussed, and, if required, an officer will be brought in his place," said a senior police officer.

The officer added that most of the cases with the SIT have been charged and the matter is sub-judice in court.

Special CP S.K. Gautam has been transferred as Special CP (Security).

Anto Alphonse, currently posted as DCP (Dwarka) will be replacing Monika Bhardwaj, DCP (North). Ms. Bhardwaj has been transferred to Crime and Santosh Kumar Meena will take the charge of DCP (Dwarka).

Jaspal Singh, Joint CP, will assume the charge of Joint CP (New Delhi Range) and N.S. Bundela, Joint CP (Traffic) will be the Joint CP (Central Range), the order stated.

Ajit Kumar Singla, Additional CP (Crime) has been transferred to Traffic. Another DCP from Crime, Ram Gopal Naik, has been transferred to Traffic.

## IAS officers reinstated in the Delhi govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Senior IAS officers Renu Sharma and Rajeev Verma were reinstated in the Delhi government almost five months after being suspended, on Friday.

Ms. Sharma was listed as Additional Chief Secretary (Urban Development) and Director (Local Bodies), while Mr. Verma was posted as Principal Secretary and Director (Vigilance) besides being given DSSSB's charge.

On March 29, Ms. Sharma, a 1988-batch officer, posted as Additional Chief Secretary and Transport Department and Mr. Verma, 1992 batch, who was Principal Secretary, Finance, were suspended for alleged dereliction of duty related to the handling of a congregation of migrant workers at Anand Vihar ISBT.

## Over 1,800 new cases in city again

This is not a second wave as first one has not ended yet: Jain

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi reported 1,808 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 1,69,412, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Friday.

Also, 20 more deaths have been reported, taking the total number of deaths to 4,389.

Of the total cases, 1,51,473 people have recovered and there are 13,550 active cases in the city at present.

The number of active cases, positive people under home isolation, and positive people in hospitals have also shown an increase on Friday.

Meanwhile, only 22,933 tests were done in the city in the past 24 hours, the bulletin stated.

When asked about the increase in the number of cases in the city, Mr. Jain said, "It could go up to 2,400 to 2,600 a day, but we will trace all the contacts and test and isolate them. The number of cases is likely to decrease when the government increases testing and tracing."

When asked if with 29.1% people developing antibodies against the virus, there are chances of Delhi facing a second wave of the infection.

Mr. Jain also said that the government will start a campaign against dengue from next month.

tion, the Minister said, "The first wave has not ended in Delhi. The current increase is not a second wave. Nationally, there is a new peak every day, but Delhi is not even reporting half the peak number of cases now."

After the number of daily new cases in the city on June 23 touched almost 4,000 – the highest so far – it had been dropping. However, earlier this week, the number of daily new cases hit a 30-day high and then breached the 1,500 mark, after remaining below the level for 39 consecutive days.

The number of active cases in the city on Friday was the highest in over a month. The last time the number of active cases was more than this was on July 24 when it was 13,681. The active cases, which were 27,007 on July 1, had fallen to 9,897 on August 4, but since then it has remained above that mark.

The number of containment zones in the city as on Friday was 763, which has been showing a steady increase over the past week.

Mr. Jain also said that the government will start a campaign against dengue from next month.

Evidence of lapses leading to corridor collapse found

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

A senior quality-cum-material expert and a bridge engineer involved with the construction of the elevated corridor on National Highway-248-A here have been debarred from any engagement with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) projects for two years. Besides, show-cause notices have been served to four firms, including the concessionaire for the project.

The action came after the NHAI, prima facie, found evidence of lapses on the part of vendors resulting in the collapse of a portion of the corridor.

Around 40-m-long span between two piers of the

## Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
<b>1,69,412</b>	<b>4,389</b>
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths
<b>1,808</b>	<b>20</b>

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

tee of technical experts has been constituted to examine lapses and suggest remedial measures.

NHAI Chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu said: "The NHAI is committed to follow the highest standards in highway construction and any lapses in these will be dealt with zero tolerance. Strict action will be taken against the defaulters and they will be debarred from NHAI projects for a long period with severe penalties."

Earlier this week, the work for the widening and strengthening of 22-km-long stretch of the highway starting from Rajiv Chowk.

A four-member commit-

tee of technical experts has been constituted to examine lapses and suggest remedial measures.

NHAI Chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu said: "The NHAI is committed to follow the highest standards in highway construction and any lapses in these will be dealt with zero tolerance. Strict action will be taken against the defaulters and they will be debarred from NHAI projects for a long period with severe penalties."

The action came after the NHAI, prima facie, found evidence of lapses on the part of vendors resulting in the collapse of a portion of the corridor.

Around 40-m-long span between two piers of the

corridor had collapsed on August 22. The corridor is part of the six-laning and strengthening of 22-km-long stretch of the highway starting from Rajiv Chowk.

NHAI notices

Besides a show-cause notice to M/s Rajiv Chowk - Sohna Highway Pvt. Ltd. for deficiencies in the construction work, the NHAI has served similar notice to another firm for lapses in discharging the duties of the independent engineer. Two more firms have been served notices for lapses in preparation and review of design and drawings of the construction works.

A four-member commit-

tee of technical experts has been constituted to examine lapses and suggest remedial measures.

NHAI Chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu said: "The NHAI is committed to follow the highest standards in highway construction and any lapses in these will be dealt with zero tolerance. Strict action will be taken against the defaulters and they will be debarred from NHAI projects for a long period with severe penalties."

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The action came after the NHAI, prima facie, found evidence of lapses on the part of vendors resulting in the collapse of a portion of the corridor.

Around 40-m-long span between two piers of the

corridor had collapsed on August 22. The corridor is part of the six-laning and strengthening of 22-km-long stretch of the highway starting from Rajiv Chowk.

NHAI notices

Besides a show-cause notice to M/s Rajiv Chowk - Sohna Highway Pvt. Ltd. for deficiencies in the construction work, the NHAI has served similar notice to another firm for lapses in discharging the duties of the independent engineer. Two more firms have been served notices for lapses in preparation and review of design and drawings of the construction works.

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**Amit Singh (Advocate)**  
Ch. No. 615, Rohini Courts, Delhi-110085

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3	HVPNL PANCHKULA	QDP NO. 1242 INT NO. 1125 DATED 06.07.2020	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UP TO 11.09.2020 UP TO 17:00 HRS.	<a href="http://www.hvpnl.org.in">www.hvpnl.org.in</a>	0322-2583789 <a href="mailto:jpm@hvpnl.org.in">jpm@hvpnl.org.in</a>
4	HVPNL PANCHKULA	QDP NO. 1236 INT NO. 1119 DATED 29.08.2020	THE LAST DATE OF ONLINE BID SUBMISSION IS EXTENDED UP TO 09.09.2020 UP TO 17:00 HRS.	<a href="http://www.hvpnl.org.in">www.hvpnl.org.in</a>	0322-2583789 <a href="mailto:jpm@hvpnl.org.in">jpm@hvpnl.org.in</a>
5	PTPS,HPGCL,PANIPAT	551A/M-7031/AIR FLOW TEST /2020 (TENDER ID NO. 2020_HRC_138388_1)	CLOSING DATE 18.08.2020 AT 13:00 HRS. -B- SERVICES REQUIRED FOR CONDUCTING DIRTY AIR FLOW TEST BEFORE OVERHAULING AND CLEAN AIR FLOW TEST AFTER OVERHAULING OF 250 MW, UNIT-7, PTPS, PANIPAT	<a href="http://www.hpgcl.org.in">www.hpgcl.org.in</a> , <a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9355869303 <a href="mailto:xencic@hry.nic.in">xencic@hry.nic.in</a>
6	PTPS,HPGCL,PANIPAT	(EOI NO. CH-3/PTPC/81/R/2020/03) SUB: ECONOMIC SOLUTION FOR REVIVING ANNUNCIATION SYSTEM (PROCON-PAL 2100) AT UNIT-6, PTPS, PANIPAT	END DATE 15.09.2020 AT 15:00 HRS	<a href="http://www.hpgcl.org.in">www.hpgcl.org.in</a> , <a href="http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in">www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in</a>	0180-2566015 <a href="mailto:xencic@hry.nic.in">xencic@hry.nic.in</a>

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**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

  
**ARUN**  
General Public is hereby informed that one boy Namely: Arun, S/o: Tej Singh, R/o: A-101, Sangam Colony, Delhi, Age: 14 Years, Height: 4', Complexion: Fair, Face: Oval, Built: Thin, Wearing: Blue Colour T-Shirt & Jeans Pant and Black Colour Jacket, Hawai Chappal in Feet has been missing since 05.11.2019 from TC-123, Pandav Nagar, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 209/19, U/s 363 IPC, Dated 06.12.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Ranjit Nagar, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing boy please inform the undersigned.

Web-site: <http://cbi.nic.in>  
E-Mail ID: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Fax: 011-23011334  
DP/277/CD/2020

**SEARCH OF MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo), Namely: Sweta, D/o: Rajender Kumar, R/o: H.No.A-10, Police Colony, Pahar Ganj, Delhi, Aged: 22 years, has been missing from her house since 09.08.2020 at about 05:30 PM. A case vide DD No. 59A, Dated 13.08.2020, has been lodged at P.S.Pahar Ganj, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:

Height: 5'3", Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Physique/Built: Normal, Clothing: Grey Colour Suit, White Colour Salwar. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Pahar Ganj, Delhi at E-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tele No.: 011-24368638 or 24368641

S.H.O  
P.S. Pahar Ganj, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-25742746, 2352009

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SHO  
P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi  
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'Ordinances won't affect purchase of crops at MSP'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal has asserted that the Central ordinances on agriculture will have no bearing on the existing policy of procurement of crops by government agencies at Minimum Support Price (MSP).

SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal said that the Centre's assurance has come through an official communication by Narendra Tomar, the Union Minister for Agriculture.

"There is no change in the present policy of purchase of agriculture produce through MSP, the Centre clarified. Also, the official procurement and MSP will not only continue, but will be the priority of the Central government," he said, referring to Mr. Tomar's letter.

Guwahati Police Commissioner Munna Prasad Gupta said an Assamese entertainment

Promulgate fresh law on procurement of farm produce, says Chief Minister



Chief Minister Amarinder Singh speaks during the Assembly session in Chandigarh on Friday. ■ PTI

the Constitution of India.

"Entry 14 of List II of the Constitution comprises agriculture as the subject of the States, therefore these ordinances are a direct encroachment upon the functions of the States and against the spirit of cooperative federalism enshrined in the Constitution and will promote distress

sale," Capt. Amarinder said. He said "this House thus urges upon the Union government to withdraw these ordinances and supported the proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2020, forthwith; and instead, promulgate a fresh ordinance making the procurement of foodgrains and other agricultural produce at the Mini-

mum Support Price."

The Chief Minister said that the ordinances were anti-Punjab and anti-farmer and would drag the State into the chaos-filled era of the 1980s, which it can afford as Pakistan was waiting in the wings to derive advantage from the chaotic situation to create mayhem in the country.

## Akali Dal MLAs absent

While the Shiromani Akali Dal MLAs were not present in the House, BJP MLA Dinesh Singh was against the resolution and supported the ordinances, saying that it was nowhere mentioned in the ordinances that the MSP regime would be done away with. Aam Aadmi Party MLAs and Lok Insaf Party MLA Simarjeet Singh Bains supported the resolution.

## Temporary ban on TV serial

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The authorities in Assam have temporarily banned an Assamese TV serial for allegedly hurting religious sentiments.

Guwahati Police Commissioner Munna Prasad Gupta said an Assamese entertain-

ment channel was on August 24 ordered to keep 'Begum Jaan' off the air for two months.

The order under the Cable Television Network (Regulations) Act, 1995, was served following a recommendation by a 10-member monitoring committee.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General public is hereby informed that one girl namely Chandni, D/o: Mohd. Zakhir, R/o Darbhanga, Bihar, Age: 16 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Dark, Face: Round, Hair: Black Long, wearing White colour Top and Blue colour Pant, has been kidnapped/missing from SPYM, 2nd Floor, Community Hall, Behind IOC Petrol Pump, Parda Bagh, Darya Ganj, Delhi since 21.03.2020 at 7:45 AM. In this regard a FIR No. 52/2020 U/S 363 IPC, dated 21.03.2020 has been registered at P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform the undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>  
E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Fax: 011-24368639

Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641

DP/284/CD/2020

SHO  
P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-23274683, 23279331

## MNF sweeps local body polls

It won 50 of the 59 councils where elections were held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Mizo National Front (MNF) swept the Aizawl Municipal Council polls on Friday, winning 50 of the 59 local bodies where elections were held on Thursday.

The Congress, which had

won most of the local councils five years ago, only managed four this time, while the principal



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## Conventional dissonance

Trump is deliberately alienating minorities of all hues in his re-election bid

There are few events in U.S. election politics that offer a more predictable denouement than the National Conventions of the two major parties, given that the presidential and vice-presidential tickets for both are known beforehand. Yet even this low bar of dull certainty was scarcely surpassed by the Republican Party as it reaffirmed its faith in a President who has shredded its ideological moorings and dug his heels in defending the record of his first term in office, including an impeachment on allegations of abuse of power and obstructing justice. The Convention culminated with Mr. Trump's address in which he appeared to fall back upon the same lines of political attack that he employed against former Democratic rival Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election, only this time against Democratic nominee and former Vice-President Joe Biden. In doing so, Mr. Trump conjured up, once again, the spectres of socialism and globalisation that threatened to creep upon the U.S. economy should Mr. Biden prevail in the 2020 election, warning that the latter was the "destroyer of America's jobs... [who] took the donations of blue-collar workers... [but] voted to ship their jobs to China and many other distant lands". It is unlikely that many among the party faithful who thronged to the Convention questioned his basic premise regarding the danger posed by the Democratic Party to the economy: that there are jobs aplenty and the pandemic is a thing of the past. Nothing could undermine that assertion more than the fact that unemployment rates are still high, and that during the time of the Convention, more than 3,600 people succumbed to COVID-19 in the U.S.

As disturbing as the false claims made about the economy and the pandemic were, more deleterious for the future of U.S. societal harmony was the strident note that the President struck regarding racial tensions that have flared up across the country following several deaths of unarmed African-Americans at the hands of armed police. Leaving little doubt as to which side of the line he stood on, Mr. Trump said he "condemns the rioting, looting, arson and violence we have seen in Democrat-run cities like Kenosha, Minneapolis, Portland, Chicago and New York". Little wonder that police brutality of the kind that was inflicted upon Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, has continued to foment anger in the streets of that city, and that Mr. Trump's regular allusions to "mob rule" by "thugs" associated with the Democratic Party is likely costing him what little support he might enjoy with minorities of all hues. When November 3 rolls around, it might take Team Trump more than a vicious attack on mail-in voting to prevent this broad sense of anger in multicultural America from drowning out its political ambitions for a second term.

## Targeting Hezbollah

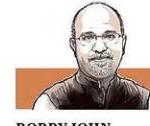
Israel and the Shia militia should not risk a wider war by engaging in targeted attacks

The Israeli attacks on Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon following what it called "cross border fires" mark a significant escalation in the crisis that has been building up along the border in recent years. Hezbollah, a Shia militia-cum-political party in Lebanon, and Israel, which have fought two wars before, have been observing a tenuous ceasefire for 14 years. Tensions began after Israel's targeting of Iranian weapons and supplies within Syria. Israel fears that Iranian supplies to Hezbollah via Syria, where the Shia militias fought alongside regime fighters against rebels and Sunni jihadists, would leave them stronger, enhancing Israel's security challenges in the northern border. In July, a Hezbollah commander was killed in an Israeli raid in Syria for which the group had vowed retaliation. Since then, there have been attempts to target troops on Israel's borders with Lebanon and Syria, according to Israel. In Tuesday's attacks, Israel targeted an observation post, which the Israeli Defense Forces claimed was used by Hezbollah for intelligence collection. The raid, at a time when Israel was carrying out an air campaign in Gaza, shows the growing appetite of the newly formed unity government of Netanyahu, under fire at home over its handling of the COVID-19 crisis, for war as a means to address the simmering border problems.

Hezbollah has been a tough target for Israel. In 2000, after 18 years of occupation of southern Lebanon, Israel was forced to withdraw mainly due to the fighting of Hezbollah. In 2006, Israel invaded Lebanon, aimed at destroying Hezbollah's military capabilities. But after a month of Israeli aerial and land attacks, even on the day of the ceasefire, Hezbollah fired hundreds of short-range rockets into northern Israel. Ever since, both sides have been wary of another open conflict. Israel, which has bombed Gaza several times since its 2005 withdrawal from the strip, had been careful when it came to Hezbollah. The militants, on the other side, turned their focus to capacity building after the 2006 war, and, since 2011, to the civil war in Syria. The Baathist Syria has been a vital link between Hezbollah and Iran ever since the group was founded in the early 1980s. Mr. Assad has survived the civil war, and Iran has substantially increased its footprint in Syria, bolstering the Iran-Syria-Hezbollah axis. Israel sees this axis as a growing security challenge and hence, started the bombing operations in Syria, risking another conflict with Hezbollah. The past two wars suggest that it would not be easy for Israel, despite its military might, to defeat the battle-hardened Hezbollah fighters at their base. Hezbollah, on the other side, might resist an Israeli attack, but risks pulling Lebanon, already battling an economic crisis, political instability and the after-effects of the Beirut blast, into a wider war. Both sides should avert such an outcome and stick to the ceasefire.

# National well-being and the counts that matter

As decennial census operations are limited, India needs new ways to know its cumulative human capital and potential



BOBBY JOHN

Since India's crimes data recording system is not built to capture subtleties, we do not know what proportion of pregnancies in India start off without the consent of the woman, even though the veil of marriage may cover it legally and culturally. While physical and mental violence can be ascertained by a sensitive clinician, the intergenerational impact of a regretful and anxiety-loaded pregnancy is inadequately quantified by current clinical or epidemiological tools. Measuring and tracking matters of import is critical to individual, community as well as national well-being.

**Parameters that are valuable**  
If we equally value all Indians, we should not stick to decennial census operations alone and count ourselves the way we do – on lines that tell us how we can be sorted and addressed in the political economy; rather, we should do so to understand what our cumulative human capital and potential look like. What is valuable is measured frequently, at different life stages, and at disaggregated levels: birthweights; the heights and weights of our children when they enter school; school completion rates; perhaps the age, height and weight of a first-time pregnant woman; and most definitely, the number of women in the formal workforce who are on a par with men in terms of earning.

Underage marriage of girls must become history. Ensuring secondary school completion of every child, especially girls in rural

areas, has far-reaching impact, and needs to be pursued single-mindedly. Provisioning separate, functional toilets and sanitary pads for girls, and teaching boys biology and gender differences (of their own and female) are key enablers to ensuring gender parity in school completion rates. Teaching school-leaving girls and boys the notion of consent, and also the basics of contraception, will ensure that the start of every pregnancy will be a desired and happy one.

### Births in the country

Not every pregnancy ends up in a live birth – evocatively captured by the six-word allegedly Hemingway novel: "For sale: baby shoes, never worn". A desired pregnancy is to be supported by a fully functional health-care system, able to anticipate complications before time and facilitating a safe delivery. Current stillbirth numbers in India are hard to pin down, but after accounting for background losses and abortions, there still remains a distressingly large number of still births, sometimes misrecorded as early neonatal deaths.

Despite the trend towards nuclear families, pregnancies in India still are familial events – outcomes are eagerly anticipated by more than just the parents, and stillbirths are a rude end to many fond wishes. A young, short and under-schooled woman is more likely to have a bad pregnancy outcome, or, a smaller than expected baby.

A birth weight is much more than a number – it is a complex outcome, telling of how well the woman and her family eats, her status among them, and also of any particular condition that the individual mother or newborn child has. Tracking average birthweights by district and subdistrict on a regular basis is a fair proxy for food security, the status of women and the delivery of primary health

CREDIT: IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

care. For a nation with plans to assign digital health IDs to everyone, this is not a tall ask – what is additionally required is the making of this moving average data live and visible to the people and their government. It should also put to rest all debate about whether some Indians are born more equal than others.

### Height-weight proportions

A good start is a great advantage, but easily squandered if subsequent growth and development are blighted by the lack of adequate nutrition, first exclusively from the mother's breast, then through locally available weaning and complementary foods; and repeated bouts of vaccine preventable or easily treatable illnesses. Parental hopes of a child growing up, going to school and becoming successful hit a major hurdle if the height-weight proportions at age five are not normal. Ensuring this marker is recorded for every child who enters school will also allow for a correlation with birthweights at the district level – giving a better understanding of multi-dimensional property.

If India is to be truly taking advantage of its large birth cohort in the form of a demographic dividend, then the correlate of birthweight and five-year height-weight needs to be reviewed at the highest political levels regularly. It reflects the physical and cognitive nurture of human capital that the

country can bank on for its future. Every child born in India is to be considered a ratna – a jewel and handled as such; some of them will go on to get the formal Bharat Ratna tag eventually.

### Improved learning

Schooling is a socio-economic and gender parity springboard if school completion rates show no gender, rural-urban or parental income divides. Consequently, India may not only bring down its maternal mortality ratios but also improve neonatal and under-five mortality rates, through delayed marriages and exercising of reproductive choices by its empowered young women.

Grading cognitively ill-equipped or ill-taught children on standardised tests is as much a waste of effort as letting large numbers of young people graduate through courses which are hopelessly out of sync with the expectations of the job interview board. The recently unveiled new education policy seeks to remedy this. It will be a while before we can measure any of the talked about, and hopefully intended, outputs or impact of this policy.

Unimaginative teaching of anaemic children is a double whammy, partially addressed through protein rich mid-day meals. Deworming, school toilets, sanitary pads and bicycles for girls are progressive policy steps in the right direction; adding remedial training and affirmative feedback for teachers will be transformative. With better cognitive capacities and supportive environment, the stress of learning reduces, and outcomes improve.

Improved learning should translate into better completion rates at post-secondary and baccalaureate levels but need not necessarily correspond to universal, meaningful employment. It is for the government and the corporate world to make opportunities and

workplaces happen, irrespective of their gender. Right economic stimuli, anticipating potential workplace disruptions, supporting reskilling and retraining, and decriminalising entrepreneurial failure will go a long way in eliminating work and livelihood-related anxieties making their way back home as domestic violence. As a society, we need to understand and make leeway for failure, and not stigmatise it, whether at school in early childhood, during miscarriages of pregnancies, or when career and business decisions go awry. Stigma erodes self-worth and kills silently.

### Timely data helps

Together, these measurements will tell us far more about where we are, and where we as a nation will go. The tools to get these measurements exist; we just have to see them in real time to be able to take corrective actions where needed. Public health about people, their continued well-being, and not just about controlling disease outbreaks. Data helps; timely, disaggregated, multidimensional data helps immensely in ensuring collective well-being, physical, mental and social. People are India's greatest possession and will remain so for the conceivable future, provided they are in a state of well-being. An ill-educated, anxious population is a tinderbox, capable of self-harm as well as being kindling for malice-driven mobilisation. Addressing this requires a whole of life and whole of society approach, and measuring the outcomes that matter, regularly. Hopefully the 2017 edition of the national health policy and the new education policy unveiled last month will be the twin rails that India rides towards a true demographic dividend.

Dr. Bobby John is an advocate for global health and the Editor of the Journal of Development Policy and Practice

## In 'act of god', coercive not cooperative federalism

In bridging the GST gap, the Centre ought to help States through the Consolidated Fund of India



MANPREET SINGH BADAL &  
RAJEEV GOWDA

It is beyond anyone's imagination that the Government of India would invoke the "Force Majeure" clause against its own people. Unfortunately, this has become reality at a time when every Indian State is massively burdened by the COVID-19 crisis and governance has been severely affected.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's statement on Thursday that the financial crisis facing the States is a result of an "act of God" is symptomatic of the callousness with which the Narendra Modi government treats State governments. This abdication of responsibility strikes a cruel blow to the social contract that exists between the Government of India and State governments, who are equal representatives of the 1.3 billion citizens of India.

**The basis**  
The Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime was built on the promise that if States faced revenue deficits after the GST's introduction, the Centre would make good the loss

in the first five years. It was on the basis of this commitment that States extended their support to GST. States sacrificed their constitutionally granted powers of taxation in the national interest. That allowed the Centre to announce the dawn of "one nation one tax" at the stroke of midnight in 2017!

When the GST compensation cess exceeded the amount that had to be paid to States, the Central government absorbed the surplus. Now, the economy has slowed down dramatically and the resources raised are insufficient. Instead of exploring other viable options, the Centre is orchestrating a charade and raising questions about whether it is legally accountable to pay compensation. A reading of the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act 2017 and the Constitution 101st Amendment answer these questions affirmatively. Alas, the government's objective is to obfuscate.

It is one thing to say that there are no funds available but entirely another to assert that there is no commitment to pay compensation. This commitment has a history that begins with United Progressive Alliance era when many Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled States strongly pitched for a compensation mechanism to be a part of the Constitution itself. Paragraph 92 of the Standing Committee report

shows that the Centre assured payment of compensation for a specified period, if there were such a loss.

### Assurances made

When the Narendra Modi government introduced the GST compensation cess, many States pointed out that proceeds from the cess may be inadequate to fund the losses faced by States after the rollout of GST. Allaying these apprehensions, the central government made the assurance that it would provide funds to meet States' deficits. In the seventh meeting of the GST Council, the Chairman (then Finance Minister Arun Jaitley), observed that it was the constitutional commitment of the central government to provide cent per cent compensation.

This was reinforced in the eighth meeting of the Council. In the tenth meeting, the Secretary of the GST Council stated that the central

government could raise resources by other means for compensation and this could then be recouped by continuing the cess beyond five years.

Therefore, there was never any ambiguity in the minds of States that succour will be offered by the Centre. The constitutional framework that ushered in the GST does not provide an escape clause for 'Acts of God'. States never expected to be disappointed so early. The central government has let them down by thrusting on them two options, both of which involve borrowing by States. This is akin to asking States to mortgage their future to sustain the present. Cooperative federalism has been transformed into coercive federalism.

### Centre is best placed

The central government has the ability to raise resources through means that are not available to States. Monetary measures are the monopoly of the central government. Even borrowing is more efficient and less expensive if it is undertaken by the Central government.

Over the last six years, the Centre has continually cornered resources that should have been shared with States. The Fourteenth Finance Commission allotted 42% of central government tax revenues to States. However, Accountability Initiative's analysis of

State Budgets shows that States received only 30% of central tax collections during the 2015-19 period.

The Centre raised an estimated ₹3,69,111 crore revenue through cesses and surcharges in 2019-20 alone. These are not shareable with States.

Similarly, cesses on petroleum products have resulted in the Centre receiving 60% of petroleum tax revenues, with only 40% going to States. In 2013-14, the ratio was 50-50.

### Equal representatives

As equal representatives of the citizens of the federal republic of India, State governments expected the Centre to demonstrate empathy when they are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns that were announced without consultation. This is the most appropriate time to provide them relief through the Consolidated Fund of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi proudly described GST as a 'Good and Simple Tax' which would usher in a glorious economic future for India. Unfortunately, just three years later, the harsh reality is that States are staring at 'grave and sordid times' ahead.

Manpreet Singh Badal is Finance Minister of Punjab. Rajeev Gowda is a former Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Congress party's Research Department

## 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.

### Phase 3 participants

As per the methodology of Phase-3 trial of a vaccine, volunteers belonging to both the experimental and control groups are exposed to the same environment of natural infection of the novel coronavirus. We already know that the 'elderly group' has a higher case fatality rate when they get infected. That is why during the pandemic, the health sector advocates 'reverse quarantine' or 'cocooning'. So if we enrol the elderly as participants for the study, as suggested by Dr. M.S. Seshadri and Dr. T. Jacob John (Editorial page, "The participants we need in Phase 3 trials", August 28), we are knowingly allowing fatal complications to occur among them. This is unethical and irrational

when other options such as using youth and healthy working volunteers can be explored. The elderly and patients with comorbidities are definitely not priority groups in a vaccine trial. But they are a priority when it comes to service delivery of a trial finished, legally certified, safe and effective vaccine. Approval from the Ethics Committee will not agree to the inclusion of the elderly for a Phase 3 trial.

Dr. K.R. ANTONY,  
Kochi

**Response:** Dr. K.R. Antony highlights a practical difficulty in including special groups of vulnerable persons in a Phase 3 vaccine trial because the traditional design will have to be modified to accommodate

them. The vaccine would have been found safe in the Phase I and II trials and it is quite alarmist to suggest that a vaccine will cause fatal complications in senior citizens. What we need is documented objective evidence of safety in seniors so that there is a vaccine roll-out to them on a priority basis immediately after vaccine registration, without further delay in conducting a bridging study after the Phase 3 is over. If seniors were excluded from the Phase 3 trial, time will be lost. Because seniors will have very low risk of exposure to infection on account of 'cocooning', they will not be suitable to assess protective efficacy. Protective efficacy will be measured in all other study subjects, including health-

care workers. Because of the need for a special trial design, we recommended that all the stakeholders should quickly consult among themselves to create a suitable ethically sound design.

Dr. M.S. SESADRI,  
Dr. T.JACOB JOHN  
Tamil Nadu

**Bridging the GST gap**  
When the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced with much fanfare, amidst stiff opposition from States, it was contended that this measure was a panacea for all economic ills and would bring to an end the conflicts between States and the Centre. Now, the States have been forced to seek and retrieve their legitimate share of GST. Apportioning their shares to itself, the

Centre is also asking them to seek 'loans' from the Reserve Bank of India for the amount, contending funds shortage (Page 1, "Borrow from RBI to bridge GST gap, Centre tells States", August 28). This is when the Centre has taken ₹4.50 lakh crore between 2015 and 2020 as "dividend" from the RBI. When technology has improved and the government gets taxes transferred in no time, it is

**CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:**  
In an OpEd page article titled "Categorising activities in the context of the pandemic" (August 28, 2020), a sentence that read: "Just like a traffic signal communicates 'stop', 'ready' and 'go' with 'red', 'yellow' and 'green' colours respectively..." should be corrected to say: "... 'red', 'orange' and 'green' colours respectively..."

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418207/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

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intriguing why the shares of the States from GST collected are not immediately transferred to their accounts. This dispensation will affect federalism as well. Had their shares been transferred immediately, much of the woes the States face now would have been automatically addressed.

A. SHREVAS,  
Chennai

# In Idukki, living in fear of landslides

Unusually high rainfall and unscientific land use cause landslides year after year in the hill districts of Kerala. **Giji K. Raman and G. Krishnakumar** report on the plight of the tea estate workers and the government's disaster management plans

It had been raining incessantly in the lush green Rajamala hills of Munnar in Kerala's Idukki district since August 1. The downpour was especially heavy on August 6. But the tea plantation workers of the layams (labour lines) of the Kanan Devan Hills in Pettimudi, a small idyllic valley, did not find any reason to be worried. Pettimudi conjoins the rolling slopes some 11 km from where the Eravikulam National Park ends for tourists.

"When rainwater flooded the labour lines, it seemed like a repeat of last August," recalls Anil Kumar, a resident and daily wage earner at the national park famous for the Nilgiri tahrs. "Around 10:45 p.m., the water began to get muddy and we thought a stream nearby had breached the banks. Suddenly, my brother looked out and hollered. Through the noise of the rain came a loud thud. Boulders came crashing down. He said something dangerous was happening. We all rushed out. Where four housing lines stood at some distance below ours, there was only debris," he says.

A massive landslide that originated from a spot in the shola forests 2 km uphill from the labour quarters had sent down a torrent of sludge, rocks and fallen trees that pulverised to dirt four of the six tin-roofed structures in the neighbourhood. The wreckage was strewn over a large area and spilled into the river on the lower side of the Raj-era settlements. Sixty-five people, most of them estate workers, were killed, while five were missing as on August 27. Rescuers could only save 12 people. The search operation has been temporarily called off in view of the rising water levels in the river and is expected to resume when the situation improves.

**A long, dark night**  
A few had a close call. With water gushing into his dwelling unit in one of the two lines in the upper reaches that housed 16 families, Suresh Kumar, a daily wage earner, was thinking of taking shelter in his cousin's house in one of the ill-fated lines below. "It was pitch dark thanks to the persisting rain and we had suffered a power outage for several days. By 11 p.m. or so, we decided to move to my cousin's place. That's when we bumped into a frightened Doraisamy, a friend, who told us about the calamity, though we did not know of its scale then. He took us to his house," says Suresh Kumar. Thankfully, his housing line and the one next to it survived.

Doraisamy, who quit working in the plantations but whose parents were still employed in the fields, was probably the first to sense the gravity of the situation. He trudged back to the site of devastation along with Suresh Kumar. They heard a voice, barely audible, from within the massive heap of rubble. "It was Mayilsamy calling for help, but we couldn't locate him. So we returned to collect more people before going back again. As the rain subsided a bit, we were able to pull out four people who were trapped underneath mounds of debris. But Mayilsamy wasn't among them. His frail cry still rings in my ears. We couldn't save him," laments Suresh Kumar.

As the night thickened, the showers resumed. Fear gripped them as they heard the sound of rocks crashing down. They returned to Doraisamy's home. There was no way they could communicate with anyone outside: the phones had long been dead and connectivity had ruptured.

## Difficulties in rescue operations

It was only when the day broke that the magnitude of the catastrophe came into full view. The survivors alerted the Kanan Devan Hill Plantations (KDHP) officials and those manning the forest check post 10 km uphill in Rajamala.

"A distraught man, who survived the ordeal, reached the check post at 7 a.m. The checkpost official informed me soon after," says Job J. Neriamparambil, assistant wildlife warden of Eravikulam National Park.

Neriamparambil was among the first to reach the site with a team. "We left in two vehicles but a minor landslip had washed away a portion of the road in front of the Rajamala hospital. We got down and resumed on foot negotiating through two more mudslides. There were uprooted trees along the way and water was flowing over a wooden bridge across a stream. When we finally reached Pettimudi by 10 a.m., there were two KDHP officials and around 15 workers from the two surviving layams. We were able to rescue three people from a collapsed tea stall in a corner of a partially destroyed building. In view of the magnitude of the devastation, we sent for reinforcements," he says.

It was still raining, which made rescue efforts difficult. Chances of further landslips were high as the stream that ran down the hill to the river below had changed course and looked menacingly



Rescue workers search for missing people at a landslide site in Pettimudi, Idukki district, Kerala. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



**Kerala has witnessed unusually high rainfall since 2018, which has destabilised the already vulnerable hill slopes in the high ranges. Some of them, which may not have seen landslides in the past, are now becoming potentially vulnerable to heavy sliding.**

C.P. RAJENDRAN  
Geoscientist and professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research

swollen. Even after 10 hours of the disaster, it had a strong current, Neriamparambil recalls.

The debris flow, he says, wasn't straight down from the point of origin. The slurry zigzagged, depositing downhill huge rocks, boulders, tonnes of soil and fallen trees. "It was this winding motion that saved the two housing lines located above the destroyed ones," he says.

The hour of the occurrence and poor communication infrastructure apart, the region's remoteness and continuing bad weather delayed rescue operations. Pettimudi is where the blacktopped road from Rajamala in the Eravikulam National Park to the Munnar Forest Division, a part of the Western Ghats bordering Tamil Nadu, ends. The only access to the area is through the national park, which was closed, and a temporary bridge at Periyavaram. The bridge, which links Pettimudi to Marayur, only partially constructed, had been washed away in the floods a few days earlier, making it difficult for rescuers and rescue gear to be transported to the spot.

"It's as if luck had eluded Pettimudi. Built by the British, the Periyavaram bridge was destroyed in the 2018 floods. The construction of a new bridge was still in progress," says M.J. Babu, a native of Munnar who has authored a book on

the Kanan Devan Hills.

While BSNL restored cellular communication, the forest department reactivated official communication channels the next day. Connectivity to Marayur was also temporarily re-established. A contingent of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) reached the site by the evening of August 7. The rescue efforts were carried out by personnel from the Kerala forest, police, fire and rescue services besides scores of volunteers.

"Debris had accumulated over the destroyed buildings at a height of 20 ft and there was water-logging. Even if we had arrived early, the chances of us finding anyone alive beneath the debris would have been remote," says Rekha Nambiar, senior commandant of the NDRF Fourth Battalion that led the rescue effort. At least 16 bodies were fished out from a four-km stretch in the frenzied river below.

There was fear of COVID-19, but locals like Hadley Renjith, a resident of Munnar, along with the police and forest officials, scoured the river banks from Anakkulam in Mankulam village some 12 km downstream all the way back up to the landslide site at Pettimudi, for bodies. The scenes at the site were heart-wrenching. Nineteen children died in the disaster. Among the casualties were 13 members from an extended family with a grandmother being the lone survivor.

## A disaster replay

The disaster looked like a replay of the calamitous landslides of Kavalappara in Malappuram and Puthumala in Wayanad on August 8 last year. In all, 76 people had been either killed or termed missing in those landslides. This time around, a red alert for extremely heavy rainfall was sounded in Wayanad and Idukki districts on August 6. The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) recommended evacuating people in landslide-prone areas to safety during the day itself. But the labour lines of Pettimudi remained teeming with hapless people.

Rainfall data from the gauging station at Eravikulam National Park suggest that Rajamala received 195 mm rain on Au-

gust 4 and 309 mm rain on August 6. "Extremely heavy rains of 30 cm or more can trigger landslides," explains K.S. Sajin Kumar, Assistant Professor of Geology at the University of Kerala who had studied the landslide susceptibility of Munnar in 2017. "Two factors contribute to landslides: static ones like the slope of a hill or its shape and triggering factors which include anthropogenic activities like deforestation, construction or land use. In the case of Pettimudi, the flat-topped hill would have caused all the rainwater to collect in a ravine before bursting through the topsoil. The sensitivity of the soil and the pattern of rock formation in the Munnar region came into focus following widening works on the Kochi-Dhanushkodi National Highway along the gap road stretch, where over 20 major landslides have been reported since 2018," he says.

Sajin Kumar wants real-time rain gauging systems to be set up in all landslip-prone localities so that people can be moved to predetermined safer locations when excessive showers take place.

Sajin Kumar calls for developing an accurate landslide susceptibility map and deploying early warning systems based on rainfall thresholds as these are critical for safe and sustainable planning and development of Kerala's ecologically sensitive regions.

According to KSDMA, the landslide susceptibility map was created by the National Centre for Earth Science Studies in 2010. The Geological Survey of India has completed a new landslide susceptibility map for all landslide-prone districts except Idukki, for which work is progressing under the National Landslide Susceptibility Mapping project. The State Revenue Department, on its part, intends to revise the State Disaster Management Plan once the battle against COVID-19 gets over.

There's an argument that setting up real-time rain gauges in all landslide-prone areas, about 15% of the State's area, is unrealistic. But the government had identified 160 sites for the India Meteorological Department (IMD) to set up such a network. The IMD has already commissioned 15 such facilities in the State, according to the Revenue Department.



Meanwhile, the Director of the National Centre for Earth Science Studies, V. Nandakumar, says the Centre has updated its landslide zonation map based on satellite data for Idukki and Wayanad districts. "The work for the landslide zonation map for Malappuram and Kozhikode is progressing. But it will take three years to validate it through field visits and further research. We also need to map all the landslides in which there were no loss of lives," he says.

## Land use management policies

Going by data collated by KSDMA, landslides claimed 177 lives in Kerala in 2018 and 2019. There were 1,362 landslides and 700 landslides in these two years, respectively. Idukki district, with 1,048 landslides, topped the vulnerability chart in this period. Except for the estuarine Alappuzha, all the 13 districts are considered landslide-prone. The Geological Survey of India has found that of Kerala's 39,000 sq km area, hills having slopes of over 10 degree constitute about 19,000 sq km.

"Kerala has witnessed unusually high rainfall since 2018, which has destabilised the already vulnerable hill slopes in the high ranges. Some of them, which may not have seen landslides in the past, are now becoming potentially vulnerable to heavy sliding. The Pettimudi slide is a repeat of what happened in Puthumala. I understand that the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel led by Madhav Gadgil had designated the Pettimudi locality as a region of highest ecological sensitivity," says C.P. Rajendran, geoscientist and professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research in Bengaluru.

Human activity exacerbates the vulnerability caused by climate change, he says, and points to the need for formulation of appropriate land use management policies in vulnerable districts like Idukki and Wayanad - something that the government is looking at as part of its Rebuild Kerala Initiative. The researchers of the Geological Survey of India who had studied 10 landslides in Idukki between June and July in 2018 had cited human interference and unscientific land use among the 'geo-scientific causes' that triggered landslides. The man-made causative factors, they said, included construction of buildings with loose material, faulty cultivation patterns and defective maintenance of drainage systems.

The human factor played no role in Pettimudi, as the crest of the slide was deep inside the pristine forests, says A. Jayathilak, Principal Secretary, Revenue and Disaster Management, Kerala. "There were also no quarries or resorts nearby. Extreme rainfall triggered the landslide and it gathered high intensity as it came down the hill," he says.

In a land-scarce State like Kerala, it's impractical to demarcate land as habitable areas and strictly as no-go zones. "The people in the lowlands and the highlands cannot be relocated to the re-

**Just look at the sheer scale of land grab in these hilly districts. In Idukki alone, thousands of acres of land have been encroached on using fake land deeds.**

HARISH VASUDEVAN  
Environmentalist and lawyer

latively safer mid-lands considering the large population that would require relocation. If we go by the maps, just about 20% to 30% of the land is habitable and it's the mid-lands," Jayathilak says.

But that shouldn't deter the State from formulating a land use policy, contends Harish Vasudevan, environmentalist and lawyer. "Just look at the sheer scale of land grab in these hilly districts. In Idukki alone, thousands of acres of land have been encroached on using fake land deeds," he says. The Pettimudi tragedy has also exposed the class divide. The tribals, estate workers and the fishermen are deprived of their rightful ownership of habitable land. "The government should have put the taluk land boards in mission mode to identify areas for the safe relocation of the landless and the marginalised," he says.

It's an argument upheld by the plantation workers of Munnar who continue to live in the Raj-era labour lines on hill slopes without ownership while the managerial staff reside in posh bungalows atop hills. The plantation sector might have witnessed mechanisation and kept pace with the times, but the lot of the estate workers has remained unchanged, they say.

An official of the KDHDP states that the company has allotted accommodation to the families from Pettimudi that have lost their living quarters in the landslide. It's also providing assistance to the few surviving kin of the deceased. "The layams remain one of the best models of safe living," says Mohan C. Varghese, KDHDP vice president. "It's a solid structure and a safe building to live in. We have not had any such incident in the last 70-80 years," he says, blaming the tragedy on the excessive downpour.

The company says it's carrying out annual maintenance of the lines, which are electrified and with basic amenities.

"But the workers' lives will not improve unless there is a major revision of the labour laws," says Gomathi, a member of the Devikulam Block Panchayat and leader of the iconic Pengal Otrumai collective, a women's movement that led a strike against labour exploitation in the tea plantation sector in Munnar in 2015. "There's been an increase in the wages earned by workers over the years. But in comparison with the rising costs of living, that's a pittance. Climate change may have made landslides inevitable, but does that mean people should die? Unless the government acts, there are many Pettimidis waiting to happen in Munnar," she says mincing no words.

## FROM PAGE ONE

**States can apply to UGC for extension of deadline**

They were issued in the interests of students. They provided three modes of examination – pen and paper, online and blended (both physical and online). A "special chance" was also given to students unable to take the exams.

**Time given to varsities**  
It said universities were moreover given time from July 31 to September 30 for preparations.

Justice Bhushan drew attention to clause 6 of the revised guidelines, which insists that exams can be held only if universities follow the safety protocols. The Centre, too, had pitched in with guidelines.

The Standard Operating Procedure for conduct of examination makes it abundantly clear that the UGC, MHRD [Ministry of Human Resource Development] and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare were fully concerned with the health of students and exam functioning," the court held.

Justice Bhushan said the UGC was well within its rights to fix "uniform" dates for the exams despite some

States being worse off.

"The UGC had rightly fixed a date for completion of the final-year examination throughout the country to maintain uniformity in the academic calendar," Justice Bhushan justified.

The court said the July 6 guidelines did not discriminate against final year students by compelling them to take exams while their juniors were promoted on their internal assessment marks.

**For future career**

"Final year exam is an opportunity for a student to show his optimum calibre. It paves his future career both in academics and employment," Justice Bhushan noted.

The court held that the UGC was not obliged to consult universities or States before the issuance of the July 6 guidelines.

Besides, States and universities cannot dismiss UGC guidelines as being merely advisory. They were necessary for the determination of standards in institutions of higher education".

**Six States move Supreme Court on NEET, JEE**

The petition comes shortly after a meeting among Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and six Chief Ministers of non-BJP States.

JEE is slated to be conducted over 660 exam centres with 9.53 lakh students taking it. This would be roughly 1,443 students in every centre. Similarly, NEET will see 15.97 lakh students in 3,843 centres across the country, nearly 415 students per centre.

"The Union Government had adequate time to make comprehensive preparations for the safe and successful conduct of the examinations. However, the intervening months from April to September were characterised by inaction, confusion, lethargy and inertia," the petitioners submitted.

They said the Centre had

**'Realism should shape India's China policy'**

This is a relationship, in Mr. Jaishankar's view, that is now playing out on a global stage, and its future could ultimately "boil down to... whether each is sufficiently accommodative of the other's rise".

For India, this includes whether China will be open to India's permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council, while India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which "reflects both India's arrival as a technology player" and which China has opposed, would be another such indicator.

Recognition of the global significance of the relationship – and the need for both countries to find ways to accommodate the other – was one key driver, Mr. Jaishankar says, behind the two summits between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi.

"What was different at Wuhan and Chennai was not just the intensity of the engagement," he writes, "but its setting against the evolving global backdrop in which both have such an important role. The practice of leaders of India and China having geopolitical conversations ceased many decades ago. Its resumption could well be a sign of a different future".

The Minister acknowledges that the past continues to cast a long shadow, and "the Chinese perhaps don't realise how lasting the impact of the 1962 conflict has been

CM YK

**Kerala records a fresh high of 2,543 cases**

State tally over 69,000; Telangana incidence close to 3,000; Karnataka reports 136 deaths; A.P. records 10,526 cases

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

health-care workers infected were from Thiruvananthapuram.

**Rising count**

Telangana again reported close to 3,000 new COVID-19 cases with 2,932 persons testing positive on Thursday.

The highest number of positive cases was reported on Tuesday when a little over 3,000 people tested positive, followed by 2,795 on Wednesday.

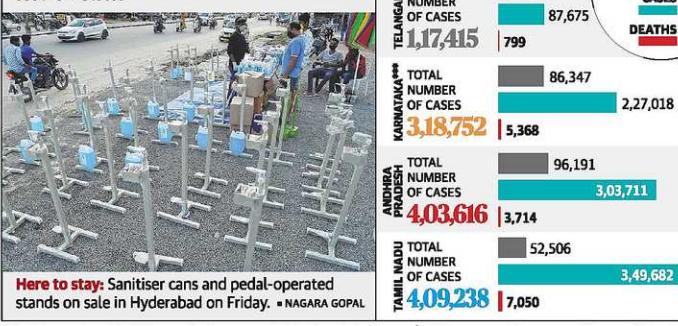
Active cases stood at 28,941, with 22,097 persons in home/institutional quarantine. The increased number of cases were attributed to intensified testing.

Eleven persons died of infection on Thursday, taking the total number of casualties to 799. The case fatality rate was 0.68%, much lower than the national average of 1.83%, officials said.

Greater Hyderabad had a major chunk of cases with

**Safety essential**

With the rising COVID-19 cases, sanitisers have become an indispensable part of our lives. The graph shows the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



**Here to stay:** Sanitiser cans and pedal-operated stands on sale in Hyderabad on Friday. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

\*Kerala has a mismatch of 65 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons | \*\*Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Thursday

\*\*\*Karnataka has 19 non-COVID deaths

520 persons testing positive on Thursday. Medchal-Malkajgiri and Rangareddy districts stood next, reporting 218 cases each.

Andhra Pradesh's tally

mounted to 4,03,616 with 10,526 new cases added on Friday. Also, 0.92% or 3,714 infected persons succumbed to the disease so far.

Half of Andhra Pradesh's

infections were from five districts in three different regions. East Godavari with 55,834 cases accounted for 13.8% of total cases.

East Godavari had the biggest spike in new cases and Chittoor the highest number of deaths, as a total of 81 new deaths were reported. Krishna district had the highest death rate of 1.75%.

Karnataka recorded 8,960 cases on Friday, bringing the State's total to 3.18 lakh. Of the total on Friday, 2,721 were from Bengaluru Urban. A total of 136 COVID-19-related deaths were reported on Friday.

With 5,996 more persons testing positive in Tamil Nadu on Friday, the number of cases rose to 4,09,238. At the same time, 102 deaths were recorded taking the tally to 7,050. On Friday, 5,752 persons were discharged from various health facilities. The number of positive cases continued to rise in the districts and in Chennai, 1,296 persons tested positive.

(With inputs from Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Chennai and Bengaluru bureaus)

**Statue installation triggers tension**

2 groups get into tussle near Belagavi

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BELAGAVI

Tension prevailed at Peeranwadi, near Belagavi in Karnataka, on Friday after a group of unidentified persons placed a statue of warrior Sangolli Rayanna before daybreak on a makeshift pedestal at the Y-junction on the national highway that passes through the village.

As the news spread, another group tried to install a statue of warrior-king Shivaji at the same place, arguing that the junction was named "Shivaji Circle." Police stopped them from going ahead. As the group started swelling and people demanded removal of Sangolli Rayanna's statue, police attempted to convince them that the issue would be dealt with legally as it was put up without permission.

Meanwhile, some distance away from the area, members of Sangolli Rayanna Yuva Sangha and Karna-



Police officers speaking to protesters at Peeranwadi in Belagavi. ■ P. K. BADIGER

taka Rakshana Vedike took out a protest against attempts to install Shivaji statue. As crowds swelled and the situation threatened to go out of hand, the police resorted to lathi charge.

Police Commissioner K. Thiagarajan, Deputy Commissioner of Police Seema Latkar spoke to both the groups and convinced them to eventually leave the area.



KARNATAKA

**Customs questions Kerala CM's ex-IT fellow**

Balachandran appears for probe in gold smuggling case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
KOCHI

Arun Balachandran, former IT fellow to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, appeared before the Customs here on Friday in connection with the investigation into the alleged smuggling of gold through air cargo shipments addressed to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) consulate in Kerala.

Mr. Balachandran came under the radar of the Customs and the National Investigation Agency after reports emerged that he had helped the husband of the key accused Swapna Suresh take an apartment near the Secretariat on rent.

The investigators found that Swapna had met the other accused, including Sandeep Nair and Sarith P.S., at the apartment on several occasions.

Mr. Balachandran had said that he had arranged the flat on the insistence of

**CPI(M) points fingers at BJP**

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The CPI(M) on Friday sought to put the Kerala BJP in the dock over the Customs summons to Janam TV coordinating editor Anil Nambiar in the UAE consulate-linked gold smuggling case. Mr. Nambiar is a prominent presenter in the

M. Sivasankar, former Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister. He had also said Mr. Sivasankar had told him that the apartment was being rented for his friend and his family. Mr. Balachandran is learnt to have spoken to the caretaker of the apartment and finalised the rent on Mr. Sivasankar's request.

Meanwhile, Swapna is

purportedly pro-BJP channel. The BJP could not shrug off its guilt of association with the accused by "lying" that it had nothing to do with Janam TV, the CPI(M) said. BJP leader George Kurien said the party was not answerable for Mr. Nambiar's actions. He was not a member of the party.

learnt to have submitted a statement before the Customs alleging that Anil Nambiar, journalist of Janam TV, had called her on July 5 after seeing the reports of the gold seizure. She claimed that he had asked her to advise the Consulate to release a statement saying that the seized consignment was not a diplomatic cargo. Mr. Nambiar denied the allegations in a social media post.

Mr. Sivasankar had told him that the apartment was being rented for his friend and his family. Mr. Balachandran is learnt to have spoken to the caretaker of the apartment and finalised the rent on Mr. Sivasankar's request.

Meanwhile, Swapna is

**Kerala sets up ATS to probe Pujari's activities**

The gangster tried to extort money from an actor in 2018

**G. ANAND**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government has tasked the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of the Crime Branch Police to unearth the past activities of underworld gangster Ravi Pujari in the State.

A senior officer said Anup Kuruvilla John, DIG, ATS, would coordinate with his counterparts in Bengaluru and Mumbai to find Pujari's collaborators in the State, if any.

The ATS would verify reports that Pujari had set up a protection money racket in Kerala in 2015 and his victims could include wealthy

businesspersons. Some might be loath to approach law enforcement.

Central agencies had used Interpol to extradite Pujari to India from Senegal in January. He had been in hiding in the West African nation since 2005. Kerala wanted Pujari mainly in connection with a 2018 bid to extort money from celebrity Leena Maria Paul.

An officer said Pujari had set his sights on Ms. Paul as a likely target for extortion after she became implicated in a ₹18 crore bank fraud case. Pujari allegedly used a set of intermediaries to coerce Ms. Paul into wiring money to an

offshore account he operated in the name of others. When the bid failed, he "threatened" to harm Ms. Paul.

When the plan failed, the accused contracted two "shooters" to fire upon Ms. Paul's beauty parlour in Kochi to prove to her that he could project his power from afar. Though none were hurt in the incident, the gun crime sent a ripple of fear in the business community and the film industry in Kochi.

Last year, the police arrested two of the suspects and recovered a pistol and several rounds from them.

The accused are Telangana Vidyarthi Vedika (TVV) president Bandari Maddileti (31), general secretary Menchu Sandeep (26) aka Praveen, Telangana Praja Front State vice-president Nalamasa Krishna (38) alias Rathnamala and Communist Party of India (Maoist) Telangana State Committee member Yapa

TELANGANA

## IN BRIEF



## Curbs in Srinagar to foil Muhamarr processions

SRINAGAR  
Several parts of Srinagar city were sealed by security forces on Friday morning to disallow any Muhamarr processions, which remain banned since the 1990s in Kashmir. Srinagar's Lal Chowk saw all main roads sealed with concertina wires. An official said curbs were imposed in eight police station limits in Srinagar as "Shia mourners were planning a procession." The police had lodged a case recently against Shia mourners for raising pro-freedom slogans.

## Centre is legally bound to pay GST dues: Left

NEW DELHI  
The Left parties slammed Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for her admission during Thursday's GST Council meeting that the Centre would be unable to pay the dues to States. "Telling the States to borrow from the RBI to bridge this gap is obnoxious. The central government is legally bound to fulfil its obligations of payment of GST dues. If needed, the Central government must borrow and pay the States their dues and cannot force the State governments to borrow," the CPI(M) said in a statement.

## Ram Madhav meets Kashmir leaders

## His visit comes in the backdrop of NC's Gupkar Declaration

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR

BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav is on a three-day visit to Kashmir and is meeting party leadership and several regional leaders in the wake of National Conference's bid to spearhead an alliance of seven regional parties to launch a joint fight for restoration of J&K's special status.

Mr. Madhav met senior BJP leaders from Srinagar on Friday and sought a "feedback on the security scenario" and "the recent political development", party sources said. The meeting was also attended by BJP general secretary in J&K Ashok Koul, Sunil Sharma and Vibodh Gupta.

Addressing the party leaders, Mr. Madhav likened the Gupkar Declaration to NC's Plebiscite Front.

## Four parties approach SC to defer JEE, NEET

Cong., Trinamool, Shiv Sena, JMM want exams in November

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

What can one expect from a government that imposed a 21-day lockdown with a four-hour notice

DEREK O'BRIEN  
Trinamool Congress leader

The Congress, Trinamool Congress, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Shiv Sena on Friday filed a review petition in the Supreme Court seeking a deferral of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for engineering courses and the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for medical courses.

At a press conference after approaching the court, the parties said they were not for cancelling the exams but wanted them deferred till November so that the government could ensure the safety of the students.

## To ensure safety

Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien said the petitioners did not want the students to lose an academic year, and the petition aimed to ensure better safety and security for the students.

"The charge here is poor planning; what can one expect from a government which imposed a 21-day lockdown with a mere four-hour notice," Mr. O'Brien asked.

Senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who represented all the six petitioners, said the govern-

ment needed to keep in mind that together, the petitioners represented 30% of the Indian population. The two examinations were originally scheduled for April and had been postponed because of the extended lockdown.

"The government has drawn itself into a corner and was now trying to get out of it by a knee-jerk reaction," he said.

Citing Bihar as an example, he said out of 38 districts in the State, there were NEET centres only in two and JEE venues in seven. When the Centre said it had increased the number of

centres, only their density had been increased in districts where they already existed, Mr. Singhvi said. As many as 1,400 students were scheduled to appear in one NEET centre.

Mr. Singhvi said holding the exams at present was exclusionary for various reasons. With transport facilities disrupted, only the affluent who had private vehicles would be able to travel to the examination centres and children who were affected by COVID-19 would not be able to appear.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said the government's insistence on holding the exams showed its "stubbornness". "Not a single day goes by when a death due to COVID-19 doesn't occur. Who will be responsible if any student or their family gets infected because of appearing in the exam," said Mr. Soren.

He said, ultimately, the States would have to bear the brunt of a unilateral decision taken by the Centre. "I had written to the Union Education Minister urging him to defer the exams, but so far, I haven't had any response from him," Mr. Soren said.

## NHRC notice to J&amp;K DGP over tweet on encounters

It asks for a report by October 1

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) this week issued a notice to the Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) after finding that a tweet by the Kashmir Zone Police on August 21 tried to "glamorise" encounter killings of alleged terrorists.

The NHRC has asked for a report by October 1 after taking *suo motu* cognisance in the case based on the Twitter handle of Imtiaz Hussain, referring to the Senior Superintendent of Police (security, Kashmir), according to the case proceedings available on the Commission's website.

Mr. Hussain had quoted the tweet about the action that led to the death of four alleged terrorists. An NHRC source said it was Mr. Hussain's quote-tweet that was brought to the knowledge of the Commission as being a senior officer he had retweeted and "endorsed" the

Kashmir Zone Police's tweet. "By releasing video of attack, #terrorists want to glamourise terrorism. But they can't. We replied by actions & killed 04 top cmdrs, Sajjad @ Haider & FT Taimur Khan @ Abu Usman (seen in said video/attack) & Naseer @ Sad bhai & FT Ali bhai @ Daniel within 72 hours. @JmuKmrPolice (sic)," the Kashmir Zone Police's official handle tweeted on August 21. Quoting the Kashmir Zone Police's tweet, Mr. Hussain, tweeted: "We work within the parameters of law, with utmost restraint and highest regard for human lives. Outlaws can only be cowards. Befitting reply by us with elimination of entire gang. Jai Hind".

The NHRC said: "The officer has this way tried to glamourise the action taken by the police by killing four persons stated to be top commanders of a terrorist group." The NHRC said it understood that the police had been a victim of terrorism.

Mr. Hussain had quoted the tweet about the action that led to the death of four alleged terrorists. An NHRC source said it was Mr. Hussain's quote-tweet that was brought to the knowledge of the Commission as being a senior officer he had retweeted and "endorsed" the

Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer  
Water Resources Zone, Jaipur  
Sinchai Bhawan, J.L.N. Marg, Jaipur- 302017  
No.10252 Date: 24/08/2020

## INTERVIEW | RAMESH POKHRIYAL NISHANK

## 'NTA has taken all safety measures'

Students should enjoy the process of examination, says Education Minister

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

*Leaders who are politicising the issue of JEE and NEET must consider that postponing the examinations will result in an opportunity cost of at least ₹48,000 crore, says Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.*

You have said that the issue of holding NEET and JEE next month should not be politicised. How is the issue being politicised? What political benefit is being sought by protesting students?

It is very much clear before everyone who is taking up the cause of whom. I do not want to go into specifics and details. Entire country is watching who is acting in the interests of students. The leaders who are speaking about the postponement of exams are not looking at the opportunity cost of not holding the exams.

If we do not have an exam now, next year for the same number of seats, we will have double the competition.

The Supreme Court has ruled that States are empowered under the Disaster Management Act to override UGC's exam guidelines, but cannot promote students without exams. What impact do you think this will have on

lective loss for the 20 lakh NEET and JEE candidates who stand to lose an academic year is ₹4,000 crore per month, and ₹48,000 crore per annum. Isn't it a huge opportunity cost? Is anyone looking at this? I urge everyone to let the country progress. The NTA [National Testing Agency] has taken all necessary health and safety measures. Students should enjoy the process of examination rather than stressing about it. The pandemic will eventually finish anyhow.



To safeguard the larger academic interest and career progression globally, it is essential to conduct final examinations

final year students?

I welcome the decision of the Supreme Court, whose order has upheld the guidelines of the UGC, which were issued keeping students' careers in mind. Legally speaking, the enactment of UGC can be traced to Entry 66 of the Union list. This allows UGC to make regulations accordingly.

The performance in examinations contributes to merit, lifelong credibility, wider global acceptability for admissions, scholarships, awards, placements, and better future prospects. Thus, to safeguard the larger academic interest of the students and career progres-

sion globally, it is essential to conduct the final examinations. Already, 209 universities have conducted their exams and around 400 are in the process of holding exams.

The NCERT's survey of high school students in central government schools and CBSE schools shows that at least 27% do not have laptops or smartphones. Is there any government proposal to provide free or discounted devices to students?

The Learning Enhancement Guidelines [survey] was undertaken to address the concerns of equity and inclusion. States and UTs were requested to carry out similar mapping exercises and use it for further planning taking cognisance of the availability of the digital resources and ensuring that education is transacted to all. The Ministry of Education recognises that technology is an enabler, and ₹839.60 crore has been allocated for integrating information and communication technology into education in 2020-21.

Under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, States/UTs have prepared their own innovative systems for integrating ICT into education.

## Congress calls for students' consensus on NEET, JEE

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Friday said the decision to hold NEET and JEE should be taken with the concurrence of students. "If any decision is to be taken regarding your future, it is important that it is taken with your concurrence," she

said in a video message.

In another message, which is a part of the Congress's 'Speak Up for Students' campaign, former party chief Rahul Gandhi said the government should have a conversation with students, listen to them and decide on holding the NEET and JEE only after developing

ing a consensus.

"Everybody understands the mishandling of COVID, the way the epidemic has been handled... the devastation that has been caused, the economic destruction and the pain that this country has had to bear. Now, what I don't understand is why you should be held res-

ponsible and why further pain should be imposed on you?" said Mr. Gandhi in the video.

"I can clearly see that the government has been incompetent. So why should the government force anything on you? It is important that the government listens to the students," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT,  
FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jorbagh Road, New Delhi-110003

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

For Engagement of Consultancy Firm for Establishment of National Project Management Unit (NPMU) for the Project "Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities"

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India is Executing the Project titled "Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities" funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), through its accredited Agency, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at National and state level including Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha.

The Ministry intends to Establish a National Project Management Unit (NPMU) at New Delhi which will assist MOEFCC in execution of the Project and invites Request For Proposal (RFP) from suitable Consultancy Firm/ Agency/Entities and other interested parties. The selection will be made through an open, transparent and competitive bidding process for engagement of the agency for establishing NPMU in New Delhi.

The Bid documents including letter of invitation can be downloaded from MOEFCC & CEC Website (<http://moefcc.gov.in>).

**THE LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF BID IS 24.09.2020 TILL 17.30 HRS IST.**

For further clarification following official may be contacted on any working day during office hours:

**Dr. SUBRATA BOSE (Scientist-F)  
Climate Change Division  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**

Email: [subrata.bose@nic.in](mailto:subrata.bose@nic.in), Telefax: 011-2469 5422

**OFFICE OF ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,  
WATER RESOURCES ZONE, UDAPUR**  
Near Akashvani, Chetak Circle, Udaipur (Rajasthan) 313001  
Phone no.: 0294-2528265  
No.- ACE/Act/Mahf-158-II/2020/11577  
**CORRIGENDUM-3 - NIT No.05/2020-21**  
The dates for downloading and uploading Bids for "Construction of Intake Shaft, Link Tunnel and Approach Channel From RD 0 to 880 m lacs is hereby extended from 24-09-2020 to 15-09-2020, 06:00 PM. Updated particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://proc.rajantran.gov.in>, [www.sppr.rajantran.gov.in](http://www.sppr.rajantran.gov.in)) of the state; and <http://www.waterrесources.rajantran.gov.in> of the central government website.

**(Bhuvan Bhaiker)  
Additional Chief Engineer  
Water Resources Zone, Udaipur**

**BHARAT COOKING COAL LIMITED**  
'A Mini Ratna Company'  
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

**NOTICE**

All the tenders\* issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCCL [www.bcclweb.in](http://bcclweb.in), Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal : <https://eprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM Portal : <https://gem.gov.in>.

\* This is applicable to all Open (Domestic / Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

**GREAT CHENNAI CORPORATION  
Solid Waste Management Department**

S.W.M.C. No.A7/0107/2020

**Notice Inviting Short Tender - Third call**

Short e - Tenders are invited for the following work in Single Stage Two Cover System as detailed below.

The Superintending Engineer (SWM), Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), invites online tender for Maintaining the Micro Compost Centers and processing the wet waste provided by Greater Chennai Corporation at designated locations for a period of 3 years in North Region Zones (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) in Chennai City are available in online [www.ntenders.gov.in](http://ntenders.gov.in)

Last Date and Time of Submission of Bid

16th September 2020, 3.00 PM

Bid Opening Date and Time

17th September 2020, 4.00 PM

Cost of Tender Documents and EMD: Rs. 20,000/- + 12% GST

EID: 5.75 Lakhs

Superintending Engineer/SWM

DIPR0233/Tender/2020

## 'Pandemic-related loss isn't Centre's liability'

Large borrowings by Central govt. will have a 'cascading effect', says Assam FM

NISTULA HEBBAR  
NEW DELHI

Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has put forward legal arguments to prove that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue shortfall due to the pandemic cannot be laid at the Centre's door, hence absolving it from having to raise loans to finance the same.

His intervention came in the middle of a heated debate at the GST Council meeting on Thursday, where Finance Ministers of States ruled by parties opposed to the BJP and the NDA forcefully argued that it should be the Centre and not the States that should raise loans to make up for the revenue shortfall.

According to those present at the meeting, opinions of these States were getting traction at the meeting, with Maharashtra suggesting an extension of the five-year period for GST compensation, while Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Puducherry wanted the Centre to raise loans. All the States were in agreement that loans had to be raised to make up for the shortfall.

## 'Centre abdicating its duty'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former Union Ministers P. Chidambaram and Jairam Ramesh on Friday said the Centre's proposal to States to borrow to bridge the compensation gap is an "abdication" of its responsibility and the States should not accept it.

Mr. Chidambaram said on Twitter that the latest assault on the States was part of an elaborate design of the Modi government to financially cripple them and reduce them to begging before the Centre.

Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said the Centre should not go for borrowing as it would affect the credit rating of the country in the international market.

At Mr. Sarma's proposal (and seconded by West Bengal), the States agreed to ponder over the two proposals of State borrowing put forward by the Finance Ministry for a period of seven days. The first proposal is of the States directly availing loans from the Reserve Bank of India, with the Centre facilitating the loan and helping get G-security linked interest rates. The second proposal is of the States forming a consortium for availing loans for the amount pertaining to the financial year 2020-21, and revisiting it the next year.

## IN BRIEF



Old video returns to embarrass Azad

NEW DELHI A day after Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad, reiterated the demand for elections to the Congress Working Committee (CWC), a two-year-old video surfaced on Friday in which he strongly argued against elections to the Committee. The video from March 18, 2018, is of the AICC plenary session.

## 19 African swine fever epicentres in Meghalaya

GUWAHATI The Meghalaya government has declared 19 villages across five districts as epicentres of African swine fever after a research institute based in Madhya Pradesh's capital Bhopal confirmed the outbreak of the disease. An official of Meghalaya's Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department said the epicentres were marked under the Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals Act, 2009. The five affected districts are East Jaintia Hills, West Jaintia Hills, Ri-Bhoi, East Khasi Hills and West Khasi Hills.

## Coastal areas in Odisha brace for floods

SATYASUNDAR BARIK BHUBANESWAR With the upper catchment of the Mahanadi river, Odisha's largest river, receiving heavy rain for the past two days, coastal districts in the State are bracing for heavy floods.

According to State Water Resource Department, the upper catchment of the Mahanadi, which falls in Chhattisgarh, has recorded heavy downpour during the past two days. In Chhattisgarh, rainfall was measured at 264.2 mm at Champa, and at 248.4 mm in Baitarpanur, on Friday.

"As per the engineers' assessment, 6.60 lakh cusecs of water from Chhattisgarh is entering Hirakud Reservoir. If water discharge from the Ib and Bhedan rivers of Odisha is taken into consideration, Hirakud would receive more than 8 lakh cusecs water," said Pradeep Jena, Managing Director, Odisha State Disaster Management Authority.

Huge inflow of water forced the Hirakud authorities to open 20 sluice gates in the morning. Later, 20 more gates were opened to release flood water.

In the lower catchment, the Mahanadi river is likely to get flood water from tributaries.

## India now third in death toll

Country records third consecutive day with more than 70,000 new cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

India's COVID-19 death toll became the third highest in the world on Friday, surpassing Mexico's. Cumulative deaths in the country stood at 62,724 on Friday, 130 more than that of Mexico's recorded toll at that time.

India registered over 75,122 new cases on Friday – the third consecutive day with more than 70,000 infections.

The 77,266 cases recorded in India on Thursday, according to the Health Ministry, is the highest single-day spike in the world, crossing the 77,255 infections recorded in the U.S. on July 17.

## Nine lakh tests

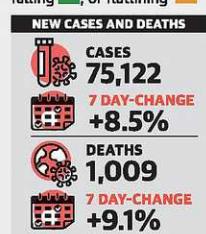
India has tested more than nine lakh COVID-19 samples for the second consecutive day on Friday, the Ministry said in a release, adding that it was keeping a sharp focus on "test, track and treat" strategy. "India has already created a capacity of doing 10 lakh tests a day and 9,01,338 samples were tested in the last 24 hours," the release said.

It said the cumulative tests were nearing four crore.

"The total tests as on date

## Viral tracker

With 1,009 deaths on Friday, India's COVID-19 toll rose to 62,724, surpassing Mexico's fatality count to become third-highest in the world. As many as 75,122 cases were recorded on the day. Graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days across select States which are classified based on where cases or deaths are rising (red); falling (green); or flatlining (yellow).



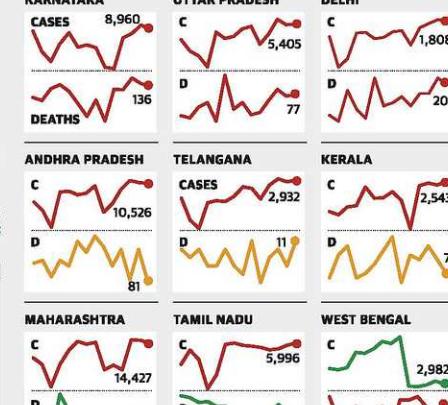
FIGURES ON THE GRAPHS DEPICT NEW CASES AND DEATHS RECORDED IN THE RESPECTIVE STATES ON FRIDAY. DATA AS OF 10:30 PM.

have reached 3,94,77,848.

More than one crore samples have been tested in the past two weeks. The tests per million too have seen a sharp surge to 28,607. It is only by aggressive testing that positive cases can be identified at an early stage, their close contacts promptly tracked and isolated as well as timely and effective treatment can be ensured,"

the Ministry said. There are 1,564 labs in the country (998 in the government sector and 566 private ones). The Ministry on Friday said it was also ramping up hospital infrastructure through the three-tier dedicated COVID facilities – hospitals with ICU bed, ventilators and so on for critical care management; health centres with oxygen beds

## KARNATAKA UTTAR PRADESH DELHI



DINAKAR PERI  
NEW DELHI

## Govt to divest up to 15% stake in HAL

It looks to raise around ₹5,000 crore



HAL is the only aircraft manufacturer in the country.

Thursday.

In February, the government set an ambitious divestment target of ₹2.1 lakh crore for 2020-21 and since then the economy has been further hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government currently holds a 89.97% stake in HAL after selling a 10% stake through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) in 2018 that raised around ₹4,229 crore.

HAL is the only aircraft manufacturer in the country and assembles and builds a range of military helicopters and aircraft.

It has several deals and products in the pipeline on offer for the armed forces.

## SC refuses to ban telecast of programme

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused a plea for a pre-telecast ban of a programme on Sudarshan TV channel containing remarks "derogatory of the entry of Muslims in the civil services". The Delhi High Court later stayed the broadcast.

A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said the plea by advocate Firoz Iqbal Khan raises "significant issues". It notes that the issue highlights views which have a "divisive potential".

"Consistent with the fundamental right to free speech and expression, the court will need to foster a considered debate on the setting up of standards of self-regulation," the apex court observed.

However, the court restrained from imposing a pre-broadcast injunction on the programme on the basis of an unverified clip shown by Mr. Khan.

"The Court has to be circumspect in imposing a prior restraint on publication or the airing of views," it said.

## Don't curtail Question Hour: Cong.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday opposing a proposal to curtail the Question Hour and Zero Hour during the upcoming Parliament session that will start on September 14.

"You will kindly appreciate the fact that raising questions in Parliament, and issues of public importance during the Zero Hour is foremost of the procedural methods available to members to vent issues of national and public importance," Mr. Chowdhury said in his letter.

## PCI ticks off media over Sushant case coverage

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

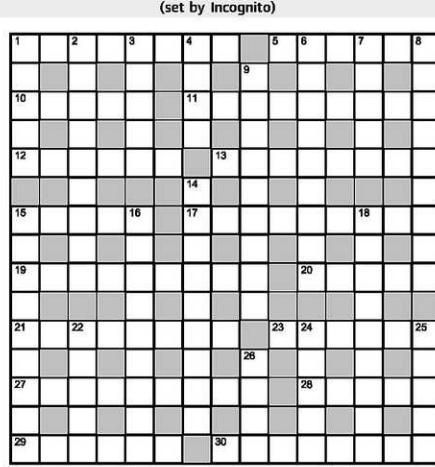
The Press Council of India criticised the "media" for some of its coverage of the investigation into the death of Hindi film actor Sushant Singh Rajput, saying that so far it has been in violation of the norms of journalistic conduct.

"The media should not narrate the story in a manner so as to induce the general public to believe in the

complicity of the person indicted. Publishing information based on gossip about the line of investigation by the official agencies on the crime committed is not desirable," a PCI statement said. "The media is advised not to conduct its own parallel trial or foretell the decision to avoid pressure during investigation and trial," the statement said. It said witnesses' right to privacy must not be breached.

## TH CROSSWORD + 13027

(set by Incognito)



## ■ ACROSS

- Brewed wine held? Capital!
- Violate rule on kick-off? Just the opposite
- Poet hides first dollar in deceit
- A male Serb produced a coherent light ray
- Scientist found in club of financiers
- Rehearsal to manage experiment at first
- Dismissed and shot

Are you good with numbers or better with words? Pick from Sudokus and crosswords.

@ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>



- Heard revenue was misrepresented by the chap in office
- "Sir, stores recycled electrical components"
- Medicine man carries frozen water for a kitchen machine
- Repairmen have afterthought about wood
- God took seat on ewer
- RAW martial arts?
- Release rent and leave
- Despair, losing energy, and collapse into turbulent waters
- What a person, always lying, may end up having?

## ■ DOWN

- Bwana turns into an Indian aristocrat
- Fries in uncontrolled conflagrations
- Priest holds me back and gets resin
- Prison ship's strongman Banner
- Equipped before conflict, editor came, after golf cry, with weapon
- Servile meerkat has a chief
- Autocrat found when numerator's underling lost a couple of consecutive directions
- Circle street before race is conducted and force to leave
- Depart in confusion, leaving Democratic Party reorganisation, forming a regime enumerated by Plato
- Destructive capacity of ignition coupled with strength
- Console and entrain after a quick run
- Meet English nobleman about to return
- Tear open Non-Resident Indian in Uttar Pradesh
- A burden for a Titan, but easily carried by a schoolchild
- Corners presently, coming back carrying some ketchup
- Primarily Iceland, Serendip, Langkawi, Elephanta or any one of them

## SUDOKU

5	6		2	9
			4	5
3	2	7		
		7	3	4
8	5			
1	2	4		
1	5	3		
2	7			
3	8	9	5	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13026

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

P	O	P	S	H	K
G	L	A	U	H	O
R	A	E	T	I	R
A	S	C	R	O	S
S	R	I	L	N	K
R	I	L	A	G	T
S	T	A	G	E	B
A	V	A	A	S	T
A	S	S	A	S	A
C	R	S	E	T	E
O	L	I	D	R	S
A	Y	A	E	S	K
A	S	S	S	S	T

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## FAITH

## Tactful Vidura

Sanjaya returns after meeting the Pandavas, but when Dhritarashtra asks him what Krishna and the Pandavas said, Sanjaya says he will convey this in the royal court the next day. Sanjaya's decision is right, because if Dhritarashtra were to twist Sanjaya's words and a war breaks out as a result, Sanjaya might be blamed. Moreover, it is important that all the elders and wise men in court should know what has happened. So Sanjaya keeps the news for the morrow.

An agitated Dhritarashtra is unable to sleep and sends for Vidura. Vidura is wise, and his behaviour is laudable too, said Kidambi Narayanan, in a discourse. He follows all the required rules. Although it is Dhritarashtra who has asked him to come, Vidura still waits outside the palace until he is summoned in. And once there, he pays respects to his king Dhritarashtra and asks him why he was sent for, and what the king wants him to do. Dhritarashtra says he is unable to sleep, and is fearful. Vidura could have immediately told Dhritarashtra that his excessive attachment to his sons was leading him to make wrong decisions. But Vidura is diplomatic. He says there could be many reasons for a man's sleeplessness, and he lists them.

A man who has illegitimate desires, one who wants to grab another's property, one who has lost his property – these are all people who cannot sleep. Vidura asks Dhritarashtra if he falls in any of these categories. Had Vidura been direct in his criticism of the king, Dhritarashtra would not have listened to him further. And Vidura, as a wise man, concerned about his family and his country, wants the king to make the right decisions. So he goes about advising Dhritarashtra indirectly. One who advises must be tactful like Vidura, and must not irritate the listener.

## CMYK



KENNETH ROSARIO

At the crack of dawn, a distraught Masaba Gupta, dressed in a bright scarlet gown, walks down an empty Mumbai street to her mother's home. She has just announced her separation with her husband on Instagram after a short-lived marriage. This opening shot of her semi-autobiographical series, *Masaba Masaba*, aptly sums up her relationship with her mother, Neena Gupta, who raised her single-handedly. When life throws her a curveball, the 31-year-old fashion designer and entrepreneur runs to her mother for comfort.

Growing up, she was at the centre of media attention for being Neena and West Indian cricketer Viv Richards' child out of wedlock. She has been vocal about body image issues on social media, the discrimination she faced because of her skin colour and the scars it has left behind. In 2018, her divorce from producer Madhu Mantena once again brought her personal life under the spotlight. While her life seems to be far from the ordinary, Masaba insists that behind the high-walls and controversies, they are regular people, experiencing the same heartbreaks as us all. "Celebrities are made out to be larger-than-life figures, untouchable and intimidating and you can't get a sense of what their lives would be like. But we are all normal human beings," she says. The intent of making the show was to demonstrate how ordinary their lives are.

**Setting the story straight**  
She goes on to observe, "You can't control the narrative when you are somewhat of a public figure." However, this project enabled her to finally tell her story the way she wanted to and "come clean about her life". Even though the show has elements of fiction, it cap-



## I'm being sold my own prints, someone thinks I'm a country in Africa'

Masaba and Neena Gupta on their semi-fictional Netflix series, *Masaba Masaba*, on controlling their narrative and working with an all-women team

tures several milestones, anecdotal information, and character traits. "The part where I'm being sold my own prints, someone thinking I'm a country in Africa, mum posting on Instagram that she is looking for work and being asked to design clothes for a dog on a film set... It has all happened to us," laughs Masaba.

To make a series like this and reveal aspects of one's life requires vulnerability, adds Neena, who was initially confused about the show's intentions when her daughter approached her. "It sounded like a great idea, but I didn't know what they wanted to do, was this a documentary on her life?" recalls the 61-year-old actor. But her primary concern was whether Masaba would manage to act, without any formal training. "It's like my kid has just given an exam," she grins.

**The desi Kardashians?**  
This doting mother-daughter relationship is at the centre of the series. In the pilot episode, when a tabloid prints blind news of Masaba's separation, Neena jumps into action to mollify her daughter. Would it be safe to say we have our own Indian Kardashians with the



Up close (clockwise from far left) Neena Gupta and Masaba Gupta, stills from the show • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

now get roles that are unbelievable. During the lockdown, I got three amazing roles. It is a golden period for actors, directors, and writers now with OTT and young filmmakers," says Neena.

Masaba too forayed into acting to cash in on this boom, which allowed her to play herself on-screen. "Playing yourself is both easy and hard," she says. "There's a fine line between being natural, which can be a bit dampening, and going over-the-top, which the audience can't relate to." She recalls, as a child, spending time on the sets of shows and films with her mother and observing how actors behave. She was inspired by her mother's co-actor in the 1995 series, *Guaraah*, Irrfan Khan, who passed away this year. "I picked up from him that the greatness of an actor is how relaxed he or she is," recalls Masaba.

Being surrounded by women - director Sonam Nair, writers Punya Arora, Nandini Gupta, and Anupama Ramachandran - during the making of this show, brought in a sense of comfort for Masaba. "When we were writing, I don't think we had to turn around and tell a male producer that this actually happens in our lives," she recalls. "Had a man directed it, it would have been a different kind of a series," adds Neena, as they both agree that the sensitivity with which women can tell women's stories is indispensable.

Masaba Masaba is now streaming on Netflix.

Watch Masaba Gupta and Neena Gupta in conversation with Kenneth Rosario on [thehindu.com](http://thehindu.com)



show? "Not at all," says Masaba. "The Kardashians had a basic formula of putting a camera on their lives and following them day and night. Ours is a heavily scripted show and is a new genre." She considers it to be closer to *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *Master of None*. "I hope it wouldn't be tied to something as common as *Keeping up with the Kardashians* - which I like - but our show is far deeper," she says.

Alongside Masaba's struggles, the show chronicles the challenges faced by older women to find prominent roles in Hindi cinema, as Neena struggles to be cast as a lead actor. In real life, her role in *Badhaai Ho* renewed her otherwise flailing career. "I



### FOOD SPOT

## The proof of a kabab...

Is in its bite and the way it is prepared, with beaten, rather than minced meat



RAHUL VERMA  
There's so much food talk on social media it's driving me crazy. Not because I am weary of conversations revolving around food, but because the more I read, the more I want to eat. Take, for instance, this thread on Awadhi food that had me drooling. This page was brought to my notice by a foodie friend who lives in Gurugram. She sent me a message about Arq that had been delivering the most delicious kababs and pulao, and promised to get me some one day.

That one day arrived last week, and what a pleasant day it was. One, we were meeting two of our dearest friends after eons (with our masks and social distancing in place). And, two, what a delicious hamper they carried for us! The food - *yakhni* meat pulao, shaami kabab and Ghar Ka Salan - was from Arq. Somehow, our friends thought that we had a wedding at home, for they'd got food for a full *baraat*. Not that we complained: instead, we dug into the food with relish (and continued to do so for a couple of days after).

Arq is run by a food lover called Anamika Bajpai, who is from Lucknow, and grew up in a largely vegetarian home. But Anamika's interest in various kinds of cuisines - including good old Awadhi non-vegetarian fare - prompted her to throw up her corporate job during the pandemic, and start a food



Mistress of spices (Top to bottom) Shaami kabab, yakhni pulao, Ghar Ka Salan • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



in meat stock with saffron and milk, had the robust flavours of whole spices such as black cardamom and mace. The gravy in the meat curry - called Ghar Ka Salan - was light and not thick or heavy like a *korma*. It reminded me of all those home-cooked mutton curries, prepared for Sunday lunches.

Anamika tells me that she was always interested in food, but picked up the finer nuances of Lakhnavi cuisine from a host of books that she pore over to gather just the right recipes.

The rates are a bit high, perhaps, but good mutton is expensive, and Anamika gets most of her fragrant spices from Kerala. The Arq Special Mutton Boti costs ₹100 for half a kilo. All mutton dishes (500g) are priced at ₹900, and chicken based dishes (500g) at ₹750. Vegetarian dishes cost ₹650 for half a kilo. The vegetarian fare includes Shaadi Waley Dum Aloo, Kaju Muttar Makhana and my all-time favourite (and full of childhood memories), U.P. ki Tehri. The non-veg fare includes keema kaleji, Khadey Masala, Ka Meat and Awadhi dum biryani. The chef is adding new dishes to the menu: Chandni Quorma (a kind of *safed korma*), Dum Ka Keema (*keema* cooked on steam) and Kimaki Sewaiyan (a sweet dish).

Ard, I am told, means essence. I get the whiff.

The writer is a seasoned food critic

Now streaming:  
**KOREAN, TURKISH, CHINESE**

**Strong storylines, cultural similarities and no cliffhangers are making Asian shows popular in the country. Meanwhile, Spanish and Turkish content find fans too**

ADITYA MANIJHA

The streaming era ended that speculation. Over the last few years, major streaming networks like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have been investing heavily in content from Asia, and smaller players like Dish TV and MX Player are now following suit. Indian audiences have been reciprocating, going beyond the predictable languages (like French and Italian). The lockdown has accelerated this.

With inputs from Surya Prabhulla Kumar and Nidhi Adlakha

With more time on hand, people are bingeing on South Korean, Turkish, Chinese and Thai dramas. Netflix's 2017 Spanish original series, *La Casa de Papel* (*Money Heist* in English), is the streaming service's most-watched international series in a non-English language, while Korean one-season dramas such as *Healer* and *Itaewon Class*, Turkish soaps *Aşk-i Memnu* and *Kuzey Güney*, and Chinese shows *The Untamed* and *Ashes of Love* are popular examples.

UK-based online market research firm YouGov's 2019 report says 55% of Indians now watch foreign language content. YouTube is the biggest platform for foreign content consumption, it says. In fact, when Thai series *Still 2Gether* premiered on August 14, India ranked no 9 on producer GMMTV's worldwide viewership list.

**All things K**  
Hallyu (the Korean wave) isn't new. For over a decade it has dominated playlists and vanity counters (K-pop, K-beauty - you name it, we've had it). In a 2019 interview with *The Hindu*, film editor Appu N Bhatathiri (*Drishyam*) highlighted how the International Film Festival of Kerala helped popularise Korean content. "K-dramas explore narratives that deal with the youth; I don't think Indian television targets the youth like they do. Besides, access to Netflix, Amazon and so on... created the urge to explore," he says.

Of late, social media, and forums on Reddit and Quora, are driving

these shows like *The Untamed*, a fantasy drama [about two magic-wielders battling demonic forces. Other favourites include the German fiction series *Dark* and Israeli action thriller *Fauda*, which he finds addictive. "All of them have very different settings, but it's the emotions and the characters that resonate with you," he says.

These shows are also popular because of the underlying cultural similarities. "Grown-up kids still live with their parents, they [Asians] have the concept of arranged marriages, they don't wear shoes in the house; there are so many overlaps," says Shroff.

With inputs from Surya Prabhulla Kumar and Nidhi Adlakha

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A ND-NDE

# Japan's PM quits citing health reasons

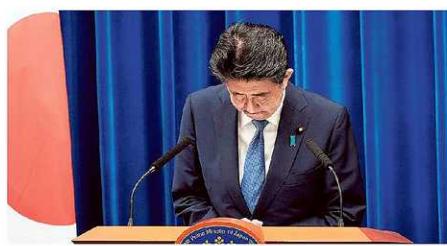
Shinzo Abe says he won't be able to continue in his position due to recurrence of ulcerative colitis

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
TOKYO

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced on Friday he will resign, ending his record-breaking tenure in a bombshell development that kicks off a leadership race in the world's third-largest economy.

Mr. Abe said he is suffering a recurrence of the ulcerative colitis that forced him to cut short a first term in office, and that he no longer felt able to continue as Prime Minister.

"Now that I am not able to fulfil the mandate from the people with confidence, I have decided that I should



**Bowing out:** Shinzo Abe bows his head as he announces his decision to step down from the post of Prime Minister. ■ AFP

no longer occupy the position of the Prime Minister," he said.

While speculation about Mr. Abe's political future has grown in recent weeks, after

two hospital visits for unspecified health checks, the resignation nonetheless came as a surprise.

Even as recently as Friday morning, the government

spokesman had appeared to dismiss concerns about Mr. Abe's health and suggested he would stay on.

But Abe made clear that would not be possible, apologising for once again cutting short his tenure.

"I would like to sincerely apologise to the people of Japan for leaving my post with one year left in my term of office, and amid the coronavirus woes," he said, bowing deeply.

**A big surprise'**  
Mr. Abe said he would "firmly execute my duty to the end", and until the next Prime Minister is appointed,

possibly through a leadership election involving ruling party lawmakers and members.

The resignation shocked the markets, with Tokyo stocks plunging more than 2% towards the end of afternoon trade when reports of Abe's decision first emerged.

"It was a big surprise", said Shinichi Nishikawa, a professor of political science at Meiji University in Tokyo.

Mr. Abe had been expected to stay in office until the end of his term as LDP leader in September 2021, and the jockeying for position to succeed him was still in its early stages.

## A Prime Minister who raised Japan's profile

Shinzo Abe promoted close ties with 'like-minded democracies', including India and Australia

ANANTH KRISHNAN

Japan is back, announced Shinzo Abe in a speech during a visit to the U.S. in February 2013, shortly after he became Prime Minister for the second time.

His first stint at the helm in 2006 only lasted a year, cut short both by health problems and political controversies that diminished his popularity. This time, he promised, he wasn't going anywhere.

He didn't. Over the next seven years, Mr. Abe, who announced his retirement on Friday because of health reasons, would not only become his country's longest-serving Prime Minister, but one who would leave a lasting legacy on Japan's foreign policy, defence strategy, and role in Asia.

"Japan is not, and will never be, a tier-two country," he had said in the 2013 speech, outlining three priorities for his foreign policy. The first, he said, was for Japan to be a leading promoter of rules for trade and in other areas in the "Indo-Pacific region" – a term Mr. Abe was among the first to popularise, as long back as in 2007, when in an address to the Indian Parlia-

ment, he reflected how "the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity".

He also pitched for Japan to become a "guardian of the global commons", particularly in an increasingly contested maritime domain, and to work closely with "like-minded democracies", such as the U.S., India, Australia and South Korea.

He broadly succeeded on all three fronts, says Hiroyuki Akiti, a commentator at Nikkei in Tokyo. "He made great achievements in foreign and security affairs," he told *The Hindu*. "In particular, he strengthened the U.S.-Japan alliance significantly, and based on that, he established a base for regional security cooperation by the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia [for Quad]. This framework has been, and will be, an important asset for the peace and stability in Indo-Pacific."

**Ties with India**  
Deepening relations with India, both on the investment front and through stepped up security cooperation un-

der the Quad, had been a priority for Mr. Abe's foreign policy, although some initiatives, such as the bullet train corridor, did not take off.

Mr. Akita said his other lasting legacy would be his shepherding of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal, seen as an economic counter to China. "While the Trump administration leaned toward trade protectionism, the Abe administration managed to establish

### NEWS ANALYSIS

the TPP even without U.S., thereby enabling the Asia Pacific region to somehow maintain a momentum of free trade."

Mr. Abe also championed a greater global role for Japan, and sought to remove some of the shackles imposed on Japan's military by its post Second World War pacifist Constitution.

While he failed to change Article 9 of the Constitution, under his watch Japan amended laws to allow its armed forces to be deployed overseas and the military for the first time took part in exercises on foreign soil.

Richard McGregor, Senior Fellow at the Lowy Institute and author of "Asia's Reckoning: China, Japan, and the Fate of U.S. Power in the Pacific Century", said "there is no doubt that Abe has been a hugely consequential Prime Minister, even without achieving two of his main goals, a revision of the country's post-war Constitution and a peace treaty with Russia."

"He has substantially rebuilt relations with Beijing, even as Japan has competed head-on with China on influence and investment in the region, and without conceding on territorial issues. He has also made Japan perhaps the most respected diplomatic player in the Indo-Pacific, which is saying something, given Japan's size relative to the U.S. and China," he said.

On China, Mr. Abe was less hawkish than many expected him to be, both home and abroad, as he balanced a fine line between courting China economically while mounting a robust counter to China's deepening influence in the region.

He took over just as relations hit a nadir in 2012, when China had essentially

cut off all ties angered by a move to "nationalise" the disputed Senkaku or Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea.

"Diplomatically and economically, he has improved relations with China," said Yoshikazu Kato, an expert on Japan-China relations at the Asia Global Institute in Hong Kong, noting that he went ahead with a visit in 2014 to Beijing for the APEC summit and sought a meeting with President Xi Jinping despite some opposition at home.

**Concessions to China**  
While not budging on Japan's sovereignty, he at the same time made some concessions such as agreeing a four-point consensus on the East China Sea in which, Mr. Kato said, Japan "finally acknowledged territorial disputes existed, which it previously did not."

While Mr. Abe might have changed Japanese foreign policy, it is "an open question to whether he has changed the country itself", said Mr. McGregor. "There is still little public support for constitutional revision to free up the military," he said, "despite rising threats from China and North Korea."

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**People's President**  
The President was introduced by his daughter Ivanka Trump on Thursday evening. "Four years ago, I introduced to you a builder, an entrepreneur, an outsider, and the people's nominee for President of the United States. Tonight, I stand before you as the proud daughter of the people's president," Ms. Trump said.

Speaking on a specially constructed stage with a campaign-style backdrop, complete with Trump-Pence signage, Mr. Trump made direct and oblique references to Mr. Biden's acceptance speech from a week ago, in which the Democratic candidate had described a battle

for America's soul. "Joe Biden is not the saviour of America's soul – he is the destroyer of America's jobs, and if given the chance, he will be the destroyer of American greatness," Mr. Trump said.

"This election will decide whether we save the American Dream, or whether we allow a socialist agenda to demolish our cherished destiny," Mr. Trump said from the South Lawn of the White House.

Mr. Trump is the first U.S. President in modern times to accept his nomination on the grounds of the White House. Critics have argued that he and several other participants at the RNC are in possible violation of the Hatch Act, which prohibits government officials from using federal property for political purposes.

Speaking to an audience of about 1,500 people mostly without masks and not observing social distance, Mr. Trump spoke of defeating the novel coronavirus pandemic which has affected the U.S. more than it has any other country.

Mr. Trump and other speakers at the RNC are specifically targeting suburban women with a college degree, a demographic they hope will help Mr. Trump who lags Mr. Biden in polls.

Among Mr. Trump's false claims were that the Democrats would "demolish" suburbs and end the Second Amendment (the right to bear arms). "If the Left gains power, they will demolish the suburbs, confiscate your guns and appoint justices who will wipe away your second amendment and other constitutional freedoms. Biden is a Trojan horse for social-

ism. If Joe Biden doesn't have the strength to stand up to wild-eyed Marxists like Bernie Sanders... then how is he ever going to stand up for you?" Mr. Trump said.

(Mr. Biden's platform explicitly supports the Second Amendment while also calling for gun control. Mr. Biden wants to reinstate an Obama administration law to address the challenge of discrimination in housing across localities. He does not oppose single-family homes in suburbs.)

### Tough line

Mr. Trump also said Mr. Biden wanted to dismantle America's borders (a false claim) and that the borders were stronger than ever before under the Trump administration. He repeatedly talked about the tough line his administration had taken on China and contrasted it to Mr. Biden's approach.

"That's why China supports Joe Biden and desperately wants him to win," Mr. Trump said. "I can tell you that upon very good information, China would own our country."

Other speakers – some of whom recorded video messages from another location in Washington DC – included Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, Marsha and Karl Mueller whose daughter was killed by the Islamic State, Ann Dorn, whose husband was killed by rioters in June, and Senator Tom Cotton, a possible 2024 candidate.

### ELSEWHERE



Incessant rain, floods claim 23 lives in Karachi

KARACHI  
Pakistan's flooded financial capital of Karachi was plunged into chaos on Friday with power cuts, streets under water and cellphone outages caused by heavy rains. At least 23 people had been killed in downpours the previous day, according to authorities. ■ AFP

### EU urges Turkey to stop Mediterranean drilling

BERLIN  
The European Union on Friday urged Turkey to halt its drilling activities in contested waters in the Mediterranean and ordered EU officials to speed up work aimed at blacklisting some Turkish officials linked to the energy exploration. ■ AP

## Pained to hear about dear friend Abe's ill health: Modi

'Under your wise leadership, India-Japan ties have grown'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Within hours of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's announcement that he would step down for health reasons, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished him a speedy recovery.

"Pained to hear about your ill health, my dear friend [Shinzo Abe]," PM Modi wrote in a tweet. "In recent years, with your wise leadership and personal commitment, the India-Japan partnership has become deeper and stronger than ever before," he added. Mr. Modi also tweeted a photograph of both leaders from his visit to Mount Fuji in 2018, which was the last



PMs Narendra Modi and Shinzo Abe in Mount Fuji in 2018. ■ TWITTER

time the India-Japan annual summit was held. In December 2019, PM Abe had to cancel his visit to Guwahati, where he was due to meet PM Modi for the summit, due to violence over the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and subsequently, his

trip could not be scheduled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During his first tenure as Prime Minister in 2006-2007 and then since 2012, Mr. Abe had made a particular push for better ties with India.

The Quadrilateral, a forum between India, U.S., Japan, and Australia, was originally Mr. Abe's idea, who called for an "arc of prosperity and freedom" across the Indo-Pacific. However, despite several attempts, and a strong friendship between the two leaders, he was unable to convince PM Modi to join the 15-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which India walked out of last year.

## China arrests 12 fleeing HK by boat

Coast Guard intercepts boat 'en route to Taiwan'; pro-democracy activist held

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
HONG KONG

A dozen people fleeing Hong Kong on a speedboat, including an activist arrested under the draconian new national security law, have been captured by China, police in the city said on Friday.

The boat was intercepted by the coastguard, police said, with local media saying it was en route to Taiwan, a self-ruled island that regularly offers sanctuary to people escaping the authoritarian mainland.

Multiple media reports said the 12 included Andy Li, who was arrested earlier this month for alleged collusion with foreign forces – a crime under the new Beijing-imposed law that carries a possible life sentence.

The pro-Beijing Wen Wei Po newspaper, citing un-

named sources, said others onboard included several arrested for their part in the sometimes violent pro-democracy protests that wreaked Hong Kong for much of 2019.

Hong Kong police said the 12, aged between 16 and 33, were being held by mainland authorities.

They gave no details on when they would be handed back to Hong Kong.

### Security law

Beijing imposed its sweeping national security law in June after tiring of the protests. The law is described by China as a "sword" hanging over the heads of its pro-democracy opponents. Authorities promised it would not apply to past transgressions.

But details from more than 20 arrests so far show actions, including political

speeches and online posts made before the law was introduced, have formed a key part of investigations, helping police obtain search warrants, conduct raids and make arrests.

Overnight, certain opinions and expressions in previously free-wheeling Hong Kong became illegal, and activists have spoken of a deep chilling effect that has seen books yanked from libraries and publishers rush to amend their titles.

"They will go back into your history and look for connections," one lawyer involved in national security investigations.

### Seeking asylum

Hong Kong's administration insists the law has not impinged on the rights to freedom of speech and assembly.

Before the new law was imposed in response to the huge protests that erupted in June 2019, Hong Kong police had arrested more than 9,000 people, among whom more than 600 were charged with rioting, which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in jail.

At least 50 former Hong Kong protesters had already applied for asylum in various jurisdictions before the coronavirus pandemic ended most international travel. Hundreds more have relocated to democratic Taiwan.

## Navalny's condition is improving, says hospital

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BERLIN

The Berlin hospital treating leading Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny said on Friday there was "some improvement" in his condition after he suffered a suspected poisoning.

The 44-year-old nevertheless remains in a medically induced coma and on a ventilator, Berlin's renowned Charite hospital said in a statement, describing his condition as serious but not life-threatening.

"There has been some improvement in the symptoms" caused by the poisoning, the statement said.

"However, due to the severity of the patient's poisoning, it remains too early to gauge potential long-term effects."

Navalny, a leading opposition figure, fell ill after boarding a plane in Siberia last week. He was initially treated in a local hospital before being flown to Berlin for treatment last Saturday.

Charite doctors said they believed the anti-corruption campaigner was poisoned with a substance that inhibits the cholinesterase enzyme, a feature of nerve agents.

Navalny's allies say he may have been poisoned.

REUTERS  
LONDON/ROME

British street artist Banksy is funding a boat to rescue refugees in the Mediterranean attempting to reach Europe from Africa.

The boat, named "Louise Michel" after a French feminist anarchist, has been operational since last week. On Thursday, it rescued 89 people, including 14 women and four children from a rubber boat in distress, the group said on its website.

The 89 migrants are still onboard the boat and waiting for a safe port to disembark.

A former French Navy

vessel's cabin features an artwork of a girl holding a heart-shaped life buoy, his familiar stencilled style.

The Bristol-born artist, who keeps his identity a secret, is known for his political or social-commentary graffiti that has popped up in cities around the world. Last year, his painting depicting primates sitting in Britain's Parliament sold for more than \$12 million.

Banksy has highlighted the plight of refugees before.

In 2018, he painted walls in Paris with murals on the theme of migration. In 2015, he sent fixtures from his temporary "Dismaland" theme park in western England to a migrant camp in Calais, France. Later the same year he created a mural of the late Apple founder Steve Jobs at the location.

In a statement, the Pakistani Telecommunication

Rescue mission: The boat, named Louise Michel, was bought with proceeds from the sale of Banksy's artwork. ■ REUTERS

Authority (PTA) said it has asked YouTube to "immediately block vulgar, indecent, immoral, nude and hate speech content for viewing in Pakistan".

&lt;

## MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	39,467	0.90
US Dollar	73.39	0.58
Gold	52,155	-0.67
Brent oil	44.87	0.00

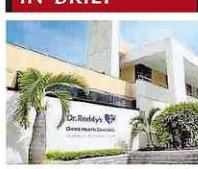
## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	360.05	-9.50
Asian Paints	1958.10	-24.40
Axle Bank	509.20	36.15
Bajaj Auto	3014.15	-28.85
Bajaj Finance	6545.55	14.80
Bharti Airtel	523.45	12.30
Britannia Ind	3793.85	-22.75
Cipla	748.60	-7.60
Coal India	139.05	-1.50
Dr Reddy's Lab	4374.30	-62.70
Eicher Motors	2213.60	-22.75
GAIL (India)	99.10	-10.10
Grasim Ind	701.15	16.10
HCL Tech	706.45	-3.70
HDPC	1883.25	19.15
HDFC Bank	1114.50	2.40
HDFC Life	589.35	-6.70
Hero MotoCorp	3059.30	-82.45
Hindalco	193.80	-1.10
Hind Unilever	2151.95	-19.30
ICICI Bank	409.70	17.50
IndusInd Bank	665.65	59.80
Bharti Infratel	201.50	1.60
Infosys	935.25	-11.80
Indian Oil Corp	87.80	0.60
ITC	195.55	1.30
JSW Steel	280.70	-8.60
Kotak Bank	1467.10	47.10
L&T	981.85	6.25
M&M	631.40	-5.35
Maruti Suzuki	7104.10	6.10
Nestle India Ltd.	16101.25	-12.45
NTPC	101.55	-1.05
ONGC	80.35	0.20
PowerGrid Corp	182.30	-2.90
Reliance Ind	2116.15	5.55
State Bank	224.85	9.20
Shree Cement	21329.55	-198.45
Sun Pharma	555.75	23.50
Tata Motors	142.80	-1.45
Tata Steel	424.20	-2.65
TCS	2238.55	-9.85
Tech Mahindra	752.35	16.75
Titan	1134.10	-3.55
UltraTech Cement	4062.55	15.40
UPL	519.25	22.50
Wipro	272.05	-0.30
Zee Entertainment	213.85	4.30

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.19	73.51
Euro	87.16	87.55
British Pound	97.20	97.63
Japanese Yen (100)	69.09	69.42
Chinese Yuan	10.66	10.71
Swiss Franc	81.03	81.38
Singapore Dollar	53.78	54.03
Canadian Dollar	55.95	56.22
Malaysian Ringgit	17.53	17.62
Australian Dollar	53.52	53.76

## IN BRIEF



**U.S. FDA drops caution on 3 units of Dr. Reddy's**  
HYDERABAD  
Dr. Reddy's Laboratories said a warning letter the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) issued almost five years ago to three of its manufacturing facilities had been closed. "We have now been informed by USFDA that based on its evaluation, we have addressed the violations and deviations... With this, the said warning letter has been closed," said Dr. Reddy's.

**Murugappa set to win ₹700-cr. bid for CG Power**  
NEW DELHI  
CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd. is set to get a new promoter in Murugappa Group after its offer to invest ₹700 crore in the fraud-hit firm found no challenger. Murugappa Group firm Tube Investments of India Ltd. launched Swiss challenge to explore if any other eligible investor was willing to better its offer. No counteroffer was received at the close of the bidding on August 26, two sources said. PTI

# Mistrys flag 'underperformance' at Tata

At Tata Sons AGM, Mistry family highlights debt at steel, auto units and value erosion in airline firms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The bitter tussle between the Tatas and ousted chairman Cyrus Mistry came to fore at the annual general meeting of Tata Sons, as the two sides traded allegations and counter-allegations over the management of \$10 billion salt-to-software group.

While no official statement or record of the proceedings was released on the first-ever online AGM of Tata Sons held on Thursday, sources said representatives of the Mistry family firms, the single biggest shareholder, flagged concerns over the drop in performance and mounting debt of two major group companies — Tata Steel and Tata Motors.

Besides, the representatives of the Mistry family, which holds 18.5% stake in Tata Sons, also questioned



**Word for word:** Chairman N. Chandrasekaran said he was clearing the 'mess created in 2013-16'. ■ SHASHI ASHWINI

recent investment decisions taken at Tata Sons, which, according to them, have gone into funding losses.

However, Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran refuted the allegations of the family, saying he was clearing the "mess [that] was

created in 2013-16", the period during which Mr. Mistry was the chairman. He also asserted that Tata Sons' investments in operating companies were done to correct the capital structure of group firms and prevent the default of any liabilities. At

**'Local transfer pricing cases to go faceless'**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Income-Tax Department will soon start sending out intimation to assesses undergoing scrutiny that such cases would now be handled under faceless assessment, a tax official said on Friday.

CBT Additional Commissioner Jaisree Sharma also said domestic transfer pricing cases, too, will be covered under the faceless assessment mechanism.

Asked whether the previous notices still stand valid, the official said, "Previous notices will not become redundant."

Reassessment cases would also be a part of the faceless scheme.

## India's business climate has been continuously improving'

Govt. to make nation one of the easiest to invest in: Kant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

India's business climate has been continuously improving and the government will work tirelessly to make India one of the easiest countries to invest in and create wealth, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said on Friday.

Mr. Kant also emphasised that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'ease of living' for the citizens of India would be the government's focus.

His comments come a day after the World Bank announced the decision to pause publication of its global 'Doing Business Report' due to irregularities in re-

porting of data based on which countries were ranked with regard to their business climate.

"India's business climate has been continuously improving, not for the World Bank's Index (ease of doing business) sake but to make

India easy and simple," he told PTI. "All of us in the government will continue to work tirelessly to ensure efficient and effective norms for MSMEs, businesses, startups and entrepreneurs and make India one of the easiest countries to invest and create wealth," he said.

India jumped 14 places to the 63rd position in the World Bank's latest ease-of-doing business ranking. India has improved its ranking by 79 positions in five years (2014-19).

NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said the World Bank should be carrying out a serious investigation into the irregularities.

**Toy traders want quality control order suspended**

Meeting Sept. 1 deadline is a challenge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI

The toy industry in India has asked the government to suspend a Quality Control Order (QCO) issued recently, for at least a year, failing which the industry would be forced to shut shop.

"The government has been rightly directing the Indian toy industry to become more competitive, especially in the global arena," the All India Toys & Baby Products Association said in a statement. "However, this cannot happen instantly, and the industry would also need the support of the government to enable ease of doing business in the country," the association added.

The QCO order issued by the government in February 2020 is a move in the right



direction. However, the complexity of Scheme-I of the QCO and the challenges in adhering to its September 1, 2020 timeline "will have a devastating impact," it said.

The government must constructively engage with all the stakeholders of the industry to formulate a comprehensive policy for domestic and overseas manufacturers based on the rules that are already in place since 2017, it said.

**Don't resign, IT union urges Accenture staff**

MINI TEJASWI  
BENGALURU

The Karnataka State IT/ITES Union (KITU) has urged the employees of Accenture who are at the risk of losing their jobs, not to yield to the company's pressure tactics and submit their resignations.

Strongly condemning Accenture's decision on large-scale layoffs, KITU said, as per labour laws, companies that employ more than 100 need to obtain the prior approval of the government to execute layoffs. "Rebranding a layoff by arguing that employees voluntarily resigned when they were, in fact, forced to resign, is also against the law. KITU urges the employees to refuse to resign," said union president V.J.K. Nair.

## VW urges govt. to eschew protectionism

COVID-19 not to derail carmaker's ₹8,000-cr. investment plan, says official



**Tax burden:** More and more tax becomes an issue for the company, says Mr. Knapp. ■ PAUL NORONHA

functional because the supply chains at the moment are global. And if you are putting more and more tax and more problems on it, that raises an issue for us."

However, noting the government had taken decisive steps to stabilise the economy, Mr. Knapp pitched for introduction of a scrappage policy that will be a 'win-win' situation, helping the envi-

ronment, pushing demand and generating revenue for the government.

Mr. Knapp said COVID-19 had not impacted the Group's plans to invest ₹8,000 crore in India under the 'India 2.0' strategy.

Asked if COVID-19 had thrown newer challenges for the company when it was in the middle of reestablishing itself, Mr. Knapp said, "No,

on contrast, as we've been anyhow in a changeover in a lot of our areas... this has actually accelerated our change".

On the increasing competition in the SUV segment, he said, it had been growing tremendously in the past few years and would continue to do so. "There is enough cake to eat. And, believe me, there is so much room in India... so big. If you have the right product at the right price, then it's gonna fly."

Mr. Knapp said his outlook for the sector in India is positive given that in July, the industry inched closer to previous year levels and August trend promises to surpass the last year's level.

He expected to see good demand due to the festive season because, he believed that Indian people, in principle, can cope with all difficult situations very well.

the AGM, which was also attended by Tata group Chairman Emeritus Ratan Tata, the Mistry family representatives raised issues of mounting losses and borrowings at Tata Motors and Tata Steel. They also flagged concerns regarding auditors' remarks on Tata Steel Europe and AirAsia India "for their ability to continue as a going concern".

According to the sources, Mr. Chandrasekaran responded by saying that in the past three years, a lot of effort had gone into restructuring Tata Steel, which witnessed the mix of profitable Indian operations increasing during the period. He also said the revival plans of Tata Steel and Tata Motors had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On losses in airline ventures, Mr. Chandrasekaran

said that the investment commitment was made in the past, and that "Tata Sons does not go back on its commitment", while reiterating that an airline business takes longer to be profitable.

The Mistry family representatives had asked whether a proper analysis was done prior to funding these ventures — AirAsia India and Vistara. They also highlighted AirAsia India's current liabilities exceeding its current assets by ₹1,200 crore and that its net worth had been fully eroded. They asked if Tatas were to buy out the JV partners, whether that would not be merely buying the liabilities of the budget carrier, the sources added.

The Mistry family also appreciated the good performance of Tata Communications and the strategy of Tata Power to deleverage.

## Chinese buyers help lift Indian steel exports

Purchases buck bilateral tensions

REUTERS  
NEW DELHI/BEIJING

India's steel exports more than doubled between April and July to hit their highest level in at least six years, boosted by Chinese buying.

Traders said reduced prices had driven the purchases as Indian sellers sought to get rid of a surplus generated by the impact of COVID-19 on domestic demand and generate much-needed income.

It was unclear whether the sales broke any trade rules, but the China Iron and Steel Association said in a statement it was monitoring them.

Leading Indian steel companies Tata Steel Ltd. and JSW Steel Ltd. were among Indian companies that sold a total of 4.64 million tonnes of finished and semi-finished steel products on the world market between April and July.

That compared with 1.93 million tonnes shipped in the same period a year earlier, government data analysed by Reuters showed.

Vietnam and China bought 1.37 and 1.3 million tonnes of steel respectively. The Chinese purchases are by far the largest since data was first collated in the current form beginning with the fiscal year 2015-2016.

Neither Tata, JSW nor India's ministries of steel and commerce responded to emails seeking comment.

Vietnam has been a regular buyer of Indian steel, but China's emergence

TV PICKS

**Belgian Grand Prix:** Qualifying, SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 6.20 p.m.  
**FA Community Shield:** Sony Ten 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 9 p.m.  
**Tour de France:** Eurosport (SD & HD), 5.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Vinesh Phogat tests positive for COVID-19

India's top woman wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Friday said she has tested positive for COVID-19. "Yes, I have tested positive for COVID-19 when my sample was taken in Sonpat before the dress rehearsal for the [Khel Ratna] awards ceremony," said Vinesh, adding she will skip Saturday's virtual ceremony.

NBA playoffs will resume on Saturday

ORLANDO  
NBA playoff games will resume on Saturday, the league and its players union announced on Friday, the third day of postponements to protest the police shooting of African-American Jacob Blake. The move came after the NBA promised to undertake greater measures to support social justice and racial equality. AP

Bahrain to host two F1 races on separate tracks

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS  
Bahrain will host its two Formula One races on separate tracks later this year. The Bahrain GP on Nov. 29 will be run on the usual 5.4km circuit, while the Dec. 6 Sakhir GP will be a night race on a smaller, 3.5km outer circuit never used before for international racing. PTI



Matsuyama in the lead in BMW Championship

WASHINGTON  
Hideki Matsuyama birdied two of the last three holes, including a spectacular closing 67-foot putt, to seize the lead with a three-under 67 after Thursday's first round of the PGA's BMW Championship. Tiger Woods, who needs a top-six finish to have a chance of making next week's Tour Championship in Atlanta, shot a 73. AP

Shubhankar Sharma shoots modest 72

BELFRY  
Shubhankar Sharma completed his unfinished opening round of the 2020 ISPS Handa UK Championship with an even par 72 here on Friday. South African Justin Walters made the most of the favourable early conditions to post a brilliant bogey-free 64 and take the lead. PTI

## Lakshadweep Islands to have more Kerala barn owls to kill rats

TIKI RAJWI

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Three pairs of barn owls shipped to the Lakshadweep Islands from Kerala in 2019 have apparently proven such skilful slayers of pesky rats which have been ravaging the coconut plantations that the Union Territory is hoping to recruit more of the "winged assassins".

The Lakshadweep Administration had embarked on the 'Pilot project on Biological Control of Rodents (Rats) by Using Barn Owls (*Tyto alba*) in Kavaratti Island' after studies revealed the shocking extent of damage caused by rats to the island's coconut yield and economy.

According to a recent report by the Departments of Agriculture, and Environment and Forest, Lakshadweep, and the Krishi Vigyan Kendra under the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, initial data shows that the owls are working wonders.

So much so that the report recommends expansion of the project by recruiting more barn owls to "guard" the coconut plantations. It also plans to extend the project to other islands in the archipelago.

## COVID-19 affects the Super Kings camp

A player and support staff test positive for the coronavirus in Dubai ahead of the IPL

S. DINAKAR  
CHENNAI

A team known for its resilience and the ability to fight back has been rocked even before the first ball has been bowled in the upcoming IPL.

An India cricketer in the Chennai Super Kings squad and several members of its support staff and social media team have tested positive for COVID-19 in Dubai, where the team is based.

The competition begins in the UAE on September 19.

It is believed the India cricketer to have tested positive is swing bowler Deepak Chahar, who has been a vital part of the CSK attack over the past two years with his control and movement, both at the beginning and the end of the innings.

Contact tracing

Then, a few members of the support staff and the side's social media team also failed the COVID test. To prevent the virus from spreading further, the authorities have already commenced 'contact tracing'.



**Booster dose:** CSK could do with some positive vibes from its passionate fans after news emerged of the pandemic having affected the team. ■ FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

The team underwent a test upon landing on August 21, after which it was tested on Days 1, 3 and 6. Everyone came out clean in the first three tests. But the test on Thursday proved a stumbling block.

Those who failed the test underwent another one on Friday, conducted by the Dubai health authority and the BCCI. The names will be released officially on Saturday.

Additional quarantine

The positive results mean

CSK has to undergo one more week of quarantine and will be able to begin its practice sessions only on September 1.

Only then will be able to enter the IPL's 'bio-bubble', a secure environment where the players will have to wear wrist bands so that their movements can be tracked.

As for the CSK player and support staff, who have tested positive now, they will, according to the tournament's SOP, be isolated from the squad and quarantined for a

couple of weeks after which they will have to clear two COVID tests before becoming eligible to compete.

Since the tournament begins only on September 19, they can still recover and be available for the first game.

Chennai camp

Ahead of its campaign in the UAE, CSK had a five-day training session in Chennai where the side underwent two COVID tests. The players and the support staff came through them without any

## CA curbs use of sweat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
SOUTHAMPTON

Cricket Australia (CA) has restricted its players from using sweat from the head, face and neck to shine the ball during the upcoming limited-overs tour of England in a bid to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Based on medical advice, CA has asked its players not to use sweat from near the mouth or nose, according to Cricket.com.au. This leaves players with the option of using sweat from either the stomach or back.

The team's premier pacer Mitchell Starc feels the regulation will not have much effect in the limited-overs formats.

"It's more of a question for red-ball cricket," Starc said.

Rain affected

Meanwhile, Australia's first intra-squad practice match was abandoned midway because of rain on Friday.

Rain stopped play in the Twenty20 hit-out when a team led by vice-captain Pat Cummins was on 60 for no loss in reply to the 150 made by an opposition side captained by Australia's limited-overs skipper, Aaron Finch. Just 25.5 overs were possible in total.

Finch and fellow opener David Warner put on a stand of 75 in 9.2 overs for the Finch XI.

## Early strike



**Great start:** Pakistan's Imad Wasim, second from right, celebrates after snaring England's Jonny Bairstow off his own bowling in the opening over of the first T20 International on Friday. England was 34/1 after six overs with Tom Banton on 17 and Dawid Malan on 15 ■ GETTY IMAGES

## Sarfaraz — earning his wings as a mountaineer

UTHRA GANESAN  
NEW DELHI

Col. Sarfaraz Singh had just completed the National Integration Trekking Expedition to Gorichen Glacier and was somewhere in the vicinity of 19,000 feet, on his way to the Gorichen Peak with his team, when he was informed about being one of the recipients of this year's Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award.

A member of the elite 6th Battalion of the Parachute Regiment, Sarfaraz is more than just a mountaineer, although his achievements as one are quite distinguished.

He is also a sky-diver, a combat free faller and a certified Scuba Rescue Diver. On the mountains, he has summited the highest peaks in the four continents — Mt.



**Scaling new heights:** Col. Sarfaraz Singh posing with a hockey stick atop Mt. Everest. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ey bronze at the Mexico Olympics, and a fourth generation armyman.

"People tell me I have an Arjuna and now my son has also got this award but honestly, I think he has achieved something far greater than me. This award is much, much bigger and I am proud of his achievements, both in

the armed forces and on the mountains," an emotional Balbir said.

An alumnus of the RIMC, the NDA and the IMA, Sarfaraz excelled at boxing and squash. With service rules barring him from indulging in contact sports professionally, it was his induction into the Para Regiment in 2001 that gave him a taste for adventure sports, beginning with the Army's 2004 expedition to the 7,105 m high Mt. Nun in Ladakh.

"I was deputy to Brig. Sauabh Singh Shekharwati there and he was the first person I called up to inform about this award and dedicate it to him," the 43-year old Sarfaraz said.

And for all the gratitude he has for the award, he cannot wait to join his team on the next expedition.

Pedigree

His lineage is equally accomplished — he is the son of Arjuna Awardee Col. Balbir Singh Kular, who won hock-

ey bronze at the Mexico Olympics, and a fourth generation armyman.

"People tell me I have an Arjuna and now my son has also got this award but honestly, I think he has achieved something far greater than me. This award is much, much bigger and I am proud of his achievements, both in

## ANNA UNIVERSITY

CHENNAI - 600 025

### TENDER NOTICE : Tender Ref No. 46/CPO4/AUTO/MIT/4/E/2020

On-line Tenders in Two Bid System are invited for the following item / equipment for the Professor and Head, Department of Automobile Engineering, MIT Campus, Anna University, Chennai -600 044.

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

1. 46\_1/CPO4/AUTO/MIT/4/E/2020 "H2 Electrolyser" 1 ₹17,00,000/-

2. 46\_2/CPO4/AUTO/MIT/4/E/2020 "GDI Engine with Engine and Dyno Accessories and Open ECU System" 1 ₹55,00,000/-

3. 46\_3/CPO4/AUTO/MIT/4/E/2020 "EVSE Tester (AC & DC)" 1 ₹1,95,00,000/-

4. 46\_4/CPO4/AUTO/MIT/4/E/2020 "Multi body Simulation Software" 10 users ₹14,00,000/-

The tender documents can be downloaded by registering in the website <https://tmtenders.gov.in> from 05.30 pm on 29.08.2020. The filled-in tender documents can be submitted by uploading in the website upto 03.00 p.m. on 15.09.2020 and will be opened at 03.00 pm on 16.09.2020. Other detailed tender conditions, future corrigenda etc., please visit the website (<https://tmtenders.gov.in>).

REGISTRAR

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA e-mail: [sephbhpt@gmail.com](mailto:sephbhpt@gmail.com)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION, BHAWANIPATNA.

Parmanandpur, Railway Station Road, Bhawanipatna, Dist: Kalahandi, PIN-766001

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement Identification No. EEPH-BHPT-04 of 2020-21 Dt. 24.08.2020

### e-Procurement Notice

Name of the work : Replacement of 400mm dia C I raw water Rising main & arrangement for pressure development in different Pipe network in Bhawanipatna Town-Under State Plan-2019-20.

Total No. of works : 01 (One)

Estimated Cost : Approx. Rs.379.80 Lakh

Class of Contractor : Manufacturer Only

Period of Completion : 2 Calendar Months

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of works	Availability of Tender On-line for Bidding	Date & time of opening of Bid
			From	To
2	3	3	4	5
Executive Engineer, P.H.Division, Bhawanipatna	EETHP-BHPT-04 of 2020-21 / Dt.24.08.2020	01 (One)	31.08.2020	15.09.2020
				16.09.2020

For details can be seen from the Government website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.H.Division, Bhawanipatna.

OIPR/13059/11/0001/2021

C-117:

damage.

Despite reservations from team CEO K.S. Viswanathan about having the camp in Chennai, CSK went ahead after skipper M.S. Dhoni insisted on it since the players were rusty following a lengthy lay off.

And before coming to Chennai, the CSK cricketers were tested once. Under the circumstances, these results in Dubai have come as a shock.

Match schedule

Although the tournament will begin on September 19, the schedule of matches is yet to be released. Ideally, the first game would have been between last year's runner-up CSK and winner Mumbai Indians. Now it remains to be seen if this clash would be the lung-opener.

The Chennai side is facing a few problems at the moment. But, with its inspirational skipper M.S. Dhoni around to lift the side, CSK can bounce back.

(With inputs from Amol Karhadkar)

## Max Verstappen sets the pace

Takes second practice ahead of Ricciardo and Hamilton



**Hot wheels:** Max Verstappen speeding around the Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps. ■ GETTY IMAGES

BELGIAN GP

REUTERS  
SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Red Bull's Max Verstappen topped the practice timesheets for the Belgian Grand Prix on Friday, ahead of Renault's Daniel Ricciardo and championship leader Lewis Hamilton.

"It's very close out there," said Hamilton, who completed a Mercedes one-two behind teammate and birthday boy Valtteri Bottas in the morning. "I think the Red Bulls are just a little bit quicker at the moment but even Racing Point is right with us..."

Hamilton, who has won four of this season's six races, is 37 points clear of Verstappen at the top.

## Vision-2024: OCA organises webinars for coaches

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

As part of its Vision-2024 initiative, the Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) organised a series of webinars for grass-root level coaches across the state.

Altogether 95 coaches from various affiliated units participated in the webinars, which were held from August 19 to 26. Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Level-3 coach R. Srikanth, Level-2 coach Prasanta Mohapatra and performance analyst Ganesh Kar conducted the webinars, said an OCA statement on Friday.

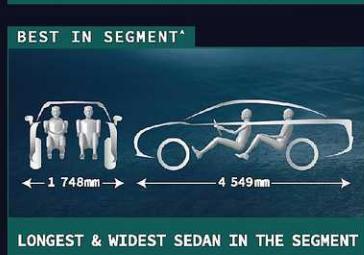
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