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Heavy rain batters parts of Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra
pages 8 & 10



India rejects China's attempt to raise Kashmir issue at UNSC
page 9



India tops 2 million COVID-19 cases, over 67% patients recover
page 10



Masood's knock helps Pakistan make 326 in its first innings
PAGE 14

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NEARBY



Delhi govt. resends plea to open markets, hotels

NEW DELHI
The Delhi government on Thursday resent a proposal to open hotels and weekly markets in the city to L-G Anil Baijal. The government has also requested to open gyms. The fresh plea was sent by Delhi Revenue Minister Kailash Gahlot.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Man arrested two days after raping minor

NEW DELHI
Two days after a 12-year-old girl was raped and stabbed multiple times in west Delhi's Paschim Vihar, the police on Thursday arrested a 33-year-old man in connection with the case. The girl is undergoing treatment at AIIMS. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has announced a relief of ₹10 lakh to the girl's family.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Police summon Jamia students in riots case

NEW DELHI
Delhi Police Special Cell has summoned students of Jamia Millia Islamia, including JCC media coordinator Alameen Kabeer, for questioning in connection with the riots in north-east Delhi. Mr. Kabeer was sent a notice via WhatsApp and asked to join questioning on August 10.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

RBI keeps key policy rates unchanged

It allows banks to restructure corporate, individual loans

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India kept its powder dry in the third review of the monetary policy since the COVID-19 pandemic spread in the country, leaving key policy rates unchanged in the face of rising inflation pressures but asserted that propping up economic recovery has assumed "primacy" in the "worst peace-time health and economic crisis of the last 100 years".

The central bank didn't extend the moratorium on loan repayments offered to borrowers beyond August 31 but allowed banks to restructure loans from large corporates, micro, small and medium enterprises as well as individuals to help stem the rising stress on incomes and balance sheets.

These restructuring efforts may or may not include a moratorium on instalment repayments, the RBI said, leaving the decision to banks, with an eye on averting such loans from slipping into non-performing assets.

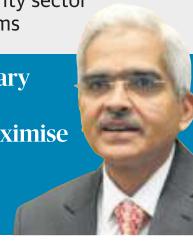
"A large number of firms that otherwise maintain a good track record under existing promoters face the challenge of their debt burden becoming disproportionately relative to their cash flow generation abilities.

Policy prescription

Some key policy decisions of the Reserve Bank of India

- Banks allowed to **restructure** stressed corporate and MSME loans
- Relief to **individual borrowers** at banks' discretion
- **No extension** announced on loan moratorium beyond August 31
- **Borrowing limits against gold relaxed**
- Tenure can be extended upto two years for **personal loans**
- ₹10,000 crore support for NHB, NABARD
- Start-ups included in priority sector lending norms

While space for further monetary policy action is available, it is important to use it judiciously to maximise the beneficial effects for underlying economic activity



This can potentially impact their long-term viability and pose significant financial stability risks if it becomes widespread," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said after a three-day meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee.

With incomes and jobs taking a hit across sectors, the RBI has allowed banks to restructure individual borrowers' loans by December 31, 2020, permitting a maximum extension of two years. Limits for loans against gold were also enhanced.

India's GDP is set to contract in 2020-21, and infla-

tion remains a bugbear, thanks to supply chain disruptions across sectors along with a sticky surge in food prices. Consumer confidence turned more optimistic in July than previous surveys by the RBI, so demand is expected to remain anaemic, Mr. Das said.

"While space for further monetary policy action is available, it is important to use it judiciously to maximise the beneficial effects for underlying economic activity," he added.

RELATED REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 13

8 die in Gujarat COVID-19 hospital fire

Short circuit believed to be the cause

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Eight COVID-19 patients – five men and three women – undergoing treatment at a private hospital here were killed in a fire that broke out at 3 a.m. on Thursday.

The blaze, apparently caused by a short circuit, occurred in the ICU of COVID-19 designated Shrey Hospital in Ahmedabad's Navarangpura area.

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has ordered a probe. Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Sangeeta

Singh and ACS (Urban Development) Mukesh Puri have been asked to submit a report within three days.

Mr. Rupani has also asked them to find out if there was negligence on the part of the management.

Meanwhile, it has emerged that the hospital did not have emergency exits and proper ventilation and fire safety systems.

At least 40 other patients were shifted to the civic body-run SVP hospital.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8



Unbearable loss: Relatives of victims outside Shrey Hospital in Ahmedabad on Thursday. •VIJAY SONEJI

Manoj Sinha appointed J&K LG, Murmu CAG

VIIJITA SINGH
NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI



Former Minister of State for Railways and BJP leader Manoj Sinha was on Thursday appointed the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir after incumbent G.C. Murmu, a former IAS officer, resigned on Wednesday.

Mr. Sinha will be the third Governor/Lieutenant Governor appointed by the BJP government in J&K in three years. Mr. Murmu's appointment was preceded by that of BJP leader Satyapal Malik,

who was sent to Goa as Governor when J&K was reduced to a Union Territory.

The special status of J&K under Article 370 was revoked last year and it was bifurcated into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
POLITICIAN AT THE HELM ▶ PAGE 9

Rajapaksas' party poised for big win in Sri Lanka

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP or People's Party) is poised for a landslide win in the August 5 parliamentary elections, going by results declared until Thursday evening.

At 8.30 p.m., the SLPP had secured over 60% of the votes. Its chances for a two-thirds majority remain unclear, but Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa expressed the confidence that they would touch the figure in Parliament, if not in the polls.

The trends pointed to a big blow to former PM Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) that led the former national unity government. Sajith Premadasa, who broke away from the UNP and contested from a new alliance, stood at a distant second spot.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was quick to call Mr. Rajapaksa as his party's huge mandate became evident. "Thank you PM @narendramodi for your congratulatory phone call... I look forward to working with you closely to further enhance the long-standing cooperation between our two countries," Mr. Rajapaksa said in a tweet.

SETBACK FOR OPPN. ▶ PAGE 12

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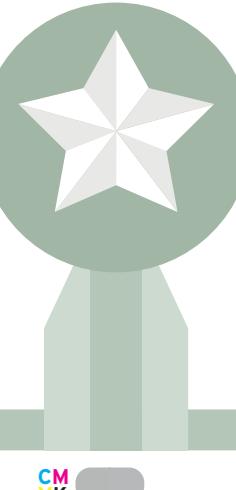
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IN BRIEF

DU launches online education programme

NEW DELHI
Delhi University on Thursday announced the launch of 'OneDU', an online education programme, to facilitate online teaching. Owing to the pandemic, online teaching and learning had become an integral part of education, with DU also adopting such practices in the last semester. The university is setting up an integrated online platform which would be facilitated by the DU Computer Centre.

Four persons held for robbery and murder

NEW DELHI
Four persons, including a minor, have been held in connection with robbery-cum-murder in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar on Tuesday night, the police said on Thursday. One accused is on the run and a manhunt is on to nab him, said Additional DCP (West) Sameer Sharma.

Sisodia hits out at DU colleges over salaries

NEW DELHI
Education Minister Manish Sisodia, hit out at Delhi University colleges funded by the government over their reported inability to pay salaries on account of lack of funds, alleging corruption at these colleges. The budget allocated to these colleges had increased by about 70% in the last five years, he said.

Police summon Jamia students in riots case

Unable to travel, they assure of cooperating on video call

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Special Cell has summoned students of Jamia Millia Islamia University, including Jamia Coordination Committee media coordinator Alameen Kabeer, for questioning in connection with the February communal violence.

Mr. Kabeer, a third-year student, was sent a notice via WhatsApp on Wednesday and has been asked to join questioning on August 10. He was the media coordinator along with Safoora Zargar at the time of Jamia protests in December last year.

JCC being targeted'

"For the last two months, I have been here at my hometown in Kerala. On August 5, a police officer sent a notice for questioning. I have informed them that I won't be able to join physically as I can't travel due to the pandemic, but I'll cooperate fully using other means of communication," he said.

Talking about the reason for being called for ques-



A burnt shop at riot-affected Mustafabad in north-east Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO:SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

tioning in connection with the communal riots, he said that he feels Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC) is being targeted. "I am a student and we are all students who have come to study and we felt it was necessary for us to question authorities for their decision [on Citizenship Amendment Act] and that's all we did... nothing else," he said. In the last three-four days, the police have sent notices to at least five students to appear for questioning.

Another third-year student, who has been served the notice, said that he has no idea about the reason. "I was not a part of any organ-

isation or committee. I only participated in the protest at the university where thousands of students gathered," he said. The student, who didn't wish to be identified, said that he was served the notice on August 4 to appear for questioning on August 5. "I told them that I cannot join because I was at my hometown in Uttar Pradesh. But I said I will fully cooperate if they need to interrogate on video call or by any other means," he said.

The FIR 59/2020 has been registered on charges of murder, attempt to murder, conspiracy, rioting and sections of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Man held for 'robbing' client for failing to clear 'dues'

Victim knew the accused but he hid facts from the police in his complaint

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI
A 30-year-old man and his accomplice were arrested for allegedly robbing his client for failing to clear his "previous dues" after having sex with him, the police said on Thursday.

The matter came to light after an incident of robbery was reported on July 30 from

south-east Delhi's Sarita Vihar. However, later during probe, the police found that one of the accused was known to the complainant and he worked as a sex worker for him, they said.

While reporting the incident of robbery, the complainant hid the facts from the police in his complaint.

The accused worked for

the complainant as a sex worker but when he failed to pay him for his service as per the "deal", he along with his accomplice decided to take revenge upon the complainant by "robbing" him of his mobile, gold chain and cash, the police said.

The complainant works as a sales head of a private firm.

Based on his complaint,

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-East) R.P. Meena said "We have registered a case and later with the help of CCTV footage and call tracing, we located them to Sagarpur and arrested them on Wednesday."

Two robbed mobile phones, gold chain and one stolen scooter were recovered from them, he said.

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ADMISSION NOTICE

Academic Session, 2020-21

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused namely Jasbir Singh, S/o Unknown, R/o H.No. B-5, Gali No. 6, South Anarkali, Krishna Nagar, Geeta Colony, Delhi, and Bhupinder, S/o Unknown, R/o H.No. B-5, Gali No. 6, South Anarkali, Krishna Nagar, Geeta Colony, Delhi, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case of FIR No. 270/16, U/s 406/34 IPC, at P.S. Karol Bagh, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the accused Jasbir and Bhupinder cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Jasbir and Bhupinder have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Jasbir and Bhupinder, FIR No. 270/16, U/s 406/34 IPC, at P.S. Karol Bagh, Delhi are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.09.2020.

By Order
Ms. Gita,
Metropolitan Magistrate-01, Central District
Room No. 180, 1st Floor,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

Sd/
Prof. B.S. Chauhan
Principal (Officiating)

GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
DEPARTMENT OF HYDRO POWER DEVELOPMENT
JAL VIDYUT BHAWAN, ITANAGAR

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Under Small Hydro Power Policy--2007, the Department of Hydro Power Development, Government of Arunachal Pradesh is hereby inviting BID Proposals from interested power developers for the development of Halaipani HEP(4x4MW), a brown project in Build, Own, Operate & Transfer(BOOT) basis in Anjaw District of Arunachal Pradesh for 50 years.

The interested power developer shall mean sole proprietorship/ company/ NGO/ Cooperative Society/ JV Company/ Consortium of Companies either in Public or Private sector and either Indigenous or non-indigenous dealing with development of Hydro Power Project on Retrofit basis. Joint Venture/ Consortium eligible to participate in the tenders, should have following eligibility criteria:-

- Either or any of the partner of Joint Venture/Consortium should be technically qualified
- Each partner of Joint Venture/Consortium shall fulfill the financial qualifying criteria up to its share in JV/Consortium.
- The share of any partner of the Joint Venture/Consortium shall not be less than 30%
- The bidder should have Rs.20 crore minimum annual average turnover of last 3 Financial Years.
- The bidder should have minimum net worth of Rs 20 crore in his books/bank account which shall be committed for the development of the project once awarded. This details of sources of financing for the project should be clearly indicated in FIN-3 of RFP.
- The Project is partially completed.
- Interested developers may purchase bid document by paying Rs 10000 in Demand Draft/cash, from the office of the Chief Engineer (Monitoring) on any working day before 26th August, 2020.
- The last date of submission of bid in sealed cover is 28th August, 2020 at 1300 hrs, which will be opened at 1500 hrs of same day.
- Price bid i.e FIN-4 should be sealed in separate envelope and that shall only be opened in case the bidder qualifies the terms & conditions stipulated in the bid document.
- Interested bidders are advised to visit the site, at their cost, for assessment before submitting the bid.

DIPR/ARN/10850-53/20

Commissioner (Power)

Man arrested two days after raping minor

Kejriwal announces ₹10 lakh to family; DCW hits out at police over delay in arrest

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Two days after a 12-year-old girl was raped and stabbed multiple times in west Delhi's Paschim Vihar, the police on Thursday arrested a 33-year-old man in connection with the case.

The girl is said to be undergoing treatment at AIIMS. Joint CP (Western Range) Shalini Singh said over 20 police teams of Outer district scanned more than 100 CCTVs in the area. In one of the footages, a suspect was seen. Further inquiry was done and the suspect was held for questioning.

"During interrogation, the suspect confessed to the crime. The accused, Krishan, is a resident of Mangolpuri. He was previously involved in a murder attempt to murder and burglary. The case is under investigation," said Ms. Singh.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the family of the 12-year-

old. After meeting the victim's family, Mr. Kejriwal had said: "According to doctors, she was admitted to remain under observation for the next 24-48 hours and is still very critical after surgery." He had also said that he had spoken to the Police Commissioner.

'Strictest punishment'
"The best lawyers will be put in court so that the strictest punishment is meted out to the accused. We are praying that she recovers soon," the Chief Minister said.

Both Mr. Kejriwal and Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) Chief Swati Maliwal visited the hospital to meet the victim's fa-

minors. Following the incident, the police had registered a case under POCSO at Paschim Vihar police station.

An officer had said apart from the local police, a team of Crime Branch and Special Cell were also working in the case. They were making the list of locals who have left the area on the day crime took place. A separate team was working on technical surveillance to get a clue in the case.

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Robbery motive

On Tuesday, a 12-year-old girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by a man, who also hit her face and head with a sharp object, at her home in west Delhi.

The accused had entered the house for robbery but on seeing the minor alone, he sexually assaulted her.

She had injuries all over her body. The neighbours had said that on seeing the girl lying in a pool of blood, they had immediately informed the police and her parents.

Don't make appointments on 2 posts, says HC

Professors' petition seeks stay on advertisement issued by JNU in August 2019

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has ordered the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) not to make any appointments on two posts – professor and associate professor – which has been challenged by two candidates.

A Bench of Justice Siddharth Mridul and Justice Talwari Singh passed the direction on a petition filed by two assistant professors who are laying their claim

to the two posts. The two assistant professors in their petition has sought stay on the advertisement issued by JNU in August last year for the two posts contending that the categories for the two posts have been altered by two candidates.

Reserved posts
Senior advocate Akhil Sibal, appearing on behalf of petitioners, stated that although in the earlier advertisement issued by the

JNU in 2017, certain posts were reserved. Mr. Sibal said the two posts are now shown in the altered categories namely Scheduled Tribes (ST) and unreserved categories in the August 2019 advertisement.

One of the posts, earlier reserved for SC candidate, has now been converted into an ST post. And the other post, which was reserved for the ST candidate, has now been dereserved and converted

to an unreserved post.

According to the petitioners, they are eligible for consideration against these reserved posts, respectively, according to the roster points and this action of the varsity in altering the category "has adversely affected their consideration".

Advocate Monica Arora, appearing for JNU, submitted that no appointments are being made in the next Executive Council meeting.

DU to hold first phase of final exams starting August 10

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi University announced that it would be holding the first phase of its final semester open-book examination starting August 10.

A senior officer said in order to check the efficiency and reaction time of their staff, the police flashed a message regarding a group of terrorist entering the city in a car. A brief description of the car was also passed on to all units of the police.

Soon SWAT commandos, PCR vans and staff of local police stations rushed to markets and put up barricades on main roads to intercept the car. The operation is a city-wide drill exercise that is conducted to check the alertness of security personnel.

"We are getting feedback of the operation. After evaluating all aspects, if there were any shortcomings, then it will be rectified. The city is already on high alert after in-

Police conduct operation before Independence Day

Drill done to check alertness of force

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Ahead of Independence Day, the police here conducted 'Operation Black Rose' to check alertness and preparedness of their staff on Thursday.

A senior officer said in order to check the efficiency and reaction time of their staff, the police flashed a message regarding a group of terrorist entering the city in a car. A brief description of the car was also passed on to all units of the police.

The suspected car was located and the occupants were apprehended.

Meeting with DCPs

A senior officer confirmed that recently a meeting was held with district DCPs and they were instructed to intensify patrolling and random checking at busy places.

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Public Notice for appointment, on deputation, in SCERT/DIETs

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Applications are invited from employees holding analogous posts in Govt. of NCT of Delhi/Autonomous Bodies of Govt. of NCT of Delhi/ Central Govt. Department/ Railways/ Defence Services or Autonomous Bodies of Central Govt., for the post of Asst. Accounts Officer in Level 8 of Pay Matrix as per CCS (RP) Rules, 2016, against 09 (Nine) sanctioned vacant posts in SCERT/DIETs.

The pay of the selected candidate will be regulated under the provisions contained in the DoPT O. M. No. 6/8/2009-Estt. (Pay-II) dated 17.06.2010. The maximum age limit for appointment by deputation shall be not exceeding 56 years as on the closing date of receipt of applications. The period of deputation shall ordinarily not exceed 5 years, or as amended by the Govt. from time to time.

For details of eligibility criteria, application form and other terms and conditions, log in to <http://www.scertdelhi.nic.in>. The last date for submission of duly completed application form is 31.08.2020.

DIRECTOR, SCERT

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Timings

DELHI

SATURDAY, AUG. 8
RISE 05:47 SET 19:08
RISE 21:38 SET 08:52
SUNDAY, AUG. 9
RISE 05:47 SET 19:07
RISE 22:08 SET 09:45
SUNDAY, AUG. 9
RISE 05:48 SET 19:06
RISE 22:37 SET 10:36

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	38	27
Safdarjung	38	27
Palam	36	28

Delhi Pali Today
36°C Warm and humid day with partly cloudy sky and moderate easterlies. Short spell light rain may occur.

Delhi Pali Tomorrow
36°C Very warm day with moderate wind. Light rain and thunderstorm likely at some places.

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IN BRIEF**HC refuses to entertain plea on audit of hospitals**

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Thursday declined to entertain a petition seeking audit of private hospitals being run by charitable trusts on concessional land given by the government, alleging that they were charging COVID-19 patients heavily. The court said the petition did not have any necessary particulars as to how the trusts and private hospitals were conniving to siphon off money or how much money has been siphoned off. It gave the petitioner liberty to move the court with a fresh plea which would have all the necessary details.

Delhi govt. resends proposal to open hotels and weekly markets

Despite L-G's earlier no, govt. thinks reopening them key to economic recovery

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Thursday resent a proposal to open hotels and weekly markets in the city to the Lieutenant Governor, according to the authorities. The government has also requested to open gyms in the city.

The fresh proposal was sent by Revenue Minister Kailash Gahlot.

On July 31, L-G Anil Baijal had rejected the Delhi government's proposal to allow hotels and weekly markets to open.

According to the Unlock 3 guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, gyms, and yoga institutes were also allowed



Vendors have resumed operation at Janpath Market in New Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

to open from August 5, but no order regarding it has been issued by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) headed by the L-G.

The situation in Delhi is improving as the number of

active cases is decreasing every day. The Delhi government has the right to decide the unlock guidelines as per the Central government's norms, an official statement said.

"Since the time, the L-G

rejected our recommendation [to open up these sectors last week], there has been a huge public uproar. The entire Delhi now wants to work towards its economic recovery. Delhi should not be stopped. The Capital showed the way to the country to tackle COVID-19. It will now show the way for economic recovery also," the Minister said in the proposal.

"I would urge that considering the improved COVID-19 situation and the sentiments of Delhites, we should open up these sectors. Also, it has been a week now since our recommendation was rejected by the L-G. We urge the L-G to reconsider his decision," he added.

With 1,299 fresh cases, Capital's COVID-19 tally reaches 1,41,531

City now has 10,348 active cases and 466 containment zones

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

As many as 1,299 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 1,41,531, stated a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Thursday.

With 15 more deaths being reported, the death toll has climbed to 4,059.

Recovery count

Of the total cases, 1,27,124 people have recovered and there are 10,348 active cases at present. The number of active cases was 27,007 on July 1. Currently, there are 466 containment zones.

As per Thursday's bulletin, testing has also picked up pace. A total of 20,436

Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
1,41,531	4,059
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths
1,299	15

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

Of the total 20,436 tests done in the past 24 hours, 71.9% of the tests were rapid antigen tests, which have shown a low positivity compared to RT-PCR tests.

COVID-19

The number of people admitted to COVID-19 hospitals has been decreasing. On July 1, a total of 5,892 beds in COVID-19 hospitals were occupied and it has decreased to 3,024 on Thursday.

Home isolation

During the same period, the number of COVID-19-positive people in home isolation has also decreased from 16,703 to 5,244.

Parties will have to file affidavit of assets in matrimonial dispute, says High Court

Consider incorporating modified format in statutes, Centre told

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

Taking cue from international best practices, the Delhi High Court on Thursday ordered a major overhaul of the manner in which parties disclose their "true assets, income and expenditure" for determining quantum of maintenance in a matrimonial dispute.

The High Court framed a new affidavit format that is much more comprehensive than before to help the family courts, adjudicating matrimonial litigations, help gauge the correct capacity of the spouse to pay maintenance

or permanent alimony.

"Maintenance is not merely a legal right. It is part and parcel of basic human right," Justice J.R. Midha remarked, while ruling that from now on parties will have to mandatorily file their affidavit of assets, income and expenditure in the prescribed form.

In terms of assets, the new format mandates a salaried person to disclose the particulars of his employment, including salary, Dearness Allowances, commissions, incentives, bonus, perks, perquisites, other benefits, Income Tax, etc. A self-employed person is required to

disclose the nature of business/profession, share in the business, net worth of the business, number of employees, annual turnover/gross receipts, gross profit, Income Tax, net income and regular monthly withdrawal/drawings from the business.

With respect to the assets, the parties are required to disclose the particulars of the immovable properties, financial assets and movable assets.

The court asked the Centre to consider incorporating the modified format in the statutes, as in the developed countries.

Govt. told to act against illegal lab aggregators

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

The High Court on Thursday ordered the Delhi government to act against online health service aggregators, who are operating illegally and collecting samples for COVID-19 tests.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan gave the direction on a petition seeking a ban on collection and testing of samples for diagnosis by illegal and unregistered online health service aggregators.

Rohit Jain, in his petition filed through advocate Shashank Deo Sudhi, claimed that many of the on-

line health service aggregators are misrepresenting themselves as Medical Diagnostic Laboratories.

Mr. Sudhi alleged that these illegal aggregators are not following the rules or regulations for the process of collecting diagnostic samples and are acting contrary to the guidelines issued by the ICMR and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The petition stated that a "large number of unauthorised pathological labs is being run by underqualified technicians who are providing totally unscientific diagnostic test reports" rendering people vulnerable to the loss of life.

Returning to normal life after recovering from COVID-19

As per ICMR guidelines, after one week from the date of sample collection or detection of COVID-19 symptoms, if a patient does not have fever or other symptoms for another three days, then no further test will be required and the doctor will discharge him/her with a certificate from the hospital or safe home. The patient must stay under home quarantine for an additional 7 days before returning to normal life.

Call 1800 313 444 222 for any information or clarification.

Department of Health and Family Welfare,
Government of West Bengal

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NAVNEET MANN

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APURV CHAUHAN

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KANCHAN

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Arvind Bhatt (Advocate)
51 Sunder Nagar, New Delhi-110003
Tel : 9810354101
E-mail:advocate.arvindbhatt@gmail.com

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The Executive Engineer, Karchham Division, HP.PWD; Bhaba Nagar Distt Kinnar H.P on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPWD Department.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Eligible class of contractor	Time Allowed
1.	C/O Chhitkul Dumti road km 0/0 to 20/750 (Alongwith Indo-China Border) (Sh-P/L dense Bitumen Macadam and Bituminous concrete in km 0/0 to 20/750	Rs. 7,96,64,623/-	Rs. 5,00,000/-	Rs. 5,000/-	"A"	6 Month

2. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <https://htenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPWD may obtain the same from the website: <https://htenders.gov.in>. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender

3. Key Dates:

1. Date of Online Publication	24.08.2020 10:00 HRS
2. Document Download Start and End Date	24.08.2020 10:30 HRS upto 05.09.2020 17:00 HRS
3. Bid Submission Start and End Date	24.08.2020 10:30 HRS upto 05.09.2020 17:00 HRS
4. Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	07.09.2020 upto 10:30 HRS
5. Date of Technical Bid opening, Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid.	07.09.2020 11:00 HRS

4. TENDER DETAILS:
The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover:
i) Cover 1: shall contain scanned copies of all "Technical Documents/ Eligibility Information".
ii) Cover2: shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid", where contractor will quote his offer for each item.

5. SUBMISSION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS: The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and other Technical Documents in O/D Executive Engineer, Karchham Division HP.PWD, Bhabanagar as specified in Key dates Sr. No. 4 on Tender Opening Date, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.

6. BID OPENING DETAILS: The bids shall be opened on 07.09.2020 at 11:00 HRS in the office of Executive Engineer, Karchham Division HP.PWD, Bhabanagar H.P. by the authorised officer. The tenders are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

7. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 90/120 days after the deadline date for bid submission.

8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Karchham Division,
HP.PWD; Bhaba Nagar,
Distt. Kinnar (H.P.)
on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

HP PWD TENDER

Sealed item rate tenders are hereby inviting on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh by the Executive Engineer, Chopal Division HPPWD Chopal for the following works from the approved and eligible contractors enlisted in H.P.P.W.D., so as to reach in the office on or before 28.08.2020 at 11:00 a.m. and will be opened on the same day at 11:30 a.m. in the presence of the intending contractors/firms or their authorized representatives who wish to be present. Application for tender form should be submitted to his office (Chopal Division HPPWD Chopal) against cash payment (Nonrefundable) on any working day during the office hours up to 4:00 pm dated 27.08.2020 and tender documents can be had from his office on same day 5:00 pm. No tender form documents will be issued after 5:00 PM. On scheduled date. If the office happens to be closed on the scheduled date the tender form documents will be sold /opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

The earnest money in the shape of FDR, NSC purchase from any nationalized Bank or Post Office shall be deposited duly pledged in favors of the Executive Engineer, Chopal Division HPPWD Chopal, must accompany with application form. Conditional tender and the application received without earnest money will summarily be rejected. The offer of the tenders shall be opened for 90 days. The XEN reserve the right to reject/accept the tenders without assigning any reason.

The copy of the latest renewal/enlistment, PAN Number and GST/CST/TIN number must also accompany the application for the tender documents.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of form	Time
1.	C/o Nerwa to Harijan Basti Katahan road km. 0/0 to 6/0 (SH: C/o PCC R/wall at R.D. 1/225 to 1/240 and 1/295 to 1/310 and widening of road km. 1/915 to 2/265).	498325/-	10000/-	350/-	One month.
2.	C/o balance work on link road Aar to Leelidhar km. 0/0 to 1/0 (SH: Cutting in earth work in between km. 0/0 to 1/0) under MMGSY.	480635/-	10000/-	350/-	One month.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Karchham Division,
HP.PWD; Bhaba Nagar,
Distt. Kinnar (H.P.)
on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

HP / 2078/20-21 HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

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OM SRI SAI RAM
IN LOVING MEMORY

DR. R. SWAMINATHAN (69)
ARAYAPURAM
Retd. Deputy Director, Thanjavur.
Passed away on 04.08.2020 in Chennai. Dasaswami on 13.08.2020.
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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PURCHASE-II

SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA, SRINAGAR

Tel: 0194-241013/2400064 (Ext: 2170) Fax: 2403493 email: ammpurchase@skins.ac.in

Sub: Extension in NIT.

Ref: e-NIT No. SIMS 15 (P-II) of 2020 dated 03/07/2020

The schedule dates for downloading & submission of tenders invited vide above referred e-NIT for Supply of HSD (High Speed Diesel) at SKIMS, Soura, Srinagar on rate contract basis is hereby extended as per following:

1. Last date & Time for Submission of Tenders:- 14.08.2020 (02.30 PM)

2. Date & time for opening of technical bids:- 18.08.2020 (04.00 PM)

Other terms & conditions of the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: SIMS 325 14/2020-1420-30-5109-1511

Dated: 03/08/2020

Sd/-

SIMS - 5111/Dt: 05.8.2020

Asst. Materials Management Officer

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

E-NIT No. Fresh-84/EEP/RNB/2020-21/2965-75

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on [Item rate basis](#) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with UT of J&K Government, CPWD, Railways and other state/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No.

Name of Work

Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)

Cost of T/Doc. (Rs.)

Earnest Money (Rs.)

Time of Completion In days

Time & Date of Opening of Bid

Class of Contractor

Major Head of Account

1

Survey, Design, Supply of Traffic Hardware, Installation Commissioning, operation and maintenance of Traffic Signalling System (in stand alone Mode) in Pulwama Town.

20.00 800/- 40,000/- 60 days 05/08/2020 OTHERS 14th FCThe Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktdlers.gov.in as per Schedule of dates given below:-

1. Date of Issue of tender Notice 05/08/2020

2. Period of downloading of bidding documents 06/08/2020 10:00 AM to 13/08/2020 04:00 PM

3. Bid submission Start date 06/08/2020 10:00 AM

4. Bid submission End date 13/08/2020 04:00 PM

5. Date and time of opening of Bids (online) 14/08/2020 11:00 AM

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Valid Treasury Receipt/e-Challan under Major Head 0059 Revenue in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money/Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama (tender receiving authority).

2. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on website www.jktdlers.gov.in and conveyed to the Bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama (tender receiving authority).All other terms and conditions shall be available in website www.jktdlers.gov.in

Head Draftsman Technical Officer Executive Engineer, R&B Division Pulwama

DIP No:DIPK-3779/20

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PURCHASE-II

SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA, SRINAGAR

Tel: 0194-241013/2400064 (Ext: 2170) Fax: 2403493 email: ammpurchase@skins.ac.in

Sub: Extension in NIT.

Ref: e-NIT No. SIMS 15 (P-II) of 2020 dated 03/07/2020

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2. Date & time for opening of technical bids:- 18.08.2020 (04.00 PM)

Other terms & conditions of the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: SIMS 325 14/2020-1420-30-5109-1511

Dated: 03/08/2020

Sd/-

SIMS - 5111/Dt: 05.8.2020

Asst. Materials Management Officer

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

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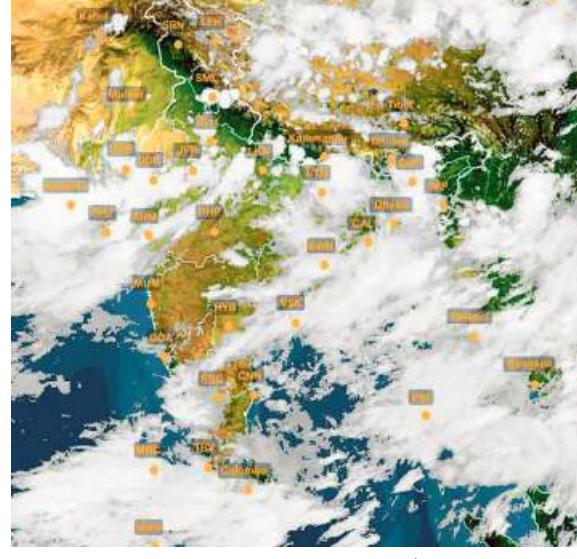
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1. Last date & Time for Submission of Tenders:- 14.08.2020 (02.30 PM)

2. Date & time for opening of technical bids:- 18.08.2020 (0

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.30 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, coastal Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	... 35.5	27.6	25.4	Kozhikode	... 13...	29.8...	25.4
Ahmedabad	2... 32.1	25.7	25.1	Kurnool	2.8...	33.6...	25.1
Aizawl	... 27.1	20.9	—	Lucknow	0.4...	33.6...	27.2
Allahabad	15.8	32.6	26.8	Madurai	—	37.6...	27.6
Bangalore	2.9	27.8	20.8	Mangaluru	28.2...	30.3...	24.2
Bhopal	4.1	30.8	24.9	Mumbai	331.8...	27.6...	23.0
Bhubaneswar	7.4	29.7	25.0	Mysuru	18...	27.0...	19.8
Chandigarh	2.2	38.2	28.6	New Delhi	13...	37.5...	27.2
Chennai	0.1	35.2	27.6	Patna	16.2...	33.8...	25.7
Coimbatore	1.4	31.0	23.6	Pond Blair	0.7...	29.9...	26.1
Dehradoon	—	35.0	26.6	Puducherry	—	35.2...	27.0
Gangtok	59.2	23.3	18.3	Pune	11.8...	26.6...	21.3
Goa	15.9	29.7	25.8	Raipur	67...	30.0...	24.8
Guwahati	—	36.0	28.1	Ranchi	18...	26.4...	23.0
Hubballi	—	24.0	22.0	Shillong	—	28.9...	20.2
Hyderabad	5.6	32.1	23.5	Shimla	36.7...	29.0...	19.0
Imphal	—	30.0	23.5	Srinagar	—	33.3...	19.2
Jaipur	0.2	33.2	27.1	Thiruvananthapuram	15.4...	30.5...	24.4
Kochi	6	30.0	25.8	Tiruchi	—	35.8...	26.7
Kohima	—	30.2	19.6	Vijayawada	—	35.5...	25.5
Kolkata	17.8	29.8	25.9	Visakhapatnam	0.3...	31.8...	28.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀ CODE
Ahmedabad	27	.53	42	... 42	— 83
Bangalore	.9	1.31	40	... 47	— 16
Chennai	3	18	61	... 55	— 16
Delhi	20	34	67	... 46	— 91
Hyderabad	.7	45	15	... 19	— 16
Kolkata	10	13	13	... 27	— 45
Lucknow	.3	20	49	... 62	— 76
Mumbai	59	15	3	... 18	— 25
Pune	13	5	44	... 26	— 12
Visakhapatnam	11	28	26	... 34	— 64

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

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

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

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

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Hisar, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 204 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 16

Heading home: Patients being discharged from a hospital after they recovered from COVID-19, in Karad on Thursday. ■ PTI

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE

Maharashtra reported its highest single-day case jump on Thursday, with 11,514 new COVID-19 cases, taking its total cases to 4,79,779. As many as 316 more deaths saw the State's death toll rise to 16,792.

This is the second time that the State has recorded more than 11,000 cases in a single day, with the previous jump of 11,147 cases being reported on July 30.

However, the surge was offset by a high number of recoveries, with 10,854 patients being discharged, taking the cumulative recoveries till date to 3,16,375.

State Health Department officials said a record 74,000 samples had been tested in the last 24 hours while the number of active cases currently stood at 1,46,305.

"Till date, of a total 24,87,990 laboratory samples, 4,79,779 (19.28%) have been tested positive with nearly 74,000 samples across the State being tested in the

last 24 hours. The State's recovery rate is 65.94%," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said, adding that the State's case fatality rate stood at 3.50%. As per figures, Pune district reported more than 3,000 new cases and 62 deaths, taking its total case tally to 1,04,353 and its death toll to 2,496. The district administration, however, said the number of active cases was a little over 27,000.

910 cases in Mumbai

In contrast, Mumbai reported just 910 new cases as its total cases reached 1,20,150, of whom only 20,546 are active. With 57 more deaths, the city's fatality toll has risen to 6,648. In the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Thane district reported 38 fatalities, taking its death toll to 1,152. The district recorded 475 new cases as its total cases crossed 36,500. After Pune district, Solapur in Pune division reported 15 deaths and 272 new cases. The district's total case tally has reached

Ahmednagar reported 533 new cases, as the district's total cases rose to 7,440, of whom 3,260 are active. Dr. Awate said 9,76,332 people across the State were in home quarantine and 37,768 were in institutional quarantine.

Court rejects Indranî's bail plea

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court on Wednesday rejected the bail plea of Indranî Mukerjea, the prime accused in the Sheena Bora murder case.

Ms. Mukerjea was arrested in August 2015, and has been lodged in the Byculla jail from October the same year. She was charged with killing her daughter Sheena on April 24, 2012.

Special CBI court Judge J.C. Jagdale, while rejecting her bail plea, said, "Some important case witnesses like Rahul Mukerjea (son of co-accused Peter Mukerjea), Vidhi (daughter of Ms. Mukerjea), and co-accused Sanjeev Khanna (her ex-husband) are yet to be examined."

'Influential person'

The court said there was no doubt that the accused (Ms. Mukerjea) was an influential and wealthy person. "Therefore, the possibility of influencing prosecution witnesses cannot be ruled out."



Renowned author Sadia Dehlvi passed away on Thursday ■

zine. Dehlvi, who edited *Bano*, an Urdu journal of the group, would fondly talk about the evenings in the company of the likes of Ismat Chughtai, Ali Sardar Jafri, Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor and Nargis.

The talk would eventually shift to their food habits as Dehlvi was a deft cook, someone who would not like to keep her recipes a secret. She generously shared them in her book *Dilli Ka Dastarkhan and Jasmine & Djinn: Memories and Recipes of My Delhi*, in which she talked about the evolution and inclusive nature of the Delhi food, which she described as a fusion of Persian and Indian

styles and how it gained in sophistication when the Turkish chefs came in contact with the Kayastha cooks of Delhi. In the same breath, the raconteur in her would talk of jinns of different faiths who inhabited the Shama Koti and how they had a sweet tooth!

She successfully dabbled in television as well, with *Amma and Family for Home TV* that opened a window to an urban Muslim family, with the irrepressible Zohra Segal playing the adventurous Amma. Part autobiographical, it broke some of the stereotypes that popular culture associates Muslims with.

She shared a strong bond

with Khushwant Singh and a common love for Delhi and Urdu poetry. Singh dedicated his book *Not A Nice Man To Know* to Dehlvi and she produced a tele-series in which he interviewed successful women from different fields.

When Shama House was passed on to the Bahujan Samaj Party, she saw it as a symbol of changing Indian polity in which Muslims were increasingly moving away from the centrestage because of various reasons. Often found at the Nizamuddin Dargah, the activist in her would question the filth around Muslim localities and places of worship and how they could not easily find rented accommodation in a city that once embraced everybody.

She tirelessly worked for preserving the cultural heritage of the city that was increasingly becoming, as she would say, too boisterous and a show-off. Like a true Sufi, Dehlvi carried many a pain in her heart but, like the title of one of her series, she always believed in *Zindagi Kitni Khoobsurat Hai*.

against the police personnel was ordered and show-cause notices have been issued. Let details of the enquiry, including the action taken against the police personnel as well as enquiry report, be also brought on the record," the court ordered.

The Bench ordered Maharashtra to file an affidavit in three weeks. The current affidavit by the State said the case was transferred to the State CID unit considering the need for fairness, transparency in investigation and the large number of accused involved.

"Let the State bring the chargesheets on record. It has further been stated that a departmental enquiry



The Supreme Court

against six police officers for negligence in connection

against the police personnel was ordered and show-cause notices have been issued. Let details of the enquiry, including the action taken against the police personnel as well as enquiry report, be also brought on the record," the court ordered.

The Bench ordered Maharashtra to file an affidavit in three weeks. The current affidavit by the State said the case was transferred to the State CID unit considering the need for fairness, transparency in investigation and the large number of accused involved.

"Let the State bring the chargesheets on record. It has further been stated that a departmental enquiry

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Groundbreaking

As the Ram temple gets under way, India must put the past of a communal struggle behind

The *bhoomi pujan* or the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of a grand temple for Lord Sri Ram in Ayodhya on Wednesday marks an end and a beginning. What it ends and what it begins can both be interpreted in different ways; how India collectively makes meaning out of it will define the future of the country hereon. One view is that the rising Ram temple signifies the end of perceived humiliation of the Hindus and the beginning of a new phase of their political ascendancy; the other is that it denotes the end of strife that shackled India's potential for decades and heralds a new dawn of fraternity among religious communities. The end and the beginning, therefore, are not just open to interpretation, they hold the possibilities of change. For those who yearned for a temple at the site which they believe is the exact spot of Sri Ram's birth, the journey so far has been tumultuous and violent. A Muslim place of worship that stood there for 464 years was demolished in 1992 to make way for the temple – a serious crime according to the Supreme Court order last year that handed over the site to the Hindus. The proponents of the temple must consider this an occasion to seek conciliation over conquest, dialogue over diatribe, and tranquility over triumphalism.

The ceremony itself manifested multiple possibilities for the country's future. In symbolism and rhetoric, the line of separation between state and religion was ominously crossed, notably by the role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in it. In his speech, however, he cited Lord Ram's adherence to justice, fairness and empathy for the vulnerable. He emphasised the importance of these values for the present. But while outlining a road map for an inclusive future, his interpretation of the past echoed familiar tropes of sectarian politics. Relitigating historical wrongs has rarely been the foundation for a harmonious and prosperous future. In India's case, many of them are an outcome of its unpleasant encounter with British colonialism. Recent path-breaking studies in genetics have unearthed India's past of being a melting pot of populations and cultures over millennia. India must put the acrimonious political mobilisations over religious issues behind it, and look forward to modern, secular governance. The construction of the temple is the logical result of the Supreme Court judgment; it should mark the end of an older, bitter phase of India, and the beginning of a new, harmonious phase.

Cartographic challenge

Pakistan's new map is intended to provoke India, and internationalise the border disputes

The Ministry of External Affairs has termed Pakistan's announcement of a new political map, which asserts its claims on Jammu and Kashmir, Siachen and Sir Creek, and lays a new claim to Junagadh, as an exercise in "political absurdity", and accused Pakistan of attempting a form of "territorial aggrandisement supported by cross-border terrorism". Pakistan's decision to issue the map, a tit-for-tat manoeuvre in return for India's decision to reorganise Jammu and Kashmir a year ago, appears to reset several agreements with India that have been concretised over the past 70 years. The map the Imran Khan government unveiled lays claim to all of Jammu and Kashmir, thus far shown as disputed territory, draws a line demarcating Gilgit-Baltistan separately from the part of Kashmir under its control (Pakistan occupied Kashmir), and renames Jammu and Kashmir as "Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir". The new map leaves the claim line with Ladakh unclear. While each of these acts is outrageous for New Delhi, it should also be questioned in Islamabad. Pakistan's claim to all of Jammu and Kashmir, but not Ladakh, goes against its own commitment to adjudicate the future of all six parts of the erstwhile royal state of Jammu-Kashmir (Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, PoK and Aksai Chin) with India. The claims to Siachen and Sir Creek, that have been the subject of several discussions between India and Pakistan, are also a regressive step. While both sides had reached an impasse on Siachen, the Sir Creek agreement had made considerable progress, and was reportedly even resolved, pending a political announcement in 2007. Either way, both were without doubt disputed areas, and Pakistan's unilateral claim over them is not helpful or conducive to future resolution. Finally, the move on Junagadh, a former princely state whose accession to India was accepted by Pakistan, opens up a whole new dispute. While Junagadh was in contention at the time of Partition, the issue was successfully resolved after a referendum was conducted there in February 1948, in which an overwhelming 95% of the state's residents voted to stay with India.

As New Delhi considers its next moves on this provocation, it should be prepared for Pakistan taking all the issues it has raised with its new map to the international stage. Pakistan's actions, while on completely bilateral matters, come in conjunction with map-related issues India faces today on two other fronts: with China at the Line of Actual Control on Ladakh, and with Nepal at Kalapani and Limpiyadhura (which Nepal's government has also issued a new map about). It is surely no coincidence that all three countries objected to the map New Delhi had issued in November 2019, albeit for different reasons, and New Delhi must be well-prepared to deal with the three-pronged cartographic challenge it will face in the coming months.

An invisible humanitarian crisis in India

The state and the rich and middle classes remain indifferent as millions slip into chronic hunger and intense poverty



HARSH MANDER

India's labouring poor have largely disappeared even from the inner pages of many newspapers and from television screens. It is as though, after the country has gradually unlocked and most migrants have returned home, the wrenching distress of mass hunger and sudden unemployment that racked their lives has somehow passed. The reality is entirely the reverse. The devastating impact of the unprecedented closure of the entire economy, which was already in recession, will endure for a long time. However, the immense suffering of the poor has been rendered invisible by the collective indifference of the state and the rich and middle classes.

Slipping deeper into want

On the banks of the Yamuna, adjacent to the largest cremation ground in Delhi, is an embankment called Yamuna Pushta, home to 4,000 homeless men. In normal times, they survived by doing casual wage work, mostly in eateries or construction. Work was uncertain and always underpaid; still they managed to keep raw hunger at bay by eating food provided by religious food charities in gurdwaras, temples and dargahs. I met them recently. Their destitution and desperation were palpable. There is still no work, and shrines have still not adequately revived their food charities. The Delhi government has mostly ended its free cooked food distribution programme. At the peak of the programme, about

10 lakh people were being fed in over 1,000 centres. I was critical then of the indignity of forcing people to line up for hours each day for a ladle of food. But although it could have been organised with more compassion and respect, that was still a crucial public lifeline for people thrust suddenly into mass hunger. With that lifeline snapped, there is nothing except for some small private charities to shield them from the blistering winds of hunger.

My comrades, including those working with homeless people in other cities, activists of the right to food campaign countrywide, and volunteers for food relief of the Karwan-e-Mohabbat, all report conditions of even more worrying precarity and deprivation from around the country. There are communities in the countryside – in forests, deserts, hills, river islands and Dalit ghettos – who even in normal times survived on the edge of hunger. They used to depend on remittances from migrants for their survival; today they have to feed the migrants who returned. Casual daily wage workers, weavers, artisans, home-based workers, rickshaw-pullers and street vendors have always lived precarious lives too. But they have slipped much deeper into want. And there are millions of new entrants into the ranks of the hungry, including laid-off employees of small enterprises and eateries, domestic workers, sex workers, workers in the gig economy, and even teachers in low-income private schools and those taking private tuitions.

All of these workers, and tens of millions more, are bracing themselves for the ways that the dispossessed have learnt, from time immemorial, and that are hardwired into their DNA, to live with chronic hunger. The first is to eliminate nu-



REUTERS

tritious but unaffordable portions of one's diet, including dal, milk, vegetables, fruit, eggs and meat. Many families report that they are eating only coarse rice and roti with salt. The next step is to reduce food intake, cutting down on both the quantity eaten during each meal and the number of meals, teaching one's body to endure with less and less. As households slide further down this steep slope, there are increasing numbers of nights when they have to sleep hungry. Children who could earlier depend on the school or preschool centre for at least one nutritious meal are now being sent out to work, including scrabbling through waste for anything which can be eaten or sold.

Public policy failures

A number of global reports warn that hundreds of millions of people are being thrust into extreme poverty and hunger because of the economic impacts of the lockdown and the raging pandemic. A United Nations University paper ('Precarity and the pandemic', June 2020) estimates that 400 million new workers are at risk of slipping into extreme poverty, of less than \$1.90 a day. What is even more worrying is that "the location of global poverty is likely to shift towards middle-income

countries and South Asia and East Asia." The impact could intensify because of "pre-existing conditions of fragmented or insufficient social protection systems" and could last for "years to come". The UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, similarly estimated in a study published in early July that more than 250 million people are at risk of acute hunger. This impact, he believes, "will be long-lasting". He is critical of governments which "rather than acknowledging how badly the efforts to 'end poverty' have been faring, and how relentlessly the pandemic has exposed that fact... are doubling down on existing approaches that are clearly failing". His angst about public policy failures to deal with the scale and depth of the humanitarian crisis is entirely justified. First, at senior levels of the Indian government, there is little acknowledgement of the depth of the crisis of hunger and the annihilation of livelihoods. To revive the economy and, in particular, MSMEs – the sector employing the most people outside agriculture – the Finance Minister relies mostly on credit rather than on fiscal transfers, unmindful that when both demand and production have crashed, credit will have few takers and can accomplish little.

Second, governments also sought to revive the broken economy by excluding workers from regimes of labour rights protections, ostensibly for attracting capital investment. Instead of atoning for the immense distress of unprotected workers and mitigating future suffering by building sturdy legal walls for their protections, many State governments used the pandemic to further weaken the scant protections which the law currently provides informal workers. Some governments attempted to

extend the workday to 12 hours, to suspend the protections of various labour laws for three years, and regulate the movement of workers across State borders.

Abandoned by the state

Even prior to the pandemic, India slipped to the 102nd position in the Global Hunger Report of 2019 that ranked 117 countries. It had fallen behind its neighbours Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The economy was also stuttering, with unemployment at a 45-year high. In the midst of this smouldering crisis, the most stringent lockdown in the world was imposed, nearly halting both demand and supply overnight. As the COVID-19 infection spreads to States with the most broken public health systems, such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and with the homeless and the poor being excluded from highly privatised health facilities in cities, the problems of the poor will further exacerbate. As the virus ravages bodies enfeebled by hunger and distress, they remain abandoned by the state, with no reliable access to care.

Through all of this, the political establishment, sections of the media and the middle class remain culpably indifferent, preoccupied instead with buying legislators and toppling governments; purchasing military aircraft; jailing dissenters; and divisive agendas like the triumphalist construction of a Ram temple at the site of a demolished medieval mosque. With millions slipping invisibly into chronic hunger and intense poverty, India is hurtling silently into its gravest humanitarian crisis in over half a century.

Harsh Mander is a human rights worker, writer, teacher, and author of several books including 'Partitions of the Heart: Unmaking the Idea of India'

Academic research is necessary, but not sufficient

Investment in research can translate into national development only through pursuit of post-academic research



R.B. GROVER

The Government of India is in the process of revisiting the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy. The policy will guide the agencies of the government mandated with funding research in higher education institutions and national laboratories. At this stage we need to ponder the question: what kind of research should be funded? That leads one to look at the nomenclature used by researchers for this purpose. Here it is pertinent to recall what William Shockley said in his Nobel lecture in 1956, that words like "pure, applied, unrestricted, fundamental, basic, academic, industrial, practical etc." are being used frequently "in a derogatory sense, on the one hand to belittle practical objectives of producing something useful and, on the other hand, to brush off the possible long-range value of explorations into new areas where a useful outcome cannot be foreseen."

Alternate frameworks

Experts in science and technology studies have come up with alternate frameworks and terminologies to provide a comprehensive pic-

ture and avoid any value judgement. One approach was proposed by NASA in the form of Technology Readiness Levels (TRL), a type of measurement system used to assess the maturity level of a particular technology. TRL-1 corresponds to observation of basic principles. Its result is publications. TRL-2 corresponds to formulation of technology at the level of concepts. Then the TRL framework advances to proof of concept, validation in a laboratory environment, followed by a relevant environment, and then to prototype demonstration, and ending with actual deployment. The framework uses terms as applicable to aerospace applications, but one can come up with alternate terms depending on the field of application, including health sciences where the term 'translational research' is commonly used. The number of levels can also be adjusted to suit the application.

An alternative is to use the terminology 'Academic Research (AR)', and 'Post-Academic Research (PAR)'. One can easily establish correspondence with the TRL framework, with AR corresponding to TRL-1 and the rest to higher levels. To provide some granularity, one can divide PAR into early-stage PAR, and late-stage PAR. Late-stage PAR has to be done by large laboratories (national or those supported by industry), while AR and early-stage PAR can be done at higher education insti-



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK PHOTO

tutions and large laboratories. Both AR and PAR generate knowledge which is necessary for national development. When examined from the perspective of national development, pursuit of AR alone, while necessary, is not sufficient. AR and PAR when pursued together and taken to their logical conclusion will result in a product or a process, or a better clinical practice, or a scientifically robust understanding of human health and disease, or provide inputs for a policy decision.

It is often said that India's investment in research is lower than that by advanced countries. Here two observations need consideration. First, countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report research statistics according to the Frascati Manual, which was first drafted in 1963, and has gone through five revisions since then. We cannot compare data with other countries without having correspondence between India's data and data re-

ported by others. Second, India has to decide where to increase investment: in AR or in PAR. Investment in research can translate into national development only through pursuit of PAR.

This is not a call for abandoning AR, but a call to look for useful outcomes including via spin-offs and serendipity, and to prioritise research in areas that relate to national development.

During my talks with academics on this topic, some observed that our industry has not reached a stage where they can absorb research being done by higher education institutions. This observation reveals that research being pursued is either not addressing national needs or is limited to AR. The lukewarm response of industry is a message for academia to orient its priorities to address national needs and engage in both AR and early-stage PAR and provide inputs necessary to raise the technology intensity of industry.

Pursuing AR and PAR

One can cite several examples to illustrate how AR and PAR can be pursued together. A programme in high energy physics can be designed to pursue accelerator technology along with high energy physics. Research in electro-chemistry can be accompanied by development of battery technologies.

Judging the growth of S&T based only on publications provides an incomplete picture. Why

is it that industries that have high technology intensity, such as aircraft and spacecraft, medical, precision and optical instruments, and communication equipment, have a low presence in India?

What should be done to increase value addition to raw materials in India? The answer lies in increasing the technology intensity of industry, which was identified as one of the goals of the STI policy issued in 2013. This needs reiteration and a mechanism should be devised to monitor progress with the objective of becoming an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

The STI policy should emphasise PAR to ensure that investment in research results in economic growth. To motivate the research community to pursue at least early-stage PAR, the reward system needs significant reorientation. The current system for rewards relies heavily on bibliometric indicators despite the knowledge that publications alone do not lead to national development. The reward system in higher education institutions and national laboratories should be reoriented to promote PAR. Academics in higher education institutions pursuing AR should pursue early-stage PAR themselves, or team up with those who are keen to pursue PAR.

In short, academic research is necessary, but not sufficient.

R.B. Grover is Emeritus Professor, Homi Bhabha National Institute, and Member, Atomic Energy Commission

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.

Online classes in J&K

The situation is the opposite of what the honourable Minister portrays ("Books, not bullets in J&K", August 6). Students don't have access to 4G Internet and this is especially difficult during a pandemic. Online classes have turned into a joke. The faces of teachers are barely visible and students merely attend classes to mark their attendance. While we welcome the fact that new colleges are being opened in J&K, we request the government to not let the already established set-up crumble.

SAMIYA SHAH,
Barumulla

Congress and Hindutva

The Congress needs to wake up to the truth that India rejected it not because it is not a Hindutva party but because it became, over time, a corrupt party with a weak rank and file and with no strong leader, among other things. It also needs to wake up to the fact that the BJP tenaciously clings to its ideology, unlike the Congress which is jettisoning its ideology of secularism, and implements all its promises. The BJP also has a highly committed, though indoctrinated, cadre at the grassroots level, unlike the Congress party.

Instead of introspecting and reworking the functioning of the party, the Congress today is busy attempting to project itself as being "more Hindu" than the BJP. It seems to believe that it can win over the Hindu votebank by doing so, but this isn't so easy. Mani Shankar Aiyar seems to be saying just that, but will the party listen to him ("Secular fundamentalism in a time of bhoomi pujan", August 6)?

KRUPAKAR POTHULA,
Hyderabad

the Hindutva agenda of the BJP, the latter is successfully following the political culture of the former by using the Governor's Office for political gains, by destabilising elected governments, and by concentrating power in the hands of one individual.

M. RAMA RAO,
Visakhapatnam

The PM at Ayodhya
Constructing a temple over the debris of a mosque is not an achievement and should not be hailed as the modern symbol of Indian culture.

"Modi", August 6). That the

BJP government is constructing a Ram temple is no surprise. But the pomp and excessive religiosity displayed at a simple event such as a *bhoomi pujan* – and that too spearheaded by the Prime Minister – goes against the tenets of the Constitution. It was also unfortunate that the government was celebrating the occasion even as J&K marked an entire year of living without certain rights; there is no Ram Rajya there.

MANOHARAN MUTHUSWAMY,
Ramanathapuram

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CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS: >>In the report titled "EWS quota challenge referred to Constitution Bench" (August 6, 2020), the Kerala Munnaka Samudaya Aikya Munnani was erroneously mentioned as one of the parties which challenged the 10% quota law. Actually, it supported the law.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552663; 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. Personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com.

Can the NEP fix access to universal education?

PARLEY

There are concerns that the policy abandons the state's commitments under the RTE Act

The new National Education Policy (NEP), approved by the Union Cabinet last week, seeks to align itself with the Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all in the next 20 years. The policy has brought into its ambit children in the age group of 3 to 18 years. Leena Chandran Wadia and Anita Rampal share their thoughts in a discussion moderated by D. Suresh Kumar. Excerpts:

Is the NEP's 10-year deadline, to make all children entering Grade 1 school-ready through Early Childhood Care and Education, practical?

Leena Chandran Wadia (LCW): I think we have to be ready because every year that we lose, we lose some children. You know, at the time that their brain is developing fast and they can learn a lot, we must help them learn as much as possible. So that is a deadline we must try to meet.

Anita Rampal (AR): Since April 1, 2010, we have a Right to Education Act making it a fundamental right of every child aged between 6 and 14 years to get free and compulsory education, in a neighbourhood school. This has been a fundamental right for the last 10 years. So there is no question of having a target of another 10 years. What this policy is doing is, it is very quietly, very problematically, going back on a fundamental right of a child, enacted by law.

With the NEP silent on last year's draft proposal to expand the RTE Act's scope to cover children from 3 to 18 years, can universal education be attained?

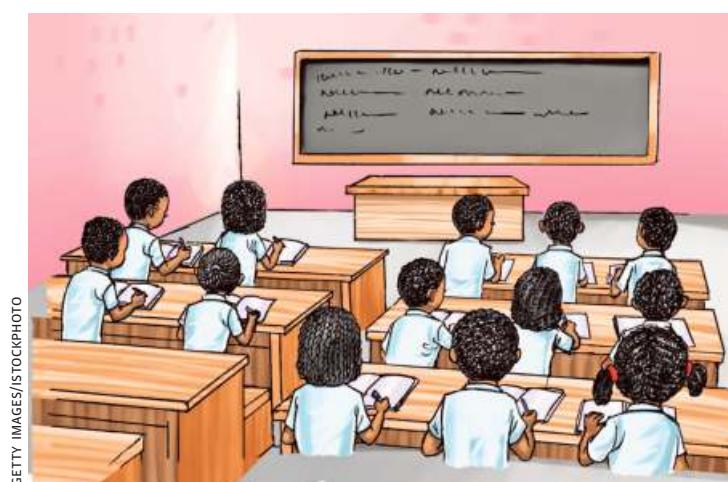
LCW: So I saw that too. And I am a little surprised... but the document does say that it wants to achieve universalisation of education. So, we have to wait and see until the implementation plan comes on how they propose to deliver on what they claim they want to do, which is universalise education between 3 and 18 years... this move to actually

bring children into sort of formal education fold at age three, had a timeline because there are lots of practical issues with the anganwadi and preschools. But it doesn't take away from the rights embodied in the RTE Act, which begins at age 6, which we felt was too late.

AR: It [NEP] is clearly trying to abandon that [RTE] Act. It says it is not going to have a regular schooling with well-qualified teachers. This policy is saying we will be allowing open schooling. This clubbing of three years of ECCE with Grade 1 and 2 of primary school and then calling this a 'foundational literacy and numeracy mission', it is so worrying because we know that an anganwadi [worker] is not professionally trained to be a teacher. Can we believe it that a national policy says children will become tutors for others in their classes? It is very clear that is really trying to abandon its responsibility of even providing a good, professional teacher for the earliest years.

The policy says education is a public service, but also advocates philanthropic private participation...

LCW: I would like to underline that all existing resources should be pressed into service to ensure that every child gets quality early childhood care. The anganwadi workers score a lot because they are actually, sort of, replacing the parents of the children. And so that is alright as a way to begin teaching the children... The NEP committee members were completely clear that the policy's focus has to be that government education is of very high quality. This is the only way we will make sure every child, no matter where they are, are given education. It is very unlikely that the private sector is going to open schools in remote areas with less than 10 children. The only hope is to strengthen the government education system. But, of course, we are not going to stand in the way of private education. In the last 25 years, we have had nearly 50% private school education and nearly 70% of enrollment in higher education in private hands. The



concern is there are too many players who are not of good quality. We have to find a way to weed them out. Everywhere in the world, it is usually philanthropy, private sector that participates in education. What we have in India is a lot of people under the umbrella of not for profit really working for profit... [To] filter them out, we have made some suggestions.

What about concerns on the proposal to create school complexes? The Kothari Commission recommended it.

AR: Kothari Commission spoke about a 'school complex' to have a collaborative synergy between high or higher secondary schools, which normally are better resourced, and the smaller neighbourhood and primary schools, which actually then become feeder schools for the high school. That word is being used now in a completely different sense. Here we know the background... 14,000 schools in one State have been closed under the name of consolidation, saying that small schools are sub-optimal.

So, schools which actually provide access in the proximity of the child, within the community; those have been closed or merged. NEP says we should have larger institutions, right up to higher education, have a college which has 2,500 students. So it is trying to make an economic argument of viability. This is playing with the child's right. How can you expect that this will be considered as access?

The proposed 5+3+3+4 school structure has triggered apprehension that it could lead to exits at each stage...

C The committee members were clear that the policy's focus has to be on making government education of very high quality

LEENA CHANDRAN WADIA, Consultant, Kasturirangan Committee

LCW: This is a pedagogical alignment, where we would like to assess students at Grade 3, 5 and 8 to make sure that they have attained the outcomes designed for them. This is an attempt to refocus attention on learning outcomes at different stages. In fact, we think there is also provision to make sure that the biggest dropouts that start to happen from beyond Grade 5 are halted.

The NEP advocates equitable and inclusive education but there is no mention of a common school curriculum. Even the proposal to impart education in the mother tongue is open-ended. Wouldn't these broaden inequities?

LCW: State governments have actually decided that teaching will happen in the regional language, which is, for instance, Kannada in Karnataka, ignoring that there are large swathes of areas on the borders of Maharashtra, where children speak Marathi; on the Andhra Pradesh border, where children speak Telugu, etc. It should be possible for a school in a certain com-

munity to teach students in the dominant language. But there is another problem as State governments transfer teachers. You hire somebody from Bengaluru and post them at the Maharashtra border and the children are listening to Kannada, which is a foreign language. So, when they don't attain foundational literacy and numeracy, it is because they are also struggling with the language. The whole idea is to try to get State governments to allow local schools to teach in their own language by hiring local teachers. How far we will succeed remains to be seen, because education is [also] a State subject. As for the common school curriculum, the discussion about different boards was there [in the NEP committee]. There is an exodus towards CBSE boards in many States but that is partially because the State boards are quite weak. This policy has tried to strengthen SCERTs so that they can attend to children's need to be educated within their own context and culture. We need to open up that opportunity so that children can relate to their real life through their education. That is the reason we have let the various boards be.

Will the thrust on vocational education weaken students academically, perpetuate hereditary occupations or lead to early exits?

AR: The notion of vocational education as something which is only preparing you for vocations should not be pushed early in school. From the first Radhakrishnan Commission right down, our [Education] Commissions have said let's not have different statuses for different kinds of programmes and instead give students a chance to study together. Our vocational education has no education in it. It is skill-based and based on hierarchy between knowledge for some and skill for the others depending on this constructed version of what is 'ability'. This needs to be really questioned, because we already have many hierarchies within our system. This clubbing together of Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 is extremely worrying and problematic because it says that you will be given vocational courses. Instead of sorting children out, give them a choice to be together and support them right through that.

There will be a lot of dropping out, pushing them away from vocational courses or open school.

With such sweeping school reforms, is a National Testing Agency needed to assess students for university admissions?

LCW: This was debated a lot. The policy is very clear about where we would like to go. So many things are being dismantled, so many new attitudes and mindsets need to be built. The interim is going to be very difficult and most parents are anxious about the handful of so-called good opportunities that they have a perception for, like IITs. And so there are insane levels of competition. We felt it is better that only the people who want to try for JEE, for example, need to study for that entrance exam. The rest in school can be liberated to experiment with so many other of their interests. Also, higher education institutions are going to have some autonomy in deciding who they admit, which again, makes parents nervous. So, if at least some percentage of scores can be used for admission through the NTA then there will be a sense that there is at least an attempt to provide a partial level-playing field till such time that some trust is built in the system. Instead of trying to examine every child through an exit exam in Grades 10 and 12, it is better to introduce an entrance exam.

Does the NEP's broad categorisation of Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Group (SEDG), hamper equity?

AR: I totally agree... disadvantage just doesn't come from the air. It is historical, it is social. That is the way identities have been shaped with declarations of exclusion. Clubbing everyone under 'SEDG', shying away from saying 'Dalit' or 'minority' will not really get us to even acknowledge what the issue is. This is sort of glossing over it. We have to understand what 'caste' is. And what does it mean when we say that a child is from the Muslim community? How does a child fare within the system? How do the others look at this child? What are the backgrounds of this child? Trying to understand the diverse social realities, disadvantages and exclusion is key.



Leena Chandran Wadia
was a senior consultant in the Kasturirangan Committee



Anita Rampal
is a former Dean, Faculty of Education, at Delhi University



Scan the QR code to listen to the full conversation online

Straying into troubled waters

Imprisoned fishermen in both India and Pakistan need to be released and their boats returned

JATIN DESAI

Along the coastal areas of Porbandar, Mangrol, Veraval in Gujarat and the Union Territory of Diu on India's western coast are hundreds of families whose lives have been torn asunder, the men of their households missing with only stray hopes of their return, women and children struggling to make ends meet and see another sunrise. The men are currently in jail in Pakistan, their families barely aware of their health and welfare. Their only 'crime' was that they were doing their work in the waters between India and Pakistan. These are fishermen who inadvertently crossed the invisible line in the water between the countries.

As fishermen do not get ample fish on the Gujarat side, they have no option but to go farther and farther out into the sea. As they fish in mid-sea, they end up in waters controlled by Pakistan and are arrested for inadvertently entering into that country.

India and Pakistan exchanged lists of prisoners on July 1 as per which 270 Indian fishermen and 54 civilian prisoners are in Pakistan's prisons.

India has 97 Pakistani fishermen and 265 civilian prisoners in its jails. In more friendly or less antagonistic circumstances, they would have been released after a formal procedure to check that they were really fishermen and not spies, but, in these times of suspicion, the value of their lives lies at the altar of bilateral relations. Consequently, their families suffer. On average, these men would have spent one-and-a-half years in prisons. Uncertainty hangs over them like the proverbial Damocles's sword, given that in their prison cells, they have little knowledge of when they will be released and repatriated.

The 2008 proposal

This is not a new problem; it has dragged on for years together, without a resolution in sight. To address this issue, in 2008, India and Pakistan had formed a judicial committee consisting of four retired judges from each country. The committee used to visit prisons of the other country specifically to meet the prisoners, ex-

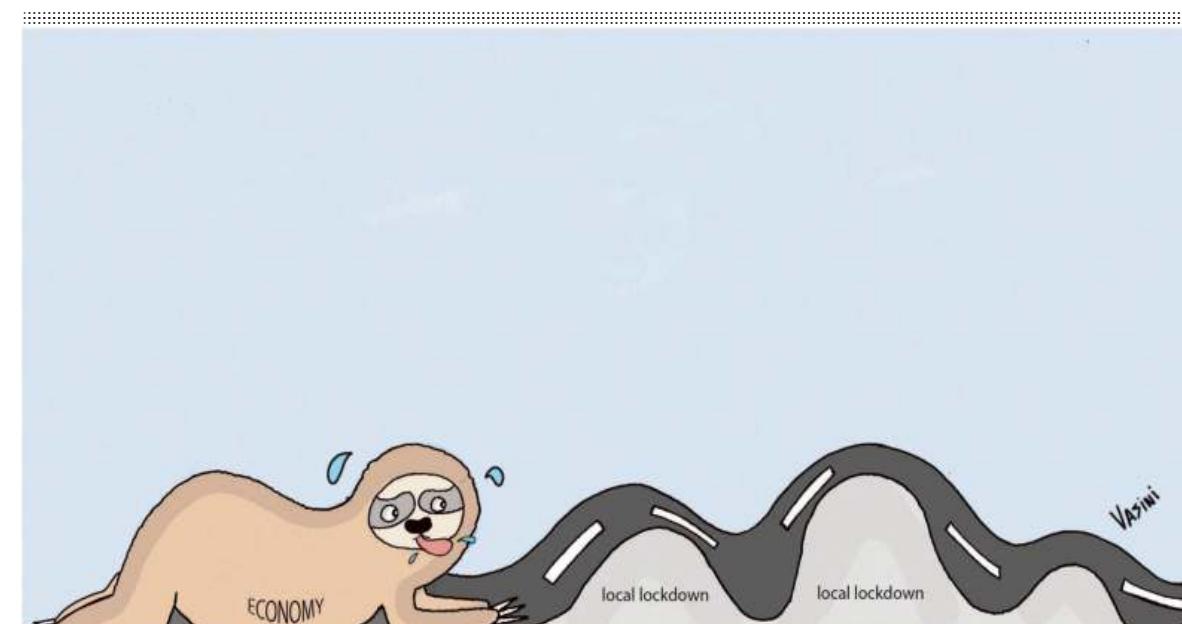
amine consular access, status of their cases, delay in release and repatriation, their health condition, and so on. It unanimously suggested release and repatriation of fishermen and a few women prisoners. The governments of both countries praised their work but did not implement the recommendations. The last meeting was held in October 2013. Five years later, there was a move to revive the panel. India nominated its four members but Pakistan did not. It is yet to take a step in that direction. Islamabad must do so urgently and call a meeting, given that the last meeting was held in India.

Returning their boats

Further, when fishermen are arrested, their boats are also confiscated. Their release means little till they get back possession of their boats from the other country. Both the countries should release those boats which can sail with some repair work. It is also time that the two countries now consider adopting a 'no-arrest policy' in the case of fishermen.

In the coastal villages of both the countries, when men are imprisoned in the other country, women bear the brunt of the load, while somehow holding their families together. The pain is the same on both sides of the border. There are many examples across villages where the children of the arrested fishermen have lost their childhoods. As the COVID-19 pandemic wreaks havoc in both countries, there are growing concerns for the health of the arrested fishermen among their families. There is hardly any communication between the two except for some stray letters which are delayed. The families have no definite way to know that their loved ones are safe from the virus. For the arrested fishermen, it is an issue of survival. For India and Pakistan celebrating their Independence Days this month, it should become a humanitarian issue and an appropriate occasion to release and repatriate fishermen. Let the fishermen too have their freedoms back.

Jatin Desai is with the Pakistan-India Peoples's Forum for Peace and Democracy



NOTEBOOK

Verify before reporting

How rumours in 2002 on a smuggled weapon from Pak turned out to be false

SUHASINI HAIDAR

As millions around the world watched Wednesday's blast in Beirut playing out on their telephones and television screens, U.S. President Donald Trump's words could have had an even more incendiary effect. Speaking at a news conference, he said that his generals had informed him that the powerful explosions had been caused by a "bomb of some kind". "...They seem to think it was an attack," Mr. Trump said. Given Lebanon's current troubles, daily protests over its fractured polity and sinking economy, sectarian tensions, as well as the upcoming trial verdict on the assassination of former President Rafik Hariri, such a comment could have sparked more violence. Within a short time, however, the claim was denied, first by the U.S. military and then by Lebanese officials, who said the explosion had come from

consignment of explosives in a port warehouse.

Unfortunately, gaffes by Mr. Trump are all too common in the aftermath of any violence worldwide, and one of the biggest perils for journalists on the job. Typically, an explosion of any kind is difficult to investigate in the first few hours, given considerable risk from fires, unexploded devices or ordnance, and the priority to rescue those injured. However, each potential terror attack in this age of instant media is followed swiftly by speculation and jostling between reporters, who don't always verify the information they receive.

'Get it first' As a result, conspiracy theories, unchecked lists of suspects, and even the quantity and origin of the explosives are put out before they can be assessed. In theory, journalists are trained to "get it right" before trying to "get it first",

but in practice, it is often the reverse that is true.

The result has led to some interesting outcomes in the world, like the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, which brought down the communist regime in the country, and brought Vaclav Havel to power in 1989 on the back of protest strikes that a mammoth two-thirds of the population took part in. The protests were sparked by a rumour that a student, Martin Smid, had been killed by the police, which later proved to be untrue. However, each potential terror attack in this age of instant media is followed swiftly by speculation and jostling between reporters, who don't always verify the information they receive.

I remember a strange story I was given to follow during the Gujarat 2002 violence, that could have had a much more diabolical impact. Local newspapers one morning reported that "rocket launchers" had been smuggled in from Pakistan. The weaponry

had been confiscated by the police, the reports said, and fear was rife across Ahmedabad that mobs would go after those accused of procuring these 'rocket launchers', whose make and type was already being discussed feverishly on television shows.

When I reached the police station in the hope of getting some visuals, officials were rather sheepish. After some persistent inquiries by us, they agreed to open their "armoury", which was in fact a small wooden cupboard. There, on the shelf, lay two peashooters, no bigger than the size of a catapult each. The "missile launchers" that could have unleashed so much mayhem turned out to be just improvised schoolyard toys, and the subject of a salutary lesson for me.

Each of these events is a red-letter reminder that a journalist's sacred duty is to 'trust, but verify and only then to report.'

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 7, 1970

Taming the Brahmaputra

The floods in Assam have been exceptionally severe this year. They have caused, in addition to epidemics like cholera, serious disruption of communications which brings in its wake a shortage of commodities leading to rising prices. All the plains districts have been flood affected simultaneously and there has been loss of life and property. Even at the best of times the communication links between Assam and the rest of the country are not adequate enough and the need for strengthening them is realised widely. This year the situation was further complicated by a railway strike at the time of the floods. The Army, as usual, has been doing excellent relief work. It is against this background that the importance of successfully implementing flood control measures in the Brahmaputra valley has to be studied. A minimum expenditure of about Rs. 250 crores has been estimated as necessary for such measures really to be effective and only Rs. 35 crores have been allotted for this purpose in the Fourth Plan. All the Governments of the States in the northeast realise the importance of flood control but all of them plead inadequate funds to do anything worthwhile. The new North-Eastern Council should give high priority to the problem but this organisation does not yet seem to be in a position to act decisively on any issue.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 7, 1920

Language of communication

(From an editorial)

We understand that, by a recent Order of the Travancore Durbar, all communications to the Dewan's office have been ordered to be addressed in the English language. At a time when the force of national sentiment among the Indian people is generally to establish the vernacular of the country as the media of education and public business even in the highest bodies such as the Legislative Councils, this reactionary move of Travancore, if true, has to be greatly deplored. In the advanced State of Baroda, the policy is to increase the province of the local vernacular and lessen that of English as far as possible. It is curious to observe that side by side with the progress of vernacular education, costing large expenditure to the State, the openings for the utilisation of its products have been steadily getting restricted. It is stated that even Dewan Bahadur Krishna Nair, Malayalee as he is, did very little during his comparative long tenure, to develop the official scope of the vernacular in that State.

M ND-NDE

India rejects China's UNSC move on Kashmir

Country reiterates Kashmir is a domestic issue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
A day after China prompted the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to discuss the Kashmir issue in a closed-door meeting, India "firmly" rejected the Chinese initiative and reiterated that Kashmir is a domestic issue. Veteran diplomats demanded that South Block launch a campaign to remove Kashmir from the agenda of the council.

"As on previous occasions, this attempt too met with little support from the international community. We firmly reject China's interference in our internal affairs and urge it to draw proper conclusions from such infructuous attempts," the External Affairs Ministry said in a press statement.

The Chinese move came on the first anniversary of the dilution of Article 370, which led to the creation of the Union Territories of Jammu



China's attempt met with little support from the UNSC members.

and Kashmir and ended the special status for the region. China initiated a similar move on August 16 last year when it revived "The India-Pakistan Question" at the UNSC. The issue had not been taken up at the council since it last figured in the world body before the India-Pakistan war of 1971. The meeting had failed to generate a common statement or a consensus on the matter.

China attempted a similar move in January this year as well, but it did not attract sufficient support from the UNSC members. The frequency of such attempts by China has prompted diplomats to highlight the unequal nature of the UN organ, where the agenda is set by the permanent members (P5) of the UNSC.

Pakistani bid'

Following Wednesday's development at the UNSC, India's Permanent Representative at the U.N., T.S. Tirumurti, described the move as an "attempt by Pakistan" that failed.

"In today's meeting of U.N. Security Council, which was closed, informal, not recorded and without any outcome, almost all countries underlined that Jammu and Kashmir was bilateral issue and did not deserve the time and attention of the council," he said.

A politician returns to the helm in J&K

Manoj Sinha, the new L-G, keeps a low profile but enjoys the PM's confidence

NITIOLA HEBBAR

NEW DELHI

The appointment of former Union Minister Manoj Sinha as Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) sees the return of a politician in the Srinagar Raj Bhavan.

Mr. Sinha, 61, was the Minister of State for Railways and Minister for Communications in the first Modi government, before hitting a patch of political wilderness after he lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election from Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh.

Throughout this, however, Mr. Sinha enjoyed the confidence of the BJP's leadership and when the net was cast to replace G.C. Murmu as Lieutenant-Governor, the choice fell on Mr. Sinha.

A BHU product

Mr. Sinha, a three-time Lok Sabha member, starting from 1996, started his active political life in Benaras Hindu University (BHU), where he got B.Tech. and M.Tech. degrees.

He was elected the stu-



Close-knit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the then Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha in New Delhi in 2018. • PTI

dents union president in 1982.

His political style in those days, say his colleagues, was very much about helping out indigent students and university staffers. In one instance, Mr. Sinha is said to have led a collection of funds to finance a wedding in the family of a staffer in his hostel.

Mr. Sinha came into contact with the RSS and the BJP in that period and remained firmly with the ideology, with the result that he was made part of the BJP's national council in 1989. He came of age in the hurly bur-

ly 1990s politics of the Ram temple movement and Mandal Commission.

Ghazipur development

He was given ticket by the BJP to contest from Ghazipur in 1996 and he won the seat that time, and in 1999 and 2014. He is credited with having brought in many development projects to Ghazipur, which is considered a backwater in eastern Uttar Pradesh, in his stint as Union Minister.

None of this helped him win the 2019 polls, but it added to his image as a quiet worker.

A calm personality, Mr. Sinha is considered to be a discreet politician and enjoys Prime Minister Narendra Modi's confidence, a fact that will help him in his current appointment. It is also hoped that his down-to-earth personality will help in reaching out to people in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Sinha had also been rumoured to have been tipped off for the post of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister when the BJP won a majority in that State in 2017, but that job finally went to Yogi Adityanath. After losing the polls in 2019, it was expected that he would be brought into the Union Cabinet via the Rajya Sabha route, considering his performance as Communications Minister in the first Modi government. That was not to be.

His appointment as Lieutenant-Governor points to the need to bring in a seasoned politician rather than a bureaucrat, a uniformed person or even someone with an Intelligence background.



75 mn people in Kashmir in virtual prison'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Thursday said 7.5 million Kashmiris were living in a 'virtual prison' for the past one year, and India's record as a democracy was being diminished every day.

Separately, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra accused the Centre of crushing democracy by treating leaders like Saifuddin Soz as prisoners and unleashing tyranny in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

Mr. Chidambaram also demanded the release of former J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti. In a series of tweets, he pointed out that most political leaders were under house arrest even though it was "illegal", and in "post-truth India", the government denied these house arrests before courts. "Today is August 6. Will all political parties and right-thinking citizens please spare a thought for the virtual prison in which 7.5 million Kashmiris are living for the last one year?" he asked.

Ms. Vadra said, "Saifuddin Soz Sahab has played a big role in strengthening Indian democracy. By treating him like a prisoner, the BJP government is crushing democracy. For the past one year, there is tyranny in J&K."

PM can't even name China, says Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of lacking "courage" to name China, after the Ministry of Defence removed a document from its website that mentioned about Chinese transgressions in Eastern Ladakh.

"Forget standing up to China, India's PM lacks the courage even to name them. Denying China is in our territory and removing documents from websites won't change the facts", Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

The Congress said the document was removed from the website after Mr. Gandhi tweeted about it and cited it to ask "why the Prime Minister is lying".

Centre takes down report on Chinese transgressions

Stand-off along LAC likely to prolong, it says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry has taken down a document uploaded on its website that admitted Chinese transgressions into Indian territory in eastern Ladakh beginning early May.

The report had said the present situation arising from "unilateral aggression"



Paying homage: People in Shimla paying tribute on August 1 to Indian soldiers killed in the Galwan clash. • PTI

by China continues to be sensitive, requiring close monitoring and prompt action based on the evolving

situation, and that the present stand-off "is likely to be prolonged".

"Chinese aggression has

been increasing along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and more particularly in Galwan Valley since May 5. The Chinese side transgressed in the areas of Kurang Nala, Gogra and north bank of Pangong Tso on May 17-18," the Ministry said in the report on June activities. The Ministry spokesperson was not available for comment.

Ground-level interactions between the armed forces of both sides were held to defuse the situation, the report said, referring to the Corps

Commanders flag meeting on June 6. "However, a violent face-off incident took place between the two sides on June 15, resulting in casualties of both sides," it said. Subsequently, the second Corps Commander-level meeting took place on June 22 to discuss modalities of the de-escalation process.

"While engagement and dialogue at military and diplomatic level is continuing to arrive at mutually acceptable consensus, the present stand-off is likely to be pro-

longed," the report stated.

The two sides have so far held five rounds of Corps Commanders' talks but there hasn't been any significant movement beyond the limited first phase of disengagement. There has been no breakthrough in the last two rounds of talks on July 14 and August 2.

"There has been no progress in the talks on Sunday. However, India remains firm on restoration of status quo ante of pre-May positions," a defence source said.

U.S. Congress panel flags restrictions in Kashmir

MEA says governance, development situation has improved

SIRRAM LAKSHMAN SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

A year after the government altered the status of the former State of Jammu & Kashmir by diluting Article 370, the leadership of an important committee of the U.S. Congress noted "with concern" that conditions in the region have not returned to normalcy.

In a letter dated August 5 and addressed directly to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Chairman of the powerful House Foreign Affairs Committee, Democrat Eliot Engel, and Ranking Member (a Republican) Michael McCaul - who formerly headed the House Homeland Security Committee - underscore the bipartisan nature of the concerns over Jammu and Kashmir and the larger context of the bipartisan support for the U.S.-India relationship. "It is because of our support for the bilateral relationship that we note with concern that conditions in J&K, and the resolution critical of New Delhi was moved in the House by US Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal.

India has faced a series of statements from the U.S., the European Union and the U.N. agencies over the past year. Earlier this week, several U.N. human rights experts issued a statement calling on the international community to "address the alarming human rights situation" in J&K. "Urgent action is needed," the experts said in a letter issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)



The August 5 letter was addressed directly to S. Jaishankar.

government to address them while upholding our shared commitments to the democratic values and freedoms on which our countries' bond was built," they said.

In December last year, Mr. Jaishankar had cancelled a meeting with the House Foreign Affairs Committee, after a human rights hearing held on the issue of J&K, and a resolution critical of New Delhi was moved in the House by US Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal.

In its letter, the HFAC also mentioned China's "belligerence" at the Line of Actual Control, assuring U.S. support as "India faces aggression from China along [the] shared border, which is part of the Chinese government's consistent pattern of unlawful and belligerent territorial aggression across the Indo-Pacific".

The August 5 letter "demonstrates that support for the relationship remains bipartisan and contrary to thoughts in certain quarters, concerns about religious pluralism in India are also bipartisan," a Congressional staffer told *The Hindu*.

"We acknowledge the ongoing serious security and counter-terrorism concerns in the region and look forward to working with your

in Geneva. "If India will not take any genuine and immediate steps to resolve the situation ... then the international community should step up," it said.

Responding to questions about both statements, the Ministry of External Affairs said it would be "happy to brief the U.S. Congress" on the situation in the Union Territory. "There have been several positive changes in the UT of J&K in the past year, whether be it in terms of good governance or socio economic development or ensuring justice to disadvantaged sections of the population," said MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava on Thursday, without addressing the statement from the U.N. experts.

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SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED e-Procurement Tender Notice (Paper Notification)

TSSPDCCL intends to float tenders for procurement of a) 3-PH 25kVA DTR with BIS EE Level-2, b) 3-PH 160 kVA DTR with BIS EE Level-3 on e-procurement platform.

For further details, please visit www.tsspower.com and www.tender.telangana.gov.in. Phone No. 040-23431034, 1035

Sd/- (U.Bala Swamy)
R.O.No.:798-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21, dt: 06.08.2020. Chief General Manager (P&MM)

R.O.No.:798-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21, dt: 06.08.2020. Chief General Manager (P&MM)

KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-TENDER ABRIDGE NIT

The Ch. Mpl. Engineer (SWM), KMC invites e-Tender for the work mentioned below (Submission of Tender online):

NIT No.: KMC/SWM/RFP/MRF/III/20-21

Scheme/ Work(s) : "Source segregation, collection of dry waste and setting up of material recovery facility including operation and maintenance for the Kolkata City"; Last date and time of bid submission: 09.09.2020 upto 01.00 P.M.; The document for Request for Proposal (RFP) and other details are available on and from 10.08.2020 (4.00 P.M.) from the website <https://wtbidders.gov.in> and www.kmcgov.in.

176/20-21

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH A.P Greening and Beautification Corporation Plot No.730, Road No.4, Sector No.4, Lotus Landmark, Ayodhya Nagar, Kedarkishwarpet, Vijayawada-520003, e-mail : apugbc@outlook.com, Phone No. 0866-2931677

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RFP No. APUG-15021/13/2020-TECH SEC-APUGBC/2020-21, Dt: 05/08/2020

Proposals are invited from registered and reputed architectural firms for providing architectural consultancy services through Design competition for the work of "Development of Dr.B.R.Armed Smrithi Vanam project in Vijayawada, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh"

The details of the project, scope of work and deliverables can be downloaded from the website www.urbangreening.ap.gov.in from 06.08.2020 and the last date and time for submission of bids is 14.08.2020 upto 4:00 P.M.

Sd/- CHANDRA MOHAN REDDY, N.

DPR 238PP/CL, Dt: 06.08.2020 MD (NMCR), O/o. Managing Director, APUG&BC

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH APEWIDC, VIJAYAWADA Door No: 9-76, Sal Fortune Heights, Block-A, Vaddeswaram, Guntur (Dt) - 522 502

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING e-procurement Notice Inviting Tender

NIT Nos.38.39 & 40/MD/APEWIDC/VJA/2020-21 Dated: 06.08.2020

Tenders are invited on e-procurement from Original Equipment / Product manufacturers for 03 types of Purified Drinking water systems with water purifiers & TDS filters, whose specifications are detailed in Schedule A of the respective Tender Document, for the Govt. Schools (Educational Institutions) in Andhra Pradesh, having:

01) <75 Children (Type-I) @ an ECV of Rs.41.40 Crores

02) Primary / upper Primary schools having > 75 Children (Type-II) @ an ECV of Rs.93.60 Crores

03) High Schools (Type-III) @ an ECV of Rs.63.70 Crores

Submission of Tender through Online: From 06-08-2020 to 20-08-2020 up to 16.00 Hrs and opening on: 20-08-2020 at 16.30 Hrs. For all details, visit e-procurement platform @ <https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in>

Note: Changes / amendment if any will only be communicated through the above e-Procurement platform.

Sd/- Managing Director, APEWIDC, Vijayawada

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India's COVID-19 cases cross 2 million

Health Ministry says recoveries have crossed 13.2 lakh and the case fatality rate is now 2.07%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in India crossed two million on Thursday, show data collated from various State health departments. As of 10.30 p.m. on Thursday, the figure stood at 2,025,197 with the addition of 61,996 infections, a daily high. The death tally has now increased to 41,649, with the addition of 907 deaths. Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh had not released data.

The Health Ministry said India's COVID-19 recovery rate climbed to 67.62% as total recoveries crossed 13.2 lakh and the case fatality rate continue to slide to 2.07% on Thursday.

The country tested a record 6,64,949 samples in 24 hours, the Ministry said. More than 6 lakh tests were done for the third successive day, it said.

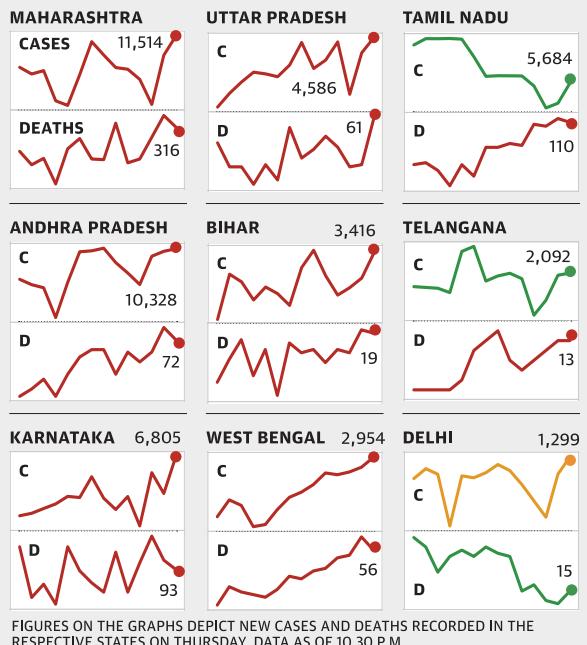
India registered 46,121 recoveries in the last 24 hours, with the total recoveries jumping to 13,28,336. Mem-

Viral tracker

With a record surge of 61,996 new cases, India's COVID-19 tally went past 20 lakh. While it took 169 days to cross 10 lakh cases, it took only 21 days from then to go past 20 lakh. The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. The States are classified based on where cases/deaths are rising (red); falling (green); or flattening (orange).

NEW CASES AND DEATHS

CASES	7 DAY-CHANGE
61,996	+8.6%
DEATHS	7 DAY-CHANGE
907	+19.3%



FIGURES ON THE GRAPHS DEPICT NEW CASES AND DEATHS RECORDED IN THE RESPECTIVE STATES ON THURSDAY. DATA AS OF 10.30 P.M.

ber-countries in the South-East Asia region, including India, have been asked by the World Health Organization (WHO) to maintain essential health services and accelerate resumption of dis-

rupted services hit by the pandemic as an integral part of the COVID-19 response.

'Immense strain'

Issuing this direction on Thursday, the WHO said the

pandemic had put immense strain on health systems across the South-East Asia region. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia region, in a virtual meeting with

Health Ministers, said: "The pandemic has put immense strain on health systems across the South-East Asia region. The previous disease outbreaks have shown that disruption to essential services caused by an outbreak can be more deadly than the outbreak itself. We must fast-track efforts and do all we can to avoid that happening, while continuing efforts to break COVID-19 transmission chains."

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, participating in the meeting, said India had been able to achieve a growing recovery rate with the actual case load of the country now at 5,95,501 active cases. "The active cases as a percentage of total cases have seen a significant drop from 34.17% on July 24, 2020 to 30.31% currently," he said.

The Minister noted that States like Chhattisgarh continued with immunisation services even within the containment and buffer zones and delivered medicines for hypertension and diabetes.

Kisan Rail to ferry fruits, vegetables

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Indian Railways on Thursday said it will begin running Kisan Rail, a service announced in the Union Budget 2020-21, from August 7. The first such train will run weekly between Devlali (Maharashtra) to Danapur (Bihar).

"This train will help in bringing perishable agricultural produce like vegetables and fruits to the market in a short period of time. The train with frozen containers is expected to build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables," the Indian Railways said in a statement.

"This train is a step towards realising the goal of doubling farmers' incomes by 2022," it added.

Rain breaks South Mumbai record

IMD forecasts moderate to heavy showers in next 24 hours

ALOK DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

South Mumbai received a record 300 mm rainfall in just four hours on Wednesday, as torrential rain accompanied by a wind speed of 101 km per hour, led to flood-type situation for the first time in many parts of the city, Brihammumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal said on Thursday.

He said the civic administration was well-prepared following an advisory on heavy rain and necessary precaution was taken to keep all COVID-19 special hospitals unaffected.

Meanwhile, Chief Minis-



After the storm: A tree that fell following heavy rain in Mumbai on Thursday. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

ter Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday took stock of the situation in Mumbai, all coastal districts, and Sangli and Kolhapur, which have received heavy rainfall.

"As many as 16 teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in Maharashtra, of which four are in Kolhapur," he said.

Mr. Chahal said Nariman

Point and Colaba received a record rainfall, which was more than even the figure on July 26, 2005. "The BMC, in coordination with the Railways and the NDRF, rescued those trapped in local trains. Rain abated by midnight and water started receding," He was speaking to reporters after visiting the site of landslide near Peddar Road in south Mumbai.

However, catchment areas of the dams supplying water to Mumbai lag behind the last year's rainfall. The percentage of usable water in Uppar Vaitarna, Modak Sagar, Tanasa, Madhya Vaitarna, and Bhatasta at present is 22.11, 46.27, 35.28, 41.73 and 44.99, respectively. In 2019, the percentage for all the dams was above 80.

According to the disaster management cell of the BMC, Colaba observatory recorded 331.8 mm rainfall while Santacruz recorded 162.3 mm rain in the 24 hours ending at 8 a.m. on Thursday.

The India Meteorological Department has predicted moderate to heavy rainfall in the city and suburbs and intense showers in some parts of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region in the next 24 hours. (With PTI inputs)

Delhi Jamaat participants free to return

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre told the Supreme Court that foreign Tablighi Jamaat members are free to return to their countries regardless of their pending trial, provided they apologise for participating in a religious congregation in the national capital during the lockdown.

Ten of a total 34 foreigners who approached the apex court had not opted for plea bargaining.

A Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar on Thursday transferred the cases of all the 10 petitioners facing trial to a court at Saket in southeast Delhi. The court ordered their trial to be completed expeditiously within eight weeks. Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta said lookout notices issued against the foreigners who approached the apex court have been withdrawn.

"The Solicitor General has, in all fairness, submitted that if the petitioners concerned tender apology, as envisaged by the Madras High Court, they can be permitted to leave India despite the pendency of the criminal case but subject to such orders that may be passed by the concerned trial court," the court order said.

In the last hearing, on July 27, senior advocate C.U. Singh, for some of the foreigners, had drawn the court's attention to a system evolved by the Madras HC of releasing lockdown violators after obtaining an affidavit of apology from them.

OFFICE OF ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER
PHED, JAIPUR REGION-4, JAIPUR
Jyoti Nagar, Sahakar Marg, Jaipur-302005
Phone: 0141-2740170 (O) & mail: acce1.jpr.phed@rajasthan.gov.in
No. F.8/ACE/PHED/Air. Distn/JJNNRIT-5/Bagger/2020-21/2354-70 Date 31.07.2020
On behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan NIT No. 05/2020-21 online tender costing Rs. 396.85 lacs is hereby invited from eligible bidders for Providing, laying, testing and commissioning of DI / HDPE pipe line, providing and installation of Pumping Machinery, Construction of RCC OHSR and CWR, Construction of Pump House with civil works for Deficit Liability of One year under Augmentation of Urban Water Supply Scheme, Bagger, District Jhunjhunu on SPR Turnkey basis as per criteria mentioned in the detailed NITTender document available on websites: <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> & <http://sspp.rajasthan.gov.in> as per prescribed schedule.

NIT No. 05/2020-21	NIB No. PHE2021A2448	UBN No. PHE2021WSOB04346
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SAVE WATER-SAVE LIFE

(R.C. Mishra)
Addl. Chief Engineer
PHED, Jaipur Region-4, Jaipur

DIPR/C/6107

TAMILNADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Tamilnadu Undertaking)
No. 417, Pantheon Road, Chennai-60008
Phone : 044-2819 1890, 2819 0259 / Mobile : 09940188236
Website : www.tnmst.tn.gov.in, E-mail : enquiry.tnmst@tn.gov.in
Sealed Tenders are invited for the supply of Anti Haemophilic Drugs by TNMSCLtd., Chennai - 600008, from the Manufacturers or Direct Importer or Loan Licensees having Valid Loan License having three years Market Standing.
Tender Reference No. 002/M/PL/HAEMO/TNMSCL/2020, Dated: 07.08.2020
Tender Document Sale Period 07.08.2020 to 19.08.2020
Last Date and Time for receipt of tender 20.08.2020 upto 10.30 AM
The tender document can be downloaded from the websites of www.tnmst.tn.gov.in and www.tenders.tn.gov.in on free of cost.
General Manager (Drugs)
DIPR/C/2963/Tender/2020

UDAIPUR SMART CITY LIMITED

Municipal Corporation, Udaipur, Town Hall, Udaipur

Website: www.udaipursmartcity.in, E-mail: uscl2016@gmail.com

Tel: 0294-2425325

Nit No.: USCL/2020-21/3

Date:- 31.07.2020

The USCL invites online unconditional bids through e-procurement portal <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> from eligible bidders as per criteria mentioned in bid document, for following works.

S. N. o.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs)	Tender Fee	Period of completion	Publish date & Start date of downloading of Bid documents	Last date of submission of on-line bids	Last date & time of depositing documents in hard copy as stated under	Date of opening of technical bids
1	Rehabilitation Works of Ayad River, Udaipur	7500.00	150.00	20000/- 1000/-	18 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	02.09.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	03.09.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	03.09.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
2	Construction of elevated Road At Kumaran ka Bhatta on Surajpole Pratap nagar road	1960.00	39.20	20000/- 1000/-	12 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	23.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	24.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	24.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
3	Construction of Alternate Road from Chandpole to Brahm pole, Udaipur	900.00	18.00	20000/- 1000/-	12 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	23.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	24.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	24.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
4	Conservation & Redevelopment works of Fateh Memorial	82.15	1.65	10000/- 1000/-	09 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
5	Construction of 2 Nos. Synthetic Basket Ball Court at Lov-Kush Stadium, Udaipur	81.47	1.63	10000/- 1000/-	04 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
6	Construction of Boundary at Bio-Methanation Plant at Balicha	68.35	1.37	10000/- 1000/-	03 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
7	Electrification work Phase-II at Balicha, Udaipur	55.52	1.111	10000/- 1000/-	3 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
8	Construction of Hall at First Floor at Luv-Kush Stadium, Udaipur	31.14	0.63	2000/- 500/-	04 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
9	Construction of Conference Hall at Third Floor Jila Parishad, Udaipur	50.00	1.00	2000/- 1000/-	04 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)
10	Facade Lighting Work at Gangaur Ghat, Udaipur	50.00	1.00	2000/- 1000/-	04 Month	01.08.2020 from 01:00 P.M.	13.08.2020 (Up to 03:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)	14.08.2020 (Up to 04:00 P.M.)

Earnest money and cost of tender documents shall be deposited through RTGS/ NEFT in the account of Udaipur Smart City Limited having account no. 10000000000000060 with AU SMALL FINANCE Bank, Delhi Gate Udaipur branch (IFSC code AUBL0002243). The unique transaction reference of RTGS/ NEFT shall be uploaded by the tenderer along with scanned copies of eligibility documents with "Eligibility Bid". The financial bid shall be submitted online only. The financial bid of renderers qualifying eligibility criteria shall thereafter be opened on specific time, date of venue which will be intimated to them separately. The provisions of RTPP Act 2012 and Rules 2013 thereto shall be applicable for this procurement. Furthermore, in case of any inconsistency in any of the provisions of this bidding document with the RTPP act 2012 and Rules thereto, the latter shall prevail. Websites for downloading Bidding Document [sspp.rajasthan.gov.in</a](http://sspp.rajasthan.gov.in)



As strong as rice

Kerala's indigenous *pokkali* variety weathers floods, storms and probably even this year's delayed monsoons. It is not surprising that the tide is turning in favour of this once-sidelined crop

PRIYADESHINI S

The pandemic and a delayed monsoon managed to push Kerala's *pokkali* rice sowing season to late June this year. The farmers who grow this indigenous rice variety, however, know that its grit and resilience will see them through; after all, *pokkali* is hailed as a climate adaptive food.

PK Hormis Tharakan was a late entrant to the tribe of *pokkali* growers. The retired police officer began farming this variety in 2016 in his ancestral land in Thaikattussery, on the eastern side of Lake Vembanad. He learned of its virtues after his crop weathered the 2018 floods, even when the bund broke and drowned the field. That year, the crop survived huge winds in Kadamakkudy until the grain was harvested.

There is further proof of its hardness: a 2018 documentary *Njan Pokkali* by environmental consultant Ranjith Rajendran, traces the history of the rice. Washed away by flood-waters in the Western Ghats, the seed survives a long and tumultuous journey to finally germinate in Kerala's salty coastal waters. The plant grew to a



height of five feet defying the low tidal waves. Slowly, it became part of the State's heritage and lore, and rituals attached themselves to its cultivation.

Over time, however, this traditional rice lost its place to more lucrative agricultural produce and was reduced

to small pockets. This caused the loss of an entire social and ecological ecosystem.

However, the tide is now turning in its favour. Since *pokkali* cultivation does not use either pesticides or fertilizers, it has been popular as an organic variety for around a decade. Ecologically, its significance lies in its ability to resist sea erosion. After 2018, it is being seen as a potential climate-change-resistant food and a responsible tourism farming produce.

In 2011, Gopinath Parayil, a responsible tourism pioneer, began to associate with the *pokkali* cause. He has been popularising farming tours in Ezhikkara and Kadamakkudy panchayats.

"Here is an amazing wild nutritious indigenous rice that survived the floods but its growers are struggling. It is labour-intensive and does not fetch a good market rate. We need to retail it strategically for its unique properties." Gopi tried to market the rice to "conscious consumers" in Kerala initially and also link it with tourism by taking the story of this rice to 17 hotels and creating a demand. He even introduced the rice to students of the prestigious Culinary Institute of America.

Last year, as part of Sampoorna Pokkali, a re-generation programme by Paliyakkal Service Cooperative Bank, Ranjith began pushing *pokkali* as food security produce and streamlining its collection and marketing from 34 panchayats. "We are also doing value-addition products with almost 12 derivatives from *pokkali*, like tooth powder from its husk," he says.

KG Padmakumar, Director, International Research and Training Center for Below Sea Level Farming (IRTCBSF) Kuttanad, points out that

the world is looking at saline-resistant crop varieties, now that sea levels are rising. *Pokkali* received GI status in 2008, but is farmed only in 1,500 hectares now. The area was 20,000 hectares 30 years ago.

Feeding grounds

It grows well in the tidal wetlands of Ernakulam, Thrissur, and Alappuzha. The farming season is April to October and fields are given over to prawn and shrimp cultivation for the rest of the year. Padmakumar points out the symbiotic aspect: decayed *pokkali* stems feeds prawns, while prawn shell waste nourishes the paddy.

Padmakumar also explains that prawn farming is lucrative whereas

pokkali rice productivity is low. "Many farmers opt to shift to prawn farming completely but this poses the danger of turning the soil entirely saline."

Tharakan remarks that ADAK (Agency For Development of Aquaculture), a project of NABARD, offers 80% subsidy to *pokkali* farmers. "After the Paris Agreement on climate change, reviving *pokkali* cultivation gained impetus. These drew me to its cultivation." Marketing remains a problem, he admits, but the demand for its seeds is vibrant.

First line of defence

Padmakumar feels *pokkali* cultivation should be encouraged for its ecological benefit. He explains that paddy draws fresh water, while the crop itself prevents the entry of seawater. The fields are used for rainwater harvesting. This, he says, is significant in times of climate change. "*Pokkali* is the first line of defence against seawater entry. This ecological angle is not being taken seriously," he laments.

Francis Kalathungal, a farmer from Chellanam, Kochi, who formed 'Samrakshana Samithi' to protect this, says, "Cropping in *pokkali* fields performs the vital function of letting rainwater percolate into the subsoil. This fresh water offsets salinity pressure on the water table. The benefits are innumerable and palpable. Often, development planners judge paddy cropping only on the basis of productivity. True, the per-acreage yield of *pokkali* is low, but its benefit to ecology is deep and long."

Pokkali farming is also reduced because its harvesting is labour intensive. Getting labourers is a problem as most *pokkali* farms are near cities and people are drawn to more lucrative jobs. Ranjith, however, is optimistic. Post the pandemic, he is ready with plans to promote the rice, emphasising its potential for food security and combating climate change.

"We have guided tours and souvenirs," he says, hoping that farmers will benefit from this reinterpretation of the heritage rice.



Soil and water This rice crop draws in freshwater to combat salinity, and also creates space for prawn feeding and cultivation • THULASI KAKKAT



What is now a lockdown trend has, for decades and across continents, been a go-to family recipe to keep kids engaged without a baking oven

Chocolate Biscuit Pudding

INGREDIENTS

- 200 gm Marie Biscuits
- 1 cup full cream milk
- 1/2 cup pan-roasted cashew
- 1/2 cup grated dark chocolate or dark chocolate chips
- (for buttercream) 50 gm butter
- 100 gm confectioners' sugar
- Cocoa powder to taste
- 1 tbsp of full-cream milk
- A pinch of salt

METHOD

Dip the biscuits in the milk but not until they are mushy – they should retain a bit of crunch. Whisk the buttercream ingredients together until light and fluffy. Layer your bowl/container alternately with biscuits and the chocolate buttercream (you can sprinkle a bit of cashew nuts in between too for extra crunch if you wish). Top with chocolate buttercream, pan-roasted cashew and chocolate shavings/chocolate chips. Refrigerate for an hour or two, until the cream is firmly set. Slice and serve cold. If you want to unmould the dessert, start CBP with a layer of buttercream; to serve in the pan, start with a layer of Marie.

Behold, the chocolate biscuit pudding

NAHLA NAINAR

The lockdown has been far from a 'crunch' for biscuit companies in India – with more people opting to stay in and avoid dining out, sweet and savoury snack foods, particularly cookies, have proved to be a popular choice to keep hunger at bay.

But biscuits do have a life beyond being the 'dip-dip-dip' companions of hot beverages, be they cloyingly sweet or sugar-free and cardboard-like.

Just like banana bread, recipes featuring biscuits in layered puddings, as crumb toppings and many other imagin-

native avatars have become the lockdown favourites for many work-from-home chefs on the lookout for Instagrammable food shots.

Some may see this as a spinoff on 'icebox cakes,' a no-bake dessert trend that started in the 1930s in the United States, mainly to popularise the refrigerator (then known as the icebox). Featuring powdered or crushed biscuits, the dishes had whipped cream or custard as a binding agent that would be arranged in layers and set in the fridge.

They have now evolved into several regional variations around the world. Lovers of chocolate biscuit cake are in

luck company, for the delicacy also happens to be the favourite of the British royal family. Darren McGrady, royal chef, has reportedly said that the dessert, made by mixing and refrigerating crushed Rich Tea Biscuits with melted butter, a beaten egg and melted dark chocolate and then iced with ganache, is one dish that Queen Elizabeth II prefers to eat till the end, even getting her staff to transport the dessert tin from palace to palace until it is over.

It was the cake of choice at her grandson Prince William's reception in 2011.

Closer home, the chocolate biscuit pudding (CBP), is a British colonial institution of sorts in Sri Lanka. Featuring Marie biscuits dipped in milk and arranged with alternate layers of chocolate buttercream and nuts, the CBP is a rich dessert despite its simple ingredients.

"The key to a great CBP is to keep the Marie biscuits very lightly soaked, so that the pudding is crisp. A mushy pudding doesn't taste so nice," says Shyama Jeyanathan, a former air stewardess and HR professional who later trained as a baker and runs the Cakes By Design bakery in the Battaramulla suburb of Colombo.

She says infusing brandy or cognac into the buttercream can give a posh spin to the CBP. "Other versions would be to top it off with a chocolate ganache and strawberries, or salted caramel, or a mocha cream. You can use your own variations to suit your palette," says Shyama as she shares her recipe.

HORS D'OEUVRES



Jack of all jams

If you have been eating seasonal jackfruit, and want them to last longer so that you can enjoy them wherever you want to, then you probably have not heard of jackfruit jam. Jackfruit lovers are clearly obsessed with the fruit and have thought of ways to preserve it.

Making jackfruit jam is as easy as making a fruit preserve, but it needs some amount of cooking to make sure the diced fruit sections are all cooked well in sugar. Once the jam is in its done state, it gets a delectable golden hue.

How is it best enjoyed? Food blogger Pallavi Saharia (photo shared by her) and her family are die-hard fans of jackfruit. So Pallavi decided to make the jackfruit jam to see that each fruit from the tree is put to good use without wasting it. Pallavi says, "it is an absolute delight to have the jam with warm toast. I think it is pretty easy to make provided one has patience and time."



Instant Araku cuppa

Arakuuccino is a new instant coffee brand, made with – you guessed it – Araku coffee. It is a blend made from quality beans from the Eastern ghats: the Arabic beans required are produced by local farmers and roasted. This instant coffee is made with Arabica and chicory in 90-10 proportion, and comes in tin packs of 50 gram (₹90) and 100 gram (₹170). It is available online on

select e-commerce portals and also at the company's portal Arakuroma.com. Once the COVID-19 pandemic ends, the coffee will also be made available in retail stores, says a company official. "Arakuuccino will appeal to coffee lovers. Only beans from Araku Valley are used for this. This is an organic produce and its journey from farm to cup is traceable. The beans are procured by Araku Aroma, a Hyderabad-based company, following a strict quality check process," said an official of the Hyderabad-headquartered company. The new instant coffee is made at the company's Bengaluru manufacturing unit.



National Handloom Day

Symbols of resilience

Dolls giving health tips, artisans going digital, age-old looms getting modern makeovers. Here's to the innovative spirit of our handloom communities

PRIYADERSHINI S

Kovid Kumari symbolises hope and joy. She is one of the many Karuna (compassion) dolls being made across the country to highlight the plight of artisans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conceptualised and promoted by the voluntary online movement CreativeDignity.org (CD), these dolls are being created by women spinners, weavers and embroiderers from their homes: from Punjab to Puducherry.

The finger-sized Karuna dolls will be launched on National Handloom Day (August 7) by each State, and the project will be unfurled on August 15. An app that will make it easier for artisans to get onboard digital marketing platforms is also in the making, and will be launched soon. This is part of a larger programme to connect artisans and their craft with a market.

Says Creative Dignity's Meera Goradia, who has been working with artisans in various capacities for 30 years, "CD has brought together diverse creative producers, practitioners, and professionals to energise the ecosystem that Indian artisans need now. Our focus is to provide relief, and rejuvenation in a bid to ensure the sustained prosperity of artisans."



Spreading hope (Clockwise from top left) Kadakali finger puppet of Kerala, Babuni of Bihar, Karuna of Puducherry, Heer of Punjab and (above) Kovid Kumari of Haryana ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Veer, says Lakshmi Ahuja over the phone from Bhatinda. "Our dolls are imbued with the spirit of *karuna* found in the *langar* served in *gurdwaras*, which ensure that no one goes hungry. In Punjabi folklore, Veerawali has many brothers and is the darling of her family. She is always ready to help. The dolls highlight the *naada*-making (drawstrings used in salwars) and *paraandi* (braids) crafts of Punjab. Fabric left over from garment-making, including men's turbans and women's *duppattas*, are being used for these."

Meera explains that they are working to enable artisans to align with the digital world and creating campaigns for stock sales. "Design schools such as Srishti, NIFT, IICD handhold the artisans in taking professional photographs and uploading them. We are building a stock sales listing, inviting B2B buyers to meet and interact with artisans."

In Puducherry, Karuna is a resurrection of Tsunamika, the doll born out of the devastating 2004 Tsunami, which was created by Uma Prajapati and her team at Upasana.

"By supporting the handmade industry, you are providing creative dignity to over 200 million artisans who are passing the art from one generation to another," says Uma. Her team made six million Tsunamika dolls that were retailed across 80 countries. "For the Karuna doll, we have chosen a colour combination and material that is representative of the South. A loop has been attached that makes it utterly versatile to be used as key-chains or other accessories," says Uma.

French connect

Meanwhile a group of women in Patna are busy making Babua and Babuni dolls for the project.

Coordinator Veena Upadhyay, who rejuvenated the craft of extra weft among artisans in Bihar's Siwan district, says that the prototype dolls were gifted as souvenirs when the women represented Bun Kar Bihar (a retail brand) at Maison et Objet, a major French trade fair in Paris in December 2019. "So when the idea came up, we had the prototype ready. The women are helped by their daughters and that is how the artistry is handed down through generations."

Chekkuty, the little doll that be-



came a symbol of the resilience of Kerala weavers during the 2018 floods, will now have a Karuna representative: the Kadakali finger puppet. "It will be made using Kerala handloom. Kathakali is a single art form that ties together many facets of Kerala. Its story will be narrated through micro puppetry," says Lakshmi Menon, co-founder, Chekkuty adding that the Kadakali finger puppetry is new to Kerala story telling.

In time, CD plans to introduce more crafts, including metal, wood and leather. As these dolls get ready to be launched, many ideas are still being formulated. One is a Karuna doll beginning her journey in an electric vehicle from one State, and other dolls joining her as she traverses the country, spreading hope and joy.

Contact Creative Dignity at 9821233473



The korvai story

CHITRADEEPA ANANTHARAM

SR Vejay Ganesh, 35, and his brother SR Vishwanath, 40, have been relentlessly striving to revive the *korvai*, a prized textile weaving technique of Tamil Nadu for the past 12 years. The brothers belong to the eighth generation of a heritage silk weaving Sourashtra community, and the loom was made in 1885 in Thanjavur by their ancestors. They learnt weaving from their father SV Rajarathnam, now 71, as children, and it was in 2008 that they shifted their focus to the revival of *korvai*.

"An ancient weaving technique, *korvai* is labour-intensive and requires two weavers to handle the shuttles at the loom. Years ago, most weavers quit weaving and took odd jobs as the income from weaving was meagre. As a result, this highly specialised technique languished and was on the verge of extinction," say Vejay. In 2007, he met textile researcher and revivalist Sabita Radhakrishna through the Crafts Council of India, who mentored him to revive the *korvai*. Today, Vejay has developed over 300 *korvai* designs and trained scores of weavers in this technique.

During the lockdown, the brothers continued to engage weavers, as they had their regular demand from customers, especially via their online store (Sagunthalai.com). "We ensured that weavers had the mask on and had the environment sanitised. As the looms are six to eight feet apart, physical distancing was not an issue," he says.

Vejay has adapted to the times and sells his products (silk and cotton saris) online. He used to make monthly visits with his latest collection to the homes of his 600-plus customers in Chennai. But now this system has been paused due to lockdown, which is why, adapting to the new normal, he is focussing on so-



Song of the loom (Above) Vejay working on a loom with his brother and father; (top) A double korvai sari ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

cial media to reach customers.

The brothers, both master weavers, have 10 looms in the terrace of their house in Thanjavur and employ weavers to weave traditional silk saris. "I had come across an old loom in which *korvai* dhooti were woven. I refitted and remodelled it to weave a *korvai* sari. With this innovation in 2011, I could weave a *korvai* with a 10-inch border," he says.

Once this improvised loom idea caught on, the weavers could weave four saris in a month, and what was even better was it did not require two weavers to handle the shuttle but one. "There was a boost in productivity and more weavers started showing interest in this technique."

"Using my funding, I have in the past few years trained 45 young weavers in the Thanjavur region in *korvai* weaving techniques, of which about five of them are showing excellence in the art. Technology has largely enabled and empowered us and I think it is essential," says Vejay.



Regional heritage

Rajasthan's Maru doll is inspired by the famous folk tale *Dholu Maru*. On the other hand, "Kovid Kumaris represent the craft of crochet. She works with women in the villages telling them that their family's health is in their hands," says Bindu Manchanda, who oversees the dolls from Haryana and Rajasthan and is the head of INTACH Community, Craft and Heritage. Around 25 women in the villages around Hisar were trained to make the dolls, she says, adding, "The sale of the dolls will supplement their income."

Punjab's Karuna dolls are the brother-sister duo Veerawali and

HOMING IN

Leaving out popular watches such as *Breaking Bad*, *Peaky Blinders* and *Dark*,

actor Rima Kallingal's **Watchlist** for this week is mostly around female-lead shows

SARASWATHY NAGARAJAN

The Fall

This features Gillian Anderson investigating a case of a string of attacks and murder of women in Belfast, Ireland. I have been watching her since *Sex Education*. To see how she has altered her body language was something that captivated the actor in me. It is interesting to see how they have turned the male gaze on its head in multiple ways. I will also add *Unbelievable* because it is also about women investigating crimes against women.



Mrs America

The series shows the Equal Rights Movement that happened in the US and that too, from the perspective of a right wing conservative Republican who led a movement against it. Cate Blanchett is just amazing. It was a goosebumps moment to see the portrayal of Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan. It was riveting to watch them discuss the trials and tribulations in the feminist movements and how it is difficult to break out from the patriarchal structure. I had tears in my eyes because we all need to understand that we are standing on their shoulders.



Films of Almodovar

On Disney+ Hotstar, there are a bunch of films of Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar. All movies are so out of the box and at the same time, they are so close to human emotions that Almodovar explores, even in the midst of the weirdest of storyline.



Flea Bag

Phoebe Waller-Bridge is unbelievable. Her script and acting have opened a new door in my brain. It is a comic-tragedy in so many different ways.

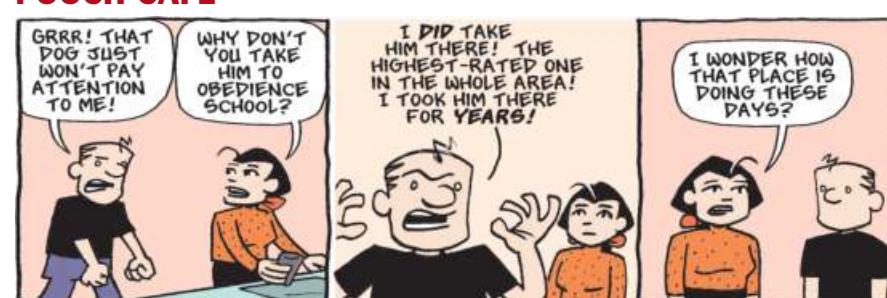


Second World War in Colour

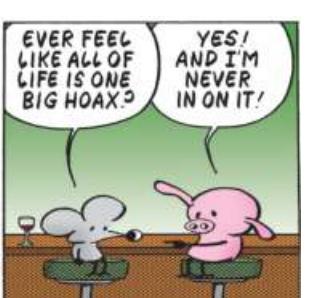
Ten episodes where they discuss the events leading to the Second World War and the context in which the war was fought. It gives us the context to understand why we are here and what has shaped the world as we know it. I would also like to recommend *Salt*, *Fat*, *Acid Heat*, *Nannette* and *Our Planet*.

We would love to know how you are keeping busy at home. Tell us what you are watching at metro@thehindu.co.in

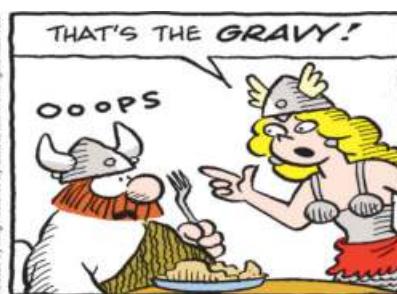
POOCHE CAFE



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



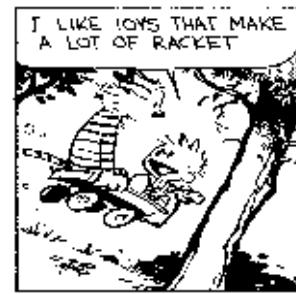
PEANUTS



TIGER



CALVIN AND HOBBES



Sri Lanka's Oppn. suffers a huge setback

Decisive parliamentary majority will allow the Rajapaksas to alter the country's political landscape

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The likely decisive parliamentary majority secured by the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP, or People's Party) in the island nation's recent general elections is set to change its political landscape in significant ways.

The political opposition to the Rajapaksas that was in fragments prior to the poll, could be decimated, going by results released until Thursday night.

Pandemic factor

Three months after his election, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was faced with a raging pandemic. His government, mainly its public health officials with help from the Army, contained its spread early, earning global praise and goodwill within the country.

With President Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa leading the party's campaign ahead of the August 5 polls, crafted by their brother Basil Rajapaksa – known for skilfully cracking poll arithmetic – their victory was certain. Only its extent wasn't. But the go-



In control: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa waving as he leaves after casting his vote at a polling station in Colombo on Wednesday. • AP

vernment's successful pandemic response, a weak and fragmented opposition, and a full-throated campaign appears to have led the party closer to its desired two-thirds majority in parliament.

Chief casualty

Meanwhile, the chief casualty of the poll appears to be the United National Party

(UNP), one of Sri Lanka's oldest parties led by former PM Ranil Wickremesinghe. The Samagi Jana Balawegaya, led by Sajith Premadasa who broke away from the UNP, had secured less than 25% of the votes as of Thursday night. With the rump of the historic Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) having merged itself with the SLPP, the Rajapaksas have an un-

precedented opportunity to consolidate power.

Apparently recognising this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among the first world leaders to call Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, whose former government was widely accused of tilting towards China.

In a press statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said Mr. Modi noted that the

incoming election results indicated "an impressive electoral performance" by the SLPP. The two leaders stressed the significance of early progress in all spheres of bilateral cooperation, the media release said.

Further, Mr. Modi informed Mr. Rajapaksa of the establishment of an international airport in the Buddhist pilgrimage city of Kushinagar in India, and said that the city looked forward to welcoming visitors from Sri Lanka at an early date.

Tamil vote

The Tamil National Alliance suffered a setback in the north and east, particularly in Jaffna district.

Though the final tally is awaited, that it has ceded considerable space to allies of the ruling party and to the Tamil nationalist All Ceylon Tamil Congress (ACTC) was clear from early trends.

Sri Lanka follows a proportional representation system of elections where voters mark up to three preferences in candidates. The total tally of seats secured by each party will be known on Friday.

FB, Twitter take aim at Trump 'misinformation'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SAN FRANCISCO

Facebook and Twitter took aim at U.S. President Donald Trump and his campaign on Wednesday over a video post, in which he contended that children are "almost immune" to the COVID-19, a claim they said amounted to "misinformation."

In an extraordinary move, Facebook removed the clip from the President's account

– the first time it has taken down one of his posts for violating its content rules.

The video – an excerpt from a Fox News interview – "includes false claims that a group of people is immune from COVID-19 which is a violation of our policies around harmful COVID misinformation," a Facebook spokesperson told AFP.

Twitter, meanwhile, said it had blocked Mr. Trump's

official campaign account over a tweet containing the same video, in which the President made the case for reopening U.S. schools come September.

A spokesperson for the San Francisco-based service said the tweet was "in violation of the Twitter rules on COVID-19 misinformation," adding that the campaign would have to remove it before being allowed to tweet

again. Soon thereafter, the @TeamTrump account was active, suggesting the contested video had been taken down.

President's defence

"Another day, another display of Silicon Valley's flagrant bias against this President, where the rules are only enforced in one direction," the Trump campaign's deputy national press secretary Courtney Parella said in a statement.

tary Courtney Parella said in a statement.

Mr. Trump defended his comments about the virus's effect on children when challenged during a White House press briefing earlier on Wednesday.

"I'm talking about (being immune) from getting very sick," Mr. Trump said.

"If you look at children I mean they are able to throw it off very easily."

After landing in Beirut, Mr. Macron said France's solidarity with the Lebanese people was unconditional, but said he wanted to tell some "home truths" to political figures.

Reforms needed

"Beyond the blast, we know the crisis here is serious, it involves the historic responsibility of leaders in place," Mr. Macron told reporters.

"We can't do without telling each other some home truths," he added. "If reforms are not carried out, Lebanon will continue to sink."

Mr. Macron promised to send more medical and other aid to Lebanon, while those around him chanted "Revolution" and "The people want the fall of the regime."

"But what is also needed here is political change. This explosion should be the start of a new era," Mr. Ma-

cron said.

One man told Mr. Macron: "We hope this aid will go to the Lebanese people not the corrupt leaders."

"I guarantee you, this aid will not go to corrupt hands," said Mr. Macron, who was wearing a black tie in mourning.

"Mr President, you're on General Gouraud Street, he freed us from the Ottomans. Free us from the current authorities," said one person among the crowd.

China sentences third Canadian to death

He was convicted of making drugs

REUTERS
BEIJING

Mr. Xu has a lawyer.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin, asked about the case at a regular briefing, said drug crimes were very serious and everyone was equal before the law.

"I don't think it should have any effect on China-Canada relations," Mr. Wang said.

The Canadian, identified as Xu Weihong, was sentenced after a trial in the southern city of Guangzhou, the Guangzhou Intermediate Court said in a notice on its website.

It did not say what drugs he had been convicted of making, nor give any other details about his crime. The court ordered his property to be confiscated.

Reuters was not immediately able to determine if

Pompeo against vote for Cuba on Human Rights Council

He said Havana sells medical services by trafficking doctors

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has urged UN members not to support Cuba's bid to join the organisation's Human Rights Council.

"It's outrageous that the Human Rights Council would offer to seat Cuba, a brutal dictatorship that traffic its own doctors under the guise of humanitarian missions," the top U.S. diplomat said on Wednesday.

Mr. Pompeo has described Cuba's sale of medical services, Havana's main source of foreign exchange, as a form of human trafficking. "No country should vote Cuba onto the council," he said.

Under President Donald



Trump, Washington has reversed an opening with Cuba initiated by former president Barack Obama, hardening a trade embargo in effect since 1962.

Cuba, which sat on the UNHRC in 2014-2016 and 2017-2019, has applied to fill

one of the regional vacancies for 2021-2023.

The seats are distributed geographically and are awarded for a period of three years. Members are not eligible for immediate relection after serving two consecutive terms.

Washington withdrew from the council in 2018, with Ambassador Nikki Haley calling it a "cesspool of political bias" and a "hypocritical and self-serving organisation that makes a mockery of human rights."

In particular, Ms. Haley had slammed the council for adopting resolutions condemning Israel, which has come under scrutiny by the council for its treatment of Palestinians.

TikTok to open Ireland data centre for Europe

It will ensure data security, faster loading

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DUBLIN



Popular video-sharing app TikTok, threatened with a ban in the U.S. over its Chinese ownership, on Thursday announced plans for its first data centre for European users in Ireland.

Roland Cloutier, TikTok's global chief information security officer, said the 420-million-euro (\$498 million) project would be operational by early 2022.

In a blog posting, he said it would "play a key role in further strengthening the safeguarding and protection of TikTok user data, with a state of the art physical and network security defence system planned around this new operation".

"This new regional data centre will deliver tangible benefits, including enabling faster loading time," he wrote.

Data from TikTok users is currently held in the U.S. and Singapore.

President Donald Trump has threatened to ban the firm, which is owed by China's ByteDance, unless its U.S. operations are sold swiftly to a U.S. company. Officials say the app poses a national security risk as it could share Americans' data with Chinese intelligence.

U.S. examines if Riyadh has nuclear goals

Intel flags China-Saudi bid to develop fuel that can be enriched into weapon fuel

MARK MAZZETTI
DAVID E. SANGER

U.S. intelligence agencies are scrutinising efforts by Saudi Arabia to build up its ability to produce nuclear fuel that could put the kingdom on a path to developing nuclear weapons.

Spy agencies in recent weeks circulated a classified analysis about the efforts underway inside Saudi Arabia, working with China, to build industrial capacity to produce nuclear fuel. The analysis has raised alarms that there might be secret Saudi-Chinese efforts to process raw uranium into a form that could later be enriched into weapons fuel, according to U.S. officials.

As part of the study, they have identified a newly completed structure near a solar-panel production area near Riyadh that some experts suspect could be an undeclared nuclear site. U.S. officials said that the



Under lens: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, left, with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. • AP/FILE

2015 to develop a nuclear programme, a clear indication that the committee suspects that some undeclared nuclear activity is going on.

The report, the provision stated, should include an assessment of "the state of nuclear cooperation between Saudi Arabia and any other country other than the U.S., such as the People's Republic of China or the Russian Federation."

An article in *The Wall Street Journal* on Tuesday said that Western officials were concerned about a different facility in Saudi Arabia, in the country's northwest desert. The *Journal* said it was part of a programme with the Chinese to extract uranium yellowcake from uranium ore. That is a necessary first step in the process of obtaining uranium for later enrichment, either for use in a civilian nuclear reactor or, enriched to much higher levels, a nuclear weapon.

Japan marks 75 years of atomic bombing

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HIROSHIMA

Japan on Thursday marked 75 years since the world's first atomic bomb attack, with the coronavirus pandemic forcing a scaling back of ceremonies to remember the victims.

Survivors, relatives and a handful of foreign dignitaries attended this year's main event in Hiroshima to pray for those killed or wounded in the bombing and call for world peace. But the general public was kept away, with the ceremony broadcast online.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui warned against the nationalism that led to Second World War and urged the world to come together to face global threats, like the pandemic. Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged to do his best for the "realisation of a world without nuclear weapons".

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Joint Commissioner, (South) Zone, Welfare Division, 9th Main Road, 9th Cross Road, Jayanagara 2nd Stage, Bangalore- 560011

No: J.C.(S)/K.E/P.R/137/2020-21 Date: 06.08.2020

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

In lieu of the special grant reserve of Rs.250.00 Lakhs To members of the Tax and Financial Standing Committee through the reorganization of 2019-20 and 2020-21, out of which an amount of Rs.100.00 lakhs has been allocated for the distribution of Sewing machines, for each zone under the Accounting pincode number: 3768 for Ward No. 181-Kumaraswamy Layout, 176-B.T.M. Layout and 124-Hosahalli, In the BBMP south zone range, Tender has been invited in Single/Two cover system from eligible and interested Manufacturers / Authorized sellers who are registered as per the Karnataka Transparency Bill Rules of 1999 and 2000 for the implementation of the said programme, for procuring and distributing various materials from suppliers.

SL No.	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lakhs)	EMD (In Rupees)
1	Providing sewing machines to the beneficiaries of sewing training at Ward No.181-Kumaraswamy Layout.	100.00	2,50,000.00
2	Providing sewing machines to the beneficiaries of sewing training at Ward No.176-B.T.M Layout.	100.00	2,50,000.00
3	Providing sewing machines to the beneficiaries of sewing training at Ward No.124-Hosahalli Zone.	100.00	2,50,000.00

(1)Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in/eportal/index.seam> under login for contractors of Government of Karnataka from 06.08.2020 (2)Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before 13.08.2020 upto 3.30 PM (3) Date of opening of Technical Bid on 14.08.2020 at 4.00 PM (4) Date of opening of Financial Bid on 17.08.2020 at 4.30 PM. Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours on working days or from website <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Joint Commissioner (South)
Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

Pay Development Charges-Help To Develop Bengaluru

MARKET WATCH

	06-08-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	38,025	0.96
US Dollar	74.94	0.00
Gold	56,590	0.73
Brent oil	45.38	-1.35

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	323.80	-3.30
Asian Paints	1727.55	11.25
Axis Bank	433.00	-1.95
Bajaj Auto	2991.80	-17.20
Bajaj Finserv	6295.70	53.65
Bajaj Finance	3245.20	32.05
Bharti Airtel	555.30	-3.65
BPCL	409.55	-0.90
Britannia Ind	3857.65	7.70
Cipla	731.10	8.95
Coal India	128.85	0.40
Dr Reddys Lab	4583.05	-17.90
Eicher Motors	21681.30	-277.45
GAIL (India)	95.65	2.35
Grasim Ind	634.20	0.75
HCL Tech	704.90	16.50
HDPC	1783.75	7.05
HDPC Bank	1040.70	13.15
HDPC Life	606.90	1.90
Hero MotoCorp	2704.45	8.70
Hindalco	178.00	2.25
Hind Unilever	2220.45	25.90
ICICI Bank	358.75	6.55
IndusInd Bank	494.90	2.15
Bharti Infratel	191.55	0.50
Infosys	970.85	26.15
Indian Oil Corp	87.20	0.60
ITC	195.35	2.55
JSW Steel	239.50	4.35
Kotak Bank	1340.10	5.90
L&T	922.15	-3.60
M&M	609.65	-4.60
Maruti Suzuki	6555.75	29.50
Nestle India Ltd.	16677.15	173.80
NTPC	86.15	0.25
ONGC	78.05	1.10
PowerGrid Corp	175.90	-0.05
Reliance Ind	2134.10	7.65
State Bank	190.95	-0.50
Shree Cement	21722.85	-381.05
Sun Pharma	532.25	3.40
Tata Motors	116.80	1.40
Tata Steel	400.45	4.65
TCS	2308.10	48.60
Tech Mahindra	660.35	11.80
Titan	1120.15	14.70
UltraTech Cement	4028.35	-12.70
UPL	463.90	10.30
Wipro	279.65	1.45
Zee Entertainment	148.75	3.20

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar.....	74.73	75.05
Euro.....	88.54	88.92
British Pound	98.41	98.87
Japanese Yen (100).....	70.74	71.04
Chinese Yuan.....	10.76	10.81
Swiss Franc.....	82.24	82.64
Singapore Dollar.....	54.52	54.76
Canadian Dollar.....	56.27	56.51
Malaysian Ringgit.....	17.82	17.91
Australian Dollar.....	53.71	53.94

Source: Indian Bank

Adani Enterprises Q1 loss at ₹65.67 cr.

NEW DELHI
Adani Enterprises on Thursday reported a consolidated loss of ₹65.67 crore for the first quarter ended June 30. PTI

Inflation to stay elevated: RBI

Economy to shrink in FY21, says central bank; offers no estimate on contraction

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

India's GDP will shrink in 2020-21, while inflation will continue to stay elevated in the coming months, the Reserve Bank of India said on Thursday. However, the RBI refrained from projecting an estimate for the contraction, with an early containment of the COVID-19 pandemic being the only hope for a positive surprise.

The RBI is hopeful of inflation easing during the second half of 2020-21. Headline inflation had gone up from 5.8% in March to 6.1% in June 2020, with price pressures evident across items, including food. A good monsoon and a bumper kharif crop could ease food prices, especially those of protein-based food items and vegetables that are prop-



Silver lining: A good monsoon and a bumper kharif crop could ease food prices, the RBI noted. ■ S. RAMBABU

ping up food inflation, the central bank noted.

Fresh infections'
RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the global economy had been stuttering again after some signs of recovery in May and June, as a wave of fresh COVID-19 infections had taken hold. "The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

noted that in India too, economic activity had started to recover from the lows of April-May; however, surges of fresh infections have forced re-clamping of lockdowns in several cities and States. Consequently, several high frequency indicators have levelled off," Mr. Das said, adding that imports also fell sharply in June, re-

flecting weak domestic demand and low crude oil prices. "Given the uncertainty surrounding the inflation outlook and extremely weak state of the economy in the midst of an unprecedented shock from the ongoing pandemic, the MPC decided to keep the policy rate on hold, while remaining watchful for a durable reduction in inflation to use available space to support the revival of the economy," he added.

"The decision to hold was correct as trajectory of economic growth, inflation, and external demand continues to be uncertain," said Soumya Kanti Ghosh, group chief economic adviser, SBI. "The calibrated approach is in consonance with evolving situation while keeping enough headroom for the future," he added.

Credit discipline: current account norms tightened

No new accounts for users with CC, OD

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

In a move aimed at improving credit discipline, the Reserve Bank of India has instructed lenders not to open current accounts for customers who have availed credit facilities in the form of cash credit (CC)/overdraft (OD) from a bank, and directed them to ensure that all transactions are routed through the CC/OD account.

The new rules will be applicable to existing current, CC/OD accounts with various banks.

Curbs on debits

"Where a bank's exposure to a borrower is less than 10% of the exposure of the banking system to that bor-

rower, while credits are freely permitted, debits to the CC/OD account can only be for credit to the CC/OD account of that borrower with a bank that has 10% or more of the exposure of the banking system to that borrower," the RBI said in a circular.

Further, credit balances in such accounts cannot be used as margin for availing any non-fund based credit facilities, the RBI added.

In case there is more than one bank having 10% or more of the exposure of the banking system to that borrower, the bank to which the funds are to be remitted may be decided mutually between the borrower and the banks, the central bank elaborated.

The move will help soften the impact on both banks as well as borrowers on the twin dimensions of controlling a rise in NPAs and supporting credit flow, said Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director, CRISIL Ratings.

"The relaxations permitted, subject to certain conditions being fulfilled, will limit the rise in NPAs in the

Debt resolution plan to help borrowers, lenders: bankers

Move will help soften impact of COVID-19, say analysts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The central bank's debt resolution plan for corporate and personal loans has been welcomed by analysts, bankers and corporates.

Under the facility, lenders can go for a one-time restructuring of loans under stress due to the pandemic.

The move will help soften the impact on both banks as well as borrowers on the twin dimensions of controlling a rise in NPAs and supporting credit flow, said Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director, CRISIL Ratings.

"The relaxations permitted, subject to certain conditions being fulfilled, will limit the rise in NPAs in the

banking system in the near to medium term," he said.

Mr. Sitaraman said the restructuring option had been extended to retail personal loans as well since many of these borrowers had faced challenges in debt servicing due to salary cuts and job losses. "MSMEs, who

have been substantially impacted by disruptions, also get a relief in the form of a three-month extension in the existing restructuring scheme," he added.

"The industry is encouraged by RBI's decision to provide a window under the Prudential Framework to enable lenders to implement a resolution plan," said Uday Kotak, president, CII.

"Extension of timeline of MSME restructuring, incentive scheme for priority sector lending shall work favourably towards the stability of financial sector to support growth and recovery in the economy," said A.K. Das, MD and CEO, Bank of India.

Bank, realty, auto stocks see mixed trend

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

central bank's bi-monthly monetary policy outcome.

As per the existing scheme, the borrower account had to be standard as on January 1, 2020.

Commenting on the scheme, PwC Partner Kunjal Sur said it was a good move by the RBI and would help MSMEs impacted by COVID-19 to get time and space to service debt when cash flows are under pressure due to uncertainty.

Priority sector lending to include start-ups

Entities to get easier access to credit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday decided to broaden the scope of priority sector lending (PSL) by including start-ups and enhancing borrowing limits for renewable energy sectors.

The central bank would also increase the targets for lending to 'small and marginal farmers' and 'weaker sections' under the PSL.

"With a view to align the guidelines with emerging national priorities and bring sharper focus on inclusive development, the guidelines have been reviewed after wide ranging consultations with all stakeholders," the RBI said.

including agriculture and micro-enterprises, it said.

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TV PICKS

UEFA Champions League: Sony Ten 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)
Formula One: Practice, SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 3.20 p.m. & 7.20 p.m.
England vs Pakistan: Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
NBA: Sony Six (SD & HD), 6.30 a.m. & 4 a.m. (Saturday)
LPGA Marathon Classic: Eurosport (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Saturday)

IN BRIEF



Paul helps Thunder pull a fast one on Lakers

MIAMI
 Chris Paul scored a game-high 21 points as Oklahoma City Thunder thumped Los Angeles Lakers 105-86 in NBA action on Wednesday.
The results: Oklahoma City Thunder bt LA Lakers 105-86; Toronto Raptors bt Orlando Magic 109-99; Boston Celtics bt Brooklyn Nets 149-115; Philadelphia 76ers bt Washington Wizards 107-98. AFP

Sony Television to air 'Chai with Raja'

NEW DELHI
 Tennis player Purav Raja's Instagram live show 'Chai with Raja' will soon be on television. Purav will host five shows of 30 minutes each on Sony TV. "It is a step forward. We will tweak the format slightly to suit TV," said Purav.

ICC meeting today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The ICC Board meeting on Friday is set to discuss the venues for the next two T20 World Cups, finalise the election procedure for the next chairman and provide an update on next year's Women's ODI World Cup in New Zealand.

India has been allotted the 2021 edition, but confirmation is subject to the

Masood crafts an epic

The opener's 156 takes Pakistan to 326 in its first innings

PAKISTAN IN ENG

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
 MANCHESTER

Shan Masood joined a select group of Pakistan batsmen to have scored hundreds in three successive Test innings as his excellent knock led the tourists to 326 all out against England on the second day of the series opener at Old Trafford on Thursday.

The left-handed opener batted for nearly eight hours in largely bowler-friendly conditions for a Test-best 156 (319b, 18x4, 2x6), surpassing his 135 against Sri Lanka in Karachi in December.

As well as being his fourth hundred in 21 Tests, it was Masood's third in a row, after his 135 and 100 against Bangladesh in February.

Valuable stand
 Masood received excellent support from Shadab Khan (45) in a sixth-wicket stand of 105 that turned the tide after Pakistan had been struggling at 176 for five. The pair ran England ragged, with even defensive shots producing well-taken runs.

Pakistan had managed just 48 runs for the loss of three wickets in Thursday's first session to reach 187 for five.



On a roll: Shan Masood notched up his third consecutive Test century on Thursday. ■ AFP

Masood, educated in England, is the sixth Pakistan batsman to score a hundred in three consecutive Test innings after Zaheer Abbas, Madassar Nazar, Moham-

mad Yousuf, Younis Khan and Misbah-ul-Haq.

Broad led England's attack with three for 54 while Jofra Archer took three for 59.

SCOREBOARD

Pakistan – 1st innings: Shan Masood lbw b Broad 156, Abid Ali b Archer 16, Azhar Ali lbw b Woakes 0, Babar Azam c Root b Anderson 69, Asad Shafiq c Stokes b Broad 7, Mohd. Rizwan c Buttler b Woakes 9, Shadab Khan c Root b Bess 45, Yasir Shah lbw b Archer 5, Mohd. Abbas c Root b Archer 0, Shaheen Afridi (not out) 9, Naseem Shah

c Buttler b Broad 0; Extras (b-1, lb-7, nb-2): 10; Total (in 109.3 overs): 326.

Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-43, 3-

39, 4-150, 5-176, 6-281, 7-291,

8-291, 9-317.

England bowling: Anderson 19-6-63-1, Broad 22.3-9-54-3, Woakes 20-6-43-2, Archer 22-4-59-3, Bess 20-4-74-1, Root 6-0-25-0.

Fenesta National tennis c'ship postponed

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Fenesta National tennis championship, scheduled to be staged in October, has been postponed. "In the current scenario, players travelling from across the country and staying in guest houses, hotels might not be advisable. Keeping this in

mind we have decided to postpone the championship till we are sure about the situation," said organising secretary Aman Pannu. The organisers have been monitoring developments and did want to go ahead with the championship till they were absolutely sure of ensuring safety of the players.

It's official: Vivo no longer IPL 2020 title sponsor

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and Vivo announced on Thursday that the Chinese firm's Indian arm will not be the title sponsor for the Indian Premier League's 2020 edition, set to be played in the United Arab Emirates from September 19 to November 10.

"The BCCI and Vivo Mobile India Pvt. Ltd. have decided to suspend their partnership for the 2020 season of the Indian Premier League".

Vivo, which replaced Peppsi as the title sponsor in 2016,

from 2018 to 2022 worth a whopping ₹440 crore per edition.

It appears that a combination of the company seeking a reduction in the sponsorship amount because of the COVID-19-caused economic crisis, as reported in *The Hindu*, and the public sentiment in India following the border tension with China has led to the parting of ways. The BCCI, in all likelihood, will now initiate the process to find a new title sponsor, with the season-

opener just six weeks away. It's a given that any bid will fetch far less than Vivo's sum.

Operational issues

In addition to the financial hit, the franchises will also have to deal with operational issues. "All our sponsors are in place and we had placed the order to manufacture kits in bulk," said a franchise executive. "Now fresh kits will have to be made all over again once we know the title sponsor."

Less money for US Open winner

REUTERS
NEW YORK

The US Open singles winners will receive \$850,000 less prize money this year, the United States Tennis Association said on Wednesday. The \$53.4 million total prize pool is down from last year's \$57 million pot with 2020 first-round prize money jumping 5% to \$61,000 from \$58,000.

Singles winners will receive \$3 million, down from \$3.85 million in 2019.

United advances

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Manchester United edged LASK, while Inter beat Getafe on Wednesday to clinch places in the Europa League quarterfinals.

Important results: Shakhtar Donetsk 3 (Moraes 89, 90+3, Solomon 90+1) bt Wolves 0. Shakhtar wins 5-1 on aggregate.

Manchester United 2 (Lingard 57, Martial 88) bt LASK 1 (Wiesinger 55). United wins 7-1 on aggregate.

Inter Milan 2 (Lukaku 33, Eriksen 83) bt Getafe 0. First leg postponed so played as a one-off tie.

Tough to set targets with so much uncertainty, says Divij Sharan

TENNIS

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

These are uncertain times for Divij Sharan. The 34-year-old doubles specialist, ranked 56 in the world, is still unsure if he will get into the reduced U.S. Open draw, and hence may play the Challengers in Europe, and possibly get ready for Roland Garros in Paris in late September.

"It is tough to set a target for the rest of the season with so much uncertainty. It will be good to finish inside the top-50 by the end of the year. It will give me an opportunity to move up in the rankings next year and make the cut for the Olympics,"



Divij Sharan.

said Divij, who won the Asian Games gold with Rohan Bopanna in 2018.

"I look forward to training with Rohan and playing some events together in the lead up to the Olympics in Tokyo."

Having missed the nomi-

ning for the showdown here on Friday.

Despite winning the league with two matches to spare, the form of Maurizio Sarri's side at the end of the campaign has raised concerns that it might not make the tournament's final eight in Lisbon.

Pep Guardiola says Manchester City will want to im-

Juventus striving to get Dybala ready

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

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Serie A champion Juventus, which trails French side Lyon 1-0 going into the second leg of the round of 16 of the Champions League, is feverishly trying to get its injured talismanic forward Paulo Dybala up and run-

nation deadline by a day for the Arjuna award last year, Divij was confident that he would be able to make it this year.

"I understand that my Asian Games gold medal will be considered. So, I am hopeful that I will get the award this time."

Divij had won the doubles bronze with Yuki Bhambri at the 2014 Asian Games. He also has a gold and a silver in mixed and men's doubles respectively from the SAF Games.

In the Davis Cup tie against Italy in 2019, Divij won the doubles rubber with Bopanna.

Divij won two ATP Tour titles last year, in Pune and St. Petersburg.

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