



Janata Dal (United)
rebel Sharad Yadav's
daughter joins Congress

Page 9



Wear masks or pay fine,
says Railways; violators
may even face jail term

Page 10



Indian Americans
strongly identify with
Democrats, says survey

Page 13



Dhawan, Shreyas and
bowlers help DC beat RR
and go to the top

Page 15

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NEARBY



Ban on diesel generators
in Delhi, NCR from today

A ban on diesel generators, except for emergency purposes, will come into force in Delhi and neighbouring cities from Thursday as part of the Graded Response Action Plan to control air pollution. The AQI of Delhi is likely to stay at the higher end of 'poor' or lower end of 'very poor' category on Thursday.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Court reserves order on shifting M.J. Akbar case

A Delhi court on Wednesday remarked that the entire trial in former Union Minister M.J. Akbar's defamation case against journalist Priya Ramani gets vitiated if the magisterial court trying the case for about two years now did not have the jurisdiction. The court reserved the order on transfer of the case to another court.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Over 1,200 municipal doctors to go on strike

Doctors and nurses of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation's Hindu Rao Hospital on Wednesday continued their protest over non-payment of salaries. The stir is likely to intensify as over 1,200 doctors working in other hospitals run by the civic body have given a notice for a strike from October 19.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

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Hathras victim's family given full security: U.P.

State files affidavit in Supreme Court

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh government has said it is "committed" to providing "complete security" to the family of the 19-year-old who died in a Delhi hospital days after she was brutally assaulted and allegedly raped in Hathras.

In an affidavit before the Supreme Court, it detailed the security arrangements made for the victim's family members.

It said there would be "no intrusion to the privacy of the victim's family/witnesses and that they are

16 killed after overnight rain wreaks havoc in Hyderabad

City marooned after road to airport gets washed away

SYED MOHAMMED
SWATHI VALADAMUDI
SERISH NANISSETTI
HYDERABAD

As many as 16 people lost their lives in the rain that pounded Hyderabad on Wednesday. With the latest deaths, the toll till Wednesday night rose to 24, including eight members of two families who died after a boundary wall collapsed on their houses in Chandrayan-gutta late on Tuesday.

Night-long rain laid siege to Hyderabad city, with hundreds of localities submerged and stranded by Wednesday morning.

This prompted the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), the Army and the State police to rescue the affected people from the inundated areas.

The main roadway link between Hyderabad and Bengaluru, National Highway 44, was snapped on Tuesday night, after water from an overflowing lake swept away a few vehicles as



Completely wrecked: The Gaganpahad area where vehicles and a part of the road were washed away. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

well as the road in the Gaganpahad area. The same road connects the city to the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

Record since 1891

While the road stretch has disappeared for nearly 200 metres, the flood waters damaged a portion of the under-construction flyover.

In what is being termed by the Meteorological Department as the highest in the month of October since

1891, the city has received an average of 17 cm rainfall. The IMD station at Begumpet recorded 19.2 cm, double from the previous highest of 9.8 cm recorded in 2013.

In a tragic incident, the flooding in Ali Nagar, a neighbourhood in the Mai-larderpally police station limits, swept away nine persons, including minors, of the same family.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
MORE REPORTS ▶ PAGE 8

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"We asked why we had been called for a meeting in Delhi while the BJP Ministers are busy in Punjab spreading false propaganda about the new laws

The farmer leaders were angry that they were not granted a meeting with Agri-

culture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, or a Group of Ministers (GoM) empowered to negotiate their demand to repeal the laws passed by

Parliament last month.

The 29 farm unions driving the widespread protests and rail blockades across the State now plan to meet in Chandigarh on Thursday to discuss their future course of action and how to intensify the agitation. This is their second rejection this month of the Centre's efforts to initiate dialogue to end the protests.

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IN BRIEF

AAP govt. sees minor Cabinet reshuffle

NEW DELHI
In a "minor change" in the Delhi Cabinet on Wednesday, Minister Gopal Rai was relieved of his charge over the labour and employment departments so he "can dedicate himself to the environment portfolio". Both departments have been given to Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, bringing the total number of portfolios under him to 10, including finance, education, planning and vigilance departments.

| Air Quality of Delhi-NCR | | |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Delhi | 276 | Gurugram 279 |
| Ghaziabad | 293 | Faridabad 265 |
| Noida | 273 | Greater Noida 286 |
| Good 0-50 | Satisfactory 51-100 | Moderate 101-200 |
| Poor 201-300 | Very Poor 301-400 | Severe >400 |
| Air Quality Index at 4 p.m., yesterday (Average of past 24 hours) Source: CPCB | | |

Three held for hiring proxy for DSSSB exam

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Three women who had "passed" an online test of the Delhi Subordinate Service Selection Board (DSSSB) in 2018 for the post of primary teacher allegedly by hiring a proxy candidate to take the exam have been arrested, the police said on Wednesday.

The impersonator who allegedly sat for the examination is absconding.

The selection of the three women has been cancelled and they have been debarred from all future DSSSB exams.

The accused allegedly gave ₹5 lakh each to the impersonator.

Ban on diesel generators in NCR from today

Air quality of Delhi and Gurugram improves slightly but continues to remain in 'poor' category, according to CPCB data

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI/GURUGRAM

The air quality of Delhi, Gurugram and Noida improved slightly but continued to remain in the 'poor' category on Wednesday, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

A ban on diesel generators, except for emergency purposes, will come into force in Delhi and neighbouring cities from Thursday as part of the Graded Response Action Plan to control air pollution, as announced by the Environment Pollution (Prevention & Control) Authority.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi is likely to stay at the higher end of 'poor' or lower end of 'very poor' category on Thursday. It is expected to improve marginally on Friday and Saturday, according to government-run monitoring agency System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

The AQI of Delhi was 276 on Wednesday, down from 300 on Tuesday, as per CPCB data. The AQI of Gurugram was 279, slightly less than 288 on Tuesday. Noida's AQI also decreased to 273, from 286 on Tuesday.



A hazy view of Delhi from Bhalswa landfill on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The AQI for the three cities are the average values of the past 24 hours, which is released by the CPCB at 4 p.m. every day, and treated as the official figures.

Stubble effect

At a meeting with officials of Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, the EPCA has told officials to take "all efforts" to supply machinery to farmers on an "urgent basis" to control stubble burning. SAFAR has stated that

stubble burning in neighbouring States is expected to contribute "minimally" to Delhi's pollution due to wind direction for now.

Last week, the Supreme Court-appointed EPCA had directed Delhi and neighbouring States to implement air pollution control measures under "very poor" and "severe" category of the GRAP from October 15, including a ban on use of diesel generators.

On Wednesday, the EPCA wrote to the Chief Secretaries of Delhi, Haryana, and

Punjab that diesel generators will be allowed only for medical purposes, elevators, railways, metro activities, airports, and interstate bus terminals.

"Any deterioration in ambient air quality in the region during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic would have considerable ramifications in terms of health of the residents of Delhi-NCR," EPCA chairman Bhure Lal said in the letter.

In a related development, AAP national spokesperson Raghav Chadha said that

diesel generators are used in Haryana despite Supreme Court orders and that the EPCA should take action against them.

Haryana yet to act

"As the GRAP will come into force from October 15, the use of diesel gensets will be banned in the regions of Delhi-NCR, but Haryana doesn't seem to want to take any action. Their government has written 'distress letters' to the EPCA repeatedly, saying that they can't enforce the ban in their State," Mr. Chadha said.

Societies to be affected

Meanwhile, over 15,000 residents in the Millennium City, including 650 families in The Crest at DLF Phase-V, could be impacted by the ban on generator sets.

Three group housing societies, including DLF's Camellias and The Crest in DLF Phase-V, don't have regular power connection and are entirely dependent on diesel generators.

Chief engineer, Smart City Project, Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam, Vineeta Singh told *The Hindu* that

two DLF Phase-V group housing societies and one in Manesar, with total population of around 2,000 residents, do not have power grid connection.

Besides, 19 group housing societies across Gurugram, with a total population of around 13,000 residents, have partial load from the grid and were dependent on the generator sets to meet their power needs.

Mr. Singh said a total of 97 power connections, including commercial establishments, were pending last year due to deficiencies on the part of developers/consumers and 18 were granted connections so far.

"In all these pending cases, either the fees are pending or the infrastructure is not complete. For instance, DLF has to set up two substations of 220 KV and 350 KV capacity as per their original plan, but have set up only one sub-station and two transformers," she said.

Ms. Singh said that DHBVN had constraints in several cases last year, but all deficiencies were met.

(With inputs from Ashok Kumar)

Shut down 11 thermal power plants: Jain to Centre

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Delhi Power Minister Satyendar Jain on Wednesday requested the Centre to shut down all 11 thermal power plants in the National Capital Region (NCR).

"Despite a Supreme Court order, the Centre intends to renew these power stations and allow them to function for two more years," the Minister said.

Mr. Jain added that the "biggest contributors" to Delhi's pollution are the thermal power plants around the national capital and said that the Delhi government is the only one that has shut down all thermal power plants under its jurisdiction.

"The Centre intends to renew these power stations and allow them to function for two more years," the Minister said.

"The Centre intends to renew these power stations and allow them to function for two more years," the Minister said.

Why did the smog towers not come up in the last one year despite being reprimanded by the Supreme Court?" Mr. Gupta said.

The Kejriwal government, he alleged, is used to misleading the people of Delhi "with tempting promises" but is "yet to learn to work on the ground in the interests of the people".

Kejriwal bats for solar energy in the Capital

He says solar power generation has gone up to 177 MW in the last four years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said that solar energy needs to become a mass movement in Delhi and that more and more people should join hands in using solar energy.

He was speaking after inaugurating a 218 kWp solar power plant at Lady Irwin College.

The Capital's total solar power generation was 7 MW four years ago, and has gone up to 177 MW now, said the Chief Minister.

"Under the Delhi government policy, the residents, RWAs, or any entity can save money by merely completing some paperwork and installing a solar power plant on their rooftop," Mr. Kejriwal said.

"Farmers can also permit

installation of solar power panels on their fields and they will receive rent from the solar power plants. They can also continue cultivating their farmlands and increase their income four-fold," he said, adding that green energy is the future.

Gist of e-NIT NO. 45 OF 2020-21 Dated. 12.10.2020
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Srinagar, invites e-tenders from OEM or his authorized representative / Authorized Dealers or Registered / reputed / experienced Firms having expertise as detailed in the tender document for the following works:

| S.No | Name of the Work :- | Estimated Cost (in Lacs) |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Central heating Hot water generators, water circulation pumps, piping, electric control panel and allied items at new maternity Hospital, SKIMS, Srinagar. | 138.71 |

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jkttenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders/ tenderers may view, download the e-bid document, seek clarifications and submit their bids online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities, & Terms and conditions of the contract and other relevant details.

| | | |
|-------|---|--|
| I) | Date and time of downloading/Sale of tender documents (Starting Date). | 13. 10. 2020 from 11:00 Hours. |
| ii) | Date & Time of Bidding Queries/clarification/Pre-bid meet | 20.10.2020 at 11:00 Hours. |
| iii) | Last Date & Time of Bid Uploading | 02.11.2020 upto 16:00 Hours |
| iv) | Date of Submission of hard copies (only Original EMD/DD for Document Fee) | 03.11.2020 upto 14:00 Hours |
| v) | Date & Time of Commercial/technical Bid (Cover-I) opening | 04.11.2020 11:00 Hours (or next convenient day) . |
| vi) | Date & Time of Financial Bid(Cover-II) Opening of the qualifying Bidders | Shall be intimated separately. |
| vii) | Cost of e-bid Document | Rs.5000/- (Rupees Five thousand only) |
| viii) | Amount of Earnest Money Deposit(CDR/FDR) | Rs: 277500/- (Rupees two lacs seventy-seven thousand& five hundred only) |
| ix) | Completion Time | Three (03) months from the date of issue of LOI or Allotment Order. |
| x) | Budget Head | Ongoing works for the year 2020-21 |

No-SIMS 139 EX/MECH/2020-21/523/20-2402-11-5472-75

Dated:- 12.10.2020

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Mechanical, SKIMS

No-SIMS 5475

Dated:- 13.10.2020

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
SHER-J-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL SKIMS MC&H, BEMINA & SKIMS, SOURA. SRINAGAR
Tel: 0194-2402617 Ext: 2159 E-Mail :mechanicalskims@gmail.com
Notice Inviting E-Tenders

Gist of e-NIT NO. 44 OF 2020-21 Dated. 12.10.2020
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Sora, Srinagar, invites online e-bids in two (02) cover systems from Original Lift Manufacturers or their Authorized Dealers/Representatives/Registered firms having experience in installation, testing and commissioning of Lifts in the Govt. Institutions/departments, detailed in the tender document for the following works:

| S.No | Name of the Work :- | Estimated Cost (in Lacs) |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Design, Supply, Installation, Testing, Inspecting and Commissioning of 10 passengers Service Elevator at "Engineering Block, SKIMS, Srinagar. | 22.00 Lacs |

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jkttenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders/tenderers may view, download the e-bid document, seek clarifications and submit their bids online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities, & Terms and conditions of the contract and other relevant details.

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| v) | Date & Time of Commercial/technical Bid (Cover-I) opening | 04.11.2020 11:00 Hours (or next convenient day) . |
| vi) | Date & Time of Financial Bid(Cover-II) Opening of the qualifying Bidders | Shall be intimated separately. |
| vii) | Cost of e-bid Document | Rs.1100/- (Rupees One thousand and One hundred only) |
| viii) | Amount of Earnest Money Deposit(CDR/FDR) | Rs. 44000/- (Rupees Fourty Four-thousand only) |
| ix) | Completion Time | Six (06) months from the date of issue of LOI or Allotment Order. |
| x) | Budget Head | Ongoing works for the year 2020-21 |

No-SIMS 139 EX/52/20-2393-2401-5468-71,Dated:- 12.10.2020

No-SIMS 5469 Dated:- 13.10.2020

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS

L-G discusses methods to monetise straw waste

He calls for innovative technology

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Wednesday co-chaired a meeting with the Central government's principal scientific adviser, Chief Secretary of Delhi, Punjab and Haryana and other stakeholders to discuss scientific approaches to monetise paddy straw waste for farmers while combating air pollution caused due to stubble burning.

In the meeting, Raj Niwas sources said, stress was laid on innovative technology for the management of paddy straw waste to improve air quality in Delhi-NCR. "The L-G advised to incentivise farmers to use their waste into wealth to address the open field burning and to achieve our objective and quality. He stated that a viable model for agri-waste and its utilisation

Timings
DELHI

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| THURSDAY, OCT. 15 | |
| RISE 06:22 | SET 17:52 |
| RISE 04:24 | SET 17:11 |
| FRIDAY, OCT. 16 | |
| RISE 06:23 | SET 17:51 |
| RISE 05:32 | SET 17:50 |
| SATURDAY, OCT. 17 | |
| RISE 06:23 | SET 17:50 |
| RISE 06:40 | SET 18:29 |

| | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| Delhi Weather | max | min |
| Delhi City | 34 | 24 |
| Safdarjung | 34 | 24 |
| Palam | 34 | 25 |

Delhi Palam Today
34°C Hazy morning turn warm and humid day with few clouds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
34°C A comfortable morning and warm day with light winds and partly cloudy sky.

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THE HINDU
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Court reserves order on shifting Akbar case

Trial vitiated if court has no jurisdiction

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday remarked that the entire trial in the former Union Minister M.J. Akbar's defamation case against journalist Priya Ramani for her tweets accusing him of sexual harassment could get vitiated if the magisterial court trying the case for about two years now did not have the jurisdiction.

Principal District and Sessions Judge Sujata Kohli made the observation while reserving the order on whether to transfer the criminal defamation complaint to another court.

The magisterial court trying the defamation case had on Tuesday sent the matter to the Principal District and Sessions Judge seeking its transfer to another court on the ground that his court was now designated to hear cases filed against lawmakers pursuant to a recent verdict of the Supreme Court.

Judge Kohli, however, noted that the SC's decision does not bar the judge con-

cerned from hearing matters other than those against MPs and MLAs.

Trial almost over'

Senior advocate Geeta Luthra, appearing for Mr. Akbar, said that the entire trial was almost over and only a few days were remaining.

The counsel appearing for Ms. Ramani said that she had no objection to any order passed by the court.

At the height of the MeToo movement in 2018, Ms. Ramani had accused Mr. Akbar of sexual harassment during his previous role as an editor of a newspaper.

Following Ms. Ramani's accusations, about a dozen former colleagues of Mr. Akbar also came out with various allegations against him.

Days before he resigned from his post as Minister of State for External Affairs in October 2018, Mr. Akbar filed a criminal defamation case against Ms. Ramani citing her open letter published in a magazine and her tweets naming him.

they said. At his instance, the offending vehicle was recovered from a mechanic shop where the family had taken the car for repair work a day after the accident, the police said, adding that the vehicle was registered in the name of the accused's uncle, who is based in Haryana.

Blood sample taken

The accident took place on Monday night near Gurdwara Nanak Piao on G.T. Road.

The police said further investigation into the mat-

ter is under way and blood samples of the apprehended minor has been collected to examine if he was under the influence of alcohol during the time of incident. The reports are awaited.

A case under Sections 279 (rash driving or riding on a public way), 304A (causing death by negligence) and 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered.

The police will also book his father and uncle under the Motor Vehicles Act.

Minor held for mowing down 2 girls

Boy's father, uncle will be booked under Motor Vehicles Act

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Class 12 student was apprehended on Wednesday in connection with an accident in north-west Delhi's Model Town in which two sisters, aged four and seven, died and their minor brother and a 55-year-old family friend sustained injuries while crossing the road, the police said.

The 17-year-old boy, who studies at a private school here, was apprehended from his residence at DTC Colony in Model Town. His father is a businessman,

+ The police said further investigation into the mat-

Another accused gets bail in riots case

HC quizzes police over delay in inclusion of name in FIR

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted bail to a man arrested in connection with the north-east Delhi riots in February, noting that the police has not been able to explain why there was a delay of seven days before his name was added in the FIR.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait said it was not in dispute that the incident took place on February 25, but the statements of two constables who were on duty and saw the incident as well as identified the accused, Kasim, was recorded only on March 3. "There is no explanation as to why the police officials did not make a PCR call/DD (daily diary) entry to the concerned police station regarding involvement of petitioner on February 25," the High Court said.

Justice Kait noted that Kasim's name was added only after a person, allegedly in-

jured in the riots, recorded his statement on March 3 in which he named Kasim. After this, the constables made their statements and also identified the accused.

The HC further noted that as per the chargesheet, 11 videos showed the riots on February 24 and 25 at the crime spot, and at the house of former AAP councillor Tahir Hussain. "It is also not in dispute that co-accused Mr. Hussain and Liyakat were seen in the CCTV footage, however, petitioner [Kasim] is not seen in any of the 11 videos," said Justice

Kait. The special public prosecutor had argued that Kasim is a 'Bad Character' of the area and there are 10 cases against him due to which the constables knew Kasim and were able to identify him.

When the HC asked the police about Kasim's phone location, the special public prosecutor stated that Kasim's phone was not in 'active mode' from February 17 to March 23 so phone location could not be done.

"Without commenting on the merits of the case and in view of the aforesaid facts, this court is inclined to grant bail to the petitioner," the High Court stated.

The High Court recently granted bail to another man charged with rioting in a Delhi riots case, after noting that there is no CCTV footage, video clip or photo to corroborate the prosecution's claim.

Yadav touring Haryana to review crop buying

Swaraj India president appeals to farmers to join agitation on farm Acts in Sirsa

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Coinciding with the "MSP Adhikar Divas" observed by All-India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee, a conglomeration of around 250 farmers groups, on Wednesday, Swaraj India president Yogendra Yadav set out on a tour across Haryana to take stock of the procurement of Kharif crops and create awareness on three farm legislations.

Holding a press conference here, Mr. Yadav said he would visit the grains markets in neighbouring Nuh to begin with and reach

Sirsa, the epicentre of the farmers protests in Haryana against the controversial legislations, on October 18. He will travel through Rewari, Mahendragarh, Charkhi Dabri and Bhiwani.

No response from govt. "We have been visiting the grains markets for the past four years in the State and sent suggestions to the government to improve procurement. But there is no reply," said Mr. Yadav.

Maintaining that the sit-in at Sirsa's Shaheed Bhagat Singh Stadium would continue till the farmers' demand

Over 1,200 municipal doctors to go on strike from October 19

Stir over pending salaries of doctors and staff to intensify over the coming days

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Doctors and nurses of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation's Hindu Rao Hospital on Wednesday continued their protest over non-payment of salaries "for the last four months". The stir is likely to spread and intensify as over 1,200 doctors working in other hospitals run by the North Corporation have given a notice for a strike from October 19 over the issue.

The Resident Doctors' Associations (RDAs) of three North Corporation hospitals – Hindu Rao, Kasturba Gandhi and Rajan Babu TB – also issued a joint statement on Wednesday that salaries have not been paid for the past four months and they will continue to protest from a "common platform".

Doctors from the other two hospitals are set to join the protest at Hindu Rao premises from Thursday. "We have not been paid for the last four months and we have been protesting



Doctors and staff of Hindu Rao Hospital protesting over the issue of pending salaries on Wednesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

since October 5. Healthcare workers from other North Corporation hospitals also joined the protest at the Hindu Rao Hospital gate on Wednesday," said Sagardeep Bawa, vice-president of the Hindu Rao Hospital RDA.

"I have borrowed money from my parents in the past four months. I don't know how I will pay next month's rent," Dr. Bawa added.

The strike notice by the Municipal Corporation Doctors' Association (MCDA), sent to the civic body com-

"The standard reply of the North Corporation is that the Delhi government is not releasing funds to them to pay salaries of employees. The Delhi government says that they have already released the funds," he added.

Dr. Gautam said that emergency services at the six North Corporation hospitals will not be affected by the strike. He added that salaries of doctors and staff of all healthcare facilities of the corporation are pending since three-four months.

Transfer to Delhi govt.'

"The civic body had earlier tried transferring the hospitals to the Centre but they did not take them. We give funds to the civic body, but we are unaware of the expenditure since they do not get an audit done. A formal written proposal has been sent to the Centre to transfer these hospitals to the Delhi government," Delhi Urban Development Minister Satyendar Jain said.

Associations thank Kejriwal for letting theatres open

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Representatives of cinema hall associations called on Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday to thank him for allowing theatres in Delhi to reopen.

Mr. Kejriwal said that the people and the associations would have to work together to revive the economy of the city.

The representatives of the cinema associations said that Mr. Kejriwal told them to ensure that safety protocols, social distancing norms, sanitisation guidelines, and SOPs of the Central and State governments are followed.

The representatives of theatre companies assured the CM of full adherence to all directions as per the guidelines and SOPs issued by the governments.

On October 7, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority had granted permission to cinema halls in Delhi to reopen from October 15 with up to 50% capacity.

Tally reaches 3.17 lakh with 3,324 new cases

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

As many as 3,324 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the tally to 3,17,548, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday.

The death toll due to the virus has reached 5,898 with 44 more fatalities reported in a single day.

Of the total cases, 2,89,747 people have recov-

Virus spread

| Total number of COVID-19 cases | Total deaths |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 3,17,548 | 5,898 |
| New cases in the past 24 hours | New deaths |
| 3,324 | 44 |

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

ered and there are currently 21,903 active cases.

In the past 24 hours, 56,950 tests were conducted

out of which 12,596 tests were RT-PCR – the highest in months. The High Court had directed the government to increase RT-PCR testing as Delhi was heavily dependent on rapid antigen tests, which is comparatively less accurate.

As per Wednesday's bulletin, the number of active cases and people under home isolation has gone up slightly, but the number of people in containment zones in the city on Wednesday was 2,748.

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JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

e-AUCTION (October-2020)

First: 87 Plots/Shops
Second: 87 Plots/Shops
Total: 174 Plots/Shops

| COMMERCIAL PLOTS | MIX USE PLOTS | RESIDENTIAL PLOTS | SHOP PLOT |
|--|--|---|--|
| 55 | 25 | 03 | 04 |
| Commercial | Mix Use | Residential | Shops |
| 45 | 09 | 01 | 18 |
| Hathoj Kardhani Vistar, Jaipur (Raj.) | Swarn Vihar Scheme, Near Muhana Mandi, Jaipur (Raj.) | New Atish Market, Jaipur (Raj.) | Ring Road Project (Burthal), Jaipur (Raj.) |
| Ring Road Project (Goner), Jaipur (Raj.) | Ring Road Project (Kanadwas), Jaipur (Raj.) | Ring Road Project (Siroli), Jaipur (Raj.) | Ring Road Project (Siroli), Jaipur (Raj.) |
| Sidharth Nagar, Block-E, Jaipur (Raj.) | Malviya Nagar Scheme, Block-A & Block-B, Jaipur (Raj.) | Tillawala Scheme, Jaipur (Raj.) | SMS Hospital to Troma Centre (Under Pass), Jaipur (Raj.) |
| 03 | 01 | 01 | 01 |
| CONSTRUCTED SHOPS | RESIDENTIAL PLOTS | | |

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TENDERS

For Sale/Eaution: Scrap Material (B&H Tubes-4019 Mtrs, C Strips-16,760 kg, S Strips-7620 Kg, Paints-121 Ltr, Instruments (Oxygen Analyser-2), Mineral Water - 1080 mtr, C&H Oil-1089 Ltrs), M/s. Thermax Ltd, Plot No-2/1/23, Manesar Gidc, Sasti Dist-Vadodara (GJ). Contact Person for inspection: Mr.Upenda Sharma - 09824754808 / MR. Bakul Pragjapati-097343259 Last Date for Inspection & EMD Deposit - 24.10.2020 & Date of eAuction - 26.10.2020 Auctioneer: Ms. Meenakshi - 9625137014 / Md. F. Islam-9911003339 (Insurance claim material will be sold on As Is Where Is'. Whatever There Is' and No Complaint basis).

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GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE
ITANAGAR
No.PHQ/WT/PP-180/2020 Dated Itanagar, the 8th Oct / 2020
TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Director General of Police, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar invites Sealed Tender under two Bid systems (Technical & Financial Bid) from the manufacturers, authorised agents / dealers / suppliers of reputed firms for entering into contract for supply of various WT equipments for SP (Telecom) Office, Chimpur, Arunachal Pradesh. For details please visit our website: www.arunpol.nic.in

Sd/-
Director General of Police
Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar

DIPR/ARN/13459-61/20

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL



General public is hereby informed that one girl Namely: Shivani @ Jyoti, D/o Mukesh Kumar, R/o Plot No. 36, Khasra No. 76/2, Ground Floor, A-Block, 1/2, Galu No. 2, Ajeet Vihar, Burari, Delhi Age: 16 years & 1 Month, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Strong, Wearing: Purple Colour Suit & Salwar and Red Colour Slipper in feet has been missing /kidnapped since 25.08.2020 at 4:00pm from her home. In this regard a FIR No. 342/20, U/s 363 IPC, dated 25.08.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Burari, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this girl but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Fax: 011-24368639 Ph. 011-23693611, 8750870132
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 DP/503/N/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a girl namely Anisha Khatun, D/o: Md. Amiruddin, R/o: Aap Ke Raasoi Ka Makan, 60 Futta Road, Gali No.-15, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi has been reported missing since 03.10.2020 from the area of P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 417/20 dated 03.10.2020 U/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi. The description of missing girl is as under:

Name: Anisha Khatun, Age: About 17 Years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Medium, Hair: Black, Wearing: Red colour top, Blue colour Jeans and Chappal in feet.

If anyone have any information about this missing girl please inform P.S. Farsh Bazar, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO Police Station Farsh Bazar, Delhi Ph: 011-21210828, 7065036028 DP/233/SHD/2020

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE
Public at large are hereby informed that my client Mrs. Puja w/o Vicki Rejput currently residing at Property No-A/244, second floor, Hasta Road, Utta Nagar, New Delhi-110059 intend to purchase Property No-4/244, Hasta Road, Utta Nagar, New Delhi-110059 (the Property) from Surita Sharma w/o Shankar Sharma (the legal owner), after consideration. Any person, who has got any interest in the claim, encumbrance or charges, any where whatsoever in respect of the above said Property or any part thereof, can send their objections with their documentary evidence at below mentioned address within 15 days of publication of this notice. Any person shall be presumed that the said Property in entirely is free from all such claims, interest, charges, encumbrances etc.

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that my client M/s. TPM Consultants Pvt. Ltd, Flat No.2B, K-Block, Saket, New Delhi - 110017, is absolute owner of SFS Plot No-2/3-B, K-Block, Saket, New Delhi-110017, (the Property) from Surita Sharma w/o Shankar Sharma (the legal owner), after consideration. Any person, who has got any interest in the claim, encumbrance or charges, any where whatsoever in respect of the above said Property or any part thereof, can send their objections with their documentary evidence at below mentioned address within 15 days of publication of this notice. Any person shall be presumed that the said Property in entirely is free from all such claims, interest, charges, encumbrances etc.

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PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME

SMT.LUHELI SUMI spouse of no 4367855 m/l hav name hekuda Seme residing h no 322, chukumidea town, ward-10 Dimapur Nagaland. 797103 my name is wrongly mentioned in Husband army service record as LUHELI Sume but correct name is Luheli Sumi for all purpose.vide Affidavit dated 02/03/2020. Regd.No.14.C /2020

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TENDERS

NOTIFICATION

C/434/JTBS/PTRACHAR/IZN/2020 DT.12-10-2020

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Eastern Railway, Itanagar Bareilly on behalf of President of India invites application for the selection and appointment of 1389 nos. Jan Sadharan Ticket Booking Sevak (JTBS) location of 38 important serving stations over Izzatnagar Division to issue computerized unreserved tickets only through UTTS (Unreserved Tickets System). Interested persons fulfilling the stipulated conditions may apply in the prescribed format. The Reservation criteria will be applicable as per extant rules.

Name of Work: Allotment of JTBS at Railway stations.

Name of stations (JTBS) for which Applications are invited:-

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| (1) Farrukhabad | (11) Khatima | (21) Daryogaonji | (31) Bilhaur |
| (2) Kashipur | (12) Rudrapur City | (22) Kalyanpur | (32) Kamalganj |
| (3) Pilibhit | (13) Fatehgarh | (23) Barrajpur | (33) Bareilly City |
| (4) Badaun | (14) Ujhani | (24) Hathras City | (34) Gursaharanj |
| (5) Kannauj | (15) Haldwani | (25) Mathura Cant | (35) Roshanpur |
| (6) Kichha | (16) Izzatnagar | (26) Kayamganj | (36) Tanakpur |
| (7) Rudaul | (17) Ramnagar | (27) Kasganj | (37) Sahrawat town |
| (8) Bazpur | (18) Baheri | (28) Patiyali | (38) Rawatpur |
| (9) Sitakunda Rao | (19) Bhojipura | (29) Lalkuan | |
| (10) Kathgodam | (20) Soner Soker Chhatta | (30) Ganjdundwara | |

Period: 3 years. • Tender form cost:- 500/- (Rs. Five Hundred only) for each station. • Earnest Money :- 5,000/- (Rs. Five Thousand only) for each station.

(1) Sale of application form: From the office of Divisional Rail Manager (Commercial) North Eastern Railway, Izzatnagar, Bareilly in any working day between 10:00 to 16:00 pm till 11-11-2020 on payment of Application form fee which will be deposited in cash in booking office at Izzatnagar station. (2) Applications submission date & time: 05-11-2020 to 12-11-2020 up to 14:00 Hrs. (3) Applications opening date & time: 12-11-2020 at 15:30 Hrs. (4) This applications form & document is available on North Eastern Railway & government website www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in The person who are interested to submit their applications from website he can download the documents and the cost of application form & earnest money should be deposited necessarily with application form through Demand Draft issued by Nationalized Bank in favour of F.A. & C.A.O/ North Eastern Railway Izzatnagar, paid in Bareilly. The railway administration reserved the right to cancel the application without assigning any reason.

CPRO/Vanijya-34 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Izzatnagar

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Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division PWD, Guptkashi

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Letter No. 503/ Nivida

Dated: 12/10/2020

e-Tendering (Short Term)

Executive Engineer Construction Division, PWD Guptkashi on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand invites e-Tender for the following work. All information about tender shall be available in e-GPS website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> on 16.10.2020.

The bid validity period shall be 120 days after the bid submission deadline date.

2. Bids shall be submitted online (e-Tender) on e-GPS website www.uktenders.gov.in.

Praveen Kr. Karnawali Executive Engineer Construction Division, PWD Guptkashi

DIPR/UK/13499

'Centre repeating Cong. blunders'

The 'so-called meeting' in New Delhi was a betrayal of the farmers' cause: Badal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab Deputy Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday said the BJP-led government at the Centre was repeating the blunders of the past Congress rulers and was "resorting to the same anti-Punjab and anti-farmer conspiracies" to provoke farmers and youth.

"This can have serious consequences for peace in the sensitive border State and for the stability in the country since farmers struggle is a national issue," said Mr. Badal, accusing the Centre of betraying farmers and their organisations on what he termed as the "so called

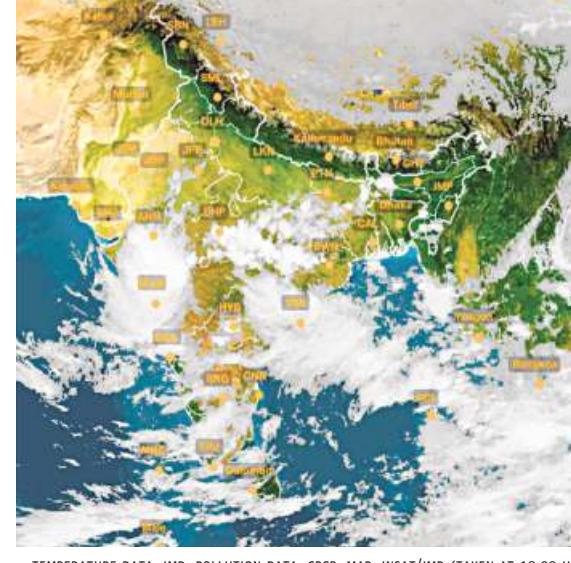
meeting" in New Delhi on the farm laws.

Mr. Badal said the Prime Minister should have found time to meet farmers instead of sending a faceless bureaucrat to "preach to them". If the PM was too busy, the meeting could have been rescheduled. The farmers did the right thing by coming out and refusing to walk into the conspiracy," he said.

"The Centre has messed up a great opportunity. The opportunity had been created by the farmers' organisations through their large-hearted and constructive response to the Centre's invite. But the Centre chose to play games and indulge in doublespeak."

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over central Maharashtra, Konkan & Goa, coastal & north interior Karnataka and Kerala. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand, Gujarat, coastal Andhra Pradesh and Lakshadweep

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|-------------|-------|------|------|--------------------|---------------|---------|------|
| Agartala | — | 34.9 | 25.0 | Kozhikode | 9...31.0... | 23.0 | |
| Ahmedabad | — | 37.6 | 24.6 | Kurnool | 8.4...30.2... | 22.8 | |
| Aizawl | 6... | 29.0 | 18.2 | Lucknow | — | 35.4... | 22.6 |
| Allahabad | — | 36.6 | 24.0 | Madurai | — | 33.2... | 25.0 |
| Bangalore | 0.6 | 25.6 | 19.8 | Mangaluru | 116.9... | 26.0... | 22.2 |
| Bhopal | — | 34.7 | 24.4 | Mumbai | 2.2... | 32.7... | 25.5 |
| Bhubaneswar | 23.5 | 28.2 | 25.0 | Mysuru | — | 28.0... | 21.9 |
| Chandigarh | — | 34.5 | 22.4 | New Delhi | — | 31.0... | 23.0 |
| Chennai | 0.2 | 34.7 | 26.7 | Patna | — | 34.4... | 23.7 |
| Coimbatore | — | 32.8 | 21.8 | Pond Blair | 23.2... | 29.4... | 24.3 |
| Dehradoon | — | 32.7 | 18.6 | Puducherry | — | 35.4... | 25.4 |
| Gangtok | — | 23.2 | 16.3 | Pune | 5.6... | 27.8... | 22.3 |
| Goa | 2.3 | 28.3 | 24.7 | Raipur | — | 31.6... | 25.4 |
| Guwahati | — | 35.7 | 24.6 | Ranchi | — | 32.2... | 21.6 |
| Hubballi | — | 25.0 | 22.0 | Shillong | — | 23.7... | 17.5 |
| Hyderabad | 191.8 | 24.8 | 21.4 | Shimla | — | 25.1... | 15.7 |
| Imphal | 2.4 | 31.2 | 18.7 | Srinagar | — | 24.9... | 5.2 |
| Jaipur | — | 35.0 | 24.9 | Thiruvananthapuram | 56.3... | 29.6... | 23.2 |
| Kochi | 12.6 | 29.0 | 23.2 | Tiruchi | — | 35.3... | 24.4 |
| Kohima | — | 26.0 | 17.4 | Vijayawada | 20.4... | 31.4... | 25.8 |
| Kolkata | — | 35.7 | 27.2 | Visakhapatnam | 15.4... | 31.0... | 25.8 |

(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 | 37 | 111 | 1.9 | 108 | 120 | ■■■■■ |
| Bangalore | 14 | 23 | .43 | 54 | 53 | ■■■■■ |
| Chennai | .5 | 19 | .91 | 60 | 50 | ■■■■■ |
| Delhi | 17 | 41 | 34 | 329 | 304 | ■■■■■ |
| Hyderabad | .5 | 39 | .24 | .24 | — | ■■■■■ |
| Kolkata | 10 | 13 | — | 36 | 57 | ■■■■■ |
| Lucknow | .5 | 53 | .47 | 250 | 163 | ■■■■■ |
| Mumbai | .6 | 50 | 112 | 139 | 134 | ■■■■■ |
| Pune | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Visakhapatnam | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. on October 15, 2020. Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 343 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Vardhman, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

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

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

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

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

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

Retreating monsoon wreaks havoc across Maharashtra

Six killed in Pandharpur as portion of river embankment wall caves in

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

PUNE

The retreating monsoon wreaked havoc over several parts of Maharashtra, especially the western part of the State and the Marathwada region, with Solapur being particularly hit-hard.

At least six people, including three women and one minor, were killed and two more injured in Pandharpur after heavy rain caused a portion of an embankment wall near the Chandrabhaga river to cave in, authorities said on Wednesday.

District authorities said that the wall of the newly constructed Kumbhar Ghat crumbled after 2 p.m., killing six of the eight people standing on the ghat wall.

Four of the deceased have been identified as Gopal Laxman Abhangrao (70), his son, Mangesh Abhangrao (35), Radhabai Gopal (50), Umesh Jagtap (13), while two other *warkari* women are yet to be identified.

Officials said two other men, buried in the debris, were rescued despite relief work being hampered by the intensity of the showers.



Rain in the offing: Lightning strikes near Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus on Wednesday evening. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

The temple town of Pandharpur has been particularly afflicted with rains throwing life awry. Power supply has been disrupted in many parts of Solapur city with rains battering the district for the last three days. Wall cave-ins have been reported in a number of places, with a portion of the tower of the palace at Akkalkot collapsing, while the road connecting the town of Vairag with Jawalaon village in Barshi taluk was submerged.

With the district witnessing near-continuous rain for the last 48 hours, a high alert has been issued by the district administration. Solapur had received 79 mm of rainfall till 5:30 p.m., said India Meteorological Department (IMD) authorities.

Authorities have warned residents not to step out. Farmers have been acutely afflicted with rain destroying grape and pomegranate fruit orchards and crops like maize and jowar. Very heavy rains in the catchment areas of the Ujjani dam near Pandharpur caused a massive discharge of 20,000 cusecs of water since Tuesday.

Traffic within Solapur city has been affected by landslides and flooding. The State's active COVID-19 cases dipped below the two lakh-mark on Wednesday, with the State recording 19,517 recoveries as opposed to 10,552 new cases. With 158 new deaths, the total death toll has now climbed to 40,859.

The State's total case tally has reached 15,54,389, while its active cases now stand at 1,96,288. A little over three weeks ago, the active cases had risen alarmingly over the three lakh-mark. The cumulative recoveries have risen to 13,16,769, with the State's recovery rate rising to 84.7%.

"Of a total of 78,38,318 laboratory samples tested thus far, 15,54,389 (19.83%) have returned positive, with around 76,000 samples across the State being tested in the last 24 hours," said State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate, adding that the State's case fatality rate stood at 2.63%.

Pune district reported a little over 1,200 cases to take its total case tally to 3,19,380, and 12 deaths saw its total toll climb to 6,291.

As per the Pune district ad-

HC accepts unconditional apology by Payal Ghosh to Richa Chadha

Actor agrees to delete statements, defamatory posts on social media

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday accepted an unconditional apology by actor Payal Ghosh to Richa Chadha which says she withdraws all defamatory and derogatory statements. A single judge Bench of Justice A.K. Menon accepted the apology in the form of consent terms and disposed of the suit against Ms. Ghosh.

Kamaal R. Khan and news channel ABN Telugu TV will contest the suit. The court granted them four weeks to file their reply. Ms. Ghosh's statement said, "She withdraws her statements and defamatory posts pertaining to the plaintiff [Ms. Chadha] as mentioned vide the current interim application and suit, including without limitation her statements and defamatory posts vide the interview to the plaintiff and unconditionally apologises to the plaintiff."

"She undertakes to delete all her above statements and defamatory posts against the plaintiff on Twitter and other media



Payal Ghosh

where she has published the same and further also undertakes not to state, make, publish and/or republish any defamatory, insulting, humiliating statements against the plaintiff at any time in perpetuity, related to the subject matter of the present interim

application in any manner and/or for any purpose."

Ms. Chadha through advocate Suneeta Bedi Sachar sought an apology and an interim injunction to Ms. Ghosh to withdraw her statement, video, articles and tweets in relation to Ms. Chadha and damages of ₹1.1 crore. On September 19, Ms. Ghosh gave an interview to ABN in which the statements were made. The complaint said, "The claims made by Ms. Ghosh in the video are not only false, frivolous and vexatious, but has also been done with an intent to cause damage to the immense goodwill."

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
Government of India
NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

- MoRTH/HPPWD(NH) has been assigned the work of Consultancy Services for feasibility study and detailed engineering including preparation of Detailed Project Report for reconstruction of major bridge across Beas River at Dehra at RD 59/375 including approaches and realignment in the state of Himachal Pradesh

| Sr. No. | NH No. | Section | State | Tentative Length (in m) | Period Of Assignment |
|---------|---------------------|---|-------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | NH-20A (New NH-503) | Consultancy Services for feasibility study and detailed engineering including preparation of Detailed Project Report for reconstruction of major bridge across Beas River at Dehra at RD 59/375 including approaches and realignment in the state of Himachal Pradesh | H.P. | 350.00 m excluding approaches. (Both side Approaches length as per site) | 300 Days |

- Proposals are hereby invited from eligible Consultants for preparation of Detailed Project Report of Consultancy Services for feasibility study and detailed engineering including preparation of Detailed Project Report for reconstruction of major bridge across Beas River at Dehra at RD 59/375 including approaches and realignment in the state of Himachal Pradesh

- The Letter of Invitation (LOI) and Terms of Reference (ToR) including Request for Proposal (RFP) is available online on e-tender portal of https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app. The document can also be downloaded from https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app. e-receipt for Cost of the Document in the form of a Non-refundable document fee of Rs.5,000 (Rupees Five Thousand only) deposited through Bharatkosh/NTRP only favouring Regional Pay and Account Officer, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways payable at Chandigarh must be furnished in a separate envelop while submitting the proposal.

The RFP has also been uploaded on "INFRACON" (www.infracon.nic.in). As such before submitting the proposal the Consultant shall mandatorily register and enlist themselves (the firm and all key personnel), on the MoRTH portal "INFRACON" and furnish registration details along with its RFP. A copy of Infracon Operation Procedure is also enclosed for bidder's reference.

All the bidders registered on Infracon shall form a Team on Infracon and which would be assigned unique Infracon Team ID. Bidders while submitting the proposal shall quote the Infracon Team ID.

1. Bid must be submitted online at e-tender portal of https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app on or before 17/11/2020 (15:00 Hrs)

2. The following schedule is to be followed for this assignment:

i) Download start date : 24/10/2020 (11:00 Hrs)

ii) Deadline for downloading of bid : 16/11/2020 (17:00 Hrs)

iii) Last date for submission of queries : 02/11/2020 (17:00 Hrs)

iv) Pre bid meeting : 03/11/2020 (15:00 Hrs)

v) Deadline for Submission of bids : 17/11/2020 (15:00 Hrs)

vi) Date of opening Technical Bid : 19/11/2020 (11:00 Hrs)

Yours sincerely,

Superintendent Engineer,

Tel: 01892- 238663

NH Circle, HPPWD Shapur

E



Intemperate letter

The Maharashtra Governor is communalising the government response to the pandemic

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari's intemperate letter to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, in which he mocked the latter, questioned his faith and even took a jibe at secularism, a fundamental tenet of the Constitution, is disgraceful. His letter, written purportedly to seek an early reopening of temples, could have urged that without the accompanying scorn and derision. The Governor reduced himself to the level of a troll warrior, by declaring that "our gods and goddesses have been condemned to remain in lockdown" and wondering whether the CM has "suddenly turned secular". He wrote to the CM that the latter used to be a "strong votary of Hindutva", and cited his visits to temples as proof. This forces the conclusion that the intent, purpose and premise of the letter were all wrong. A person's faith in Hinduism and its practices is not Hindutva. The Constitution envisages no role for a CM's faith in his functioning. Moreover, it is not the Governor's job to interfere in the daily functioning of an elected government. Communication between the Governor and CM must be perfectly civil and respectful besides being constitutionally appropriate. And at any rate, restrictions on gatherings at places of worship as a measure to combat a pandemic are not related to the concept of secularism.

His warped logic apart, Mr. Koshyari has a track record of privileging his political fealties over norms and propriety. In November 2019, he held a swearing-in for BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis as the State's Chief Minister, in a dubious attempt to pre-empt the formation of a Shiv Sena-led alliance government. He continued to wade into political controversies, in a manner unbecoming of his office. Mr. Thackeray rightly reminded the Governor of the fact that secularism was a "key component" of the Constitution and the need to take care of people while being sensitive to their beliefs and sentiments. Mr. Thackeray also descended into avoidable grandstanding in the letter by reiterating his own Hindutva credentials and revisiting earlier tussles with the Governor. NCP Chief Sharad Pawar on the other hand, called out the Governor's ill-advised move in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in which he expressed "shock" and "surprise" that the letter was released to the media. The Governor could convey his views to the CM, but the "kind of language" was unsuitable for someone holding a constitutional office, Mr. Pawar pointed out. Maharashtra is fighting a battle against COVID-19, and all steps in this regard must be based entirely on a proper analysis of the situation. Any political considerations can only be damaging, and a communal one will be dangerous. It is unfortunate that the Governor sought to insert himself into the situation in an extremely unhelpful manner. He must retreat and let the Council of Ministers and the Chief Minister take decisions that they consider appropriate and timely.

Unpleasant spectacle

The tussle between State govt. and High Court in A.P. should not be allowed to escalate

The sudden escalation of an ongoing tussle between the judiciary and the ruling YSR Congress party in Andhra Pradesh makes for an unpleasant spectacle. The limits of propriety are being stretched, as the allegations being bandied about have taken distinctly political overtones. With the CM, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, writing to the Chief Justice of India, S.A. Bobde, complaining about the allegedly hostile attitude of the Andhra Pradesh High Court against him and his government, and making public details of the letter that contains explosive allegations against a serving Supreme Court judge, the conflict is embarrassingly out in the open. Meanwhile, the High Court has directed the CBI to take over the investigation into the registry's complaints against allegedly defamatory, inciting and derogatory social media posts against the judiciary as well as individual judges, and to examine whether these attacks were part of a larger conspiracy. The CM alleges that the High Court is being controlled by loyalists of his predecessor in office and political rival, N. Chandrababu Naidu, and has passed a slew of orders against his regime and its actions. The High Court, the petitioner on the administrative side, argues that not only is the State police reluctant to take action against those carrying on an online campaign against the court but it is actively pursuing complaints of similar offences against Mr. Jagan Mohan and arresting the perpetrators. It says many of those posting on social media against the High Court judges are from the YSR Congress.

The conflict is based on mutual accusations that the High Court is hostile to the State government, and that the latter is abetting a political campaign against the judges. It is disturbing enough that some judicial orders are seen in a political light, or lend themselves to such an interpretation. It becomes quite ominous if these charges give rise to open threats and abuse. The government has sought to ease the situation by offering no objection to the CBI inquiry. It is presumably waiting for the outcome of the CM's unusual missive to the CJI, who in turn faces a dilemma as he cannot be seen as either ignoring a written complaint from an elected leader or giving undue credence to charges from a disgruntled litigant. The problem is that allegations of possible judicial bias, which are difficult to establish, are combined with those of misconduct, a serious charge. The right thing would probably be for the CJI to order an inquiry into the letter in accordance with the apex court's internal procedure. Regardless of what happens, it may end the recriminations. India can ill-afford a public perception that judges have strong political loyalties. For, that will undermine faith in an independent judiciary.

A weak link in the elementary education chain

India is ignoring the necessity for strong capacity building of the many NGOs engaged in educational improvement



ROHIT DHANKAR

For about three decades now, a large number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are intensively engaged in the task of improving elementary education in the country. A paper (<https://bit.ly/3doEEI3>) in the *Economic & Political Weekly* of May 2005, titled "How Large Is India's Non-Profit Sector?", estimates about three million paid workers in the voluntary sector through 1.2 million organisations. The paper estimates that 20.4% of this workforce (about six lakh workers) is engaged in education. According to a newspaper report, "India has 31 lakh NGOs, more than double the number of schools" (August 1, 2015), the number of NGOs in the country was more than 31 lakh – more than double the number estimated in the above mentioned paper. With these data, it should be a safe guess to estimate that there are now more than 12 lakh NGO workers engaged in education (even if there could be only 50% of them in school education, and the remainder involved in improving reach and quality). The lower end of the estimated number of NGO staff working for the improvement of quality and reach in elementary education must be over three lakh.

Scope of work

It is most probable that these workers are engaged in direct teaching in classrooms, demonstrating various activities and methods to teachers, conducting teacher workshops and so on. Most NGOs and large foundations believe that these people work as catalysts and influence the functioning of the system. For various reasons, they are supposed to be more effective than regular employees in the government system.

There is a lot of discussion around education and the Continuous Professional Development of Teachers (CPDT). These NGO workers have a significant part in the CPDT, for example, in annual in-service training and pedagogy improvement workshops. We should be asking ourselves whether these workers are adequately prepared for this difficult task. As an example, let us take quality improvement, which is currently the biggest concern in education.

Anyone who can successfully contribute to the improvement of educational quality must have some idea of what educational quality happens to be. A very common notion of what good quality school is in our society is based on a high score in the board examinations. Suppose the curriculum is irrelevant to the life of people (as it is often claimed), would it still indicate high quality? Further, suppose that high scoring is achieved by subjecting children to severe punishment and stress, would it still remain an indicator of high quality? If the response to last two questions is negative, then we can conclude that appropriateness of curriculum and pedagogy also need to be considered in defining quality of education. But how do we know what good or appropriate curriculum and pedagogy are? On what criteria can we decide that?

Key documents, framework

The four documents currently providing a framework of principles, guidelines and legal stipulations to deal with such questions are the National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF), The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE), the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2009 (NCFTE) and the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). Even if the NCF and NCFTE change in the near future, the new documents are likely to have much in common with the present ones. Therefore, it is worthwhile to assume that any worker engaged in



education improvement should reasonably understand these and similar documents. Let us take an example from each one of these documents to see what is involved.

Regarding pedagogy, the RTE, in Section 29(e), recommends "learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centered manner". To use this definition in school improvement, the NGO worker has to ask himself questions such as : What is discovery? How and what can children learn through discovery? Does discovery method have any limitations as a pedagogy? Further, the NCF recommends constructivist pedagogy. What is the constructivist method of learning? Is it the same as recommended by the NCF?

On curriculum, NEP 2020, paragraph 4.23 says "certain subjects, skills, and capacities should be learned by all students to become good, successful, innovative, adaptable, and productive human beings in today's rapidly changing world. ... these skills include: scientific temper and evidence-based thinking; creativity and innovativeness; sense of aesthetics and art; oral and written communication; health and nutrition; physical education, fitness, wellness, and sports; collaboration and teamwork; problem solving and logical reasoning; vocational exposure and skills; digital literacy, coding, and computational thinking; ethical and moral reasoning; knowledge and practice of human and Constitutional values; gender sensitivity; Fundamental Duties; citizenship skills and values".

If we want to use this policy, we

need to understand what paragraphs such as the above say. One has to note the complexity and profusion of terms used. What do all these words and phrases mean? Is the paragraph internally consistent? Is this paragraph consistent with the NCF? Do the NCF and NEP need to be consistent with each other?

The paragraph from NEP 2020 also highlights certain aims of education: namely, to make all children "good, successful, innovative, adaptable, and productive human beings in today's rapidly changing world". Are these aims consistent with each other? Do they have any relative weightage? What if some schools produce children who are highly successful, innovative, adaptable, productive, extremely competitive, and uncaring for others? Would we be happy to call them "good" and consider such an education to be high quality education?

The last example, the NCFTE (page 23), says that we need teachers who "[P]romote values of peace, democratic way of life, equality, justice, liberty, fraternity, secularism and zeal for social reconstruction". Are these two quotes, one from NEP 2020 and the other from the NCFTE, compatible with each other? Are they emphasising the same values or have significant difference with each other?

Need for deep insights

It seems bringing about improvement in the quality of education is not a simple task that one can accomplish just by desire, hard work and interaction with teachers. It seems to require answers to a plethora of questions. Could it be that our attempts for over three decades have failed, at least partly, because most people working for improvement do not have reasonable answers to such questions?

Just reading these documents may be adequate for a layman not engaged in educational activities and teacher capacity building. But for someone engaged in CPDT, a study of these documents alone

will neither answer the questions raised above nor give him/her any better insight into these documents. The positions taken in these and other such documents, as well as in decision making in education, are based on a vast repertoire of theoretical knowledge. A major part of this theoretical knowledge is drawn from the philosophy of education, political theories, sociology of education, psychology of learning and development, and a contextual understanding of the current needs of our society. Understanding an adequate part of all this and their implications for curriculum, pedagogy, and teacher development, therefore, becomes imperative to be effective in quality improvement or to contribute to good education.

An immediate task

If the argument outlined so far is even tentatively acceptable, then a strong programme for capacity building of NGO workers engaged in educational improvement becomes an urgent need.

However, NGOs do not seem to be paying adequate attention to this very important area. Nor do universities and teacher education colleges seem to be offering any short term and/or distance learning courses for this sector. If we want to implement NEP 2020 – presently leaving its merits and demerits aside – and really want to see improvement in the quality of education available to our children, we need to pay very close attention to capacity building of this vast workforce engaged in the field. Without adequate preparation, the assumption that the mere appointment of a person in an NGO and being placed in the field will automatically develop the capabilities of these workers is incorrect, and a case of sheer injustice to them, to the education system, and to children in schools.

Rohit Dhankar is Professor, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, and the Founder Secretary, Dignitar, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The views expressed are personal

Phased manufacturing policy that is hardly smart

Largely applicable to the mobile phone manufacturing sector, the plan has fared poorly in domestic value addition



CHIDAMBARAM G. IYER

Last week, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said it had approved 16 firms in the mobile manufacturing sector for the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme (for large-scale electronics manufacturing, notified on April 1, 2020; <https://bit.ly/3nPgqNK>) to transform India into a major mobile manufacturing hub. These are five domestic and five foreign mobile phone producers and six component manufacturers. The PLI comes on the back of a phased manufacturing programme (PMP) that began in 2016-17 and was supposed to culminate in 2019-20. The PMP incentivised the manufacture of low value accessories initially, and then moved on to the manufacture of higher value components. This was done by increasing the basic customs duty on the imports of these accessories or components. The PMP was implemented with an aim to improve value addition in the country.

More imports in India

Firms such as Apple, Xiaomi, Oppo, and OnePlus have invested in India, but mostly through their contract manufacturers. As a result, production increased from \$13.4 billion in 2016-17 to \$31.7 billion in 2019-20. However, analysis of factory-level production data from the Annual Survey of Indus-

tries (ASI) shows that in 2017-18, value addition for surveyed firms (barring two outliers) ranged from 1.6% to 17.4%, with most of the firms being below 10%. For the majority of the surveyed firms, more than 85% of the inputs were imported. Comparable UN data for India, China, Vietnam, Korea and Singapore (2017-2019), show that except for India, all countries exported more mobile phone parts than imports – which indicates the presence of facilities that add value to these parts before exporting them. India, on the other hand, imported more than it exported, the least being in 2019 when its imports of mobile phone parts were 25 times the exports. Therefore, while the PMP policy increased the value of domestic production, improvement in local value addition remains a work-in-progress.

Further, in September 2019, Chinese Taipei contested the raise in tariffs under the PMP. If the PMP is found to be World Trade Organization (WTO) non-compliant, then we may be flooded with imports of mobile phones which might make the local assembly of mobile phones unattractive. This will affect the operations of the mobile investments done under the PMP.

Focus on value of production

The new PLI policy offers an incentive subject to thresholds of incremental investment and sales of manufactured goods; these thresholds vary for foreign and domestic mobile firms. Thus, focus remains on increasing value of domestic production, and not local value addition. According to our calculations, if implemented



in toto, an additional capacity of 60 crore mobile phones per year may be onstream at the end of the PLI, i.e. FY25.

Shift from China is unlikely

Chinese firms that dominate the Indian market are not a part of the PLI policy. Thus their capacity expansion, if any, will be in addition to this. India produced around 29 crore units of mobile phones for the year 2018-19; 94% of these were sold in the domestic market, with the remaining being exported. This implies that much of the incremental production and sales under the PLI policy will have to be for the export market.

Recently, a study by Ernst & Young for the India Cellular & Electronics Association showed that if the cost of production of a mobile phone is say 100 (without subsidies), then the effective cost (with subsidies and other benefits) of manufacturing mobile phone in China is 79.55, Vietnam, 89.05, and India (including PLI), 92.51. This shows that incentives under the PLI policy may not turn out to be a game-changing move, and it may be premature to expect a major chunk of mobile manufacturing to shift from China to India.

It may also be useful to recall that mobile phone investments that occurred around 2005, targeted relatively local and low value

export markets, which is being followed by the incumbent mobile manufacturers in the country. Numbers show that though India's mobile phone exports grew from \$1.6 billion in 2018-19 to \$3.8 billion in 2019-20, the per unit value declined from \$91.1 to \$87, respectively. Thus, our export competitiveness seems to be in mobiles with lower selling price. However, for foreign firms chosen under the PLI policy, the incentive will be computed on the basis of the invoice value of phones available at and above ₹15,000 (\$204.65). This is surprising as it is clear that the PLI policy does not strengthen our current export competitiveness in mobile phones; and markets with higher average selling price have lower volumes.

Difficult for domestic firms

The five foreign firms that have been chosen are Samsung and four of Apple's contract manufacturers. Samsung and two of Apple's contract manufacturers already have facilities in India, and can be expected to continue with their strategy of dependence on imported inputs. Domestic firms have been nearly wiped out from the Indian market. So, their ability to take advantage of the PLI policy and grab a sizeable domestic market share seems difficult. Domestic firms may have the route of exporting cheaper mobile phones to other low-income countries. However, their performance in the last couple of years has not been promising. For example, among the chosen domestic firms, Lava International reported exports of ₹324 crore in FY18, while Optimus Electronics exported ₹83 crore in FY18 and ₹4 lakh in FY19.

Thus, how well they respond to the opportunity that the PLI policy provides is an open question.

Supply chain colocation

Finally, the six component firms that have been given approval under the 'specified electronic components segment', though a welcome step, do not complete the mobile manufacturing ecosystem. For example, literature shows that when Samsung set up shop in Vietnam, it relied heavily on its Korean suppliers which co-located with it to produce intermediate inputs, so much so that 63 among Samsung's 67 suppliers then were foreign. It was a surprise when it was found through our primary survey that though Samsung is invested hugely in India, it has not colocated its supply chain in the country.

In summary, the PMP policy, since 2016-17 has barely been helpful in raising domestic value addition in the industry even though value of production expanded considerably. As backward integration via tariff protection is likely to come up against WTO rules, the new PLI focus is on increasing domestic production, and not value addition. The policy has separately licensed six component manufacturers to start domestic manufacturing. This may not succeed as the assemblers and component manufacturers move together. A first step in this direction could be to encourage foreign firms chosen under the PLI policy to collocate their supply ecosystems in the country.

Chidambaran G. Iyer is Associate Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Row in Maharashtra
State Governors have known to be partisan. However, the Governor in Maharashtra, as well as some others, is functioning like a *de facto* State party chief. The President of India should take *suo motu* notice of the Governor's letter and remind him that his post is constitutional and that he is bound to maintain dignity. If the Governors appointed by the

BJP government are uncomfortable with their ornamental constitutional post, they can always resign and join the mainstream of the party which they represented instead of indulging in politics (Page 1, "Pawar backs Uddhav, writes to PM", October 14).
N. NAGARAJAN,
Secunderabad

■ The current 'set' of Governors has surpassed

even the partisan behaviour of Governors appointed under the Congress regime. The BJP does not seem to have got over the pain of losing power in Maharashtra and is trying every trick in the book to embarrass or bring down the present government in Maharashtra. Maharashtra Governor B.S. Koshyari's letter to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra is not befitting the high office he holds. Even if there is a

valid reason for not reopening temples, the tone and tenor of the Governor's letter is condemnable.
ANTHONY HENRIQUES,
Mumbai

Thread of hope
After an insipid showing in the initial stages of the IPL 2020, the much fancied Chennai Super Kings have made amends, leaving the team hanging by a slender thread in the race for the

play-offs. Interestingly, the Dhoni-led CSK has faced such a situation earlier. The sudden exit of two of its stalwarts, Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh, has taken its toll on the team. Despite the win in Dubai, it is still going to be a bumpy road

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:
In a Business page report on Epson India's surge in printer sales (Oct. 14, 2020), the company name was misspelt as *Epson* in the headline.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300; E-mail: readerseditor@

Tackling the roots of discrimination

It is imperative to establish both individual culpability and institutional accountability



D. SHYAM BABU

Ram Vilas Paswan earned many distinctions. He was the only leader to be a Central Minister under six Prime Ministers. His eclecticism in ideology and dexterity in politics could only be a dream for many a politician. Such a feat required of him to be an agnostic in his identity as well. He couldn't help being a Dalit and he didn't hide it, either. Being mindful of electoral dynamics, he always sought to represent lower castes, Muslims and, of course, Dalits. His Dalit critics were upset that he clubbed the three groups together for every demand, diluting the 'uniqueness' of Dalits.

Leaving aside his first ministerial post as Labour and Welfare Minister, Paswan throughout helmed 'non-represented' ministries such as Railways and Communications. He was as mainstream a national leader as they come. But for most of the media, Paswan died a Dalit. He was a Dalit icon, a Dalit face in the Union Cabinet and what have you.

Creating pictures in our head

From Ambedkar to Paswan, most of the media clubs Dalits' caste identity with their accomplishments. But when was the last time the media reported on a national leader as a Brahmin icon or a Bania face? Consider the deleterious effects of such cultural reflex. Sections of the media are complicit in creating and stereotyping what the American abolitionist Frederick Douglass called the "pictures in our head."

The visual media, especially cinema, is guilty of perpetuating all the drross in society. A recent Telugu movie, *Sarileru Neekevvaru*, portrays the heroine in a grossly insulting way. As if she is the tail of a monkey, she literally chases the hero till the last frame. In that chase, she stands denuded of agency, dignity, or just decency that is any person's due. Calling it humour would be a fig leaf to hide sexism. A railway official who must be a graduate, by virtue of his job, is cast as an obese black man capable of generating only derision and laughter.

Here is a movie produced by mostly brown-skinned men; it's been made for



a mostly brown-skinned audience. But the movie stands out also as an essay of the brown man asserting the white man's supremacy over him. In fact, for example, our age-old infatuation with the white skin explains how, when the actual White Man had showed up on our shores, we had handed him the keys to the country, expressing our habitual obedience.

Three incidents

This year we have witnessed many incidents of violence, inhumanity and blatant discrimination which highlight how the problems of caste, race and gender remain intractable. Let us examine three such incidents.

The murder of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, by a white policeman in the U.S. has forever damaged its reputation as a city on a hill. A female Dalit doctor at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, found the harassment by her upper caste senior so unbearable that she tried to end her life. Fortunately, she failed in the attempt. A Dalit employee of Cisco Systems was discriminated against by upper caste supervisors in the company's American headquarters and the same is testified by a California government's lawsuit.

By no means are these acts of cruelty mindless. Nor are they to be ignored as some kind of clash between two parties, where one of them just happened to be from a minority group. The trail of death and destruction these acts leave goes beyond the immediate context. In addition to harming its victim, an act of discrimination does something far more insidious and long-lasting. It rein-

forces rules, norms and customs that allow or sanction such crimes. We must not forget the wider impact of a case like Floyd's murder. The damage to the psyche of those millions of young blacks who protest against racism is severe and long-lasting.

The imperative for us is to demand institutional accountability. The ones who should be in the dock are, in addition to the accused, those who head the institutions where acts of discrimination take place. In the AIIMS case, the upper caste senior allegedly told the lady Dalit doctor, "You're a SC, stay within your limits."

The attempted suicide led to the filing of an FIR and AIIMS set up two committees, including an internal one, to investigate the matter. Their brief appears to be to protect the institution's reputation, rather than standing by the victim even if they found merit in her allegations. The internal committee's investigation produced this gem: "Although the accused didn't explicitly use gender or caste-based remarks against the victim, but he did use words like 'billi', 'mind your level'..."

"Mind your level"? What ought to be that level, if her caste and gender were not part of her level? This is how institutions resort to what can be called intentional failures to subvert the laws meant to be invoked in such cases. The obvious reason for AIIMS's illogic is to obviate the invocation of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989 as well as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013. These two acts mandate swift action. AIIMS is guilty of making a mockery of the law.

Like a rattlesnake

Therefore, institutions must be made accountable. A simple police investigation would unearth wrongdoing by several top functionaries at AIIMS to subvert the law. The greatest folly would be to treat the matter as an individual case.

Caste and race, like a rattlesnake, distract us by their myriad and daily abominations and we hardly notice their bite. Each act of hatred and violence deserves its own justice. But we must treat them as mere symptoms and look for the real factors that keep hatred and discrimination enduring and pervasive.

D. Shyam Babu is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. Views are personal

+ Neither is the tendency for opacity nor is the tendency to take recourse to federalism new for this government. Take, for instance, the suppression of data on farmer suicides, starvation deaths, and the Consumption Expenditure Survey. Similarly, consider the onslaught on poorer State governments such as Bihar when the Central government refused to pay its share of the GST. The Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act stipulates, among other things, payment of displacement and journey allowance by employers. However, this was not enforced. The order by the Home Ministry (March 29) asking employers to pay employees during the lockdown also stood toothless. Indeed, the Central government violated its own orders by not paying all MGNREGA job card holders as technically the Central government employs them. The fundamental problems will remain unless a deeper introspection of the workforce, skills portfolio and innovation capital is performed. Lax legal enforcement cannot be a justification to whittle them down further.

The Indian workforce has consistently depended on so-called 'casual labour' for decades. As per the 2017 Eco-

nomic Survey, there are about 14 crore migrants, half of whom are inter-State workers. Informal workers contribute to nearly 50% of the GDP and inter-State migrant workers contribute to about 6% of the GDP. A majority of the inter-State labourers are self-employed and/or engaged in casual labour with limited opportunities for skill building and increased wages. Despite the threat of automation and mechanisation, the Labour Ministry has sought to focus its skill development initiatives primarily on the formal sector. There is an urgent need to better assess the capabilities and improve the skills of the informal sector as well.

Impact on workers and country

The unacceptably high levels of informal employment have negative impacts not just on the workers but also on the country. First, the informal sector does not provide learning and training opportunities and invests little on their workers, hindering their chances to upgrade. Second, it compounds the existing inequality in the country. It presents itself as a source of income for poor families, whose children often drop out from education to help support their families. In doing so, they halt their own development in formal education or training, leading to sustained low wages. Historically marginalised communities such as Dalits, Muslims, and Adivasis are disproportionately affected by this. Finally, a healthy workforce is a necessary and sufficient condition for a healthy country. From an economic standpoint, a healthy workforce implies higher levels of productivity. And it is an end in itself from a constitutional standpoint.

Bishwa Pandey and Rajendran Narayanan are SWAN volunteers. Pandey is a researcher in a private company and Narayanan teaches at Azim Premji University, Bangalore. Anindita Adhikari, a PhD candidate at Brown University, contributed to the article

The RBI tunes in to the economy

The central bank is showing signs of shifting away from its rigid inflation targeting policy

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

There is nothing like a crisis to concentrate the mind. The salience of this saying may be found in the changes taking place in the economic policymaking establishments of the world. The COVID-19-triggered recession had led to some of their strongly held assumptions being revised.

Shift away from dogma

Perhaps the most significant of them is the shift indicated by the Chair of the Federal Reserve (Fed), Jerome Powell, declaring that the Fed will not let inflation stand in the way of maximising employment. The practical counterpart of this is that the Fed will no longer raise rates pre-emptively, i.e., in anticipation of inflation. The reason for this, he declared, was that the Phillips Curve, the relationship between inflation and unemployment, may no longer hold in the U.S. economy. Mr. Powell went on to say that he will even be guided by the consideration of unemployment among vulnerable groups within the American population, namely African-Americans and Hispanics. It took a lawyer to call out the emperor. The Phillips Curve has been a mighty presence in the canon of Anglo-American economics.

Yoked as much of India's economic policymaking has been to intellectual developments in the West one would expect some changes in how our own central bank, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), will change now that the Fed has. We are not disappointed. In the recent reconstitution of the Monetary Policy Committee, which conducts monetary policy in India, we can find a refreshing shift away from dogma. Not all its members may be macro-economists in the conventional sense but their work conveys that they will not be governed by rigid adherence to the model of inflation underlying RBI's inflation targeting policy. This change has not come a day too early, and India's government and central bank have done no one any favours by bringing it about. Data show that the model that currently guides India's inflation control strategy may be quite irrelevant. This is seen in the recent behaviour of inflation. We know that out-

put contracted by more than 23% in the first quarter of this year. Despite this staggering decline the inflation rate did not budge, an experience that flies in the face of the proposition that inflation reflects an 'over heating' economy, one growing too fast in relation to its potential. This view represents the RBI's official understanding of inflation, and presumably forms the basis of its policy of inflation targeting. It was endorsed by the Government of India when it legislated the modern monetary policy framework to enable the RBI to pursue inflation targeting. If the Phillips Curve, which the RBI's approach internalises, exists, inflation should have abated as India's economy contracted during the lockdown, implying a 'cooling off' as it were.

So far the RBI has shown little time for a handy account of inflation that can explain the recent experience of inflation in India. It had been imagined with developing economies in mind, and is based on the idea that food prices are an important determinant of inflation along with imported inflation. Accordingly, a macroeconomic contraction need not lower inflation.

Model to forecast inflation

A committee somewhere may hardly be sufficient to bring about a change in the mindset of a major arm of the Indian state. Hopefully, though, the economic havoc wreaked by COVID-19 will lead to a more sober and rooted policymaking. We may even be seeing some green shoots. A recent working paper of the RBI's research department has received attention in the media for suggesting that a more eclectic model than the one that underlies inflation targeting does a better job of forecasting inflation in India. This model accepts a role for food prices, a possibility that is missed when embracing economic models developed in the western hemisphere, where food prices have stopped trending upwards over half a century ago. Better late than never, we might say. That India's central bank is finally alive to India's economy is surely good news for Indians.

Pulapre Balakrishnan is Professor of Economics, Ashoka University, Sonipat



DATA POINT

Minimal support

1. SUPPORT PRICE | The chart shows MSPs for select crops for the 2020-21 season. The MSP is the price the govt. has to pay if it procures the crop. But it is legally bound to do so

7,196
5,275
2,150
Bajra
Groundnut
Maize
Moong

1,850
1,868
1,850
Paddy
Ragi
Sesame
Soybean (yellow)

3,295
6,855
3,880
Tur
Urad

6,000
6,000

MSP (₹ per quintal)

In Punjab and Haryana, on all instances, paddy was sold at or above the MSP between Oct. 1 and Oct. 13. In other States, in most instances, it was sold at a price much lower than the MSP. In the case of paddy (common) the MSP was ₹1,868.

Analysis limited to paddy varieties sold in Punjab and Haryana

In many instances the modal price was ₹300 to ₹1,000 per quintal less than the MSP

Chhattisgarh
Gujarat
Haryana
Karnataka
Punjab
Uttar Pradesh

Modal price (₹/quintal)

2. DISTRESS SALE | While the govt. announces the MSP for many crops, only paddy and wheat are procured in significant quantities. Even in paddy (common), procurement is mostly limited to certain States. The graph shows the sale of paddy in various instances (as defined in chart 2) across States

2,156
In the case of Bajra, of the 2,156 such instances in the considered period, 2,156 (97%) saw the modal price going below the MSP

% instances with modal price >= MSP
Modal price < MSP

100
75
50
25
0

Bajra
Groundnut
Maize
Moong
Paddy
Ragi
Sesame
Soybean (yellow)

100
75
50
25
0

Bajra
Groundnut
Maize
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Soybean (yellow)

100
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FROM PAGE ONE

16 killed as rain wreaks havoc in Hyderabad

Mohammed Abdul Taher Qureshi, the inconsolable sole survivor, too was washed away in the strong current, but his younger brother saved him in the nick of time, before himself being swept away. He is currently reported as missing.

Mother, daughter die
In separate cases, a mother and daughter – Suvarna, 45, and Shrawanthi, 15 – were killed in Ibrahimpat-

Loan borrowers' Deepavali in your hands, SC tells govt.

Mr. Mehta said the government had detailed the scheme on an affidavit in court. It would not go back on its word.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, for the Indian Banks Association, assured the Bench, also comprising Justice R. Subhash Reddy, that the scheme would be "worked out and done".

He submitted, "It has to be done. Everything the government has said on affidavit has to be done. There is no question about it".

He said a month's time may be necessary because there were a large number of borrowers under the ₹2 crore category. Mr. Mehta said the calculation of interest would also vary.

Chidambaram's plea
Senior advocate P. Chidambaram, appearing for the Shopping Centres Associa-

Hathras victim's family given full security: U.P.

The State had deployed "adequate forces to ensure protection" to the family, which includes the parents, the two brothers, a sister and the grandmother, it noted.

A "three-fold protective mechanism" had been put in place at the village and the house.

It consists of armed constabulary, civil police personnel of guards, gunners and shadows and CCTV cameras to cover the sur-

Abdullahs meet PDP chief, to discuss Gupkar pact

In an indicator of cementing relations between the two major regional players, Mr. Abdullah said Ms. Mufti has accepted an invitation to attend the meeting of the Gupkar Declaration at his residence around 4 p.m. on Thursday.

"All the signatories of the Declaration will be meeting. The future course of action will be decided jointly," Mr. Abdullah said.

The Declaration was signed by six political parties, including Congress, on August 4 last year just a day before the abrogation of J&K's special status. It called for a joint fight to "safeguard

J&K's special status, Article 370 and 35A". Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone, a signatory of the Declaration, also met Ms. Mufti on Wednesday.

In an audio uploaded online, Ms. Mufti, toughening her stand, said the struggle will continue to get back what "the Delhi Darbar has snatched away by unconstitutional and undemocratic means" and sought resolution of the Kashmir issue.

"People also need to keep struggling for the solution of Jammu and Kashmir, which has led to sacrificing thousands of lives," Ms. Mufti said.

Register FIRs for holding large meetings: M.P. HC

SPs asked to file compliance reports before the next hearing

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOJPAL

The Gwalior Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court has directed the Data and Gwalior District Magistrates to register FIRs against members of congregations violating COVID-19 norms and against those at whose they were organised.

A Division Bench of Justices Sheel Nagu and Rajeev Kumar Srivastava, while hearing a petition filed by la-

Rain leaves a trail of destruction in Telangana

Standing crops damaged; roads too bear brunt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Although the depression over Telangana moved west-north-westwards and was lying over north interior Karnataka and adjoining areas of Maharashtra and Telangana, the heavy downpour during the 24-hour period till 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday had thrown normal life out of gear across Telangana.

According to the Met department, there was over 10 cm rain at over 60 places across Telangana. Extremely heavy rain (over 20.4 cm) occurred at isolated places in Rangareddy, Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri and Sangareddy districts, very heavy rain (over 11.5 cm) occurred at most places in Medchal-Malkajgiri, Yadadri, Hyderabad and Sangareddy districts, at a few places in Vikarabad, Rangareddy, Nalgonda and Medak and at isolated places in Jangaon districts.

Heavy rain (over 6.4 cm) occurred at most places in Siddipet and Jangaon, at a few places in Warangal-Rural, Karimnagar and at isolat-



Nature's fury: A scene from Gaganpahad on the NH-44 between Hyderabad city and the airport. Several vehicles were washed away in the area. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

ed places in Bhadravati-Kothagudem, Warangal-Urban, Kamareddy, Mahabubabad, Suryapet Khammam and Rajanur-Sircilla district.

Roads were damaged in many districts. Standing crops were submerged. Over 700 minor irrigation tanks suffered breaches due to heavy inflows. Of the 43,412 tanks, nearly 24,200 were discharging surplus water and water in another 12,000 were near the full tank level," irrigation authorities said.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Polavaram left main canal in the Godavari irrigation system at Jagampeta in East Godavari district developed a breach in the early hours of Wednesday owing to huge inflow of rainwater into it.

Krishna river once again is in spate since Tuesday night bringing in woes of flooding to thousands of families residing in the low-lying areas downstream of Prakasam Barrage in the district.

Union Home Minister

Amit Shah said on Wednesday that the Ministry of Home Affairs was closely monitoring the situation in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the wake of heavy rainfall. Mr. Shah tweeted that "the Modi government is committed to provide all possible assistance to the people of both the States in this hour of need. My thoughts and prayers are with those affected."

(With inputs from Vijayawada bureau)

Kerala Congress faction led by Jose K. Mani decides to join LDF

I will step down as RS member to uphold principles of morality, he says after emergency parliamentary party meeting



Changing course: Jose K. Mani announcing the decision to align with the LDF in Kottayam on Wednesday.

STAFF REPORTER
KOTTAYAM

Ending weeks of uncertainty over the political position of the Kerala Congress (M) [KC (M)] faction led by Jose K. Mani, the party on Wednesday announced its decision to align with the Left Democratic Front (LDF).

After an emergency parliamentary party meeting here in the morning, Mr. Mani said he would step down as Rajya Sabha member in line

with the principles of political morality. The party's decision to join the LDF

marked a major shift in its political course after nearly four decades, barring a few months of association at the Kottayam district panchayat in 2017.

The regional party, under the leadership of K.M. Mani, had joined the LDF in 1979 along with the A.K. Antony-led Congress (U), but re-

turned to the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1981.

Elaborating on the decision to join the LDF, Mr. Mani said its move was unconditional and discussions with the LDF would soon begin.

"This is a decision that is going to change the political landscape of Kerala forever," Mr. Mani said.

"A meeting of the party State committee decided to

finalise our political stance based on the proclaimed slogans of the KC(M), which include protection of farmers, secularism and the vision for a brand new Kerala. The Left Democratic Front has been so effective in keeping the communal forces at bay. Moreover, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also responded favourably to KC (M)'s request to revive the crisis-ridden agriculture sector," he said.

IN BRIEF



Kuchipudi dancer Shobha Naidu dead

VISAKHAPATNAM
Noted Kuchipudi dancer and Padma Shri recipient Shobha Naidu died in Hyderabad on Wednesday. In his condole message, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said:

"She has done a great service to Kuchipudi and her ballets won worldwide acclaim."

Sivasankar moves HC for anticipatory bail

KOCHI
M. Sivasankar, former Principal Secretary to the Kerala Chief Minister, on Wednesday approached the Kerala High Court seeking anticipatory bail in a case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the diplomatic channel gold smuggling case.

Kerala cases drop, A.P. adds less than 4,000

Mid-week incidence in Kerala down again at 6,244; Karnataka records 9,265 cases and Telangana 1,446

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In a sharp drop, Kerala on Wednesday recorded 6,244 COVID-19 cases, when 50,056 samples were tested.

The test positivity rate, which was 18.16% the previous day, plunged to 12.4% on Wednesday with no explanation.

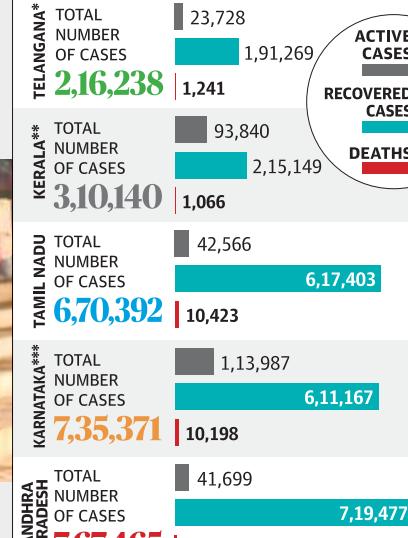
Last week too, the State's

Double whammy

Incessant rain in many States has made life all the more tough for people amid the spread of COVID-19. The graph shows the spread of the pandemic in the southern States



*Telangana numbers are as of 8 p.m. on Tuesday | **Kerala has a mismatch of 85 cases due to unaccounted deaths, missing persons ***Karnataka has 19 non-COVID deaths



Over a 24-hour period, 1,13,771 tests were conducted including 39,111 rapid antigen tests.

Telangana recorded 1,446 COVID-19 cases on Tuesday.

On October 13, the number of tests stood at 40,056 and 1,446 tested positive. Eight more COVID-19 patients died. The new cases included 252 from Greater Hyderabad, 135 from Rangareddy, 131 from Medchal Malkajgiri, 74 from Karimnagar, and 58 from Nalgonda.

From March 2 to October 13, a total of 36,64,152 tests were conducted.

Andhra Pradesh had less than 4,000 new cases, at 3,892, on Wednesday. For the first time in three months, the State registered less than 30 deaths, at 28.

Samples tested touched 69,463 samples and the positivity rate was 5.60%.

East Godavari once again reported the highest single-day case tally and three districts the highest number of deaths in the past day.

(With inputs from Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Vijayawada bureaus)

A sister born to save ailing brother

Under 'saviour sibling' experiment, baby's bone marrow was used to save child

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

India's first 'saviour sibling' experiment is a success, say doctors.

A one-year-old sibling has saved her brother's life by donating her bone marrow. Kavya was conceived by her parents through invitro fertilisation to save her brother, Abhijeet Solanki, who was born with Thalassemia.

Thalassemia is a disorder where the haemoglobin count is low in blood and such persons require frequent blood transfusions.

Abhijeet was born in November 2013 but unlike normal babies he did not achieve growth milestones. The parents learned that Abhijeet had Thalassemia major. Abhijeet required blood transfusion every 25 days

and the gap between two transfusions reduced as he grew. By the age of six, Abhijeet had undergone 80 transfusions, recalled his father Sahdev Singh Solanki. The only way to save him was through a bone marrow transplant.

The family was willing to donate their bone marrow but the human leukocyte antigen (HLA) of the family, including that of his older sister, did not match.

The Solanki family consulted many doctors. Mr. Solanki's research led him to the 'saviour sibling' concept, following which he sought out Manish Bunker, medical director of Nova IVF Fertility in Ahmedabad.

Dr. Bunker said Mr. Solanki's research and the science behind it was known but no

body had approached him with such a request before.

Reproductive therapy

Dr. Bunker started the assisted reproductive therapy, called pre-implantation genetic testing, for monogenic disorder with HLA matching. The couple underwent three cycles of IVF and 18 embryos were created. Of this only one perfectly matched Abhijeet's HLA.

The embryo was implanted in Apla Solanki, who delivered a baby girl a year ago. "We had to wait for the baby to grow. She had to weigh 10 kg before we could draw bone marrow," said Deepa Trivedi, programme director of Sankalp Bone Marrow Unit, CIMS Hospital, Ahmedabad, where the transplant was carried out.

Pointing out that the best therapeutic option for Thalassemia major patients is bone marrow transplant from an HLA-identical donor, Dr. Bunker said, "We are extremely thrilled to be part of reproductive history in India to create the first-ever 'saviour-sibling' through ART. We used pre-genetic diagnosis and screening test, an established method for conceiving a child who may donate cord blood or hematopoietic stem cells for transplantation to save a critically ill sibling."

Mr. Solanki said the transplant was done on March 17. Since then Abhijeet has not needed any blood transfusion, indicating that he had been cured of the disorder. His haemoglobin count was 11.3, Dr. Trivedi said.

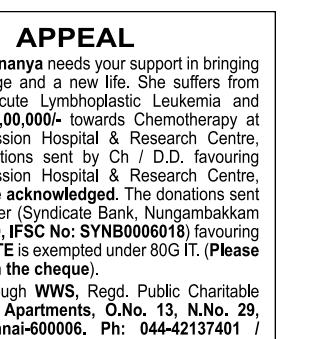
A.P. schools asked to remove caste, religion

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA

In a move to promote egalitarianism on school campuses, the educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh have been asked not to mention caste and religion of students in the attendance register. Director, School Education, Vadrevu Chinna

veerabhadru, has issued a circular asking the schools to remove the students' caste and religion from the attendance register.

He also said schools should stop writing names of girls in red ink. Many schools use blue ink to write boys' names and red ink to write girls' names.



AN NO-NDE

Modi set to address many rallies in Bihar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address at least 12 campaign rallies in Bihar over four days between October 23 and November 3.

Senior sources in the State BJP involved in firming up plans for these rallies told *The Hindu* that Mr. Modi would address at least three or four rallies a day at various locations.

"The venues have also been decided and include Patna, Gaya, Bhagalpur, and Darbhanga," said a source. The rallies will be a hybrid of real and virtual with physical attendance in some and others via smartphones, computers and tablets in possession of BJP workers.

The Bihar election is the first big one to be held under COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Election Commission. The polls in the State will be held in three phases starting from October 28, with the results to be out on November 10.

Many Bihar 'strongmen' receive ticket bounty

To counter chances of their disqualification, spouses of some candidates have entered the fray as Independents

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar may have been reiterating in his campaign meetings that the rule of law has been established in the State in the 15 years of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) rule, but come elections, Bihar appears to be back in the 1990s – when *bahubalis* (strongmen) made headlines. In this election too, almost all the parties have fielded such characters or their wives.

In the first phase of polling to 71 seats on October 28, 164 of the 353 candidates face serious criminal cases. They include murder, attempt to murder, extortion, rape and kidnapping.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) tops the list in fielding such candidates, followed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), the Rashtriya Lok Samata Party (RLSP) and the Janata Dal (JDU).

Anant Singh, RJD candidate from the Mokama As-



Wielding clout: (Clockwise from left) Anant Singh, Rittal Yadav and Manju Verma.

sembly constituency, faces as many as 38 criminal cases of murder, extortion, kidnapping, and possession of illegal weapons. He is in jail and won the 2015 Assembly election from Mokama as an Independent candidate. Earlier, he represented the constituency in 2005 and 2010 on JD(U) ticket. Not willing to take the risk of his disqualification on any grounds, his

wife, Neelam Devi, has filed her nomination from the same seat as an Independent candidate.

Similarly, the RJD surprised everyone by giving the Danapur ticket to Rittal Yadav, who faces 33 criminal cases of murder, extortion and money laundering. He is the main accused in the murder of former BJP leader Satyanarayan Sinha in 2003.

JD(U) candidate from Belaganj, Abhay Kumar Singh, faces 14 criminal cases each.

Proxy candidates

Many of the dons facing serious criminal cases and unable to get party ticket to contest the polls have switched to proxies by projecting their wives as candidates.

"This is a dangerous trend in democracy but not a new phenomenon for the Bihar elections," said political analyst Ajay Kumar.

Vibha Devi, wife of former RJD MLA and rape accused Raj Ballabh Yadav, has been given party ticket to contest polls from the Nawada seat, while Kiran Devi, wife of absconding sitting RJD MLA Arun Kumar Yadav, has been given RJD ticket from Sandesh constituency.

Both former MP Lovely Anand and her son Chetan Anand got RJD ticket for the Saharsa and Sheohar constituencies.

The RJD candidate from the Atri Assembly constituency, Ajay Yadav, and the

Sinha's widow, Asha Singh, has won the Danapur seat for the past three consecutive terms on BJP ticket, and this time she will be facing Rittal. He was released from Patna's Beur jail in August this year, after being granted bail by the Patna High Court in a money laundering case.

The RJD candidate from the Atri Assembly constituency, Ajay Yadav, and the

Anand Mohan Singh, who is serving a life sentence in the Saharsa jail in connection with the murder of District Magistrate G. Krishnaiah in 1994 in Muzaffarpur town.

The ruling JD(U), too, has fielded the spouses of several *bahubalis* like Manoranjan Singh Dhumal, Awadhesh Mandal and Bindu Yadav from the Ekma, Rupauli and Atri Assembly constituencies, respectively.

The JD(U) has also given ticket to Manju Verma from the Cheria-Bariarpur seat – Ms. Verma had to resign from Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Cabinet as Social Welfare Minister after she, along with her husband Chandrashekhar Verma, was sent to jail in connection with the infamous Muzaffarpur shelter home abuse case.

The BJP has fielded Aruna Devi, wife of Akhilesh Singh, from the Nawada seat. Singh faces 27 criminal cases, including the Chakwai massacre in Nawada in which 10 people were killed in 2004.

Cong. election panel holds meeting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Election Authority (CEA) of the Congress party met on Wednesday to discuss organisational issues such as updating the list of All India Congress Committee members.

The CEA is in charge of holding organisational elections and AICC members make up the delegates who elect the Congress president.

"It was a routine meeting to discuss organisational issues," said a member of the CEA.

At the stormy Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting on August 24, it was decided that the party would hold an AICC session and elect a new president within six months, if the COVID-19 situation allowed it.

The panel is also learnt to have discussed issues such as new membership from different States.

The CEA is headed by Madhusudan Misri.

JD(U) rebel Sharad Yadav's daughter joins Congress

Subhashini Yadav is likely to be fielded from Bihariganj

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Janata Dal (JD) rebel Sharad Yadav's daughter Subhashini Yadav joined the Congress party on Wednesday. Her father was expelled from the JD(U) for opposing Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's move to return to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

Mr. Nitish Kumar resigned as Bihar Chief Minister in July 2017, less than two years after he had joined hands with his arch enemy Lalu Prasad to form the 'Mahagathbandhan' government in the 2015 Assembly polls. He returned as Chief Minister after he rejoined the NDA. Sharad Yadav, who opposed this move, spoke publicly against it on many platforms and was ex-



Subhashini Yadav

peled for anti-party activities.

The Congress is likely to field Ms. Yadav from the Bihariganj Assembly segment in the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, which falls under the Madhepura Lok Sabha seat. Her father, Sharad Yadav, has represented the Madhepura Lok Sabha seat four times in

the past.

She joined the Congress at the party headquarters, 24 Akbar Road, in the presence of Bihar State unit chief Madan Mohan Jha.

Speaking to *The Hindu* minutes after joining the party, the 30-year-old Ms. Yadav said that this election was not about holding any personal grudges or avenging her father. "This election is only about development and bringing about a change in the State," Ms. Yadav said.

Along with her, Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader and former MP Kali Pandey also joined the party. Mr. Pandey shifted loyalties from the LJP five days after the death of LJP patriarch Ram Vilas Paswan.

India, Pakistan exchange barbs

At a Commonwealth meet, Islamabad alleges 'targeting' of religious minorities

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

India and Pakistan sparred at a Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministerial meeting on Wednesday, after Pakistan raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and accused India of "targeting" its religious minorities.

"For a state to hypocritically preach about religious minority groups elsewhere, while trampling upon the rights of its own indigenous minorities, was indeed most regrettable, and a blatant misuse of this august platform," said Secretary (West) at the Ministry of External Affairs, Vikas Swarup, in response to what he called a "rant" by Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi during the Commonwealth meet, held via videoconference, although he didn't name Pakistan directly.



In his speech, Mr. Qureshi had also not named India directly but accused "a state" in South Asia of "targeting" religious minority groups. "It has transgressed rights and freedoms of millions and fanned hyper-nationalism to engineer illegal demographic change in a disputed territory," he said, in an apparent reference to the government's move to reorganise the largest number of terrorists proscribed by the United Nations.

The latest exchange between the two countries comes two days after Mr. Yusuf claimed that India had sent a "message" to Pakistan earlier this year, exploring the possibility of a "conver-

sation", and set what he

called Pakistan's terms for any bilateral engagement.

"We have got a message for a desire for conversation," Mr. Yusuf said in an interview to *The Wire* news portal but refused to provide further details, saying Pakistan wished to talk to India about Jammu and Kashmir and terrorism.

The Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment on Mr. Yusuf's claim but is expected to issue a full statement in response on Thursday.

No talks have been held between the countries since Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Lahore to meet former Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif in December 2015, and the government has maintained that Pakistan must end cross-border terrorism before talks can be held.

Army chief to visit Nepal in November

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane will visit Nepal in November, the Nepal Army has announced.

The visit will be keenly watched as it will take place months after Nepal revised its political map and claimed the strategically important region of Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura in the Pithoragarh district of India.

"General Manoj Mukund Naravane, Chief of the Army Staff, Indian Army will visit Nepal in November this year. The visit was approved by the Government of Nepal on 3rd February 2020 but was postponed due to lockdown in both the countries," a Nepal Army spokesperson said in a statement.

Man arrested on charge of acid attack

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GAZIABAD

The police in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, on Wednesday said they had arrested a man for allegedly throwing acid on three girls when they were sleeping in their house.

Shailesh Kumar Pandey, SP Gonda, had said the eldest daughter suffered 30% burns, while the other two suffered 20% and 5-7% burn injuries.

The accused, identified as Ashish alias Chotu, who lived in the same village in Parsapur as the victims, was arrested late on Tuesday after an alleged exchange of fire, said Additional SP Mahendra Kumar.

Police fired in self defence and Ashish, who is said to have used an illegal weapon, suffered an injury on his right foot, according to sources.

Kin of Hathras victim quizzed

CBI collects ashes and pieces of bone as evidence



Policewomen standing guard at the investigation site in Hathras on Tuesday.

of the cremation. It could help the investigation agency find out what material was used to cremate the victim.

Interestingly, the cane was still with the family. Brahm Singh, the investigating officer (IO) before the SIT took over the case, said they collected the slippers of the victim and the cane that the family collected from the site

"You should remember, I was not the first IO in the case," he said, referring to Ram Shabu who was suspended after the preliminary report of the SIT.

It was Mr. Singh who recorded the statement of the victim at the J.N. Medical College and Hospital in Aligarh and added the sections on gang rape to the FIR.

Ruchi Gupta, Circle Officer, Hathras, told reporters that the accused is a cousin of the victim and had been arrested under the relevant sections of the IPC.

The family took the girl to the Community Health Centre. She was referred to the district hospital, where doctors confirmed rape.

A police officer is reported missing with 2 AK-47 rifles

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

Two militants were killed in south Kashmir and two security personnel have gone missing along with service rifles from two different locations in central Kashmir's Budgam on Wednesday.

The police suspect that one of the two missing security personnel may have joined the militant ranks.

Inspector General of Police Vijay Kumar said, "The two militants were killed during a joint cordon and search operation, launched after a specific input in Shopian's Chakura area." Arms and ammunition were recovered from the site.

Police sources said Special

Extension Notification No. IFB No. 08/3/NLC - CWSS Pkg.I-2" call/DO/CE/VLR/2020/Dated: 12.10.2020

Name of work: Providing CWSS to Thikkudi, Pennadam, Mangalampettai, Vedur, Kurinjiappadi and Gangalakondan, Town Panchayats and 625 rural habitations in Mangalore.

Ref: 1) This office Extension of Bid No. 08 / NLC - CWSS Pkg.I-2" call / DO / CE / VLR / 2020 / Dated: 28.08.2020
2) This Office Extension Notification No. IFB No. 08/2/NLC - CWSS Pkg.I-2" call / DO / CE / VLR / 2020 / Dated: 28.09.2020

The tender called for, for the above works in the reference 2" cited is hereby extended as follows:

| SL. No. | Description | Already given | Extended upto |
|---------|---|--|--|
| 1 | The last date for sale of Tender and downloading from website | Upto 5.45 PM on 12.10.2020 | Upto 5.45 PM on 27.10.2020 |
| 2 | The last date for receipt and opening of tender | Upto 3.00 PM and 3.30 PM on 14.10.2020 | Upto 3.00 PM and 3.30 PM on 20.10.2020 |

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Dalit unit chief held without warrant: Cong.

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Congress on Wednesday claimed that the chairperson of its Uttar Pradesh Dalit unit was arrested without a warrant late on Tuesday. Alok Prasad, chairperson of the U.P. Congress Scheduled Castes department, was 'arrested' in the middle of the night without a warrant, said party State president Ajay Kumar Lallu. "The Yogi government is staging conspiracies to hide its failures. It is incessantly oppressing Dalits and the deprived," said Mr. Lallu on Twitter.

The police is yet to issue a statement or confirm if and why Mr. Prasad was detained or arrested. He was reportedly detained over the self-immolation bid by a woman.

Farooq's remark totally unacceptable: Karan Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader from Jammu and Kashmir Karan Singh has said that Dr. Farooq Abdullah's recent remark on Article 370 is "totally unacceptable."

Dr. Singh said in a statement that his old friend Dr. Abdullah had made an astounding statement that Article 370 would be restored with China's support. "I can understand his rage and frustration at recent events... However, his recent articulation is totally unacceptable. It will tend to once again provoke totally unrealistic expectations among the people of Kashmir," Dr. Singh stated.

+ Nagaland govt. calls meeting on peace talks

It will focus on civil society groups

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Nagaland government has called all civil society groups for a consultative meet in Kohima on Thursday to discuss the ongoing peace talks and the political issue.

The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak Muivah) and the seven Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) that are in talks with the Government of India for signing the final peace deal have not been invited to the meeting.

An official said this meeting would only focus on the civil society groups such as church bodies and Naga Ho and prominent persons.

Assam Minister and North-East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) convener Himanta Biswa Sarma told presspersons on October 13 in Guwahati, "On October 15, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has called a meeting with all the social organisations... Now people of Nagaland know the position of the Government of

Punjab calls special House session to counter farm laws

Cabinet also opts for 33% reservation for women in Punjab Civil Services

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab government has decided to convene a special session of the Assembly on October 19 to bring in legislation to counter the Centre's agriculture sector laws.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, according to an official statement.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had earlier announced that his government would fight the new agriculture sector laws through legislative, legal and other routes.

A Cabinet meeting chaired by Capt. Singh also gave the nod for 33% reser-



Amarinder Singh. ■ FILE PHOTO

vation for women in direct recruitment in Punjab Civil Services.

The meeting approved the Punjab Civil Services (Reservation of Posts for Women) Rules, 2020, to provide such reservation for women for direct recruit-

ment to posts in government, as well as recruitment to boards and corporations in Group A, B, C and D posts.

Employment plan

The Cabinet also approved a State Employment Plan 2020-22, to fill vacant jobs in government departments, boards, corporations and agencies in a phased manner. The recruitment will be done on Central government pay scales, in line with the earlier Cabinet decision to this effect, said the statement.

The Cabinet also gave approval to notify the Rules of the Punjab Slum Dwellers (Proprietary Rights) Act 2020 for the purpose of giving proprietary rights of land to slum dwellers, thus ensuring basic amenities for them, it added.

It was also decided to allow production of quality seed potato through tissue culture-based technology, using aeroponics-net house facilities, along with the certification of seed potato and its successive generations.

The Cabinet approved the Punjab Tissue Culture Based Seed Potato Bill, 2020, to meet the demand of potato farmers for quality seed potato, and enable the development of the State as export hub for seed potato in the country, said the statement.

40,000 tonnes to be offloaded from buffer stock to check the rapid rise in prices

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In a bid to cool down the recent hike in pulses prices, the Union government plans to release 40,000 tonnes of tur dal from its buffer stock into the retail market in small lots. Five States have expressed an interest in buying one lakh tonnes of the dal from the Central buffer stock at MSP (minimum support price) rates to sell at subsidised prices, according to the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA).

Several major consuming centres of urad (black gram) and tur dal have seen a 20% spike in prices over the last two weeks alone. At an all-India level, the average retail prices of urad have shot up almost 40% in comparison to last two weeks.



Prices of black gram and tur dal shot up by 20% in the last two weeks.

to last year, while the average retail prices of tur dal have increased almost 24%, says an official statement.

Last month, the DoCA introduced a mechanism to use the buffer stock of the National Agricultural Coop-

erative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), which procures pulses from farmers at MSP rates, to moderate retail prices by supplying pulses to the States and the Union Territories.

The States are supplied pulses either in bulk or in retail packs for supply through the ration shops of the Public Distribution System, or through milk and vegetable outlets run by the government or cooperatives.

Five States seek supply

"Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Bihar and Tamil Nadu have placed their requirements for tur for a total quantity of over approximately 1,00,000 tonnes. More States are expected to come forward," said the

statement. For such retail intervention, offer prices are fixed on the basis of MSP itself, or the Dynamic Reserve Price, whichever is lower. Tur is being offered for ₹85 a kg, while urad dal from the 2018 season is being offered at ₹79 a kg and that from the 2019 season for ₹81 a kg. This move will also help clear NAFED's existing stock to make way for procurement from this season's harvest, due to arrive in markets soon.

"Apart from this retail intervention, the DoCA has also decided to release 40,000 tonnes of tur from the buffer stock in open market sale in small lots so that the releases may reach the retail market at a faster pace and help in cooling off rising prices," the statement said.

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has issued detailed guidelines for travellers asking them to desist from acts such as not wearing a mask or wearing a mask improperly, not maintaining social distancing, coming to railway area or station or boarding a train after having declared COVID positive or when results are awaited. In addition, "spitting or wilful ejection of bodily fluid/waste in public area" or any other act or omission likely to aid in spread of the virus will be deemed unlawful.



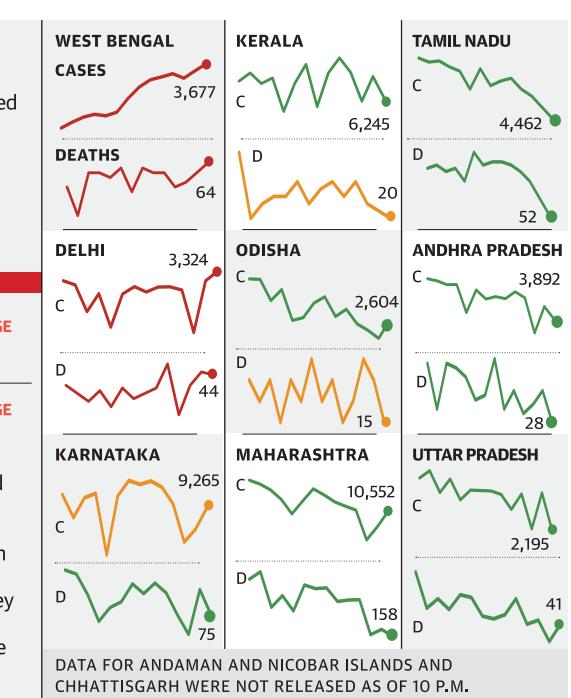
Viral tracker

With 64,566 COVID-19 cases recorded on Wednesday, India's tally stood at 73,01,915. As many as 658 deaths were registered, taking the toll to 1,11,308. A total of 9 crore samples have been tested as of October 13, according to the ICMR.

NEW CASES AND DEATHS

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| CASES 64,566 | 7-DAY-CHANGE -5.5% |
| DEATHS 658 | 7-DAY-CHANGE -29.9% |

The graphs depict the new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. If average cases and deaths in the last seven days are higher than the previous seven days, then the cases and deaths are rising ■; if they are lower, then dropping ▲; if they are similar, then cases and deaths are flattening ■■ in that State



Wear masks or pay fine, say Railways

Violators may even face jail term

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Passengers travelling on trains without masks or not following social distancing on railway premises may now need to pay fine or even face jail terms as per new guidelines that seek to protect the spread of COVID-19 during the upcoming festive season.



People trying to board a train in Jabalpur. ■ PTI

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has issued detailed guidelines for travellers asking them to desist from acts such as not wearing a mask or wearing a mask improperly, not maintaining social distancing, coming to railway area or station or boarding a train after having declared COVID positive or when results are awaited. In addition, "spitting or wilful ejection of bodily fluid/waste in public area" or any other act or omission likely to aid in spread of the virus will be deemed unlawful.

The announcement comes as the Railways gears to run 392 festival specials between October 20 and November 30. These will be in addition to about 300 trains that it is operating.

Crucial times ahead: Health Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The next two-and-a-half months were going to be crucial in India's "fight against COVID-19 because of the winter season and the festival season," Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said at a meeting to review activities under a 'Jan Andolan'.

The virtual meeting was to review the activities taken on "COVID-19 appropriate behaviour" and involved the Minister as well as the heads of AIIMS and Central government hospitals, on Wednesday. COVID-19 appropriate behaviour includes wearing face-covers, masks, and observing physical distancing. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 'Jan Andolan' earlier this month to alert people on appropriate behaviour ahead of the festive season.

India's total recovered cases stood at 6,301,927 on Wednesday.

Delete ineligible names: NRC official

Order seeks removal of 'declared foreigners', 'doubtful voters' from citizens' list

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Assam's district heads have been asked to submit the list of ineligible people whose names have been included in the National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in August 2019. They have also been told to write speaking orders for deletion of such names from the list of citizens.

In a letter to every Deputy Commissioner and district registrar of citizen registration on October 13, State NRC coordinator Hitesh Dev Sarma said some names of ineligible people belonging to the "categories of DF/DV/PFT along with their descendants have found entry to the NRC". The DF, DV and



Of the 3.3 crore applicants, over 19 lakh were excluded from the final NRC. ■ AP

PFT stand for "declared foreigner", "doubtful voter" and "pending in Foreigners' Tribunal".

Mr. Sarma pointed out that the local registrars of citizen registration had prepared and published the supplementary list of names

after disposal of claims and objections while the Registrar General of India is yet to publish the final NRC as per Clause 7 of the Schedule of the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003". He cited other clauses of the same Rules necessitating verification of names of such persons and recording of the reasons for their inclusion or exclusion.

Verification must

"As such, you are requested to write speaking orders for deletion of such names... after specifically ascertaining the identity of the person. The verification would mandatorily require the correct identity of the person so that

no ambiguity arises in future," the letter said.

A speaking order mentions the reasons for leaving out people's names from the final NRC. Based on such an order, the NRC authority issues a rejection slip to an ineligible person. "You are, therefore, requested to submit the list of persons who are not eligible for having their names in the NRC along with speaking order justifying reasons for deletion of names," Mr. Sarma wrote.

More than 19 lakh people of 3.3 crore applicants were excluded from the final NRC. Those left out would have to appeal to the Foreigners' Tribunals within 120 days of receiving the rejection slip from the NRC authority.

J&K, Ladakh women to benefit from rural scheme

₹520 crore allocated for five years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved changes in the criteria to extend benefits under the Deen Dayal Antyodaya Rashtriya Aajeevika Mission to over 10.58 lakh women in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. An allocation of ₹520 crore has also been made for the next five years.

The scheme is aimed at providing livelihood to women in rural areas.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar said due to some technical reasons, very few women in J&K and Ladakh were eligible for the programme.

Therefore, certain chang-

es in the criteria were approved by the Cabinet to ensure that 10.58 lakh women in the two Union Territories benefited from the special package.

Help for self-help groups
Mr. Javadekar said there were 63 lakh self-help groups comprising seven crore women members in the country. They had been granted ₹3 lakh crore in loans and the non-performing assets amounted to only 2.3%. The outstanding loans were to the tune of ₹1 lakh crore.

The Central government planned to take the scheme to 10 crore women, said the Union Minister.

Cabinet approval for school education reform project

The STARS programme is partly funded by the World Bank

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet has approved a project partially funded by the World Bank to carry out a reform agenda in the governance of school education, and improve data and assessment systems at the national level, as well as teaching and learning outcomes in six States, especially for early childhood and vocational education.

The project includes an emergency response component to help the government respond to disaster situations which lead to school closures and loss of learning, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, according to an official statement issued after the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

The Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) project will



World Bank will contribute ₹3,700 crore for the project.

have a total project cost of ₹5,718 crore, with the World Bank's support amounting to about ₹3,700 crore (\$500 million), said the statement.

A major component of the project is the establishment of PARAKH ((Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) as a National Assessment Centre. Included in the National

Education Policy 2020, this autonomous institution under the Union Education Ministry will set norms for student assessment and evaluation for all school boards across the country, most of which currently follow norms set by State governments.

At the State level, the project seeks to improve education outcomes and school-to-work transition strategies for better labour market outcomes in Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.

A similar project to be funded by the Asian Development Bank will cover Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Assam and every State will partner with one other State to share best practices, said the statement.

The Hindu, Roof and Floor to host webinar

Session is on virtual sales & realty tours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI



virtual property fair aimed at providing an unique platform to showcase wide spectrum of projects across Chennai, Bengaluru, Coimbatore and Hyderabad.

Fair till Oct. 31
Presented by Casagrand, the property fair would be held online till October 31. To register for the webinar, potential buyers may visit <http://bit.ly/RandFTV> or scan the QR Code.

Advocates slam Jagan's letter to CJI

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Advocates-On-Record Association (SCAORA) has issued a statement condemning a letter written by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy against a sitting Supreme Court judge.

The SCAORA said the judge was the next in line to be the Chief Justice of India. Justice N.V. Ramana is the next in line as CJI as per seniority.

The contents of the letter addressed to CJI S.A. Bobde, and its release to the media in a press conference lacked propriety and tended to "scandalise and breach the independence of the judiciary," the SCAORA said in a resolution.

The Delhi High Court Bar Association has also condemned Mr. Reddy's statements as an affront to independence of judiciary.

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLK

Sculptors in Madurai are busy post lockdown, catering to a surge of requests from people wanting to enshrine loved ones, not only in memories but also as life-size statues

SOMA BASU

When Karnataka businessman Srinivas Gupta installed a wax statue of his departed wife at a housewarming ceremony held in August, in his hometown of Koppal, little did he imagine that his endeavour would spark a spurt in demand for similar statues in faraway Madurai. Srinivas had employed the service of a Bengaluru-based sculptor for the statue that went viral on social media.

When Madurai-based entrepreneur C Sethuraman wished to fill the void in his life following the passing of his wife Pichaimiammal, he contacted the same sculptor, inspired by Srinivas' viral story, only for his request to be turned down. This, however, worked in favour of JET Prasanna, a graduate of the Government College of Fine Arts, Chennai, who took up the job of creating a six feet tall statue and delivering it within a fortnight, in time for the 30th day ritual that Sethuraman had organised for his late wife.

Prasanna used fibre, glass, and rubber to make the statue, which was also shared widely on social media. Says Prasanna, "People now call me and share how much they miss their dear ones and express confidence in me to make a statue in their likeness." He adds, "I took an order from a man in Kalakkam who lost his wife to COVID-19 in August. Whenever he calls me, he breaks down over phone and says that he can't wait for his wife to return home."

Statues for all
Prasanna is now besieged by similar orders. For instance, a girl whose wedding is scheduled for November 18 wants a statue of her father made so that she can feel his presence during the ceremony. An NRI customer wants life size statues of his parents sculpted whilst another customer from Uthangudi, near Madurai, wants one of his wife sculpted to fit in the



Life in stone (Clockwise from left) JET Prasanna at work; C Sethuraman with his wife's statue; 'Stone' Pandi at his workshop; a statue by Prasanna; Nallathambi's statue near Salem • RASHOK



Pandi adds that he does not use silicon because it has a shorter shelf life and requires high maintenance.

Unique request

One of his recent orders was from Madurai-based AIADM party member, Suresh Kumar aka Kremmer Suresh. "He gave me an old, faded black-and-white photo of his mother with his brother and himself. He wanted to recreate a childhood memory as a statue. I took it up as a challenge and made a statue of the mother holding the older son by hand, and carrying the younger son on her hip," says Pandi.

Whilst there is a surge in people wanting to immortalise their departed ones, there are also people like A Nallathambi, a 60-year-old rag picker, who poured his life's savings into crafting a statue... of himself. Nallathambi's likeness, which one could easily mistake for an ancient Hindu king, stands on a pedestal on the Vazhapadi-Bellur road near Athanurpatty, Salem. The sculptor behind the statue, G Thangadurai of Okkarai, Tiruchi, says, "His request was unique and I didn't want to disappoint him." Nallathambi is happy with the finished product, and has planned an unveiling ceremony soon.

ONE for you, for me



the lookalikes, he uses silicon variants and fibre. "Silicon is best to recreate the eyes, nose, cheeks and the finer lines on the face," he says. His statues cost upwards of ₹2.5 lakh.

Earlier this month, Prasanna delivered a four-feet tall statue of a woman who died aged 101 last year. The order was placed by her son, Muthu Meenakshi Sundaram, a retired bank employee. "My mother now has a permanent place in the puja room of our ancestral house in Goripalayam," says Muthu.

Another person who has immortalised their parent in a similar manner is Thambi Balan. His father Kannu Servai lived to be 96, but for Thambi, making a statue was his way of commemorating a man who single-handedly supported his family of nine children with his income as an agri worker. "It feels like my father is back; he

sits in the main hall in his favourite corner and guards over us," says Thambi.

Statues have always been popular in Tamil Nadu, a State where these structures hold a position of cultural significance considering the number of political leaders and figures of the past, including actors, who have been immortalised this way. "Sculptures are luxury products. These are often used as status symbols by the rich and famous," says 'Stone' Pandi, a Madurai-based sculptor for whom sculpting has been the family trade for over five generations.

He exports at least one statue every two months to his clients in the US, Germany, France, Malaysia and Singapore. Based on request, Pandi moulds his statue using granite, teakwood, mixed metal and fibre. Each sculpture costs in the ₹10 lakh bracket.



+
+



SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

The lockdown has meant different things to different people; while some have been out of business, others have been adjusting to their new WFH routine. But, it has also ignited a few creative minds in the city.

Over 25 Chennai writers have penned their personal experiences during these tough times, and their works have been featured in the online platform Lockdown Journal Chennai.

The Journal is the brainchild of writer Praveena Shivram, who, along with journalist-publisher Vincent D'Souza, hoped to chronicle essays, poems, fiction and non-fiction work based on the lockdown. They drew inspiration from a similar effort in Goa. "The idea was that the writing would be some kind of archival stuff that reflects the mood of people at this point of time," explains Vincent.

Kickstarted on May 2, the Lockdown Journal Chennai – mostly popularised through word-of-mouth promotion within the writers' community – has till date clocked 30 entries, all in English. Praveena assures that

Words of reflection

How online platform Lockdown Journal Chennai chronicled the mood of people during these unprecedented times



A local approach The Journal features writers' personal experiences during the lockdown • SR RAGHUNATHAN

the entries are very different from newspaper reports and social media posts that revolve around lockdown. "For starters, the pieces are personal and real-time accounts," she explains.

She adds that "There is a certain urgency in writing, since the writer is living in the reality he/she is describing. That gives the journal its texture. Also, as it is not written in retrospect, the burden of nostalgia is not there." There is variety in the writing – if storyteller Janaki Sabesh talks about her mother-in-law's everyday routine in Google Kannani, writer Aashika Suresh becomes pensive in the *Grief in Confined Spaces* poem.

Praveena exercises restraint when it comes to choosing pitches and finalising the stories that go on page. "It's about how well the story has been put together and structured. Sometimes, I have worked with the writer to bring it to a certain level," adds Praveena.

Going back and forth takes time, which is why the platform is updated only when a piece is fully ready to go. In a bid to encourage more local writers, the team is offering a small honorarium for published material.

Praveena believes that the written word is crucial, despite the importance we give to visuals and videos today. "You spend time thinking before writing, and this distilled thought process is important when it comes to something as big as the pandemic. I tell all my writers that they are part of history and have got the opportunity to pen down experiences that might never occur at a later stage."

Though the lockdown is technically over in the city, the team behind the Journal hopes to keep it up and running. "We are not sure how its tone will change, but we are looking at it as a platform for good writing in Chennai," signs off Vincent.

Writers based in the city can send ideas to lockdownjournal-chennai@gmail.com. Read published works on Medium.com/lockdown-journal-chennai

Lines from the lanes of Mysuru

The Indian Institute of Cartoonists hosts an online tribute to RK Laxman to mark the beginning of his centenary year



RANJANI GOVIND

The cartoonist, illustrator and humorist, RK Laxman used to draw on the floors, walls and doors of his house as a child. The appreciation he received from his teacher of the drawing of a peepal leaf, proved to be the start of a long and illustrious career. Laxman's centenary year is being celebrated this month.

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Laxman (1921-2015), or Doodu as he was affectionately called, was born on October 24 at Mysuru to a school headmaster. He was the youngest of seven siblings, one of whom was novelist, RK Narayan.

The Indian Institute of Cartoonists (IIC), Bengaluru, is celebrating Laxman by uploading a selection of his cartoons every day on its social media handles.

"As a student of Maharaja's College in Mysuru, Laxman contributed to *Koravangi*, a Kannada monthly satirical magazine, brought out by writer and humorist Dr Ra Shiva-



Unique strokes A sketch from Tenali Raman (top) and (above) Laxman at IIC

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

CASUAL WANDERING THOUGHTS

Five years ago when the IIC displayed 97 doodles from Laxman's scrapbook, the response was unprecedented. The event was part of a tribute to Laxman's 95th birth anniversary. Narendra had discovered the book of doodles when he had met Laxman's nephew, RS Krishnaswamy.

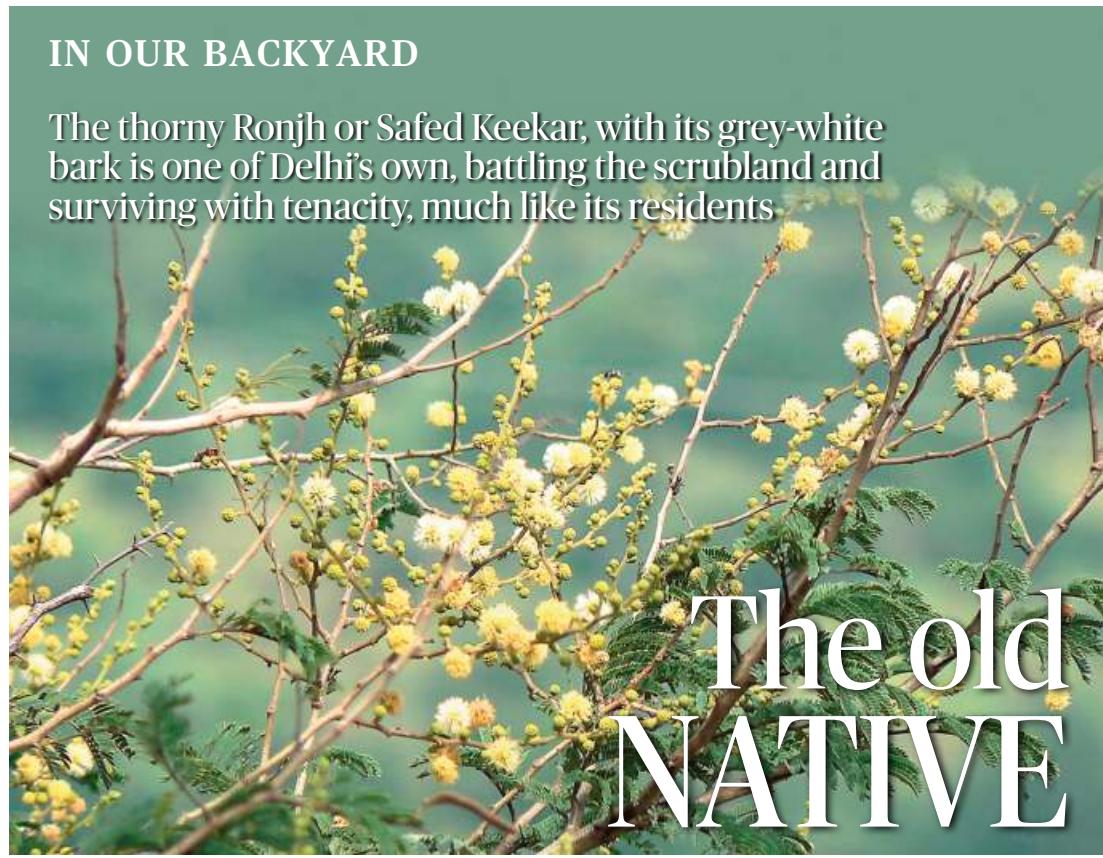
"Krishnaswamy casually mentioned Laxman's doodles lying about at home. I snapped them up. The scrapbook had nearly a 100 doodles that we restored for posterity."

Laxman was known to doodle on scraps of paper. "My father gave my uncle a scrapbook in 1975 thinking this would be the best way to gather all his drawings in a single book," recalls Krishnaswamy. "My uncle was curious about how people discussed political and day-to-day matters. Doodu uncle's doodles were the result of 20 years of casual, wandering thoughts from 1975 to 1995 in the by-lanes of Mysuru."

"The doodle, 'The Odds Are Against Us,' came about on a road trip," Krishnaswamy recalls. "When I drove Doodu uncle from Mysore to Bengaluru, a herd of *aadu* (goats) on the road made me honk insistently. The result was the doodle."

IN OUR BACKYARD

The thorny Ronjh or Safed Keekar, with its grey-white bark is one of Delhi's own, battling the scrubland and surviving with tenacity, much like its residents.



The old NATIVE

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

Even as new high-rise apartment complexes plant exotic palms that are not native to Delhi, requiring more care, water, and other resources, outside the gates you may find a Ronjh growing wild.

Native to Delhi's historical (what was once) open scrubland, this moderate to large sized thorny deciduous tree is characteristic of dry regions, hardy and drought-resistant, adapting to dry, rocky, sandy soils.

The Ronjh's (*Acacia leucophloea*) crooked trunk and light yellowish-grey to nearly white bark, has given it the species name *leucophloea*, in which *leuco* means white. The tree is also often referred to as the White-barked acacia or Safed Keekar, for the same reason. On this bark are dark botches, which make it easier for people to identify it, as acacia is a big family of trees with similar appearances.

The tree has the ten-

dency to form a spreading crown. Being deciduous, it is leafless towards the end of the cold season (January) and in the earlier part of summer, with new leaves appearing in April. It puts out blossoms from late August during the rains until November. During this time, the tree's canopy is full of its tiny, spherical white and yellow flowers clumped together in round heads. This loose

clustering arrangement of flowers has also earned this tree another name: panicle acacia. The flat curved fruit-pods ripen into a khaki colour by January.

In highly arid conditions, the tree is stunted, but survives. According to an extensively researched book *The Silviculture of Indian Trees* written by R.S. Troup in 1921, it is not just drought-hardy, but is also able to survive in fires and frost, making it one of the most adaptable native trees found in the Indian subcontinent.

The timber is not of great value, but the hardness of the wood saw it being used extensively in semi-rural and rural areas for posts and beams, carts and their wheels, agricultural instruments and also for fuel. Herdsman in drier areas of the country, including deserts, use their leaves as dry-season fodder, considering the dearth of food in the region at the time.

Historically, the tree has proved useful in several ways, according to Pradip Krishen's *Trees of Delhi*. It says that the leaves yield a black dye, while the inner bark is used to make a reddish-brown dye and its fibre is used for making ropes and fishing nets. The bark and the gum from the tree are used in traditional medicine to treat bronchitis and asthma. The bark is often used to distil liquor, a reason for the tree's other interesting name: Distiller's Acacia or Sharab ki Keekar.

The Ronjh can be seen

on The Ridge, Hauz Khas, Vasant Kunj and the tree-rich old JNU campus. Apart from the old trees, the Aravalli Biodiversity Park in Gurugram has attempted to bring back flora native to the Delhi scrubs with this tree being an important ingredient.

The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.

The Ronjh in bloom (top), the bark • WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/DINESH WALKE

‘Indian Americans strongly identify with Democratic Party’

72% of registered voters from community plan to vote for Joe Biden, says survey

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

Results from a new survey of Indian Americans provide strong evidence that contradicts an emerging narrative that these voters are shifting their support from the Democratic Party, which a majority of them have traditionally supported, to the Republican Party. The results also show that U.S.-India relations feature low in the list of issues that motivate voting choice among Indian Americans.

A significant 72% of registered Indian American voters plan to vote for Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the presidential elections, while 22% plan to vote for incumbent President Donald Trump. Three per cent do not plan to vote and 3% plan to vote for a third party candidate, as per the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey (IAAS), published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP), Johns Hopkins SAIS and the University of Pennsylvania.

The study surveyed (online) a nationally representative sample of 936 Indian Americans in September and the overall margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.2% as per the publishers.

The narrative (as the report notes) of this shift from the Democratic Party to the GOP is based on the bonhomie between Mr. Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi as well as criticism of the Modi government by Democrat lawmakers (including Mr. Biden’s running mate Kamala Harris). In fact, a recent survey report by AAPI Data and Indiaspora showed that support for the Demo-



Going strong: Democratic candidate Joe Biden, left, with his running mate Kamala Harris.

crats had fallen a little since 2016. However, the IAAS survey suggests that Indian Americans still strongly identify themselves with the Democratic Party.

“The data really challenge the emerging conventional wisdom that Indian Americans are abandoning the Democratic Party thanks, in part, to concerns over how a Biden-Harris administration might handle relations with India,” said Milan Vaishnav of the CEIP, who co-authored the survey with Sumitra Badrinath (University of Pennsylvania) and Devesh Kapur (Johns Hopkins SAIS).

Of the 4.16 million Indian Americans, some 1.9 million are eligible to vote. A survey of their political attitudes is important as the community is being courted by both Democrats and Republicans.

Leftward tilt
Consistent with historical patterns, 56% of Indian Americans generally identify as Democrats and 15% as Republicans. Twenty-two percent identify as Independents. In terms of political

ideology, the results show that Indian Americans “clearly skew Left”. This leftward tilt is more visible among U.S.-born Indian Americans relative to their foreign-born counterparts.

On a seven-point scale that ranged from extremely conservative to extremely liberal, a total of 47% of respondents fell in the extremely liberal, liberal or slightly liberal categories, while 23% fell in the slightly conservative, conservative and extremely conservative categories. Twenty-nine per cent said they were moderate.

Respondents were asked to list the top three issues that influence their vote choice. The biggest issue was the economy (21% said it was their first choice), closely followed by healthcare (20%), then racism (12%) and taxes (9%). Contrary to the narrative around Indian Americans being driven by India-U.S. relations, the bilateral relationship was second from the bottom, with just 3% ranking it as their most important election issue.

“This is not very surpris-

ing since the top foreign policy priority of American voters overall appears to emphasise reorienting U.S. foreign policy to more explicitly serve the everyday concerns of Americans and for the United States to be ‘strong at home’,” the survey report says.

Nevertheless, priority issues are also subject to partisan variation. A larger proportion (36%) of likely Indian American voters who are Republicans rank the economy as their number one priority, relative to Democrats (16%).

The survey finds that Indian Americans tend not to identify with the Republican Party because it is perceived as unwelcoming of minorities and “overly influenced by Christian evangelicism”. Those who identify with the party, primarily do so because they differ with Democrats in economic policy and healthcare policy.

Impact of Harris

Mr. Biden’s vice-presidential candidate choice of Ms. Harris, who has Jamaican and Indian roots, has had a significant “turnout effect” – with 45% of respondents saying the choice made it more likely they would vote in November, while 10% said the choice made it less likely they would vote and 40% said it had no impact on their motivation to vote.

The survey data indicate that the mobilisation effect is working in favour of Democrats: 49% say Ms. Harris’s nomination made them more enthusiastic about Mr. Biden’s candidacy, while 15% said it made them less enthusiastic about him.

Trump, Biden to hold rival TV town halls

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump will feature in a televised town hall on Thursday on NBC News, the network said, setting up a direct scheduling clash with rival Joe Biden who had already planned his own version.

The two were originally meant to have been meeting for their second debate on Thursday evening. Instead, they will be simultaneously, but separately, talking to voters in TV studios – NBC for Mr. Trump and ABC for Mr. Biden.

Mr. Trump will be in Miami, the network said, while Mr. Biden, who had already booked his appearance last week, will be in Philadelphia. Their scheduled debate had also been designed as a town hall where the two candidates would have fielded questions from voters, but this was upended after Mr. Trump contracted the coronavirus.

Debate organisers said they wanted to switch the format to a virtual appearance, for safety reasons, and Mr. Trump refused, forcing cancellation of the event.

NBC News said on Wednesday it had received a statement from the clinical director at the National Institutes of Health and lead infectious diseases expert Anthony Fauci that they had “a high degree of confidence” that Mr. Trump is now “not shedding infectious virus.” Mr. Trump and the NBC host will be socially distanced and the audience will wear masks.

Mr. Biden has been frequently testing for coronavirus and reporting negative results since Mr. Trump’s illness. This will be followed by

clashes have rendered almost meaningless a humanitarian ceasefire agreed in Moscow last week. Armenia confirmed that military positions inside the country had been hit but denied its forces had been firing into Azerbaijan. It warned that it too could start targeting military sites inside its adversary’s territory.



Xi Jinping

another major anniversary next year, when the Communist Party of China turns 100.

The planned events were overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which did not, however, derail Mr. Xi’s visit, with China broadly tackling the spread of the outbreak at home for now.

New engines
“We need to unswervingly implement an innovation-driven development strategy to foster new engines and new trends, so as to build a technological and industrial innovation high-ground with global influence,” Mr. Xi said in a speech to a hall packed

On reforms anniversary, Xi outlines innovation push

President warns of ‘unprecedented’ global challenges

ANANTH KRISHNAN

China on Wednesday marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of its first special economic zone (SEZ) in Shenzhen, outlining plans to boost its innovation capabilities and global technological influence, even as it grapples with a bruising trade and technology war with the U.S.

President Xi Jinping, who travelled to Shenzhen and Guangdong province to mark the anniversary – a key step on China’s economic reform and opening up process – in a close to hour-long speech warned of “unprecedented” global challenges and a “turbulent” world facing China, but did not mention relations with the U.S. specifically.

Mr. Xi’s visit to Guangdong province for the anniversary had been billed as a key political event in China for 2020, coinciding with the Communist Party’s plans to mark the year as when it would eliminate extreme poverty and build what it calls a “moderately prosperous society”.

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Clashes over Nagorno-Kar

MARKET WATCH

| | 14-10-2020 | % CHANGE |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Sensex | 40,795 | 0.42 |
| US Dollar | 73.31 | 0.05 |
| Gold | 51,367 | -1.20 |
| Brent oil | 43.05 | 2.06 |

NIFTY 50

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| Adani Ports | 348.95 | -0.95 |
| Asian Paints | 2071.35 | 6.70 |
| Axist Bank | 471.30 | 9.95 |
| Bajaj Auto | 3054.15 | 19.70 |
| Bajaj Finserv | 6100.05 | 232.40 |
| Bajaj Finance | 3372.05 | 99.45 |
| Bharti Airtel | 413.25 | -2.05 |
| BPCL | 332.90 | -6.20 |
| Britannia Ind | 3789.80 | 44.15 |
| Cipla | 781.50 | -5.65 |
| Coal India | 110.55 | -3.30 |
| Divis Lab | 3130.45 | -8.70 |
| Dr Reddys Lab | 5123.00 | -45.75 |
| Eicher Motors | 2253.90 | 34.35 |
| GAIL (India) | 82.65 | -0.50 |
| Grasim Ind | 763.60 | 14.15 |
| HCL Tech | 890.45 | -9.95 |
| HDFC | 1979.85 | 36.45 |
| HDFC Bank | 1211.50 | 13.05 |
| HDFC Life | 572.35 | 5.65 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 3310.80 | 22.75 |
| Hindalco | 174.20 | 0.95 |
| Hind Unilever | 2158.15 | 19.95 |
| ICICI Bank | 406.80 | 10.55 |
| IndusInd Bank | 622.65 | 14.45 |
| Infosys | 1137.00 | -20.80 |
| Indian Oil Corp | 74.65 | -1.45 |
| ITC | 167.80 | -2.35 |
| JSW Steel | 290.65 | 0.70 |
| Kotak Bank | 1353.35 | 8.40 |
| L&T | 915.20 | 18.75 |
| M&M | 623.85 | -4.05 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 7002.35 | -30.55 |
| Nestle India Ltd. | 1567.05 | 0.05 |
| NTPC | 79.10 | -3.55 |
| ONGC | 67.00 | -2.10 |
| PowerGrid Corp | 157.05 | -3.40 |
| Reliance Ind | 2287.50 | 6.80 |
| SBI Life | 810.60 | 24.05 |
| State Bank | 200.05 | 4.35 |
| Shree Cement | 21135.90 | 47.90 |
| Sun Pharma | 502.20 | -0.95 |
| Tata Motors | 130.70 | -3.40 |
| Tata Steel | 375.55 | 7.20 |
| TCS | 2809.60 | -16.95 |
| Tech Mahindra | 848.85 | -19.35 |
| Titan | 1223.45 | -5.40 |
| UltraTech Cement | 4442.85 | 60.10 |
| UPL | 510.90 | 4.40 |
| Wipro | 350.45 | -25.50 |

EXCHANGE RATES

| CURRENCY | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar | 73.10 | 73.42 |
| Euro | 85.72 | 86.10 |
| British Pound | 94.49 | 94.94 |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 69.34 | 69.65 |
| Chinese Yuan | 10.85 | 10.90 |
| Swiss Franc | 79.83 | 80.20 |
| Singapore Dollar | 53.84 | 54.08 |
| Canadian Dollar | 55.67 | 55.94 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 17.61 | 17.71 |
| Australian Dollar | 52.41 | 52.65 |

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Honda unveils special edition Amaze sedan

NEW DELHI

Honda Cars India unveiled the 'special edition' of its compact sedan Amaze in the price range of ₹7 lakh to ₹9.1 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). It will come in petrol and diesel variants. "With the inclusion of smart new features, the overall package has a freshness at a very attractive price," said Rajesh Goel, senior V-P and director, marketing and sales, Honda Cars India.

CLP Wind Farms raises ₹297 crore via bonds

MUMBAI

CLP Wind Farms (India), a subsidiary of CLP India, has raised ₹296.9 crore via non-convertible debentures. The move will help CLP India sustain the expansion of its renewable energy portfolio. The yearly-coupon bonds will be issued in two tranches - ₹196.9 crore and ₹100 crore. The proceeds will be used to refinance loans used for renewable wind energy projects, the company said.

Tata Power to build 100 MW solar unit in Gujarat

MUMBAI

Tata Power has bagged a contract from the Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL) to develop a 100 MW solar power project in Gujarat. The plant would come up in Dholera Solar Park. The power project is expected to generate about 246 million units of energy per year and annually offset about 246 million kilogram of carbon dioxide, according to the company.

Equitas SFB files RHP for ₹280-crore IPO

NEW DELHI

Equitas Holdings on Wednesday said its subsidiary Equitas Small Finance Bank has filed a red herring prospectus (RHP) with the Registrar of Companies for an initial public offering to raise ₹280 crore. As per the proposed offer, Equitas Small Finance Bank will raise fresh capital up to ₹2,800 million, where the promoter EHL will sell up to 7,20,00,000 equity shares, it said.

Infosys's net jumps 21%, guidance raised

Company expects annual revenue to climb 2-3%; to award promotions, increments, incentives in Jan.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Infosys on Wednesday reported second-quarter net profit jumped 20.5% from a year earlier to ₹4,845 crore, helped by better margins. The information technology services provider also raised revenue growth estimates to 2-3% for the full year.

Consolidated revenue from operations rose 8.6% to ₹24,570 crore in the three months ended September.

Deal momentum rises' The deal momentum picked in the quarter, Infosys told the media. The period saw large deals totalling \$3.15 billion. Digital revenues grew 25.4%, accounting for 47% of the total business.

A cut in discretionary spending, reduction in travel expenses and savings from



Homoeostasis regained: Increments will be identical to the previous years, says COO Pravin Rao. ■ GETTYIMAGES

'work from home' helped lift the operating margin by 370 basis points to 25.4%.

"We had a substantial Q2 across multiple dimensions: client impact, digital scaling,

growth and operating margins," said Sajil Parekh, CEO and MD.

Buoyed by the strong order book, Infosys revised its revenue growth guidance

Voluntary attrition declined to 7.8% from 18.3% in the previous year. COO says trend not sustainable

upwards to 2-3% in constant currency for fiscal 2020-21, from 0-2% last quarter.

Raises margin forecast The operating margin guidance too was revised upwards for the year, to 23-24%, against 21-23% earlier.

High-tech, life sciences and financial services grew strongly from a year earlier and on a sequential basis; banking and finance recorded positive growth. But retail and manufacturing will take time to come back, said COO, Pravin Rao.

An increase in free cash flows in the first half was dri-

ven by a "focus on liquidity and cash management", said CFO Nilanjan Roy. Consequently, Infosys decided to raise the interim dividend per share by 50% to ₹12. Heartened by the results, Infosys said it would give out 100% variable pay, wage increments as well as one-time special incentives to employees effective January.

"The quantum of hikes will be identical to the previous years," added Mr. Rao.

He said attrition fell "dramatically this quarter and we put tremendous focus on employee engagement. However, once growth comes back fully, we may not be able to sustain this level of attrition".

The quarter saw voluntary attrition in IT services declining to 7.8%, from 18.3% in the year-earlier period.

Pandemic shutters 15% of start-ups, funding dips 50%

But pace of recovery faster than expected, report reveals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Severely impacted by the pandemic outbreak and subsequent lockdowns, about 15% of start-ups in India had to discontinue their operations since March, according to a report. Their overall funding dipped by about 50% during the lockdown as compared to pre-COVID levels, the report released on Wednesday said.

Overall, while 40% of start-ups have been negatively impacted, 44% have cash runway for less than six months and 52% of start-ups are struggling to raise another round of funding, the report 'COVID-19 and the Anti-frugality of Indian Startup



Ecosystem' released by TiE Delhi-NCR in partnership with Zinnov, said.

The report noted that India exited 2019 as the third largest start-up ecosystem in the world with more than 38,000 active start-ups and receiving \$14.5 billion in funding. In the second quar-

ter of 2020 (April-June), the total funding declined 48%

to \$1.3 billion as against \$2.5 billion in the same quarter last year. During the first quarter of the year, funding stood at \$2.8 billion.

However, the report added that as the economy opened, the pace of recovery in terms of demand and investor sentiment has been faster than expected.

"Although the immediate impact of the lockdowns on the Indian start-up ecosystem was severe, we have been amazed to witness how quickly Indian founders have acted to re-imagine their businesses," Rajan Anandan, president, TiE Delhi-NCR, said.

"Going forward, it is projected to stabilise in 2021, before slowly declining up

Public debt ratio to rise to 90% of GDP on Covid'

IMF cites increase in public spending

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON

India's public debt ratio, which remarkably remained stable at about 70% of the GDP since 1991, is projected to jump by 17 percentage points to almost 90% because of an increase in public spending due to COVID-19, the IMF said.

"In our projections, the increase in public spending, in response to COVID-19, and the fall in tax revenue and economic activity, will make public debt jump by 17 percentage points to almost 90% of GDP," Vitor Gaspar, Director of IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department, told the Press Trust of India.

According to Mr. Gaspar, in the near-term, additional fiscal action can and should be deployed as needed to support the poor and the vulnerable.

to the end of the projection period, in 2025. Broadly speaking, the pattern of public debt in India is close to the norm around the world," he said.

According to Mr. Gaspar, in the near-term, additional fiscal action can and should be deployed as needed to support the poor and the vulnerable.

Business barons also needed to snap out of a 'Heads I win, tails you lose' approach, Mr. Subramanian contended at a session on stressed assets hosted by industry body FICCI.



Krishnamurthy Subramanian

tract other investors.

"A significant amount of judgment is used to price the value of that debt with a necessary haircut [and] take that hit in the profit and loss account... This is where because of the involvement of the COVID-19 pandemic set to 'inevitably' add to the distress in corporates' and lenders' balance-sheets, the country needed a price discovery mechanism for distressed assets."

Asserting that the country's evolving insolvency and bankruptcy process still had scope to become more efficient, he said, "We also need a market for price discovery of stressed assets, without which the process of taking a haircut becomes difficult".

"Similarly, a corporate bond market that enables bonds of distressed companies to be traded becomes important."

"In India, it's primarily just the [firms with] top few ratings that get traded. The U.S. benefits a lot in the creative destruction process by having that market for price discovery. So, we need to look at our incentives and the market for price discovery," Mr. Subramanian added.

"Investigations that do not take into account some of these very important nuances, really make it very difficult for bankers to do what is economically efficient," the CEA said, stressing that such judgment was critical for alleviating the distressed assets problem.

"Corporate India needs to recognise and respect that the equity contract entails - if things go well, even if due to luck, you retain control; but if things go bad, possibly also due to luck or exogenous circumstances, ceding control is part of the equity contract," he said.

Home-grown firms breach pre-COVID-19 levels in Sept.

Automakers report higher sales compared with last year

N. ANAND

CHENNAI

A number of home-grown companies have breached pre-COVID-19 levels, either in sales or production, during September, indicating that the worst may be over.

Buoyed by the recent upturn in sales, automobile firms and auto component makers are cautiously optimistic about the

Spirited Capitals bowlers stifle Royals in the chase

Defend target of 162 with skill and composure after 85-run stand between Dhawan and Shreyas keeps side in the game



Hit and miss: While Dhawan was in his element for DC, Buttler's cameo for RR was ended by Nortje's express delivery. ■ BCCI/IPL



Hit and miss: While Dhawan was in his element for DC, Buttler's cameo for RR was ended by Nortje's express delivery. ■ BCCI/IPL

IPL 2020

SPORTS BUREAU

On a night when some quality, express pace lit up the Dubai International Stadium, Delhi Capitals emerged victorious against Rajasthan Royals. That perhaps wasn't surprising, as DC boasts the fastest, deadliest pair of pacers in the IPL.

The South Africans, Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje, received good support from debutant seamer Tushar Deshpande and spinners R. Ashwin and Axar Patel too, as DC won by 13 runs, defending an unimposing total of 161

for seven. The win also put Shreyas Iyer's men back on top of the table.

Shreyas (53, 43b, 3x4, 2x6), who had to leave the field after hurting his shoulder, had earlier put on 85 for the third wicket with Shikhar Dhawan (57, 33b, 6x4, 2x6).

They had to repair the DC innings, which had been reduced to 10 for two by Jofra Archer, who removed Prithvi Shaw with the first ball.

Later on, Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes gave a brisk start to RR's chase, both unleashing some spectacular shots. They added 37 inside the third over, which witnessed some great cricket.

Nortje was welcomed into the attack by Buttler with a glorious six over long-on. The batsmen then ramped him to fine-leg twice for four. But the bowler had his revenge off the last ball, as Buttler was bowled through the gate by a delivery that clocked 155kmph.

A little later, Ashwin ensured Steve Smith would not get his form back in this match, inducing a leading edge from the Royals captain and completing the return catch. Then Deshpande had a dream start to his IPL career as he removed Stokes (41, 35b, 6x4) to end the threatening third-wicket

Points table

| Team | M | W | L | PTS | NRR |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|-----|--------|
| Delhi Capitals | 8 | 6 | 2 | 12 | 0.990 |
| Mumbai Indians | 7 | 5 | 2 | 10 | 1.327 |
| Royal Challengers | 7 | 5 | 2 | 10 | -0.116 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | -0.577 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 0.009 |
| Chennai Super Kings | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 | -0.390 |
| Rajasthan Royals | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 | -0.844 |
| Kings XI Punjab | 7 | 1 | 6 | 2 | -0.381 |

After the DC-RR match on Oct. 14

partnership with Sanju Samson. The Kerala batsman would soon follow Stokes to the dugout, bowled by an arm ball from Axar, and

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS

Prithvi Shaw b Archer 0 (1b), Shikhar Dhawan c Tyagi b Shreyas Gopal 57 (33b, 6x4, 2x6), Ajinkya Rahane c Uthappa 22 (9b, 3x4, 1x6), Steve Smith c & b Ashwin 1 (4b), Sanju Samson b Axar 25 (18b, 2x6), Robin Uthappa b Nortje 32 (27b, 3x4, 1x6), Riyan Parag run out 1 (2b), Rahul Tewatia (not out) 14 (18b, 1x4), Jofra Archer c Rahane b Rabada 1 (4b), Shreyas Gopal c sub (Lalit b Deshpande 6 (4b, 1x4); Extras (lb-1, w-3, nb-1); 5; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 148.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-0 (Shaw, 0.1), 2-10 (Rahane, 2.3), 3-95 (Dhawan, 11.4), 4-132 (Shreyas Iyer, 15.6), 5-153 (Stoinis, 19.6), 6-157 (Carey, 19.4), 7-161 (Axar, 19.6).

ROYALS BOWLING

Archer 4-0-19-3, Unadkat 3-0-32-2, Tyagi 4-0-30-1, Stokes 2-0-24-0, Shreyas Gopal 4-0-31-1, Tewatia 3-0-23-0.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

Rabada 4-0-28-1, Deshpande 4-0-37-2, Nortje 4-0-33-2, Ashwin 4-0-17-1, Axar 4-0-32-1.

Toss: DC; Mom: Nortje.

DC won by 13 runs.

INNINGS SCAN

| DC | RR |
|------|----------|
| 39 | Dots 42 |
| 11 | Fours 14 |
| 5 | Sixes 4 |
| 47/2 | PP 50/2 |
| 8.05 | RR 7.40 |

Next assignment

RR: Oct. 17 vs. RCB

Dubai, 3.30 p.m. IST

DC: Oct. 17 vs. CSK

Sharjah, 7.30 p.m. IST

Desperate Kings XI faces high-flying RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SHARJAH

KXIP will be hoping that Chris Gayle fires on his much-awaited return against a high-flying RCB on Thursday.

KXIP can take confidence from the fact that its only win in the tournament has come against RCB, which looks a much more potent squad since their last meeting on September 24.

With Aaron Finch back among the runs against KKR, RCB's top-order batsmen – Devdutt Padikkal, Virat Kohli and A.B. de Villiers – can be a nightmare for any team.

The spin pairing of Washington Sundar and Yuzvendra

TODAY'S MATCH



SHARJAH, 7.30 P.M. IST

HEAD TO HEAD

Played: 25

KXIP 13 | RCB 12

FORM GUIDE

(last five matches, latest game first)

RCB W | W | L | W | W

KXIP L | L | L | L | L

STAR SPORTS 1, & SELECT 1 (SD & HD)

dra Chahal has proved very effective and the pace department has been strengthened with the return of Chris Morris from injury.

CSK hopes to cash in on slowing wickets



The go-to man: Dhoni will depend more on left-arm spinner Jadeja if the pitches start to slow down. ■ BCCI/IPL

ing him on top," he said.

"We needed to do something different because the trend of our losses was becoming too familiar," said Fleming.

With the wickets starting to become dry and offering assistance to the spinners, Fleming felt it would be to his team's strength.

"We got excited when Jadeja turned one. If it continues how we think it will go, then the spinners will come into play. If that's the case, then our attack has more teeth. If spin starts to play a part, we are well equipped."

IN BRIEF



New Zealand great John Reid passes away

AUCKLAND
New Zealand's oldest surviving Test cricketer and former captain John Reid has passed away at age of 92, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday. A hard-hitting right-handed batsman and a seam bowler, he played 58 Tests scoring 3428 runs with six centuries and taking 85 wickets. PTI

Kohli suggests DRS for wides and no-balls



SPORTS REPORTER

BENGALURU
Virat Kohli would like the Decision Review System (DRS) to cover wides and no-balls.

In an Instavideo session with K.L. Rahul on Wednesday, the India skipper said: "As a captain, I would like to have that. It can be big in a high-profile tournament like

the IPL, and T20 in general, because it is so fast-paced and you can miss things. If you lose by a run and you cannot review that wide [or no-ball], it could make a massive difference."

Cover everything

Rahul concurred, saying that the two reviews allowed should cover everything and

not just dismissals.

He pointed to the erroneous short-run call in KXIP's game against DC which the former lost in a Super Over.

Kohli, in turn, referred to last season's loss for RCB against MI, where the umpire missed a front-foot no-ball from Lasith Malinga, with RCB needing seven runs off the last ball.

"We had Sam padded up for every innings trying to introduce him at a certain point. We thought rather than getting clogged up with too much batting resources we would take one out and be certain about Sam, send-

Joshua in last eight; Ghosal crashes out

CAIRO
Joshua Chinappa beat Egypt's Farida Mohamed 11-7, 11-6, 7-11, 10-12, 11-9 to enter the quarterfinals of the CIB Egyptian Open. However, Saurav Ghosal lost to Mazen Hesham of Egypt 11-8, 11-9, 11-8 in the men's third round.

Purav & Ramkumar and Sriram in quarterfinals

ALICANTE (SPAIN)
Top seeds Purav Raja and Ramkumar Ramanathan sailed past David Marrero and Nenad Zimonjic, 6-4, 6-0 in the pre-quarterfinals of the Challenger tennis tournament on Wednesday. Sriram Balaji and Luca Margaroli also moved into the quarterfinals with a 0-6, 6-3, [14-12] win over Hunter Reese and Jan Zieliński.

Misbah to step down as Pakistan chief selector

LAHORE
Misbah-ul-Haq said at a media briefing on Wednesday that he will be stepping down as Pakistan's chief selector next month to focus on his role as head coach of the national cricket team.

Srikanth advances but Ajay, Subhankar exit

ODENSE
K. Srikanth outclassed Toby Penty to advance to the second round at the Denmark Open, while Ajay Jayaram and Subhankar Dey crashed out after losing their openers on Wednesday.

The results: K. Srikanth bt Toby Penty (Eng) 21-12, 21-18; Anders Antonsen (Den) by Ajay Jayaram 21-12, 21-14; Jason Anthony Ho-Shue (Can) bt Subhankar Dey 21-13, 21-8.

Williamson has a role at No. 4, says Bayliss

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

HYDERABAD
Sunrisers Hyderabad's head coach Trevor Bayliss said Kane Williamson is a quality batsman who can score more runs at No. 3 but has a role to play at No. 4.

"Right now, he has a role at No. 4. Hopefully, the young batters down the lower order use his experience to help them out," Bayliss said after the defeat against Chennai Super Kings on Wednesday.

The SRH coach was all

praise for pacer Sandeep Sharma, who he felt was a bit disappointing in the last few games, saying "he was outstanding upfront in the first three overs he bowled, taking wicket also tonight."

"We (batters) need to target the shorter boundaries but it is difficult when the opposition doesn't give you that freedom."

Top-heavy batting

"Our batting is top-heavy. We are trying to give the young players the experience," he said.

"Our bowlers have to

make the batters hit to the larger side of the ground like Bravo did. It is all about experience," added Bayliss.

Neymar's hat-trick powered Brazil to a 4-2 win over Peru and a share of the lead with Argentina in South American World Cup qualifying on Tuesday.

Neymar, who scored twice from the spot and once in added time, now has 64 goals, two more than Ronaldo and 13 behind Pele, the record-holder.

Lionel Messi's Argentina topped Bolivia 2-1, scoring its first win in the altitude of La Paz since 2005, to also make it two victories from two starts in the round-robin group stage.

Luis Suarez scored his record-extending 61st and

62nd goals for Uruguay with a pair of late penalties, but Ecuador proved better on the day.

The results: Bolivia 1 (Moreno 24) lost to Argentina 2 (Martinez 45, Correa 79); Ecuador 4 (Caicedo 14, Estrada 45+3 & 52,

Neymar 'tricks' for Brazil against Peru



Neymar... make that three. ■ AFP

Plata 75) bt Uruguay 2 (Suarez 83-pen, 90+5-pen); Venezuela 0 lost to Paraguay 1 (Gimenez 85); Peru 2 (Carrillo 5, Tatia 59) lost to Brazil 4 (Neymar 2



What a start! Stokes was Tushar's maiden IPL wicket. ■ BCCI/IPL

'Indian women face daunting task'

Deepika says there is just one tournament left to qualify for Tokyo

ARCHERY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Commonwealth Games gold medallist and former World No. 1 Deepika Kumari feels Indian women archers face a daunting task of securing the full quota for next year's Olympics owing to the cancellation of planned tournaments in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Indians have just one tournament left to qualify for Tokyo and two spots to earn.

Talking on Indian paddler Mudit Dani's online chat show *In The Spotlight*, Deepika said that the country's female archers had worked hard and were confident of securing the quota ahead of the COVID-19 lockdown.



Deepika Kumari. ■ FILE PHOTO

two other quota places. Normally we always secure a full quota by this period, but it is different this time around."

The Indian women's archery team will have its last shot to secure the full Olympics quota in Paris, as a separate tournament is planned ahead of the World Cup in June next year.

Deepika, who's currently the country's only woman archer to have secured a spot at the Tokyo Games, also recalled that despite being a two-time Olympian, she has never been part of an Olympics opening ceremony. "In archery our ranking begins on the same day as the opening ceremony. So we feel sad that I have never been to any opening ceremony and have only watched it on TV," she said.

"Right now, we only have one quota spot in the women's category and only one qualifier is left to secure the

A competent and contented man

Raj Kumar strings racquets with remarkable accuracy

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

The pandemic shook the sports community, but life was normal for the competent Raj Kumar who runs a small tennis goods shop in the market opposite the Delhi Lawn Tennis Association (DLTA) Complex.

He is one man the entire tennis fraternity knows, especially in the Delhi NCR.

Raj Kumar strings racquets with remarkable accuracy and efficiency and everyone trusts him.

When the Indian Davis Cup team was about to leave for the tie against Pakistan, captain Rohit Rajpal called Raj Kumar for a day to the training base to cater to the team's needs.

"I was lucky through lockdown as I kept working. Ma-

ny people have tennis courts in their farm house. There are many other private courts. I worked from home for a few weeks and then had to come to the shop as people needed racquets, balls, etc.," said Raj Kumar even as he kept himself busy, stringing racquets with assurance.

Exceptional response
It was an exceptional response as the coaches had suffered the most, going without earnings for months.

Raj Kumar himself was a coach and had trained some good players before a leg injury ended his coaching career. For more than three decades, Raj Kumar has been following Indian tennis and has his fingers on its pulse.

Even though all coaches

are his friends and come to him regularly, Raj Kumar is candid to say that most of them needed to focus on grooming players rather than be occupied in merely earning money.

"Coaching is about guiding players to a good standard. That is the challenge. Making money is the easier option," he observed.

Lack of greed

Apart from efficiency, Raj Kumar endears himself to all with his pleasant manners, marked by a complete lack of greed. He keeps a low margin on all the products, and charges only ₹80 for stringing a racquet. Even if you want him to take more money, he refuses saying he was very happy with what he earned.



The go-to man: Raj Kumar with Leander Paes.

The new kid on the block

Mumbai speedster Tushar Deshpande debuts for Capitals

IPL 2020

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI

He has played a key role in Mumbai winning its first Vijay Hazare Trophy title in more than a decade. He has represented India-A as well. But it took his IPL debut for Tushar Deshpande to start talking on social media.

The Mumbai speedster who still lives in Kalyan, an eastern suburb more than 60 km far from his alma mater Shivaji Park Gymkhana in Dadar, was handed an IPL debut by Delhi Capitals versus Rajasthan Royals on Wednesday. It must have meant a hell a lot for the 25-year-old who earned an IPL contract for the first time in 2020.

Interestingly, Deshpande was a ball-boy at the Wankhede Stadium during the IPL's maiden edition in 2008.

"I remember our full under-13 team was at the IPL and I was overawed to see the likes of Dhawal Kulkarni, Abhishek Nayar, Pinal Shah, Dwayne Bravo, Shaun Pollock and, obviously, Sachin Tendulkar in action," Deshpande had told *Sportstar* before leaving for the UAE.

"I remember there used to be a fridge full of Gatorade cans just outside the boundary rope. For a 13-year-old, more than watching and learning from the greats, the main aim used to be to open that fridge, get a can or bottle and sip it while enjoying the match. That's the first IPL memory."

Deshpande, who joined Mumbai's T20 squad for the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy three days after his mother's demise last year, has been training with Capitals captain Shreyas Iyer since childhood at the Shivaji Park Gymkhana.

na. In fact, the duo would often place an egg-sandwich bet in the nets.

Mutual respect

"I remember when we were together in the (Shivaji Park) academy, we didn't really get along. Even now we are not the thickest of friends but we have immense mutual respect for each other. In the academy, we would have a mini-competition in the nets and the best used to be who-soever loses will treat the other with egg sandwich and Bournvita in the gymkhana," Deshpande said.

"Most of the times, I used to win because I knew how to bowl to him. When you are young, you don't plan too much, all you think of is how I'll dismiss a batsman off every ball. Sometimes he also used to win because he too is mentally very strong but majority I would win."

Bhawanipore FC downs Garhwal FC

I-LEAGUE QUALIFIERS

AMITABHA DAS SHARMA
KOLKATA

Bhawanipore FC continued to remain in the fight for an I-League berth as it warded off Garhwal FC's challenge 2-1 in a third round match of the Qualifiers at the Salt Lake Stadium on Wednesday.

Goals from Philip Adjah and Pankaj Moula helped Bhawanipore secure a 2-0 cushion by the first 50 minutes before Garhwal FC fought back with a late strike from substitute Afdal Varikkodan.

The former managed to hold on to the slender lead till the end and secured the full quota of points.

Tied at the top

This saw Bhawanipore tallying six points from two wins and tying on top of the cur-

rent standings with the other Kolkata side Mohammedan Sporting, which also has six points but continues to remain ahead with a better goal difference.

FCBU holds ARA FC

In the other third-round match played at the Kalyani Stadium, FC Bengaluru United rode on a penalty in the final minute of the injury-time to manage a 1-1 draw against debutant ARA FC.

Pratik Swami put ARA FC in the lead midway through the opening half before Mohammad Asrar found the target from the spot in the last minute of injury-time to help Bengaluru United salvage a draw.

The results: Bhawanipore FC 2 (Philip Adjah 8, Pankaj Moula 50) bt Garhwal FC 1 (Afadal Varikkodan 76).

ARA FC 1 (Pratik Swami 36) drew with FC Bengaluru United 1 (Mohd. Asrar 90+6-pen).

Johnson tests positive for COVID-19



Johnson. ■ AP
AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

Dustin Johnson has tested positive for COVID-19, the PGA Tour said Tuesday, forcing the World No.1 golfer's withdrawal from the CJ Cup in Las Vegas.

Johnson underwent a test after experiencing symptoms of coronavirus ahead of Thursday's opening round at Shadow Creek, the tour said in a statement.

The 36-year-old, whose last outing came at last month's US Open, is now undergoing self-isolation, the tour added.

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| NORTH DEHLI | Saya (Azaipur) 4708888 | DD Motors (Narela) 9999003688 | T.R. Sawhney (Saraswati Vihar) 9582263509 | D.D. Motors (Pitampura) 9999003888 | T.R. Sawhney (Badli) 9711507777 | Rana Motors (Prashant Vihar) 9999159577 | D.D. Motors (Wazirpur) 9999149577 | Krish (Tis Hazari) 9873477744 | Fairdeal (Budh Vihar) 9729009371 | Rohan (Mathura Road) 9560036268 | T.R. Sawhney (Amar Colony) 9999563333 | Competent (Lajpat Nagar) 8377007979 | AAA Vehicleleads (Malviya Nagar) 9971500011 | Prem Motors (Chhatarpur Metre Station) 8745887458 | Rohan (Okhla Ph-1) 011-66764444 | Bagga Link (Kotla) 8826892666 | Rana Motors (Sardarjung) 26712222 | |
| CENTRAL DEHLI | Magic Auto (Karol Bagh) 8929268145 | Competent (C.P.) 9582797749 | T.R. Sawhney (T.P. Station) 9999399157 | Magic Auto (Sec-20, Dwarka) 8929268146 | T.R. Sawhney (Rajouri Garden) 9873781333 | Competent (Najafgarh) 9582797763 | Magic Auto (Sec-13) 8929268144 | AAA Vehicleleads (Mundka) 9650445555 | Competent (Dwarka) 9582797879 | Magic Auto (Palam Dabri Road) 8929400501 | TR Sawhney (Shivaji Marg) 9999137164 | Competent (Janakpuri) 9582797748 | Rana Motors (Mayapuri) 011-47911111 | D.D. Motors (Shahdara) 9999003886 | Fairdeal (Bhajanpura) 729009372 | Competent (Gazipur) 8377007977 | Bagga Link (Patparganj) 9818199370 | T.R. Sawhney (Gokulpuri) 9999399150 |
| MID DEHLI | Magic Auto (Preet Vihar) 8929400502 | Vipul (Sec-63) 0120-4824000 | Fairdeal Cars (Sec-10) 999970944 | Rohan (Sec-1) 9873901288 | Vipul (Sec-18) 8800091555 | Rohan (Udyog Vihar) 9811800980 | Competent (32nd Milestone) 8750487504 | Prem Motors (JMD Sikandarpur) 4845400 | Rohan (Subhash Chowk) 4395700 | Pasco (Udyog Vihar) 4012000 | Pasco (SCO Plot No-322 Sec-29) 9582797739 | Rana Motors (Neelam Chowk) 4280000 | Pasco (Silverton Sec-50) 7639003300 | Fairdeal (Mehrauli) 999994707 | Auto Nation (Neelam Chowk) 0129-4252525 | Vipul (Ballabhgarh) 9899596002 | Rohan (Delhi Road) 971773300 | |
| WEST DEHLI | Rohan (Palika Chowk) 9582139824 | Platinum Motocorp (IMT Motoworld) 9953345312 | Platinum Motocorp (Farrukhnagar) 9205192634 | Platinum Motocorp (Pataudi) 9953345311 | Platinum Motocorp (Naraul) 9053088437 | GURGAON | Rohan (Mukund Nagar) 9650100045 | Motorcraft (Sahibabad) 9650972222 | T.R. Sawhney (Mohan Nagar) 9582263544 | Regent Auto (Meerut Road) 7065191234 | Rohan (Hapur) 0122-2313204 | Modi Nagar (Modi Nagar) 8057692222 | Pasco (Alipur) 8683000956 | Pasco (Tauru) 8683000929 | Pasco (Panjha) 8683000929 | Auto Vibes (Kosli) 01259-275300 | Auto Vibes (Bawali) 7082100280 | Rohan (Delhi Road) 05732-281900 |
| EAST DEHLI | Rohan (Palika Chowk) 9582139824 | Platinum Motocorp (IMT Motoworld) 9953345312 | Platinum Motocorp (Farrukhnagar) 9205192634 | Platinum Motocorp (Pataudi) 9953345311 | Platinum Motocorp (Naraul) 9053088437 | GURGAON | Rohan (Mukund Nagar) 9650100045 | Motorcraft (Sahibabad) 9650972222 | T.R. Sawhney (Mohan Nagar) 95822635 | | | | | | | | | |