



PLA told to return five Arunachal boys who strayed beyond LAC  
page 9



Self-righteous ego is a must for a truth-loving person, says Bhushan  
page 9



One dead, 7 injured in stabbing spree in central England  
page 12

MI takes on CSK in the IPL 2020 opener on September 19  
page 14

## NEARBY



Capital records fresh 3,000 COVID-19 cases

NEW DELHI  
Delhi recorded 3,256 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday with 29 deaths and 2,188 recoveries in the past 24 hours, said a health bulletin. The total positive cases now stand at 1,91,449.  
CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Delhi Metro to resume operations from today

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi Metro, which halted its operations five months ago following the imposition of a nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, is set to run again from Monday in a graded manner.  
CITY ▶ PAGE 2

EDUCATION PLUS ▶ PAGE 11

## Govt. suspends FCRA clearance of four Christian groups

U.S.-based donor agencies also under Home Ministry's scanner

VIIJITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

Of the six NGOs whose licence under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was suspended by the Union Home Ministry this year, four are Christian associations. An FCRA licence is mandatory for a non-profit organisation to receive foreign funds.

At least two U.S.-based Christian donors are also under the Ministry's scanner for funding NGOs and groups here, a senior government official said.

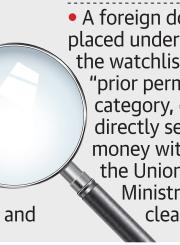
**Probe under way**  
"Concerns have been raised regarding the impact of U.S.-based evangelical donors, in-

**Under the lens** | A total of 22,457 NGOs or associations are at present registered under the FCRA. The licences of 20,674 have been cancelled and those of 6,702 are deemed to have expired

- Sabrang Trust, an NGO run by social activist Teesta Setalvad, and Lawyers Collective, run by noted lawyer Indira Jaising, lost their FCRA registration in 2016.
- Eight foreign donors came under the government watchlist during the UPA regime and 13 after the Modi government came to power in 2014. Among them are Compassion International and

cluding Seventh Day Adventist Church and Baptist Church, in regard to Indian associations. A probe is on," the official said.

The four groups whose li-



cence was suspended are Ecreosculis North Western Gossner Evangelical in Jharkhand, the Evangelical Churches Association in Manipur, the Northern Evangel-

ical Lutheran Church in Jharkhand and the New Life Fellowship Association (NLFA) in Mumbai. The reasons for the suspension or violation was not specified.

The Bajrang Dal, the youth wing of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, had obstructed prayer meetings organised by the NLFA in Mumbai in April and September last year. It alleged that the meeting was a pretext for religious conversion, and later submitted a complaint to the police.

The FCRA licence of NLFA was suspended on February 10, according to Home Ministry data.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

## India, Iran discuss Afghan peace process



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with his Iranian counterpart Brigadier General Amir Hatami in Tehran on Sunday. ■PTI

## Monsoon games



**Soaking in:** People angling during rain at Fort Kochi on Sunday. The southwest monsoon picked up over Kerala after a lull under the influence of a low pressure area that formed over the Arabian Sea. ■THULASI KAKKAT

## Kesavananda Bharati, a saviour of Constitution

The seer's petition helped preserve the Basic Structure of the statute

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

Kesavananda Bharati Swamiji, who passed away on Sunday, was the sole unwitting petitioner in the historic Fundamental Rights case which prevented the nation from slipping into a totalitarian regime.

Though the judgment is a landmark case, he did not win any relief in the case. The amendments in the Kerala land reforms law, which he had challenged, were upheld by the Supreme Court in 1973.

It was senior advocate Nani Palkhivala, representing Swamiji, who extended the ambit of the case. Mr. Palkhivala saw an opportunity through Swamiji's case to challenge a series of constitutional amendments introduced by the Indira Gandhi



government, granting unlimited power to Parliament to alter the Constitution.

"Courtroom Genius", a biography of Mr. Palkhivala co-authored by senior advocates Soli Sorabjee and Arvind Datar, said the seer never met or spoke with the great lawyer. In fact, the book said, Swamiji was quite surprised at the time to see his name in the newspapers every day and wondered

why his case, challenging only certain land reforms in Kerala, was taking so long.

**Unique case**  
By sheer statistics, leave alone the law it laid down, the "Kesavananda Bharati versus State of Kerala" case is unique. The case was heard by a Bench of 13 judges – the largest formed in the Supreme Court. It was heard over 68 working days from October 1972 to March 1973. The judgment was a mammoth 703 pages.

The Kesavananda Bharati judgment innovated the Basic Structure doctrine which limited Parliament's power to make drastic amendments that may affect the core values enshrined in the Constitution, like secularism and federalism.

The verdict upheld the

power of the Supreme Court to judicially review laws of Parliament. It evolved the concept of separation of powers among the three branches of governance – legislative, executive and the judiciary. But democracy won that day on a wafer-thin 76 majority. The judges were split down the middle until the 13th judge, Justice H.R. Khanna, supported the view that constitutional amendments should not alter the "basic structure" of the Constitution.

The Emergency was proclaimed shortly after the judgment was delivered on April 24, 1975.

The Kesavananda Bharati judgment proved timely and thwarted many an attempt on democracy and dignity of individual during those dark years.

## NCB questions Rhea for six hours

The agency is probing a drug angle in Sushant Singh Rajput's death case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministers of India and Iran discussed ways to take forward bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on regional security issues, including peace and stability in Afghanistan, during their meeting in Tehran, the Defence Ministry said on Sunday. In a departure from protocol for defence meet-

ings, the Iranian side raised the issue of recent reports citing the safety of minorities in India, it is learnt.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a bilateral meeting with Iran's Minister of Defence and Armed Forces Logistics Brigadier General Amir Hatami at the latter's request on September 5.

Mr. Singh was on a transit

halt in Tehran en route from Moscow to New Delhi where he attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting. Iran is an observer at the SCO.

"Both leaders emphasised upon the age-old cultural, linguistic and civilisational ties between India and Iran," the Ministry said.

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who worked as a housekeeper for Sushant. He was produced in a court that sent him to the NCB custody till September 9.

Rhea's brother Showik and Sushant's housekeeping manager Samuel Miranda are already in the agency's custody for alleged procurement of drugs.

The agency has invoked various provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act

against the accused.

Dipesh was earlier confronted with Showik and Samuel, besides alleged drug peddlers Kaizan Ibrahim and Zaid Vilatra. The agency made the arrests in the Sushant case after it got leads during the searches in a separate case in the last week of August. Two persons, Abbas Ramzan Ali Lakhani and Karn Arora, were initially arrested for allegedly possessing curtailed marijuana.

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A N D - N D E

# Metro ready, commuters in limbo

A section of riders is upbeat about resumption of services, while others want to wait and watch; vendors, e-rickshaw drivers pin hopes on passenger rush

SHINJINI GHOSH  
SIDDHARTH RAVI

Raju Dubey, 26, a cashier at a motorbike showroom in Saket has had a difficult time travelling to work in the last few months. While at times he hopped on his friends' bikes to reach the showroom, at other times he took a bus at the cost of increasing his travel time, he said.

Mr. Dubey, like several other city residents, has been waiting for the resumption of metro services for over five months now.

The Delhi Metro, which halted its operations five months ago following the imposition of a nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is set to run again from Monday in a graded manner.

With 57 trains being made operational for the 49-km-long Yellow Line, trains will be available at an interval of 2.44 minutes to 5.28 minutes at different stretches, officials said.

The passenger capacity of each train has been reduced to around 20% of the pre-lockdown period due to social distancing norms. The DMRC has appealed to commuters to travel light, avoid carrying metallic items and "talk less" during their journey to prevent the possibility of short-range aerosol transmission.

Mahesh Chand, who plans to ride the metro

to Lal Quila on weekends, said, "Social distancing is not really being maintained anywhere. Look at the buses. Besides, if the government has decided to restart the metro, it must have put some thought behind it."

#### Measuring the risks

However, several others said they would prefer to wait and watch before heading out in numbers. Supriya Sundriyal, a resident of Arjun Nagar and a regular on the Yellow Line for her daily commute to Gurugram, said, "I will initially avoid the metro because of the fear of spread of infection. While the government must have put all safety measures in place, I am not too sure of how it plans to manage the intake of passengers at crowded stations."

"It's a good move to start the metro in a graded manner, but I think it is better to observe the results first before risking my life and those of others," said Ms. Sundriyal.

Anwesh Patnaik, a student, also rejected the idea of riding the metro anytime soon on account of the soaring number of COVID-19 cases. "I used to take the metro pretty regularly, mostly the Yellow and Violet Line, but I don't think it makes any sense to start using it right now," said Mr. Patnaik.



**Back on track:** Rajiv Chowk metro station during a preview of arrangement for new travel protocol. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Rakesh Ahuja, 32, an executive working at a firm in Noida, said, "On a regular day, my metro commute from south Delhi to Noida included 17 stations across two lines. I am not entirely convinced of using the metro so soon as being in an enclosed space for so long is too big a risk at this stage. Also with longer queues and stricter security checks at every stage, the travel time will increase exponentially, which is not something I can afford right now."

#### Last-mile connectivity

Ajay Kumar, an autorickshaw driver from Bihar who has been working in Delhi for the last 12 years, said, "During the lockdown I went back to my village with my family. I came back to the city two weeks ago hoping

that the situation would have improved but that doesn't seem to be the case as we hardly get any passengers these days. The metro reopening will definitely boost our passenger load as there will be a little more movement of people."

E rickshaw operators, who try to and from the Govindpuri metro station, also hoped to get more passengers after the restarting of the metro. Despite the easing of the lockdown, drivers here say they get very few passengers and their earnings are very low.

Mohammad Habib, an autorickshaw driver in the Capital for the last 18 years, added, "The situation is quite bad as earnings are lower than ever. I am not sure if the metro reopening is a

good sign for us as the few passengers we get might want to travel in the metro and not auto. That will just diminish our earnings further."

#### Economic activities

After a lull in business for several months, street vendors around metro stations are also pinning their hopes on resumption of services. Dayaram Singh, who sells junk jewellery at Connaught Place, said, "I returned to my spot around 20 days ago. Due to lack of public transport, CP was hardly its usual self. Now we will have to wait and watch if the metro helps increase the footfall. These days we are not even earning half of what we used to earlier."

Satyaveer Khushwar, another vendor, said, "One can never tell whether with the resumption of metro services people will be back. A few weeks ago, when the number of cases dropped in the city, the footfall increased and there was a glimmer of hope. Now, with the rising numbers, we are back to almost no business again."

#### Protocol and guidelines

With the resumption of services, metro commuters will have to adapt to new guidelines like occupying alternate seats,

mandatory use of smart cards instead of tokens, social distancing and restricted access for entering and exiting stations.

In a bid to ensure compliance of protocol, a staff of 800 will be deployed by the Delhi Metro

Rail Corporation (DMRC) across its stations. While commuters will have to undergo thermal screening and sanitisation processes at the station entry, not more than three people will be allowed inside the lifts. A foot-operated pedal for calling lifts has also been installed at 16 stations across the network.

The dwell (stoppage) time of metro trains will also be increased to ensure that passengers have enough time to board or alight. According to the guidelines, metro trains will not stop at stations falling in containment zones.

"The list of such stations will be updated on a regular basis depending on the current containment zones," said a DMRC official.

#### Precautionary measures

The DMRC said that at the end of each trip machine-based sanitisation with special chemicals will be done at all touch points inside the train.

"As for station cleaning, sanitisation will be carried out every four hours. In addition to that, all baggages would be scanned at the scan machines," the DMRC said.

Metro officials said that the air conditioning systems of trains have been modified to keep fresh air flow to 100% open mode (fresh air intake) and the AC filters will be cleaned every seven days instead of the earlier 15-day period.

## A boost for businessmen in Gurugram

Traders hope resumption of metro service will bolster sales

ASHOK KUMAR  
GURUGRAM

Though most of the offices in the Millennium City are shut with companies preferring work from home for the employees, the businesses, especially shopping malls and restaurants, are looking forward to the resumption of metro service from Monday after around five months.

MGF Metropolitan Mall Association member Aman Bajaj, who also runs a gaming and gadget store, 'music festival', said that around 40% footfall in the shopping mall, adjacent to MG Road metro station, comprised Delhiites. So he hoped the business to pick up with the resumption of the metro service.

"It has helped us in terms



The 12-km rapid metro network with 11 stations will reopen on Monday. ■ MANOJ KUMAR

of business to be close to the metro station. Most of the crowd travelling by metro comprises office-goers and the offices are now shut, but still the opening of the metro will help the business a great deal. The footfall has already gone up significantly since the malls first opened after the lockdown," said Mr. Bajaj. He added that the opening of metro signalled that the situation was getting back to normal and gave con-

fidence to the people to step out. With the Haryana government allowing renewal of bar licences from this month, the hospitality industry also hopes to reap the benefits of metro restart, especially the Cyber Hub, which is connected with the Rapid Metro. Inderjeet Banga, head of National Restaurant Association of India's Gurugram chapter, said that opening metro would make travelling

easy and increase the access. He said it was a "welcome move" and helped create a positive mindset. "When the mindset is positive, consumption patterns will go up," said Mr. Banga.

It also means a new lease of life for the rickshaw pullers and autorickshaw drivers, who have been struggling to make both ends meet since the lockdown. Many autorickshaw drivers in the city are forced to

convert their vehicles into open carts selling vegetables and tea to earn their livelihood.

#### Three-member team

Though Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) would be responsible for the running of metro trains and ensuring adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures inside its premises, the Gurugram district administration has decided to deploy three-member teams comprising a policeman, a health worker and a municipal official, at each of the five Yellow Line stations in its jurisdiction. A nodal official will be appointed for overall supervision of the situation.

Haryana Auto Chalak Sangathan State president Mahavir Singh said there would be separate auto stands to pick up and drop the passengers.

The 12-km rapid metro network with eleven stations will also be open on Monday, but since it mostly caters to office-goers, the traffic is expected to be less.

## Six held for stealing aviation oil from pipelines of a company

Accused would then sell the oil to various persons in Delhi

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Six members of a gang have been arrested for allegedly stealing litres of aviation oil from the pipelines of an oil and gas company and further selling the same to various places across Delhi, the police said on Sunday.

The accused have been identified as Sanjay Dhanwan, Mukesh Kumar, Samay Pal, Avlesh, Himanshu and Sanjay, they said. A probe was initiated after the police received several complaints about a gang involved in the theft of petrol, diesel and aviation oil from the supply pipelines of the oil and gas company in Delhi and NCR.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Bhisham Singh said: "The arrest was made by the Crime Branch after their team received information on Saturday that

six members of the gang, involved in the theft were coming to Nihal Vihar to sell the stolen oil in a tanker accompanied by a car. A trap was laid and when the vehicles entered a godown in Nilothi, our team apprehended the accused."

The officer said since Samay and Mukesh have been involved in this theft for over a year, they were well aware of the locations of supply pipelines of the oil and gas company. Firstly, they would identify the area where tanker can reach easily near the pipeline preferably in a field of the full-grown crop to minimise visibility from the public as well as security persons of the oil and gas company and execute their operations at night.

Other gang members – Avlesh and Himanshu – would dig a hole over the

selected pipeline and fit a valve on it with the help of clamp and later connect the pipeline to a tanker. After filling the tanker with oil, they would close the valve and cover the hole with soil while other members kept a watch, the DCP said.

They used to sell the oil at various places in Delhi to the persons, who further sold it in retail illegally to various users, he said.

#### Items recovered

The police claimed to have seized the tanker used for transportation of stolen aviation oil from pipelines and recovered 1,100 litres aviation oil along with instruments used for making a hole in pipelines, a car used in the commission of crime, ₹60,000 cash, a generator and an oil pipe from the possession of the gang members.

## Two held for killing man

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 25-year-old man was robbed and murdered by two persons, whom he met on a dating application, in south-east Delhi, the police said on Sunday.

The accused – Sumit and Karthik – from Gautampuri have been arrested for the crime, they said. The incident took place on Saturday night at a deserted jungle area of Aali Vihar in Sarita Vihar. A case under Section 302 (murder) and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of the IPC have been registered.

DCP (South-East) R.P. Meena said: "During probe, mobile phone of the deceased – Sanni Dayal – was missing and when contacted, it was

## NCDRC orders realty firm to refund buyer's money

The delivery of flat, which was bought nine years ago, was to be made in 2013

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) has ordered RPS Infrastructure Limited to refund a homebuyer's money along with interest for keeping him in the dark regarding pending litigation that eventually led to a delay in possession.

In 2011, Sandeep Nagar booked a flat at RPS Palms Project, RPS city in Faridabad's Sector 88, against a total consideration of ₹50.27 lakh. The apartment buyers agreement signed on January 28 that year promised delivery within 24 months.

Mr. Nagar took a loan of ₹30.98 lakh to ensure timely

payments. Advocate Aditya Parolia, appearing for Mr. Nagar, stated that despite payment of ₹49.53 lakh, the company failed to hand over possession of the apartment by January 2013.

After several legal notices, the realty firm issued an offer of possession for July 2016 but with an enhanced cost of ₹19 lakh more than the original agreed amount, citing enhanced External Development Charges (EDC). Mr. Nagar then moved the consumer court seeking a refund with interest.

**Stay order from SC**

The realty firm stated that it could not have handed over possession since there was a

stay order from the Supreme Court. It also stated that the buyer knew about it and hence could not get out of the agreement.

Meanwhile, the consumer court said, even though the buyer was aware of the pending litigation, it does not take away the firm's responsibility to keep him "fully informed and thereby enabled him to exercise choice".

The consumer court pointed out that the litigation, at the behest of some landowners, had commenced soon after the buyer had made his booking.

"So, even as this litigation cast a shadow over the project, Opposite Party [RPS Infrastructure] continued to

receive payments, and took no step to inform the complainant [buyer]," the consumer court noted.

#### 'Unfair trade'

"This was an unfair trade practice on the Opposite Party's part. The complainant had a right to know whether his investment in his booked flat was being used for the purpose for which it was made," the consumer court said. "Had the complainant [buyer] been kept informed, he would have had the option to decide his future course of action. He could have opted out or stayed on. But as things were, Opposite Party decided for him," the consumer court said.

## DCW rescues teenager trafficked from Jharkhand

Victim says she was raped by men in Delhi

#### STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Sunday said it has rescued a teenager from New Rajinder Nagar. She was trafficked from Jharkhand when she was aged nine.

Acting on a complaint by her father, who had been searching for her for several years, the commission managed to track down the girl, who was working as domestic help. She was then taken to Rajinder Nagar Police station and during counselling, she said a person from her village lured and brought her to Delhi many years back.

"She was first sold off to a trafficker and was allegedly raped by several men. She was able to recount the name of some of the men too," the DCW said.

The girl was then later sold off to a family in Punjabi Bagh, where she worked as domestic help for several years. DCW Chief Swati Maliwal said the commission has been rescuing girls trafficked from Jharkhand, almost every alternate day which highlights the gravity of the problem of trafficking. "The perpetrators of this heinous crime need to be punished. We will ensure rehabilitation of this girl," Ms. Maliwal said.

Timings  
DELHI

MONDAY, SEP. 07	
RISE 06:03	SET 18:36
RISE 21:40	SET 10:13
TUESDAY, SEP. 08	
RISE 06:03	SET 18:34
RISE 22:14	SET 11:07
WEDNESDAY, SEP. 09	
RISE 06:04	SET 18:33
RISE 22:52	SET 12:01

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	23
Safdarjung	36	23
Palam	34	25

**Delhi Palam Today**  
34°C Light winds and comfortable morning and warm day. Passing rain may occur at few area.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
35°C Dry weather with warm afternoon and partly cloudy sky likely.

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# Capital records fresh 3,000 COVID-19 cases

Active cases at 20,909; 11,010 patients under home isolation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS  
NEW DELHI/GURUGRAM

The Capital recorded 3,256 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday with 29 deaths and 2,188 recoveries in the past 24 hours, according to a health bulletin issued by the Delhi government.

The total positive cases stand at 1,91,449, total deaths at 4,567 and total recoveries at 1,65,973. There are 20,909 active cases in the Capital. The bulletin stated that 9,217 RT-PCR and 26,829 rapid antigen tests were conducted in the past 24 hours.

There are 1,076 containment zones and 11,010 patients are under home isolation. Providing statistics about patient management, the bulletin said that out of 14,171 hospital beds, 9,070 are vacant.

At dedicated COVID care centres that have 8,580 beds, 4,679 are vacant. Of the 601 available beds at dedicated health centres, 188 beds are vacant.

## Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
1,91,449	4,567
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths
3,256	29

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

On Saturday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said that the number of cases in the Capital is rising as they have started testing more. The testing had gone from 20,000 to 40,000 per day.

In the highest single-day spike, 306 COVID-19 cases were recorded in Gurugram on Sunday. It took the total number of cases in the district to 13,321. With 140 recoveries, Gurugram now has 1,686 active cases.

After a steady decline in the number of active cases in Gurugram since June 21, there has been a sudden

spurt over the past two weeks. The active cases again crossed the 1,000 mark on September 1 after more than a month.

The health officials and the district authorities have attributed the sudden rise in infection cases to the gradual unlocking of various activities, including shopping malls, market places and transport, and also on the people lowering the guard.

As per the latest health bulletin, Gurugram has recorded 137 deaths, including 96 with co-morbidities. As many as 1,486 patients are in home isolation, and the rest in the hospitals. Of the total cases, Gurugram city has the maximum 11,057, followed by Pataudi (1,192), Sohna (835) and Farukh Nagar (237).

In view of the rise in cases, the district administration mulls to increase the number of reserved beds in private hospitals to 30% and fix quota for the residents of Haryana.

## Man with ₹1 lakh bounty arrested in riots case

Accused had shot dead a law student in north-east Delhi this February

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Crime Branch team probing the north-east riots case on Sunday arrested a man, who carried a reward of ₹1 lakh on his head, for allegedly killing a 26-year-old law student near a school in north-east Delhi.

Mustaqeem (25) alias Sameer Saifi, a resident of old Mustafabad, who allegedly shot dead Rahul Solanki near Rajdhani Public School in Shiv Vihar on February 24, was arrested by a special investigation team on September 3, the police said.

He has been sent to judicial custody, they said. Mustaqeem had joined the prot-

est against the CAA and NRC near Farukia Masjid, they added.

Solanki was pursuing LLB from a private college in Ghaziabad and had stepped out of his home to buy milk when he was killed.

The SIT has arrested seven others - Arif, Anis, Sirajuddin, Salman, Sonu, Saif and Irfshad - accused in the Solanki case and they have been charge-sheeted for actively participating in the riots with a common objective to cause death and burning properties on February 24, the police said.

Solanki was shot dead near Rajdhani Public School and a case was registered at Dayalpur police station. La-

ter, the investigation was handed over to the SIT.

### Identification

During investigation, eye-

witnesses described the person who opened fire on Solanki. They identified the accused from his clothes and appearance after they were shown a video of the incident, a senior police officer said.

"We had deployed our sources in Mustafabad to identify the alleged shooter on the basis of his description. Our team questioned hundreds from the area and verified their presence at the spot through physical and technical means, but we did not get any information. Af-

ter six months, on September 3, one of our sources informed us and he was apprehended from Bhajanpur Majar," the officer said.

Mustaqeem denied his involve- ment initially, but confessed to it after detailed questioning, he said.

The countrymade pistol used in the crime was recovered along with five live cartridges, at his instance. A mobile phone and the clothes, shoes and helmet, which he was wearing at the time of committing the crime, have also been found, the police said.

Mustaqeem studied up to Class X and dropped out to work as a carpenter, they said.

## CM launches anti-dengue drive, seeks participation of residents

The campaign had helped reduce number of cases last year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday kick-started the Delhi government's 10-week anti-dengue campaign that seeks the participation of all residents to fight and prevent vector-borne disease.

The campaign that was conducted last year as well was credited by the Delhi government for reducing the number of dengue cases and deaths to two in 2019 from 60 in 2015.

**10-week drive**  
Titled "10 Hafte 10 Baje 10 Minute campaign" (10 weeks-10 o'clock-10 minutes) the government asks citizens to take 10 minutes every Sunday for 10 weeks to inspect their house for any signs of stagnant water and drain it. It will ensure that there is no breeding of mosquitoes and vector-borne diseases such as dengue, malaria, and chikungunya.

Mr. Kejriwal said that like last time, two crore people of Delhi will join hands and



Arvind Kejriwal drains out stagnant water to curb chances of mosquito breeding. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

work together to fight against dengue. "The rainy season is here again and we all know that at this point, the breeding of mosquitoes that spread dengue is at a peak. We have to save ourselves and our family from dengue," he said.

He added that last year, there were only 1,400-1,500 dengue cases in Delhi, which was a big achievement because this number was around 14,000-15,000 a few years back.

Mr. Kejriwal tweeted, "The people of Delhi have once again started a war against dengue. On the first

Sunday of this 10-week massive campaign, I have also changed the clean water accumulated in my house and eliminated the possibility of mosquito-borne diseases".

Several Ministers in the Delhi government and MLAs also joined and tweeted pictures of themselves checking their homes for stagnant water. The government in a statement said that the campaign also seeks to engage residents call 10 of their friends/relatives and advise them on the good practices of preventing dengue and children will be encouraged to take part in the campaign.

Calling the Delhi government, a "government of advertisements", Mr. Gupta said that efforts of the municipal corporation ought to be encouraged instead of spending money on advertisements.

## Ensure rehabilitation of railway slums before demolition'

CPI-ML calls SC directive 'shocking and inhuman', says it is violation of right to life

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A recent Supreme Court directive to demolish all slums along the railway tracks in Delhi within three months came under fire from the Communist Party of India (ML) on Sunday.

The group called it a "shocking and inhuman" decision which it argued was a violation of the right to life guaranteed in the Constitution.

The Supreme Court ordered the removal of nearly 48,000 slums in the safety

zone of railway tracks last week.

### 'Protect rights'

People living in these slums are part of the working poor and their rights must be protected, the group said. It also demanded proper reh-

abilitation prior to demolition of slums, a fresh survey among those living near railway tracks to ascertain the correct number of families, intervention of the Delhi government and called for protests against the order.

## Ratan Lal case: 2 declared proclaimed offenders

Court takes cognisance of chargesheet filed against 17 people in constable's murder

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday took cognisance of the chargesheet filed in the alleged murder case of Head Constable Ratan Lal during the north-east Delhi violence and declared two persons as proclaimed offenders.

The court, however, did not take Section 153-A (promoting enmity between different groups based on religion, language, caste etc.) as the required sanction has not been filed by the police yet.

The court declared Suleiman Siddiqui and Ravish proclaimed offenders in the case for allegedly intentionally avoiding to appear in the court despite due service of process under Section 82 (proclamation for person absconding) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

"Due to non-appearance despite several calls and due service under Section 82 CrPC, accused Suleiman Siddiqui and Ravish are declared proclaimed offenders," the court said in its order.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Purushottam Pathak



Several people were killed and many sustained injuries in the riots, which broke out in north-east Delhi in February this year. • FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

took cognisance of the chargesheet filed against 17 accused - Mohd. Saleem Khan, Salim Malik, Mohd. Jalaluddin, Arif, Mohd. Ayub, Mohd. Yunus, Mohd. Danish, Shah-nawaz, Ibrahim, Furqan, Badrul Hasan, Mohd. Sadiq, Shadab Ahmed, Imran Ansari, Adil, Nasir and Suvaleen - in the case.

The court said all the accused should be produced through videoconferencing on September 10.

### Mob-turned rioters

The court said the mob turned into rioters and in the process of rioting, they obstructed policemen who were performing their du-

ties, led to Lal's death and serious injuries to several policemen and civilians and also burnt and destroyed several properties.

From the statements of witnesses and the chargesheet, prima facie, it was revealed that the riots dated February 24 wherein several policemen were murdered, several policemen and civilians were injured and several properties were burnt and destroyed, was an outcome of a well-hatched conspiracy by the accused, the court said.

"They planned the manner of committing the offence of rioting, murder and other offences as alleged and

they were instrumental in gathering of unlawful assembly at Chand Bagh on February 24 in conspiracy with each other having common intention and unlawful object," the court also said.

It said there was sufficient material on record to take cognisance of the offences alleged to have been committed by the accused.

"However, I am not inclined to take cognisance of the offence under Section 153-A IPC as for taking cognisance of the offence, previous sanctions are mandatory to be filed by the agency but the same has not been filed till today," the judge said.

"The investigating officer has informed that in the present case, a letter dated February 13 has been sent to the competent authority, but it was not clear as to how much time it will take for obtaining sanction and any delay in proceeding further in the matter will unnecessarily defeat the purpose for which the special courts for trial of riot cases have been created, I deem it fit to take cognisance of all the offences as discussed," the judge said.

## Activist seeks appointment with CP to submit plaint against book on riots

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Activist Saket Gokhale has written to S.N Srivastava, Commissioner of Police, Delhi, seeking a personal appointment to submit a complaint against the book 'Delhi Riots 2020' and its authors as well as submit evidence pertaining to BJP leader Kapil Mishra's alleged role in instigating the

violence in February.

Mr. Gokhale, in his letter, said that Mr. Srivastava had earlier met the authors of the said book and accepted a compliant from them. "I am one of the 'accused' named in this frivolous complaint. Principles of natural justice demand that both sides in any issue must be treated equally," Mr. Gokhale said. He added that he

was puzzled as to why the Police Commissioner met the delegation personally to accept their complaint instead of directing them to the local police station.

He added that he and his associates would also be extending the privilege of being able to submit a complaint personally as was given to the authors of the book.

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PLAN NO

Ajmer Sharif Dargah to reopen today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JAIPUR

Some major religious places in Rajasthan, including the Ajmer Sharif Dargah, will reopen on Monday as per the 'Unlock-4' guidelines issued by the Centre in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Follow guidelines'**  
The State government has allowed religious places to reopen from September 7 and has asked them to adhere to social distancing and other COVID-19 guidelines under 'Unlock-4'.

Religious places were closed after the Centre imposed a nationwide lockdown in March to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The 'Unlock' process began on June 8 and so far, the Central government has implemented four phases.

# Parties slam Centre's move to drop Punjabi language in J&K

The move reflects BJP's anti-minority stand: Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal

VIKAS VASUDEVA  
CHANDIGARH



The Centre's move of not including "Punjabi" as one of the official languages in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has invited sharp criticism from political parties in Punjab, including the BJP's alliance partner, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

Expressing displeasure, former Deputy Chief Minister and SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal has termed the move anti-minority. The Congress echoed the allegation and described it as another move that exposes the anti-minority mindset of the BJP.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) State president, Bhagwant Mann, condemned the decision and said he would raise the issue in the upcoming monsoon session of Parlia-



cumbent regime, and it's because of this mindset that no minority community in the country feels secure – be it surrounding their religion, language or culture. This speaks dangerously about our democracy and our social fabric."

"The government should notify Punjabi language as an official language," he added.

Mr. Badal in a letter to Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha, wrote, "Punjabi is not only the mother tongue of a very significant part of the people of the State but it was also a recognised language duly certified in the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir."

The SAD president pointed out that the Punjabi language had profound religious, cultural and emotional

implications for the Sikh community. "As such, the exclusion of Punjabi as official language in Jammu and Kashmir is bound to be seen as an anti-minority and is certain to be seen as an anti-Sikh step of the Jammu-Kashmir administration".

**Propaganda ammunition**

Mr. Badal also cautioned that "decisions such as these provide dangerous propaganda ammunition to those who are always looking for such opportunities to disturb peace and communal harmony in the country, especially in the sensitive border States of Punjab and Jammu-Kashmir".

According to Mukesh Kumar, son of the deceased, when the family was conducting the last rites, they discovered that it was not of their father. "I got a call from Meerut Medical College on Saturday evening. The lapse came to light when a Modinagar family in Ghaziabad district informed the authorities that the body they were given in a packed form, as per protocol, was not of their father who passed away in Meerut Medical College on Saturday evening.

The family members also alleged that when they called up the hospital, the officer on duty reprimanded them and said removing the packing could have legal consequences. "When we persisted, we were told that another person from Meerut's Rohta Road area also passed away because of COVID-19 around the same time and the bodies could have interchanged," Mr. Mukesh said, adding he was going to Meerut to collect the ashes

# Bodies of virus victims get interchanged in U.P. hospital

Swap discovered by one family at the time of last rites

ANUJ KUMAR  
GHAZIABAD

In a case of gross negligence, the bodies of two COVID-19 patients allegedly got interchanged in Meerut Medical College on Sunday. The District Magistrate has ordered an inquiry into the case and has promised strict action.

The lapse came to light when a Modinagar family in Ghaziabad district informed the authorities that the body they were given in a packed form, as per protocol, was not of their father who passed away in Meerut Medical College on Saturday evening.

According to Mukesh Kumar, son of the deceased, when the family was conducting the last rites, they discovered that it was not of their father. "I got a call from Meerut Medical College on Saturday evening. The lapse came to light when a Modinagar family in Ghaziabad district informed the authorities that the body they were given in a packed form, as per protocol, was not of their father who passed away in Meerut Medical College on Saturday evening.

of his father.

The authorities called up Varun, son of the other deceased, but by then the family had performed the last rites of the body. "We rushed to Modinagar and collected the remains of our father. We have been told that we could not perform the last rites here, so we are taking him to Meerut," he said.

## Strict action promised

Raj Kumar, Chief Medical Officer, Meerut, who is part of the inquiry committee, told *The Hindu* that the responsibility would be fixed within 12 hours and strict action would be taken against the guilty.

"We are looking into the allegations of misbehaviour as well, and nobody would be spared," he said.

## Home guard killed by smugglers

Odisha police tried to intercept a group carrying ganja

SATYASUNDAR BARIK  
BHUBANESWAR

A home guard of the Odisha police died in an attack by smugglers when a police team tried to stop a group carrying ganja in Malkangiri district on Saturday.

The incident took place in the Nuaguda forest near Mathili area, close to Andhra Pradesh.

The group of more than 100 were carrying the banned drug in slings when a police team intercepted

them. During the scuffle, the miscreants hit the home guard, identified Banabasi Maharana, on the head. He later succumbed to grievous head injuries. Taking advantage of the darkness, the smugglers fled.

## COVID-19: constable ends life in hospital

Third such case in a month at the designated virus facility in U.P.'s Moradabad

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

A police head constable who had tested positive for COVID-19 ended his life at a hospital in Moradabad on Saturday evening, police said. The deceased has been identified as Diwakar Sharma, 52, and was posted at the police complaint's desk.

Notably, this is the third death by suicide in the Teerthankar Medical College & Research Centre in the last one month. It is a designated COVID-19 facility meant to treat patients from across the Mo-

radabad division.

On August 19, a 28-year-old COVID-19 positive girl ended her life and on August 28, a 42-year-old bank manager took a similar step. The local police had termed them both as suicide cases.

### 'Unstable condition'

Amit Anand, Superintendent of Police (City), Moradabad, said doctors treating the head constable had told the police that he was "psychologically unstable" after he learnt about his condition. He confirmed that it was the third

case of death by suicide in the private hospital.

Preeti Jaiswal, Additional District Magistrate (Finance), who is the nodal officer of COVID-19 control centre in the district, said the hospital was a 500-bed L3 facility acquired by the government. "Here, only those patients who require close monitoring are admitted. Right now, around 300 patients are there in the hospital. Some people get paranoid, perhaps because of false information circulating on social media. The girl ended her life even before she

was properly admitted. Preliminary reports suggest that the constable fought with the medical staff before he took the extreme step around 11 p.m."

She said there were two counsellors but still three such incidents had happened which was "unfortunate".

"We are looking into ways to prevent such incidents," she said.

*Suicide prevention helpline:* Sanjivini Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-40769002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.

## Four killed in bike-truck collision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BADAUN (U.P.)

Four members of a family lost their lives when the motorcycle on which they were travelling collided with a truck here on Sunday, police said.

Senior Superintendent of Police Sankalp Sharma said the four were going to a dargah, when the motorcycle collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction. Efforts are on to catch the truck driver who fled after the accident.

## Assam doctor, teacher wife held for torturing minor help

The couple had allegedly poured hot water on the 12-year-old boy and then fled to West Bengal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A court in eastern Assam's Dibrugarh district on Sunday sent a doctor and his teacher wife to judicial custody for allegedly pouring hot water on their 12-year-old domestic help.

Dr. Siddhi Prasad Deuri of the Assam Medical College

and Hospital in Dibrugarh

and his wife Mitali Konwar, principal of Moran College near Dibrugarh, were arrested at Raha in central Assam's Nagaon district on Saturday.

The boy was engaged illegally to wash five cars and take care of the couple's dogs since April 2019.

The couple had reportedly lain low in West Bengal and

were on their way back home as the police had earlier arrested their son and daughter. The doctor and his wife were booked under relevant Sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Child and Adolescent Labour Prohibition Act and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

"The couple was produced before the local court in the afternoon. The court prescribed judicial custody," Dibrugarh Superintendent of Police Thube Prateek Vijay Kumar said.

He said the police were investigating the case on the basis of the child's statement and circumstantial evidence.

## Research paper calls for change in India's forest policy: D-G Forests

It illustrates potential of timber production outside forests

SIDHARTH YADAV  
BHOJPAL

Director General of Forests Sanjay Kumar has said a research paper which advocated for sustainable forest management based on certification and a policy characterised by restoration, conservation and production equally was relevant in making a "strong case" for amendment in the forest policy.

Mr. Kumar on June 28 wrote to senior officials including Inspector Generals of Forests (Forest Policy), (Forest Conservation) and (Survey and Utilisation) to take follow-up action once a vetted review by experts on the paper titled the 'Impact of forest policies on timber production in India: a review' was received from the Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal.

The paper, published in 2016 in the *Natural Resources Forum*, a United Nations Sustainable Development Journal, while illustrating the potential of timber production from trees outside forests (TOFs) – grown outside government recorded forest areas (RFAs) – points to the lack of reliable data relating to growing stock, consumption and production of timber, which constrained forecast of supply and demand projections.

Domestic timber production slumped while imports soared after decades of policies focused on production instead of conservation, fol-

owing a 1996 Supreme Court order which regulated logging in government forests. The imports affected domestic pricing patterns, said the paper. "The import-export policy of the country should be reviewed to rectify the pricing in the market so that it is economically viable to grow trees on farmlands," the authors suggested.

The domestic demand of timber, they said, was growing owing to increasing population and per capita GDP. And the dependency on imports could backfire as exporters worldwide were shifting to a conservation-based approach, warranting a revision in the Indian policy to boost domestic production.

**'Help rural economy'**  
Highlighting the pivotal role of TOFs in meeting demand, the paper quotes the India State of Forest Report (2011) which estimated timber production from government forests to be 3.17 million m<sup>3</sup> and potential timber production from TOFs to be 42.77 million m<sup>3</sup>.

"Increasing wood production will also push carbon se-

questration, and help in mitigating effects of climate change," said Bhaskar Sinha, Chairperson, Centre for Climate Change Studies, IIFM, one of the authors besides Mili Ghosh, former PhD scholar. "Increasing timber production from TOFs can revive the rural economy."

Mr. Kumar told *The Hindu*, "Every piece of information is important, particularly if it is coming from academics."

The conservation policy, the paper said, must focus on maintaining ecological balance and improving biodiversity through protected area management. The restoration policy must target reclamation, rehabilitation and regeneration of degraded landscapes and waste-

lands. Production forestry should focus on "sustainable increase in forest productivity from TOFs and RFAs". To boost production through RFAs, the paper recommends, States must devise working plans and demarcate 10% of the forests for plantations. For TOFs, a synchronised nationwide policy could be developed.

GREAT HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Sl. No.: NIT No.: e-Procurement Tender Notice No. 05/SE-II(H)/GHMC/2020-21/  
Recall Date: 04-09-2020. Name of the Work: Construction of STP: Estimated amount (Rs. In Lakhs): Total: 1 work: 80.00 Lakhs; Start Date/Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: Start date: 07-09-2020 @ 04:00 PM, Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: 21-09-2020 @ 03:30 PM; Name & Address Officer Cell No.: Superintending Engineer-II (Housing), GHMC 900091843. For further details can be obtained at e-procurement @ www.tender.telangana.gov.in  
DPR No.: 4666-PCL/ADT/1/2020-21 Dt. 05/09/2020  
Sd/- Superintending Engineer-II (Housing), GHMC

CM  
YK





## Too close for comfort

India and China must lose no time in finding a diplomatic solution to their border disputes

Following Friday's talks in Moscow between the Defence Ministers of India and China, the prospects of an imminent diplomatic solution to the continuing stand-off along the LAC do not appear bright. The statements issued by the two sides have underlined the sharp differences in how New Delhi and Beijing have continued to view the unprecedented developments along the border since May, when China deployed troops in large numbers and sought to unilaterally redraw the LAC in several areas. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh "categorically conveyed" India's stand, emphasising that China's actions "were in violation of the bilateral agreements". He also expressed hope that both sides would be able to resolve the ongoing situation "peacefully through dialogue". His Chinese counterpart, General Wei Fenghe, appeared to only reiterate the stand conveyed by China in recent statements that it had no blame to bear for this summer's developments. He said "the responsibility lies entirely with the Indian side", while China "kept maximum restraint to prevent potential escalation". He called on India to "immediately withdraw its troops". He did, also, add that both sides should "stay committed to resolving the issue through dialogue and consultation" and "make joint efforts to meet each other halfway".

As External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said last week, diplomacy is the only way out of the crisis, and that can only happen "if both sides understand that it is in each of their best interests if the events of this summer are not repeated". The problem, so far, has been a stark mismatch between China's statements and the actions of its troops. Its consistent labelling of India as the aggressor this summer contradicts the reality that India has, since May, ceded about 1,000 square kilometres in Ladakh to Chinese control. If China's diplomats have spoken repeatedly of the need to keep in mind "the big picture" of bilateral ties, the actions of its military on the ground have suggested an intent that is precisely the opposite, emphasising achieving tactical gains at the border over the broader strategic relationship. Until that calculus changes, India will have to be prepared to be tested along the border and to stand its ground over the long haul. India has signalled its intent to do so with the latest developments on August 29 in Chushul. If the statements following the Moscow meet did not exactly inspire confidence, both sides will have the chance to reassess the situation when Mr. Jaishankar will likely meet his counterpart, Wang Yi, at a meeting of SCO Foreign Ministers on September 10. Military talks can occasionally help to avert a flare-up, but the two neighbours need to work toward a diplomatic solution to ensure undisturbed peace and quiet along the border.

## Mixed messaging

India's efforts to attract capital will not result in a flood of FDI till investors see policy stability

Prime Minister Modi last week elaborately pitched India as an investment destination that could serve as a manufacturing hub at the heart of global supply chains. The pitch made at the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum comes in the backdrop of the government's keenness to use the disruptions the COVID-19 pandemic has caused to the cross-border movement of goods as an opportunity to lure potential investors, especially those looking to relocate from China, to India. This tack is consistent with recent initiatives to explore supply-chain synergies with other economies, including Japan, as an escalating border feud casts a shadow over India's economic and trade ties with its northern neighbour. The reasoning appears to be that if even a few multinational enterprises can be drawn to set up manufacturing bases, either by shifting facilities or as new additional plants, then not only does the Indian economy stand to gain FDI, new jobs and tax revenue but it also makes a statement. Clearly, officials must have advised Mr. Modi that U.S. businesses were the ideal target given the worsening relationship between Washington and Beijing and the ongoing trade stand-off between the world's two largest economies. On the face of it, the approach seems inarguably sound. The rub, however, lies in the government's recent 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative, of making India more self-reliant.

Over the decades, it has been established that global FDI investors prioritise and are even willing to pay a premium for policy stability and largely barrier-free access to local and international markets. The drive for self-reliance has spurred several Ministries to urge companies and industry sectors to replace imports with 'Made in India' substitutes. From the Shipping Ministry's call for the design and manufacture of indigenous tugboats to auto component makers being told to abjure foreign parts, the thrust of the initiative is evidently 'import substitution'. It is hard to imagine any potential foreign investor in manufacturing being ready to source capital goods locally – assuming they are available – even at the cost of possibly compromising on quality or price or both. Betraying the government's anxiety, Mr. Modi took pains to stress that the push for self-reliance should not be interpreted as India turning its back on the world. Separately, from the market access perspective, India's decision to not join the RCEP multilateral trade pact would put investor companies seeking to tap consumers in RCEP member countries at a tariff disadvantage. Interestingly, most of the recent FDI announcements have been by way of stake acquisitions in existing businesses, and predominantly in the services sector. Attracting FDI into manufacturing will require the government to convince investors that it is committed not merely in words but in deeds as well to an open, barrier-free global trade and investment order.

# Court's drift and chinks in the judiciary's armour

An opaque 'master of the roster' system and a certain kind of judge are sufficient to destroy judicial independence



AJIT PRAKASH SHAH

This past fortnight has seen two significant developments in connection with the Indian judiciary: the first was the decision of the Supreme Court of India in the matter of Prashant Bhushan's contempt case, and the second was the retirement of Justice Arun Mishra. These events, in their own way, magnify the chinks in the armour of the Supreme Court.

### The Bhushan case

In the first instance, the Supreme Court, in a display of self-proclaimed "magnanimity", let off Mr. Bhushan with a fine of one rupee in the contempt case against him over two tweets. In the alternative, the top court ordered for a three-month imprisonment term and three years' debarment from practice. The Court chastised him for his "conduct", which, according to the Court, "reflects adamanence and ego, which has no place to exist in the system of administration of justice and in noble profession, and no remorse is shown for the harm done to the institution to which he belongs". It would be trite to say that these words ring hollow coming from a Court that chose to relentlessly pursue Mr. Bhushan in a petty exhibition of arrogance itself. Over the course of the hearing, the Court repeatedly tried to coerce the contemnor, i.e., Mr. Bhushan, to proffer an apology, and kept granting him additional time (a few days, a few hours, etc.) for this purpose. It was arguably strange behaviour on the part of the Court, and it also appeared embarrassing, for it came across as petulant bargaining more than anything else. Mr. Bhushan, with appropriate decorum and honesty, admitted that any apology from him in the circumstances would be insincere.

The jurisprudential contribution of this decision to the law of contempt will be studied for years to come, surely, but maybe not for the reasons that the Court intended. Hopefully, a wiser judicial and legislative community will realise one day how utterly self-defeating this law is for a healthy democracy, and eventually change the law around.

### A judge in the limelight

This was among Justice Mishra's last few decisions as a member of the Supreme Court, before he retired on September 2. As a result, considerable attention has been paid to his decisions during his tenure which lasted from 2014 to 2020. One consistent feature has revealed itself throughout, which is the kinds of cases that were assigned to the Benches he was on, and the kinds of decisions he issued. In the judges' press conference two years ago, the primary grouse was with the "master of the roster" system, and the specific concern that politically sensitive cases (i.e., dealing with the executive) were being allocated to Benches involving Justice Arun Mishra (even if not mentioned by name, his role was clearly insinuated, notably with reference to the judge Loya case). Commentators (e.g., Aparna Chandra, Anup Surendranath, V. Venkatesan) have also conducted detailed analyses of Justice Arun Mishra's decisions, and studies have found that these were predictably in favour of the executive.

In recent times, many columnists, leading scholars, and legal luminaries have speculated on the marked drift of the Supreme Court away from rights-based court to an executive court. Of course, to keep such a court going, a judge who is ever ready to step up to handle politically sensitive matters, and who can be relied upon to issue decisions that are in favour of the executive, is always useful. However, even as the limelight is on a judge such as Justice Mishra in circumstances like this, the role of the office of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) in facilitating the creation of an executive court cannot be ignored.



SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAK

Allegations and suspicions have been voiced from within as well, with Justice Kurian Joseph suggesting that the assignment of work in the Court during Justice Dipak Misra's tenure was "remote controlled". During his time, two judgments were delivered by the CJI's Bench in matters to which he himself was a party. Through these judgments, the CJI defended the "master of the roster" system, indicating that the CJI was entitled to have unrestricted and untrammeled power in matters of case allocation. After the press conference, one hoped there would be rethinking on this, but nothing has really happened, and things have continued in the same way since. The "master of the roster" system was designed for a different era, and indeed, may have worked well in the past even, when we had very tall judges, and judicial independence was rarely doubted. But things have changed now.

Recall that the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act was struck down by the Court on grounds of excessive executive interference in the selection of judges. But surely, this judgment is of no use if executive interference is anyway possible in more subtle ways.

### Executive's chipping away

Theoretically, it is very easy for an all-powerful executive that is looking to seize control over the other arms of the state, and especially an independent judiciary. There is no need to expend energy in packing the Supreme Court with pro-government judges. Finding over 30 judges who think alike would anyway be difficult, if not impossible.

All that is needed is to ensure that certain "favourable" conditions exist in the Court: these include a CJI who is on your side, and a handful of other judges on the Bench who are "reliable". Unfortunate precedents in the recent past where CJIs have, without compunction, accepted politically-coloured post-retirement opportunities, have not really helped. The competence of judges becomes irrelevant in this scheme of things. The combination of opaque systems like the "master of the roster", and a certain kind of judge are sufficient to destroy judicial independence.

This rule can be that cases are allocated randomly. But any kind of rule can be implemented only if judges themselves take a stand and decide. There should be agreement that no discretion can be allowed, for that is the root cause of so many of our troubles. A case allocation system that is neutral and rules-based will prevent bench packing, and demonstrate neutrality, impartiality, and transparency. All this, in turn, ensures that courts are protected from outside interference; improves public confidence in the impartiality and independence of the judiciary; assures litigants of equality and fairness; and protects basic rights and freedoms by not compromising on them.

### Malaise within

There is a tendency to view the threat to judicial independence in India as emerging from the executive branch, and occasionally the legislature. But when persons within the judiciary become pliable to the other branches, it is a different story altogether. Today, we have a situation which was foreseen many decades ago, by CJI Y.V. Chandrachud, when, in 1985,

he observed, "There is greater threat to the independence of the judiciary from within than without ..." All the sermonising in the world (of the sort offered in the Bhushan judgment) will be of no consequence without any real changes in the way things work. And indeed, it is important to note that Justice Arun Mishra's retirement is not likely to impact the situation; he was anyway merely a manifestation of the deeper malaise in the system. Surely, this is as good a time as any for the judges of the Supreme Court to unite and seriously consider whether self-preservation trumps institutional independence, or whether they truly want to protect the judiciary from outside influence, and hold their own against an overbearing executive.

*Justice A.P. Shah is retired Chief Justice, Delhi and Madras High Courts, and former Chairperson, Law Commission of India*

## Policy lessons in Tamil Nadu's language formula

C.N. Annadurai's argument was that the official language should be equidistant to all in a multilingual society



SAMAS

The New Education Policy misses the vital empirical evidence of Tamil Nadu following a language formula that is distinctly at variance with that of Delhi for the past 50 years and yet achieving significant positive social and economic changes. That many are oblivious of it is surprising.

### Annadurai's vision

It was the decision of C.N. Annadurai, who realised the Dravidian movement's dream of achieving governmental power, that beyond Tamil and English (in order of preference) no other language would be taught in the schools of Tamil Nadu either as a language or medium of instruction. The far-sightedness of this decision can be better appreciated if one goes through the language policy adopted by various developed countries.

Most countries follow a one-language formula (invariably mother tongue) for teaching children in the primary classes. On reaching middle school they are given a chance to learn one more language, mostly English. As there is no imposition through schools, voluntary learning of other languages is widely prevalent in these countries. Be it students of literature, sociology, or people involved in international trade, their know-

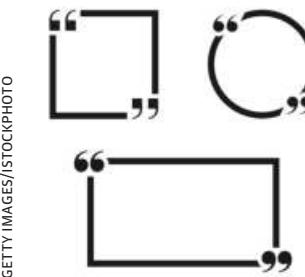
ledge of five or six languages is quite normal.

### In Singapore

All countries faced with the enormous challenge posed by the new century, invariably give preference to the English language after their mother tongue. Japan and Singapore can be cited as two countries which handle language policy as a strategic tool to achieve socio-economic development. Singapore's success in this area is phenomenal and closely comparable to the situation in India. It was the mission of Lee Kuan Yew, the architect of modern Singapore, giving equal status to English and mother tongue as a prerequisite not only to work closely with the international community but also to bring in big ticket changes. In many ways this can be compared to Annadurai's mission.

Lee Kuan Yew attributed the international acclaim Singapore received for its success mainly to its two-language formula. Though Chinese by birth, his elitist family spoke English at home. Having studied in English schools and receiving his higher education in Cambridge, he understood the importance of English for the then undeveloped society in coping with international competition.

Importantly, Lee Kuan Yew realised that a multicultural society such as Singapore could enhance its status only if each of its cultural groups felt it was on a par with others. He viewed that the lingua franca of the country should be equidistant to all cultural groups, thereby creating fair competition and opportunities. Only in this



background were Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English declared as common languages with the lingua franca being English.

The mainstay of Annadurai's argument, while insisting that all the national languages should be made official languages and English should be the common link language, was that the official language should be equidistant to all the members of a multilingual society.

English would fit the bill for both students of Hindi and Tamil. Making Hindi alone as the official language would create disparity among various linguistic groups other than the Hindi-speaking population which will result in partial treatment, giving unfair advantage to the Hindi-speaking population. Annadurai was against this injustice.

Annadurai was also particular that English is the language we communicate with a larger world. The American example he cited during a parliamentary debate is worth mentioning: "When USA emerged as a nation only 20% of the people went from the British Isles... Yet America has chosen English as the official language."

What Annadurai dreamed of as a language policy for 'the Dravidian land' was actually imple-

mented in Singapore by Lee Kuan Yew. Singapore had much more justification to adopt Chinese as its sole official language than India insisting on Hindi being the sole official language. Even today the population of Hindi-speaking people has not crossed 50% in India; in Singapore, 74.2% of the population is Chinese, 13.2% Malays and 9.2% Indians. If Lee Kuan Yew had wished he could have well declared Chinese to be the sole official language and satisfied the Chinese who were in a majority. He could have used this as a nationalistic tool and cemented his place politically forever. But he resisted this temptation.

He not only selected English but also recognised languages of every social group. He mandated that each Singaporean should learn their respective mother tongue along with English. He was of the firm view that only the roots one has in his/her mother tongue would be shaping his/her future personality.

The world celebrates the decision made by Lee Kuan Yew after taking into consideration the possibilities, limitations and challenges faced by a third world country. They praise him for his two-language policy which prepared Singaporeans in advance for globalisation. Have the 'experts' ever discussed the contribution of Annadurai's two-language formula in the background of Tamil Nadu being one of the developed States in India despite not possessing a trade and big capital like Gujarat or Maharashtra or having water resources and land fertility like Kerala and Punjab or the political bar-

gaining power by sheer size and population by States such as Uttar Pradesh? And when will they be discussing the Indian government's failure in the language policy in the backdrop of inequalities prevailing among societies since Independence?

**Reality check in Tamil Nadu** Though comparable to Singapore in far-sightedness and in the forefront as far as India is concerned, in the present scenario, Tamil Nadu's education standards are not comparable to Singapore's in terms of outcomes. Our students suffer a serious handicap while dealing with English and Tamil languages. And they do not have command over either. Yet this is not the failure of the two-language formula *per se* but of its implementation and the present Indian educational ecosystem.

Even teaching in the mother tongue or the teaching of two languages is filled with challenges, does India take into account the challenges in teaching three languages? If India is really interested in the new education policy capable of creating new generations, Delhi can acquire that vision only by studying the educational ecosystem throughout the world and comparing it with the strengths and weaknesses of Tamil Nadu's. Working towards the possibility of implementing the two-language formula successfully throughout India would throw light not only on India's education policy but also on its official language policy.

*Translated by Venu Mani. E-mail: samas@hindutamil.co.in*

## 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.

**Monsoon session**  
News of the suspension of Question Hour in the monsoon session of Parliament is a step backwards. However, MPs should aim to ensure that there is immediate discussion to avoid disruptions and make coordinated efforts to deal with key issues. Our parliamentarians will be judged on four Cs: Character, Calibre, Capacity

and Conduct. The leaders of all parties should instruct their MPs to be present and punctual in their attendance (Editorial page, "Parliament stifled, business, and a word of advice", September 5).

A.J. RANGARAJAN,  
Chennai

■ One wonders whether we are slowly sliding into a "functioning anarchy", as described by a former U.S.

Ambassador in India, John Kenneth Galbraith. Abolition of Question Hour could be termed as a constitutional crime committed by an autocratic legislature for its own achievement of ulterior motives.

E.P. MENON,  
Bengaluru

**Quad and China**  
Given that China is taking advantage of the undemarcated border and

unilaterally imposing its ever expanding perceptions of the LAC, and refusing to see reason even after repeated talks, it is small wonder that India is being driven to considering re-engaging the U.S.-Australia-Japan Quadrilateral. The fact that they are all healthy democracies with shared concerns will effectively drive home the message to China that India has the political support of major nations. There is no denying that India refrained from playing a proactive part in the Quad as it was wary of hurting China, but it takes

two hands to clap.

NALINI VIJAYARAGHAVAN,  
Thiruvananthapuram

**CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:**  
In the report "80 additional trains on popular routes from Sept. 12" (Sept. 6, 2020), the opening paragraph should be recast to say: "The Indian Railways will start running 80 additional trains to cater to demand on popular routes from September 12 onwards. Travellers will be able to reserve seats on these trains, which will run in addition to the existing 230 special passenger trains, beginning September 10." This corrects the factual error in the print version that the 230 special trains were to run from September 10.

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

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



# The many challenges in estimating deaths

Deficiencies in mortality surveillance have existed for a long time, not just during the COVID-19 period



ANAND KRISHNAN

There is a debate on the number of deaths in India caused by COVID-19. The official number as on August 26 was 59,449. Nobody believes this number to be true, yet nobody has an alternative number. So, when two young scientists conjured up a specific estimate of 1,88,939 deaths on July 31 based on an ingeniously simple approach (multiply the reported deaths by five) in an article in these pages, they were criticised. There is also a campaign by activists asking the government to put COVID-19 deaths-related data in the public domain. Before we discuss the merit of these two arguments, we need to be clear about the urgency of the need of this estimate. While knowing the number of COVID-19 deaths is a good indicator of burden, this alone is not of much use in planning our current public health strategies, for which case fatality rates or infection fatality rates are far more useful. Also, as the pandemic is far from over, this estimate becomes outdated almost the instant it is generated. Despite this, there is no question that such an estimate needs to be generated, if only for academic purposes. It also gives us an opportunity to be better prepared for such estimations in future.

There are two kinds of challenges in estimating the number of deaths due to COVID-19 - the first is related to weaknesses in our mortality surveillance system; the second to COVID-19-specific issues. It might also be relevant to point out that even for other diseases, estimating the number of deaths is a problem.

#### Counting deaths

In an ideal world, we would be able to count all deaths and have a certified cause of death in all the cases. In the real world, we have neither. According to the Civil Registration Scheme report for 2018, 86% of all deaths were registered, with 34% being through hospitals. However, this would not be a good source for cause of death as it is as reported by the next of kin at the time of registration.

The second source of cause of death is the medical certification of proce-



THULASI KAKKAT

cause of death (MCCD). As per the report released by the Office of the Registrar General of India (ORG) in 2018, 1.45 million deaths (21% of all registered deaths and hence, multiplication by five suggested by the scientists) were medically certified. MCCD has an urban bias and there are also issues related to quality of death certification by doctors. The scientists mentioned above ignored the fact that COVID-19 has largely been an urban phenomenon till now, where medical certification coverage is much better, and also did not address COVID-19-specific issues.

The third and final source for cause of death is the Sample Registration System. Here good quality mortality surveillance is carried out in a small representative population. All identified deaths are noted by a trained worker using standard procedures to generate information which is reviewed by a doctor to arrive at a cause of death. This occurs in a small number of deaths (40,000-45,000) nationally per year. However, due to delays in the process, this information is available in the public domain only till 2013.

#### Impact of the pandemic

In addition, COVID-19 has adversely impacted death registrations due to lockdowns, travel restrictions as well as social stigma resulting in people hiding these deaths. As COVID-19 moves to rural areas, these challenges are going to worsen. Also, as many of these systems are not yet fully electronic, there will be a delay in the availability of these data even after registration. Thus, it is quite likely that the data available with the ORG for 2020 will need evaluation for its usefulness for estimation proce-

dures, even if made public. I have always supported efforts to put publicly funded data in the public domain. Yet, I would caution against uncontrolled access in this case.

Identifying COVID-19-specific mortality is a challenge across the globe. An approach of using reported death data would be applicable if all those who developed COVID-19 were tested and their deaths certified. However, there are serious limitations of test availability due to restrictive criteria for access and use, even for people with symptoms. Without testing of all suspected cases, healthcare providers have to rely on clinical features to label a death as being due to COVID-19. Our inability to differentiate these from other causes of death may result in misclassification. Without testing, it is going to be difficult for a doctor to differentiate between COVID-19 and, say, influenza. The second issue is related to defining indirect deaths caused by COVID-19. Due to societal and health system disruptions, the pandemic is likely to contribute to deaths from other causes - suicides, non-communicable diseases, tuberculosis. Also, think of a person who had a compromised heart which was worsened when she suffered a COVID-19 infection, precipitating a heart attack, which otherwise would not have occurred now. In a sense, this is also a death caused by COVID-19 as it initiated the final sequence of events leading to death. However, a doctor would certify this as a cardiac death as one cannot ever be sure that COVID-19 initiated the process. How do we include this in our estimate? All these factors will have to be considered when we estimate COVID-19-related deaths.

So, what is the way out? Almost all the issues mentioned for COVID-19 are also applicable to influenza. For the swine flu pandemic of 2009, an estimate published in *The Lancet* in 2012 indicated that the real mortality was 15 times higher than the globally reported laboratory-confirmed cases. For many years, influenza-associated mortality has been estimated using an indirect modelling approach based on the concept of 'excess mortality'. An estimate for influenza mortality in India using the same approach based on above data sources has been generated by my team. Such exercises always give you a range and not a single estimate.

#### Excess mortality

Even countries with near-complete registration of deaths in normal times have acknowledged that their officially recorded COVID-19 death tolls might be underestimates and they are now focusing on excess mortality - the number of deaths above that expected during 'normal' times. This approach first statistically defines the 'expected' number of deaths in a given period in a given population using past mortality records and then uses the 2020 mortality data to estimate increase in rates of death beyond what would be expected if SARS-CoV-2 had not circulated. The 'excess death' approach would include deaths directly (pneumonia or other respiratory conditions) as well as indirectly caused by the pandemic or its interventions (cardiac conditions). It will have to be acknowledged here that lockdowns may have had a preventive effect on some other deaths, notably road accidents and pollution-linked deaths. Depending on the availability of data and analytic capacity, this can lead to a real-time measurement of excess mortality or it could be an exercise done at the end of the epidemic.

Thus, the estimation of 'true' mortality due to COVID-19 is likely to pose significant methodological and systemic challenges. However, sufficient technical capacity exists in the country to do so. It should be noted that deficiencies in mortality surveillance have existed for a long time. There is no denying that these need to be addressed urgently.

Anand Krishnan is a Professor at the Centre for Community Medicine at the AIIMS, New Delhi

#### FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

## Fact-checking should become more effective

Only verified information should be put out in the public domain



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

There were questions from readers about my last column, 'Popular ideas must replace populist ideas' (August 31), that asked for some form of accountability from India's news channels. One reader asked whether other media platforms are free from errors and asked why television had been singled out for harsh evaluation.

The criticism flows from a wrong reading of the column which tried to explain the role of the media in creating our public sphere. Public sphere is a nebulous construct. If arguments in the public sphere are woven with facts, we get a fine tapestry. However, if they are woven with disinformation, we get a toxic environment.

Disinformation is different from inadvertent errors caused by oversight. It is true that many respected media outlets, including *The Hindu*, have carried errors. But these reports have often been corrected at the first instance. I argued in my column, 'Invisible mending undermines trust' (August 15, 2016), that the act of visible mending makes journalism more dependable.

#### Refusal to acknowledge mistakes

My concern is about the trust factor in the news media which has suffered a decline in the last decade. The decline in standards in television is galling because many TV channels refuse to acknowledge their mistakes, and seldom rectify their misleading or inaccurate stories. For instance, earlier this month, *Alt News*, a fact-checking organisation, pointed out how two TV channels of the India Today Group and one channel of The Times Group aired old images of a Chinese military cemetery as graves of Chinese soldiers killed in Galwan. With the border situation remaining tense along the Line of Actual Control, one expects media organisations to provide credible information.

What we learn from the *Alt News* report is that the reports in these channels were not inadvertent errors but disinformation. The channels speculated that the death toll is anywhere between 40 to 100 soldiers. The fact remains that none of them is sure of Chi-

nese casualties in the June face-off between India and China in Galwan Valley. On August 31, *Aaj Tak* claimed that it was airing "exclusive" images proving that "40 PLA soldiers" were killed in the cross-border clashes. The report said: "We are showing you pictures of the graves of Chinese soldiers. Several people in the country wanted proof of the Chinese soldiers who were killed in Galwan clashes. The proof is on your television screens...more than 40 Chinese soldiers died in clashes with India and you can watch how Chinese soldiers paid respect to their tombs." *India Today* also broadcast similar visuals. It showed satellite imagery of the same set of graves with two red arrows pointing at a specific area claiming that those were "new graves". And *Times Now* reported: "Photos of 106 PLA tombstones reveal [the] extent of Chinese casualties in June 15 Galwan clash." *Alt News* found that the image aired by *India Today* dated back to 2011.

#### The 'backfire effect'

Television journalists seem to have bought the 'backfire effect' lock, stock, and barrel. The 'backfire effect' is an idea propounded by American academics Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler in their paper, 'When Corrections Fail: The persistence of political misconceptions'. Their argument is that when a claim aligns with someone's ideological beliefs, telling them that it is wrong will actually make them believe it more strongly. The emergence of populist leaders seems to have cemented the idea of the 'backfire effect' in most television newsrooms.

Amy Sippitt, as Research Manager at the British fact-checking organisation, *Full Fact*, worked on this contentious issue in a systematic manner. Her study titled 'Does the "backfire effect" exist - and does it matter for factcheckers?' suggests that fact-checking does help inform citizens. 'Backfire effects' are rare; they are not the norm. One of the important conclusions of the *Full Fact* study is that we still need more evidence to understand how fact-checking content can be most effective. The American Press Institute said that in journalism, "getting it right" is the foundation upon which everything else is built - context, interpretation, comment, criticism, analysis and debate. The 'backfire effect' cannot be used as an excuse not to verify information before putting it out in the public domain.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

## Financing economic recovery

Regionally coordinated policies will help

ARMIDA ALSIAH ALISJAHBANA

As the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic spread across Asia and the Pacific, finance ministries are continuing their efforts to inject trillions of dollars for emergency health responses and fiscal packages. With continued lockdown measures and restricted borders, economic rebound seems uncertain. Compared to 2019's economic situation, over the past six months, countries in Asia and the Pacific have been experiencing sharp drops in foreign exchange inflows due to declines in export earnings, remittances, tourism and FDI. This is worrying as policymakers are tackling difficult choices over how to prioritise development spending, while continuing to expand their squeezed fiscal space.

**Financing in three key areas**  
The United Nations is contributing through a global initiative, Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond, co-convened by Canada and Jamaica, to articulate a comprehensive financing strategy to safeguard the Sustainable Development Goals. Governments are united to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to steer an inclusive, sustainable and resilient post-COVID-19 recovery. In the Asia-Pacific region, several countries have already adopted financing plans in three key areas. They aim to address the challenge of diminished fiscal space and debt vulnerability; to ensure sustainable recovery, consistent with the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda; and to harness the potential of regional cooperation in support of financing for development.

Through ESCAP, we can scale these efforts across the region, working closely with our member states, the private sector and innovators to build a collective financing response to mobilise the necessary additional resources. Together, we can chart financing strategies of Asia and the Pacific which can enhance societal well-being and economic resilience of future pandemics and crises.

growing call for extending the debt moratorium under global initiatives like the Debt Service Suspension initiative is timely. Central banks can continue to keep the balance of supporting the economy and maintaining financial stability. This further involves enhancing tax reforms and improving debt management capacities, while using limited fiscal space to invest in priority sectors. Exploring sustainability-oriented bonds and innovative financing instruments options such as debt swaps for SDG investment should be explored further.

In addition to economic considerations, the policy paradigm must mainstream affordable, accessible and green infrastructure standards, while promoting social equality and environmental sustainability principles as enshrined in the Paris Agreement. As we scale up the use of digital technology and innovative applications, the financing support of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises must go hand in hand with these national job-rich recovery strategies.

#### Regional cooperation

No country can take this agenda forward alone. Regionally coordinated financing policies can restart trade, reorganise supply chains and revitalise sustainable tourism in a safe manner. Across Asia and the Pacific, governments must pool financial resources to create regional investment funds. Strengthening regional cooperation platforms to ensure that all countries receive an equitable number of doses of the vaccine on short notice to everyone everywhere is particularly essential.

Through ESCAP, we can scale these efforts across the region, working closely with our member states, the private sector and innovators to build a collective financing response to mobilise the necessary additional resources. Together, we can chart financing strategies of Asia and the Pacific which can enhance societal well-being and economic resilience of future pandemics and crises.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana is the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

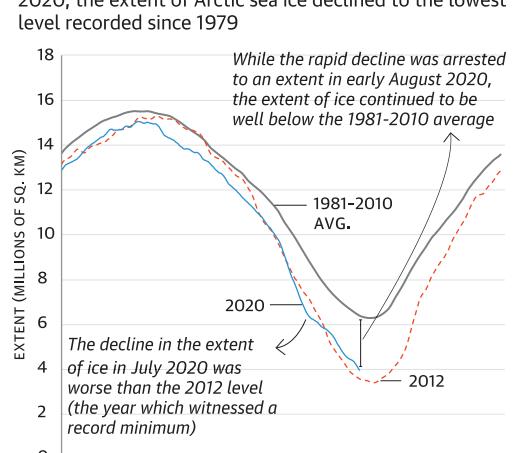


#### DATA POINT

## Polar opposites

The extent of sea ice in the Arctic region plunged to record lows in July 2020. The extent of ice in the Arctic recorded in August was the third lowest for any August in more than four decades. On the other end, the extent of sea ice in the Antarctic recorded higher than average levels in September 2020. By Sumant Sen and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

**1. Harsh Arctic summer |** In the last 15 days of July 2020, the extent of Arctic sea ice declined to the lowest level recorded since 1979

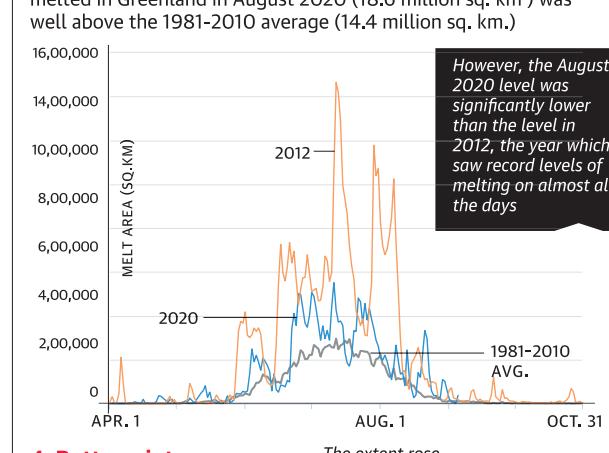


#### 2. August meltdown

The average monthly extent of sea ice for August has consistently fallen in the last 41 years. In 2020, it was 5.08 million sq. km., the third lowest since 1979

Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center

**3. Greenland, a mixed bag |** The extent of surface ice that melted in Greenland in August 2020 (18.6 million sq. km.) was well above the 1981-2010 average (14.4 million sq. km.)



#### 4. Better winter in Antarctica

The extent of sea ice in the Antarctic increased above the 1981-2010 average for the first time in four years. It came dangerously close to the 2017 levels (a standout year with record minimums) in July and August, but recovered rapidly to go beyond the 1981-2010 average in September

Source: National Snow and Ice Data Center

The Hindu

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 7, 1970

#### Respect for the State

(From an Editorial)

Most of the anti-national acts of individual citizens in a democracy are the outcome of their mental confusion. The confusion consists in identifying the government in power with the State and heaping injuries on State symbols like the national flag, the national anthem and the Constitution in a bid intended to wound only the party in office. The psychological effects of such confused action are easy to assess: Repeated insults to the nation in its symbols will make a mockery of the symbols and, as the habit spreads, the sense of national oneness which these symbols had been designed to infuse will get progressively weakened. The Bill introduced by the Union Government in the Lok Sabha to prevent such insults through specific penalties like imprisonment for three years or a fine or both has come none too soon. But such legislation has its limits. For instance, the Bill seeks to punish wanton disrespect to the national anthem, flag and Constitution. Apart from the theoretical possibilities for proving the existence of extenuating circumstances even in the case of wanton disrespect and thus escaping punishment, constraints on such misbehaviour can never be effectively enforced by laws alone.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 7, 1920

#### Non-Cooperation

(From an editorial)

To whatever fateful decision the Special Congress is going to commit the country, at least the charge cannot be laid against it that it had failed to give the subject of Non-Cooperation the anxious sifting that its importance and gravity demanded. Some of the most powerful minds in the country, depleted though their ranks may be by the unfortunate defection of the Moderates, have been brought to bear upon the problem and in the result the discussion in the Subjects Commission has taken a very high level. It would be interesting to speculate upon the evolution of the Subjects Committee as a kind of miniature Congress. With the inevitable emergence of parties in the Congress itself the Subjects Committee has become the real arena for different parties to fight their battles in. To the Congress is left the final choice but the nature of its composition precludes any possibility of adequate or even resolute debate.

FROM PAGE ONE

## No FCRA clearance for four Christian groups

According to the NLFA's website, the group began operations in India in the mid-sixties after the arrival of missionaries from the New Life Churches of New Zealand in 1964.

The Evangelical Churches Association (ECA) was founded in 1952 in Manipur.

The origins of the group can be traced to a Welsh Presbyterian missionary who visited in 1910.

According to the website of Ecreosculis North-Western Gossner Evangelical, its origin is rooted in the development of the Gossner mission of Germany in Chhattanagpur region.

The Northern Evangelical Lutheran Church was established in 1987 and is part of a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 77 million Christians in 99 countries, its website says.

None of the associations responded to requests by *The Hindu* for a comment on the government's decision.

**Leprosy unit hit**  
The two other organisations whose licence was suspended are the Rajnanda Leprosy Hospital and Clinics, deemed to have expired.

## India, Iran discuss Afghan peace process

Iran is a 95% majority Shia country, and Iranian officials raised the issue of safety of minorities as Mr. Singh represents Lucknow, which has a sizeable Shia population as well, said sources privy to the meeting.

According to the sources, Mr. Singh reassured the Iranian Defence Minister that

and the Don Bosco Tribal Development Society.

Earlier in 2017, another powerful U.S.-based Christian donor, Compassion International, was forced to stop operations in India after the Ministry found that it funded NGOs that encouraged religious conversions.

### 'Not in compliance'

Former Union Home Secretary Rajiv Mehrishi had in an interview to *The Hindu* on August 30, 2017 said, "Compassion was not in compliance with FCRA [guidelines]."

The same year, the Home ministry declined to renew the FCRA licences of two NGOs, which received funds from Bloomberg Philanthropies, founded by U.S. billionaire Michael Bloomberg.

Earlier in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the former New York mayor had announced a joint initiative to build Smart cities in India that would be aided by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

This included 50 health-care workers. Thiruvananthapuram reported 528 new cases on Sunday. Malappuram had

As of now, there are 22,457 NGOs or associations registered under the FCRA, while the licences of 20,674 were cancelled and 6,702

Telangana incidence in 2,500 range; A.P. nears 5 lakh cases with steady spread; 50% tests in Karnataka of rapid antigen type

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

324 cases, Kollam 328, Ernakulam 281, Kozhikode 264, Alappuzha 221, Kasaragod 218, Kannur 200, Kottayam 195, Thrissur 169, Palakkad 162, Pathanamthitta 113, Wayanad 40 and Idukki 39.

New cases in Telangana again hovered in the 2,500 range, at 2,574 cases on Saturday. During September 2 to 5, a total of 10,380 cases were reported, from testing of 2,47,122 samples. By contrast, Andhra Pradesh reported over 10,000 cases every day over several days now.

For about two weeks, around 60,000 samples were checked in Telangana every day. On Saturday, 62,736 samples were tested.

Of 14,0969 cases, active cases stood at 32,553 and deaths at 886.

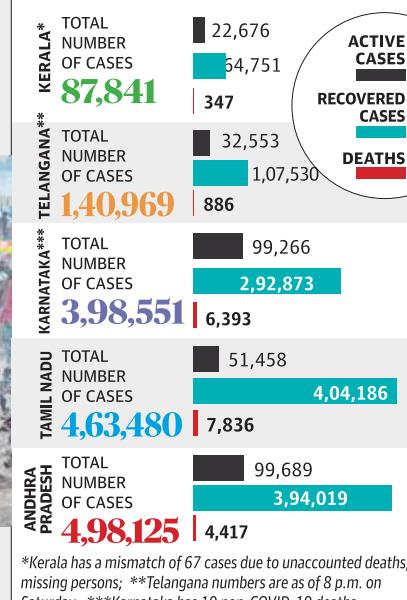
Andhra Pradesh moved closer to the five lakh-mark for cases, with 10,000-plus infections reported in 24

### On the edge

Despite COVID-19 cases continuing to rise, people are throwing caution to the winds and breaking social distancing norms. The graphs show the spread of COVID-19 in the southern States



**At risk:** People thronging a beach to enjoy the weekend at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK



highest toll of 473.

Karnataka reported 9,319 new cases on Sunday, raising its total to 3.98 lakh.

Of 99,266 active cases, 775 patients were in ICUs, and 95 patients died of COVID-19 on Sunday. Total deaths rose to 6,393. Out of 74,384 COVID-19 tests conducted on Sunday in Karnataka, 35,073 tests were rapid antigen tests. Out of 9,319 cases reported on Sunday, 2,824 cases and 38 deaths were from Bengaluru Urban district.

With 5,783 persons testing positive on Sunday for COVID-19 infection, Tamil Nadu's tally rose to 51,458 active cases.

As on date, 4,63,480 persons have tested positive while the total number of persons discharged from various facilities has risen to 4,04,186.

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

hours. There were 10,794 new infections on Sunday.

The State tested 72,573 samples in the past day, the highest so far with an overall positivity rate of 12.13%.

Nellore district reported

the highest single-day tally and four other districts reported more than 1,000 new infections. Chittoor reported the highest number of new deaths, and also had the

Driver, who was an accused in an attempted culpable homicide case, arrested; incident sparks protests in Pathanamthitta

STAFF REPORTER  
PATHANAMTHITTA

A COVID-19 patient from Pathanamthitta in Kerala was sexually assaulted by the driver of the ambulance while being shifted to a COVID Care Centre on Saturday night.

The ambulance driver, identified as Noufal, 29, of Kayamkulam, has been arrested.

According to the police, the 19-year-old woman was being shifted to a COVID care centre at Pandalam from Adoor when the assault took place. The victim, along with an 42-year-old woman patient, boarded the ambulance at Adoor.



After dropping the first patient at the District General Hospital in Kozhencerry, the ambulance proceeded to a COVID care facility at Pandalam with the second patient.

As they reached Aranmula, the accused took a diversion to an isolated location and molested the patient. He then allegedly apologised to the woman and dropped her at the Pandalam centre.

### 'Planned attack'

The victim revealed her ordeal to the health officials on duty who, in turn, informed the police. After collecting

the victim's statement, the police traced the location of the accused and took him to into custody.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the accused had planned the rape and diverted the ambulance through Kozhencerry instead of going straight to Pandalam from Adoor.

The official also confirmed that Noufal had been arraigned as an accused in an attempted culpable homicide case in Kayamkulam. A probe is on to trace his criminal antecedents.

The accused was booked under IPC Sections 375 for rape, 363 for kidnapping,

342 for wrongful confinement, 323 for voluntarily causing hurt and also under provisions of the SC/ST Atrocities Act. He was later remanded to custody and put in an isolation unit.

Official sources said the case would be handed over to the Aranmula police station, where the incident actually took place.

The incident triggered widespread protests in the district with Youth Congress and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha activists staging demonstrations, alleging violation of protocols by the District Medical Office in transporting a woman patient without escort.

## BJP calls for resignation of Health Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The rape in Kerala's Pathanamthitta of a COVID-19 patient sparked public outrage, with the State Health Department coming in for severe criticism from the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala blamed the Health Department, pointing out that there was no woman health worker with the patient in the ambulance.

Stating that the driver had a criminal background, Mr. Chennithala said health officials had ignored his criminal record.

BJP State president Velammal Muraleedharan called for the resignation of State Health Minister K.K. Shylaja.

Kerala Women's Commission Chairperson M.C. Josephine told *The Hindu* that she had sought a report from the Pathanamthitta police chief.

## IN BRIEF



### Monsoon session to start today in Telangana

HYDERABAD  
The monsoon session of the Telangana legislature is all set to commence in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic on Monday. It has been made mandatory for Ministers, MLAs, officials and mediapersons to undergo tests and obtain a COVID-19 negative certificate for gaining entry into the legislature building.

### Excise operation nets 500 kg of ganja

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
A covert drug enforcement operation spanning Kerala and Karnataka resulted in the seizure of 500 kg of marijuana from a container lorry at Attigal in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday. The State Excise Enforcement Squad that spearheaded the action said it was arguably the biggest haul of marijuana in Kerala since 2000.

### Jose K. Mani plans to disqualify Joseph, Mons

KOTTAYAM  
Mounting a direct attack on its most formidable rivals, the Kerala Congress (M) led by Jose K. Mani will soon approach the Speaker seeking disqualification of P.J. Joseph and Mons Joseph, MLAs, for violating the party whip. A decision to this effect was taken during a meeting of the party steering committee held here on Sunday.

### Central team to hold talks on flood damage

BENGALURU  
A six-member team of the Union government will reach Bengaluru on Monday and will be touring the flood-affected areas of Karnataka on Tuesday and Wednesday. The team, headed by K.V. Pratap, Joint Secretary, Union Home Ministry, will hold consultations with Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa at his home-office at 5 p.m. on Monday.

## +'Moplah rioters' not freedom fighters: report

ICHR member Issac seeks removal of Malabar Rebellion leaders from martyrs list

K.S. SUDHI  
KOCHI

A report submitted to the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) in 2016 had recommended the removal of the Wagon Tragedy victims and Malabar Rebellion leaders Ali Musliyar and Varamkunath Ahmad Haji, and Haji's two brothers from a book on martyrs of India's freedom struggle. The report sought the removal of names of 387 'Moplah rioters' from the list of martyrs.

The book, *Dictionary of Martyrs: India's Freedom Struggle 1857-1947*, was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week.

**Martyrs from the south**  
C.I. Issac, an ICHR member, submitted the 2016 report to the Council, recommending

the deletion of the names when the fifth volume, covering martyrs of the freedom struggle from south India, came up for review.

The report, accessed by *The Hindu*, describes Haji as the "notorious Moplah Rioter" and a "hardcore criminal," who "killed innumerable innocent Hindu men, women, and children during the 1921 Moplah Riot, and deposited their bodies in a well, locally known as Thoothoor Kinar".

Haji was arrested by the army, tried by an army court and shot dead on January 20, 1922, the report said.

The ICHR recently constituted a three-member committee, including Mr. Issac, to review the entries in the dictionary, including those of Haji and Ali Musliyar.

The review report said, "Almost all the Moplah outrages were communal. They were against Hindu society and done out of sheer intolerance. Thus, the following names should be deleted from the yet-to-be published

project." Mr. Issac is also the vice-president of the Bharatiya Vichara Kendram.

**For taking part in riots'**

"None of those who died in the Wagon Tragedy were freedom fighters of India as they hoisted the Khilafat flag and established Khilafat and Khilafat courts for a brief period. They were arrested by the army for participating in riots. Around 10 Hindus who participated in the riots too are on the list of persons to be removed from the dictionary," said Mr. Issac.

The British convicted the rioters after proper trial. While some were hanged to death, some died in jail and some others in hospitals. These dead were never recognised as freedom fighters elsewhere, he added.

## Drug racket: accused named in FIR continue to be at large

Central Crime Branch forms team to track them down

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB), probing the drug racket case, has formed a separate team to track down many of the accused who remain at large.

So far, the police have Kannada actor Ragini Dwivedi, a second division assistant with the Jayanagar RTO, a foreign national, and three party organisers in custody.

Some of the more high-profile names mentioned in the FIR are yet to be detained at the time of going to press.

Among the accused is Aditya Alva, son of the former Minister Jeevaraj Alva and

Ragini Dwivedi brother-in-law of actor Vivek Oberoi. "We have reasons to suspect that he is in Mumbai. His house here is locked," said a senior CCB official.

Another person is in quarantine as he had contracted COVID-19. The police asked him to appear before the CCB after recovery.

The CCB continued to question Ragini for the second day on Sunday. "We are verifying her property and assets to ascertain her source of income," said the official.

The CCB has distanced itself from Ragini after a video showing her campaigning along with B.Y. Vijayendra, son of Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa for the 2019 Assembly bypolls, went viral. "The CCB is neither accountable nor answerable for Ragini Dwivedi's activities in her personal and professional life," it said.

**DRI officers injured in gold mafia attack**

They tried to stop a car at Karipur

STAFF REPORTER  
MALAPPURAM

Two officers of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) were injured in a purported attack by a gang involved in gold smuggling at Karipur in Kerala's Malappuram district on Sunday. The gang rammed the motorcycle of the officers with their car when they tried to stop it.

**Serious injuries**  
DRI officers Najeeb and Albert were admitted to a private hospital in Kozhikode with serious injuries.

A group of DRI officers reached Karipur following a tip-off that a large quantity of gold was being smuggled through the airport. The Customs authorities had no clue about the gold smuggling.

The DRI reportedly found

that a package containing gold was handed over to two persons in a car with the registration number KL-16 R-5005. The car hit the officers when they tried to stop it.

**One held**  
The vehicle then lost control and hit a tree. The duo in

INTERVIEW | PRASHANT BHUSHAN

# 'Trying to use the contempt law to stifle criticism is counterproductive'

The court's reputation depends on its judgments and actions and not on what the people say, the civil rights lawyer says

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

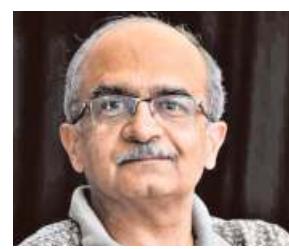
Civil rights lawyer Prashant Bhushan was punished for criminal contempt for scandalising the Supreme Court. The court punished him with a ₹1 fine. He was also criticised by the court for not apologising. The court blamed his "adaman and ego" for that. But Mr. Bhushan says that "self-righteous ego is a must for any self-respecting, truth-loving person". Edited excerpts of a phone interview:

You said criticism, and harsh criticism at that, protects the court. The court said criticism should be "fair" and not cross the Lakshman Rekha. Is this the court asking critics to self-censor or is it the court appealing to their better judgment when they speak in public?

■ They are doing both. When I said that the court should be willing to suffer even intemperate criticism, I did not mean that people should level intemperate criticism. What I said is even if criticism is intemperate or unfair and bordering on scurrilous and abusive, it will be understood for what it is by the people. People can make out that this criticism is scurri-

lous and unfair. The court's reputation depends on its judgments and actions. It is not dependent on what people say.

The court's reputation is affected by what people say only if it seems to have a ring of fairness and authenticity. Trying to use the law of scandalising and lowering the authority by way of contempt to stifle criticism just because some of it may be scurrilous or totally unfair is counterproductive and especially dangerous because it ends up stifling honest opinion. It was my, and remains my, bona fide opinion about the role of court in the last few years. Somebody may agree with it or not, but that does not make it contempt. I am not saying the whole of



I am not saying the whole of contempt law should go, but [the ground of] scandalising of court should go

loving person.

The court's judgment says judges are handicapped when attacked. It is contempt to attribute personal motives to judges. But it is not healthier for the institution and dignity of office if individual judges are allowed to defend themselves and respond to attacks?

■ In my view, they [judges] should be able to respond to criticism levelled against them. Others can also re-

pond to these remarks, and they do. On the question of motives, sometimes motives are there for all to see. For example, there have been cases where judges have a serious conflict of interest and they still deal with those cases.

Is wider consultation necessary before initiating contempt on the ground of scandalising the court?

■ *Suo motu* initiation of contempt should only be after a meeting of the Full Court. Secondly, there must be an appeal against this judgment. One appeal ... one criminal appeal is held to be a fundamental right under Article 21 by the Supreme Court. There is no appeal against this. Review goes to the same Bench in chambers.

A tweet is shared rapidly. It attracts hundreds or even thousands of comments which vary from funny to abusive. Is contempt practical?

■ Theoretically, it [con-

tempt] can be done, but it is not in public interest to do so because people will stop making even bona fide and fair comments.

Are opinions expressed in social media a reflection of public opinion and faith in an institution?

■ By and large, they are. There may be some people who level criticism or attack the court due to vested interest. But on the whole, they are a reflection of public opinion.

As a senior lawyer and officer of the court, should you have been more guarded in your tweets?

■ No, my motorcycle tweet... It was primarily meant to underline why the courts are being kept under lockdown. It is leading to real problems for litigants ... See the number of cases normally heard by the court and the cases being heard during lockdown through videoconferencing ... It is hardly 10% ...

Do virtual court hearings give ample opportunity to substantiate defence in a criminal contempt case, especially when personal liberty is at risk?

■ It is not just a question of personal liberty, but proper and fair hearing. We cannot have a proper hearing through e-conferencing.

The contempt action was confined to two tweets. Yet your reply delved into various past instances in connection with the court. The court termed these allegations "wild" and "reckless". The reply was described as an aggravation of contempt. Why did you file this reply? What did you want to convey to the court?

■ I was showing my bona fide. That look, I absolutely believed what I said. There were three things I said ... First, democracy has been substantially destroyed in the last six years. Second, the court has facilitated or allowed the destruction of de-

mocracy in the last six years. Last, four CJs have played a significant role in that destruction. I dealt with each of these in the reply to show why I felt that democracy has been substantially destroyed. Look at the assault on free speech, look at the destruction of regulatory institutions, look at the assault on the media ... And then I said the role of the Supreme Court is to protect democracy and fundamental rights.

You were willing to be punished, saying truth is your defence. Mr. Rajeev Dhavan [Mr. Bhushan's lawyer] urged the court not to punish you and make you a martyr. Was there a disparity in thought here between you and your counsel?

■ No, he felt it would be further damaging to the court if they send me to jail. That was his view.

Have you paid the ₹1 fine?

■ Not yet.

## Key names left out of new U.P. Cong. panels

Party forms committees with eye on 2022 Assembly poll

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In a clear sign of where things are headed for the group of 23 senior leaders who penned the letter seeking reforms in the functioning of the Congress, former Minister Jitin Prasada and former president of the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee Raj Babbar were left out of seven new committees that were formed for the State.

The Congress on Sunday evening announced the formation of a Manifesto Committee, Outreach Committee, Membership Committee, Program Implementation Committee, Training and Cadre Development Committee, Panchayat Raj Election Committee and Media and Communication Advisory Committee. These committees have been formed in view of the March 2022 Assembly election in the State. Insiders pointed



Jitin Prasada

out that it is unprecedented for the party to start preparations two years in advance.

The other notable omission is of senior leader RPN Singh, who had a face-off with former party president Rahul Gandhi at a recent meeting of the Congress Working Committee in June. Mr. Singh had suggested that the party must ensure criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the Chinese incursion should not get personal. Mr. Gandhi lost his temper at this suggestion accusing the other senior lead-

## Edneer Math seer passes away at 80

He was a promoter of Yakshagana

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MANGALURU

Kesavananda Bharati Swamiji, seer of the Edneer Math in Kasaragod district of Kerala and petitioner in the landmark judgment of the Supreme Court on Fundamental Rights, passed away in the math in the early hours of Sunday.

He was 80. Soon after completion of his 60th Chaturmasa programme in the math on September 1, the seer was admitted for a couple of days at a private hospital in Mangaluru after he had cardiac and breathing problems. On Saturday, he performed puja at the math and slept after having fruits.

The last rites of the Swamiji were performed on the math's premises in the presence of a large number of devotees on Sunday.

The seer, known as Srimad Jagadguru Sri Sri Sankaracharya Thotakacharya Kesavananda Bharati Sripathanlavaru, was the head of the math since 1961.

A proponent of Advaita philosophy, the seer belonged to the lineage of Thotakacharya, one of the first four disciples of reformer Adi Sankaracharya.

The Swamiji was a good singer and a popular 'Bhaga-

(With PTI inputs)

ers of going easy on the BJP and Mr. Modi. Mr. Singh is not a signatory to the G23 letter. Leaving out Mr. Prasada and Mr. Singh is more surprising, insiders said, because both are considered close to the Gandhi family. Mr. Singh has also had a successful stint as in-charge of Jharkhand, where the party is part of the JMM-led government.

More recently, the party re-jigged its team in Parliament, appointing Assam MP Gaurav Gogoi as the deputy leader in the Lok Sabha, superseding former UPA Ministers Manish Tewari and Shashi Tharoor. Both Mr. Tharoor and Mr. Tewari were signatories to the G23 letter.

"If this trend holds on, then both Shashi Tharoor and Anand Sharma [who too is part of G23] will not be re-nominated as chairpersons of the standing committees," another senior leader said.

**'Four different rates'** In the third edition of the video series on economy, Mr. Gandhi said, "Why are there four different rates? This is because the government wants those who have the means to be able to easily change GST, and those who don't have means, cannot do anything about GST. Who has the means? India's

billion 15-20 industrialists.

Continuing his attack on the Narendra Modi government's economic policies, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi said that the "GST is not a tax system, it is an attack on India's poor".

Five State governments have written to the Centre rejecting its suggestion to borrow money, since the Centre has already expressed inability to pay the GST compensation at the existing rate. The Centre has not paid at least two installments of GST dues.

**New party to contest 80-100 seats**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

GUWAHATI

The All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) has said it will neither project nor bargain with prospective allies on party chief Maulana Badruddin Ajmal's name as a candidate for the Assam Chief Minister's post.

It said Mr. Ajmal's name was invariably used as a bogey ahead of the Assam Assembly elections in a bid to polarise voters in a State where a section equates Muslims with "Bangladeshis" or "illegal migrants." The fear was being stoked this time because of a strong possibility of the AIUDF and the Congress fighting the 2021 polls together, party leaders said.

"As minorities, we want a healthy and constructive relationship with the majority community in Assam. Our party knows its limitations and has taken a conscious decision that it will not project a chief ministerial candidate if it is in a position to form a government in alliance with secular parties," said Mamun Imadul Haque Choudhury, AIUDF general secretary and MLA.

The Congress and the AIUDF had in August decided to join hands in a bid to dislodge the BJP-led alliance government in Assam after



FILE PHOTO

the 2021 polls.

The BJP termed their friendship an "unholy alliance" and said it would pave the way for Mr. Ajmal, who is the Lok Sabha member from Dhubri, to rule over the indigenous people of Assam as the Chief Minister.

"A section that thrives on polarisation of voters on religious lines deliberately uses the name of our party president. He will never become the CM because the post is for our 'big brother', the Congress," Mr. Choudhury said.

He referred to 1980 when Anowara Taimur of the Congress had become the Chief Minister during the peak of the Assam Agitation against "illegal foreigners." Hafiz Rafiqul Islam, another AIUDF legislator, said the BJP had no right to refer to the Congress-AIUDF friendship as "unholy".

## GST is an attack on the poor, says Rahul

Chidambaram suggests plan for revival

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Continuing his attack on the Narendra Modi government's economic policies, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi said that the "GST is not a tax system, it is an attack on India's poor".

"Not only is it [the GST system] unsuccessful, it is an attack on the poor and on the small and medium businesses. GST is not a tax system, it is an attack on India's poor".

Five State governments have written to the Centre rejecting its suggestion to borrow money, since the Centre has already expressed inability to pay the GST compensation at the existing rate. The Centre has not paid at least two installments of GST dues.

**Minor raped by mother's colleagues**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

GUWAHATI

The political party to be launched by the All Assam Students' Union and AJYCP will contest 80-100 seats in the Assembly elections in Assam due early next year, a top AASU leader said on Sunday.

After the 18-member 'Assam Advisory Committee' suggested the two organisations to form a political party, a source close to the development said the new outfit will be launched within the next 10 days.

Though the AASU and Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chhatra Parishad will not forge any pre-poll alliance with the Congress or be part of its proposed 'Grand Alliance', it is open for an understanding with the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi said.

"Targeting 2021 polls, we will start working as per the recommendation of the committee. We are targeting to contest 80-100 seats across Assam," he said. The new political party will not join hands with the nationalist and "communal" forces as that will hurt the sentiments of the indigenous people who trust AASU and AJYCP, he added.

## PLA told to return five Arunachal boys'

They reportedly strayed beyond LAC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju said that the Indian Army has sent a hotline message to the People's Liberation Army of China for returning the five boys who had apparently strayed beyond the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The five boys, belonging to the Tagin community and hailing from the Nacho area of the Upper Subansiri district, had gone missing on Friday. The district falls in the Arunachal West Lok Sabha constituency, represented by Mr. Rijiju.

"The Indian Army has already sent a hotline message to the counterpart PLA establishment at the border point in Arunachal Pradesh. Response is awaited," the Union Minister tweeted on Sunday.

**Complaint lodged** The district police said they have launched a probe after the families of the missing boys lodged an informal complaint.

Nacho is about 130 km



from the district headquarters of Daporijo, with a high-altitude jungle stretching further uphill. The five were said to have gone hunting. But Prakash Ringling said his brother Prasad Ringling, one of the missing five, was working as a porter for the Army. The other missing boys were identified as Toch Singam, Dongtu Ebija, Tangu Baker and Ngari Diri.

There have been several instances in the past of people "abducted" or captured by the Chinese soldiers from the LAC.

In March, 21-year-old Togley Singam was taken away at gunpoint from the Aspila sector of the district while two of his friends managed to escape. The Chinese Army released him after 19 days in captivity.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU FOREST DEPARTMENT

SALE NOTICE

Public auction sale will be held for the right for cutting, collection and removal of babul fuel wood, prosopis along with uprootal of root portion of prosopis in the following divisions on the dates as noted against each. The conditions of sale of the plantations can be had from the Divisional/District Forest Officers concerned on all working days during office hours.

SI.No.	Name of the Division	Date of First Sale
1	Madurai	01.10.2020
2	Theni	05.10.2020
3	Dindigul SF	07.10.2020
4	Tuticorin	09.10.2020
5	Tirunelveli SF	12.10.2020
6	Ramnad	14.10.2020
7	Sivagangai	16.10.2020
8	Virudhunagar SF	19.10.2020
9	Salem SF	21.10.2020
10	Krishnagiri SF & Ext	23.10.2020
11	Dharmapuri SF & Ext	28.10.2020

'At least 10 lakh people could use Metro'

DAMINI NATH  
NEW DELHI

Metro networks across cities could see 10 lakh to 15 lakh passenger journeys by the end of the first week of restarting services after a five-and-a-half month break due to the pandemic, according to Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry officials on Sunday.

Metro services are set to restart in a graded manner, except in Maharashtra, from Monday, after the Ministry of Home Affairs on August 28 gave the go-ahead.

With social distancing requirements, Metro stations and trains would be functioning at reduced capacities. The MoHUA secretary, Durga Shanker Mishra, said services would be resumed in a graded manner, with reduced timings and number of lines to begin with, gradually leading to all lines by September 12. Social distancing norms and mandatory masks, would remain in place. The frequency of trains in Delhi would be increased from every two minutes to five to seven minutes, he said.

## Record spike in five States

Centre focuses on 35 districts for intensive containment strategies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

At least five States in the country registered record single-day spike in COVID-19 cases on Sunday, as India neared the 42 lakh mark with 84,701 fresh cases and 959 fatalities.

Maharashtra, Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala, Odisha, and the Union Territory of J&K saw a record rise in infections.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan held a meeting with the Health Secretaries of West Bengal, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Delhi and Puducherry on the containment and management of COVID-19 in 35 districts under their jurisdiction.

These 35 districts are Kolkata, Howrah, North 24 Parganas and 24 South Parganas in West Bengal; Pune, Nagpur, Thane, Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban, Kolhapur, Sangli, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Raigad, Jalgaon, Solapur, Satara, Palghar, Aurangabad, Dhule and Nanded in Maharashtra; Surat in Gujarat; Puducherry; East Singhbhum in Jharkhand; and all 11 districts in Delhi.

"Mr. Bhushan underscored the need to suppress,

### Viral tracker

With 84,701 COVID-19 cases recorded on Sunday, India's tally stood at 41,95,836. As many as 959 new deaths were added, taking India's toll to 71,671. A total of 4.88 crore samples have been tested as of September 5, according to the ICMR.

#### NEW CASES AND DEATHS

CASES	7 DAY-CHANGE
84,701	+36.7%
DEATHS	7 DAY-CHANGE
959	+21.1%

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.

curb and eventually break the chain of transmission of the infectious disease by strengthening the active case search focusing on those with co-morbidities and elderly population; revisiting and strengthening the containment measures in the affected areas; and scaling up the testing to decrease the positivity rates below 5%," a release by the Mi-

nistry noted. They were also advised early identification by ramping up testing across the districts, optional utilisation of RT-PCR testing capacity; effective monitoring of home isolation cases and early hospitalisation in case of disease progression; seamless hospitalisation and early admission for patients requiring medical support, especially



DATA FOR ASSAM, JHARKHAND, TRIPURA, LADAKH AND ARUNACHAL PRADESH WERE NOT RELEASED AS OF 10 P.M.

## HC asks Centre to decide on control over Assam Rifles

Home, Defence Ministries have administrative and operational controls

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI

There should not be any delay in taking a decision when it concerns the interests of servicemen and ex-service men, the Delhi High Court has remarked while giving 'last opportunity' to the Centre to take a call on the issue of bringing Assam Rifles out of the dual control of the Home Ministry (MHA) and the Defence Ministry (MoD).

"...It appears that in-principle decision has already been taken that Assam Rifles, like other CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces), to fall under the exclusive control of MHA. However still the final decision appears to have been not taken," a Bench of Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw and Justice Asha Mehta said.

Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, representing the Centre, stated that further six months' time is

required for taking the decision as it has been affected by the prevalent COVID-19 situation.

The High Court, however, noted that the issue has been pending for nearly three years. "The matter involves servicemen/ ex-servicemen and whose interest is not only to be paramount, but is proclaimed from various platforms of the Government, to be paramount," it said.

#### No delay

"When a decision of such paramountcy is required to be taken, there should be no such delay therein," the High Court said directing the Centre to take the decision within 12 weeks.

The HC requested the Ministers of Home and Defence, the Secretaries, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Home Affairs, the Chief of Army Staff and the Director General of Assam Rifles and all other persons involved to cooperate in the decision making within the aforesaid time.

The direction came on a petition filed by Assam Rifles Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association seeking direction

to the government for placing to bring Assam Rifles under one control, preferably under Indian Army (MoD).

Assam Rifles is a Central Para Military Force along with two other forces namely, Special Frontier Force and Coast Guard. However, only Assam Rifles functions under the administrative control of the Home Ministry.

Hence, the administrative control of the Assam Rifles is with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the operational control of Assam Rifles rests with the MoD," the petition said.

It argued that the objective and functions of Assam Rifles is that of a military and para-military force and its categorisation as a 'Police' force is "arbitrary, unreasonable and in violation of the rights of Assam Rifles personnel".

The greatest inequity affecting the morale of the Assam Rifles personnel operating alongside the Army on similar duties are the disparity in the pay scale of the two. Somehow the Assam Rifles personnel's call themselves a 'Cheap Army,' the plea said.

## BJP unveils 'Justice for Sushant' campaign ahead of Bihar poll

Opposition accuses party of giving political colour to tragic death

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PATNA

Ahead of polls, the BJP in Bihar has launched a campaign "#justice for Sushant Rajput" with 30,000 photos, pamphlets and posters across the State declaring "Na bhole hain! Na Bhole denge! (We have not forgotten, nor will let him be forgotten).

The Opposition parties have responded by accusing the BJP of giving the actor's unfortunate death a "political colour" for electoral mileage.

The State BJP's art and culture cell has put up and distributed around 30,000 posters, masks, stickers and pamphlets across the districts.

"Sushant Singh Rajput was an artist from the State and we feel there is an emotional attachment with him among the people of the State. It was the art and culture cell of the BJP which first raised the demand for a CBI inquiry into his death... The posters, masks, stickers and pamphlets are part of our campaign for justice for Sushant's family," said Varun Singh, convener of the cell. He, however, denied that the campaign was linked to the Assembly election.

The BJP wing has also written to Chief Minister Nitish



In turmoil: Actor Rhea Chakraborty arriving at the Narcotics Control Bureau office in Mumbai on Sunday. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

ish Kumar to rename the Rajiv Nagar Chowk and the proposed film city at Rajgir in Nalanda district after the late actor.

**Genuine concern?** "There should not be a political interpretation of the genuine concern expressed by the art and culture cell..." said State BJP leader and party spokesperson Nikhil Anand.

Opposition parties, however, have criticised the campaign and alleged that the BJP has launched this campaign to woo the 4% upper caste Rajput vote in the upcoming Assembly polls.

Rajput voters are said to be crucial in as many as 40 constituencies of the 243 seat Assembly and 19 Rajputs are members of the current House.

"RJD leader Tejashwi Ya-

dav was the first to demand a CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death and had also visited his home in Patna but BJP is now trying to derive a political and electoral mileage of this unfortunate incident," said RJD leader and party spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari. "Our State president too is from Rajput caste but we cannot do such acts for political reasons during election time...this is most unfortunate."

Congress and other leaders of the Opposition *maha-gathbandhan* also took on the BJP for its effort to take "electoral and political dividend on death of an actor from the State".

"What would be a more opportunistic way to reap electoral dividend on an emotional issue by the BJP," asked a senior Congress leader.

These projections also

## Fire on tanker off Sri Lanka doused

Risk persists owing to heat on the vessel and strong winds, says Navy official

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
COLOMBO

The fire that erupted on oil tanker *MT New Diamond* off Sri Lanka's south east coast was completely doused on Sunday, Navy authorities said.

Over the past four days, Indian and Sri Lankan Navy vessels, along with tug boats, were jointly engaged in putting out the flames on the vessel, a 330-metre-long very large crude carrier, carrying 2,70,000 tonnes of crude oil from Kuwait to Odisha.

"The fire has been put out

completely, but the heat remains close to combustible material. So our vessels are still in the area closely monitoring the vessel," Sri Lankan Navy spokesman Indika de Silva told *The Hindu*. The risk persists, as Sri Lanka witnessed strong winds and rainfall on Sunday, he added.

Earlier, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa thanked defence forces of India and Sri Lanka for their fire-fighting efforts in order to prevent a potential oil spill.



Successful mission Tug boats and ships battling the blaze on the oil tanker *MT New Diamond* on Sunday. ■ PTI

## 'Close old power plants, save ₹53,000 crore'

Savings will accrue from not having to spend on their upkeep, says report

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

Shutting down thermal power plants older than 20 years in 11 key States can save the exchequer ₹53,000 crore over five years, says an analysis by Climate Research Horizon.

The savings will accrue from not having to spend on retrofitting these plants to reduce the toxicity of their emissions, as well as switching to renewable energy, the authors estimate.

These projections also

come at a time when India has announced plans to auction 41 coal mining blocks in an ostensible bid to be less reliant on imported coal.

**Surplus capacity** Several of the power distribution companies (discoms) are financially stressed though India has surplus power generation capacity.

While free power for agriculture and power theft are one reason, the authors opine, another is that several States have installed capacity



The report looked at thermal power plants older than 20 years in 11 States.

based on projections that are far in excess of actual requirements.

"This has resulted in huge overcapacity in the electric-

ity system, and disproportionate fixed cost obligations for many discoms. In conjunction with delayed payments from cash-strapped government entities and the requirement to provide free and subsidised power to significant segments of their customer base, this has been a recipe for disaster," note authors Ashish Fernandes, CEO and lead analyst, CRH, and Harshit Sharma, lead researcher.

In her Budget speech in February, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that utilities would be urged to shut down old and polluting power plants

to meet air emission norms. The States analysed were Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. They together account for nearly half of discom dues.

The surplus generation capacity notwithstanding, an additional 60,000 MW thermal power is officially under construction across the country, with another 29,000 MW in the proposal/ permitting stage. Of this, 17,235 MW is likely to be completed by 2022 in these States.

## FAITH

### Modes of upasana

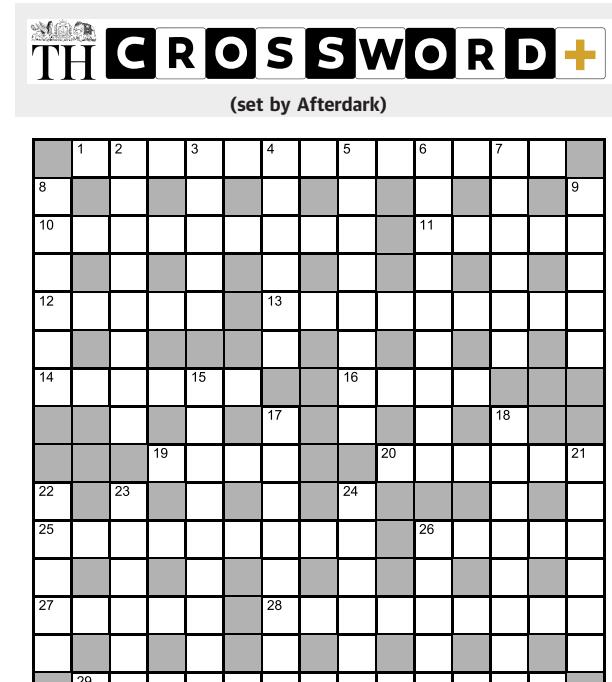
In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Srishti is explained at the outset itself. "The world existed first as seed, which as it grew and developed took on names and forms. As a razor in its case, or as fire in wood, so dwells the self, the Lord of the universe, in all forms, even to the tips of the fingers. Yet the ignorant do not know Him who remains hidden behind the names and forms."

In a discourse, Sri Rajagopal Sarma drew attention to the fact that the Sritis are so concerned for the well-being of the jiva that they try to help him overcome this ignorance of the self that stands as a great hurdle to spiritual progress.

The fundamental teaching is to reinforce the same nondual nature of the self that is in the jiva as well as the Ishwara.

The Supreme Brahman is the antaryami in all creation. When the self is associated with avidya it is known as jiva, and when in association with Maya it is Ishwara. So, Maya and avidya are the adjuncts of the self that appears as Ishwara and jiva respectively. At the time of Pralaya, Ishwara is not associated with Maya. There is no creation. He is in unmanifest form.

This is the causal or karana sarira of Brahman that is worshipped by great devotees. But not all can rise to this level. So Ishwara also takes the form of the suksma sarira, known as Hiranyagarbha for the sake of upasana by quite a few devotees. For many others who are still to reach this level, there is the more accessible sthula form of Ishwara, the Virat swaroopa, such as the vision that was revealed to Arjuna. Suppose even this is not possible, Sruti comes down to show how to do upasana of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, in their roles of srishti, stiti and laya.



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SCAN TO PLAY



## SUDOKU



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# TEACHING in the time of a pandemic

With Teachers' Day just past, here's looking at how educators are coping with a new mode of teaching

VINEY KIRPAL

Teachers had less than a week to prepare for the online delivery of the courses left incomplete, due to the hasty closing down of schools and colleges, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. Remote teaching/learning was an emergency solution. Many had never dabbled in online teaching.

Indian teachers are used to chalk-and-talk teaching, which is a practical way of communicating concepts, clarifying doubts, teaching even subjects such as math and Engineering. Besides, it is a method that works in all circumstances and locations. Students too are used to following the teacher as she teaches on the board. The general bustle and the playfulness of students also keeps them and the teacher engaged and relaxed.

**Technology in tow**  
A couple of colleges arranged a brief training for teachers on the use of Google Meet, and Zoom. However, Dr. Jaslene Bawa, who teaches Accounting and Costing at FLAME University, Pune, remarked, "Nobody prepared us for the challenges of teaching online." Many others agreed with her.

Professor Anurag Mehra who teaches Chemical Engineering at IIT Bombay

spoke of the difficulty of speaking to the camera in the absence of students and suggested dropping of minor courses and focusing on the major ones, as this would make it easier for everyone.

Bawa, Mehra, and Professor Anjali Gera Roy, who teach English at IIT Kharagpur, sorely miss the live interaction with their students. Roy says that looking at students enables a teacher to use their non-verbal responses to change towards what's of interest to them.

Student feedback also reveals they have missed the face-to-face interaction. They say it is difficult to clarify doubts. Some teachers have devised options for students to raise questions/doubts, through e-mail group or special sessions on course websites.

Though the faculty interviewed come from the better-endowed institutions, not all their students have high-powered Internet connections, iPads, laptops or Android phones at home. Teachers fear that such students are being left out. Students too want recorded videos on YouTube instead of attending virtual classes, as

**Indian teachers are used to chalk-and-talk teaching, which is a practical way of communicating concepts...**

they are unable to always attend at the given time due to sharing resources with their family. Roy confirms that, despite being given advance intimation, a section of the class doesn't attend.

Bawa says Google Meet helps her know how many students are present. Mehra is not happy about the students' non-attendance and recommends they be given loans to buy laptops and data packs. The issue of poor connectivity bothers the faculty, as they also experience connectivity problems making it hard to take virtual classes.

**Innovation matters**  
Sangeeta Vishwanathan, a science teacher at Ravindranath Tagore English Medium School, Pune, a government school for less privileged students, conducted an online session on cell division for class X students. She used a downloaded video that employed cartoons to explain the complex topic. Vishwanathan focused on explaining only the main concepts in Hindi because students weren't fluent in English.

What I found enjoyable was her interaction with the students. Her tone was conversational and she took pains to teach the two major concepts first

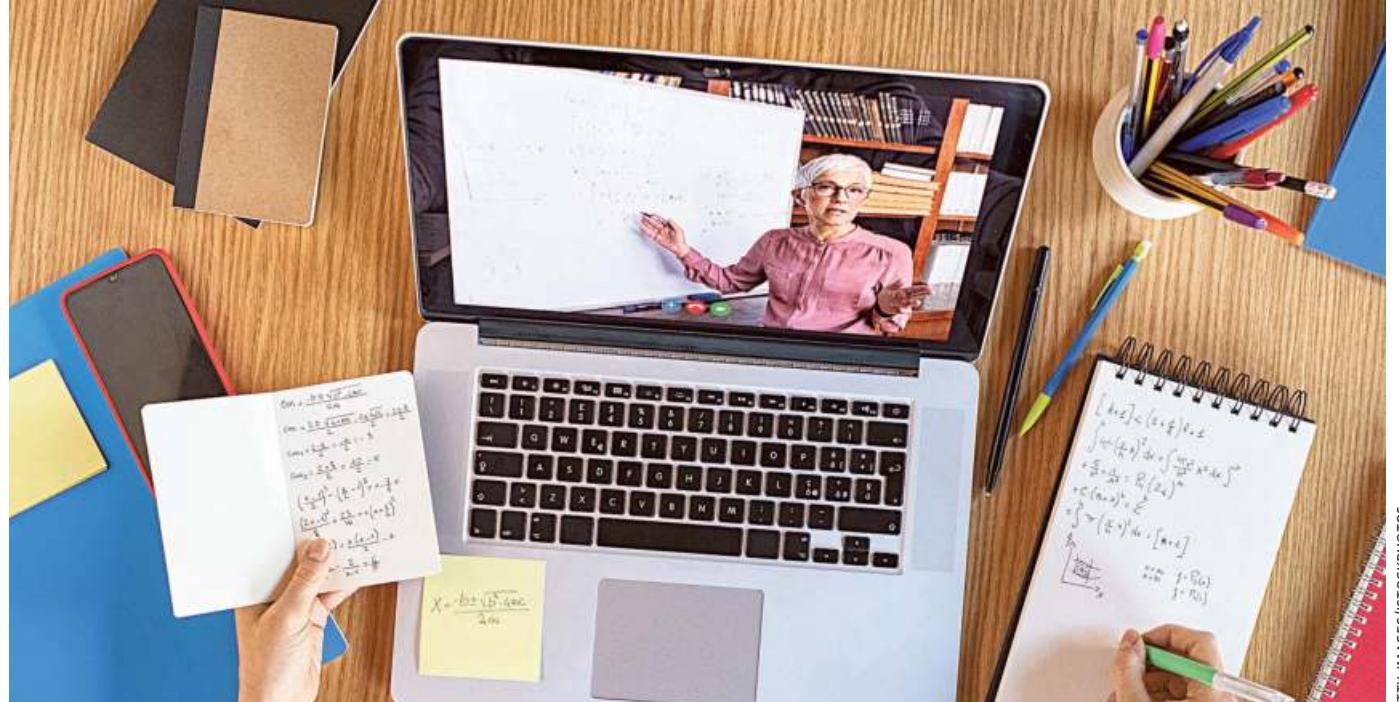
by going over the slides. At the end, she revised the concepts with the students. She told them to take screenshots of important slides and said she'd send them the page numbers from their textbook to study. At the end of an hour, a student remarked "Miss, the class is over? So soon?" Out of the total 40 students, 30 attended and enjoyed every minute.

Teachers are also trying to discover strategies to test students so they don't cheat. Should it be short quizzes all along the course, or proctored online tests using a software or home assignments to express their own opinions? It's a dilemma. Students too are applying their mind on how to help their teachers give their best. Create an offline app, send recorded lectures and notes, give practice sheets and solved problems... a churning of ideas has begun.

From general observation, it seems that it would help to train teachers to use Zoom, Webex and Google Meet, and online pedagogical methods. Teachers have taken a courageous leap forward.

Improvement is a dynamic process and will continue.

Viney Kirpal was Professor of English at IIT Bombay.  
vineykirpal@gmail.com



## SCHOLARSHIP

### Department of Mathematics Post-Doctoral Fellowship, IIT-Roorkee

The Department of Mathematics, IIT-Roorkee invites applications for the project, "Geometric structures in sets with positive upper asymptotic density and in syndetic sets".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to candidates with a PhD in math and knowledge of additive combinatorics and combinatorial number theory. Candidates with

1-2 years of research experience in areas related to number theory and combinatorics preferred. They must have at least two very good publications in SCI/SCIE-based journals. Candidates who have recently submitted their PhD thesis can apply, but will have to present the proof at the interview.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹55,000 per month with a contingency grant of ₹50,000 per annum

**APPLICATION:** By email and by post to 'Professor and Head Department of Mathematics, Indian

Institute of Technology-Roorkee, Roorkee 247667 India'

**DEADLINE:** September 15  
[www.b4s.in/edge/TRIO](http://www.b4s.in/edge/TRIO)

**NCERT Department of Education in Languages Junior Research Fellowship/Junior Project Fellowship**

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi invites applications for the project "Need analysis, pedagogical process and perception of students and teachers in Hindi as a second and third language at Upper Primary and Secondary stage of southern

states".

**ELIGIBILITY:** Candidates below 40 years of age, who hold a master's degree in Hindi, with at least 55% marks (50% in case of SC/ST/PH) and able to analyse data on the computer and present it suitably.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Up to ₹25,000 per month

**APPLICATION:** Direct walk-in-interview

**DEADLINE:** September 16  
[www.b4s.in/edge/ERT5](http://www.b4s.in/edge/ERT5)

**ICAI Doctoral Scholarship Scheme**

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India invites applications from its members.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Candidates under 40 years, who are members of ICAI with minimum 75% marks/grade in class X and XII. They must be pursuing doctoral research from a recognised university/institution in Auditing, Taxation, Commerce, Management and Accounting discipline.

They must not be availing benefits under any other government scholarship/fellowship.

**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹50,000 per annum

**APPLICATION:** Online

**DEADLINE:** September 15  
[www.b4s.in/edge/ICA7](http://www.b4s.in/edge/ICA7)

Courtesy:  
[buddy4study.com](http://buddy4study.com)

## Behind the screens

With classes being held only online, we asked students what they appreciated most about their teachers during this time. A Teachers' Day special

■ EDUCATION PLUS TEAM

**Saujanya N.,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, B.A. English Literature,  
PSG College of Arts and Science,  
Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

» Among those who made the gloomy lockdown days better was my professor, Dr. Sripadma Devi. When virtual classes commenced, she spent the first session asking us what we had been up to during the lockdown and just spending time with us. "I miss seeing all your faces," she said. Now that our classes are online, she makes an effort to keep them

lively and interactive through digital aids. I have been taking a leaf out of her book and trying to be punctual.

**Saureesh Namagiri,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, Bachelor of Management Studies, Shiv Nadar University, Dadri, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh

» My professors have shown more concern about our well-being than ourselves. When our semesters moved online, they helped us adapt and sent frequent emails of encouragement and assurance. They quickly familiarised themselves with online tools and gave us tutorials on how to navigate them. I was among the few students who remained on campus throughout the semester and the summer and was amazed at how my professors went out of the way to help. At one point, we weren't sure if we would be allowed to stay back in the hostel.

A marketing professor offered to house as many of us as she could, in her staff quarters. My sociology professor offered to let some of us cook food of our choice at her place because the mess food was getting monotonous. Occasionally, a few professors would drop by the hostel to share home-made food with us.

**Shivanshu Pande,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, Computer Science Engineering, BMS College of Engineering, Bangalore, Karnataka

» I would like to thank all my teachers including those in BMS College of Engineering. Even during the pandemic, they continued to teach complex topics in simple ways, making test papers and checking them too, despite their household chores. A special mention to my college's computer science department for all the guidance, specially my computer science teacher Mrs. KVN, who taught me C

programming with great patience as I had not learnt this before joining college. She also kept in touch during some tough times.

**Maathangi Venkatraman,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, B.Arch, School of Planning and Architecture, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

» Cracking voices and frozen screens. The 'new normal' classroom is nowhere near how regular classrooms used to be, but that hasn't deterred any of my teachers from doing their job the way they used to. A sick professor took his practical class online, and this made me feel obliged to go the extra mile and pay more attention than I usually do.

**Mehul Shah,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, B.Sc Information Technology, Vidyalankar School of Information Technology, Mumbai, Maharashtra

» Although we miss the campus, our teachers continue to play a vital link in keeping our focus on learning. Previously, we used the Internet for entertainment, but we now realise that it is for Edutainment. After the move from live interaction to distance learning, things have changed from "Good Morning, students" to "Am I audible?" Although things have changed, I am thankful to my teachers for keeping our enthusiasm and learning spirit intact. They have again proved they are the backbone of education.

**Helen Mary Bob,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, BBA, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kalamassery, Kerala

» My teachers have really moved out of their comfort zones to teach us. My professor Nikhil sir told us how heartbreaking it was to see a college without students; it is just a building with a name tag. I also remember how Jose sir had trouble with his network. He went around his house holding his laptop, to get better range so that he could teach us without any interruption. All the teachers truly give their maximum to give us the best.

I would like to thank all our teachers who have put in so much effort in providing us the best through an online platform during this time.

**Gopalchettu Brahma,**

II<sup>nd</sup> year, B.Tech (Aerospace Engineering), Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab

» It amazes me to see how my teachers have kept up with the transition and are coping up with the challenges, as the university shifts gears from the traditional classrooms to online learning. They address our problems through all possible platforms. While their work hours were limited to college timings earlier, now they are available to help us with notes and clarifications round-the-clock, without any complaints.

Also, handling many students virtually, especially with uncertain Internet connectivity and speed, and explaining topics and clearing doubts repeatedly is daunting. But our teachers cope with a smile. They have taken a personal interest in our performance and participation in activities and also keep an eye on our mental well-being. They took extra effort to connect with us personally through telephone, video conferencing and even chat, to motivate and keep us going.

**Aayusi Biswas,**

IV<sup>th</sup> year, Computer Science, SRM University, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh

» Our teachers rose to the occasion wonderfully as all of us worked to adapt to the online environment. There were times when Dr. Jatinendra Kumar Dash couldn't conduct classes as scheduled due to low Internet connectivity. To make up, he would forgo his Sunday and compensate. He even took an hour-long special class for some of us who missed sessions. He has been motivating us to research remotely, and even taught us how to do so. Thanks to his help and guidance, I might even land an internship from a prestigious foreign university. I was also impressed with how each teacher took our feedback on their online classes, and how they could improve. Hats off to all of them.



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# How to save a LIFE

Seen disturbing messages on social media about someone wanting to take their life and not known what to do? Experts tell us how to help

SOMA BASU

*(Trigger warning: If you are in distress or feeling suicidal, please avoid reading this article)*

Whether you encounter a casual remark from a friend about the pointlessness of living or a message on social media on someone wanting to take theirs, it is always a good idea to take it seriously. It could be early warning signals or a last minute intervention to save someone's life.

In fact, 80% of those with suicide ideation are ambivalent and if counselled appropriately, a majority do not take the extreme step, says Dr Lakshmi Vijayakumar, Chennai-based psychiatrist and founder-trustee of Sneha, a suicide prevention and crisis hotline.

From his 30 years of practice as a psychiatrist, Dr C Ramasubramanian, who established the MS Chellamuthu Trust and Research Foundation in Madurai, says that 90% of callers do not die by suicide when they are heard and feel cared for.

Preventing suicide is everybody's business, not just the 'job' of close family and friends. "Each of us has a responsibility to allow others to see themselves as valuable and capable. It cannot be left in the hands of mental health professionals alone," says Nandini Murali, a suicide loss survivor in Madurai, who runs Project Speak to help those who are contemplating the extreme step.

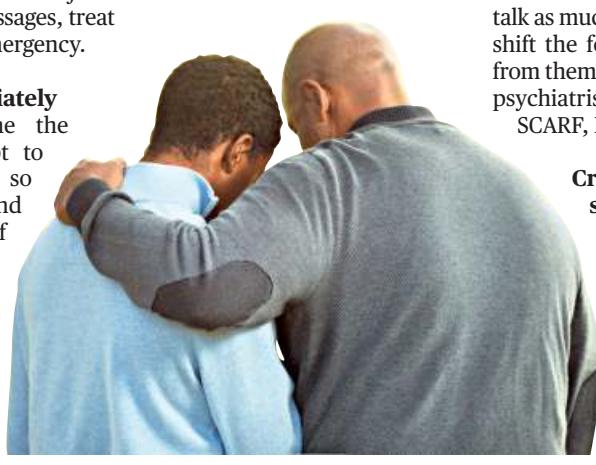
While trained gatekeepers and volunteers at helpline centres and counselling clinics have the tools for both immediate interventions and long-term therapy, people like you and me have the power to reach out to anyone who may put out messages that signal self-harm. Suicide is a serious public health issue caused by multiple factors that can be social, economic, environment; it is not a disease. It is a symptom that can be addressed by offering hope and each of us can contribute responsibly.

## Understand the urgency

Any message that signals death: "sleep forever", "want to leave this space", besides more obvious ones like "I do not want to live", should all be prompts to reach out, for those of us reading them. But what if you do not know the person at all? Even if there is a mismatched emoji attached to telling messages, treat every word as an emergency.

## Reach out immediately

Do not undermine the thought or attempt to make a diagnosis, so avoid writing back and asking the person if they are depressed, for instance. Instead, write back or find a contact number to speak directly. It is important to establish a physical or emotional



Stay calm and carry on the conversation in a gentle, non-judgemental manner ■ GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

## WHAT IF IT'S YOUR FRIEND?

If your friend shows disinterest in life, appears restless, complains of low appetite and sleep, focusses on fears, and dwells a great deal on problems and how they are not possible to resolve, how do you react? Dr Vijayakumar says it is natural between friends to brush it off, but it is better to ask some straight questions. "It is a myth that when you ask directly, you reinforce suicidal thoughts," she says and adds, "it is better to show your empathy and concern instead." If timely intervention comes by, the vulnerable feeling of unworthiness and a death wish can be conquered with help. Offer to go with them to a psychiatrist or an RCI-registered counsellor.

ing unreasonable and ungrateful. Do not trivialise their problem by citing a worse example from your life.

**Engage in a conversation**  
The objective should be to prevent them from carrying out the death wish. "Ask about friends, family, neighbours, place of residence and allow the person to talk as much and as long. Do not shift the focus of conversation from them," says Chennai-based psychiatrist and ex-director of SCARF, Dr Thara Srinivasan.

## Create a safe supportive space

Tell the person you totally understand their feelings and believe it is a phase that shall pass. Assure them that there is help available and that you will stay on the

phone with them for as long as they would like you to. The person may be rude, but adopt a non-confrontational approach. The point is to show concern, and if you do not know them it can be difficult for you to express love, but it is possible to offer words of comfort, says Dr Vijayakumar.

Understand the person is under psychological distress and an alternative-narrative makes them think and gives hope, says Dr Mukherjee. Help them to remember their hobbies that they could return to. Never advise, but resonate with the person's feelings, she says. For example, if the person says that life is very difficult to live without money, ask if they want to talk about earlier struggles and how they faced it. It will give them the confidence to look at options.

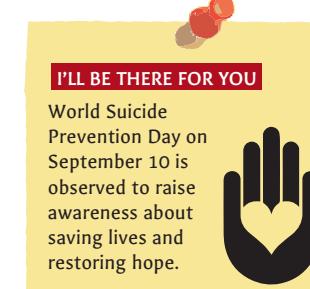
## Make a commitment

Ask if you can make a plan (like meeting them for coffee the next morning). If you find out they are good at something – like writing poetry for instance – ask if you can call the next day so they can read you some. Remind them of the protective factors that kept them happy earlier. If they talk about supportive parents, caring spouse or children, build on that gently to make them feel less agitated. This is also an activation of a person's internal and external resources.

## Connect and be in touch

Try to lead to a situation where the person is ok reaching out for professional help – first a helpline, then therapy. Approaching the police is the last resort and is helpful in case of an emergency with little time on hand. Remain in touch with the person as long as you can. An occasional phone call or a letter could help them, as it does any one of us.

*(Sneha suicide prevention helpline: 044-24640060 (8 am to 10 pm); 044-24640050 (24/7)*



## CONVERSATIONS WITH SELF

# Seeking forgiveness

While the need to be forgiven by another is important, the greater need in us could be the willingness to forgive ourselves



TT SRINATH

A young lady doctor, attending to COVID-19 patients, herself succumbed to the infection she seemed to have contracted.

Before she went into hospital, she told someone I know that if she did not make it back, she hoped all those she may have distressed in the course of her life, would forgive her. The poignancy of her plea struck me even more significantly, when my mother suddenly passed on within a day of my hearing this comment and sharing it with her. It forced me to ask myself 'What does this mean?'

In my journey through life I imagine there are surely some people who may have felt pain in my dealing with them. Do I seek forgiveness from them? A few whom I recall have passed on.

While the need to be forgiven by another is important, the greater need in me seems to be the willingness to forgive myself.

Some who have said I have caused them pain may not know that my intent may never have been to distress them. If I have done so, more often than not it has been owing to either my insensitivity, which I was not aware of, or even ignorance.

Hence to whip myself and fault myself, much after the act



GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

has been committed, only seems to heap on me guilt and shame.

Possibly a less painful way of apologising is to first forgive myself for any indiscretion I may have committed. In doing so I may then, with awareness, be able to examine the content and process of my errors. I may also feel far less burdened for I know that I am not punishing myself and thus am ridding myself of either feeling a victim or persecuting myself.

It may not be easy to forgive myself, yet if I do not attempt to do so, I do not think I will let others forgive me even if they want to as I would anyway continue to stew irrespective of whether someone forgives me or not.

From whom am I forgiveness seeking, if I cannot from self? If not, I am only self-deceiving, and no one else!

The writer is an organisational and behavioural consultant. He can be contacted at [ttsrinath@gmail.com](mailto:ttsrinath@gmail.com)

## Before you start, remember...

To wear comfortable stretchable clothing. To maintain correct posture, as alignment of the joints is key to an injury-free workout. Avoid the exercises if you are experiencing pain or stress in the joints. Exercises can be done with or without shoes.

## Workout structure

It can be done post cardio for 30 minutes, at least 20 repetitions and three sets of each exercise. Or you can exercise for time: each exercise to be done for two minutes, repeated twice. With five minutes of warm up and cool down each, it should take you 34 minutes in total. For warm up, you can perform three sets of 20 squats, shoulder rotations and pushups each. Beginners can reduce the number of repetitions.

## EXERCISE AT HOME

# Weight a while

The weight plates in your barbells can be used by themselves to improve grip and strengthen the muscles of your hands and torso



## COULD IT BE THAT..



GETTYIMAGES/STOCK

# Sleep is now a commodity?



SUNALINI MATHEW

About a decade ago, I was privy to a meeting where a company that sells diapers said they would like to focus on sleep and put out communication around it. The reason: it was found that babies' development happened when they were at rest. Frequent urinating into a cloth nappy would wake them up, interrupting sleep and hence growth. By marrying diapers and sleep, they were putting a cost, not on convenience, but on early childhood development, rendering a costly product inexpensive in parents' eyes.

Over the years, in an adrenalin-high world that runs on stimulants (coffee, cigarettes, stress) and the boast of 'burning the midnight oil', we have found the need to advocate for sleep. It gives our bodies time to repair, our brains the rest to consolidate memory, and our hormones the chance to regulate themselves, affecting hunger and circadian rhythms (our natural body clock). A lack of sleep is the reason those on a night shift feel a greater need for junk and oil-laden food. It is the body desperately trying to cope with a situation that is not natural to it.

Increasingly, people are understanding the importance of a good night's rest. Riding on

any self-awareness movement though, is marketing, pushing the message ahead with a momentum that only money can buy. To some extent it is the resources sunk into a health message that takes it to everyone, but it also convinces us to buy into products that purportedly aid in the endeavour.

There are mattresses, apps, supplements, white noise machines, masks, teas, essential oils, ear plugs, nose clips, anti-snore chin straps, and more – all promise help. There is nothing wrong with most of the products marketed around rest, except for certain creams and sprays, the ingredients of which you may want to read on the back of the pack.

But there is a danger of us buying into them without looking deeper within to examine why we have a problem with sleep. Am I in a state of hyperstress – overloaded with work to the extent that a small trigger can become a big episode? Anxiety ridden? Do I have sleep apnoea? An addiction – even if it is to tech? Why am I not able to have nights of uninterrupted sleep for eight hours? Sleep, like most things in life, is a consequence of how we operate through the day, our activity, thoughts, interactions with those around us. If we hold on to poor routines, habits, and relationships, all the white noise machines and self-affirmation apps in the world will only be band-aids that simply do not address the real reason we are not sleeping well and get up feeling refreshed.

Weight plates, usually added to barbells, come in different shapes, sizes, and weights. If you already have weight plates as a part of your home exercise equipment, then you can use them just by themselves. If not, then get plates in the range of 2.5 kilograms to 10 kilograms.

The advantage of using a weight plate on its own is that it improves grip and strengthens the small muscles of the fingers and hands.

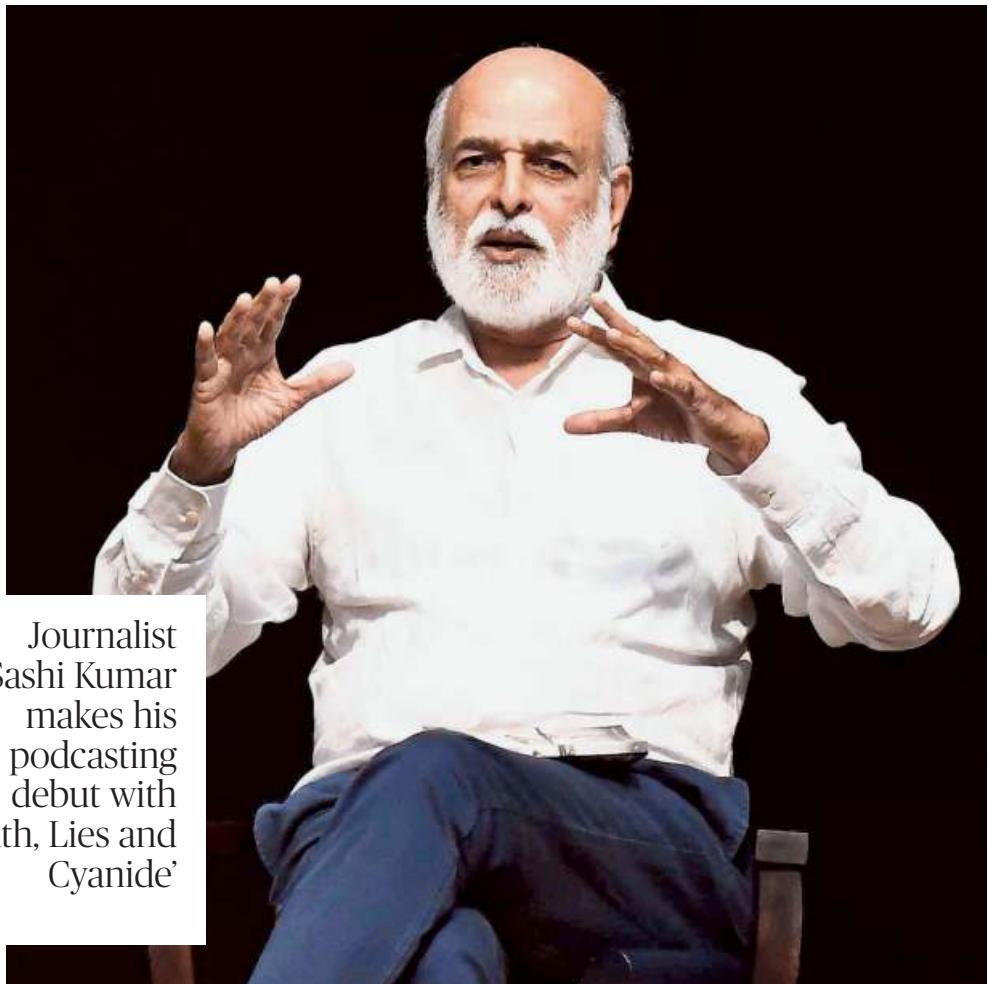
In specific exercises such as the Halo (which involves revolving the plate from the front of your chest, back around the neck, and in front again), alignment of the joints is better and the execution is smoother as compared to a dumbbell. Normally, all traditional exercises can be done with a weight plate to add variety and challenge to your fitness routine.

*Nisha Varma is an ACSM-certified exercise physiologist. A monthly column with exercises for a home workout*

**Farmer's walk:**  
Hold one plate in each hand. Choose a weight which will challenge the fingers and walk for three minutes at a preferred speed.

**Shuffle pushups.**  
Keep one of your hands on the plate and one on the floor. Execute a push up. Shift the position of the hands and execute the next push up. Continue for time.  
Cool down by stretching all the muscles in the lower body and arms.

# Murder, she spoke



Journalist Sashi Kumar makes his podcasting debut with 'Death, Lies and Cyanide'

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

"The podcast requires a good deal of investigative journalism, which is pushing the frontiers of journalism," starts Sashi Kumar, who is beaming over video chat on Google Meet, as his debut podcast 'Death, Lies & Cyanide' is set to launch on Spotify today.

"You cannot take too many liberties with the facts. Some crimes are not as fascinating as they are constructed – sometimes the narratives get tedious. So one has to make it fascinating, in being true to the facts and engaging," adds the journalist who is also trustee of Media Development Foundation, that handles the Asian College of Journalism.

Across 10 episodes, 'Death, Lies & Cyanide', written by Ramesh Ravindranath, covers the chronicles of Jolly Joseph from Kozhikode whose poison-imbibed murders took Kerala by storm. Both local and international media were drawn in by the 'women who kill' allure as well as the nature of her 14-year silent rampage (from 2002



to 2016). It all came to a head this year, when Jolly was convicted of six murders by cyanide, including that of her husband.

Sashi Kumar points out that the podcast ends on an open-ended note, to leave room for the listener to ponder, and for more developments in the investigations down the line, if there are any. The podcast is not just a retelling of the crimes, but also a navigation of the widespread media coverage and of

perspectives of investigating authorities. Sashi Kumar was careful to make sure that before kicking off the podcast, he and his team had access to primary and secondary sources to back the narrative.

During the pre-podcast research, more angles to the case were discovered, based on a re-examination of evidence. "It's not as though there is a treasure trove waiting to be discovered here," he admits, "You get that from dogged and painstaking

**Retrospect** The podcast looks back at the coverage and probe of the recently convicted Jolly Joseph's cyanide murders ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

investigation. This case, for a spell of time, had over-saturated coverage, so one would think everything to know is out there already. But in the podcast, there is fresh information from the chargesheet, and snippets that were in the public domain which no one bothered to follow. There is a lot of fresh information about this character: what she has done, who she is, her connections, those complicit in the killings, and more. The podcast, importantly, is not aimed at vindicating or demonising, but rather at telling a true story objectively without taking anything for granted." The fact that the case is fairly recent and still in the subconscious of Kerala and India, adds an appeal and contextual relatability for listeners.

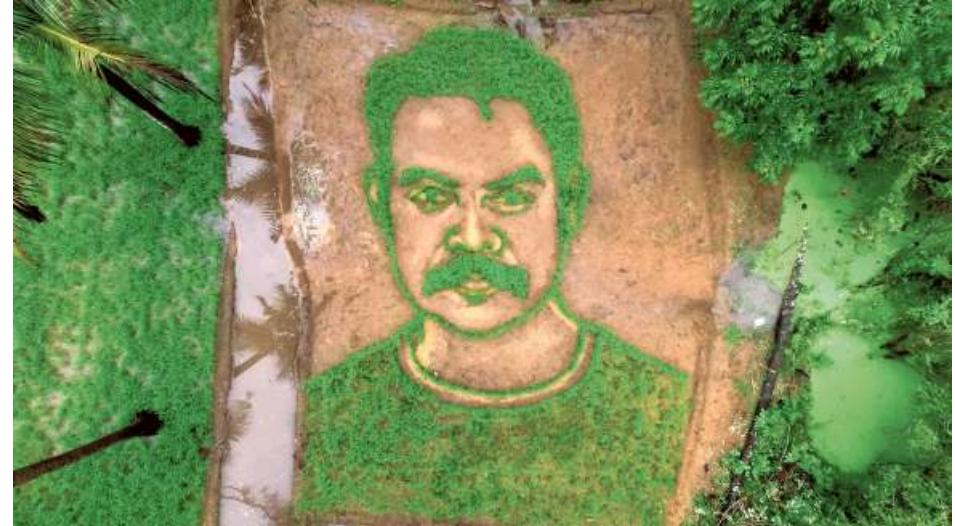
There is a storytelling vibe about the podcast, affirms Sashi Kumar, pegging the experience as having a "non-factual aura" about it, because of the juiciness factor to keep listeners on tenterhooks.

The podcast comes at an apt time, he agrees, given the polarising coverage around Sushant Singh Rajput's passing. It invites listeners to take the news and social media they see, hear and read with a grain of salt. "It will be hard to compete with the breathless sensationalism that the [SSR] case got," he shares. "It is important to have a narrative which was corrective, in one sense. We are no one to say whether so-and-so is guilty. In the case of the podcast, there is a chargesheet with numerous bits of corroborated evidence, an accused, victims, and so on."

Sashi Kumar, who started his career as a film journalist, was also

*The Hindu*'s first West Asia correspondent in the mid-1980s. The 68-year-old is a big believer in "the sound of journalism" having been a radio journalist for many years.

But podcasting – "a huge new dimension," as he describes it – is a new horizon he is excited to conquer. He explains why: "Though I have not sought out podcasts avidly, I'm not surprised that it is the happening thing now. In a time when the visuals are becoming more difficult, listening to podcasts is a soothing experience, and you can engage with the medium in an everyday setting."



## Rajinikanth in a 'soot'

Meet the Kerala artist who creates innovative portraits of movie stars from everyday materials

SUSAN JOE PHILIP

"I am a big fan of him [Amitabh Bachchan]," says artist Suresh PK as he wraps up the 25x15 feet portrait of the veteran actor using cloth masks. He is inside an auditorium in Thrissur.

Once done, Suresh inspects his work, clicks a photograph, collects the masks and puts it into a bag. "I have to clear this floor in the next hour. I hope the photo finds its way to Amitabh Bachchan through social media," says Suresh.

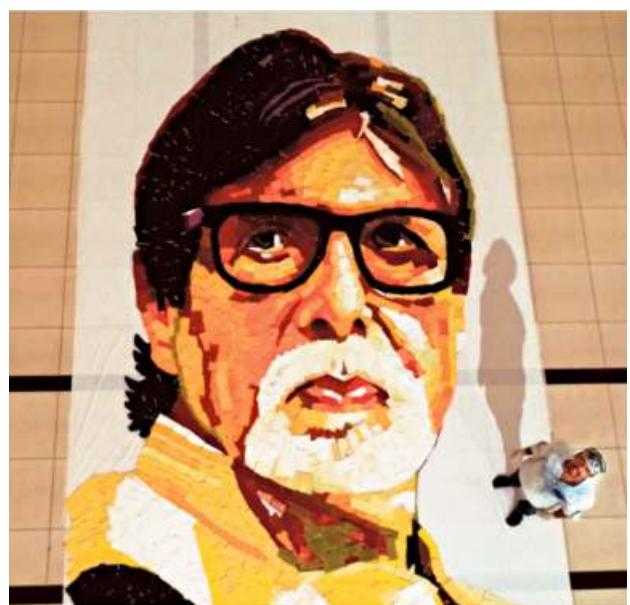
The artist – known as 'Da Vinci' Suresh – is popular for his unorthodox approach to art and choices of media. "I keep looking out for things to experiment with. I love movies and that shows in my works. Most of my portraits are of movie stars."

Suresh started his career by painting hoardings and billboards in Thrissur with his brothers. "As they made way to digitally printed ones, I lost my job. Then I started to

make moving sculptures for carnivals and festivals. I have crafted huge elephants that can sway their heads, and gorillas that can move their hands using fibre and motors," he says.

However, given the current situation, sales have decreased. "There are no gatherings and many artists like me have lost our livelihood. Earlier I created art during my spare time. Now, I use my time to experiment," he says.

One of his first works was of actor Mohanlal's portrait, made three years ago, using vessels from his kitchen. "It was the character Aadu Thoma from the movie, *Spadi-kam*. It was quite challenging as it wasn't a very flexible medium. I used old



**Unusual art** Some of Suresh PK's works ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

blackened pots to create his hair and moustache," he says.

### Medium matters

In the past six months, actors Rajinikanth, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Fahadh Faasil, Tovino Thomas, and freedom fighter Muhammed Abdu Rahiman Sahib have been made into portraits.

While Rajinikanth was done on the ceiling of his bedroom, using soot from burning candles, the portrait of Prithviraj Sukumaran was created using firewood. "Fahadh's portrait made of nails looks like dot painting from a distance. I plan to gift it to him.

The work of Muhammed Abdu Rahiman Sahib using books, was more like a sculpture and was done in a public library for Independence Day. I used 2,000 books for that work," he says.

For Tovino's portrait with paddy, Suresh divided the field into cells and planted paddy into designated areas on the ground. "It was 35 x 20 feet in area and was designed for an aerial view. It took me almost four hours to complete. Tovino shared the photo on his social media pages and I was thrilled," he adds.

Recently, Suresh completed a project done by Kerala Cartoon Mission, in association with Kerala Social Security Mission, to draw cartoons on public walls to spread awareness on the pandemic. "I was one of the 30 artists chosen for the project. We covered all the 14 districts in 14 days."

He is now attempting to try out over 100 media for his art. "I have completed 62 so far. I hope my works will be an inspiration for others to travel on an untravelled route. I have planned my next work, but I would like it to be a surprise!"



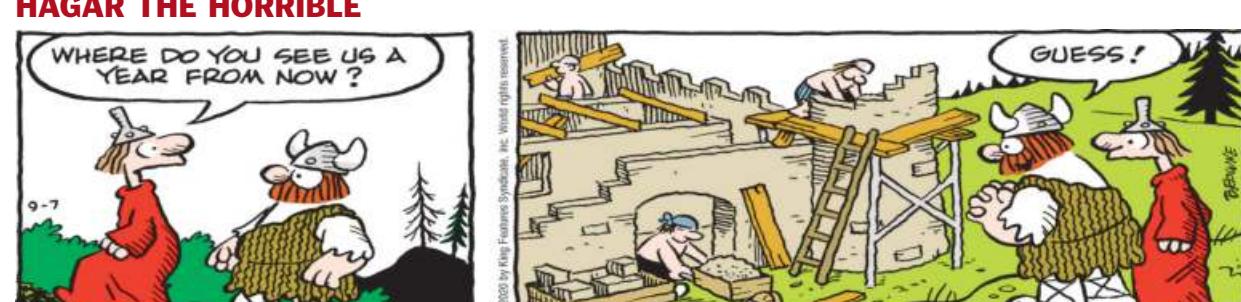
### An online guide for the performing arts

This Friday, the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in collaboration with HSBC will be hosting a workshop on 'The Convergence of Digitization and the Arts', as part of their initiative on ancillary skill development for the artiste community. Considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this community, with a month-long stopper on stage performances, the workshop means to introduce artistes to platforms, processes and means to be able to enhance online engagement. Renowned Kathak dancer Keerthi Kumar will be taking a live audience through ways to conduct virtual classrooms, online performances, conferences and seminars using a mix of household equipment, handy tools and subscription-based software. This live dialogue will cover a variety of subjects that make it imperative for an artist to re-look at monetisation in the new normal. From home acoustics and lighting system settings to re-modelling teaching methodologies for the digital medium, the workshop will cover a number of significant aspects of taking the performing arts online and reaching out to audiences across the globe. The workshop will be held on September 12 from 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm. For details and registration, visit [www.ncpamumbai.com](http://www.ncpamumbai.com).

### POOCH CAFE



### HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



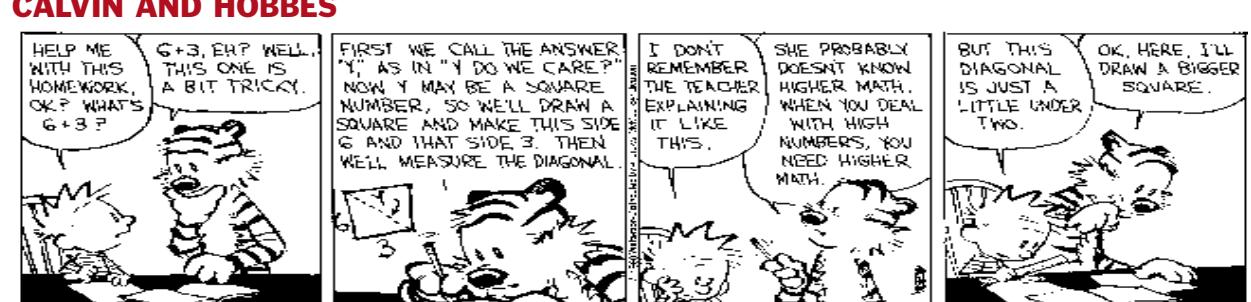
### TIGER



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBES



### PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



# Hong Kong police swoop on protesters

Nearly 300 people demonstrating against postponement of legislature polls, national security law held

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
HONG KONG

Nearly 300 people were arrested by Hong Kong police on Sunday as riot officers swooped on democracy protesters opposed to the postponement of local elections.

Sunday was meant to be voting day for the city's partially elected legislature, one of the few instances where residents of Hong Kong get to cast ballots.

But the city's pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam suspended the polls for a year – citing the coronavirus – angering the pro-democracy opposition who had been hoping to capitalise on seething anti-government sentiment.

Hundreds of riot police flooded the district of Kowloon in a bid to thwart online calls for flash mob protests to mark the suspended vote.

Throughout the afternoon officers were heckled by people shouting slogans such as "Give me back my vote!" and "Corrupt cops!" as officers conducted multiple stop and searches and ordered



**Tough action:** Police detaining protesters at a downtown street in Hong Kong on Sunday. • AP

crowds to disperse.

In a Facebook statement, police said at least 289 people were arrested, mostly for unlawful assembly.

One woman was detained under a new security law Beijing imposed on the city for chanting independence slogans, the force added.

Live images showed three prominent pro-democracy politicians – Leung Kwok-hung, Figo Chan and Raphael Wong – were among those held.

## Sedition charge

The protests came hours after the police's newly formed national security unit arrested Tam Tak-chi, another democracy activist and radio DJ, for "uttering seditious words" – a colonial-era offence.

Mr. Tam is the latest in a long line of government critics to find themselves facing prosecution in recent months for their involvement in protests.

When they announced the arrest on Sunday morning, police did not explain what Tam may have said that was considered seditious.

Hong Kong government condemned the protesters'

"unlawful and selfish acts" in a statement issued on Sunday evening.

"The first priority for Hong Kong currently is to unite as one and fight the virus together with concentrated resources," a government spokesperson said.

Beijing has initiated a widespread crackdown against its critics in Hong Kong after the financial hub was rocked by seven straight months of huge and often violent pro-democracy protests last year.

Rallies have been all but outlawed this year with authorities citing both security concerns and wielded emergency anti-coronavirus laws to ban public gatherings in the city.

In late June, Beijing also imposed its new security law, which bans anything authorities perceive to be secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces.

At least 22 people have been arrested under the new law since it came into effect, sending a chill through the city.

"At this stage we can't find a particular motive, but it does appear to be random in

# One dead, seven injured in multiple U.K. stabbings

Lone suspect responsible for two-hour long attacks at large

REUTERS  
BIRMINGHAM

Police said they were searching for a man in relation to a two-hour long stabbing spree in the city of Birmingham, central England, early on Sunday, that left one man dead and seven people injured, two of them critically.

The knife attacks happened in four locations in the city centre starting from 00:30 (2330 GMT), police said.

"We are treating all four of those incidents as a linked series," West Midlands Police Chief Superintendent Steve Graham said.

"We are searching for one suspect and inquiries to identify and then trace that suspect are ongoing."

He said there was no suggestion that the attacks were targeted at any section of the community or were gang related.

"At this stage we can't find a particular motive, but it does appear to be random in



**Searching for clues:** Officers gathering evidence at the spot of a stabbing incident in Birmingham on Sunday. • AFP

terms of the selection of people who were attacked," he said.

## Stay vigilant

Britain's Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said he had no information to indicate the incidents were terrorism related but the public should stay "very vigilant".

The first stabbing was in Constitution Hill, police said, and the suspect then moved from north to south,

to Livery Street, Irving Street and ending at Hurst Street.

The final location is an area known as the city's Gay Village, where people had been seated at outdoor tables eating and drinking.

A knife was visible to a Reuters witness beside a drain in Edmund Street, near to the second location.

Mr. Graham said it was "way too early" to say if the knife was connected to the incident.

# Assange to fight against U.S. extradition bid

Hearing to resume in London court

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is set to fight for his freedom in a British court after a decade of legal drama, as he challenges American authorities' attempt to extradite him on spying charges over the site's publication of secret U.S. military documents.

On the subject of which sanctions could be discussed by the EU, Maas did not rule out action relating to Nord Stream 2, a multi-billion-euro Russian-German gas pipeline nearing completion that has drawn the ire of US and European partners alike.

American prosecutors have indicted the 49-year-old Australian on 18 espionage and computer misuse charges adding up to a maximum sentence of 175 years.

His lawyers say the prosecution is a politically motivated abuse of power that will stifle press freedom and put journalists at risk.

Mr. Assange's attorney Jennifer Robinson said the case "is fundamentally about basic human rights and freedom of speech."

American prosecutors say Mr. Assange is a criminal, not a free-speech hero.

Mr. Assange argues he is a journalist entitled to First Amendment protection, and says the leaked documents exposed U.S. military wrongdoing.

Among the files released by WikiLeaks was video of a 2007 Apache helicopter attack by American forces in Baghdad that killed 11 people, including two Reuters journalists.

# Germany threatens Russia with sanctions

Britain says Russia has 'very serious questions to answer' and that it was 'clear' Navalny was poisoned

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BERLIN

Tensions deepened between Germany and Russia over the alleged poisoning of opposition figure Alexei Navalny on Sunday, with Germany threatening sanctions and Russia accusing Berlin of delaying the investigation it demanded.

The Russian opposition leader and anti-corruption campaigner fell ill on a flight last month and was treated in a Siberian hospital before being evacuated to Berlin.

Germany said last week there was "unequivocal evidence" that President Vladimir Putin's top foe had been poisoned using the Soviet nerve agent Novichok.

Any sanctions decided should be "targeted", he added.

Britain said on Sunday that Russia had "a very serious set of questions to

provide an explanation soon, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Sunday.

"We have high expectations of the Russian government to solve this serious crime," Mr. Maas told German daily *Bild*. "If the government has nothing to do with the attack, then it is in its own interest to back this up with facts."

## 'Russia needs to clarify'

If Russia does not help clarify what happened "in the coming days", Germany will be compelled to "discuss a response with our allies," Mr. Maas said.

The Kremlin has denied responsibility for the attack and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Germany is yet to share any findings with Moscow's prosecutors.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on

answer" and it was "clear" the Kremlin critic was poisoned with Novichok.

The Kremlin has denied responsibility for the attack and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Germany is yet to share any findings with Moscow's prosecutors.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on

Sunday accused Germany of stalling efforts to probe the case.

German authorities had failed to respond to a request by Russian prosecutors sent on August 27, she said in a Facebook post.

"Dear Mr. Maas, if the German government is sincere in its statements then it should be interested in preparing a response to a request of the Russian Prosecutor General's Office as soon as possible," Ms. Zakharova said.

## Double game'

"So far we are not certain that Germany is not playing a double game," she added. "Where is the 'urgency' you are insisting upon?"

"By not sending its answer, Berlin is stalling the pro-

cess of investigation for which it's calling. On purpose?"

Mr. Maas said on Sunday there were "several indications" that Russia was behind the poisoning, in the strongest accusations yet from Germany. "The deadly substance with which Navalny was poisoned has in the past been found in the hands of Russian authorities."

On the subject of which sanctions could be discussed by the EU, Maas did not rule out action relating to Nord Stream 2, a multi-billion-euro Russian-German gas pipeline nearing completion that has drawn the ire of US and European partners alike.

"I hope... that the Russians do not force us to change our position on Nord Stream," Mr. Maas said.

American prosecutors have indicted the 49-year-old Australian on 18 espionage and computer misuse charges adding up to a maximum sentence of 175 years.

# Hezbollah, Hamas chiefs meet to discuss Israel-Arab ties

They seek to maintain the 'axis of resistance' against Israel

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIRUT

Leaders of Lebanon's Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas movement, both enemies of Israel, have met to discuss diplomatic normalisation between the Jewish state and Arab countries, a report said on Sunday.

They stressed the "stability" of the "axis of resistance" against Israel, the Hezbollah-run Al-Manar TV channel reported, without saying where or when the meeting took place.

Hassan Nasrallah, head of

the Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah movement, was pictured meeting Ismail Haniyeh, who heads the political bureau of Hamas, the Islamist movement that controls the Gaza Strip.

They discussed "political and military developments in Palestine, Lebanon and the region" and "the dangers to the Palestinian cause", including "Arab plans for normalisation" with Israel, Al-Manar said.

The meeting comes after an August 13 announcement that the Jewish state and the

United Arab Emirates have agreed to normalise ties.

While the U.S.-backed diplomatic drive aims to boost a regional alliance against Iran, Palestinians have condemned it as a "stab in the back" as they remain under occupation and don't have their own state.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said his country is in talks with other Arab and Muslim leaders now about normalising relations, following the deals with UAE and, decades ago, Egypt and Jordan.

# Cohen memoir casts him as 'star witness' against Trump

Ex-lawyer claims President is guilty of the same crime as his; White House calls the book fan-fiction

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
NEW YORK

Donald Trump's former personal attorney and fixer Michael Cohen, in a tell-all memoir, makes the case that the President is "guilty of the same crimes" that landed him in federal prison, offering a blow-by-blow account of Mr. Trump's alleged role in a hush money scandal that once overshadowed his presidency.

Of all the crises Mr. Cohen confronted working for Mr. Trump, none proved as vexing as the porn actress Stormy Daniels and her claims of an extramarital affair with Mr. Trump, Cohen writes in

*Disloyal- The True Story of the Former Personal Attorney to President Donald J. Trump.*

Mr. Trump, despite his later protestations, highlighted the \$1.30 million payment to silence Ms. Daniels ahead of the 2016 election, reasoning he would "have to pay" his wife a far greater sum if the affair ever became known. Mr. Cohen writes, adding the President later reimbursed him with "fake legal fees."

"It never pays to settle these things, but many, many friends have advised me to pay," Mr. Trump said, according to Mr. Cohen. "If it

comes out, I'm not sure how it would play with my supporters. But I bet they'd think it's cool that I slept with a porn star."

The White House called

Mr. Cohen's memoir "fan fiction." "He readily admits to lying routinely but expects people to believe him now so that he can make money from book sales," White House spokesman Brian Morgenstern said in a statement.

"It's unfortunate that the media is exploiting this sad and desperate man to attack President Trump."

The Associated Press obtained an early copy of the book, which is scheduled to be released on Tuesday.

Mr. Cohen, who pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations and other crimes, including lying to Congress, calls himself the "star wit-

ness" of a hush-money conspiracy that still could culminate in charges for Mr. Trump after he leaves office. He described his new book as a "fundamental piece of evidence" of the President's guilt.

He assails Mr. Trump as an "organized crime don" and "master manipulator," but says he once considered him a father figure.

Mr. Cohen also sheds light on Trump's admiration of Russian President Vladimir Putin, saying he admired him most because he "had the balls to take over an entire nation and run it like it was his personal company."

# Man shoots and kills journalist wife in Pak.

Balochistan police searching for him

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani man shot and killed his journalist wife at the couple's home in a remote southwestern town before fleeing, but the motive behind the killing was unclear, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place on Saturday in Turbat, a town in Balochistan province, local police official Mohammad Mohsin said. He identified the slain journalist as Shaheena Shaheen, saying she worked for state-run Pakistan Television.

Mr. Mohsin said Shaheen was dropped off at a hospital in critical condition by two men who then left as

# U.K. not scared of a no-deal Brexit'

As talks resume tomorrow, differences remain over state aid and fishing rights

REUTERS  
LONDON/BRUSSELS



David Frost

Frost said on Sunday, "So a lot of what we are trying to do this year is to get them to realise that we mean what we say and they should take our position seriously," he said.

Talks are due to resume in London on Tuesday but they

have stalled over Britain's insistence that it have full autonomy over state aid and its demands over fishing.

Britain says the EU has failed to fully accept that it is an independent country.

"We are not going to be a client state. We are not going to compromise on the fundamentals of having control over our own laws," Mr. Frost told the *Daily Mail*. "We are not going to accept level playing field provisions that lock us in to the way the EU does things."

**'Wake-up call for the EU'** "That's what being an independent country is about, that's what the British people voted for and that's what will happen at the end of the day," he said.

# Amazon bans sale of imported seeds in U.S.

Move after people get mystery packets

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
SAN FRANCISCO

Amazon has banned the sale of imported seeds

## ASK US

VIDYA BALA

**Q.** I am 27. I recently took up a State government job. My salary is ₹28,000, after PF and NPS deduction. I have also opened a PPF account. I want a personal financial plan. I have no insurance and my parents are aged. I am planning to buy a home. Also, how can I manage my funds after retirement?

SAMIK

**A.** Start with saving regularly. In another 8-10 years, you can seek the help of a financial planner to draw a plan for key goals and retirement. You have all the right traditional investment options. Continue them. Go for a good medical insurance policy and see if you can afford to add your parents, too, in the same policy. Get a pure term cover and make yourself provide adequately for your goals, loans, and the income loss your family could have for the next 10-20 years at least. Do not go for money-back policies. Build an emergency fund in short-term FDs equivalent to 3-6 months of expenses and keep renewing the same to cover any emergency needs for your family, especially in these tough times.

For retirement, make sure you have good allocation towards equities in your NPS. Other than this, you can start with some SIPs in equity mutual funds. Instead of searching for high quality advice, simply choose equity index funds based on the Nifty index and the Nifty 500 index and invest in them regularly. You can use any online platform that offers direct plans of mutual funds. Keep this investment as part of your retirement kitty

and do not be

troubled by falls in the market. There is time for you to think about managing post-retirement money. As for buying a home, please don't rush into it until you are settled in your job and

raise a family. Let your income grow to a level where you don't have to pay more than 30-40% of your income as EMI and you can still save and invest at least 10-20% of your income. You can start saving to cover the margin needed to buy a house with a mix of FDs and equity index funds.

**Q.** I am a 24-year-old government employee. Given where the markets are, what are the options to achieve my financial requirements of buying a house at 32?

SAI PRASAD NAIK

**A.** You have eight years for your goal. That is a decent time to have a mix of various instruments. In other words, you should take an asset-allocated approach. Unless you are familiar with stock-market investing, don't venture into it for this goal. And, do not try to time your entry. It is hard even for seasoned investors. Simply go with SIPs in quality multi-cap equity and corporate bond funds and add some money to FDs when the interest rate turns better in future. Bond markets, too, need timing and identifying low-risk and liquid options. Avoid it in case of insufficient knowledge. Debt funds will provide you with exposure to quality bonds. If you believe in gold, then consider 10-15% in it but only through gold mutual funds and not physical or digital gold. Consider it as a hedge to protect your portfolio when equity markets are down.

**Q.** I am a commerce graduate, looking to gain knowledge about stock market. Can you recommend some online courses?

LAKSHIT SAREEN

**A.** You could start with reading good books on finance by great investors/authors such as Benjamin Graham, Peter Lynch and John Bogle. You could also use all the free sources (including classes) from Professor Aswath Damodaran to learn about valuations. There are courses you can do on technical analysis but please know that technical analysis is not a hobby. It is serious business and needs full-time effort and dedication.

(The author is co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

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

# A difficult CHOICE



Before opting for RBI's debt-recast plan, borrowers must study the long-term impact on their financials

IMAGING: J.A. PREMKUMAR

NAVEEN KUKREJA

The moratorium offered by banks and other institutional lenders ended last month. However, the economic disruption caused by the pandemic and the resultant income and job loss continue to a large degree.

In this scenario, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a loan restructuring plan to offer relief to impacted borrowers, who may struggle to repay their debt over the short term, at least.

This plan is unique in many ways. Unlike the earlier restructuring windows with a largely open-ended structure, the latest resolution framework has a strict entry barrier and a clearly defined timeline for the implementation of the scheme.

Also, unlike the moratorium on term loans that was open for all, only those borrowers whose income has been adversely impacted due to the pandemic and repayment capacity se-

riously restricted would be eligible for the loan restructuring scheme offered by the lender.

This is also the first time that the RBI has announced a resolution plan specifically for retail loans.

**C** Borrowers would need to wait for their lender to announce details on the various options that may be available and the associated eligibility criterion

**Holistic solution**  
The primary objective of the loan recast plan is to provide a holistic solution to the liquidity and viability-related issues faced by existing borrowers in the personal loan segment, along with the corporate and MSME loan categories. The RBI has acknowledged the need to address the deeper cash flows issues faced by borrowers, a large section of whom have an

otherwise good repayment history. According to RBI's Financial Stability Report released in July, about 50% of individual loan borrowers had availed themselves of the moratorium as on April 30.

As a result, most banks and institutional lenders would have feared a significant rise in NPAs in the next few months. But, if implemented well by lenders, the restructuring plan will allow the lending system to spread the probable systemic shock over a longer period of time. Hopefully, the plan will not only provide huge relief to the genuinely-stressed borrowers but also help maintain the overall health of the lending sector.

Currently, most lenders, including the large banks, are being cautious in issuing new loans. Only borrowers with a steady income, who have been unscathed by the pandemic fi-

nancially and have a solid repayment history are predominantly being catered to. This is likely to continue till the time lenders have a clear picture of the repayment capacity of existing borrowers, which should happen over the next couple of months.

In the RBI's lexicon, the term 'personal loan' includes gold, education, home, personal, consumer durable and car loans, credit card dues and loan against securities (other than those sanctioned for business and commercial purposes).

**Loan recast goal**  
The objective of the loan restructuring plan is to clearly provide relief to the maximum number of retail borrowers, who may struggle to service existing debt, by allowing them to

repay as per their changed repayment capacity. The RBI has outlined a broad framework for the lenders to resolve the stress in personal loan assets.

Lenders may provide relief to impacted borrowers by rescheduling loan repayments, conversion of any interest already accrued or to be accrued in future into another loan and through granting loan moratorium subject to a maximum of two years.

This is only a broad framework and personal loan borrowers would need to wait for their lender to announce details on the various options that may be available and the associated eligibility criterion.

However, any restructuring one goes for will come at a price such as higher interest cost and may have a long-term implication on the financial future. Hence, only those genuinely af-

fected by the COVID-19 crisis and struggling to repay debt should opt for loan resolution.

Borrowers should also consider the fact that the loans taken up for restructuring will be reflected in credit reports as 'restructured'. This is likely to have an adverse impact on credit score and thereby, borrowers' chances of availing another loan or credit card may plummet significantly in the future.

My advice for those whose income has been considerably impaired is to opt for rescheduling of loan repayments. Be disciplined and start repaying according to your reduced repayment capacity. Only those who have no, or little, means to make repayments over a longer time horizon should opt for the moratorium. But do go through the various options available with your lender, before taking a decision.

(The author is CEO & Co-founder, Paisabazaar.com)

## THINK INVESTOR

## When dividends matter

Investments should result not only in capital appreciation but also stable cash flows

VENKATESH BANGARUSWAMY



Show me the money: When the market tanks, certainty around dividends becomes important for investors. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

can invest every month through RDs and still enjoy certainty in cash flows. An investment in a bond fund may generate capital appreciation but you would not know today the cash flows you will receive when you redeem units six years hence. Same is the case with equity investments. That causes anxiety when the market tanks. So, what should you do to reduce emotional stress?

Your equity investments should earn returns from both sources – dividends and capital appreciation. Dividends cushion equity investments when markets tank because of broad market factors. For this reason, dividend-paying stocks (along with gold) can be considered as comfort investments; they offer you comfort when

your portfolio value declines. There are two other reasons why dividends can be an important source of returns on your portfolio. Barring unforeseen circumstances, receiving dividends is certain after a company announces the record date for dividend payments. Typically, when the market tanks, such certainty in cash flows becomes an important factor for investors. Therefore, there is good demand for high dividend-paying stocks during such times, especially closer to the record date.

The second reason is psychological. You tend to be more patient with your investment when it has already earned some returns or is expected to offer fixed cash flows. So, receiving dividends will encour-

age you to hold dividend-paying stocks for a while even if the market tanks. When the market revives, you may be able to also earn capital appreciation on your investment. Note that dividends will be taxed at your marginal tax rate which may be higher than the tax on capital gains on equity investments.

## Conclusion

If income is the primary source of return on your investment, you can give up capital appreciation to enjoy the benefit of stable cash flows. But if the primary source of return on investment is capital appreciation (equity), you should, if possible, aim to also earn income returns. Having two sources of returns makes such investments less risky compared with investments that earn only capital appreciation.

There are two ways in which you can capture dividends. You can directly invest in shares after a company announces dividends. Note that dividend yield (dividends upon current market price) should be at least 4-5% if you want to build some cushion to reduce risk on your equity investments. Alternatively, you can buy equity funds that invest in high dividend-yield stocks.

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

## TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

## Consolidation mode

B. KRISHNAMURAM

After a sharp rally in July, precious metals remained largely range bound in August. The upside momentum in July spilled over to the early part of August with comex gold spiking to all-time highs on August 4, before cooling off. The prices have since been consolidating in a trading range.

## Frenzy abates



MCX gold has been consolidating in a range recently. While the long-term trend is positive, a range-bound price action in the ₹49,500-₹54,500 range is likely in the short term. A move above ₹55,000 per 10 gm would signal the resumption of the long-term uptrend.

Price action in MCX silver was similar to MCX gold. After moving past the earlier mentioned target of ₹68,500-₹69,000, the price has eased into consolidation in August. It is likely to be confined to the range of ₹64,000-₹70,000 in the near term. A breakout above ₹70,500 may indicate resumption of the uptrend.

To summarise, precious metals have been in consolidation mode, which is likely to sustain in the short term. The short-term trend would remain positive until the price breaches the lower end of the trading range mentioned above.

(The author is a Chennai-based analyst/trader. This is not meant to be trading or investment advice)

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

## LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"My financial advisor sent me here. Is it right that you are good at disabling QR-code readers?"

## Life insurance term plan premium

Male: 30 Years, Sum Insured- 1 crore, Cover upto- 70 Years

Insurance company	Plan name	Maximum cover Up to (Years)	Annual premium (₹ Male)
Aditya Birla Capital	Life Shield Plan	80	12,998
Aegon Life	iTerm Insurance Plan	100	9,114
Bajaj Allianz	Smart Protect Goal	99	8010
Canara HSBC OBC Life	iSelect+ Term Plan	99	9,284
Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance	Zindagi+ Term Insurance Plan	80	9,309
Exide Life Insurance	Smart Term Plan	75	12411*
Future Generali	Flexi Online Term Plan	75	9,427
HDFC Life	Click2Protect 3D Plus	100	12,478
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	12,502
India First Life	e-Term Plan	80	8,260
Kotak Life Insurance	Kotak e-Term Plan	75	9,558
Max Life insurance	Online Term Plan Plus	85	10,148
PNB Met Life	Mera Term Plan	99	10,148
Reliance Nippon Life	Digi Term	80	11,012
SBI Life	eShield	80	15,070
TATA AIA Life	Maha Raksha Supreme	100	12,980

\*Exide coverage upto 60 yrs for age 30 yrs

## Health insurance premium

For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, for sum insured of ₹10 lakh living in a metro city

Insurer name	Key features	Plan names	Premium (₹)
Care Health	Day Care Treatments Family Floater option Health Checkups Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	NCB Super Premium Care Care with unlimited recharge NCB Super Premium with UAR	9,092 8,265 8,885 9,712
Max Bupa Health	Day Care Treatments Hospitalization at Home Family Floater option Alternate Medicine	Health ReAssure Health Pulse Enhanced Health Companion Go Active	9,590 10,696 9,862 11,747
Star Health	Family Floater option Restoration of cover Wellness Benefits	Medi Classic Star Comprehensive Young Star Gold Plan Young Star Silver Plan	9,661 11,476 8,389 7,133
HDFC Ergo Health	Restoration of cover Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Easy Health Individual Standard Easy Health Individual Exclusive Easy Health Individual Premium Health wallet	10,094 12,670 15,692 22,908
HDFC Ergo General	Hospitalization at Home Hospital Room Eligibility Alternate Medicine	My-health Suraksha Gold Smart My: health Suraksha Silver My: health Suraksha Silver with Rebound & ECB	13,886 12,231 12,765
Digit Healthcare Plus		Activ assure Diamond Activ Health Enhance Activ Health Enhance (Diabetes) Activ Health Enhance (Asthma) Activ Health Enhance (Hypertension)	7,938 9,801 38,148 16,818 32,616
Bajaj Allianz General		Activ assure Diamond with NCB and Unlimited Reload Activ assure Diamond with Super NCB Activ assure Diamond with Unlimited Reload NCB and Unlimited Reload	8,732 8,494 9,287
SBI General Insurance		For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, for sum insured of ₹10 lakh living in a metro city	9,287
Manipal Cigna Health			
Raheja QBE			
Edelweiss General			
Universal Sompo General			
TATA AIG			
Royal Sundaram General			
Liberty General			

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# IPL 2020

League Phase Schedule



Date	Teams	Time	Venue
Sept. 19	MI vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 20	DC vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 21	SRH vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 22	RR vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Sept. 23	KKR vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 24	KXIP vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 25	CSK vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 26	KKR vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 27	RR vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Sept. 28	RCB vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Sept. 29	DC vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Sept. 30	RR vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 1	KXIP vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 2	CSK vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 3	RCB vs. RR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 3	DC vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 4	MI vs. SRH	3.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 4	KXIP vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 5	RCB vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai

Date	Teams	Time	Venue
Oct. 6	MI vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 7	KKR vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 8	SRH vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 9	RR vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 10	KXIP vs. KKR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 10	CSK vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 11	SRH vs. RR	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 11	MI vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 12	RCB vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 13	SRH vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 14	DC vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 15	RCB vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 16	MI vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 17	RR vs. RCB	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 17	DC vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Oct. 18	SRH vs. KKR	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 18	MI vs. KXIP	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 19	CSK vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Oct. 20	KXIP vs. DC	7.30 p.m.	Dubai

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Oct. 31	DC vs. MI	3.30 p.m.	Dubai
Oct. 31	RCB vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah
Nov. 1	CSK vs. KXIP	3.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Nov. 1	KKR vs. RR	7.30 p.m.	Dubai
Nov. 2	DC vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Abu Dhabi
Nov. 3	SRH vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Sharjah

\* There will be 10 double-headers • 24 matches in Dubai, 20 in Abu Dhabi and 12 in Sharjah • All times IST



\* THE PLAYOFFS SCHEDULE WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER. THE FINAL WILL BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 10

## TV PICKS

**US Open:** SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 8.30 p.m.; SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 p.m.

**Nations League:** Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 5 p.m., 10 a.m., 3 p.m., & 7.30 p.m.; Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD) 12.10 a.m. (Tuesday).

**PGA Tour:** Eurosport (SD & HD), 11 p.m.

## IN BRIEF



**Siakam helps Raptors tie series with Celtics**

MIAMI  
Pascal Siakam scored 23 points as Toronto Raptors beat Boston Celtics 100-93.

**The results (semifinals):**

**EC:** Toronto Raptors 100 (Siakam 23, Lowry 22) bt Boston Celtics 93 (Tatum 24) 2-2; **WC:** Denver Nuggets 110 (Murray 27, Jokic 26) bt LA Clippers 101 (George 22) 1-1. AP



**Tvesa finishes fourth for career-best result**

FLUMSERBERG (SWITZERLAND)  
Tvesa Malik finished tied fourth at Flumserberg Ladies Open to record her career-best result in a pro event. Sanna Nuutinen won in a sudden-death playoff against Stina Resen. PTI

**Delhi Capitals' assistant physio tests positive**

NEW DELHI  
Delhi Capitals' assistant physiotherapist has tested positive for COVID-19, the franchise revealed. He had tested negative in his first two tests on arrival. He is now at the isolation facility.

## Serena passes the Stephens test

Pospisil stuns Agut; Thiem beats Cilic; Bopanna-Shapovalov in last eight

### US OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
NEW YORK

### Day Six in numbers

**1** Serena, the only woman in Open Era with a winning record in Slams after losing the first set (43-42) [minimum: 25 matches]

**9** Cilic's ninth successive loss against a top-5 opponent. His last victory came against Nadal (No. 1) at 2018 Australian Open

### QUOTESIDE

**C** First memories are easy. We played a match when we were 11 or 12, and we were one of the worst juniors in terms of attitude... crying and throwing racquets MEDVEDEV, WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS CHILDHOOD MEMORIES WITH RUBLEV

### THE RESULTS

**Third round: Men:** 6-Matteo Berrettini (Ita) bt 30-Casper Ruud (Nor) 6-4, 6-4, 6-2; 10-Anдрей Rublev (Rus) bt Salvatore Caruso (Ita) 6-0, 6-4, 6-0; Frances Tiafoe (USA) bt Marton Fucsovics (Hun) 6-2, 6-3, 6-2; 3-Daniil Medvedev (Rus) bt Jefrey Wolf (USA) 6-3, 6-3, 6-2; Vasek Pospisil (Can) bt 8-Roberto Bautista (Esp) 7-5, 2-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; 21-Alex de Minaur

(Aus) bt 11-Karen Khachanov (Rus) 6-4, 0-6, 4-6, 6-3; 15-Felix Auger-Aliassime (Can) bt Corentin Moutet (Fra) 6-1, 6-0, 6-4; 2-Dominic Thiem (Aut) bt 31-Marin Cilic (Cro) 6-2, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

**Women:** Alize Cornet (Fra) bt 7-Madison Keys (USA) 6-4(6), 3-2 (retd.); Tsvetana Pironkova (Bul) bt 18-Donna Vekic (Cro) 6-4, 6-1; 15-Maria Sakkari (Gre)

bt 22-Amanda Anisimova (USA) 6-3, 6-1; 3-Serena Williams (USA) bt 26-Sloane Stephens (USA) 2-6, 6-2, 6-2; Victoria Azarenka (Blr) bt Iga Swiatek (Pol) 6-4, 6-2; 20-Karolina Muchova (Cze) bt Sorana Cirstea (Rou) 6-3, 2-6, 7-6(7); 16-Elise Mertens (Bel) bt Caty McNally (USA) 7-5, 6-1; 2-Sofia Kenin (USA) bt 27-Ons Jabeur (Tun) 7-6(4), 6-3.

**Guiding force:** Jos Buttler took England home with an unbeaten 77 that contained eight fours and two sixes. AP

**Fast Facts**

▪ Gasly's maiden GP triumph, and the first for Italy-based AlphaTauri (formerly Toro Rosso). Incidentally, Toro Rosso's only victory also came at the Italian GP in 2008 with Vettel

▪ The last time a French driver won a race was in 1996 when Olivier Panis finished on top at the Monaco GP. Gasly was three months old then!

▪ First race won by a team that is not Mercedes, Ferrari or Red Bull since Australia 2013 (Raikkonen, Lotus F1)

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