



SC asks A-G to suggest ways to improve gender sensitivity
page 10



Govt. gets 6 weeks to file status report on Mallya extradition
page 10



Priyanka Radhakrishnan is New Zealand's first Indian-origin Minister
page 11



Nortje, Rahane help DC finish second; RCB also enters playoffs
page 13

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NEARBY



'Only hi-tech, service units in industrial areas'

NEW DELHI
In an attempt to control pollution and promote 'green Delhi', Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced that the Centre had cleared a proposal permitting only hi-tech and service industries to operate in new industrial areas. Manufacturing units operating in old industrial areas will be encouraged to switch to the service sector, he said.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

Level Up IAS
Current Affairs
(with answer Writing Practice)
Crash Course - CSE Mains 2020
One Year Course-Pre-cum-Mains 2021
By Santosh Kumar
8826486650, 8826496650

Gujar protesters back on rail tracks in Rajasthan

JAIPUR
Rail service and road traffic were disrupted after Gujjars demanding reservation in jobs and education as a most backward class intensified their agitation on Monday and occupied the railway tracks at Peelupura in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan. As many as 29 trains on the Delhi-Mumbai route were diverted and three cancelled.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 9

SC stays EC order revoking 'star campaigner' status of Nath

Who gives you the power to determine who is the leader of the party, asks CJ

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the October 30 order of the Election Commission (EC) revoking the 'star campaigner' status of former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde, heading a three-judge Bench, said the Commission had no power to determine who should be the 'star campaigner' of a political party.

"Who gives you the power to determine who is the leader of the party... We are staying this order. You have no power," Chief Justice Bobde told the EC, represented by senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi.

Petition infructuous

Mr. Dwivedi said Mr. Nath's petition against the October 30 order was already infructuous as the campaigning for the bypolls to 28 Assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh was already over, and polling is on November 2.

"Never mind, we will examine this case closely... You have no power," Chief Justice Bobde said.

On October 30, the EC found Mr. Nath guilty of violating the model code of conduct in place for the byelections. The EC revoked his

Poll conduct | A timeline of the case

Sept. 29:	Model Code of Conduct comes into force for bypolls to 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh
Oct. 22:	Nath replies that his remarks have been "completely misunderstood without context and highlighted that there was no malice or intent to disrespect on his part" He says that he had issued a clarification a day after making the purported remarks
Oct. 18:	BJP complains to Election Commission about Kamal Nath violating the poll code at the Dabra campaign rally
Oct. 26:	EC holds that Mr. Nath had violated its code of conduct advisory and advises him to not use such words or statements during the period of Model Code of Conduct
Oct. 21:	EC issues notice to Nath
Oct. 30:	EC revokes his 'star campaigner' status

name on the basis of a complaint from the BJP that Mr. Nath derogatorily referred to its candidate, Imarti Devi, as an "item" during a campaign rally at Dabra in Gwalior district.

Prerogative of party

Mr. Nath, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocates Varun K. Chopra and Gurtejpal Singh, said it was the prerogative of his

party and not the EC to remove his name as a 'star campaigner'.

"Section 77(I) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 read with Guidelines for Star Campaigners issued by the Election Commission, from time to time, makes selection/revocation of 'star campaigners' the sole prerogative of the political party," the petition said. Mr. Nath said the "honour,

dignity and safety of women have been one of the paramount pillars of his work as a Chief Minister, Union Minister and Member of Parliament since 1980 onwards."

There was not a single allegation of misconduct or ill-tempered remark against women attributed to him, he stated.

Frame guidelines

He urged the court to frame "appropriate guidelines for speeches during campaigning by star campaigners/campaigners, keeping in mind the right to freedom of speech and expression and concept of democratic elections".

The revocation of his name from the 'star campaigner' list impeded "the principle of free and fair and level playing field in elections", he said.

The petition explained how the EC first issued notice on October 21 to Mr. Nath on a complaint by the BJP submitted on October 18.

Mr. Nath replied on October 22 that the remarks were "completely misunderstood without context and highlighted that there was no malice or intent to disrespect on his part". He said he regretted the remark and issued a clarification the very next day.

In this context, the Attorney-General referred to Mr. Upadhyay's statement that Mr. Reddy had 31 criminal

A-G declines consent for contempt case against Jagan

But timing of A.P. CM's letter to CJ could be suspect, he says

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal on Monday declined consent to initiate contempt proceedings against Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy and his Principal Adviser Ajeya Kallam.

Mr. Venugopal, however, said the "timing itself" of the Chief Minister's letter to the Chief Justice of India, containing allegations against Supreme Court judge N.V. Ramana and the subsequent public release of the document could "certainly said to be suspect".

Frame guidelines
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In this context, the Attorney-General referred to Mr. Upadhyay's statement that Mr. Reddy had 31 criminal

Prima facie, the conduct of the said persons is contumacious.

However, what has to be noted is that the entire case of contempt arises out of the letter.. written by the Chief Minister directly to the Chief Justice of India. The CJJ is therefore seized of the matter. Hence, it would not be appropriate for me to deal with the matter

— K.K. VENUGOPAL,
ATTORNEY GENERAL

cases against him. "In this background, prima facie, the conduct of the said persons is contumacious," Mr. Venugopal said.

He said he found the letter to contain "objectionable statements".

"I have carefully gone through the contents of your petition. I find that the objectionable statements have been made in a letter dated October 6 written by the Chief Minister to the Chief Justice of India," Mr. Venugopal said.

Mr. Venugopal said Mr. Reddy's letter on October 6 and its release by Mr. Kallam at a press conference held on October 10 was "suspect" because they came "in the background of the order passed by Justice Ramana dated September 16, directing pending prosecutions of elected representatives to be taken up and disposed of expeditiously".

In

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letter".

"Hence, it would not be appropriate for me to deal with the matter," he wrote.

It was Mr. Upadhyay's

PILs against the criminalisation of politics and the long-pending trials against legislators that had led the top court to order the setting up of special courts to try MPs and MLAs expeditiously.

The Bench led by Justice Ramana is presently monitoring the process.

In his letter for consent to the Attorney-General, Mr. Upadhyay said Mr. Reddy's letter on October 6 and its release by Mr. Kallam at a press conference held on October 10 was "suspect" because they came "in the background of the order passed by Justice Ramana dated September 16, directing pending prosecutions of elected representatives to be taken up and disposed of expeditiously".

The letter was released in public domain not only to derail above stated PILs but also to intimidate judicial proceedings. Mr. Reddy is not only indulging in bench-hunting but also wants the court to stop hearing these PILs. This is not a silly mischievous deceitful act but deliberate fraudulent calculated attempts to not only undermine apex court but also to terrorise the judiciary".

"Hence, it would not be appropriate for me to deal with the matter," he wrote.

It was Mr. Upadhyay's

32 protesters held for Ballabgarh violence

3 of them test positive for COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

FARIDABAD

Thirty-two people were arrested by the Faridabad police in connection with the violence on Sunday during a Sarv Bhadrak Sangathan gathering at Ballabgarh to seek justice for Nikita Tomar, who was shot dead by a stalker and his friend last week.

The arrested persons were produced before a court on Monday and sent to jail.

A case has been registered under various Sections of the IPC at the Ballabgarh police station.

The police said the 32 persons belonged to Delhi, Faridabad, Nuh and Palwal.

The police said as three of those arrested had tested positive for COVID-19, they

advised all those present in the panchayat to get tested for the coronavirus.

The police added that the organisers of the panchayat would be quarantined.

Security for family

Police Commissioner O.P. Singh said security had been provided to the parents and brother of Nikita.

The deceased's brother had also been given an arms licence for self-defence, he added.

More than 200 demonstrators had gathered in Ballabgarh and thrown stones at shops and the police on Sunday afternoon. They also tried to block the National Highway-44 (New Delhi-Agra). Ten police personnel sustained injuries during the incident.

Battle for Bihar

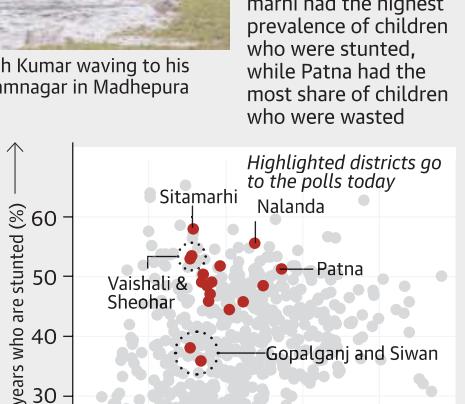
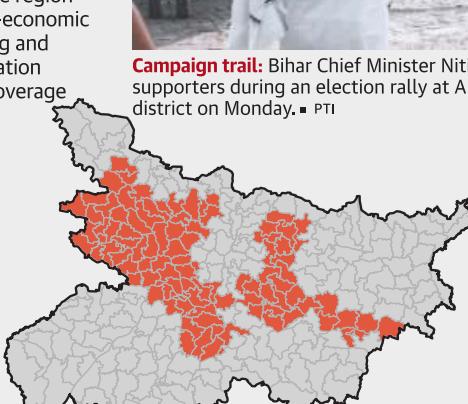
Voting in 94 Assembly constituencies, spread across 17 districts, will be held today in the second phase of Bihar poll. In the 2015 poll, the RJD won the most number of seats and had the highest contested vote share of 45.3% among all parties in the 94 constituencies. The region fared poorly across socio-economic indicators such as stunting and wasting in children, sanitation facilities and electricity coverage

By The Hindu Data Team

PAST PERFORMANCE

The table lists party-wise number of seats contested and won in the 2015 Assembly election in the 94 constituencies and the contested vote share (a party's votes divided by total votes polled in seats contested by the party)

Party	Won	Fought	Contested vote share
RJD	33	42	45.3%
JD(U)	30	41	40.0%
BJP	20	63	38.0%
INC	7	11	40.9%
LJP	2	21	31.6%
Others	2	-	-



Rajasthan passes Bills to stall farm laws

Many pvt. hospitals indicate 100% occupancy, few govt. hospitals show availability



All geared up: A passenger wearing a PPE suit waiting for a train at the New Delhi railway station on Monday. ■ PTI

According to Delhi government data, 604 of the 1,927 COVID ICU beds with ventilators are vacant and 9,076 of the 15,795 COVID beds are currently available. Private hospitals, including Max Healthcare, Fortis, Apollo and Batra, have indicated a fast growing occupancy of ICU beds with ventilators in their facilities, while the government hospitals are facing an onslaught of patients with COVID as well as seasonal ailments.

Increase in bed strength
Speaking to *The Hindu* about

Only hi-tech, service industries can now open in Delhi: Kejriwal

'Pollution-causing manufacturing units will have to shift to hi-tech, service sector'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE

NEW DELHI

In an attempt to control pollution and promote a 'green Delhi', Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday announced that the Centre had cleared a proposal permitting only hi-tech and service industries to operate in new industrial areas in the city.

Manufacturing units operating in old industrial areas will be encouraged to shut down and switch to the service sector, Mr. Kejriwal said, adding that the move would provide opportunities to hi-tech and service industries, which have been moving to other regions of the National Capital Region, to set up offices in new industrial areas in the Capital.

The Chief Minister said that the main economy of Delhi is service-based and



Wazirpur industrial area in Delhi. • FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

such industries were earlier placed under the 'office' category, which meant they could only be opened in commercial areas according to the Master Plan of Delhi.

Commercial rates
"The rates in commercial areas were very high and so

these offices could not open in Delhi and shifted to Gurugram and Noida. Now, office owners will not have to shift to other cities. They will be able to avail cheap and spacious locations in industrial spaces in Delhi itself," Mr. Kejriwal said.

The move is a step to-

wards getting rid of polluting industries such as iron, steel and plastic in Delhi, Mr. Kejriwal said, while thanking Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri for clearing the proposal that had allegedly been lying with the Centre for 3-4 years.

"In the coming days, we hope that all these manufacturing industries will be shut down and more service industries will be opened in Delhi," Mr. Kejriwal added.

The service sector includes offices of Chartered Accountants, lawyers, media companies; computer hardware and software industries; IT service, Internet and email providers; customer interaction services such as call centres, email helpdesk, back-office processing, finance, accounting and more, the CM added.

HC denies relief to school principal in riots case

Setting aside lower court's bail order, Judge notes accused may hamper probe

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday set aside a trial court order granting bail to the principal of Rajdhani Public School here in a case related to the north-east Delhi riots, noting that he may influence the witnesses and hamper the investigation and trial.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait said the trial court, while granting bail to Faisal Farooq, failed to appreciate that while deciding an application for bail, the interest of the society is also to be safeguarded.

Larger interest

"The entire country is aggrieved by the action of such offenders who tarnish the basic secular fabric of the nation and needs to be punished severely. Personal liberty of an individual though precious, is of little value if the larger interest of the people and nation are at



Paramilitary force personnel flag march in violence-hit north-east Delhi. • FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

stake," the judge observed.

The prosecution had alleged that Mr. Faisal, who also owned the school, allowed the rioters to enter his school who created havoc. Consequently, irreparable damage was caused to adjoining DRP Public School and other surrounding structures by the Rajdhani School mob.

Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi, representing the prosecution, stated that Mr. Faisal was found as

the kingpin and mastermind of the incident. At the very onset of the riots, Mr. Faisal was present at the school premises, instigating his people to damage and destroy DRP School, Mr. Lekhi said.

School terrace
It has also been established that during investigation lot of bullets were fired from the terrace of Rajdhani Public School resulting in death of two innocent peo-

Falsely implicated

On the other hand, senior advocate Ramesh Gupta, appearing for Mr. Faisal, said the police have falsely implicated him in another FIR and arrested him on June 22, the day, he was to be released on bail.

Mr. Gupta argued that on the day of the alleged incident, Mr. Faisal had dialled the police six times for help and made a complaint about the damage caused to his school.

Farm fires biggest contributors to pollution'

Rai says pollution combined with pandemic can have catastrophic consequences

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Monday said that Delhites are working hard round the clock to curb pollution level in the Capital but stubble burning has remained the biggest contributor of pollution in the city in the run-up to Deepavali.

He said that the Delhi government was doing everything in its capacity to curb pollution but its hands were tied when it comes to stopping toxic haze from stubble burning from polluting the city.

"Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar says stubble burning contributes 4%-6%, whereas statistics clearly state 40% contribution on Sunday, which was the highest this season," Mr. Rai said.

He requested the Centre to take some action rather than just making a commission, because "pollution combined with the current pandemic can cause catastrophic consequences for the people of Delhi".

"Pollution is not defined by State boundaries, it is defined by air sets. It has an air set of around 300 km, which means pollution will affect the radius of 300 km. People are being ignorant of this fact. Collective effort is required to deal with this issue," Mr. Rai added.

He was speaking after launching an awareness drive against pollution and



Delhi's air quality settled in the 'poor' category on Monday. • R.V. MOORTHY

its damaging effects. "We are launching the 'Red Light' campaign in all 272 wards to reduce the local sources of pollution in Delhi," he said.

Stubble burning

It is repeatedly being said that the rising pollution level is due to stubble burning in neighbouring States, and the response we received from the Central government and States was that there is no alternative to stubble burning, Mr. Rai said.

Meanwhile, the air quality in the Capital on Monday improved and settled in the 'poor' category due to high wind speeds. The average air quality index was 295, according to the CPCB.

Delhi's AQI on Sunday was 364 (very poor).

According to the air quality monitor of Ministry of Earth Sciences, SAFAR, the share of stubble burning in Delhi's pollution was 16% on Monday.

"Increased local surface wind speed and the decrease in the strength of night time inversion have improved dispersion conditions and are likely to influence positively for the next two days," the SAFAR bulletin read.

It added that a marginal deterioration towards the middle of the 'very poor' category is forecast for Tuesday and Wednesday.

Students' plea against physical exams by GGSIPU

They seek deferment or cancellation of tests; HC asks Centre, Delhi govt. to reply

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The High Court on Monday asked the Centre and the city government to respond to a plea by several law students of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University here seeking deferment or cancellation of physical exams, some that were scheduled to start from Monday, in colleges affiliated to the university.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice Praetek Jalan also issued notices to GGSIPU, Bar Council of India, Universities Grants Commission, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies and Amity University.

Multiple exams

The students contended that they have already given multiple exams under various notifications issued by their respective colleges and now are being directed to again sit for examinations for the

same courses through offline mode. The plea contended that a blanket notification forcing all students to give exams through physical mode causes immense distress to the mental health of the students and is violative of their Right to Life".

"The changing nature of the notifications and short timespan between exams has made it burdensome for the petitioners [students] to manage studies, online classes, distance learning, inter-

nal exams of previous semester followed by internal exams of current semester clashing with current semester classes followed by physical examinations within a week," the plea added.

The counsel representing the students said the BCI has come out with a resolution allowing universities to conduct physical exams after getting a no objection certificates from the State governments and State disaster management authorities.

Teachers should not suffer in DU colleges-govt. tussle'

University must act responsibly, says High Court

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The High Court on Monday said that teachers cannot be allowed to suffer in the blame game between the city government and Delhi University colleges while hearing a plea challenging the decision to pay pending salaries to employees from the Student Society Fund (SSF).

The court observed that DU is the guardian of all its colleges and there is some responsibility of the university to put things in order. It asked for all the colleges to be made a party in the case while posting the case for hearing on November 5.

The Delhi government's counsel informed the High Court that a Coordinate Bench of the court, on October 23, had stayed the decision asking 12 DU colleges to pay outstanding salaries to staffers from the students' fund.

DUSU, in its plea, challenged the October 16 order of the Delhi government ask-

ing the 12 colleges, which are fully funded by the State, to pay the salaries of over 1,500 employees - both teaching and non-teaching - from the students' fund.

DU's counsel said the university is supporting the students' petition and added that the students' fund cannot be used for paying teachers' salaries and it will amount to cheating the students.

College employees have not been paid for the last three months.

DUSU, in its plea, said that as per UGC guidelines, only 11 heads can be included as income and 34 heads for expenditure.

It added that for paying the salaries only those heads which are under "income head" can be used for paying salaries.

This does not include the funds collected by students under the societies head or any amount kept in that corpus fund with regard to the SSF can be utilised for this purpose, the plea said.

Two held for 'objectionable' posters of Macron

HEMAMI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI

Two persons have been arrested in north-east Delhi's Jafrabad for allegedly pasting "objectionable" posters of French President Emmanuel Macron.

A senior police officer confirmed the arrests.

Processions and gatherings were organised against Mr. Macron by Muslims in north-east and old Delhi on Sunday. "Posters were pasted on the premises of a mosque in Jafrabad. A case has been lodged and the two persons who put up the posters have been arrested," the officer said.

Mr. Macron's stance on Islam and his defence of caricatures of Prophet Mohammad to protect freedom of expression, has drawn the ire of Muslims.

Man arrested from Assam for harassing Delhi woman online

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 24-year-old man has been arrested from Assam for allegedly harassing a Delhi-based woman on social media and threatening to defame her by sharing her pictures online, the police said on Monday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Atul Thakur said the accused, Chandan Nath from Mangaldoi village in Darrang district in Assam, works at a mobile shop.

During interrogation, he allegedly told the police that he befriended people online and later threatened to make their chats and video calls on social media. She also told the police that he threatened to make her pictures viral on WhatsApp to defame her.

With the help of surveillance and technical analysis, the police managed to locate the mobile number of the accused and his location was traced to Mangaldoi.

A team was then sent to the location and he was nabbed from his village, the police said.

During interrogation, he allegedly told the police that he befriended people online and later threatened to make their chats and video calls on social media. She also told the police that he threatened to make her pictures viral on WhatsApp to defame her.

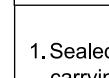
No.DME/247/2020/15322
ADVERTISEMENT FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF CARDIO-THORACIC & NEURO SCIENCES CENTRE (C.N. CENTRE), ATTACHED TO GAUHATI MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, GUWAHATI, ASSAM

Applications are invited from the citizens of India for filling up the post of DIRECTOR, CARDIO-THORACIC & NEUROSCIENCES CENTRE (C.N. CENTRE) ATTACHED TO GAUHATI MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, GUWAHATI on contractual basis for an initial period of 03 (three) years. Interested candidates having qualification and experiences in CTVS / Neuro-Surgery (M.Ch. / DNB recognized by NMC / N.B.E.) can apply for the post. For details please visit our website: www.dme.assam.gov.in

Director of Medical Education,
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Janasanyog No.D/6466/20
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ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL

RIDGE ROAD, DHAWLA KUAN, NEW DELHI-10



TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed tenders are invited from experienced contractors for carrying out the work of whitewash including scrapping, filling, plastering, waterproofing, distempering (plain/oil both), Apex, Snocem and Enamel paint in Main & Middle Block, Activity Block, Raina Auditorium and Sports Room buildings of Army Public School Dhaula Kuan.

2. Firms having professional expertise in providing the above services can collect the tender form between **0900 hrs to 1500 hrs from 04 Nov 2020 to 09 Nov 2020**. Last date for submission of tender form is **16 Nov 2020 by 1200 hrs**.

3. Cost of tender form is Rs 500/-

Principal

Government of Jharkhand
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY & CO-OPERATIVE (ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DIVISION)
Jharkhand, Ranchi.

Notice for Cancellation of published e-Tender vide PR No. 234725(AH) 20-21
e-Tender No. 01/2020-21

Due to unavoidable circumstances e-Tender referred as above published on dedicated website for Jharkhand Government <https://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in> and published in newspaper vide PR No. 234725(AH) 20-21 is hereby cancelled till further notice.

Sd/-
Director Animal Husbandry
Jharkhand Ranchi

PR 235157 (Lohardaga) 20-21 (D)

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

E-Tendering Tender Notice No. 21/2020

Division Railway Manager (Engg.)

N.E. Railways Izzatnagar for and

on behalf of president of India invites

"OPEN" e-tender through on Line (E-tendering) for the following work.

S.N. :- 1, Description of works:-

Balence work for Provision of

2nd washing pit of 600 m long &

shifting of catch siding at Lalkuan

station. Approx. Value (Rs.):-

Rs. 2,87,88,02,89. E.M.D. Money

(Rs.):- Rs. 2,94,000.00. Cost of

Tender Forms:- Rs. 1000/-

Completion time/period from the date

of issue of acceptance letter 08

Timings

DELHI

TUESDAY, NOV. 03

RISE 06:35 SET 17:35

RISE 19:29 SET 08:45

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 04

RISE 06:36 SET 17:34

RISE 20:13 SET 09:41

THURSDAY, NOV. 05

RISE 06:36 SET 17:34

RISE 21:03 SET 10:35

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 30 11
Safdarjung 30 11
Palam 28 14

Delhi Palam Today
30°C Smoke haze to prevail in cool morning and drop in surface winds. A mainly clear sky.

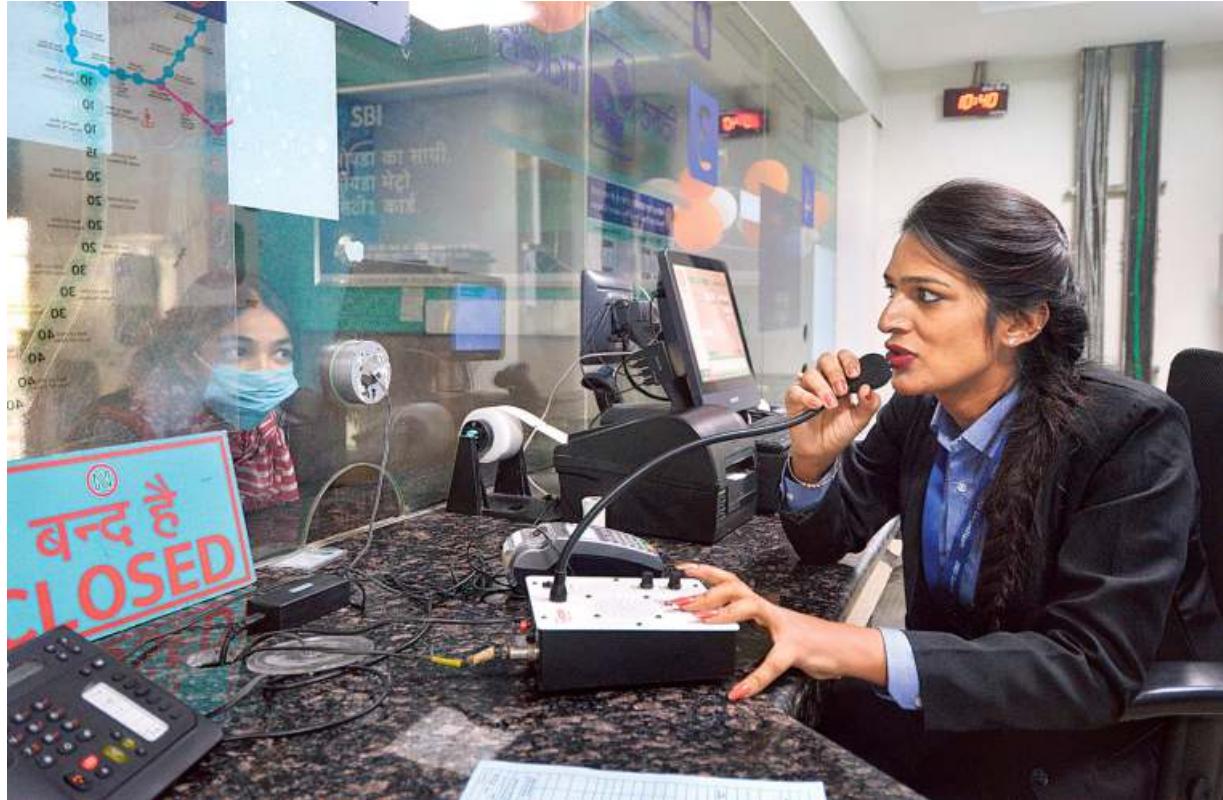
Delhi Palam Tomorrow
30°C Marginal rise in morning temperature with smoke haze. Day likely to remain comfortable.

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THE HINDU

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Our pride



Mahi Gupta, a transgender, works as a ticket-vending operator at Noida Metro Rail Corporation's Pride Station, formerly known as Sector 50 station. Six members of the transgender community have been recruited by the NMRC. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Couple kills niece with iron rod, held

Man had tried to molest her: police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A man and his wife have been arrested for allegedly killing their 17-year-old niece in north-east Delhi's Nandnagri, the police said on Monday.

The accused, Vakeel Podar, 51, and his 45-year-old wife hid the body in a bed box in their house.

The girl was living with the couple as she was studying in Delhi.

Reported missing

The girl was reported missing on October 23 afternoon. Her aunt's statement was recorded. The police started suspecting the couple after Vakeel went missing around the same time.

During the probe, the victim's aunt told the police that on October 23, she left home at 5.30 a.m. and when she returned at 12.30 p.m., she could not find the victim. Her husband told her that he had left the minor in an orphanage in Ghaziabad. During the investigation, it came to notice that Vakeel was not seen in the locality since October 23, said DCP (North-East) Ved Prakash Surya.

On making an enquiry at the said orphanage, it came to light that no girl of the said name was brought there on October 23, he said. "During investigation, it was revealed that Vakeel had tried to molest the victim on September 28. The

Capital seeing third surge in virus cases, government tells Union Home Secretary

Authorities told to do RT-PCR testing in critical zones such as restaurants, markets

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla reviewed the COVID-19 situation in Delhi on Monday.

The city government stated that 57% of the 15,789 dedicated COVID-19 beds in the Capital are vacant and that Delhi was witnessing a "third surge" in cases.

The meeting was also attended by V.K. Paul, Member of NITI Aayog; Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Director General, ICMR; Chief Secretary, Delhi government; and the Commissioner of Delhi Police.

"While new COVID cases and total active cases are going up, the administration is focusing on testing, contact tracing and treatment. The recent surge in active cases is attributed to the festival season, which has witnessed greater movement of people, accompanied by laxity



A hairdresser in PPE suit attends to a client at a salon in Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

in adhering to the basic principles of safe COVID behaviour. The hospital bed situation was reported to be comfortable with 57% of the 15,789 dedicated beds being vacant," read a Ministry statement.

It added that the strategy to contain spread of COVID-19 in Delhi was discussed at length, keeping in view the festival season and decreasing temperatures accompanied by rising pollution.

"It was decided that efforts need to be concentrated in key areas such as targeted RT-PCR testing in sensitive and critical zones such as restaurants, market places, barber shops, salons, etc.; bolster availability of medical resources, including beds, ICUs, and ventilators as a pre-emptive measure; ensure high degree of contact tracing and monitoring of quarantined contacts so as to suppress and break the chain of transmission," the statement added.

Metro travel

It was also emphasised that metro travel should be carefully regulated, strictly in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure that has been issued in this regard. The situation in Delhi will be reviewed again in the coming week, along with other districts of the National Capital Region.



A man undergoes a COVID-19 test in Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Tally nears 4-lakh mark in Delhi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Capital on Monday reported 4,001 new cases of COVID-19, taking the tally to 3,96,371. A total of 36,665 tests were conducted, taking the positivity rate to 10.91%.

The health bulletin released by the Delhi government added that 42 deaths were reported in the same 24-hour period, taking the death toll to 6,604.

A total of 4,824 recoveries

Virus spread

Delhi

Total number of COVID-19 cases 3,96,371

Total deaths 6,604

New cases in the past 24 hours 4,001

New deaths in the past 24 hours 42

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

were also reported.

Currently, there are 33,308 active cases in the

city. The cumulative positivity rate is 8.32% and the case fatality rate is 1.67%. The city has 3,416 containment zones and 21,364 people are in home isolation.

Out of the 15,789 hospital beds available for COVID-19 patients in Delhi, 9,113 are vacant. Dedicated COVID-19 care centres have 6,385 of the 7,887 available beds vacant, and dedicated COVID-19 health centres have 209 of 527 beds vacant.

Inter-State bus travel to resume today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Ahead of the reopening of the three Interstate Bus Terminals (ISBTs) at Kashmere Gate, Sarai Kale Khan and Anand Vihar on November 3, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot reviewed the preparation at the depots to ensure the safety of passengers as well as employees.

This will be the first time inter-state bus travel will be allowed in the Capital since the COVID-19 lockdown was announced.

Mr. Gahlot said, "We have been monitoring patterns of travelling since we resumed bus services and even though interstate travel is a challenge, we are ensuring sanitisation at every point.

Apart from this, regular announcements and sensitisation of passengers about COVID-19 precautions through audio messages, visual communication is also being undertaken. He added that there will be a strict ban on use of gutka, tobacco products, etc. in the premises of ISBTs.

Thermal checking

The Minister said that detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) have been put in place and thermal checking of both passengers and bus crew, at boarding and at the point of entry to ISBTs, will be mandatory.

The government said that all passengers will have to wear masks and no standing will be allowed in the buses.

Social distancing will be ensured on ground station, at the time of boarding of passengers and inside the bus as per government guidelines. It added that testing camps for rapid antigen/RT-PCR tests have also been set up at all three depots in case any passenger shows signs of illness post thermal screening.

6% rise in seroprevalence among Delhi's neighbours

Second serosurvey shows 14.8% in Haryana have developed COVID-19 antibodies, 16.5% in Gurugram

ASHOK KUMAR

GURUGRAM

Seropositivity for COVID-19 in Gurugram, Faridabad and Jhajjar – three of the four districts bordering Delhi – has increased by 5%-6%, according to the second serological survey conducted in Haryana last month. Sonipat, however, registered a marginal dip of 0.1%.

A serological survey is conducted to assess the prevalence of a disease in a population and ascertain how many have developed antibodies against the illness.

The result of the latest survey showed seroprevalence (antibodies) in 14.8% of Haryana's population – an overall jump of 6% compared to the first round. Eight districts recorded seropositivity higher than the State average this time. Faridabad registered the highest at 31.2%,

followed by Yamunanagar (28.6%), Jind (26.6%), Panipat (23%), Karnal (20.7%), Ambala (19.5%), Nuh (17.6%) and Gurugram (16.5%). Bhiwani recorded seropositivity of 3.1%, Sonipat (13.2%) and Jhajjar (12.8%).

Over 16,000 samples

Of the total 16,477 samples collected during the two-day survey conducted in the third week of October, 14,022 were found negative and 2,432 positive. The rest (23) were inconclusive.

In each district, a total of 720 samples were taken and divided into rural and urban strata by considering 60:40 ratio. A total of 432 rural and 288 urban participants were selected from each district.

In terms of deviation in seropositivity compared with the first round, Yamunanagar saw an increase of 20.3%,

from 8.3% earlier. Similarly, Jind and Panipat registered a significant increase of 15.6% each. Gurugram and Faridabad witnessed an increase of 5.7% and 5.4%, respectively. Jhajjar saw a jump of 6.9%.

Nuh saw a dip of 2.7%. Bhiwani, Sonipat, Charkhi Dadri and Palwal also saw a dip.

Seropositivity was highest for the 88-97 age group at 20% and the lowest for the 78-87 age bracket at 13.1%. Seropositivity was a little above 15% for those in the age group of 38-57, it was 13.9% for the 18-27 age bracket.

Participants in the survey not in the habit of wearing masks outnumbered those wearing masks in Kaithal, Faridabad, Nuh and Fatehabad. Similarly, those not adhering to the norms of social distancing outnumbered those adhering to it in Faridabad, Nuh and Fatehabad.

After a quarrel broke out between them, Sahil suspected that his wife and Afroz were in an illicit relationship.

Further probe revealed that Sahil's wife was living in her parental house for over a month with their two children. The couple often quarreled because of Sahil's suspicion. On Sunday, Sahil had gone to meet his wife and kids in Matia Mahal. He then brought Afroz – who stays in his wife's parental house – along with him to his resi-

dence. The police found two empty glasses at the crime spot and suspected that the duo was drinking.

A fight is suspected to have broken out between them after which Sahil strangled Afroz.

On hearing the commotion, Sahil's mother and brother rushed to the room and tried to intervene but Sahil hit them as well, leaving them injured.

Sahil also told them that he had killed Afroz. His fami-

ly members sought their neighbours' help but they allegedly refused because they were aware of Sahil's violent behaviour. Subsequently, he took his own life. Sahil worked as a photographer and videographer and Afroz worked at a salon.

(*All names have been changed)
Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, Telephone: 011-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.

Man found dead in Hauz Qazi after killing relative

The 25-year-old suspected his wife of having an affair with the victim, say police

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A 25-year-old man allegedly killed his relative before taking his own life in Central Delhi's Hauz Qazi on Sunday night, the police said on Monday.

A senior officer said the accused, Sahil*, was upset over strained relationship with his wife. The police said they received information regarding the incident at 12 a.m. Inquiry revealed that Sahil killed a relative, Afroz*,

after a quarrel broke out between them. Sahil suspected that his wife and Afroz were in an illicit relationship.

Further probe revealed that Sahil's wife was living in her parental house for over a month with their two children. The couple often quarreled because of Sahil's suspicion. On Sunday, Sahil had gone to meet his wife and kids in Matia Mahal. He then brought Afroz – who stays in his wife's parental house – along with him to his resi-

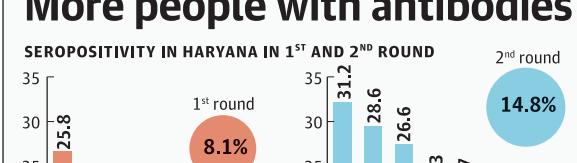
dence. The police found two empty glasses at the crime spot and suspected that the duo was drinking.

A fight is suspected to have broken out between them after which Sahil strangled Afroz.

Sahil also told them that he had killed Afroz. His fami-

More people with antibodies

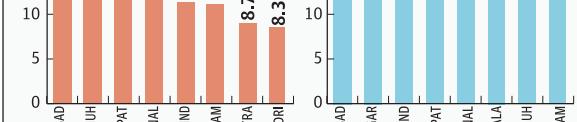
SEROPOSITIVITY IN HARYANA IN 1ST AND 2ND ROUND



(overall seropositivity) 8.1%

Source: HARYANA GOVERNMENT

OCCUPATION-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS



War of words over suspension of goods trains to Punjab

BJP trying to fool farmers, say State Cabinet Ministers

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

With the continued suspension of goods trains to Punjab, political parties were engaged in verbal spat surrounding the issue, a day after Chief Minister Amarinder Singh urged Party national president J.P. Nadda for collective will and statesmanship to resolve the situation.

All Cabinet Ministers of the Congress government on Monday hit out at the BJP, accusing the State BJP leadership of misleading farmers after being cornered on the draconian farm laws.

Punjab BJP president Ashwani Sharma had accused the Chief Minister of "instigating farmers by misinforming them to gain political mileage".

The Punjab Ministers, in a joint statement, said, "not only was the BJP in Punjab trying desperately to fool the farmers with regard to the

agricultural laws of the Central government but their leaders and workers were actively indulging in brazen falsehoods in a bid to exploit the sensitive issue to promote their political interests."

Farmers hurt

"The farmers don't need any instigation. They are hurt at the treatment meted out to them by the BJP-led Central government. They are fighting to save their livelihood. But clearly, Mr. Sharma, like other BJP leaders, has no realisation of this," added the Ministers.

The Ministers also dismissed the allegation that the Congress government was responsible for the continued farmer protests and suspension of goods trains. Pointing out that the security and safety of trains was the responsibility of the Railway Protection Force, with

the State government having no say in the matter, the Ministers asked what the State government had to do with the safe movement of trains.

AAP's charge

However, the Opposition Aam Aadmi Party accused the Chief Minister of indulging in theatrics. Leader of the Opposition Harpal Singh Cheema said Capt. Singh's letter to Mr. Nadda was nothing more than mere theatrics with a ploy to mislead the people of Punjab, especially the struggling farmers.

"Until and unless the farmers of the State get a legal guarantee to procure all their crops at MSP, the interest of the farmers could not be safeguarded. The State government should guarantee to the farmers to purchase the crop at the MSP on all crops, including wheat and paddy," said Mr. Cheema.

BSP chief does U-turn on support to BJP, says ideologies opposite

Will rather retire from politics than ally with communal forces, says Mayawati

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said on Monday that she would rather take *sanyas* (retire) from politics than ally with the BJP or contest elections with it.

The BSP will never ally or contest any election at any cost with "parochial and communal forces like the BJP," Ms. Mayawati said in a statement that seemed aimed at the Muslim community.

The ideologies of the BSP and BJP were polar opposites, she added.

The BSP chief's clarification was issued to reassure the minority community days after she had stated that she would ensure the defeat of the SP candidate in the upcoming MLC election even if it meant voting for the BJP. The SP was quick to seize on her comments, say-



BSP chief Mayawati

ing her claim was an open admission of her links with the ruling BJP.

Blames opponents

In an apparent damage control effort on the eve of voting for the bypolls in U.P. and M.P., and second phase of the Bihar Assembly election, Ms. Mayawati's statement said her opponents were spreading "false propaganda" about her remarks as part of a "conspiracy" to

wear Muslim voters away from her.

"I will take *sanyas* from politics but I cannot contest election with the BJP," the former Chief Minister said, stressing that she had no plans of retirement yet.

Ms. Mayawati claimed that despite forming a government with the BJP thrice in U.P., the BSP did not allow any opposition against any person or religion. There was not a single "Hindu-Muslim" riot in U.P. during her tenure, she claimed.

Stating that she had always provided adequate representation to Muslims, Ms. Mayawati pointed out that in the U.P. bypoll for seven seats, she had fielded two Muslim candidates.

SP president Akhilesh Yadav meanwhile reiterated his allegation of the BSP having a tacit understanding with the BJP.

"Both BJP and BSP say they want the SP to lose. I want to understand how their desires aligned," Mr. Yadav told reporters.

Test for opposition

The by-election will not only measure any anti-incumbency against Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath but also test the strength of the opposition parties as they fight to claim the position of the main challenger in 2022.

While the SP under Akhilesh Yadav, with a larger presence in the Assembly, has emerged as the frontrunner, the Congress has also staked a claim through the frequent visits to the State by its general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Ms. Mayawati, however, has been relegated from ground politics especially since the 2019 Lok Sabha election which she contested along with the SP.

Ex-Unnao MP joins SP after quitting Cong.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Days after resigning from the Congress, former Unnao MP Annu Tandon on Monday joined the Samajwadi Party in the presence of party president Akhilesh Yadav.

Ms. Tandon said she wanted to see Mr. Yadav as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in 2022. She said it was necessary to unite if we have to push back communal forces.

Explaining her decision to join Mr. Yadav, Ms. Tandon said, "Uttar Pradesh needs a progressive, visionary, young and educated leader."

Ms. Tandon was elected MP from Unnao, adjoining Lucknow, in 2009. However, she lost in both the 2014 and 2019 elections.

Last Thursday she submitted her resignation to the Congress stating that there was a "misalignment" between her and its Uttar Pradesh unit.

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that an one male person fell down from Poorva Express at New Delhi Railway Station, platform no. 15 he was Admit dated 28.10.2020 by CAT Ambulance CR37 in Lady Harding Hospital MLC No. 3314/20 declared dead by doctor. The dead body has been preserved for identification at LMLH Hospital Mortuary, Delhi for 72 hrs. In this regard a DD No. 32A dated 29.10.2020 has been registered at PS New Delhi Railway Station, New Delhi.



The description of the dead body is given as under Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 60 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Black Half Paint, Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO
PS New Delhi Railway Station
Ph.: 011-23744073, 8750871301
DP/03/RLY/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING



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

E-mail : cic@cbi.nic.in
Ph.: 011-24368634, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
PS Mayapuri, Delhi
DP/253/WD/2020

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CHANGE OF NAME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

I, ANJALI Rani Sharma D/o Ram Avtar Sharma, DOB 27-11-1985 hereby declare that some of my documents have name as R. Anjali Rani Sharma. But my correct name is Anjali Rani Sharma as per notary affidavit no. IN-DL010685604450645 dt. 02-Nov-2020.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice
NOTICE is hereby given that BALWINDER SINGH S/o MANMOHAN SINGH R/o WZ-201, GALI NO. 10, KRISHNA PARK, TILAK, NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110018 OF AFGHANISTAN is applying to the Secretary of the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs for Naturalization and that any person who knows any reason why Naturalization should not be granted should send a written signed statement of the facts to the said Secretary.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Smt. Gindo Devi W/o Sh. Prabhakar Lal R/o F-08, Sector-56, Noida (UP), intend to transfer in the name of Plot No. 08, Block-F, Sector-6, Noida, Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar (UP) 201301 area 162.00 sq.mtrs. which is at present registered in the name of (allottee) Smt. J.K. Madan W/o Late Sh. K.L. Madan R/o BD-7E, Munirka, New Delhi-110060. Any person who has any claim of any sort with respect to the said property, can lodge his/her objection in the Residential Section of Noida Authority along with proofs within 15 days of this public notice. Gindo Devi

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WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe

Kerala and Mahe. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala and Mahe

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

Agartala 1.2 ... 33.3 ... 23.8 Kozhikode 34.6 ... 26.2

Ahmedabad 34.3 ... 19.0 Kurnool 34.5 ... 22.0

Aizawl 16 ... 25.3 ... 16.2 Lucknow 29.7 ... 18.1

Allahabad 31.6 ... 18.5 Madurai 34.7 ... 24.7

Bengaluru 0.2 ... 29.0 ... 20.4 Mangalore 1.6 ... 31.8 ... 23.0

Bhopal 30.5 ... 14.6 Mumbai 35.0 ... 23.4

Bhubaneswar 33.4 ... 24.6 Mysuru 32.0 ... 21.6

Chandigarh 72 ... 30.2 ... 13.0 New Delhi 30.1 ... 10.8

Chennai 33.3 ... 25.3 Patna 32.2 ... 19.6

Coimbatore 34.4 ... 23.6 Port Blair 0.4 ... 31.2 ... 25.5

Dehradun 29.4 ... 13.7 Puducherry 33.4 ... 24.2

Gangtok 21.2 ... 13.5 Pune 31.2 ... 19.8

Goa 31.5 ... 25.1 Raipur 33.2 ... 20.0

Guwahati 33.0 ... 23.8 Ranchi 30.0 ... 17.6

Hubballi 29.0 ... 20.0 Shillong 1.3 ... 21.3 ... 15.3

Hyderabad 32.8 ... 17.5 Shimla 31.6 ... 12.5

Impal 46.1 ... 28.4 ... 18.2 Srinagar 20.5 ... 2.1

Jaipur 30.8 ... 14.8 Thiruvananthapuram 32.6 ... 25.1

Kochi 31.4 ... 25.0 Tiruchi 35.8 ... 25.0

Kohima 26 ... 24.2 ... 16.3 Vijayawada 34.0 ... 24.0

Kolkata 32.6 ... 25.8 Visakhapatnam 34.0 ... 25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES SO₂ NO_x CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE

Ahmedabad 37 ... 104 ... 47 ... 175 ... 126 ... 126

Bengaluru 14 ... 26 ... 53 ... 217 ... 134 ... 134

Chennai 29 ... 16 ... 38 ... 88 ... 100 ... 100

Delhi 18 ... 152 ... 104 ... 351 ... 330 ... 330

Hyderabad 32 ... 58 ... 28 ... 204 ... 140 ... 140

Kolkata 7 ... 13 ... 38 ... 41 ... 44 ... 44

Lucknow 4 ... 83 ... 31 ... 363 ... 367 ... 367

Mumbai 3 ... 81 ... 46 ... 181 ... 149 ... 149

Pune 29 ... 43 ... 49 ... 120 ... 84 ... 84

Visakhapatnam 9 ... 68 ... 22 ... 189 ... 192 ... 192

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Maharashtra recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 393 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 13

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

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

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

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

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

Quota issue: Shivendararaje urges Maratha leaders to fight together

Maratha Kranti Thok Morcha seeks dismissal of panel headed by Ashok Chavan

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Expressing concern over the simmering resentment among the Maratha youth after the Supreme Court stayed the implementation of the Maratha quota law in Maharashtra, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislator Shivendararaje Bhosale on Monday urged community leaders to set aside their differences and stand together.

Speaking at a round table conference of Maratha outfits in Satara, Mr. Bhosale – a direct descendant of the warrior King Chhatrapati Shivaji – warned that lack of unity among the community's leaders could result in a social Panipat".

The BJP legislator was alluding to the shocking military debacle suffered by the Maratha army in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761.

"I have come to this conference with a view to seeking justice for the Maratha community. I have not come here as a royal, but as a common member of my com-



Shivendararaje Bhosale

munity. The apex court's decision has irked the Maratha youth. Therefore, the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi government needs to sort out this issue on a priority basis," Mr. Bhosale said.

Imploring community leaders not to repeat history, he said that it would do no good to the cause if the community was riven with factionalism.

Pawar's attention
The Satara royal, along with leaders of other Maratha outfits present on the occa-

I have come to this conference with a view to seeking justice for the Maratha community. I have not come here as a royal, but as a common member of my community. The apex court's decision has irked the Maratha youth.

sion, demanded that Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar, whose party is an important part of the tripartite MVA, pay more attention to the quota issue.

Skipping the meet

Incidentally, despite Mr. Bhosale's exhortations for community leaders to stand united, his cousin and rival from Satara – BJP MP Udayanraje Bhosale who, too, was expected to be present, yet again skipped the conference. On Friday, Mr.

Udayanraje had abruptly cancelled another conference that was scheduled to be held in Pune.

Meanwhile, Aba Patil of the Maratha Kranti Thok Morcha said that the sub-committee on the Maratha reservation issue headed by Congressman Ashok Chavan had not been of any use to the community.

No requisite seriousness'

"We demand that the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government dismiss this committee and form a fresh one with new members who are seriously interested in working for the rights of the Maratha community. Up until now, the MVA has not shown the requisite seriousness in this matter," Mr. Patil said.

Urging Mr. Pawar to take on a major role in securing justice for the community, Mr. Patil said that Maratha outfits had lost faith in Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

Summoned by NCB, Deepika's manager Karishma 'untraceable'

She has to record statement in drug case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Bollywood actor Deepika Padukone's manager Karishma Prakash, who has already applied for anticipatory bail.

The NCB, which is probing the alleged nexus between drug peddlers and Bollywood celebrities which came to light after actor Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide, had summoned Ms. Prakash on October 28 following seizures at her residence.

Earlier Ms. Padukone and Ms. Prakash have appeared before the NCB for questioning. Ms. Prakash's name cropped up during interrogation of one of the arrested drug peddlers, an official said.

Statements of Ms. Padukone and fellow actors Sara Ali Khan, Shraddha Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh, among others, were recorded by the NCB in September.

The Central agency has so far arrested 23 people as part of its investigation in the drug case linked to Rajput's death.

Happy birthday King Khan



Day to remember: A man walks past a painting of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan on his 55th birthday, in Mumbai on Monday. ■ VIVEK BENDRE

Free online classes begin for Class XI students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PUNE

The Maharashtra Education Department on Monday started free online classes for Class XI students to prevent loss of the academic session due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"Schools and colleges in the State are shut due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Besides the pandemic, the admission process for FYJC is suspended due to the ongoing Maratha quota issue," Mr. Patil said.

The classes have begun on YouTube and over 60,000 first-year junior college (FYJC or Class XI) students have so far enrolled for these classes,

State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) director Dinkar Patil said.

The decision to start online classes free of charge for FYJC arts, science and commerce students was taken to avoid the academic loss till colleges start functioning normally, he said.

The admission process for the FYJC currently stands suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Ajit Pawar discharged from hospital

Ajit Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

and the Supreme Court order staying the implementation of reservation for Marathas in jobs and education.

"Schools and colleges in the State are shut due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Besides the pandemic, the admission process for FYJC is suspended due to the ongoing Maratha quota issue," Mr. Patil said.

"To avoid the academic loss, we decided to start free online classes for arts, science and commerce students through YouTube," he said.

Mr. Patil said till Sunday evening, they received around 62,000 registrations from Class XI students for the online classes across the State. The registration is still going on, he added.

As per the SCERT's data, over 9,000 FYJC students from Pune and 7,600 from Mumbai have registered for the online classes.

Antigen test for lawyers, litigants at Family Court

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

There will be an antigen test for lawyers and litigants entering the Family Court premises starting November 3. The court had suspended physical hearings in view of the lockdown in March, which resumed on Monday.

A notice was issued on Monday that said, "In order to ensure everyone's safety at Family Court during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's H East ward will conduct free antigen tests for everyone from November 3."

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IC-1289(17)/2020

Decision on financial relief for electricity consumers before Deepavali: Minister

STAFF REPORTER

MUMBAI

Maharashtra Energy Minister Nitin Raut on Monday said that a proposal to extend financial relief to the domestic power consumers who received inflated bills for the period during the lockdown was being considered by the Finance Department and a decision would be taken before Deepavali.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted many employees. One of the reasons for increased bills was that people were asked to work from home. However, we have received complaints that many have got inflated power bills for that period. We have discussed ways to extend relief and expect that a decision will be taken before Deepavali," Mr. Raut said. The minister visited Tata Thermal Power centre at Trombay.

A number of consumers from different parts of the State had complained of inflated bills in August and September. While the minister had earlier announced of extending relief to the affected consumers, the Finance Department led by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar had expressed inability to bear the financial



Nitin Raut

strain as the economy was already struggling due to the lockdown.

Earlier, Mr. Raut said that his department had set up a technical audit committee to find out the reasons behind the complete power shutdown in Mumbai on October 12.

"The Central Electricity Authority and the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) too have formed independent committees and combined suggestions from all three committees will be discussed in front of the MERC," he said, adding that measures to improve islanding system for Mumbai and steps to be taken for modernisation would be discussed.



Back to school

Reopening will prevent a washout year for students but the pandemic is not past

The most significant aspect of continued unlocking of public activity during the COVID-19 pandemic is the decision of many States to reopen schools in November. While some, such as Andhra Pradesh and Assam, have allowed pupils back on campus from November 2, many others are waiting until Deepavali to resume classes. Attendance at schools remains voluntary, since the Centre's guidelines, which now extend until the end of November, specify that parents can decide what their wards should do. Existing regulations allow research scholars and students who have to take up practical work to resume from October 15, but colleges remain understandably cautious and want to adopt a staggered approach to reopening. India's revitalised public sphere outside containment zones, with shops and restaurants open, and buses and urban trains on stream, is set to widen its scope as cinemas also open at half capacity. These activities will restore the sinews of the economy, but they come with the risk of exposing more people to the coronavirus. At the end of several fatiguing months of restrictions, the belief that India has crossed peak infections and reduced its transmission rate could well prompt citizens to become lax about safe behaviour – proper, universal use of face coverings, personal hygiene and distancing norms. This could pose an unprecedented risk, since children who are believed to be less affected by the infection could bring the virus home to vulnerable individuals, a phenomenon experienced after reopening schools in Israel. Minimising negative impacts during the unlock and pre-vaccine phase, therefore, requires unwavering adherence to safety protocols, and additional vigilance on the part of State health authorities who must monitor the situation in educational institutions.

Globally, reopening of schools has elicited mixed reactions, but governments have deferred to the learning needs of children in Europe where lockdowns have been reimposed due to a fresh wave of cases. In any case, data published in August show that children represented less than 5% of all infections in 27 European countries. Teachers' unions in Britain are calling for limited classes to help disadvantaged children and those with parental commitments; public schools in many U.S. States remain closed while some private institutions have reopened; France is asking even small children to wear masks along with teachers. The consensus is to prevent crowding, mandate masks, and allow natural air to ventilate rooms. Such precautions have universal applicability as preventive measures. A reopening will revive the economy, but it need not impose a deadly price in the form of avoidable and invisible deaths among the elderly and the vulnerable.

End of the tunnel?

The welcome pick-up in GST revenues may not yet signal a sustainable economic recovery

Over ₹1.05 lakh crore has been collected from the Goods and Services Tax in October, the highest monthly revenue from the indirect tax since February 2020. This marks the second successive month of a year-on-year uptick in the GST kitty – the 10.25% rise in October was preceded by a 4% increase in September. Coming on the back of six successive months of contraction in GST revenues beginning March when the lockdown was imposed, this two-month trend clearly signifies a recovery is underway in the economy, the government has claimed. October's revenues broadly pertain to economic activity that occurred in September, a month in which significant improvements were recorded in a range of high-frequency indicators, including exports and the purchasing managers' index (PMI) for manufacturing. Only a part of that can be explained by the base effect – September 2019 had seen a dip in several indicators. Indeed, the wider unlocking of the economy in September when public transport restrictions were lifted and several sectors were allowed to operate with fewer curbs, helped. After the 23.9% collapse for the economy in the first quarter of 2020-21, the sense of relief from a string of positive numbers isn't misplaced. The few signs that have come in about October's economic performance suggest GST revenues could remain healthy in November too. The manufacturing PMI for October, released on Monday, has risen even higher, indicating large firms scaled up production further. India's largest auto makers have clocked record sales in October, which incidentally should prop up the GST collections used to compensate States – a federal flashpoint this year.

Yet, any prognosis of a full-fledged economic recovery could still prove to be premature and illusory. Economists have reservations about reading too much into the September-October data as a sustainable trend, for it partly represents pent-up demand brewing over the months of lockdown finding expression, and partly India's fabled festive season effect. North Block mandarins recently critiqued these 'experts' for their changing opinions, swinging from a doomsday scenario in June to a cynical 'pent-up demand' surmise when economic indicators improve. Talking up the economy is perhaps a necessary policy device at times, but equally critical is a realistic assessment of ground realities so as to prepare better for what lies ahead. One such parameter that needs attention is employment. The government has not ruled out more stimulus measures in the coming months. Much depends on the sensitivity of its evolving worldview, be it about the pandemic's spread and control, or the most challenged sectors in the economy that still need support.

Education, the nation and the States

The National Education Policy 2020 underestimates the problem of reconciling the three systems of education in India



KRISHNA KUMAR

Towards the end of a recent webinar on the National Education Policy 2020, a retired civil servant asked a question. Referring to Centre-State relations and roles in education, he asked whether the new policy gives the Centre a predatory role. The use of the word 'predatory' felt a bit sharp in the context of education, but the intention obviously was to ascertain whether the new policy observes federal courtesy. Even the 1986 policy didn't fully acknowledge the variety prevailing in provincial practices and the legacies those practices are rooted in. The trend has been to assume that a national system will evolve and iron out provincial variations. That is a strange assumption. For education to fulfil its social role, it must respond to the specific milieu in which the young are growing up. India has sufficient experience of attempts made from the national level to influence systemic realities on the ground. There is a considerable history of strong recommendations made by national commissions and of provincial recalibration. States have their own social worlds to deal with, and they often prefer to carry on with the ways they became familiar with in colonial days. A prime example is the continuation of intermediate or junior colleges in several States more than half a century after the Kothari Commission gave its much acclaimed report.

Evolution in the provinces
Historically, the system of education evolved in the provinces. One hundred years ago, the Central Advisory Board of Education was

created to co-ordinate regional responses to common issues. The 'advisory' character of this administrative mechanism meant that the Board served mainly as a discussion forum. The Constitution, in its original draft, treated the States as the appropriate sphere for dealing with education. But unlike some other federal countries, India chose to have a Ministry of Education at the Centre. Its role was not merely decorative or confined to coordination among differing State perspectives and practices; rather, the Centre was expected to articulate aims and standards, or to pave the road to nation-building and development. Soon after independence, a more substantial sphere of the Centre's activities in education emerged in the shape of advanced institutions in professional fields and schools specifically meant for the children of civil servants transferrable across India. Such institutions received higher investment than the States could afford. The same can be said for national-level resource institutions which guided policy and encouraged new practices.

Thus, concurrency was already a reality before the 1976 amendment formally included it in the Constitution. What it might mean after the Emergency was an open question. A decade later, when the national policy was drafted under a youthful leader, it emphasised national concerns and perspective without specifically referring to provincial practices that indicated strong divergence. Engagement with the States remained a function of the Planning Commission. In the meantime, a burgeoning private sector had begun to push both public policy and popular perceptions of education. The force of this push can be measured from the difference between the 1986 policy and its own action programme published six years later. Throughout the 1990s, those in charge of education remained hesitant to explain publicly how ex-



actly liberalisation would apply to this traditionally public responsibility. The rapidly expanding and globalising urban middle class had already begun to secede from the public system, posing the awkward question of why education cannot be sold if there are willing buyers. Systemic chaos grew, leaving the policy behind.

Three systems

India now has three systems. To call them sectors would be an understatement. There is a Central system, running an exam board that has an all-India reach through affiliation with English-medium private schools catering to regional elites. Two school chains run by the Centre are part of this system. The Central system also includes advanced professional institutes and universities that have access to greater per capita funding than what their counterparts run by the States can afford. These latter ones belong to the second system which also features provincial secondary boards affiliating schools teaching in State languages. The third system is based on purely private investment. Internationally accredited school boards and globally connected private universities are part of this third system. These institutions represent a new level of freedom from state norms.

An explicit attempt was made under the Right to Education (RTE) Act to bridge the first two systems. The RTE is a parliamentary law, providing a set of standards for elementary education and a call to private schools to provide for social justice via the quota

route. In higher education, such an attempt to balance private autonomy with an obligation to provide social justice is yet to be made in any palpable sense. Accreditation norms and recognition procedures create a semblance of public accountability.

Coordination among the three systems has proved unmanageable, even in purely functional terms. The least we might expect would be a reliable mechanism to reconcile the marking standards of different Boards and universities. Far harder is the coordination required in adherence to social responsibilities in a period of rapid economic change. Inequalities have become sharper with the rise in overall prosperity. Education must mediate between different social strata divided by caste and economic status.

The recent attempt made by Tamil Nadu to create a modest quota in NEET for students who attended government schools points towards an endemic problem exacerbated by centralisation.

Social vision

The new policy document underestimates the problem of reconciling the three systems. The architect of many of our national-level institutions, the late J.P. Naik, used to say that we must ask what kind of human being and society we want before we draft a policy in education. Apart from that philosophical question, we also need a systemic vision: both for recovery from institutional decay and for future progress. Functional uniformity is unlikely to offer any real solution. That is what the new policy seems to favour. In higher education, it proposes nationally codified and administered measures to oversee institutional transformation across State capitals and district towns. The assumption is that old structures will melt like wax under the heat of an empowered vision. The idea of a monolithic regulatory architecture to control a system that is privatising at a

rapid pace suggests a tempting impulse rather than a considered plan. Sufficient indication has existed for many years now that economic policy favours greater private enterprise in higher education. How to reconcile this push with the necessity of equitable public education is a nagging question. Similar is the question of autonomy; it cannot be interpreted in financial terms alone. The many different ways in which the States have maintained their colleges and universities cannot all be regarded as signs of a dysfunctional or failing system. If failure is the criterion for choice of remedy, gradations of failure will have to be determined first and their causes studied before remedial steps are contemplated. To accept that one size does not fit all, and then to push every foot into a chosen shoe takes self-contradictory parlance to a new level.

At the school level too, the new policy proposes a post-RTE structural shift, ignoring the fact that the RTE itself has not yet been fully implemented. It is useful to recall that the RTE was drafted with prolonged involvement with the States, not mere consultation. The consensus for such a law was no less difficult to create than the formulation of its content. A vital role was played by the highest judiciary in pushing the polity towards recognising children's right to be at school rather than at work. This was a historic social turn towards greater parity between sharply unequal strata. It might not have been accomplished if the Centre had not played an assertive role. Further progress of this role called for continued financial support for the implementation of RTE and policy guidance for the proper use of this support so that regional disparities diminish.

Krishna Kumar is a former Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training and editor of the Routledge Handbook of Education in India

Serosurveys underestimate building of herd immunity

Antibody prevalence data derived from serosurveys must be interpreted with caution and correction factors



M.S. SESADRI & T. JACOB JOHN

The theory behind population-based serological surveys (seroprevalence surveys or serosurveys) to detect the prevalence of antibodies against COVID-19 is robust. Their purpose is to measure the proportion of a population already infected, as evidenced by antibody positivity. When applied on a national scale, a random sample of the entire population is tested. Then, the data are extrapolated to the whole population.

'Random', according to the dictionary, means something without a deliberate order. In biostatistics, it means each individual has an equal probability of getting selected. Statisticians stratify the population and select a random sample from all strata so that the prevalence figure obtained is representative of the whole population. The result of random sample serosurveys can be confidently extrapolated to obtain national-level prevalence of antibodies.

What antibody tests say
Unfortunately there are problems with the antibody tests. Antibodies are the footprints of the host's response to virus infection. Their presence in the blood-serum confirms past infection. However, test results for antibodies throw up surprises. Antibody prevalence data derived from serosurveys must be interpreted with caution

and correction factors.

The virus carries several antigens, both on the surface and internally. The body responds to all of them. Four antigens selected to detect antibodies are spike protein (S1, S2), receptor-binding domain (RBD) and nucleocapsid (N). An antibody against each antigen has its own time of appearance, duration in blood and rate of decay over time. Moreover, detection of antibodies does not correlate well with the protective virus-neutralising function of immunity. Testing for virus-neutralising antibodies is not an option, since handling the virus is risky for lab personnel. It is prohibited in clinical labs and restricted to selected research labs.

Recent publications in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* and *The New England Journal of Medicine* say that in people with asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic infections, these antibody levels decline over time, reaching 50% of the initial levels by about 36 days and become undetectable by 60 days after proven infection. Such asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic cases constitute more than 80% of those infected with the virus. In a study on exposure-prone healthcare workers in Tennessee, nearly half the subjects with S2 antibodies became negative in two months. If both S2 and RBD antibodies are detected, the results correlate better with the neutralising function. Also, one or the other may persist longer. However, available test kits use only one antigen.

The Indian Council of Medical Research conducted two serosurveys: May 11-June 4 and August 17-September 22. The first survey



measured S1 antibody and the second survey used another antigen, rendering inter-survey comparison problematic.

The latent period between infection and the appearance of a detectable antibody is about four weeks. Therefore, the results of the first serosurvey pertain predominantly to the antibody status of subjects from April 13 to May 7. Those who got infected after May 7 would have been eclipsed in the study. So the result is an underestimate of the true value. The seroprevalence was 0.73% and that was extrapolated to about 30%-35% of the population having antibodies when India saw the epidemic peak in mid-September.

Since infections were very few before April 13, the results of the first serosurvey were reasonably time-appropriate and the extrapolation close to the true situation. A study by the Department of Science and Technology concluded that at the peak time, the proportion of the population with antibodies was 28%, close to the published estimate of 30%-35%.

The second serosurvey gave 7.1% prevalence for those immune between July 20 and August 25. For the sake of simplifying calculations, we assign August 4, the midpoint of this time interval to repre-

sent the second survey results. Subjects who were antibody positive by August 4 would have contracted the infection a month earlier by July 4. The result is not time-appropriate as at least 50% of those infected two months earlier by June 4 (representing the midpoint between April 20 and June 25) would have become antibody negative. This was the time when infections were rapidly rising. In short, the result is a gross underestimate of the true level of those with antibodies. Taking 50% as the correction factor, prevalence was 14.2% on August 4.

From August 4 to September 16, (the day of the peak) new cases increased from 51,282 to 97,859 by a factor of 1.9. So, the estimated proportion of the population infected at the peak could have been 14.2 X 1.9=27%.

Cautious interpretation
Evidently, serosurvey results have to be cautiously interpreted to arrive at the true level of prevalence of antibodies. If taken at face value, serosurvey results grossly underestimate true prevalence, except in the very early phase of the epidemic when infected people two months earlier were very few.

Misinterpreting serosurvey results has serious consequences for understanding the epidemic profile. What is in store for India? Several countries have second or even third waves of infection. Will India face such waves? If the peak coincided with 27%-35% prevalence, the epidemic is likely to evolve as endemic after another 30% are infected in the post-peak phase of the epidemic. The predicted herd immunity level needed to end the

epidemic was 60%, for a normal epidemic curve with peak at its halfway mark. For a normal epidemic curve, the cumulative number of people infected before the peak will be equal to the number who will be infected after the peak because the curve is bell-shaped. That means we did not manage to flatten the curve and further waves are unlikely. However, the speed with which people will get infected in various localities depends on human behaviour. Pre-peak there was fear and people practised social distancing and wore masks. Post-peak, many have no fear and are more relaxed about good practices to prevent infection. Major festivals are approaching. Unless care is taken, they may enhance transmission frequency, giving rise to local outbreaks and infection waves, but they are unlikely to disturb the downward slope of the national epidemic curve because half of the herd immunity level required to end the epidemic was already reached by mid-September.

Governments must continuously exhort citizens not to let their guard down, not only for the safety of those who celebrate, but also, more importantly, their family members, particularly senior citizens. People can celebrate festivals but governments must enforce strict norms regarding crowding, especially inside buildings.

Dr. M.S. Seshadri is Retired Professor of Clinical Endocrinology and Medicine, Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, and now Medical Director, Thirumalai Mission Hospital, Ranipet, Tamil Nadu; Dr. T. Jacob John is Retired Professor of Virology, CMC

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.

Sign of recovery
The GST collection in October is the highest since the pandemic set in ("GST inflows cross ₹1 lakh cr. in October," Nov. 2). This shows that economic activity has picked up and reached pre-pandemic levels and there is income generation in the economy. But there are still uncertainties about the sustainability of this recovery. Some countries in Europe have announced new lockdowns as they are

seeing a second wave of COVID-19 cases. India must prepare for a new wave and build confidence among various sectors of the economy that in case of a further spike, economic activities will continue to take place with added precautions and safeguards. Moreover, we cannot let our guard down; strengthening of healthcare infrastructure should be our utmost priority.

KALAPALA VINOD KUMAR,
Nuzvid, Andhra Pradesh

Violating protocols
In the midst of the pandemic, while the media, healthcare workers, and the government continue to advise social distancing and mask wearing, Bihar, caught up in election frenzy, seems to have forgotten all about COVID-19. Images of rallies, including one held by the Prime Minister, show how protocols are being blatantly violated. A large population which has little or no access to proper

healthcare seems oblivious to the dangers of this disease. All this is happening under the watch of the Election Commission. If cases go up, who will be held responsible?
ADHIP AGARWALA,
Bengaluru

Distressing proposal
This is a highly distressing proposal ("After U.P., Haryana mulls law against 'love jihad,'" Nov. 2). The ill-advised move would be

another nail in the coffin of India's secular credentials. It is sad that some governments don't seem to care about individual freedoms and are bent on creating communal disharmony.

AYASSERI RAVEENDRANATH,
Aranmula, Kerala

MORE LETTERS ONLINE:
www.thehindu.com/opinion/letters/

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS: >>In the explainer in the FAQ page (Nov. 1, 2020) on the BECA agreement and India-U.S. military cooperation, the aircraft in the accompanying photograph is an IL-76 and not a C-17 as mentioned in the caption. It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-284297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturi Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com



Reinforcing RBI's accountability

It must abide by the law and apprise the Centre of why it failed to control inflation



PUJA MEHRA



Average inflation exceeded the target in each of the last three quarters. ■ FILE PHOTO

Popular narrative suggests that the Central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has a low tolerance for inflation. But this may not be very accurate. In each of the last three quarters, average inflation has not only exceeded the target, but has persisted above the upper tolerance limit set by the Centre.

Inflation, as measured by the consumer price index (CPI), was 6.7% in the January-March quarter, 6.6% in the April-June quarter (based on imputed data) and 6.9% in the July-September quarter. At 5.8%, the average inflation rate for the October-December 2019 quarter was also within a hair's breadth of the upper tolerance limit.

The inflation target, notified in August 2016, is 4%. The upper tolerance level was set at 6% and the lower tolerance level at 2%. Average inflation overshooting the upper tolerance level or remaining below the lower tolerance level for any three consecutive quarters constitutes a failure to achieve the inflation target. In such an event, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is required to send a report to the Centre, stating the reasons for the failure to achieve the inflation target, the remedial actions it proposes to initiate, and an estimate of the time-period within which it expects to achieve the inflation target through the corrective steps proposed. Through amendments passed by Parliament in 2016, these new provisions were written into the RBI Act. They are aimed at ensuring enhanced transparency and accountability of the central bank and are a key feature of the inflation-targeting regime agreed upon between the RBI and Finance Ministry.

Data limitations

For a while now, a determined lobby, with elements both within and outside government, has been injecting confusion into the discourse on the desirability of persisting with the inflation-targeting regime. This is probably because high inflation makes all that is measured in nominal terms appear rosier – like business revenues and profits, or tax collection figures in the Finance Ministry's budget arithmetic.

The range around the inflation target

that the Ministry provided to the RBI is for accommodating constraints and challenges like data limitations. The press statement that the Finance Ministry had issued at the time of setting the target makes this quite clear. The whole point of the range around the target, the statement emphasised, is that it "accommodates data limitations, projection errors, short-run supply gaps and fluctuations in the agriculture production". The last factor is an important one for CPI inflation, as food articles constitute about 46% of the CPI basket.

The range, according to the Ministry's statement, allows for unanticipated short-term shocks to be accommodated, even while nudging public inflation expectations to the target at the centre of the range, to which the monetary policy ought to return the economy over the medium term.

It is hard to imagine what could be gained by letting the RBI side-step the institutional mechanism provided under the RBI Act for explaining the challenges it is up against in meeting the inflation target and what needs to be done to manage them. Why should the RBI not be made to explain what it plans to do to control inflation? The central bank should be allowed to state expressly what support by way of government policy it needs to meet the inflation target. This can only strengthen the RBI's hand; it should not let go of the opportunity to reinforce the MPC framework. Transparency can enable more informed decision-making within the government, greater public scrutiny of the RBI's performance, and an improved inflation-targeting regime. To slack off on it would be to compromise with the credibility, transparency and predictability of monetary policy.

Puja Mehra is a Delhi-based journalist and author of *The Lost Decade*

Science vs. Trump

The endorsement of Joe Biden by three science journals is a significant break with tradition

GARIMELLA SUBRAMANIAM

The categorical endorsement by renowned science journals of the Democratic contender in the U.S. presidential race is a plausible response to Donald Trump administration's comprehensively hostile stance towards all evidence-based research and scientific institutions.

Premier academic journal *Nature* and its more popular counterpart, the *Scientific American*, have openly backed former Vice-President Joseph R. Biden Jr. in the contest, emphasising his faith in the enterprise of science and his commitment to the multilateral framework. The *New England Journal of Medicine* (NEJM) has adopted a seemingly more circumspect position, urging voters to deny Mr. Trump a second term. The London-based *Nature*'s recent editorial is perhaps the most sweeping of all the criticism, as it repudiates the President's anti-science, anti-immigrant and blatantly xenophobic policies.

The journal deplores the so-called 'America first' approach as no more than a subterfuge for 'Trump first', as the President has gone about withdrawing Washington from the landmark Paris climate deal, from the Iran nuclear agreement in 2018, and the World Health Organization this year.

The NEJM's editorial, "Dying in a leadership vacuum", is the first time in its more than 200-year-old history that the institution has weighed into a presidential contest. It is also only the fourth instance that all of its editors have thrown their weight behind the widely-read column. The failure of the leadership in the U.S. is, in its view, why the country accounts simultaneously for the largest number of COVID-19 cases in the world, and over 215,000 deaths now. Particularly scathing is the observation that "Instead of relying on expertise, the administration has turned to uninformed opinion leaders and charlatans who obscure the truth and facilitate the promulgation of outright lies".

The NEJM highlights another glaring contrast – the mortality rate from the disease has been three deaths per million in China, the country home

to the world's largest population, compared to over 500 deaths per million in the U.S., the world's richest nation. Further, the ratio of tests conducted per infected person in the country is way below than in nations with meagre medical capacity, such as Kazakhstan, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. The intervention by the top-ranking peer-reviewed journals into the 2020 presidential contest is evidently uncharacteristic, if not entirely unprecedented. Noteworthy is *Nature*'s June 1933 editorial, unequivocally condemning the consequences for academic freedom arising from Germany's expulsion of eminent intellectuals and artists under the sway of Adolf Hitler's fanatical ultranationalism.

A slew of missteps

The candour of the three publications underscores the dangerous levels to which the trust, confidence and credibility of various specialised agencies have been undermined during the Trump administration. The administration, anxious to announce a breakthrough COVID-19 vaccine ahead of the November 3 election, recently sought to block the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from releasing additional guidelines in order to boost public confidence. Earlier, the agency was pressured into authorising the malaria drug, hydroxychloroquine, to treat hospitalised COVID-19 patients, before the manifestation of side-effects forced a reversal of the decision. Instructions issued in July to hospitals to transfer data concerning patients directly to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services raised concerns that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was being bypassed. The body has since come under pressure over norms on reopening of schools and gathering in public places. The CDC's crucial guideline for passengers and employees to wear masks in public transportation has been overruled.

Against this gloomy backdrop, the three journals have clearly determined that silence would amount to complicity.

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DATA POINT

Back to Europe

CASE SURGE

After slowing down in August and September, global cases shot up in October, recording over 4 lakh average cases a day for the first time

SHIFTING BURDEN

The table lists continents' share of new global cases in the first half (FH) and the second half (SH) of each month. Europe's share dropped post the March peak of 66%. However, cases surged once again, with 46% of the new cases coming from Europe in the SH of October

Period	Asia	Europe	N.America	S.America
March FH	29%	66%	5%	0%
March SH	10%	60%	27%	2%
April FH	13%	41%	41%	4%
April SH	16%	32%	41%	9%
May FH	18%	27%	35%	17%
May SH	23%	17%	27%	29%
June FH	28%	13%	23%	31%
June SH	27%	9%	26%	32%
July FH	27%	7%	33%	26%
July SH	28%	6%	32%	26%
August FH	33%	8%	25%	29%
August SH	37%	11%	21%	27%
September FH	43%	14%	18%	22%
September SH	41%	19%	18%	20%
October FH	33%	30%	18%	16%
October SH	21%	46%	19%	12%

Europe has become the epicentre of the COVID-19 pandemic once again after a gap of six months. Many European nations reimposed lockdowns as a second wave of cases, much bigger than the first in March, hit the continent in October. Global cases recorded a sharp spike in October, with half the cases from Europe. France and Italy are once again among the worst-affected countries. In contrast, infections are steadily waning in India. However, not all States are following this declining trend. By The Hindu Data Team

BIGGER THAN FIRST WAVE | Almost all major European countries have recorded a sharp spike in new cases in the past few weeks, with France averaging over 41,000 cases a day in the latest week, the highest in the continent

The chart shows seven-day average of new cases in select European nations

France
Spain
Netherlands
Germany
Italy
Belgium
Czech Republic
U.K.
Switzerland

The second peaks are higher than the first and are further growing for all countries

Day since 100th case

7-day avg. new cases

India's second wave has intensified, with daily infections rising beyond the peak registered during the first wave

Kerala recorded a sharp and steady uptick in new cases in September and October

Avg. new cases (in 1000)

Cases are rising in West Bengal too

Aug. 1 Sep. 1 Oct. 1 Nov. 1

The nutrition fallout of school closures

COVID-19 has exacerbated the problem of child hunger and malnutrition



JAYASHREE B., GOPINATH R.



schools closed, the nutritional needs of children were being fulfilled. Serving hot meals, at the children's homes or even at the centre, may have challenges in the present scenario. Even States like Tamil Nadu, with relatively good infrastructure for the MDMS, are unable to serve the mandated 'hot cooked meal' during the lockdown.

Innovative strategies

Local smallholder farmers' involvement in school feeding is suggested by experts, such as Basanta Kumar Kar, who has been at the helm of many nutrition initiatives. He suggests a livelihood model that links local smallholder farmers with the mid-day meal system for the supply of cereals, vegetables, and eggs, while meeting protein and hidden hunger needs, which could diversify production and farming systems, transform rural livelihoods and the local economy, and fulfill the 'Atma-nirbhar Poshan' (nutritional self-sufficiency) agenda. The COVID-19 crisis has also brought home the need for such decentralised models and local supply chains.

There are also new initiatives such as the School Nutrition (Kitchen) Garden under MDMS to provide fresh vegetables for mid-day meals. Besides ensuring these are functional, hot meals can be provided to eligible children with a plan to prepare and distribute the meal in the school mid-day meal centre. This is similar to free urban canteens or community kitchens for the elderly and others in distress in States like Odisha.

Also, adequate awareness about the availability of the scheme is needed. Thirdly, locally produced vegetables and fruits may be added to the MDMS, also providing an income to local farmers. Besides, distribution of eggs where feasible (and where a State provision is already there) can be carried out. Most of all, the missed mid-day meal entitlement for April may be provided to children as dry ration with retrospective effect.

Across the country and the world, innovative learning methods are being adopted to ensure children's education outcomes. With continuing uncertainty regarding the reopening of schools, innovation is similarly required to ensure that not just food, but nutrition is delivered regularly to millions of children.

Bhavani R.V. has contributed to this article. The authors work with the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 3, 1970

Elections in "Azad Kashmir" (From an Editorial)

The first elections under adult franchise have been held in "Azad Kashmir" (the area of Kashmir seized by Pakistani troops in 1947 and divided from the rest of the State by the ceasefire line) though Baltistan and Gilgit were excluded from the election. There are only 1,06,000 voters and they had to choose both a president and 24 members of the legislative assembly. Under the new constitution devised by President Yahya Khan, decisions of the elected president of "Azad Kashmir" can be reversed only by two-thirds of the assembly membership. It is not surprising that Sardar Qayum, leader of the Azad Muslim Conference and a former nominated president, has outdistanced his rivals. He is a man who stands for a strong centre, whereas some of the others have local support. For example, Sardar Ibrahim is based mainly on Poonch (where there was once a revolt against the centre) and Mr. K.H. Khurshid draws his support from the refugee element in the State. Mr. Maqbool Ahmad Butt, leader of the Plebiscite Front, is reported to have been arrested with two of his colleagues. It seems that his party stands for the independence of Kashmir and is inclined to adopt terrorist methods to achieve its aim. It is perhaps needless to add that all the four parties who fielded 140 candidates for the assembly regard the election as one which concerns the whole of pre-Partition Kashmir and are pledged to recover the whole territory by fair means or foul.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 3, 1920
Ancient Hindu Judicature (From an editorial)

The notion ordinarily indulged in by Western writers that courts of justice in Ancient India, if at all they existed were merely assemblies of the reigning Prince, is to say the least, preposterous on its very face, proceeding from the false generalisation of some stray instances found in the recent times of administrative chaos and internal confusion. The easy establishment of courts based on foreign models with foreign rules of procedure and adjudication has also contributed much to thicken the shroud of mystery and ignorance covering the nature, composition and working of our ancient indigenous courts. The subject presents an interesting and instructive sphere of research for Indian jurists and students of law, and Mr. B. Guru Raj deserves to be congratulated on his recent production on Ancient Hindu Judicature.

FROM PAGE ONE

Rajasthan passes Bills to stall Centre's farm laws

Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria said the Bills, which went against the federal structure, had challenged the Centre's legislative domain.

The House earlier rejected a proposal to send the Bills for seeking public opinion. Speaker C.P. Joshi said no changes had been suggested in the provisions of the Bills, which had been introduced with the stated objective of ensuring the livelihood security of farmers and protecting minimum support prices (MSP) for agricultural produce.

Three Bills

The three Bills, pertaining to the State amendments to the Central statutes, were the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill, 2020, and the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions and Rajasthan Amendment) Bill, 2020.



Charred remains: The remains of the vehicles involved in the accident on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Red sanders vehicle catches fire, five killed

The SUV rammed into a tipper in A.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA

Replies to the debate on the Bills, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal said the BJP-led government at the Centre had tried to finish the farmers and hand over the agriculture sector to big corporates through the farm laws. "We will not allow this to happen in Rajasthan. Over 95% of farmers do not get remunerative prices for their produce... Our amendments will protect them."

'Will affect PDS'

Mr. Dhariwal said the Central laws, if enforced without any change, would also adversely affect the public distribution system (PDS), as the commodities like rice and wheat would not be available for procurement.

While Agriculture Minister Lal Chand Kataria, initiating the debate, said the Central laws would ultimately abolish Krishi Upaj Mandis and turn the farmer into labourers on their own land, senior BJP MLA Rajendra Rathore said the Congress itself had earlier advocated the creation of a "free market" for farmers.



The SUV was allegedly involved in the illegal ferrying of red sanders logs, and the four persons in it were woodcutters from Tamil Nadu. They were overspeeding

after sensing police movement. The SUV had taken a detour to avoid the police, but crashed straight into the tipper. Fire engulfed the vehicle as soon as it hit the tipper's diesel tank. Rajan, Ramachandran, Kathiravan and Muthiah were charred to death. The fire intensified after another car collided with the SUV from behind.

The third vehicle was an escort in the operation. Of the three rescued and rushed to the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences from the escort vehicle, one unidentified person died under treatment.

Sivasankar named as accused in graft case

'He accepted bribe from a builder for LIFE Mission contract'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB) on Monday indicted M. Sivasankar, former Principal Secretary to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, for accepting a sizeable sum as bribe from a builder for nudging a government construction contract in his direction.

In a court filing, the VACB stated that Mr. Sivasankar had persuaded officials of the LIFE Mission to award the contract to construct 144 apartments for the homeless at Wadakkanchery in Thrissur to the business person.



M. Sivasankar

the contract for the businessperson recommended by Mr. Sivasankar.

Builder's admission

Investigators said the UAE Red Crescent deposited ₹14 crore in the account of the builder. By his admission in the High Court, the builder paid ₹4 crore as bribe to bag the contract.

As a set-off against the bribe, the LIFE Mission whittled down the number of dwellings from 199 to 144, thereby causing loss to the government and undue pecuniary advantage to the builder, the VACB stated.

According to the VACB, the LIFE Mission excluded another builder to secure

Consulate-linked gold smuggling case suspects Sandeep Nair, Swapna Suresh and P. Sarith as accused in the case.

At the time of the award of the contract, Sarith and Swapna held influential posts in the UAE Consulate.

Transfer to account

The VACB said Sandeep had introduced the builder to Swapna, who allegedly referred him to Mr. Sivasankar.

The builder wired Sandeep ₹60 lakh from his account as a bribe. The rest he gave him as cash purportedly to pay off UAE Consulate officials.

Later, Swapna told the court that the ₹36 lakh the Customs had found in her bank locker was the brokerage she received from the builder and not proceeds from gold smuggling as suspected. Swapna held the locker jointly with a chartered accountant.

The auditor told the Customs that he had opened the bank locker along with Swapna on Mr. Sivasankar's directive.

IN BRIEF



Bineesh Kodiyeri's custody extended

BENGALURU

A special court designated for Enforcement Directorate (ED) cases here on Monday extended by five days custody of Bineesh Kodiyeri, son of CPI(M) Kerala State Secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, who was arrested by the ED.

HC defers trial in actor rape case for a week

KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Monday deferred the trial in the actor rape case for a week. The Additional Special Sessions Judge, Ernakulam, had earlier scheduled to resume the trial on November 3. Actor Dileep is the eighth accused in the case and has been charged with conspiracy.

Unidentified men open fire at cars, kill one

BELAGAVI

Unidentified men opened fire at three cars in Karnataka's Vijayapura district on Monday, injuring a repeat offender and his four associates, and killing his manager. They were all admitted to a private hospital in Vijayapura.

HC panel questions setting up of special courts to try MPs

'These should be offence-centric and not offender-centric'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

A three-judge committee of the Madras High Court has questioned the constitutional validity of setting up special courts to exclusively try MPs and MLAs for various crimes.

It said the special courts should be "offence-centric" and not "offender-centric."



"An MP/MLA, who commits an offence under the POCSO Act [or other Special Acts like Prevention of Corruption Act, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act] can only be tried by a Special Court created under the POCSO Act [PC Act, NDPS Act] and there cannot be another Special Court exclusively for trial of an MP/MLA, who commits POCSO offence," the Madras High Court Committee report reasoned.

Status report
This report is part of a status report filed by amicus curiae Vijay Hansaria and advocate Sneha Kalita in the Supreme Court on Monday.

committee on Special Courts for Trial of Criminal Cases against MPs/MLAs, composed of Justices P.N. Prakash, G. Jayachandran and N. Sathish Kumar, said special courts could not be set up on the basis of judicial or executive orders.

"Special courts can only be constituted by a statute and not by executive or judicial fiat," Mr. Hansaria summarised the observations of the committee.

Robust structure
The committee raised strong reservations against setting up special courts in Tamil Nadu.

"The existing court structure in Tamil Nadu, which is robust, is more than enough to deal with the cases involving MPs and MLAs," the committee said.

It urged the Madras High Court Chief Justice to bring this "fact" to the notice of the Supreme Court to get an "exemption from establishing special courts for trial of cases involving MPs and MLAs".

It also comes at a time when a three-judge Bench of the apex court led by Justice N.V. Ramana is looking at ways to expedite these trials pending for years, in some cases, for decades. Over 4,400 criminal trials are pending against legislators. Of this, over 2,500 trials involve sitting legislators.

But the Madras High Court's Criminal Rules Com-

Up in arms



Push comes to shove: Police stopping Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) at the Collectorate in Visakhapatnam on Monday. They were protesting against the decision of the government to utilise their services at the village/ward secretariats. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

Kerala PSC to implement 10% quota for poor in general category

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Public Service Commission (PSC) has decided that 10% reservation in government jobs for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in the general category will be applicable for all job notifications which were active on October 23, the

date on which the Cabinet gave the nod for the quota.

Necessary amendments will be made in the online application and profile for the quota will be made applicable for eligible aspirants for job notifications, for which the last date for ap-

plication had not ended on October 23.

The last date for applications to be submitted on November 4 has now been extended till midnight of November 14 for eligible aspirants to make applications. The date extension is not applicable to de-

partmental posts in which the EWS quota is not applicable.

The Kerala State and Subordinate Service Rules was amended as per a notification issued on October 26 for implementation of the 10% reservation in government jobs for the EWS in the general category without affecting the existing reserva-

tion, following the Cabinet decision three days earlier.

The Centre had earlier decided to provide the 10% reservation based on the 103rd amendment of the Constitution, without affecting the 50% reservation being provided to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

Kerala cases see another 'weekend' dip

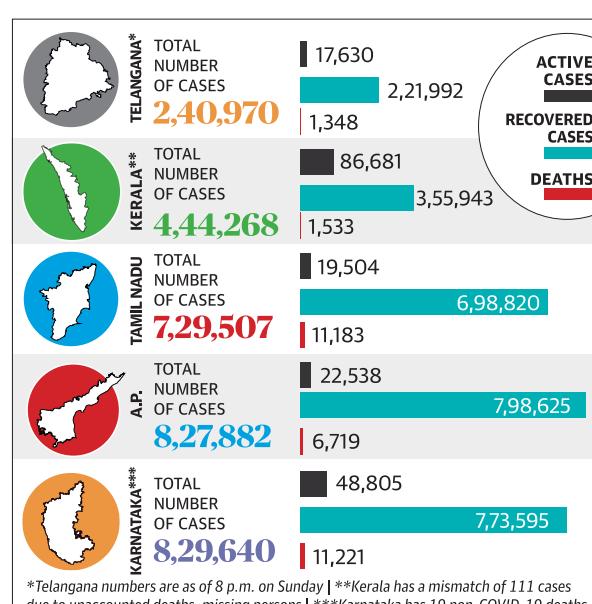
Test positivity falls to 2.97% in A.P.; Telangana cases drop on lower testing; Karnataka adds 2,576 cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

New cases of COVID-19 in Kerala dropped by nearly half on Monday at 4,138, when testing also dipped to 33,345 samples.

This followed the trend with testing going down on Sundays. The test positivity rate at 12.4% remained stabilised over the past week.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the State's weekly increase in cases dipped by 5% and cumulative case dou-



but on Sunday, the number fell to 25,643, leading to detection of 922 positive cases.

The new cases included 256 from Greater Hyderabad, 56 from Rangareddy and 44 from Sangareddy.

With the death of seven more patients, the toll touched 1,348.

Karnataka on Monday reported 2,576 new cases. With 29 new deaths, the toll rose to 11,221. While the positivity rate was 10.13% for 81,75 lakh samples.

at 3.28%, Case Fatality Rate (CFR) touched 1.12%.

Bengaluru Urban reported 1,439 cases and 14 of the 29 deaths. As many as 78,496 tests were conducted including 65,015 RT-PCR tests.

Andhra Pradesh recorded 1,916 new cases and 13 deaths on Monday. The daily

positivity rate of 64,581 samples was the lowest in four months at 2.97%. The overall positivity rate was 10.13% for 81,75 lakh samples.

Case involving Kummanam dropped

STAFF REPORTER
PATHANAMTHITTA

A cheating case allegedly involving BJP leader Kummanam Rajasekharan has been settled, with the complainant deciding not to proceed with it.

The complainant, C.R. Harikrishnan of Aranmula, told presspersons on Monday that he was withdrawing the complaint following an out-of-court settlement. However, the Aranmula police are yet to get any formal intimation.

The Aranmula police had earlier booked a case against nine persons.

According to the FIR, the accused collected ₹36 lakh from the complainant for making him a partner in a factory unit to be opened in Palakkad. Despite repeated requests, the accused allegedly refused to hand over the relevant documents.

After several rounds of mediation, the accused returned a part of his investment, but refused to give back the remaining amount.

The complainant said Mr. Rajasekharan had tried to convince him that it was a good enterprise.

Telangana, A.P. reach accord on bus services

Services were stopped post-lockdown

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

The stand-off between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on inter-State bus services ended on Monday following an amicable agreement between them. The services, suspended in the wake of imposition of lockdown on March 23, were restored at 4 p.m.

As per the agreement signed by the vice-chairmen and managing directors of the two road transport corporations – Sunil Sharma (Telangana) and M.T. Krishna Babu (Andhra Pradesh) – the Telangana outfit will run 1,61,258 km daily in Andhra

Pradesh, with 820 services, and Andhra Pradesh will run 259 km less, with 638 services. But the roll out will be gradual and demand-driven. The agreement, signed in the presence of Transport Minister of Telangana P. Ajay Kumar, sealed the number of services to be run by either States on specified routes. It was the first agreement post-bifurcation.

Though the Centre relaxed lockdown norms to permit inter-State movement of buses, they could not be run between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as the former State insisted on parity in services.



APPEAL
2 years old Thillai Mathivel needs your support in bringing a lasting change and a new life. He suffers from Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and requires Rs. 8,00,000 towards Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Mathivel is currently staying at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. Mathivel will be acknowledged. The donation sent through CHD:DINEFT, Transfer Syndicate Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/c No.0018201006310, IFSC No. SYNBO000618 favouring WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE is exempted under 80G IT. Please give us your e-mail ID.

All correspondence is done through WWS, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, Flat No.GF 1, Cordell Apartments, O.No.13 N.No.29, Pyroto Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-2137401/28235324 E Mail: womenswelfare syndicate@gmail.com Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

Leaders set furious pace for final phase

Tejashwi Yadav replays jobs promise as Nitish Kumar touts his government's achievements

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PATNA

Leaders of the National Democratic Alliance, Rashtriya Janata Dal and Lok Janshakti Party addressed a series of public meetings on Monday to seek votes for their candidates in the last and third phase of elections in Bihar scheduled for November 7.

Both the Janata Dal(U)-led NDA and the UPA, led by the RJD, are locked in tough contests this time in most of the Assembly seats. The second phase of polling will be held on Tuesday.

"As I have promised, I will provide 10 lakh government jobs with my first signature at the first Cabinet meeting if voted to power," RJD leader and party's chief ministerial face, Tejashwi Yadav, said at a public meeting at Darbhanga town.

"Besides, I will focus on the core issues plaguing the State like *padhai, dawai, kamaai, sinchai aur mahangai* [education, medicine, employment, irrigation and price rise]... I'm a young man with new thoughts," he told the cheering crowd.

The 31-year-old leader has been drawing huge crowds at over a dozen public meetings every day.

The RJD, a party with a largely Muslim-Yadav vote bank, has this time fielded a number of upper caste candidates in the Mithilanchal area.

Mr. Yadav is the lone star



Wooing voters: (Clockwise from left) JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar Bihar, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, Defence Minister and BJP veteran Rajnath Singh and LJP president Chirag Paswan addressing campaign rallies in Bihar. ■ ANI, PTI

campaigner of the UPA. "Only a few days are left and I have to cover all 78 seats in the third phase," he told the crowd.

On Monday, he addressed over 20 public meetings in Araria, Saharsa, Darbhanga, Supaul and Samastipur districts, where elections are scheduled to take place on November 7. On Saturday, he had addressed 19 public meetings before campaigning ended for the second phase.

Nitish's claim

JD(U) president and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has been addressing four or five public meetings every day, where

he tells the crowd about the development works his government has done in the past 15 years. "We constructed roads and brought electricity, 50% reservation for women in panchayats and a number of welfare measures for students... if given a chance I'll do more, as service to the people is my religion... development with justice has been my government's mantra," he told a public meeting at Supaul on Monday. "But for some people, development only means development of their family: sons, daughters, wife and others... for me, Bihar is my family."

At Pipra High School

ground in Parihar constituency of Sitamarhi district, BJP president J.P. Nadda talked about the development work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi across the country and by the NDA government in Bihar.

He slammed Opposition RJD for its misrule and mis-governance during the 15-year rule of Lalu Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi from 1990 to 2005.

"*Jo kaam karne wale hain unkao kaam dijiye, aur jo beimaani karne wale hain unkao aaram dijiye* [Those who do work, give them work to do and those who are dishonest with you, give them rest],"

Mr Nada said at his public meeting in Sitamarhi.

Chirag's appeal

Lok Janshakti Party chief Chirag Paswan has taken jibes at Mr. Kumar on issues such as prohibition and corruption in welfare projects.

The LJP has fielded candidates against the JD(U). "The next government in Bihar will be of the BJP-LJP combine," he declared. He appealed to the people to bless his party candidate Abdul Razzaque at Mahishi in Saharsa district. "The BJP-LJP government will implement the 'Bihar 1st, Bihar 1st' vision document," he said.

Badlo Bihar! Cong. sets up a clickbait for young voters

Party ups its social media reach for electioneering

SOBHANA K. NAIR

NEW DELHI

With campaigning for phase two of the Bihar Assembly election ending on Sunday evening, setting the stage for polling on Tuesday, the Congress upped its social media game — the party has launched a video game to engage with young and first-time voters.

Titled *Badlo Bihar*, it's a basic game. The players earn points each time they manage to pop out the issues that the *mahagatbandhan* (grand alliance) has been highlighting such as migration, farmers' issues, corruption and so on, by pressing on the Congress's election symbol.

The highlight of the game is the voice-over at the end that says "*Bole Bihar, mahagatbandhan sarkar*". The voice-over mimics Prime Minister Narendra Modi's voice.

The Congress, through its social media campaign, is focusing on micro-targeting the voters, making individual campaigns for the party's 70 candidates and attempting to hold a dialogue with voters on local issues.

Party's social media in-charge Rohan Gupta said it had the first-mover advantage, since they had been working in the State for four months now. Their head-



Smartphone users can explore social and political issues through games.

tability from the Nitish Kumar government.

With unemployment being the central theme of the grand alliance's poll campaign, the Congress has been working on targeting the migrant workers.

Targeted messages

"There are constituencies where farmer's issues are more important, other constituencies with higher concentration of migrant workers the issues could be vastly different. Accordingly, our messaging was targeted for each of the 70 constituencies that we are working on," Mr Gupta said. The party was reaching out to four crore people daily.

"Our emphasis is to go local, so we are making local creatives, which are specific to each candidate and his constituency. We ask each of them to provide us videos and photographs from their campaigning. And interestingly, this turned into a way of receiving feedback too on who is active and who isn't," Mr. Gupta added.

From targeting voters on Facebook, the social media team has tapped into 10,000 WhatsApp groups. Each group can have up to 200 participants.

In the past four days, the frequency of messages from the Congress has increased.

Terrorism knows no boundaries: Shringla

He flags radicalisation in Europe

SUHASINI HAIDAR

NEW DELHI

Referring to the recent violent attacks in France, Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla took a tough line on "radicalism in Europe" during his official meetings in Germany on Monday.

He also stressed India's concerns over the coronavirus pandemic, the military stand-off at the Line of Actual Control with China, and cross-border attacks from Pakistan.

"As you know, India has faced multiple challenges in the recent months due to the pandemic, tensions on our northern border [China] and the ever-present menace of terrorism on our western border [with Pakistan]," Mr. Shringla is understood to have said, without naming either country, at the start of talks in Berlin with the German Foreign Office and Chancery officials.

Sources said the Foreign Secretary told his German interlocutors that Europe is witnessing a "manifestation of radicalism and extremism", saying that knife and shooting attacks in France linked to Islamist radicals in the past week vindicates India's stand that "terror knows no boundaries".

"Unfortunately, the terrorists are united in purpose and action while we, the victims, are yet to be so. Ironically,



More trains are likely on busy routes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Railways, which has taken a 90% hit in revenues from the passenger segment due to COVID-19, said on Monday that about 327 or 44% of the 736 special passenger trains currently running have waiting lists.

"We are monitoring these 327 trains daily. Once we determine the nature of the wait list — for how many days and how long — we will run clone trains on those routes," Railway Board Chairman and CEO V.K. Yadav said.

Replying to a query, he said the Railways had earned about ₹3,322 crore from the passenger segment so far in the current financial year, which was 90% less than it did last year due to COVID-19.

However, freight operations had seen a growth in revenues. Loading had grown for all commodities, Mr. Yadav said.

In October this year, freight revenue was ₹869 crore more than it was last year and the month also saw the highest ever automobile loading.

Mr. Yadav said the average occupancy was about 92% in the currently running trains. About 19 trains had occupancy below 30%, 44 had between 30% and 50%, 83 had between 50% and 75% and 327 trains have wait lists.



Traffic block: Gujjars have frequently used rail rokos as their strategy to demand reservation. ■ FILE PHOTO

Gujjar protesters back on railway tracks

Govt. allows preventive detentions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR

Rail and road traffic was disrupted after Gujjars demanding reservation in jobs and education as a most backward class (MBC) intensified their agitation on Monday and occupied the railway track at Peelupura in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan. As many as 29 trains on the Delhi-Mumbai route were diverted and three cancelled.

The government authorised the Collectors of eight districts to make preventive detentions under the National Security Act to deal with the agitation. While Gujjar supremo Kirori Singh Bainسا joined the protesters at the railway track, others blocked the Bayana-Hindau road.

Nearly 220 buses from five major Rajasthan Road-

ways depots of Dausa, Hindau, Karauli, Bharatpur and Bayana were stopped and the bus service on the Jaipur-Agra route was halted, causing inconvenience to a large number of passengers. Gujjars also held demonstrations elsewhere in the State, including in Ajmer and Kota, while Internet services were suspended in Gujjar-dominated areas of several districts.

Consensus on 14 points
The agitation started amid indications of division in the Gujjar leadership, as a section of the community leaders held talks with the government in Jaipur on Saturday and reached a consensus on 14 points. The faction, led by Himmat Singh, held a meeting near Bayana on Monday and called for an end to the agitation.

Man held for 'plot' to kill politicians

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

The police on Monday said they arrested a hospital security guard in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal who was tasked by militants with preparing a kill list of local political workers.

The police said the conspiracy was unravelled during the investigation into the attack on BJP district vice-president Ghulam Qadir in the Nuner area on October 6, in which one constable lost his life. During the investigation, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh from Ganderbal's Serch area, who works as a security guard, was held.

"Technical details revealed some startling facts. He admitted to be an active member of Hizbul Mujahideen during sustained questioning on October 30," the police said.

According to the police, Sheikh was instrumental in the attack. "One pistol, one magazine and Pakistani flags have been recovered on his disclosure," the police said.

The police said two of his accomplices, Hilal Ahmad Mir and Asif Ahmad Mir, were also arrested.

The trio, according to the police, were in touch with terror operatives in south Kashmir and were "tasked with preparing a kill list of local political workers and attack them".

'32% of candidates have criminal cases'

ADR analyses poll affidavits in Bihar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In Bihar, 89% Assembly constituencies have three or more candidates who have declared criminal cases against themselves in their affidavits for the ongoing elections, an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms found on Monday.

The ADR analysis of election affidavits of 3,722 of the 3,733 candidates found that 32% of them had declared criminal cases. The affidavits of the remaining 11 were not available at the time of compiling the report.

Releasing the report, ADR founder Jagdeep S. Chhokar said the Bihar elections were the first general elections to be held after the Supreme Court directions to parties on February

13 to publish the reasons for choosing a candidate with a criminal background.

He said the number of "red alert constituencies", which have three or more contestants with criminal cases pending, is usually around 50%, but it had increased to 89% in the Bihar polls. He said parties had largely not followed the court's directions.

"The directions of the Supreme Court have had no effect on the political parties in selection of candidates as they have again followed their old practice of giving tickets to around 32% candidates with criminal cases," the ADR report said.

The court had directed the parties to give reasons why a candidate without criminal antecedents could not be chosen.

J&K govt. defends new land laws

Legislation will afford protection to over 90% of the land in the UT

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

In the face of growing anxiety and protests in regions of Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K administration on Monday said the recently introduced land laws "will afford protection to over 90% of the land in the Union Territory (UT)", and the previous laws were "anti-people".

"The new land laws will not only afford protection to over 90% of the land in J&K from being alienated to outsiders but will also help revamp the agriculture sector, foster rapid industrialisation, aid economic growth and create jobs in J&K," government spokesman and Principal Secretary, Information, Rohit Kansal, said in Jammu. On the move to repeal II

land laws of the erstwhile State, Mr. Kansal described them as "old, regressive and intrinsically contradictory".

Contradictions existed

"A number of laws had contradictions leading to scope for discretionary interpretation and rent seeking. For example, 'family' was defined differently in different laws, provision of alienation and conversion of land were different in different laws and the ceiling of 182 kanals fixed in Big Land Estates Abolition Act, 1976; yet both provisions continued to coexist creating contradiction and confusion," he said.

The new land laws were mod-

ern and progressive "while affording adequate protection against alienation of land to outsiders", he said.

Without naming any political party, he said that a variety of reactions from political parties and others that J&K was on sale was because of a lot of misinformation or lack of clarity.

A protest organised by the Civil Society Forum (CSF), headed by Qayoom Wani, was prevented by the police on Monday.

Government of Tamil Nadu PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT / WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT Superintending Engineer, PWD, WRD, Upper Cauvery Basin Circle, Salem-7 Tender Notice Tender Notice No. 04 / 2020-2021 / DB / DO1/F.275 (Mettr)/2020 / Dated : 02.11.2020. On behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu, the under signed has invited sealed tender for the following work Upto 3.00 p.m. on 04.12.2020 from the Registered Contractors of Public Works Department.						
Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Value of work (including GST)	E.M.D.	Period of Contract	Class of Contractors eligible	Cost of Tender Schedule (including GST)
TWO COVER SYSTEM-PREQUALIFICATION AND PRICE TENDER IN						

INTERVIEW | BARRY O'FARRELL

'Strategic Partnership will aid smooth work in the event of regional crisis'

Artificial Intelligence, 5G, rare earth products, ground station tracking facilities to support Gaganyaan are among the areas covered: Australian High Commissioner

NARAYAN LAKSHMAN

Australian High Commissioner to India Barry O'Farrell took charge a month before the COVID-19 pandemic struck in India, yet his time here has seen a steady uptick in the momentum of bilateral cooperation including a Prime Ministerial summit in June and, more recently, Australia's inclusion in the Malabar naval exercises. He speaks about a range of cooperative initiatives on the anvil.

Regarding the announcement of Australia joining the Malabar naval exercises, could you explain how this takes forward the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) that Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Scott Morrison agreed to in June 2020, in terms of maritime security and broader stability across the region?

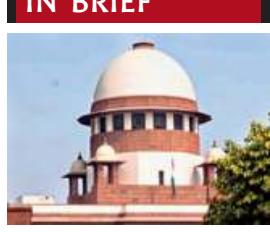
■ It will demonstrate the ability of our Navy to work through exercises, warfare serials and the like with the Navies of India, Australia, the U.S. and Japan. That is important because, were there to be a regional crisis, like a natural or humanitarian disaster, the ability to

work smoothly with partners is critical. It builds particularly on the maritime agreement that was one of the agreements underneath the CSP, but also to the mutual logistic support arrangement, which is designed to improve the collaboration between our armed forces.

What do you see as the biggest challenges in moving forward quickly on cyber and cyber-enabled critical technologies?

■ Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic has damaged economies. It has accelerated geopolitical competition, and it has obviously disrupted our way of life. It has highlighted the importance, to

IN BRIEF



SC refuses to extend security of Babri judge

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Monday refused a plea made by former CBI judge S.K. Yadav, the author of the Babri Masjid demolition case verdict, to allow him to continue with his personal security. He had acquitted top BJP and Sangh Parivar leaders such as L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and others in the case. He had made the appeal citing the sensitivity of the case.

BJP paid Gujarat ex-MLA ₹10 cr. to defect: Cong.

NEW DELHI
Ahead of the byelections to eight Assembly seats in Gujarat on November 3, the Congress on Monday sought a court-monitored probe into allegations that its former MLA was paid huge sums by the ruling BJP to switch sides. The Congress also played a sting video showing former Gujarat MLA Soma Patel purportedly confessing that ₹10 crore was paid by the BJP to defect from the Congress.

Now, M.P. mulls law against 'love jihad'

BHOPAL
The Madhya Pradesh government will make legal arrangements to curb the alleged practice of 'love jihad' in the State, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Monday. With this, M.P. has become the third BJP-ruled State after Uttar Pradesh and Haryana to announce its intention to make legal provisions against 'love jihad'. "There will be no jihad in the name of love," Mr. Chouhan told reporters. PTI

Sonowal writes to Amit Shah on border issue

GUWAHATI
Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Monday wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the tension with Mizoram as a person from Cachar district died in custody in the neighbouring State. Mr. Sonowal expressed condolences over the death of Intazul Laskar, who was "abducted by the miscreants", an official statement said. PTI

NIA arrests madrasa teacher from Bengal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a 32-year-old madrasa teacher from West Bengal for his alleged involvement in a series of conspiratorial meetings convened by the members of the Al-Qaeda module.

The accused, Abdul Monim Mondal, also tried to re-

cruit new members, the NIA said. So far, 11 accused have been arrested from West Bengal and Kerala in the case registered on September 11 pertaining to "anti-national activities by a group of jihadi terrorists," it said.

Mondal was produced before the district court and a transit remand to move him to Delhi for interrogation has been granted.

countries like India and Australia, of ensuring a safe, secure and prosperous future for our citizens. That's why, as part of the CSP, there were agreements in relation to critical technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, quantum computing, and 5G because we recognise the opportunities they present to people, to businesses, to the broader economy, and the fact that they should be guarded by international standards to ensure they do not present risks, to security or prosperity. The Australia-India framework Arrangements on Cyber and Cyber Enabled Critical Technology cooperation will enhance bilateral cooperation. It provides a programme of ₹66 crore over four years for an Australia-India cyber and critical technology partnership to support research by institutions in both Australia and between institutions in Australia and India.

Could you talk a little bit more about special minerals



and rare earth products? What exactly are specifics on where Australia can help move things forward?

■ If you want to build batteries or electric vehicles, lithium, amongst other items, is required. We know that your northern neighbour is your most significant supplier of these critical minerals. We know that India is seeking to become more self-reliant.

defence and electric vehicle and energy mission projects.

Given the investments made by India under its national quantum mission and the aspiration here to build more infrastructure and experimental facilities, how could Australia help India move forward?

■ Australia is already contributing to India's national quantum mission by facilitating partnerships with universities, research institutions and businesses. That includes one of the best relationships we have with India, which is the Australian Indian Strategic Research Fund, which has been going for over 20 years.

Since 2013, one of our Australians of the Year, Professor Michelle Simmons, has led a team of researchers at New South Wales University's (UNSW) Centre for Quantum Computation and Communication Technology, seeking to build the first quantum computer in

silicon.

Looking at space technologies, India has made critical advances over several decades now. What synergies and opportunities exist between India's long-standing programme and Australia's relatively new space ambitions?

■ Australia and India have been cooperating together as countries since 1987, when we inked our first MoU, and there is a strong engagement between ISRO and Australian agencies. We have undertaken data collaboration on Indian remote satellites. Since 2013, we have been doing laser ranging for Indian regional navigational satellite systems. We are exploring how we can place temporary ground station tracking facilities in Australia to support that Gaganyaan Mission.

Are Australian universities following the online model? How do you see them recovering? When will

things open up and what options will Indian students have?

■ We recognise that it is face-to-face learning, like face-to-face working is still what most people want. A number of Australian States are starting pilot programmes to demonstrate that students can be picked up and returned to Australia into campuses safely given the COVID spread. My Education Minister, Dan Tehan, made the point two weeks ago that the Australian government is keen for that to happen as soon as possible. The latest part to be announced was one from South Australia that will fly students out of Singapore into Australia. There was an early one announced by the Northern Territory. On the back of those, there is a hope that we will be able to return students to Australia for Day One, Term One, next year. But it will depend on those State trials. If the trials are successful, I remain confident about next year.

Four States lead COVID-19 tally

Kerala, Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal see highest number of cases in 24 hours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



Best bet: The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation started free testing at 244 locations from Monday. ■ EMMANUEL YOGINI

Eighty per cent of the new COVID-19 cases are concentrated in 10 States and Union Territories, with Kerala (7,025), Delhi (5,664), Maharashtra (5,369) and West Bengal (3,987) reporting the highest numbers in the past 24 hours, according to data released by the Union Health Ministry on Monday.

Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha also continue to register a high number of cases, it said.

The country has reported 45,213 confirmed cases in the last 24 hours along with 496 deaths during this time period, with 10 States and UTs accounting for 82% of the fatalities in the past 24 hours, the Ministry said.

"22% of deaths reported yesterday [Sunday] are from Maharashtra with 113 deaths followed by West Bengal with 59 deaths, Delhi (51),

Chhattisgarh (49), Tamil Nadu (30), Kerala (28), Uttar Pradesh (26), Karnataka (24), Andhra Pradesh (16) and Odisha (11)," it said.

Recoveries cross 75 lakh
India continued to occupy the top global position as the country with the highest number of recoveries, it noted. The total recoveries crossed 75 lakh on Monday

21.16%, the release said.

The higher number of recoveries was also reflected in the continuous increase in the national recovery rate, which at present was 91.68%. "78 per cent of the new recovered cases in the past 24 hours are from 10 States/UTs. Kerala and Karnataka have contributed the highest number to these, with more than 8,000 cases. Delhi and West Bengal follow, with more than 4,000 cases," the Ministry said.

India had demonstrated an increase in the number of COVID-19 cumulative tests since January 2020. This had led to early identification and treatment. It crossed the landmark of 11 crore (11,07,43,103) total tests on Monday. "The country's testing capacities have multiplied manifold, with 2,037 labs country and with collaborative efforts of the Centre and State/UT governments," it said.

The petitions had contended that the en masse blacklisting of foreigners from 35 nations, without affording them an opportunity to *prima facie* defend themselves, was an egregious and

36 petitioners have been cleared of serious charges but the police have filed revision applications

C.U. SINGH

Counsel for petitioners

blatant violation of Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution.

Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, for the petitioners, said the cases registered against her clients had become a pretext for "protracted litigation". She submitted that eight of the petitioners had been discharged of all the allegations against them but their applications for liberty to leave the country were still pending.

Senior advocate C.U. Singh, also for the petitioners, informed the Bench that 36 petitioners had been cleared of serious charges

under Section 14B (using forged passport to enter the country) of the Foreigners Act of 1946. But the police have filed applications for revision of their discharge and the hearings are on November 7 and 10. "This is a punitive sort of process," Mr. Singh submitted. The court agreed to hear the case further on November 20.

Pregnant woman's plea
Four petitions, including one by a Thai national who is seven months pregnant, had challenged the Centre's decision of April 2 to blacklist foreign nationals from travelling to India for the next 10 years.

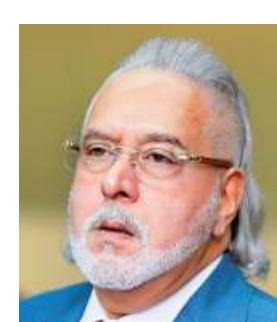
The decision by its very unilateral nature, infringed the principle of natural justice, particularly *audi alteram partem* (hear the other side), her plea said.

Top court looks at M.P. HC's rakhi order

Bench seeks gender sensitivity

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI



ember 2 the nature of this confidential proceedings, when it will end and by when the businessman will appear before it to accept his sentence for contempt.

The court has adjourned the case to next January.

On August 30 last, the court dismissed Mr. Mallya's review petition against a May 9, 2017, verdict of contempt. It found no merit in his three-year-old review plea.

In May 2017, the court found him guilty of contempt for wilful disobe

dience of its order to come

clean about his assets and

not disclosing a sum of ₹40 million (₹600 crore) he received from British liquor major Diageo Plc following his resignation as Chairman of United Spirits Limited in February 2016.

The Attorney General can make recommendations to include in bail conditions

posed by the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

Trauma trivialised
The nine lawyers, led by advocate Aparna Bhat, said the High Court order was a "trivialisation of her [victim's] trauma".

Mr. Parikh said there were many such instances of court orders that objectified women already traumatised by the crimes committed against them.

The law prescribed that the victim be kept far away from the accused. Instead, here, the Madhya Pradesh HC had ordered the accused to visit the home of the woman - the very place where the crime was alleged to have occurred. The petition said the court had further ordered the accused to gift the woman ₹11,000 "as a customary ritual usually offered by brothers to sisters on such occasion and shall also seek her blessings". It had also ordered the accused to offer ₹5,000 to the woman's son to "purchase clothes and sweets".

Mr. Parikh said such orders only succeeded in victimising the woman and retarding the years of work done to sensitise the courts.

Govt. gets 6 weeks to file status report on Mallya's extradition

SC rejects his lawyer's plea to discharge him from case



Vijay Mallya

formed that the extradition case in the U.K. was over but some "secret" proceedings were on.

Adjourned to January
The court had wanted to know about the nature of these confidential proceedings and ordered Mr. Mallya's side to clarify by No-

ember 2 the nature of this confidential proceedings, when it will end and by when the businessman will appear before it to accept his sentence for contempt.

The court has adjourned the case to next January.

On October 5, the court asked Mr. Mallya's side to come clean about the nature of a "confidential" proceeding going on after the rejection of his appeal against extradition in the U.K. Supreme Court.

The government had informed the court that the proceedings were "secret" and were not to be disclosed.

Help desks for women
He said the Ministry was supporting the States and Union Territories in setting up and strengthening woman help desks in police stations and

strengthening anti-human trafficking units in all districts. "The National Database on Sexual Offenders is used by the police to identify repeat offenders, and receive alerts on sex offenders, as also in the investigation.

Police can also use this data for verification requests from employers for their employees working in vulnerable areas, like educational institutions, hotels, public transportation," he said.

States' suggestions sought to amend IPC
The Central government has accepted the suggestions made by the states regarding the amendment of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy said on Monday that the States had been asked for their suggestions to amend the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

At a function in Delhi, Mr. Reddy said the Centre was prepared to make laws and create infrastructure to make women safe. "India has a rich culture and heritage. We have a culture of res-

Space has its own environmental problems, particularly a sharp increase of space debris. This Canadian company is attempting to solve this with the latest technologies



ISHAN PATRA

Traffic cops of space



"In space, we always talk about firsts," space technologist Stewart Bain muses. "Skylark would be the first dedicated satellite constellation looking at managing the situation in space such as congestion, threats of collisions, and addressing space traffic management."

Stewart is the CEO of Canada-based space company NorthStar Earth & Space that made headlines for its efforts to address the threat of space debris, which has increased over the recent years. NorthStar plans to provide safe and sustainable solutions through its Skylark satellite constellation designed specifically for Space Situational Awareness (SSA).

Sputnik 1 was the first human-made object to orbit the Earth. Its launch created new opportunities in space. However, 63 years later, it has also added 29,000 objects as debris (larger than 10 centimetres in diameter) in addition to the 2,500-plus active satellites in space.

Space environment

As space organisations around the globe explore opportunities in commercial space industry, artificial space objects are only expected to grow and this is where SSA comes in. SSA tracks natural and artificial objects in the orbit around the Earth, and predicts where the objects are going to be at any given time. The space-tech company is collaborating with Thales Alenia

EXPANDING SPACE ENVIRONMENT

According to European Space Agency, the number of space debris objects in Earth's orbit is 6.7 lakh (larger than 1 cm) and over 17 crore (larger than 1 mm).

Mega-constellations from companies such as SpaceX, and Amazon will add thousands of satellites in the low Earth orbit.

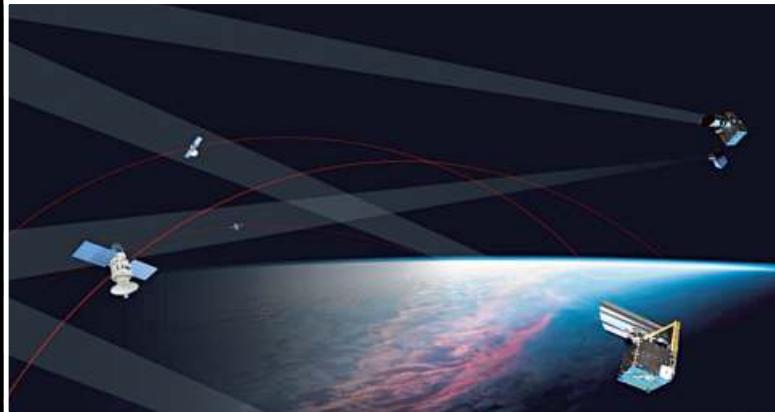
It presents a serious challenge to operators, regulators, insurance companies, and investors.

NorthStar plans to provide the information to prevent accidents as the number of satellites exponentially increase.

Space, to build satellites for the Skylark constellation, while LeoStella, will oversee the final assembly, and Telespazio, will help in the implementation of the ground stations in Europe and Canada.

The constellation of 12 satellites would be equipped with optical sensors to monitor space objects including active and inactive satellites and debris that could pose a threat. "We put up street signs 70 years ago to manage traffic. On similar lines, we need to start thinking about how we are going to manage our interaction with what is in space in a safe and sustainable way," Bain explains over video call from Canada.

The Canadian company has announced signing the contract



for the first three satellites to build the constellation. It plans to launch them by mid-2022 and the rest by 2024.

Each satellite weighs about 200 kilograms and is equipped with a 60-centimetre long sensor. The set of three satellites form a spiral, so the constellation will have four spirals with different orbits, all of which will be circular and polar at about 575 kilometres from the Earth's surface in the low Earth orbit (LEO).

Challenges above

Other companies such as SpaceX and House Space Force Caucus have been vocal about the problem of debris. Since Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin's first human spaceflight in 1961, numerous space missions have contributed to the build-up of debris.

Most 'space junk' can reach a speed of nearly 29,000 kilometres per hour. Because of

the amount of debris in LEO and the speed at which they are moving, current and future space-based services, explorations, and operations pose a safety risk to people and property in space and on Earth, according to NASA. A space-based satellite system has certain advantages over ground-based systems, including having multiple points of view for an object; not reliant on weather changes and atmospheric interferences; and the ability to make frequent revisits. Stewart adds, "It picks up changes quickly, if two

The company's team of 40 people comprises individuals experienced in flight dynamics, interplanetary navigation, and mathematical modelling.

CEO
NorthStar would offer subscription-based services, which will be available to organisations to address their specific needs. The announcement is a step towards becoming a revenue-generating enterprise. The company's team of 40 people comprises individuals experienced in areas such as flight dynamics, interplanetary navigation, and mathematical modelling. Stewart says the combination of private and public investments has helped the company get this far. NorthStar has received investments from the Canadian government, the Québec government, Telesystem Space, and the Space Alliance. The CEO adds, "The aim of the satellite constellation is to combat the imminent threat of space collisions but it also has economic value, not just to us, but to the people who are working in the new space economy."



TECH-A-BYTE

WhatsApp craze of 100 billion

WhatsApp users are now exchanging roughly 100 billion messages every day, as private messaging continues to be one of the fastest-growing forms of communication, CEO Mark Zuckerberg said during the company's third quarter earnings call. Also, there are now more than 40 million people viewing a Business Catalogue every month on WhatsApp, COO Sheryl Sandberg said.

A 115 million landmark

Microsoft announced that its video conferencing platform Teams has reached 115 million daily active users. The platform brings together meetings, chat, calls, collaboration, third-party apps, and business processes into a single experience. "We are seeing increased usage intensity in Teams as people communicate, collaborate, and co-author content across work, life, and learning," Microsoft said in a blog post.

A COVID-19-savvy AI

Researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have developed an artificial intelligence (AI) model that can distinguish between asymptomatic and healthy individuals through cough recordings. The model was trained on tens of thousands of samples of coughs, and words, which people voluntarily submitted through web browsers and devices such as mobile phones and laptops, MIT said in a release. The model identified 98.5 percent of coughs from people who were confirmed to have COVID-19, including 100 percent of coughs from asymptomatic individuals, it added.



Far Cry gets further

Ubisoft's much-anticipated game from the famous Far Cry series Far Cry 6 has been delayed to 2021-2022 due to COVID-19 as the video game company has been having production challenges related to work from home, Ubisoft said in its latest earnings report. "Our teams around the world are working in the studios and from their homes to pour their passion and creativity into making an unforgettable game," Far Cry 6 team tweeted. The company's Rainbow Six Quarantine's release has also been pushed along with Far Cry 6. Ubisoft had unveiled the sixth instalment of the first-person shooter game in July.

Compiled by Ishan Patra

GAMESPOT



JULIAN ALMEIDA

London calling

Watch Dogs: Legion literally lets you play as anyone in an exciting, if not a little buggy, open-world experience



Straight into it

Welcome to London, but this time as a futuristic supercity filled with wonder, such as AI automation to driverless cars to drones everywhere to take care of your 'well-being'. Dystopian governments are controlled by corporations complete with policing by a paramilitary outfit. Large tech companies not only mine your data but prove mass surveillance is commonplace. In this world, you, as a member of hacktivist group, DedSec, have to develop the resistance and take down Albion.

For my starting character, I picked a lady whose only attri-

bute was that she owned a car... I was not impressed. My interest in the game grew as soon as I started recruiting. Repetition was inevitable with a 'play as anyone' system. Yet,

WATCH DOGS: LEGION

DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Toronto

PUBLISHER: Ubisoft

PRICE: ₹3,999 on Playstation 4, Xbox One and PC; coming soon on PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X/S

there is a surprising variation in characters: construction workers, football fans and the elderly, even those with unique abilities like a James Bond-like spy or a magician. Walking around the beautifully-recreated London streets as I profiled people, it was fun staking out locations for elite recruits, and the game has a way of surprising you. Spot someone interesting, complete their recruitment mission and they are part of your team.

With such a large cast of characters, Ubisoft has implemented permadeath to its ro-

gue hero mechanic. This works effectively, as it hurts losing a treasured hero. Though you can recruit more, it still smarts and that feeling raises the stakes. The missions are designed to permit experimentation with your characters' abilities; you can approach objectives from different angles, hack drones, sneak and set traps using the hacking mechanics or go point-blank guns blazing – this freedom is refreshing for



Extraordinary roleplay
Screenshots from Watch Dogs: Legion



ing aspects of being on the road include the hilarious radio stations, and the voice of Bagley, DedSec's deadpan yet hilarious AI assistant.

Pure sandbox fun

Annoying gameplay bugs aside, dystopian London looks crisp and clear, especially if you have raytracing, and see the scenes at night with dynamic lighting and reflections. No doubt this game would shine on next-gen consoles, assuming you get your hands on one. The open world is fantastic, and like any sandbox game there is a lot to do. Building your team is an obvious one, but the number of side missions will keep you busy for over 40 hours.

Watch Dogs: Legion takes what made Watch Dogs 2 great and adds many bold features. The 'play as anyone' is undoubtedly memorable, and so is the Black Mirror-like storyline and setting. If it looks you are going for, it is wise to wait a bit and play it on a new PlayStation 5 or Xbox Series X or on a fast computer with an RTX card.

The writer is a tech and gaming enthusiast who hopes to one day finish his sci-fi novel



The sole purpose



Behind these shoes, upcycled from old tyres, is conservation. Style does not take a backseat either



ANISHA MENEZES

What happens to vehicle tyres once they have outlived their purpose? Often, the end-of-life tyres are put through thermochemical treatment under high temperature, to produce industrial oil and other matter, in a process called pyrolysis. The procedure emits polluting gases, according to the Australian Tyre Recyclers Association (ATRA), and has been banned in some developed countries. Tyres that escape pyrolysis sit in large rubber graveyards, where they do not disintegrate, but leach harmful chemicals into the landfills or are a fire hazard.

Young Indian entrepreneurs are finding innovative, non-toxic ways of returning rubber to the road – by adorning your feet with them. Mumbai-based Funky Kalakar, for instance,

has impressive credentials: 1,400 kilogram of rubber tyres saved and sewn into footwear since 2017. On a smaller – but still impressive – scale, Pune-based Nemital upcycled more than 400 kilograms of tyres since it was founded in 2018. Tyres, however, are

just the beginning. Both these firms are now taking their upcycling ambitions to the next level.

Says Pooja Apte-Badamikar, Founder of Nemital, "We are planning to use upcycled textile and plastic sheets in footwear, very soon, as we transition from waste to wealth."

Amit Jain's Funky Kalakar has already taken its ethos of circular fashion forward with the launch of Go Zero-a recycling/upcycling initiative wherein customers can ship or drop off their previous purchases (handbags and footwear), and are incentivised with a discount on future shopping. Once the items are received, the parts that can be salvaged are upcycled into small accessories like key chains and card holders, while the remaining material is recycled.

The PETA-certified brand creates handbags as well as men's and wo-



Salim and Sulaiman Merchant have been churning out an interesting body of work during this lockdown, via collaborations with emerging and established artistes. Their independent label, Merchant Records, now presents a brand new track – 'Date Kar Le' that features rapper and social media influencer, Carry Minati.

Being released to coincide with the festive season, 'Date Kar Le' is a Punjabi track with rap blended in, aimed at being a party favourite with audiences of all ages. Composed by Salim Sulaiman, the song's Punjabi lyrics have been penned by Shradha Pandit while Carry Minati has written and delivered the rap verses. Romi's engaging voice lends itself beautifully to the song as it picks up pace with its unique video picturisation.

Carry Minati was re-

commended to Salim Merchant by a friend, and Salim was impressed by the YouTuber's enthusiasm and creativity. We liked his sound and our energies jelled. The mindset of people has changed with small parties and social gatherings beginning to happen in the aftermath of the lockdown, hence

this was the perfect fun song to release in the upcoming festive season," says Salim.

'Date Kar Le' has a man with a Virtual Reality headset who immerses himself while imagining three kinds of girls he would like to date.

Adds Sulaiman: "'Date Kar Le' is a cool new concept and now with everything digital, people will hopefully relate to it."

With its contemporary vibe, 'Date Kar Le' is a fun track. Carry Minati's rap delivery and his connect with the youth of the country complements the energy on this collaboration.

Party track (From far left) The 'Date Kar Le' poster; Salim and Sulaiman • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Carry Minati creates music with Salim Sulaiman

POOCH CAFE



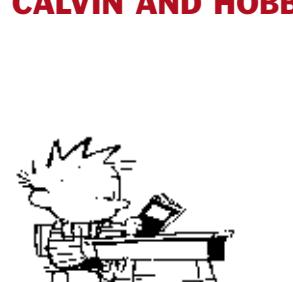
PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



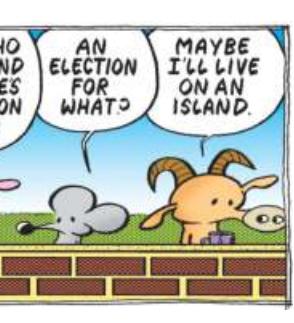
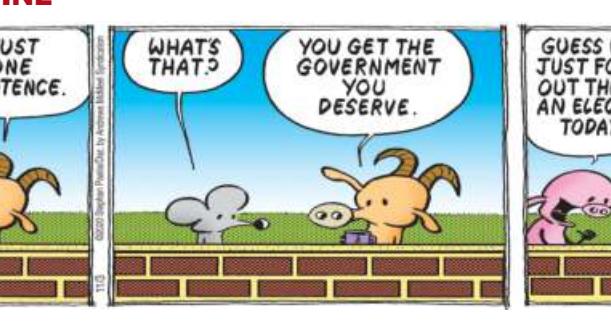
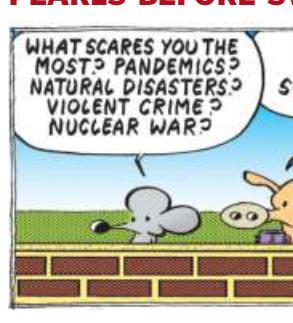
CALVIN AND HOBBES



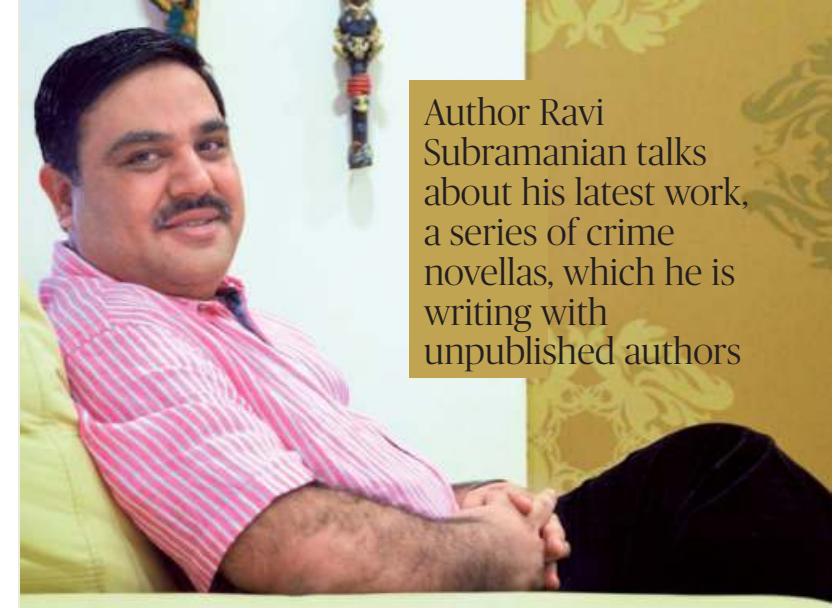
TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



Author Ravi Subramanian talks about his latest work, a series of crime novellas, which he is writing with unpublished authors



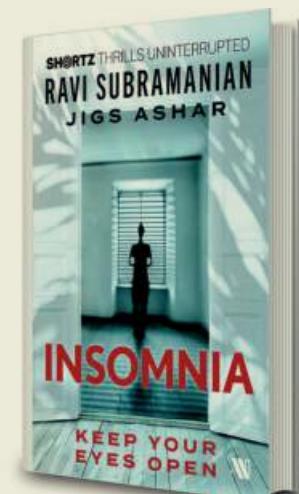
'Shortz is the T20 version of thrillers'

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

Ravi Subramanian's first book, *If God was a Banker*, came out during the global financial crisis of 2007-08. Despite the crisis and his full-time job as a banker, he found the time and energy to write a novel. So, one assumes he would have done the same during the pandemic. After all, the lockdown must have allowed him more time. But he hasn't.

"I need a clear mind and positive energy around me to write. And, that has been largely missing for the last six to seven months."

There were a few pending projects that Ravi managed to finish. The first book of his children's mystery series, *The SMS Detective Agency*, was out on October 23. And, the first two books of *Shortz*, a series of crime novellas, which he is writing with unpublished authors, was released in September.



Adrenaline rush Ravi Subramanian's (top) *Shortz* is simpler than conventional thrillers • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

who are starting to read like simpler stories. And, the good thrillers have multiple plots and non-linear narratives. It can be a bit taxing, especially if it is a big book." *Shortz* books, he says, are smaller and simpler.

All 12 books in the series will feature an unpublished writer as Ravi's co-author. "There are a lot of talented thriller writers in India. *Shortz* is an attempt to provide a platform for them," Jigs Ashar, who co-wrote the first two books in the series, *Insomnia* and *A Brutal Hand*, won an award from Jeffrey Archer for his short story.

The OTT effect on reading *Shortz*, Ravi says, is also an attempt to get people who mainly consume OTT content to read. "Just a few years ago, you saw people travelling with a book on their hands. That has been replaced by phones now."

Ravi is aware he can't change everyone. Even he binge-watches shows, which eats into his reading time. But he believes reading is better than watching films or a show. "When you read a book, you aren't merely consuming the writer's creativity; you are using yours as well to imagine the world that a writer has created. You don't do that with OTT content. Reading lends balance; it contributes to culture."

U.S. sees 95 mn early votes; one more day to go

President Donald Trump again questions integrity of election process; both campaigns have readied armies of lawyers

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

More than 95 million Americans had cast their votes in the 2020 presidential election by Monday, according to a tally by the U.S. Elections Project at the University of Florida, a harbinger of what is expected to be the highest turnout in modern times.

Just a day before Election Day, the record-breaking number is equal to 69% of the entire voter turnout for the 2016 election.

A sharp increase in mail-in and early in-person voting was largely prompted by the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 2,30,000 people in the United States and continues unabated in many States.

President Donald Trump, his administration criticised for its handling of the COVID-19 outbreak, trails Democratic challenger Joe Biden in national opinion polls.

But the race is still a toss-up in battleground States that decide the election through the Electoral College, including Arizona, Florida and North Carolina.

In-person voting

A large number of Mr. Trump's Republican supporters are expected to turn up in person to vote on Election Day after he sowed distrust, without evidence, of mail-in voting by asserting it was riddled with fraud.

Democrats have largely embraced early voting, not only because of the pandemic, but also because of steps the Trump administration has taken to slow down the processing of U.S. mail.

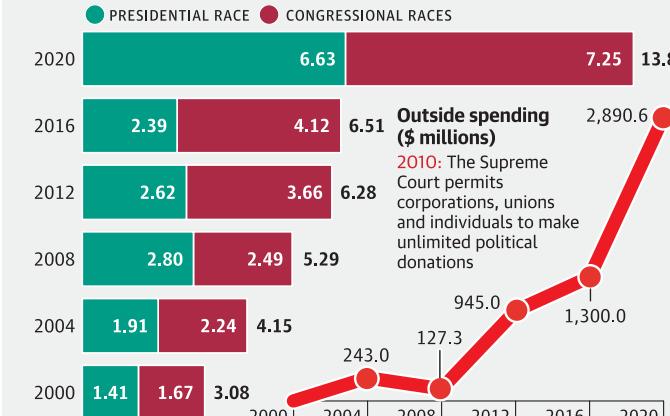
Experts predict turnout will easily surpass the 138 million who voted in 2016. Only 47 million votes were submitted before Election Day four years ago.

World's most expensive election

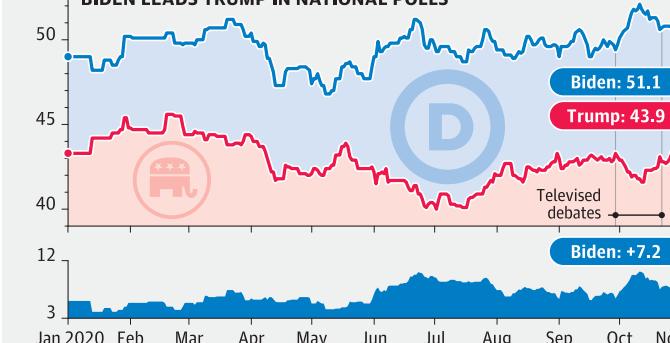
The \$14 billion price tag of this year's US Presidential and congressional races will eclipse the combined cost of the last two elections, according to the Centre for Responsive Politics



RISING COST OF US ELECTIONS (\$ BILLIONS)



BIDEN LEADS TRUMP IN NATIONAL POLLS



Key dates between the vote and inauguration:

Nearly three months transpire between Election Day and the Presidential inauguration, during which time the votes for President and Vice President must be counted and certified by the States and accepted by Congress

Nov 3: Election Day

Nov 5-Dec 12: Deadlines for every state to clarify election results, including for President and Vice President, to determine how state electors will vote

Dec 14: 538 State electors cast their ballots, the candidate with 270 or more wins

Jan 3, 2021: The new Congress is sworn in

Jan 6: A joint session of Congress convenes, with Vice President Mike Pence presiding, to certify results

Jan 20: The President and Vice President are sworn in

Biden: +7.2

swing on Sunday, Mr. Trump, who was impeached by the Democratic-led House of Representatives last December and acquitted by the Republican-controlled Senate in February, claimed he had momentum.

He promised an economic revival and imminent delivery of a vaccine to fight the pandemic.

Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious diseases expert, has said the first doses of an effective coronavirus vaccine will likely become available to some high-risk Amer-

"We're going in the night of – as soon as the election is over – we're going in with our lawyers," Mr. Trump told reporters without offering further explanation.

The Attorneys General of Michigan and Pennsylvania, both Democrats, challenged Mr. Trump's rhetoric on Twitter. "The election ends when all the votes are counted. Not when the polls close," Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel wrote.

In sign of how volatile the election could be, buildings for blocks around the White House were boarded up over the weekend. Federal authorities planned to extend the perimeter fencing around the White House by several blocks, encompassing the same area fenced out during this summer's protests against racism.

To help ensure mail-in ballots are delivered in a timely fashion, a judge on Sunday ordered the U.S. Postal Service to remind senior managers they must follow its "extraordinary measures" policy and use its Express Mail Network to expedite ballots. A federal judge in Texas on Monday will consider a Republican request to throw out about 1,27,000 votes already cast at drive-through voting sites in the Democratic-leaning Houston area.

Mr. Khan, who was speaking ahead of local elections slated for November 15, did not provide a timeline for the move.

Chinese role

China has spent years building infrastructure projects in Gilgit-Baltistan, home to an estimated 1.3 million people, including a long stretch of the Karakoram Highway, a key component to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Mr. Khan said the modern and well-maintained road had brought important progress to Gilgit-Baltistan and the move to make the area a province would help "uplift backward areas and poor segments of society".

Any change in status would require a constitutional amendment. If final

Gilgit-Baltistan to be a full province: Pak. PM

He did not give a timeline for the move

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Imran Khan has angered India after declaring that part of the contested Kashmir region will provisionally become a full province of Pakistan.



ised, it would make Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan's fifth province.

'Illegal occupation'

New Delhi condemned Mr. Khan's announcement, saying it would "bring material changes to a part of Indian territory".

"Such attempts by Pakistan, intended to camouflage its illegal occupation, cannot hide the grave human rights violations, exploitation and denial of freedom for over seven decades to the people residing in these Pakistan-occupied territories," India's Foreign Ministry spokesman Shri Anurag Srivastava said in a statement.

Two of the three wars the rival neighbours have fought since independence have been over Kashmir – home to shrinking Himalayan glaciers seen as vital lifelines to the water stressed countries.

In a move that outraged Pakistan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government last year revoked articles in the Constitution that guaranteed Kashmir's partial autonomy and other rights, including its own flag and Constitution. The two parts of Kashmir are divided by a Line of Control that is subject to frequent cross-border shellings.

With one day left for polling, President Trump and Mr. Biden stepped up campaigning in the battleground States on Monday.

Former President Barack Obama, whom Mr. Biden served as Vice-President for eight years, will hold a get-out-the-vote rally in Atlanta on Monday before closing

out the campaign in the evening with a rally in Miami.

Mr. Biden has wrapped up the campaign on the offensive, travelling almost exclusively to States that Mr. Trump won in 2016 and criticising the President's response to the coronavirus pandemic, which has domi-

nated the race.

Mr. Biden accuses Mr. Trump of giving up on fighting the pandemic, which has killed more than 2,30,000 Americans and cost millions of jobs. Polls show Americans trust Mr. Biden more than Mr. Trump to fight the virus.

During a frantic five-State

process.

Mr. Trump has repeatedly said that mail-in votes are prone to fraud, although election experts say that is

+ Chennai-born Priyanka is New Zealand's new Minister

Jacinda inducts first-ever Indian origin person in govt.



Community and Voluntary Sector and Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment.

She has become New Zealand's first-ever Kiwi Indian Minister, the *New Zealand Herald* newspaper quoted *Indian Weekender* as saying.

Ms. Radhakrishnan, who is from the 2017 intake of new MPs, is a Minister outside of the Cabinet.

She lives in Auckland with her husband.

New talents

Announcing the names of the new Ministers, Prime Minister Ardern said: "I am excited to be bringing in some new talent, with first-hand experience in the areas that they will be working in, and reflecting the New Zealand that elected us on the 17th of October."

"Within this lineup, I'm playing to people's strengths," she said.

have been exploited.

She was elected first as a Member of Parliament belonging to the Labour Party in September 2017. In 2019, she was appointed the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister for Ethnic Communities. Her work in that area helped her build the base for her new role of Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities.

In addition to this, she has become the Minister for the

Snowden aims to become dual U.S.-Russian citizen

He earlier got permanent residency

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

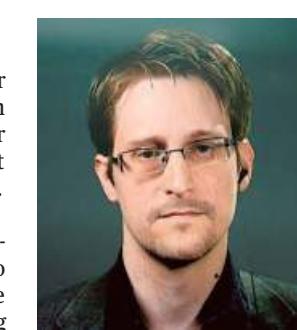
Fugitive U.S. whistleblower Edward Snowden said on Monday he had applied for Russian citizenship but would keep his U.S. nationality.

The former American intelligence contractor, who revealed in 2013 that the U.S. government was spying on its citizens, has been living in exile in Russia since the revelations.

Mr. Snowden's tweet comes weeks after he was granted permanent residency in the country, and just days after his partner Lindsay Mills announced she was pregnant.

He tweeted: "After years of separation from our parents, my wife and I have no desire to be separated from our son."

Moscow only recently relaxed its strict citizenship laws to allow individuals to hold Russian passports without rejecting their original nationalities.



Edward Snowden

In the short thread, Mr. Snowden emphasised that he and Ms. Mills would "remain Americans, raising our son with all the values of the America we love – including the freedom to speak his mind."

The former U.S. contractor is wanted in the U.S. on espionage charges after he leaked information showing that agents from the National Security Agency were collecting telephone records from millions of U.S. citizens.

IS attack on Kabul University + leaves 25 dead, 22 wounded

Iranian envoy was attending a book fair; Taliban denies role



Mayhem on campus: Policemen standing guard at an entrance of the Kabul University on Monday. ■ AFP

the U.S. finally withdrew from Afghanistan. Later in the day, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack.

As the attack unfolded, students and teachers were seen fleeing the part of the campus, while hand grenades exploded and automatic rifle fire could be heard.

Afghan special forces surrounded the campus, shepherding teachers and students to safety.

The Islamic State group said it targeted newly graduated "judges and investigators belonging to the apostate Afghan government" gathered at the campus, according to the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors terror online messaging.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan's Interior Ministry says hours-long siege of the Kabul University is over, with at least 25 dead.

Al-Qaeda threatens Macron over remarks

French PM defended cartoons on Prophet

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TUNIS

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb urged its followers on Monday to kill anyone insulting the Prophet Mohammed and threatened French President Emmanuel Macron over his remarks on Islam.

Last month, Mr. Macron defended the publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed on the grounds of freedom of speech, launching a campaign against Islamic radicalism and sparking fury across the Muslim world.

Mr. Macron has vowed to defend freedom of speech, but anger has spread among Muslims worldwide, with many vowing to boycott French products.

Thousands in Dhaka rally against France

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

At least 50,000 people took part on Monday in the biggest demonstration yet in Bangladesh over French President Emmanuel Macron's defence of the right to publish cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed, police said.

A rally which started at Bangladesh's biggest mosque was stopped from getting close to the French Embassy, where security has been stepped up. Police estimated some 50,000 people took part in the protest. Protesters called for boycott of French products and chanted "No defamation of the Prophet".

Since the U.S. signed a troop withdrawal agreement

On Afghan highways, Taliban calls the shots

Militants are collecting unofficial taxes while 'police are afraid to come out'



Risky roads: Afghan security forces on the Baghlan-Kunduz highway, Afghanistan, in this file photo. ■ REUTERS

addition to collecting "taxes," the militants search vehicles for soldiers or government employees, sometimes executing them on the spot.

The lucrative highway racket helps fund the Taliban's war effort, but there is also a strategic purpose: The militants use their control of many highways to launch attacks on beleaguered government forces, bolstering their negotiating position at the stalled peace talks in Doha, Qatar. The Taliban takeover of sections of the country's roadways is shifting the dynamic of the war, now in its nineteenth year, by making it more difficult for the government to resupply increasingly isolated garrisons and checkpoints. NY TIMES

ELSEWHERE



Depp loses libel case on 'wife beater' claims

LONDON Hollywood star Johnny Depp on Monday lost his libel battle with British tabloid *The Sun* that labelled him a "wife beater", after a London High Court ruled he had repeatedly assaulted his former partner and put her in fear for her life. In a ruling that could severely damage Depp's reputation and career, the judge said he accepted claims from the actor's ex-wife, actress Amber Heard, that he had violently assaulted her. Ms. Heard said Depp would turn into a "monster", after binging on drugs and alcohol. ■ Reuters

DC snaps out of its slump to qualify second; RCB through too

Shreyas' side ends four-match losing streak, thanks to Nortje-led bowling effort and Dhawan-Rahane stand; Kohli's men in playoffs with better NRR than KKR

IPL 2020

SPORTS BUREAU

Ajinkya Rahane (60, 46b, 5x4, 1x6) and Shikhar Dhawan (54, 4lb, 6x4) returned to form and helped Delhi Capitals seal second spot at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Monday.

The convincing six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bangalore was set up by a fine bowling performance that restricted RCB to 152, before Rahane and Dhawan came good with an 88-run second-wicket partnership.

RCB too confirmed its place in the playoffs, after making DC bat more than 17.3 overs and ensuring that its net run rate didn't fall below Kolkata Knight Riders' in fourth.

Dhawan started the chase with four cracking boundaries through the off-side, including an exquisite straight drive off Mohammed Siraj. Rahane was composed, catching the eye with his excellent use of the feet. The two boundaries he hit off Isuru Udana through the covers and past mid-off to round out the PowerPlay were pleasing.

After scoring 53 from six overs, the duo dropped anchor and consolidated. But in the 13th over, Dhawan was caught at short fine-leg trying a cheeky sweep. Rahane, a little while later, perished trying a cheekier shot, a reverse-sweep. But DC was not to be denied the win.

Earlier, Devdutt Padikkal top-scored with the fifth half-



Rising to the occasion: Ajinkya Rahane and Anrich Nortje fired for Delhi Capitals in a shoot-out with Royal Challengers Bangalore for the No. 2 spot. ■ BCCI/IPL

century (50, 4lb, 5x4) of his maiden IPL season. But it was again left to Virat Kohli (29, 24b, 2x4, 1x6) and A.B. de Villiers (35, 2lb, 1x4, 2x6) to do the heavy-lifting, a job at which they didn't succeed. Kohli was foxed by R. Ashwin (4-0-18-1) while de Villiers was run out.

After Shreyas Iyer chose to bowl, the PowerPlay fetched RCB just 40 runs. Josh Philippe was restless during his 17-ball 12 but Padikkal made full use of the pace from Anrich Nortje and Kagiso Rabada, lifting and guiding the duo for three boundaries on the off-side.

Kohli's stay contained a crunching back-foot drive (Nortje), a fierce hit over extra-cover (Rabada) and a six over long-on (Axar Patel). He was dropped by Nortje in the deep off Axar in the 10th over, but Ashwin teased the RCB skipper into charging him with a slow delivery and

had him caught at deep mid-wicket.

In the 16th over, Nortje breached Padikkal's defence with a 152kmph snorter and had Chris Morris caught behind. But in a 10-ball window across the 18th and 19th overs, de Villiers and Shivam Dube raised hopes by smashing 28 runs.

However, they fell within three balls of each other, denying RCB the necessary tailwind.



Anrich Nortje celebrates a wicket for Royal Challengers Bangalore. ■ BCCI/IPL

MI vs DC on Nov. 5

- MI and DC, the top two finishers, will meet in Qualifier 1 in Dubai on Nov. 5
- RCB will meet either KKR or SRH in the Eliminator in Abu Dhabi on Nov. 6
- If SRH beats MI on Tuesday, it will qualify; if it loses, KKR will be through to the playoffs

After the DC-RCB match on Nov. 2

Points table

Team	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Mumbai Indians (Q)	13	9	4	18	1.296
Delhi Capitals (Q)	14	8	6	16	-0.109
Royal Challengers (Q)	14	7	7	14	-0.172
Kolkata Knight Riders	14	7	7	14	-0.214
Sunrisers Hyderabad	13	6	7	12	0.555
Kings XI Punjab	14	6	8	12	-0.162
Chennai Super Kings	14	6	8	12	-0.455
Rajasthan Royals	14	6	8	12	-0.569

Q: Qualified

1x4), Marcus Stoinis (not out) 10 (5b, 1x6); Extras (1b-3, w-3): 6; Total (for four wkts. in 19 overs) 154.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (Shaw, 1.5), 2-107 (Dhawan, 12.4), 3-130 (Shreyas, 16.2), 4-136 (Rahane, 17.2).

RCB BOWLING
Morris 2-0-19-0, Siraj 3-0-29-1, Washington 4-0-24-1, Udana 2-0-24-0, Chahal 4-0-29-0, Shahbaz Ahmed 4-0-26-2.

Toss: DC; MoM: Nortje.

DC won by six wickets with one over to spare.

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS

Josh Philippe c Shaw b Rabada 12 (17b, 1x4), Devdutt Padikkal b Nortje 50 (41b, 1x6), Virat Kohli c Stoinis b Ashwin 29 (24b, 2x4, 1x6), A.B. de Villiers run out 35 (21b, 1x4, 2x6), Chris Morris c Pant b Nortje 0 (2b), Shivam Dube c Rahane b Rabada 17 (11b, 2x4, 1x6), Washington Sundar (not out) 0 (1b), Isuru Udana c Shreyas b Nortje 4 (2b, 1x4), Shahbaz Ahmed (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-1, w-3): 4; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 152.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-25 (Philippe, 4.1 overs), 2-82 (Kohli, 12.3), 3-112 (Padikkal, 15.4), 4-112 (Morris, 15.6), 5-145 (Dube, 18.6), 6-146 (de Villiers, 19.2), 7-150 (Udana, 19.4).

CAPITALS BOWLING

Sams 4-0-40-0, R. Ashwin 4-0-18-1, Nortje 4-0-33-3, Rabada 4-0-30-2, Axar 4-0-30-0.

DELHI CAPITALS

Prithvi Shaw c Siraj 9 (6b, 2x4), Shikhar Dhawan c Dube b Shahbaz 54 (41b, 6x4), Ajinkya Rahane c Dube b Washington 60 (46b, 5x4, 1x6), Shreyas Iyer c Siraj b Shahbaz Ahmed 7 (9b), Rishabh Pant (not out) 8 (7b),

For the IPL scorecards and points table, scan the QR code

Top of the charts

ORANGE CAP

K.L. RAHUL (KKR)
Matches: 14 | Runs: 670
HS: 132* | SR: 129.34

PURPLE CAP

KAGISO RABADA (DC)
Matches: 14 | Wickets: 25
BB: 4/24 | Econ: 8.14

After the DC-RCB match on Nov. 2

SRH has to beat MI to qualify

A loss for the Hyderabad side will see KKR through

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SHARJAH

A resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad will back itself to topple the mighty Mumbai Indians and qualify for the playoffs here on Tuesday.

Thanks to a healthy run-rate, a win against MI should be enough for SRH to make it.

After leaving out Jonny Bairstow, SRH has managed to find the "right" balance.

Wriddhiman Saha has made an instant impact as David Warner's opening partner and the inclusion of Jason Holder has provided an all-round option.

Impressive

Holder and Sandeep Sharma were very impressive, both upfront and at the death, in the last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Left-arm pacer T. Natarajan and trump card Rashid Khan round out the arsenal.

SRH also knows there is little scope for error against a formidable outfit like MI, which seems to be on



Kieron Pollard. ■ BCCI/IPL



David Warner. ■ BCCI/IPL

TODAY'S MATCH

SUNRISERS VS. MUMBAI INDIANS

SHARJAH, 7.30 P.M. IST

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 15

SRH 7 | MI 8

FORM GUIDE

(last five matches, latest game first)

SRH W | W | L | W | L

MI W | W | L | W | L

STAR SPORTS 1 & SELECT 1 (SD & HD)

course for an unprecedented fifth IPL title.

In the absence of injured skipper Rohit Sharma, MI steamrollered RCB and Delhi Capitals in its previous encounters, becoming the first team to qualify for the playoffs.

Trent Boult and Jasprit Bumrah have looked menacing with the swinging new ball and ever so frugal with the old.

Kieron Pollard has been impressive with his captaincy.

Watson brought aggression and sense of occasion to CSK

All-rounder has called it quits from all forms of the game

S. DINAKAR

CHENNAI

For Chennai Super Kings, Shane Watson brought with him aggression and a sense of occasion. In the playoff games and the final, he would boom. He was a big game hunter.

Watson, now, has drifted into the sunset when he had some more cricket left. He is 39, but his unbeaten 83 against Kings XI Punjab in the ongoing IPL was high-octane batting.

He also carried with him sunshine and laughter. Relaxed, he enjoyed his cricket... at the expense of the opposition.

Now, Watson has called it quits from all forms of the game.

Fast and furious

He began his career as a tea-ravay who hustled the batsmen by making them smell leather with short stuff and inflicted pain on them with



Watson... a big contributor to CSK's success. ■ BCCI/IPL

the order.

Shane Watson's body, though, could not take the workload, and, after injuries and surgeries, he was forced to concentrate on his powerful batting. He still sent down his medium pacers cleverly.

He had his successes in Tests with 3731 runs at 35.19 and 75 wickets at 33.68 in 59 matches.

Making his mark

But the handsome cricketer's biggest moments arrived in the shorter formats; he made his international debut in 2002. He went on to become a World Cup and Champions Trophy winner.

In the second half of his career, Watson would open the batting and then bowl his seamers cleverly. And he was one of the most brutal pullers of the ball.

Memories will remain. Watson was a true blue Aussie.

While the BCCI is yet to

make the official announcement, *The Hindu* understands that the fantasy platform emerged as the only interested party after the BCCI had extended the deadline. As a result, it has acquired the rights for ₹6 lakh per match and an annual royalty of ₹8 crore.

It means that the revenue generated on a match-to-match basis through kit sponsorship will reduce almost by 30%. Nike, for the last four years of its 14-year-long association, paid ₹88 lakh per international match.

Dream11, a fantasy sport platform, came on board as the IPL title sponsor recently after a Chinese mobile manufacturer ended its association with the T20 league.

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★

TV PICKS

Rome Masters: Sony Six (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m.
Champions League: Sony Ten 1, 2, 3, & 6 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Wednesday)



Rublev wins title

VIENNA
Andrey Rublev beat Lorenzo Sonego 6-4, 6-4 on Sunday in the Vienna final to win his fifth ATP title of the season and secure a spot at the Tour Finals in London. Rublev will be making his debut at the season-ending Tour Finals, which starts on November 15. AFP

Shinkwin takes title; Shubhankar is T-14

PAPHOS (CYPRUS)
Shubhankar Sharma rounded off a consistent week by carding a two-under 69 in the final round, to finish a creditable tied 14th at the Cyprus Open golf here on Sunday. It was Shubhankar's best finish of the season, bettering his T-26 at the Scottish Open. Meanwhile, Callum Shinkwin defeated Kalle Samooja in a play-off to win his first European Tour title. PTI



Gay is champion; Lahiri finishes T-11

SOUTHAMPTON (BERMUDA)
Anirban Lahiri signed off tied 11th with a four-under 67 in the final round of the Bermuda golf championship here on Sunday. He totalled 10-under 274 and finished T-11 alongside Kiradech Aphibarnrat. Brian Gay claimed his fifth PGA Tour victory with a playoff win over Wyndham Clark. PTI

National table tennis camp begins today

CHENNAI
All the players having undergone the mandatory six-day quarantine, the National table tennis camp begins at the Delhi Public School (Sonepat, Haryana) on November 3 (Tuesday). "All the players are here. The facilities are good. I took the COVID-19 Test today and it returned negative. All the SOPs are being followed," Sharath Kamal, India's top paddler, told *The Hindu* on Monday.

Zidane's Real Madrid gets set to meet Conte's Inter

The Spanish side faces the coach who could have brought painful but necessary changes

FOOTBALL

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MADRID

Antonio Conte might have been in the Real Madrid dugout for Tuesday's Champions League game against Inter Milan were it not for the five words spoken by Sergio Ramos in October 2018.

"Respect is earned, not imposed," Ramos said, when asked about the prospect of a hard-line coach like Conte taking charge.

His answer was taken as a rejection of Conte's methods and a rebuke to the idea that Real Madrid's dressing room was in desperate need of a



Conte. ■ FILE PHOTO

Sindhu's 'I retire' tweet startles fans

But the world champion was not talking about quitting the game

BADMINTON

V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

World champion P.V. Sindhu caused a flutter on social media on Monday with a message that began with the words, "Denmark Open was the final straw; I RETIRE". But anybody who read the tweet in its entirety will have learnt that she wasn't talking about hanging up her racket.

She was referring to the negativity which has spread in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and wanting to 'retire' from that.

"I have been thinking about coming clean with my feelings for a while now ... That's why I am writing today to tell you that I'm done," Sindhu tweeted.

"It's understandable you are shocked or confused but by the time you finish reading this you would have learnt about my point of view, and hopefully, will support it too..."



Misconstrued! It transpired that P.V. Sindhu was referring to the negativity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. ■ FILE PHOTO

Denmark Open was the final straw
I RETIRE

guess I needed to get you guys to sit up and take notice. That being said, we must be hopeful about the light shining at the end of the tunnel.

"Yes, the Denmark Open didn't happen but that won't stop me from training. When life comes at you, one must comeback [sic] twice as hard."

"So will I for the Asia Open. I refuse to give up without putting up a solid fight. I refuse to give up without conquering this fear."

"And will carry on doing so till we have a safer world."

AITA plans camps for elite players

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The national tennis federation has decided to invite country's top players for a training camp at the DLTA with an aim to provide a platform for their return to competitive action from next year.

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has laid out a plan for top-20 elite men's and women's players for the camp, which may culminate with a national championship in the singles format among the assembled players in a bio-secure environment.

The 21-day camp will first begin for the men's players from November 30.



Raring to go: Mithali Raj is just thankful for the chance to be back in action. ■ FILE PHOTO: V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM

EURO LEAGUES

REUTERS
LONDON

Gareth Bale came off the bench to head the winner for Tottenham Hotspur in a 2-1 victory over Brighton & Hove Albion in the Premier League on Sunday, his first goal since returning to the club from Real Madrid.

The Welshman was brought on in the 70th mi-

C I may have given you guys a mini heart-attack; unprecedented times require unprecedented measures. I guess I needed to get you guys to sit up and take notice

Sindhu is currently training in England, and although her family is concerned about the state of affairs in the UK, it is learnt that she will monitor the situation before deciding whether to return home or continue with her schedule.

"The tweet is more an expression of her thoughts on the worldwide scenario with emphasis on how grim a battle humanity is waging against the pandemic," a family member told *The Hindu*.

"It has nothing to do with the game."

Alva and Madesh in blazing form

KARTING

ASHWIN ACHAL
BENGALURU

Bengaluru racers Ruhaan Alva and Ishaan Madesh starred in the Meco-FMSCI National Karting Championship (X30 Classes) here over the weekend.

Alva, who won every race in Round 1 and Round 2, won three out of the four



races in each of the two rounds in the Junior Category. He holds a massive 41-point lead and has sealed the championship with one round still to go.

In the Cadets section, Madesh won seven of the eight races to assert his class.

In the Senior Category, Coimbatore's Suriya Varan (total tally 138) widened his lead over Chennai's Nirmal Umashankar (111).

promoter Vamsi Merla.

"We had promised to take INRC to a different level and are certainly on the move. We are in talks with other big companies and will soon announce new partners and teams. We express our gratitude to Mr. [Nutulapati] Mallikarjuna Rao [owner] and his team for supporting our vision," added Merla.

"We are very excited with this new venture as this is the first time that we are involved in sports in a big way. When we were presented with the opportunity to own a team, we were sceptical. But, after proper due diligence, we have decided to go ahead."

"With the kind of drivers in the line-up, we are confident of our chances this season," said Mallikarjuna Rao.

'Team Nutulapati' to take part in INRC

MOTORSPORTS

RAYAN ROZARIO
COIMBATORE

The Champions Yacht Club (CYC)-FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) is getting bigger by the day.

After Yokohama Tyres announced its return for the new season, it's time for Sri Sai Venkata Rama Constructions to field a team in the championship, the first by a first real estate company.

"Team Nutulapati" will consist of last season's overall runner-up and INRC 2 champion, Bikku Babu (Kerala), Dhruba Chandrashekhar (Karnataka), and Aditya Thakur (Himachal Pradesh).

Bikku and Dhruba will compete in the INRC 2 category, while Aditya will spearhead the challenge in INRC 3 class. All will drive Volkswa-



Mallikarjuna Rao

gen Polos on MRF Rally Tyres.

Good sign

"It is indeed a great sign for INRC as well as for the overall motorsports scene of the country that apart from car and tyre companies, others have started showing interest in the sport and are investing their time and money into it," said INRC

win. Unbeaten Sassuolo has 14 points from six games, two behind leader AC Milan.

The results:

Premier League: Tottenham 2 (Kane 13-pen, Bale 73) bt Brighton 1 (Lamptey 56).

LaLiga: Granada 1 (Machis 8) drew with Levante 1 (Vezo 34); Valencia 2 (Musah 22, Soler 70) bt Fiorentina 0; Sampdoria 1 (Jankto 23) drew with Genoa 1 (Scamacca 28).

Bundesliga: Freiburg 2 (Hoeler 3, Petersen 72) lost to Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Alario 29, 42, Amiri 65, Tah 76); Hertha Berlin 1 (Cunha 6) drew with Wolfsburg 1 (Baku 20).

Bale's winner puts Tottenham in the second spot**EURO LEAGUES**

REUTERS
LONDON

Harry Kane had put Spurs ahead in the 13th minute from the penalty spot.

Spurs moved points two behind leader Liverpool.

Sassuolo went second in the table and ended Napoli's 100% record on the pitch in Serie A with a shock 2-0 away

win. Unbeaten Sassuolo has 14 points from six games, two behind leader AC Milan.

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Tiri and Sandesh boost to ATK MB's squad

ISL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

Spanish centre back Tiri, who is returning after three years, was on Monday named along with star Indian defender Sandesh Jhingan in a 27-member squad announced by ATK Mohun Bagan here.

Tiri was part of ATK's ISL-winning side in 2016 before switching to Jamshedpur FC, while Jhingan has been the most high-profile signing of the season.

It remains to be seen who will partner the duo in the backline.

The trio

Then there's the trio of Pratam Kotal, Sumit Rathi and Prabir Das who have been retained.

During their practice session at Benaulim Stadium,

Sandesh Jhingan. ■ FILE PHOTO: M. VEDHAN

the Spanish gaffer was seen paying extra attention to their defence to get a perfect combination for the duo of Tiri and Sandesh.

Fijian star forward Roy Krishna is likely to wear the captain's arm band but Habas, who is known to rotate his skipper, did not reveal any name.

The squad:

Goalkeepers: Arindam Bhattacharya, Dheeraj Singh, Avilash Paul, Arsh Anwer Shaikh, Aryan Niraj Lamba.

Defenders: Tiri, Sandesh Jhingan, Subhasish Bose, Sumit Rathi, Pratam Kotal, Prabir Das, Boris Singh Thangjam.

Midfielders: Brad Inman, Ningombam Engson Singh, Carl McHugh, Pronay Halder, Michael Regin, Sheikh Sahil, Javi Hernandez, Ghan Martins, Mohammad Fardin Ali Molla, Michael Soosaiyan, Edu Garica and Jayesh Rane.

Forwards: Roy Krishna, David Williams and Manvir Singh.

Swastik hits triple ton, century by Vivek

NEW DELHI: Swastik Chhikara scored an unbeaten triple century off just 140 balls, studded with 30 fours and 23 sixes, to add 408 runs for the third wicket with Vivek Yadav (107 no., 92b) as Haryana Academy thrashed Uttarakhand Boys Academy by 255 runs in the Manoj Soni cricket tournament.

The scores:

HCA 439/2 in 40 overs (Swastik Chhikara 107 n.o., Vivek Yadav 107 n.o.) bt UBA 184 in 34.3 overs (Rajdeep Jain 60; Kabir Bishnoi 4/20, Suhail Dhull 3/22).

Forwards: Roy Krishna, David Williams and Manvir Singh.

SC East Bengal launches kits

Retains iconic jersey colours for home games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

SC East Bengal on Monday unveiled their jerseys for the upcoming Hero Indian Super League, retaining the club's iconic red and gold/yellow pattern for the home games.

East Bengal launched their home, away and third kit for the 2020-21 ISL season.

The jerseys have been designed by Meghna Nayak, a young designer from Bengal who prefers to keep "things local". While the club received numerous submissions, it was looking for a de-

signer to present concepts that were original.

"Nayak's concepts for SC East Bengal, inspired by the Flame, the 'Ilish' or Hilsa fish, and the Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sunderbans instantly appealed to the club," SC East Bengal head coach Robbie Fowler said.

The home kit is a stylised version of the flame in the club logo. The rendition in red and yellow continues to "signal the dynamism and firepower" of the team while adapting it to new design sensibilities. The away jersey is blue and white in colour.

DELHI ROUND-UP

Sahgal and Chaudhary enters semifinals

Ayush Badoni top-scored with 74 as Sahgal and Chaudhary beat Rann Star Club by six wickets to enter the semifinals of the YS Sports T20 tournament.

The scores: RSC 171/5 in 20 overs (Milind Kumar 93