



CBSE exam dates to be fixed after discussions, says Ramesh Pokhriyal
page 10



Daily COVID-19 count stays below 40,000 for 11 days in a row
page 10



Britain sets Sunday deadline for Brexit talks with European Union
page 11



Legendary Italian footballer Paolo Rossi passes away
page 13

PRINTED AT • CHENNAI • COIMBATORE • BENGALURU • HYDERABAD • MADURAI • NOIDA • VISAKHAPATNAM • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • KOCHI • VIJAYAWADA • MANGALURU • TIRUCHIRAPPALLI • KOLKATA • HUBBALLI • MOHALI • MALAPPURAM • MUMBAI • TIRUPATI • LUCKNOW • CUTTACK • PATNA

NEARBY



COVID-19 cases cross 6 lakh mark in the Capital

NEW DELHI
The Capital witnessed 1,575 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 6,01,150, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Thursday. Also, 61 more deaths have been reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths to 9,874.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Constable accuses two CRPF officers of rape

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Police have registered an FIR against an officer of the rank of Deputy Inspector-General and another in the CRPF after a woman constable alleged that she was raped by them for several years, a police officer said. The FIR was registered against team coach Surjit Singh and Chief Sports Officer Khazan Singh, the police said.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

LevelUp IAS
Current Affairs
One Year Course-Pre-cum-Mains 2021
by Santosh Kumar
8826486658, 882649658

Govt. asks farmers' unions to reconsider its proposal

Doors not shut, say unions, but call for a 'concrete solution'

ASHOK KUMAR
NEW DELHI

Responding to an appeal on Thursday from the Centre that the farmers' unions reconsider its proposal for amendments to the three agriculture sector laws and resume dialogue, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), a joint front of the farmers' unions, maintained that they too had not "shut the doors" for negotiations. However, they said the government must come up with a "concrete solution" to end the impasse.

A day after the unions rejected the government's proposal, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, at a joint press conference with Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal, said he was "pained" to see that the farmers were not able to make a decision despite all their doubts being addressed by the government. He made an appeal to the farmers to consider the proposal sent by the Centre and resume talks.

Mr. Tomar said the government was ready for talks with an "open mind", adding that the farmers should decide on the next date of talks. He said the unions should give up the path of agitation and it was not correct to in-



No headway: The government said the unions should give up the path of agitation as talks were still on. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

tensify the stir when talks were still on. He said he was "hopeful" of a solution to the matter.

No law completely bad' When asked about the possibility of the withdrawal of the laws, Mr. Tomar maintained that no law was "completely bad".

Mr. Goyal said the government was "very, very open and flexible" to find an amicable solution to the concerns raised by the farmers. "We make an honest appeal to the union leaders to allow the farmers to return to their villages and continue dialogue with the government to dispel any apprehensions," he said.

In reply to a question, Mr. Goyal said the media should use its "investigative skills" to find out whether the farmers were being misled.

Reacting to the government's appeal, Bharatiya Kisan Union (RK) president Balbir Singh Rajewal, speaking at a press conference at the Singhu border, said the farmers, too, had not "shut the doors" for talks, but stressed that the government must offer a "concrete solution" for the dialogue to resume.

He said the proposal sent on Wednesday had been discussed for hours and there was nothing new in them.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 9

New Parliament building will reflect India's aspirations: Modi

It will be the amalgamation of the new and the ancient, says PM

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the new Parliament building, for which the ground-breaking ceremony was held, would channel and reflect the aspirations of 21st century India.

The ceremony was attended by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Harivansh, and Union Ministers Hardeep Puri and Pralhad Joshi, along with members of the Union Cabinet, diplomats, and Members of Parliament.

The ceremony included an all-faith prayer and rituals by priests from the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Karnataka. The shankha (conch shell) and navaratnas (nine precious stones) had come from the Peetham.

Mr. Modi said, "The new building will be the amalgamation of the new and the ancient, and reflects also the spirit of fostering change in oneself adapting to changing circumstances. Our Con-

New seat of power

A look at some of the features of the proposed four-storey Parliament building

Shape: Triangular

Total area **64,500** square metres

Main spaces
Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and Central Lounge

■ The National Emblem will crown the new Parliament building

CAPACITY

Lok Sabha **888** seats (current chamber can accommodate 552 people)

Rajya Sabha **384** seats

■ The Lok Sabha Hall will also have additional capacity, up to **1,272** seats, to host joint sessions

THEME OF INTERIORS
Lok Sabha Peacock (National bird)
Rajya Sabha Lotus (National flower)
Central Lounge Banyan (National tree)



Gearing up: Construction workers walking past a hoarding featuring the new Parliament building. ■ REUTERS

■ Construction was scheduled to start in December, but the works have been stopped till the Supreme Court disposes of challenges to the project

Contractor Tata Projects Ltd.
Architect HCP Design, Planning and Management

Estimated cost **₹971** crore
Completion deadline: October 2022, in time for the winter session of Parliament in the 75th year of Independence

versations must continue", noting that it was the spirit of democracy, a comment significant with regard to the stalled negotiations between the government and farmer groups over the three farmer-specific laws passed by Parliament.

While there could be disagreements, there cannot be space for disconnect, he stated.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
RELATED REPORTS ▶ PAGE 9

stitution was framed and given to us in the current Parliament building and it is the repository of much of our democratic legacy but it is important to be realistic as well. Over the last 100 years, several modifications have been made to the current building to the point where even the building requires rest. Which is why the decision was taken to construct a new Parliament building.

Mr. Modi spoke of the spirit of conversation and dialogue, quoting the first Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Nanak Devji: "as long as the world exists, con-

a space where people from constituencies could meet their MPs, something lacking in the current building.

Spirit of optimism
Mr. Modi called upon MPs to keep the spirit of optimism alive around democracy by being always accountable to people and the Constitution.

He spoke of the spirit of conversation and dialogue, quoting the first Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Nanak Devji: "as long as the world exists, con-

versations must continue", noting that it was the spirit of democracy, a comment significant with regard to the stalled negotiations between the government and farmer groups over the three farmer-specific laws passed by Parliament.

While there could be disagreements, there cannot be space for disconnect, he stated.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8
RELATED REPORTS ▶ PAGE 9

Sisodia's house was attacked, alleges AAP

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) alleged that "BJP goons" attacked Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's residence on Thursday when he was not present. The party claimed that it was done

with the support of the police who were present at the spot.

While AAP shared a video of the purported attack, the BJP said the video shared as evidence by the party was "fake".

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 3

Lawsuits could force Facebook to sell Instagram, WhatsApp

bury" strategy to snap up rivals and keep smaller competitors at bay.

The twin lawsuits filed on Wednesday accuse Facebook of buying up rivals, focusing specifically on its acquisitions of photo-sharing app Instagram for \$1 billion

in 2012 and messaging app WhatsApp for \$19 billion in 2014. Regulators said the acquisitions should be unwound, which could set off a long legal challenge as the deals were cleared years earlier by the FTC.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Convoy of BJP president attacked in West Bengal

State in grip of 'tyranny', says Shah

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

The convoy of BJP president J.P. Nadda came under attack on Thursday in West Bengal's Diamond Harbour area, triggering a major political row in the poll-bound State.

Videos of the incident that surfaced on social media and also circulated by the BJP showed stones and bottles raining on the passing vehicles, as Trinamool Congress supporters holding flags stood on both sides of the road.

Several vehicles suffered damage and many people,

J.P. Nadda including BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, were injured in the incident.

The entire BJP leadership condemned the attack.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

HelpAge India presented UN Population Award for 2020

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

HelpAge India has been presented the UN Population Award for 2020 (institutional category), according to a release issued by UNFPA.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981, the United Nations Population Award recognises contributions in the fields of population and reproductive health.

The Committee for the United Nations Population Award, which made the selections, is chaired by Ion Jinga, the permanent representative of Romania to the United Nations, and is com-

posed of representatives of nine other UN Member States.

"For the first time in the history of the UN Population Award, the honour is being conferred on an Indian institution. The last time the Award came to an Indian was 28 years ago, back in 1992, when it was awarded to Mr. J.R.D. Tata as an individual laureate.

HelpAge India, which has been working for the cause and care of disadvantaged older persons to improve their quality of life' for over four decades, is the first Indian institution to receive this award," added the release.

KENT Mineral RO™ Water Purifiers
HOUSE of PURITY

It's Time to Be More Healthy Protect Your Family With KENT RO Purifiers

Get 100% Pure Water
Kills Bacteria & Viruses
Removes Even Dissolved Impurities
Retains Natural Minerals
World's Best Quality Certificates

Get 100% Peace of Mind
4 Years of Free Service at Home
Prompt Service
Trusted by Millions
No Water Wastage

KENT TECHNOLOGY
RO + UV + UF + TDS Control + UV in TANK

To Know More Make a Video Call By just Scanning This QR Code

4 YEARS FREE SERVICE
1 Year + 3 Years Maintenance Free

Kent Deta Hai Sabse Shudh Paani

Powered by KENT CamCall
*T&C Apply.

Free Demo & Sales Enquiry: 9582-123-456 | Web: kent.co.in | Service: 92-789-12345
Shop Online: KENT Shoppe (Shop.kent.co.in)

Available at all leading home appliance stores.

in association with THE HINDU GROUP

Unacademy CSE Mentor's Workshop
The guidance you need for UPSC CSE Mains

Urban Crisis in India
Free session on GS Paper 4 by Sunita Narain, Environmentalist, Director General of Centre for Science and Environment

December 11 | 5 PM
Register Now

Use of Space Technology for Growth & Security of the Nation
Free session on GS Paper 4 by A S Kiran Kumar, Former Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation

December 12 | 5 PM
Register Now

Learn Live

Hygiene a concern as farmers get 'dirty' toilets at protest site

Protesters face garbage pile-ups, waterlogging; some decide to take up cleaning

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Farmers camping at the Singhu border might have managed to secure food and shelter for the long haul, but the lack of access to clean toilets remains a major cause of concern.

A few metres away from the main stage at the Delhi-Haryana border protest site, public toilets for "gents" and "ladies" are being managed by Haryana authorities. While these are meant for the protesting farmers, they can't use them.

The four toilets, on each side, are "dirty, stinking, and without water – as if they hadn't been cleaned for days". "These toilets are dirty and the stench is vomit-inducing. We don't even think of walking towards that area where they are installed," said Sukhdev Singh (32) from Ludhiana.

Kamaljeet Kaur and Rajbir Kaur from Nawanshahr, who have been protesting at the spot since November 26, said they don't use the public convenience because factory owners and small shop owners have made their toilets and bathrooms available for them.

"Public toilets installed here are unusable. But other people are kind. They don't even let us thank them"



A man walks past a garbage dump of thermocol plates, paper cups and other waste at the Singhu border on Thursday. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

C Public toilets installed here are unusable. But other people are kind. They don't even let us thank them

KAMALJEET KAUR
Protester

side and at a place where none of us goes. It's only for show and politics. Most men manage to relieve themselves in the open," said Khushinder Singh from Patiala.

While unclean public convenience is a major issue, the farmers are also troubled over garbage pile-ups and waterlogging on the roadsides resulting in sludge.

All the protesters try to keep their immediate surroundings clean by constantly sweeping the road near their tractors and there are the likes of Simranjeet and Pawanjeet Singh who voluntarily

clean the common areas. The two friends came from Tarn Taran on Wednesday night and have been sweeping around the common areas. The garbage mostly includes vegetable waste, plastic bottles, and disposable utensils.

Simranjeet, who works as an auto-driver, said that he didn't have money but wanted to perform "sewa" for the "sangat".

Ragpickers at site

He along with his friend Pawanjeet decided to clean the streets. "No one should feel that Punjabis came and made a mess of the place," he said.

Simranjeet also runs a small trust to help accident victims in his village, he said. After the volunteers collect the garbage and push it to a side, the ragpickers take the plastic from the pile.

Rafiq and about 20 other

ragpickers from Kundli visit every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result of leaking water tankers and cooking waste that is dumped on the side. We are not equipped to clean it," he said.

Rafiq and about 20 other

cleaners from Kundli visit

every day around 11 a.m. and leave around 6 p.m. after collecting plastic in their sacks, which they further sell for ₹10-12 a kg.

Kundli Municipal council workers were also spotted collecting garbage; however, they say the manpower isn't enough.

Ramesh (*name changed*) while pushing a small wooden cart full of garbage said, "Around 20 of us collect garbage, clean toilets, and sweep. It's not enough. We have lost count of the number of rounds we have made from the stage till the end collecting garbage."

Ramesh and his colleagues begin at 7 a.m. and leave at 5 p.m.

"This sludge is a result

Timings**DELHI**

FRIDAY, DEC. 11
RISE 07:04 SET 17:26
RISE 03:04 SET 14:52
SATURDAY, DEC. 12
RISE 07:05 SET 17:26
RISE 04:10 SET 15:33
SUNDAY, DEC. 13
RISE 07:05 SET 17:26
RISE 05:20 SET 16:18

Delhi Weather	
max	min
Delhi City	28 11
Safdarjung	28 11
Palam	26 13

Delhi Palam Today
28°C A cool morning and clouding would increase towards evening. Chances of thunderstorm/light rain at some areas towards night.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
25°C Light spell of rain and thundershower with gusty winds and cloudy sky expected.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING PVT LTD & Owner of this newspaper does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products or services. THE PUBLISHING PVT LTD & Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/ company shall not be held responsible/ liable in any manner whatsoever for any claim and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Sisodia's house attacked by 'BJP goons': AAP

War of words erupts between parties; Deputy CM was not present at the time of incident; six arrested

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday alleged that "BJP goons" attacked Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's residence earlier in the day when he was not present at home.

The party claimed that the attack was carried out with the support of Delhi Police which was present at the spot. Six persons have been arrested and a case has been registered, said Delhi Police PRO Eish Singh.

Video shared

While the AAP shared a video of the purported attack, the BJP, which had organised a protest outside Mr. Sisodia's residence for allegedly being part of a plot to "kill" Mayors sitting on a dharna outside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence over the last four days, countered it by stating that the "real" protest was peaceful and the video shared as evidence by the party was "fake."

Mr. Kejriwal soon entered the fray of what snowballed



Video grabs of the incident. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Delhi police is under the ambit of the Central government and not the AAP-ruled Delhi government. AAP leader Atishi said that the attackers had "police protection".

Police had information'

Mr. Bharadwaj claimed that the police officers, who were responsible to protect the residence of Deputy Chief Minister, had prior information of the attack and intentionally removed the barricade so that the BJP supporters can enter his house.

"Even after entering the premises of his residence, the protesters were not arrested by the police. Other officials who were present there got them out of the premises," Mr. Bharadwaj told *The Hindu*.

Delhi BJP vice-president Ashok Goel Devraha, who led the protest outside Mr. Sisodia's residence, alleged the video shared by the AAP is fake. "Our protest was peaceful. As far as the video is concerned, the time stamp on it is from July this year; the AAP has become so desperate that

into a political war as he took on Defence Minister Rajnath Singh over the issue of attacks on political leaders in a democracy.

Mr. Singh, referring to a purported attack on BJP national president J.P. Nadda in Kolkata, tweeted: "In a democracy, it is very worrying to target political leaders in this way. Given the seriousness of the attack on the convoy of the BJP national president, it should be thoroughly investigated and the responsibility of this incident should be fixed."

Earlier in the day, addressing a press conference, AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said, "When the Deputy Chief Minister was not present at his house, BJP workers, who can be called BJP's goons, attacked his house when only women were present."

The party also showed CCTV videos of a group of protesters entering the gate of Mr. Sisodia's residence.

it first stages such incidents and then uses them to seek attention," he said.

Delhi Police, meanwhile, said that they had received request from Delhi BJP regarding organising a protest outside Mr. Sisodia's residence on Mathura Road which they rejected as no gathering or protest is allowed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At 11.30 a.m., a group gathered at a barricade installed by Delhi Police near Deputy CM's house. A group of protesters jumped over the barricades and entered the camp office of Deputy CM located in the house.

The police officers on duty acted swiftly and held six persons who trespassed and were taken to Mandir Marg police station.

"We have received a complaint on the matter from Deputy CM's secretary at Tilak Marg police station. An FIR has been registered into the matter under relevant sections of IPC. The CCTV footage of the incident will be examined," said Mr. Singh.

COVID-19 cases cross 6 lakh mark in the Capital

City records 1,575 more infections

STAFF REPORTER

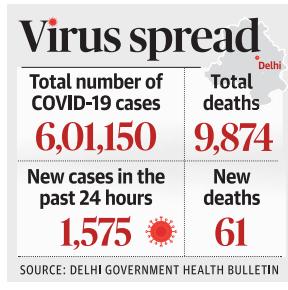
NEW DELHI

The Capital witnessed 1,575 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 6,01,150, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Thursday.

Also, 61 more deaths have been reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of deaths to 9,874. Of the total cases, 5,72,523 people have recovered and there are 18,753 active cases.

Third wave declining'
"We can say that the third wave in Delhi is fading away, however, it is not over yet. I sincerely thank all the frontline and health workers who have been rigorously active in the course of this pandemic, putting their lives at stake in order to provide service to the citizens. I applaud Delhi's citizens for their continued support," said Mr. Jain.

Earlier, the city saw a sudden increase in deaths because of the hazardous pollution levels, the Minister said. "Combined with the virus, a lot of people were indisposed. Still, a lot of people are admitted in the hospitals. This has a lagging effect meaning that we see changes after a gap of 2-3 weeks. Now that cases have decreased, the death rate too will eventually fall," he said.



Talking about vaccination, he said more than 2 lakh registrations have come for the vaccination. "The priority is healthcare and frontline workers. After which the focus will be on senior citizens and subsequently moving to the entire population of Delhi," he said.

Delhi's air quality improves, enters 'poor' category

Condition likely to improve on Friday

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The air quality of Delhi and Gurugram improved to the 'poor' category on Thursday, while Noida stayed in the 'very poor' category, according to the CPCB.

Air quality of the national capital is expected to further improve on Friday due to scattered rainfall.

The effect of stubble burning on the city's air quality was negligible on Thursday.

But the local surface-level winds were calm, which does not help in the dispersion of pollutants. Also, the mixing height, which is the height from the ground level up to which pollutants can be dispersed, was also low at night.

This also prevents pollutants from getting dispersed easily.

"Under the influence of fresh Western Disturbance, isolated to scattered rainfall

Air quality of Delhi-NCR	
Delhi	284
Gurugram	217
Ghaziabad	330
Faridabad	300
Noida	310
Greater Noida	322
■ Good	0-50
■ Satisfactory	51-100
■ Moderate	101-200
■ Poor	201-300
■ Very poor	301-400
■ Severe	>401
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS)	SOURCE: CPCB

and better ventilation conditions are expected on Friday and Saturday, and the AQI is likely to improve on to the lower end of the 'very poor' to 'poor' category by Friday and likely to improve further on Saturday into 'poor' category in case of sufficient rain," said a statement by the government-run monitoring agency SAFAR.

The AQI of Delhi was 284 on Thursday, down from 358 on Wednesday, as per the CPCB's 4 p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours. The values for Gurugram and Noida were 217 and 310 respectively.

Feather watch



A flock of painted storks spotted flying in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

Funds sanctioned for staff, web licences for district courts'

Govt. move comes after HC observed that the continuing pandemic situation requires virtual hearings

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The AAP government has informed the Delhi High Court that funds have been sanctioned for recruiting staff and purchase of 761 licences from Cisco Webex to continue with virtual court hearings in the district courts of the Capital.

The government said it

has sanctioned funds for recruiting ministerial and group-C staff in the district courts, state legal services authority (DSLSSA) and the Delhi Judicial Academy. It said ₹2.52 crore and ₹8.54 crore have been sanctioned for recruiting ministerial and group-C staff respectively.

The Delhi government's

report came in response to the High Court's December 3 direction to grant administrative approval and necessary sanctions for releasing ₹1.44 crore to purchase 761 licences from Cisco Webex in order to continue with virtual court hearings in the district courts here.

The court was hearing a petition seeking to enlarge functioning of the courts,

pandemic situation in Delhi requires virtual hearings in the district courts to be continued and the entire proceedings shall come to a grinding halt in the event funds are not released forthwith" for acquiring the licences.

The court was hearing a petition seeking to enlarge functioning of the courts,

particularly family courts, in the prevalent times.

The plea has sought direction to all the family courts to allow recording of evidence through videoconferencing during the restricted functioning of courts owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, either by the presiding judge of the family court or by a commission.

L-G chairs meet to oversee redevelopment of New Delhi station

Signal-free routes for vehicular traffic, pedestrian-friendly improvements are key components of the project

JATIN ANAND

NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Thursday chaired the first meeting of an Apex Committee to oversee and facilitate the redevelopment of the New Delhi Railway Station as well as its vicinity.

According to sources, the project will, over the next four years, seek to redesign the largest and second-biggest railway station in the country with a daily footfall of approximately 4.5 lakh passengers along the lines of the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport both from without and within.

Signal-free routes for vehicular traffic and pedestrian-friendly improvements are key components of the project to significantly improve access to one of the most infamously congested parts of

the Capital.

Chaired the first meeting of the Apex Committee to oversee & facilitate the Redevelopment of New Delhi Railway Station along the lines of IGI Airport from without and within. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and greatly enhance the aesthetic, living & travelling experience of the citizens. Advised CS, Delhi & VC DDA to notify a nodal officer to ensure seamless coordination [sic.].

The National Transit Oriented Development policy aims at focusing on development around or along a transit node or corridor to facilitate complete ease of access to the transit facilities. It was approved by Mr. Baijal in his capacity as Chairman of the Delhi Development Authority in September 2019. Under the policy, residential, commercial, civic or institutional establishments are proposed to be located in close proximity to allow the local community to access facilities like plazas, shared parks and public transport. The policy seeks to enable walking, cycling and the use of public transportation over personal modes of transport.

While the height of the station will be increased to 70 metres, twin towers of 40 metres height will be constructed in addition to a hangar for trains, the creation of passengers' lounge

similar to the airport and an underground parking for 2,000 vehicles and 40 buses, sources said. A commercial area will also be developed.

According to sources, approaches to the station from Minto Road, Deshpande Gupta Road and Ajmeri Gate would be made signal-free which would provide the additional benefit of de-congesting Connaught Place outer circle on the one hand and a pedestrian high street over half-a-km long would connect the station to Connaught Place on the other.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

On Thursday, the L-G said he had also emphasised on conduct of monthly meetings to facilitate effective project implementation by way of speedy resolution of issues cutting across agencies as the project unfolds.

Rajasthan to boost farm supply chain

State govt. to take up post-harvest management projects

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR

In its continuing steps for farmers' welfare, the Congress government in Rajasthan has formulated plans to expand agricultural supply chain infrastructure and take up post-harvest management projects. Loans worth ₹9,015 crore will be disbursed to farmers, cooperative societies, self-help groups and agricultural entrepreneurs during the next four years.

The decision has been taken in the midst of farmers' protest against the Centre's

agriculture sector laws. Chief Secretary Niranjan Arya said here on Thursday that 21 banks had been authorised to develop the supply chains by sanctioning loans for different projects, while the agricultural processing and export policy would be linked to them.

The State Assembly had passed three Bills last month to stop the applicability of the Centre's new farm laws through the amendments making the Central Acts ineffective in certain respects. Rajasthan is the second Congress-ruled State, after Punjab,

jab, to formally reject the Centre's farm Acts, which are being opposed in a major agitation on the outskirts of Delhi.

Mr. Arya said new warehouses, silos, pack houses, grading and sorting units, cold storages, primary processing centres, fruit ripening chambers and other logistic facilities would be constructed on a large scale across the State. The assets for community farming, organic farming, smart and precision agriculture and farm clusters will also be created.

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:

www.thehinduads.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given that AMARJEET KAUR BHAMBRA D/o INDER SINGH RAI, WZ-2, SECOND FLOOR, GULMARG, NEW DELHI-110085 OF AFGHANISTAN is applying to the Secretary to 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.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT IS for general information that I, Jose Thankachan S/O Thankachan Thomas residing at 75, Pocket-4, Sector-2, Rohini, New Delhi-110085, declare that name of my father, mother and myself has been wrongly written as Thankachan T., Esther and Jose T. in educational documents. The actual name of my father, mother and myself are Thankachan Thomas, Esther Thankachan and Jose Thankachan respectively which may be amended accordingly. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

Vide Affidavit No: IN- DL15863916562633S

PUBLIC NOTICE
The public in large it is inform that my client Sh. Kuljeet Singh S/o. Manjit Singh Rio 925, 2nd Floor, Front Side, South Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110088, (Aadhar Card No. 3456114412492) have all his moveable & immovable properties and have also severed all relations from him as he is no more in under control of my client and if anybody deals with him or he deals with anybody else or performs any actions, my client shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever in future. Mool Chand Gupta, Advocate Enr. No. 3125/2013

EDUCATIONAL

LURNOOZ APP.
Open Your Mind To True Learning

M. PURI SIR'S COURSES

General Studies Paper 2
• Cover topics like Indian Constitution, Polity, Governance, Social Justice, International Relations, most comprehensively

ADMISSIONS OPEN BATCH STARTS 20TH DEC. 2020

General Studies Paper 4
• The most comprehensive batch for GS Paper 4 in the Country

General Studies Paper 2 Answer Writing
• Plug loopholes in your answer writing skills and obtain excellent marks in GS Paper 2

GS ECONOMY BY PRATAP SIR
• Most comprehensive coverage of GS Economy
• Test Series 4 Personal Mentorship included

FREE COMPREHENSIVE PRE-CUM-MAINS MODULES
Modules in History, Culture, Geography, Science and Tech, Environment, National Security etc. by the best experts are also available.

Enroll at www.stellariasacademy.com
Access the course on Lurnooz App.

Stellar ACADEMY
Ground Floor, Dainik Bhaskar Building, Sector 25-D, Chandigarh-160014
Call : 99152-14599 | www.stellariasacademy.com

EDUCATIONAL

ANTHRO-2021
PREPARE AT HOME
By Vijay Singh
(33 Years Teaching Experience)
Latest Recorded Class Videos
Full Study Material in Vijay Sir's 2 Books
Social & Physical Anthropology (Paper-I)
Indian Anthropology (Paper-II)
Books Available on
[amazon](http://amazon.in) [flipkart](http://flipkart.in)
www.vijayiasclasses.com
6203561263, 9560633328
4th Floor, Croma Building, Near Karol Bagh Metro, Delhi

CURRENT BASED MOST RELEVANT GS PRE 25 TESTS
Available in PDF
ASK FOR FREE DEMO PDF AT:
iaspjad@gmail.com
9983820303, 960257983
Visit: www.pjadt.in

Will resign from post if MSP ends: Dushyant

'Centre had accepted farmers demand for written assurance'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing agitation, Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala on Thursday said the Centre had accepted the demand of farmers on written assurance regarding the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and he was hopeful the issue would soon be resolved.

Talking to journalists here, in response to a question, Mr. Chautala said as long as MSP was being given, he would stay on his post and if there was any threat to MSP, he would be the first to resign.

"The State government has procured unprecedented quantities of 'bajra' this season and has already given permission for procurement of additional 55,000 tonnes. The government has also procured cotton, dal [pulses], corn and peanuts on

MSP," he said. Mr. Chautala said he was in touch with the Centre to put forward the demands of farmers.

"I had met with those Ministers who are in the committee holding talks with the farmers. Our party [Janayak Janta Party] and the State government are also giving suggestions to the Centre in this matter. I am hopeful that farmers will

soon understand the benefit. The first and foremost demand of farmers was to include MSP in writing," he said.

Elections on time'

Mr. Chautala said the panchayat elections in the State, due early next year, would be held on time and the government had also written to the Election Commission in this regard.

"The BJP is trying to spread confusion about the committee formed under my [Hooda] leadership during the UPA government. The BJP is misleading the public by suggesting that the three new laws had been recommended by our committee. Our committee did not make any recom-

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

First Death Anniversary of Jacob John Chellarak Singh



+ 11/12/2020 +

"Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you."

- John 16:22

Until we meet again,
In those heavenly lanes,
Memories of you creep,
Each night when we sleep.
The silence kills
And the sadness fills
Every second of the day.
There is nothing more to say.

Fondly remembered by
Crystal, Crystalline, and the
extended families.

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

IN FOND MEMORY OF Dr.N.C. KRISHNAN, F.C.A., On the Occasion of the TWENTY EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY



Birth : 29.3.1928 Death : 11.12.1992

Inserted by : Staff & Partners of M/s. S.VISWANATH LLP, Chennai-4

For enquiries on announcements in this section, please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. and 8p.m.
New Delhi : 011- 43579797

Rate for New Delhi:
(Minimum Rs. 320/- 2 Lines
Extra Line - Rs.160/-)
(B/W Display): Rs.60/Per Sq.cm
(Clr Display): Rs.70/Per Sq.cm

Log on to www.thehinduads.com

For Placing Advertisements Online

In memory of your loved ones

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:

011-43579797

from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. &

For Placing Advertisements Online log on to

www.thehinduads.com

DONATE EYES-GIFT SIGHT

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that this person
Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown,
Age: 30 Years (Approx.), Sex: Male, Height: 5'2",
Face: Long, Complexion: Dusky, Built: Thin,
Wearing: White Shirt & Pajama, has been
found unconscious at Ajronda Flyover, Faridabad, was admitted in AIIMS Trauma

Center, Delhi Doctors declared him brought dead on 16.10.2020 at 12:13 AM in the Jurisdiction of P.S. Hauz Khas, New Delhi

In this regard a DD No.112A, dated 16.10.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Hauz Khas, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out

information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following.

SHO

P.S. Hauz Khas, Delhi

Ph. 011-26867878, 26510077

DP/352/SD/2020

SEARCH FOR MISSING / KIDNAPED GIRL



General public is here by informed that one girl **Named: Priyanka, D/o Satpal, R/o H. No.4, Sec.-26, Phase-4, Rohini, Delhi. Age: 17 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Red Colour top and Black Coat and Black Colour Pant and Chappal in feet has been missing/kidnapped since 17.11.2020 from the area of PS**

Shahbad Dairy, Delhi.

In this regard a FIR/DD No. 574 dated 18.11.2020 has been

lodged at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out

information about this girl but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this girl kindly

inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

Fax: 011-24368639

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO

P.S. Shahbad Diary, Delhi

Ph. 011-27821047, 27822207

DP/629/ON/2020

'Centre should accept demands of farmers'

BJP misleading people, says Hooda

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHANDIGARH

mendations that harm the farmers," said Mr. Hooda.

Mr. Hooda said the committee of Chief Ministers, formed under his leadership, had recommended the extension of *mandis*.

No monopoly'

"It said that there should not be any monopoly on the *mandis* and that the facility should be extended to every farmer. During our government, the *mandis* were expanded to ensure that there is a big farm produce market every 8-10 km radius in Haryana. Also, government procurement centres were built in large numbers and agro malls were established."

The former Chief Minister said during the UPA regime, there was an average increase of 12 to 15 per cent in crop rates every year and rates of many crops were increased by more than 20 per cent annually.

Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala. ■ FILE PHOTO

MSP," he said. Mr. Chautala said he was in touch with the Centre to put forward the demands of farmers.

"I had met with those Ministers who are in the committee holding talks with the farmers. Our party [Janayak Janta Party] and the State government are also giving suggestions to the Centre in this matter. I am hopeful that farmers will

soon understand the benefit. The first and foremost demand of farmers was to include MSP in writing," he said.

Elections on time'

Mr. Chautala said the panchayat elections in the State, due early next year, would be held on time and the government had also written to the Election Commission in this regard.

"The BJP is trying to spread confusion about the committee formed under my [Hooda] leadership during the UPA government. The BJP is misleading the public by suggesting that the three new laws had been recommended by our committee. Our committee did not make any recom-

Assam NRC list: status of 10,199 people was sought to be changed

Updated list of 2019 not the final one, High Court told

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI

Mr. Sarma said in the affidavit.

The affidavit submitted by Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC) Coordinator Hitesh Dev Sarma before the Gauhati High Court on December 3 said officials handling the exercise to update the citizens' list sought a change in the status of 10,199 applicants.

+

Some 19.06 lakh of a total of 3.3 crore applicants were excluded from the updated NRC released on August 31, 2019.

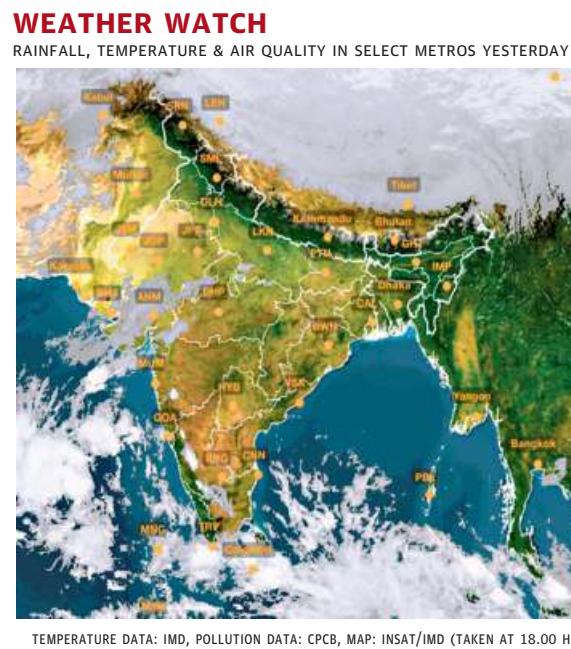
+

The affidavit, a copy of which was accessed by *The Hindu*, said the updated NRC was only a supplementary list of inclusion and exclusion of names as the Registrar General of India (RGI) is yet to publish the final one.

+

One of the cases mentioned in the affidavit was that of Chamaria Circle in central Assam's Kamrup district. The names of 64,247 out of 14,352 applicants under this circle were included in the draft NRC but random verification showed 14,183 had been wrongly marked as original inhabitants.

Some of them were found to be "ineligible" for inclusion



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 20:00 hrs)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall/snowfall likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan and Muzaffarabad. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning/hail likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, west Madhya Pradesh and central Maharashtra

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	24.6	16.7	Kozhikode	—	34.9	25.2
Ahmedabad	—	33.3	17.5	Kurnool	—	32.5	17.6
Aizawl	—	21.6	9.8	Lucknow	—	25.4	14.0
Allahabad	—	29.6	12.6	Madurai	5.1	30.6	22.1
Bengaluru	—	28.4	16.4	Mangaluru	1.8	33.9	23.5
Bhopal	—	30.3	14.6	Mumbai	—	33.8	24.0
Bhubaneswar	—	30.7	20.2	Mysuru	—	29.8	20.0
Chandigarh	—	27.4	10.9	New Delhi	—	28.3	10.9
Chennai	—	30.1	22.2	Patna	—	21.8	15.0
Coimbatore	—	29.8	22.0	Pond Blair	—	30.7	25.2
Dehradun	—	27.7	11.4	Puducherry	1.2	30.5	21.0
Gangtok	—	13.4	9.7	Pune	—	32.1	19.7
Goa	—	33.0	24.6	Raipur	—	31.6	16.2
Guwahati	—	27.5	13.4	Ranchi	—	27.8	13.3
Hubballi	—	29.0	19.0	Shillong	—	27.6	8.8
Hyderabad	—	30.9	14.5	Shimla	—	20.2	11.0
Imphal	—	22.0	6.7	Srinagar	—	10.3	1.6
Jaipur	—	29.6	14.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.6	23.8
Kochi	—	33.2	24.8	Tiruchi	0.4	30.4	21.8
Kohima	—	17.8	6.2	Vijayawada	—	31.2	18.6
Kolkata	—	26.7	16.6	Visakhapatnam	—	30.6	19.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	40	145	.33	199	.191	—
Bengaluru	12	.28	.36	.55	.85	—
Chennai	11	.9	.24	.83	.85	—
Delhi	—	46	164	287	305	—
Hyderabad	11	84	.26	146	.137	—
Kolkata	14	.29	.68	.351	.227	—
Lucknow	9	104	.42	.371	.338	—
Mumbai	11	123	.33	.203	.186	—
Pune	—	.58	.32	.83	.82	—
Visakhapatnam	20	.44	.36	.213	.230	—

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

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 438 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution in contrast Chikkaballapur, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 35

Maharashtra sees dip in active cases with 5,000 recoveries

State reports 3,824 new cases, 70 more deaths; recovery rate rises to 93.52%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

As many as 5,008 COVID-19 patients were discharged across Maharashtra on Thursday, while 3,824 new cases were reported, causing the number of active cases to dip further to 71,910.

The total case tally now stands at 18,68,172, while the cumulative recoveries have risen to 17,47,199. The State's recovery rate rose incrementally to 93.52%. With 70 more deaths, the total toll has surged to 47,972. The case fatality rate has marginally decreased to 2.57%.

"Of a total of 1,15,02,427 laboratory samples tested thus far, 18,68,172 (case positivity rate of 16.34%) have returned positive, with nearly 55,000 samples being tested in the last 24 hours," said State Surveillance Officer Dr. Deepak Aware.

798 new cases in Mumbai

Pune reported nearly 550 new cases to take its tally to 3,60,269, while eight deaths saw its toll reach 7,596. As per the district administration, active cases dipped to 10,099 while the recovery rate rose to 94.71%. Mumbai reported 798 new cases to take its tally to 2,88,696, of



Jostling for space: People buy vegetables at a market in Mumbai on Thursday. ■ AP

which 11,886 are active. Thirteen fatalities saw the city's death toll rise to 10,942.

Nagpur reported over 400 new cases, taking its tally to 1,18,160, of which 4,599 are active. Three deaths took the total death toll to 3,061.

In western Maharashtra, Satara reported five deaths and its toll stands at 1,710. As many as 94 new cases saw the case load rise to 53,729, of which 1,841 are active. In north Maharashtra, Nashik district reported 268

cases and three deaths as its total case tally reached 109,250, of which 2,239 are active. Its death toll stands at 1,757. Neighbouring Jalgaon reported 35 new cases and two deaths as its tally reached 55,447, of which only 963 are active, while its death toll stood at 1,425.

A total of 5,41,059 people across the State are in home quarantine and 5,137 are in institutional quarantine facilities, Dr. Aware said.

Neighbouring Sangli re-

ported 39 new cases and four deaths as the district's death toll rose to 10,942.

Just 8 cases in Kolhapur

Kolhapur reported a mere eight cases and no deaths as its total case tally reached 49,078, of which 450 are active.

The total death toll remained constant at 1,655.

In north Maharashtra,

Nashik district reported 268

cases and three deaths as its total case tally reached 109,250, of which 2,239 are active. Its death toll stands at 1,757. Neighbouring Jalgaon reported 35 new cases and two deaths as its tally reached 55,447, of which only 963 are active, while its death toll stood at 1,425.

A total of 5,41,059 people across the State are in home quarantine and 5,137 are in institutional quarantine facilities, Dr. Aware said.

The letter had also said,

"Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of fear and criminalisation promoted by the State wherein the human rights of Indian citizens and especially those of human rights defenders who are critical of State policies are under threat."

The letter had also said, "Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of fear and criminalisation promoted by the State wherein the human rights of Indian citizens and especially those of human rights defenders who are critical of State policies are under threat."

The letter had also said, "Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of fear and criminalisation promoted by the State wherein the human rights of Indian citizens and especially those of human rights defenders who are critical of State policies are under threat."

The letter had also said, "Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of fear and criminalisation promoted by the State wherein the human rights of Indian citizens and especially those of human rights defenders who are critical of State policies are under threat."

The letter had also said, "Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of fear and criminalisation promoted by the State wherein the human rights of Indian citizens and especially those of human rights defenders who are critical of State policies are under threat."

The letter had also said, "Despite our expectations, our bail applications were recently rejected. The stringent provisions in the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and Sedition Act have made it easier for the prosecution to brush aside important questions on the authenticity, credibility and admissibility of digital evidence, thus prolonging the incarceration. These aspects of any digital technology allow political rivals/adversaries to use fake content as an effective tool to attack, defame, criminalise and silence each other."

Retired Supreme Court judge and co-organiser of the event, P.B. Sawant said, "The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government does not tolerate anyone who has a different line of thinking. They have been violating basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution and the Preamble. The freedom of an individual is being suppressed and the trend of the government is to

suppress any criticism."

Last year, on Human Rights Day, all the accused – men lodged at Taloja Central Jail, and women incarcerated at Byculla Jail – had written a letter to the Chairperson of the Maharashtra Human Rights Commission. It read: "We condemn the environment of



Grain and chaff

The Centre must first implement its proposals before continuing talks with the farmers

Both sides unrelenting in their contradictory positions, an agreement between the Narendra Modi government and the agitating farmers on the question of three controversial Farm Bills appears elusive. With the farmers' organisations calling for a blockade of Delhi's highways to Jaipur and Agra by December 12, tensions may escalate further. A large number of these farmers from the neighbouring States of the national capital are camping at locations around it for two weeks now. After several rounds of talks, the Centre has now offered a written assurance that government procurement at minimum support price would remain, along with proposals to amend the laws to deal with farmers' concerns regarding parity between State-run and private mandis, registration of traders, and dispute resolution mechanisms. These assurances are in response to the concerns being raised by the farmers, but they find them inadequate and half-hearted. They have decided to intensify the strike, demanding complete repeal of the controversial laws. The government has ruled out their repeal, setting the stage for a showdown.

Farmers, howsoever politically empowered they might be in some parts of the country, are at the mercy of market forces and government policy all the time. The Centre appears willing to brazen it out in the face of stiff opposition from the people most affected by the laws. In this battle of unequals, the government should look at a just settlement, not a political compromise. The underlying premise of the Centre that farmers will be better off in an open market needs to be qualified. No country serious about food security can leave farming and marketing of produce entirely to market forces. Even the most free market countries and the WTO acknowledge this. India's agriculture marketing and its crop pattern both undoubtedly require reforms. And reforms do trigger resistance. The way forward is not by questioning democracy itself as senior government officials and functionaries of the ruling BJP have been doing. The Centre must be more cognisant of the fact that the farmers and the farm sector are both under its protection, and they cannot be free market actors. They do not have enough leverage to protect their own interest in negotiations with big corporations. There is no point in replacing existing distortions in the agriculture sector with reforms that do not inspire confidence among the farmers. As a start, the Centre must go ahead and fulfil all the promises it made to the agitating farmers, rather than use those as a negotiating position. It must legislate the guarantee of MSP and reassure farmers on procurement and subsidies.

True to its name

The DCGI did well to seek more data before clearing emergency use of vaccines

With a stroke of a pen, the Drugs Controller General of India has put to rest any doubts and concerns that it would rush to grant emergency use approval to COVID-19 vaccines tested and manufactured in India or elsewhere in the absence of sufficient data. The greatly reassuring decision to seek additional safety and immunogenicity data from the Pune-based Serum Institute of India and Hyderabad's Bharat Biotech underlines the regulator's priorities even for emergency use approval rather than an early roll-out of vaccines that have not been sufficiently studied. The decision to seek more evidence would mean a slight delay in locally manufactured vaccines becoming available. But it clearly demonstrates that the committee did not misread the announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that a vaccine will be available in the next few weeks as a signal to grant approval in haste. By keeping the approval on hold pending more evidence, the expert committee has done much to generate trust in the regulator's uncompromising approval process even for emergency use in the midst of the pandemic. However, these manufacturers have unfortunately come out as being in a hurry to seek approval without sufficient data to support their case.

Bharat Biotech's rush to seek approval is of concern as the company had not submitted any data from its phase-3 trial but relied entirely on the interim safety and immunogenicity data of the phase-1 and phase-2 trials; the company had begun phase-3 trials only in mid-November. While Serum had submitted interim safety and efficacy data of the Oxford vaccine from the phase-2/3 clinical trials carried out in India and other countries, the safety data of the Indian trial submitted was only till mid-November. The phase-3 trials by Serum began on September 21, and since the second dose is administered 28 days after the first, the median follow-up after the second dose would have been for just a few weeks, far less than at least two months that the U.S. FDA had stipulated. With the published data of the interim phase-3 trial of the Oxford vaccine raising some concerns, the committee has rightly sought immunogenicity data from the U.K. trial. While the U.K. has approved the mRNA vaccine from the U.S.-based Pfizer, no country including the U.K. has approved the Oxford vaccine manufactured by London-based AstraZeneca. In September, nine global vaccine manufacturers had signed a joint pledge that they would not seek premature approval from regulatory authorities and would test COVID-19 vaccines to the highest standards and keep "the safety of vaccinated individuals our top priority". So Indian manufacturers should strive to carry out the trials to the highest ethical standards and submit comprehensive data such that emergency use approval is a sure shot. Any further haste shown in seeking approval for emergency use may turn detrimental and the companies may even run the risk of losing public trust.

All is now fair in India's ailing pedagogic spaces

Reconciling the new technological environment with child psychology and educational theory has not been easy



KRISHNA KUMAR

When someone teaching at a reputed nursery said earlier this year that she was taking online classes, I thought she was joking. She is a Montessori specialist and Montessori methods are mostly incompatible with virtual learning. How could she be asked to go online, I wondered. With the passage of days and months, the question has lost its relevance. The novel coronavirus has turned our ailing pedagogic spaces topsy-turvy. All is now fair and there are no fouls. And in any case, there is no referee.

Reconciling the new technological environment with child psychology and educational theory has not been easy. Schools have struggled to cope with the pressure to comply with market forces and thoughtless policies. Though there is no worthwhile evidence that smart classes contribute to intellectual development, both private and government schools have installed 'smart' infrastructure at great expense. The ethos has been astonishingly charged up for quite some time now. Given the scale of the market that children offer to the information technology (IT)-related industries, school authorities in the private sector and State officials have been equally under pressure to make decisions on the run.

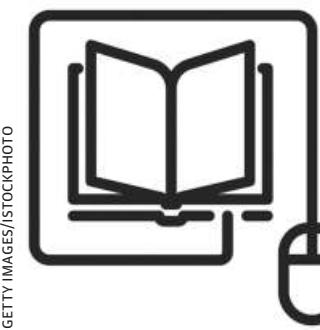
The pandemic and pressures
The novel coronavirus pandemic has created its own pressure on the education sector. Response to this pressure reflects poor systemic capacity to adapt to unforeseen situations. Spaces available for deliberation and working out details

have always been quite limited, and academic advice has had only a marginal role. These systemic weaknesses only intensified under pandemic conditions.

The feeling that there is no alternative to going online erased the need to make stage-wise distinctions and age-specific provisions. Nor was there any scope for assessing the situation in rural schools region-wise. Examination agencies slashed the syllabus and teachers were told to adopt a harder duty routine, combining screen time with messaging and responding. For the vast population of children who had no access to laptops, smartphones were hailed as a substitute. They were distributed in some States on the assumption that they would remain useful for a long time. The usual rush to start the new session left no time to consider the implications of children's unbounded access to the Internet and their increasing facility with the smartphone.

It will soon be a year since the switch over to the new arrangement for engaging children started. Instead of getting wiser, the system appears to have got poorer in its ability to benefit from teachers' experience and advice. Now and then you hear the anguished voice of middle-class parents, but they too are preoccupied with planning the best possible post-pandemic life for their children. Coaching outfits are now offering a lot more than preparation for entrance tests. Parents have no idea how to judge the competing claims made by private companies that their courses will protect children from learning losses incurred due to school closure. Many online courses are advertised with the claim that they will enhance the intellectual growth of children'.

No safety net for children
Childhood is now fully exposed to the attractions of the virtual world and there is no one to offer a safety net. Young children's access to the



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

Internet brings them face to face with self-styled video teachers of every subject, manufacturers of video games, fantasy app makers, and coding instructors. These and many others have successfully penetrated the armour that the family and the school used to provide. From entertainment to education and preparation for jobs, the new claimants of children's attention have no dearth of wares on display in the humungous mall known as the Internet. Merits of the various items on offer are not easy to estimate. Let us consider the claim that courses on coding will enhance the analytical skills and structural awareness of elementary schoolchildren. Vocabulary of this kind attracts educated parents, but it also reaches out to teachers and the children themselves. Not just companies, drafters of policy documents and advisers of international organisations now use terms such as 'analytical skills' and 'critical inquiry' as brand signs for the so-called '21st century skills'.

Deceptive vocabulary

These terms evoke older, familiar ideas that had similar names but carried a different meaning. To give just one instance, 'critical inquiry' implies the ability to place a problem in a wider context. Analytical skill developed in the course of a contextualised enquiry should be transferable to new problems belonging to different spheres of life, including the social sphere which tends to be complex and prone to constant change.

This is why social science teachers face greater difficulties than science teachers do in introducing children to basic concepts. Children whose sense of context is confined to a rectangular screen can hardly be expected to transfer their analytical ability to social or human situations. Educational theory recognises this limitation, but that hardly matters to IT-related industries. In the case of early instruction of coding, the curriculum gives precedence to production by small children so that they develop greater interest in the course. Let a seven-year-old experience the joy of designing an app, say the promoters of coding courses; logic can be taught later.

Fascination of precocity

For quite some time now, the assumption that schools in the West and countries such as Japan are more tech-savvy has served as a populist guide to school policies in India. The assumption is false, but it is often sustained with the help of baseless or highly exaggerated news. For instance, Japan is said to be replacing printed textbooks with digital ones. Nothing of this kind has happened on any scale in reality. Provision of a hands-on experience and the reading of printed material remained undisturbed in primary schools even under pandemic conditions in European countries, Japan and China. Online teaching was perceived only as a supplement, that too for older children. Stage-wise specificity of appropriateness is seldom given serious consideration in our system. The general logic currently applied is that if digital resources are useful for higher classes, why not induce the youngest age group in online learning?

Respect for the natural pace of intellectual maturation and the importance of hands-on experience have enjoyed universal currency. Over the recent years, acceleration of learning, outcome-driven teaching and frequent testing emerged as parts of a

new ideology in education. These ideas gel nicely with certain culturally entrenched beliefs in our country. Many parents feel happy to be told that their child is precocious. To see a small child working hard or talking like an adult is seen as a sign of genius. This is not a new belief: its roots can be found in folklore and mythology. The modern schooling system has introduced and propagated a culture of competitiveness. Parents want to see their child moving ahead of others. Children internalise this desire early and teachers encourage it despite what they learn during their training about individual differences in pace and style of learning.

Facetious advice

The competitive culture entrenched in the social ethos fits in well with the new regime of frequent regular testing and the thriving market of ready-made tests. Online teaching facilitates and encourages frequent testing. The sense of achievement boosted through instantly available results is similar to the pleasure that success in coding or winning in a video game brings. Moral criticism of the video game market has failed to discourage the kinds of material that parents might otherwise find objectionable. Fantasy apps are an example. To be told that some of them foster a gambling mindset may not surprise new age parents who argue that it is best to let the child get prepared for the real world. Similar arguments can be advanced about exposure to manipulative advertisements, violent entertainment and pornography. The argument that children cannot be insulated from such things is facetious. Equally facetious is the advice given to parents that they should make children fully aware of the risks they face.

Krishna Kumar is a former Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

The right political moves in Telangana

It is advantage BJP as the TRS's model of governance is undermining the regional spirit and creating a vacuum in politics



AJAY GUDAVARTHY

After the formation of the State of Telangana in 2014, as India's 29th State, many political leaders and prominent social activists believed that the entry of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was not possible for probably the next two decades or so. In support of this, they often cited the glorious history of Telangana, marked by the Telangana armed struggle of 1946, to the collective and democratic spirit demonstrated during the heyday of the struggle for a separate State of Telangana. Demand for a separate State was around the issues of agrarian distress, imposed social and economic backwardness and about taking pride in popular culture, literature and language without turning chauvinistic against those continuing to reside from Andhra.

Change in less than a decade
Telangana, even as part of the erstwhile undivided State, had witnessed a prolonged period of communal harmony and took pride in its 'Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb'. Further, Telangana had robust Dalit-Bahujan politics that in the past worked in close proximity to the Left politics, including both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary mobilisations, and, more recently, in kick starting the demand for autonomous Dalit-Bahujan articulations. In fact, Dalits and the Other

Backward Classes (OBC) were the backbone of the mobilisation for a separate State through the various Joint Action Committees, popularly called JACs, in the struggle for a separate State that was envisioned to be inclusive and democratic. All these factors produced a robust public culture in Telangana and prompted many to believe that the politics of polarisation that the BJP-Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) combine propagated would be repelled against the very spirit that Telangana represented.

However, in less than a decade, the BJP began to make inroads as demonstrated by the party's growing presence during the general election in 2019 where they won a surprise four Lok Sabha seats, including one in Nizamabad defeating the sitting Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) Member of Parliament and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's daughter, K. Kavitha.

A possible trend
This momentum by the BJP seems to be continuing with its win in the recent by-poll in Duggibba, followed by 48 seats in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections (<https://bit.ly/3qLj2vY>) from an earlier count of four seats. This may not be an aberration, as All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Asaduddin Owaisi would have us believe but could well indicate an emergent trend leading up to the next Assembly elections.

The BJP is putting in extra efforts to maintain the swing in its favour, as it is doing so in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. This is significant for the BJP not only for the State Assembly elections in



2023 but also in compensating for a possible loss of seats in the Hindi heartland in the 2024 general election.

Process of demobilisation

Today, democratic and progressive voices in the State, while taken by surprise by the sudden surge of the BJP, feel that it is necessary 'punishment' for the model of governance put in place by the TRS under Mr. K.C. Rao. He offered a highly centralised model that undermined various social mobilisations that were the force behind the formation of Telangana apart from weakening the Congress – 12 Congress MLAs joined the TRS in 2019. This culture of defection marked a realignment, with many known leaders of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) shifting to the BJP. The vacuum caused by the lack of an effective Opposition that is necessary in democracy is today being filled by the BJP. The State government has filed cases under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act on 78 social activists, including a well-known journalist and Section 123 of the Indian Penal Code (Concealing with intent to facilitate design to wage war) in an earlier strike.

In a sense, Mr. Rao began to undermine the very spirit of Telangana

na that he vouched to represent in the days of the struggle for a separate State. Even basic public protests for issues related to Dalits, Adivasis and the youth were routinely denied permission. There was an active process of demobilisation that was sought to be compensated by welfare and doles to different sections of the society, but what this model of governance did over a period of time was to undermine and denigrate the regional spirit of taking pride in the very identity of Telangana on the one hand and creating a political vacuum on the other.

A kind of social movement

It is this social and political vacuum that the BJP is beginning to fill. Socially, the youth are among the first sections to have walked across and announced their support for the BJP that projects itself as both 'anti-establishment' and an 'outsider' to the hegemonic political culture. With the additional but silent role of the RSS, the BJP becomes, by default, not just a political party but also a kind of social movement. Youth, who had earlier rallied for social demands of free and quality education, converting contractual jobs to full-time government employment, today see the ideology of 'Hindutva' as a correction to the hubris of a Chief Minister finding resonance in the BJP's pitch against the dynasty rule of Mr. Rao and his family. The BJP's brand of nationalism becomes an 'empty signifier' for a moral correction of all that has gone wrong with the legitimate aspirations in a new State.

In more tangible political terms, the BJP is succeeding in stoking latent religious prejudices among

caste Hindus and upper middle-class professionals, and the landed agrarian sections of society. It is also being aided by the heightened communal pitch of leaders such as Akbaruddin Owaisi. At the other end of the social ladder, with the decline of the TDP that enjoyed a large support base among the OBCs, much of the OBC social base has now moved to the BJP; the visible faces of political leadership of the BJP today Mr. T. Raja Singh Loh and Bandi Sanjay Kumar belong to the OBC community. This has further established the credentials of the BJP as a bottom up 'subaltern' party close to the ground. This is in turn linked to the muscular mode of the functioning of some of these leaders and caste groups that is now taking the shape and content of aggressive Hindutva politics.

Notes for the TRS

One has to wait and watch to see whether the TRS does course correction, which would mean allowing space for social mobilisation, bringing back issues of education and employment, opening channels of communication with academics, journalists, government employees and social activists raising the concerns of Dalits and tribals. It would also mean extending an olive branch to the youth, creating more employment and continuing with the various welfare schemes that the TRS had successfully put in place. It would above all require Mr. Rao to eschew hubris and return to representing the spirit of Telangana.

Ajay Gudavarthy is Associate Professor, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

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.

Reflections

The rapid transformation of India has been one from a secular democracy to what can be called an oligarchy, in just six years (Editorial page, "The reality of an India at the crossroads", December 10). Government institutions including the judicial system have been undermined systematically. The convenient realisation that religious polarisation pays rich dividends at the hustings has come in quite

handy for the ruling party. In the midst of the unprecedented economic slowdown now, exacerbated by policy misadventures, many realities are being glossed over. Avenues are being created for the corporate sector to continue its exploitation. The farmers' protest offers hope to those who still cherish democratic values that change can still be sought.

G.B. SIVANANDAM, Coimbatore

The protest continues
Nearly 13 days have elapsed with still no solution in sight to the intense agitation against the farm laws (Page 1, "Farmers reject amendment proposals, plan to intensify stir", December 10). The attitude of the government, which can be termed adamant and egoistic, and the continuing protests by the farmers will only aggravate the situation. The reason for the unfortunate situation is the

government's autocratic way of having passed the farm laws, without any discussion or consultation with the farmers, union leaders and the political Opposition. The government must convene a special session of Parliament for a detailed debate.

D. SETHURAMAN, Chennai

■ It is most unfortunate that the farmers' stir still has no end in sight. Equally bad is

the stand of the Opposition parties attempting to fish in troubled waters without offering concrete suggestions. The Centre should at least convene a meeting of all State Chief Ministers and elicit their opinion. The present situation could have been avoided had there been debate earlier.

J.P. REDDY, Nalgonda, Telangana

Team man
Parthiv Patel has timed his

retirement right, though it is a decision that must have been exceedingly tough. In the limelight from a tender age and then to undergo a struggle after that must have been painful. To his credit, he fought hard and with the limited opportunities, proved himself a complete team man. It is unfortunate that such players are not given due recognition.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI, Secunderabad

To read more letters online, scan the QR code



Are IT project managers facing an existential crisis?

PARLEY

If they become consultants for clients as well as learn coding, they will be valuable

Despite the years of experience and expertise that the middle management layer brings to the Indian IT services industry, it has been facing an existential crisis for a while now. Stories abound of clients preferring senior code writers over project managers, and of tech CEOs aiming the axe at this layer first every time a sizeable lay off is planned. The pandemic has not made it any easier. Have enough project managers made the change to agile methodologies that steer clear of the traditional, and sequential, more rigid 'waterfall' approach while working with clients? What does the future hold for them? R. Srikrishna and Srinivasan discuss the question in a conversation moderated by K. Bharat Kumar. Edited excerpts:

probably has not been done away with, but it is certainly under threat.

We have not seen mass job losses in this segment. Have project managers reskilled themselves in technology?

RS: Apart from reskilling, there's a big change needed in terms of a cultural and social shift – some of it has been happening. Historically in our industry, the success of a manager has been measured by how many people work for that project manager. In a social setting, the success of your work was measured by, "I have 100 people work for me, or 1,000 work for me." Now, success is not merely managing a large team but the ability to handle a complex project with relatively fewer people.

At a guess, two-thirds of project managers will make the change on both the technology and cultural fronts; and a third will not. The latter may not become all redundant – they will maybe work in traditional roles with customers where their skills are still valuable.

If you exclude the BPO (business process outsourcing) headcount, the IT services industry would have project managers accounting for about 5% of the workforce. In Hexaware, we have about 5% of our workforce as project managers. About 70% of those would have made a successful transition into new-age skills. Not just the methodology, but also technology, becoming clued into cloud-native development.

The new roles could act as proxy product owners. The product owner is a customer-side role in agile methodology – on behalf of customers and can help drive progress for the team. The expectation is that the vendor is a partner in that journey, to help clients determine the roadmap.

Isn't that what a technical software architect helped with earlier?

RS: For sure, substantial tech skills are needed here as opposed to project or people management skills. What is expected of these profiles is also that it would extend into under-



standing the business context of the product... help the customer think through what the product must do.

SS: Middle managers need to evolve very quickly by reskilling. Agile software development turns the focus on key issues: how will the team meet business objectives; how will they create value-stream delivery; and how will they make innovation happen? The benchmark is no more around time and cost alone. Demonstration of agility is key.

Here's what PMI (Project Management Institute) tells project managers who may be working across different methodologies, be it SAFe, Scrum or Kanban: find a way to mix and match the best of different approaches to create a customised way of working that is best for that customer; don't be constrained by any one methodology or by the conditions. Clients would appreciate that an IT services team working for them has found a way to add more value, more innovation. It becomes important for middle managers to lead that process.

Another developing trend is the move from 'project' to 'product'. It's been happening for a while, but it is now accelerating thanks to COVID-19. If a client's focus is time-to-market, this is the theme the project manager has to support. When this mindset shift happens, all team members have to learn how to deliver a product versus a project. In the new model, you budget for business results or value delivery, not on length of time. Key performance indicators are on profit mentality, rather than cost mentality.

How is PMI helping project managers remain relevant?

At a guess, a third of project managers will not make the change on both the technology and cultural fronts. They may not become all redundant – they will maybe work in traditional roles with customers where their skills are still valuable.

SS: Starting January 2021, the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification will have an entirely new curriculum revolving around waterfall, hybrid and agile. It would cover a spectrum of skills. We are going beyond PMP and saying that the need of the hour is to make project managers become more 'agile'. We have created a whole portfolio of Disciplined Agile certifications for project managers to help meet their professional development needs across stages – entry level, senior scrum master, value-stream consultant, or even a consultant that deals with digital transformation. Then we will support project managers in their switch to managing deep science projects: artificial intelligence, machine learning, automation – we just finished a study with Nasscom to look at what the transition model for a traditional project manager to manage deep science projects should be; how do they bring in the right level of business acumen; skills such as design thinking, collaboration and problem solving, as well as a "fit for purpose" project manager framework...

What are the top three key result areas in the new world a

project manager should be appraised on?

RS: The answer would depend on the area: is it a data centre, cost centre, testing programme? Accordingly, the focus changes.

Within software development, the top three things I would call out are: be prepared to code, and code cloud-native. That is an attitude change but also a lot of technology relearning. Second, collaboration and communication challenges get even more amplified in a 100% remote working situation. It's far more difficult to bring teams together to manage a complex project when everyone is working from home. Even with smaller teams in office, soft skills are crucial. Third, stop assuming clients would tell you what to do. You have to force yourself from a culture and knowledge perspective to challenge the customer across knowledge, domain and business objectives.

When building a product for an airline, for example, the expectation is that you will be part-product owner; so, you need to know the business. Culturally, most managers in India are used to saying "yes, sir". That has to change.

For managers who do adapt, how do prospects improve?

RS: The boundaries of what constitutes IT services have expanded dramatically. If you think of the kinds of players we have, they include Ernst & Young, KPMG, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte. They are now almost mainstream IT players, as are consulting firms Boston Consulting Group and McKinsey. The biggest strategy they talk about is digital and mobility; they all have the businesses to not only put out the vision but also execute the vision. So in a sense, if you are a rockstar, the kinds of companies you could go to next have changed. You can work in an IT services firm today but join a McKinsey tomorrow. That wasn't possible earlier. Opportunities for individuals are far more now versus earlier.

SS: One of the trends in tech firms across the globe is that these rockstar managers are becoming the key conduit as consultants; they show subject matter and business expertise as also social skills. We see a

huge trend where these managers eventually end up forming the core of an agile project management office within these organisations.

What traditional roles can managers who are yet to make the cut fill in tech firms?

RS: There are always some roles for people who don't make the cut into learning new technology. Take the example of PeopleSoft; it is a legacy technology. A vast majority of our PeopleSoft engineers get retrained in other technologies such as Workday or Oracle Fusion or some other cloud technology. Some do not. But we still do plenty of work around PeopleSoft every year. So the demand for legacy technologies will not go to zero overnight. There are other areas – the entire talent management lifecycle and supply chain does not require the highest of new technology skills but does require a lot of old-school management skills.

Are people reaching out to PMI for certifications more now than earlier? What kind of demand do you see, and specifically for what kinds of certifications, now versus earlier?

SS: The PMP count in India, more than 50% of which is from the IT industry, grew about 9.3% to 43,814 last month, compared with about 40,075 at the end of November 2019. This is a bit faster than the global growth of 7.5% to 1,077,327. In India, 25 organisations have signed up to be Disciplined Agile Training Partners over the past three months. The Disciplined Agile product portfolio was launched in 2020.

A couple of things are changing. The reach-out to organisations like PMI is not just from individuals, who have historically been our high-engagement audience. Now, it is also from companies themselves.

Both organisations and individuals ask for business agility or enterprise agility. The whole objective of most IT services organisations is to become a business partner to clients, as opposed to being a vendor. The client may not always tell you what to do, because they themselves may not know. You, as a business partner, should be able to articulate the road ahead.



R. Srikrishna
is CEO and
Executive Director,
Hexaware
Technologies



Srinivasan
is Managing
Director,
PMI South Asia



Scan the QR code to
listen to the full
interview online

Iran's calculated risk

Iran is enhancing its nuclear programme, which can be reversed if talks with the U.S. are revived

STANLY JOHNY

When the P5+1 nations (China, France, Russia, the U.K. and the U.S., plus Germany) reached an agreement with Iran in 2015 to scuttle the country's nuclear programme, it was expected that the agreement would lead to a new beginning in West Asia. However, this did not happen.

The Iran problem

The Barack Obama administration's calculation was that denying Iran a path to the bomb was in the best interest of everyone, including Iran's rivals in the region. Washington saw Iran's nuclear programme, which was at an advanced stage in 2015, as a national security problem and tackled it via diplomacy.

But Iran's regional rivals, mainly Israel and Saudi Arabia, who are also America's allies, saw the Iran problem differently. For them, Iran's nuclear programme was not the problem but was part of the larger geopolitical challenges Iran posed. The problem was Iran itself: Tehran's influence across West Asia, its backing for non-state militias, and its ambition to emerge as a dominant pillar in the region based on the political heft of the Shia community. Mr. Obama's nuclear deal cut off the path to the bomb, but by lifting sanctions, he allowed Iran to move towards claiming its natural economic and political might. This upset the Israelis and the Saudis.

The Donald Trump administration took an entirely different line towards Iran. It pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear deal, despite United Nations certification that Iran was compliant with its terms, and reimposed sanctions on Tehran. In practical terms, Mr. Trump's approach towards Iran had aligned with that of Israel and Saudi Arabia. The Trump years gave Israel a window of opportunity to step up its covert and overt operations. In 2018, Israeli spies carried out a daring mission at a warehouse inside Iran and stole thousands of documents related to Iran's nuclear programme. Iranian nuclear scientists came under attacks. In Syria, where Iran has deployed militias backing the government of Bashar al-Assad, Israel continued to bomb Ira-

nian targets.

But now, in the twilight months of the Trump administration, President-elect Joe Biden has promised to take the U.S. back to the nuclear deal – with more riders. There is a possibility that Mr. Biden, who was the Vice President of the administration that originally signed the deal, could zero in on the nuclear programme, like Mr. Obama did, and leave the regional issues to the regional players to settle.

Israel's motives

It was against this background Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, a top Iranian nuclear physicist, was assassinated on November 27 on the outskirts of Tehran. Israel has been blamed for the attack, an allegation that Tel Aviv has not denied. It is not difficult to see Israel's motives. It wants to set back Iran's nuclear programme by taking out a prominent scientist and scuttle the possible revival of the nuclear deal. The attack has put Iran in a spot. If it does not retaliate, it shows that Iran's deterrence is getting weaker, which could trigger more such attacks from its rivals. If it retaliates, it could escalate the conflict, giving the outgoing Trump administration and a crisis-hit Benjamin Netanyahu government reasons to launch heavier strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, closing off the diplomatic path.

Iran seems to have opted for the less risky option. Instead of walking into the trap of provocation, its Parliament passed a Bill that obliges the government to enrich uranium to a higher level – from less than 5% now to 20%, which is a technical step away from the weapons-grade level of 90% – and stop access for UN inspectors to the country's top nuclear facilities in two months if sanctions relief is not given. Within two months, Mr. Biden will be in the White House. So, Iran is taking a calculated risk by enhancing its nuclear programme, which can be reversed if talks are revived. But it is leaving the Israel problem unaddressed, for now. Israel wants Iran to be contained, not just Iran's nuclear programme. This leaves the region vulnerable to a prolonged crisis.

stanly.johny@thehindu.co.in



NOTEBOOK

The short shelf life of a news peg

For a news reporter, too much verification can sometimes be unhelpful

MEERA SRINIVASAN

In news reporting, time is everything. That's one of the first lessons we pick up as cub reporters in any newsroom.

Every newsroom would have colleagues and seniors who have covered big news breaks in the evening, in a matter of hours, adding value to the one line they picked up on a phone call. For print journalists, seeing that intense work acknowledged with a coveted front page byline the next day is the best possible morning high. That's a story that begins and ends well.

Then there are stories that you hear of and try to follow, only to realise you were a tad late to the party. Recent social media posts in Sri Lanka, about an information board at a suburban railway station, creating some buzz online. The board, a photograph showed, listed destinations in other districts and cor-

responding train timings, but the names were in English and Mandarin, not Sinhala or Tamil. The controversy reminded me of earlier instances of some opposing Arabic sign boards in the island's eastern districts, or Chinese language sign boards at a construction site.

The reactions to the social media posts ranged from amusement to anger. Soon, the local media reported that the railway authorities and Sri Lanka's Official Languages Commission would investigate how the board came up, observing it violated the Constitution according to which Sinhala and Tamil are official languages, while English is a link language.

After the infamous, blatantly discriminatory 'Sinhala Only' Act of 1956, it was only in 1987 that even Tamil, spoken by about 25% of the country's population, acquired an "official language" status. Seen against the historical back-

drop of the politics of language in Sri Lanka, the recent controversy around Chinese lettering on a public display board was fascinating.

Sri Lanka has one of the highest literacy rates in the region (over 90%) but that pertains to the three languages mentioned in the Constitution. Increasingly though, we do hear of Chinese language classes being offered in the country, including one launched by the Chamber of Commerce in the southern Hambantota district recently. It is not hard to appreciate why someone here or anywhere else might want to learn a new language, but most Sri Lankans are still far from reading display boards in a language other than Sinhala, Tamil or English. That is precisely why this board violated the Constitution according to which Sinhala and Tamil are official languages, while English is a link language.

"Where is it?" I eagerly asked, pulling out my phone to take a picture. "It was here," he said, pointing to an empty wall. "They removed it just yesterday because of this problem."

I was late by a day. I was also reminded of something that a senior Colombo-based journalist once said jokingly: "Remember, too much verification kills a story."

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 11, 1970

Colleges closed again
(From an Editorial)

Nobody will be happy about the closure of colleges, following clashes between students and the police in various parts of Madras. It seems that the students were dissatisfied with the Government's language policy in higher education, though one group of students did not agree with the dissatisfied majority. It is unfortunate that the Government hardened instead of softening. During the recent debate in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, the Chief Minister had said enough to indicate that the Government had no intention of relaxing its policy which now compels students in the Government colleges to use the Tamil medium. These students have been told that they will be given preference for all types of Government employment. This assurance may have reconciled some of the students to the Tamil medium, but as a survey by our staff reporter shows, the scope for Government employment is really very limited. The Tamil Nadu Government provides jobs for only about two hundred graduates by direct recruitment while the number of Tamil medium students who passed out last March was over 3,700. Another 2,000 students using the Tamil medium will graduate in science in March 1970.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 11, 1920

Motive in the study of history

Last evening at the Presidency College Dr. Mathai delivered the Sir Subramania Iyer's Lectures, the subject being "The place of motive in the study of history". Dr. Mathai began by pointing out that two kinds of motives prompted people to study history, the utilitarian which sought guidance from history in regard to present problems and the educational. The former motive was not seriously regarded by modern historians, the latter motive was largely accepted at the present day. It enabled a man to form a well-balanced judgment, imparted a broader outlook to him or enlarged his mind and led to the generation of positive enthusiasm. These motives operated in the case of specialists also. The scholar sought truth for the sake of truth to verify and establish new facts, and to present facts in an attractive form. That was the motive of the artist. History was also studied to elucidate or understand some problem or institution. There was then the propagandist motive, which impelled people to study history to secure acceptance of some social or political principle.

FROM PAGE ONE

Parliament building will reflect India's aspirations'

While pointing out that many nations felt Indian democracy would not last, the country had proven naysayers wrong, especially because of the ancient roots of democracy in India as elaborated in the concept of the 12th century Anubhava Mantapam set up by Basaveshwara; a 10th century stone inscription in a village near Chennai, describing a panchayat mahasabha and its elaborate rules, including the need for members to disclose their income; and the ancient republics of the Lichchavis and Shakyas.

"As a nation we must pledge to keep the spirit of democracy and public service alive," he observed. "The day isn't far when the world acknowledges that In-



dia is the mother of democracy," he asserted.

Speaking earlier, Mr. Puri, whose Ministry is the nodal agency for the construction of the new Parliament, said it was hoped that the 2022 winter session of Parliament would be held in the new building.

Govt. asks farmers' unions to reconsider its proposal

He reiterated that agriculture was a State subject and the three laws were "unconstitutional" and should be withdrawn.

"The Ministers in the press conference today (on Thursday) conceded that the laws were for trade and commerce, validating our stand," said Mr. Rajewal.

He added that the focus of the government was traders and corporate houses and the farmers did

not exist for them.

Krantikari Kisan Union president Darshan Pal said the unions were, "in principle", opposed to contract farming, private markets and hoarding and therefore, the three laws should be repealed.

Being harassed'

He also alleged that farmers headed to Delhi from neighbouring States, such as Uttarakhand, were being harassed by the police.

Lawsuits could force FB to sell Instagram, WhatsApp

With the filing of the lawsuits, Facebook becomes the second Big Tech company to face a major legal challenge this year after the U.S. Justice Department sued Alphabet Inc's Google in October, accusing the \$1 trillion company of using its market power to fend off rivals.

The lawsuits highlight the growing bipartisan consensus to hold Big Tech accountable for business practices and mark a rare moment of agreement between the Trump administration and Democrats, some of whom have advocated breaking up both Google and Facebook.

"For nearly a decade, Facebook has used its dominance and monopoly power to crush smaller rivals, snuff out competition, all at the expense of everyday users," said New York Attorney General Letitia James on behalf of the coalition of 46 states, Washington, D.C. and Guam, Alabama, Georgia, South Ca-

rolina and South Dakota did not participate in the lawsuit.

Ms. James said the company acquired rivals before they could threaten the company's dominance.

Facebook's general counsel Jennifer Newstead called the lawsuits "revisionist history" and said antitrust laws do not exist to punish "successful companies." She said WhatsApp and Instagram have succeeded after Facebook invested billions of dollars in growing the apps.

"The government now wants a do-over, sending a chilling warning to American business that no sale is ever final," Ms. Newstead said. She also raised doubts about alleged harms caused by Facebook, arguing that consumers benefited from its decision to make WhatsApp free, and rivals like YouTube, Twitter and WeChat did "just fine" without access to its developer platform.

Convoy of BJP president attacked in West Bengal

The party later held demonstrations at several places across West Bengal. Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the State had gone into an era of "tyranny, anarchy and darkness under Trinamool rule".

"The manner in which political violence has been institutionalised and brought to the extreme within West Bengal under Trinamool rule is sad and worrying for all those who believe in democratic values," Mr. Shah said, adding that the Centre was taking the issue seriously and the State government will have to answer the people of the State on the issue.

Speaking at the event in Diamond Harbour, which he reached with considerable difficulty, Mr. Nadda said what he witnessed made it evident that the West Bengal government had become synonymous with a "state of lawlessness and intolerance".

"Not a single vehicle had been spared. Today I have reached this destination with the grace of Ma Durga.

Trinamool activists and goons left no stone unturned to strangle democracy," he said.

Later in the day, speaking at a press conference, the BJP chief said law and order and the entire administration had crumbled in the State.

Mr. Vijayvargiya, who suffered injuries in his left hand, called it a "planned and targeted" attack.

Allies: Mamata

The Trinamool Congress leadership said there was provocation on the part of the BJP president, who was visiting Ms. Banerjee's constituency Bhawanipur, and Abhishek Banerjee's constituency, Diamond Harbour.

Ms. Banerjee said BJP leaders had the protection of different central agencies, including the CISF and the CRPF, insinuating that the attacks may have been the result of "planning" by the BJP itself.

"I have told the police to make a total inquiry because I will not tolerate all the lies," she said.

76.38% vote in Kerala local body polls phase II

Rural areas witness brisk polling but urban voters did not evince interest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

While rural and mofussil areas in Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad and Wayanad districts witnessed brisk polling in the second phase of the local body elections held on Thursday, urban voters did not demonstrate similar enthusiasm, partly owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two deaths, of a voter and a police officer on duty, were reported from Wayanad.

While strict adherence to the COVID-19 protocols was observed in several places, such restrictions went for a toss in the early hours of voting in places which witnessed a heavy rush of voters. As in the first phase, an extended hour of voting was made available to COVID-19 patients and quarantined people to vote.

The surge in turnout in the second phase compared



Smart check: A robot deployed for dispensing sanitiser and checking temperature at a booth in Ernakulam. ■ THULASI KAKKAT

to the first phase on December 8 had the major fronts claiming advantage.

Senior Congress leader V.D. Satheesan said central Kerala being a traditional stronghold of the UDF, even in hard times, it would stay

with the alliance.

"The Left Front's was a defensive campaign which hasn't worked very well," he said, foreseeing a favourable outcome in Kottayam, Ernakulam and Wayanad districts while remaining hopeful of

Row over Minister's voting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THRISSUR

Allegations of Kerala Minister for Local Self-Government A.C. Moideen casting his vote ahead of the scheduled polling time for the local body elections triggered a controversy here on Thursday. T.N. Prathapan, MP, and Thrissur District Congress Committee president M.P. Vincent sent a joint complaint to the State Election Commission. The Minister cast his vote at

the Panangattukara booth in the Thekkumkara gram panchayat in the morning. He used to reach the booth as the first voter for almost all elections.

This time too he reached the booth around 6.40 a.m. and waited in the queue as the first voter. But there is an allegation that the Minister cast his vote a few minutes before the scheduled time of 7 a.m. for the commencement of polling.

The alliance would prove beneficial to the Left in Kottayam district, claimed acting CPI(M) State Secretary A. Vijayaraghavan, citing low voter turnout in areas where the UDF traditionally had an edge.

Cong. boycotts Assembly against passage of anti-cow slaughter Bill

Rules and procedures followed, says Karnataka Speaker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

The Opposition Congress on Thursday boycotted the proceedings of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly opposing the introduction and passage of the anti-cow slaughter Bill, despite appeals by the Speaker to participate.

The controversial Karna-

taka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill, 2020, was passed in the Assembly on Wednesday amid protest by the Congress.

The former Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition, Siddaramaiah, announced on Wednesday that the Congress would boycott the proceedings on Thursday opposing the Bill, which was passed without discussing in the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of the House.

Recalling developments

in the House on Thursday, Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri said the Leader of the Opposition had raised a couple of issues regarding the passage of the Bill and clarified that he had conducted the House "within the framework of House rules and procedures."

The Speaker said it was made clear at the BAC meeting that some ordinances and important Bills would be taken up during the session. Mr. Kageri said the Bill had figured in the supplementary agenda on Wednesday, before it was tabled and passed.

Karnataka says no to forcible eviction

Allays fears over Western Ghats report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Thursday said people living in 1,533 villages in the Western Ghats region, coming under the eco-sensitive zone as classified by Dr. K. Kasturirangan report, would not be forcibly evicted.

Replying to a debate in the Assembly on the report, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar said the State would explore the option of impleading before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to make known its stand on the report.

"I will talk to both the Forest and Law Ministers to explore the option," he said.

Seeking to allay fears that there would be mass eviction of people from the villages if the report is implemented by the end of this

year, Mr. Kumar said the Centre was yet to issue the final notification.

The State had not only filed objections to all the four draft notifications on implementation of the report, but also written to the Centre making it clear that it would not accept implementation of the report in its present form, he said.

Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, in his letter to the Union Minister for Environment and Forests, had also sought that the State should be informed about any new draft notification to be issued in this regard before taking a final call on the report, he said.

Earlier, all the MLAs from the Western Ghats region expressed concern citing media reports that the NGT had asked the Centre to implement the report from December 30.

13 more 'mystery illness' cases detected in Eluru

STAFF REPORTER

VIJAYAWADA

Thirteen more cases of the undiagnosed illness were reported in Eluru of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday pushing the total number to 600, said District Coordinator of Health Services A.V.R. Mohan.

Earlier in the day, Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney called on the people who fell sick due to the disease – the root cause of which was still not conclusively known – at the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Eluru.

Ms. Sawhney interacted with the patients, and also enquired about the outcome of the study being done by doctors and other

experts from Mr. Mohan.

District Collector R. Mutyala Raju informed Ms. Sawhney about the number of patients being treated in the hospitals and the areas where people fell sick with convulsions and dizziness as the dominant symptoms.

Meanwhile, doctors and experts from the AIIMS, the National Centre for Disease Control, and the Institute of Preventive Medicine were continuing their investigation into the neurotoxicity symptoms.

In Vijayawada, Health Minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas sought to know from officials the treatment being given to the 23 patients at the GGH in the city.

In full flow



Water power: A policeman warning off people after they failed to heed to repeated appeals not to enter an overflowing bed dam at Sellipattu, near Puducherry, on Thursday. ■ S.S. KUMAR

Chennithala raises corruption charges against Kerala Speaker

Opposition leader to approach Governor for probe; Speaker says he is willing to face any investigation agency

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOZHIKODE

Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala on Thursday levelled serious allegations against Kerala Speaker P. Sreeramakrishnan in the financial handling of the Assembly and said he would approach Governor Arif Mohammad Khan for a probe into the charges.

Addressing a news conference here, Mr. Chennithala alleged that Mr. Sreeramakrishnan had indulged in large-scale extravagance in the conduct of the Loka Sabha, hosted by the State government to bring Keralites living around the globe under one platform. A sum of ₹1.84 crore had been spent just for the seating arrange-

ments in Sankaranarayanan Thampi Hall in the Assembly Complex in 2018. He alleged that the profligacy had been led by Vadakara-based Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society (ULCCS). The renovation included replacing new seats and erecting imported lan-

terns costing ₹16.65 crore in January 2020. All this for hosting a programme for one-and-a-half days. He alleged that ₹52.31 crore was spent for the software e-Niyamasabha (e-Assembly). For this, ₹13.59 crore had been offered as advance to the ULCCS. It was

mysterious that the ULCCS had been awarded the contract without inviting tenders for the project.

He said the appointment of the consultants of the Sabha TV and the organisation of Festival of Democracy, both initiatives of the Assembly, were steeped in corruption.

Mr. Chennithala said the Speaker, who was a State committee member of the CPI (M), had behaved in a manner unbecoming of his position, he said.

Mr. Sreeramakrishnan attempted to mount a strong defence against the imputation that gold smuggling case suspect Swapna Suresh had implicated him in the racket. The Opposition parties had seized on the allegation to disadvantage the ruling front during the local body polls.

The Speaker slammed Mr. Chennithala for raising baseless allegations of corruption and extravagance against the Legislative Secretariat. He denied there was any fraud in contracting the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society for carrying out works in the Assembly complex. The Sabha TV was a new concept for bringing the Assembly closer to the public.

The well-appointed Assembly lounge, which Mr. Chennithala had highlighted as wasteful expenditure, was widely appreciated for its aesthetics, he said. (With inputs from Thiruvananthapuram bureau)



Ramesh Chennithala and, right, P. Sreeramakrishnan



KERALA

utive secretary to the UAE Consulate General.

The Speaker slammed Mr. Chennithala for raising baseless allegations of corruption and extravagance against the Legislative Secretariat.

He denied there was any fraud in contracting the Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society for carrying out works in the Assembly complex. The Sabha TV was a new concept for bringing the Assembly closer to the public.

The well-appointed Assembly lounge, which Mr. Chennithala had highlighted as wasteful expenditure, was widely appreciated for its aesthetics, he said. (With inputs from Thiruvananthapuram bureau)

IN BRIEF



A.P. launches 'Jagannana Jeeva Kranti' scheme

GUNTUR

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday virtually launched the 'Jagannana Jeeva Kranti' scheme, under which 2.49 lakh sheep and goats will be distributed to women in a phased manner at a cost of ₹1,869 crore. The scheme will help improve the living standards of women with less investment.

Maoist 'courier' involved in 50 cases arrested BHADRADRI A Maoist courier, who was allegedly involved in around 50 cases of violence during his stint as a dalit member of the banned CPI (Maoist) in the areas straddling the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border in the past, was arrested from Bodanelli forest area on Wednesday. According to the police, Podium Jayaram alias Gururi, 30, was nabbed after a brief chase.

Raveendran fails to appear before ED

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM C.M. Raveendran, additional private secretary to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, has reportedly claimed inability to appear

'No action on Roshni Act order for now'

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Thursday made an oral statement in the Supreme Court that it will not immediately take "coercive action" against petitioners, who claim to be lawful occupants and land holders, challenging the "omnibus" verdict of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court to scrap the Roshni Act.

The petitioners alleged that the High Court had not given them the opportunity of a hearing. They were being deprived of their rightful property in violation of Article 300A of the Constitution. The Bench asked petitioners to join in with others seeking a review of the verdict.

NHRC got over 46,000 plaints since April

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Human Rights Commission has received over 46,000 complaints of violation of rights and disposed of over 49,000 complaints, both old and new, NHRC member Justice P.C. Pant said on Thursday.

At the NHRC's virtual event to mark Human Rights Day, Justice Pant said this year had been very difficult for humanity and there was a need for a cohesive response from public healthcare systems and the public, an NHRC statement said.

He said that in the past eight months, from April 1 till November 30, the NHRC registered 46,544 complaints and disposed of 49,759 complaints.

3 scribes slapped by police officer during DDC polls

Kashmir Press Club demands action

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

Three journalists were allegedly beaten up by a police officer in Anantnag district in Kashmir while covering the District Development Council polls on Thursday. The Kashmir Press Club has sought action against the officer.

"We were at a polling station where no vote was allowed to be cast till 8.30 a.m. despite the polling time of 7 a.m. This we tried to raise with Senior Superintendent of Police Sandeep Choudhary... Without any reason, I and two other colleagues were slapped by

Congress MPs skip ceremony

Party says democracy made not by 'grand buildings' but by constitutional values

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday targeted the Narendra Modi government over the proposed new Parliament building, with senior leaders pointing out that India's democracy is not made by "grand buildings" but its constitutional values.

The Congress' parliamentary leaders stayed away from the ground-breaking ceremony of the building. The party has been critical of the government for proceeding with the Central Vista project in the middle of the pandemic.

While former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram tweeted that "the foundation for a new Parliament building was laid on the ruins of a liberal democra-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a puja during the Parliament foundation stone laying ceremony. ■ PTI

cy", his colleague and the Congress deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha, Anand Sharma, called it a "case of misplaced priorities in times of a pandemic, economic distress and farmers are fighting for justice and their rights in the biting cold".

"Vibrant Democracy is

sustained and strengthened not by grand buildings but by nurturing the spirit of India's hard-earned constitutional democracy which was brazenly assaulted when the farm Bills were rammed through by muzzling the Opposition, using the COVID pandemic as a shield, and in

violation of parliamentary rules and established practices," Mr. Sharma tweeted.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said history would record that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was busy laying the foundation stone when farmers were fighting for their rights on the streets.

Congress Chief Whip in the Rajya Sabha Jairam Ramesh said the existing Parliament building, built by the British, resembled the Chausath Yogini Temple in Morena (Madhya Pradesh) while the new *atmanirbhar* Parliament looked like the Pentagon in Washington.

On his Twitter handle, Mr. Ramesh shared pictures of the old and new buildings and that of the Pentagon and the Morena temple.

Modi's govt. is destroying democracy, says Yechury

Left parties pan PM's speech at ground-breaking ceremony

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Left parties panned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech at the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Parliament building.

Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said that Mr. Modi's speech was a case of "diabolic doublespeak".

"Mr. Modi is giving a moral lecture on the 'values' and 'culture' of democracy while in practice [he is] destroying democracy. Every single institution that holds

ties, every dissenter is labelled as anti-national. A boy and a girl cannot freely marry in this country without the government's intervention," Mr. Yechury said.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said that a new Parliament should not be the beginning of a new order replacing constitutional democracy with theocracy. "Replacing the present building with a new building shouldn't lead to replacing the present Constitution with a new one based on Manusmriti," he said.

'No move to replace Sonia as UPA chief'

CWC member shrugs off reports

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

A member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Thursday said that reports of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar taking over as the head of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was a ploy to break Opposition unity and divert attention from pressing issues such as the ongoing farmers' strike.

Speculation that Mr. Pawar could be asked by non-Congress parties to take over as the UPA chairperson gained momentum after the NCP chief, in a recent interview, had questioned former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi's "consistency as well as leadership abilities".

It also comes at a time when the Congress is gearing up for organisational elections to elect a new party president.

There has also been renewed activity by a section of the Group of 23 (G-23) Congress leaders who had written to Ms. Gandhi in August pressing for an organisational revamp.

a member of the CWC, told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Anwar, a former founding member of the NCP and colleague of Mr. Pawar, said "such stories are also planted to divert attention from issues like the ongoing farmers' protests".

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED

(A Govt of Karnataka Enterprise)

Office of the Executive Engineer, VJNL U.B.P

Division no.2, B.R.Project-577 115

Phone No: 08282-256345 E Mail id:

eeubp2@rediffmail.com

CIN No. U41000KA2016SCG097260

No:EE/VJNL/UBP/DIV-2/BRP/PB/AdditionalStructures/Corrigendum-2/2020-21/990 Dated: 10.12.2020

CORRIGENDUM-II NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Managing Director, Visvesvarayya Jala Nigam Limited, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division No.2, B.R Project, Shimoga District, Karnataka had invited Short term tender notification for the work of Construction of Additional works as per Revised Mitigation Plan for Wildlife Clearance under UBP package I lifting water from Tunga River to Bhadra Reservoir. Indent No: VJNL/2020-21/ BG / WORK INDENT1476 vide Notification No.871 Dated 09-11-2020, and corrigendum-I have been issued vide Corrigendum Notification No.929 dated: 25.11.2020. But Due to some Technical Reason the Receipt and opening of Tender have been Postponed

The details of Corrigendum of Tender are listed below

SI.No. 1. Previously : Last date of Submission of Completed e-Tendering Documents (Cover I & II) through E-Portal till 11.12.2020 upto 17.00 Hrs. **Modified :** Last date of Submission of Completed e Tendering Documents (Cover I& II) through E-Portal till 22.12.2020 upto 17.00 Hrs

SI.No. 2. Previously : Last date & Time for Tender Queries/Clarification till 10.12.2020 upto 16.00 Hrs **Modified :** Last date & Time for Tender Queries Clarification till 21.12.2020 Upto 16.00 Hrs

SI.No. 3. Previously : Date and Time of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I) By Superintending Engineer, VJNL, UBP Circle No.1 B.R Project on 14.12.2020 at 17.00 Hrs **Modified :** Date and Time of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-1) By Superintending Engineer, VJNL, UBP Circle No.1 B.R Project on 24.12.2020 at 17.00 Hrs

SI.No. 4. Previously : Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be intimated to the Technically Sucessful Bidders **Modified :** Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be intimated to the Technically Sucessful Bidders

Sd/- Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division-2, B.R.Project-577115.

DIPR/sm/No.20/12/mca/2020-21

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask Follow Physical Distancing Maintain Hand Hygiene

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS : TIRUPATI INFORMATION CENTRE, CHENNAI TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders are invited for supply of 22 Ltrs., of Curd per day to TTD Information Center, Chennai for preparing anaprasadams and to offer to deities for a period of one year from i.e., 2021-2022 or from the date of agreement which ever is earlier. Intending participants may obtain the tender document in person from the Office of the Dy. Exe. Officer, TTD Information Centre, Chennai, No.26, Venkatanarayana Road, T.Nagar, Chennai from 11-12-2020. The Last Date for accepting of Sealed Tenders is 12.00 noon on 22-12-2020.

Roc.No.PRA/13925/Adv.No.245/PRO/2020; Dated:10-12-2020 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Office of the Chief Engineer

7th Floor, East Wing, Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, Ameerpet, Hyderabad-82.

Tender Notice

Date:07.12.2020

No:HMDA/DEV/CE/15/2020-21

REMEDIATION OF HUSSAIN SAGR LAKE IN HYDERABAD, TELANGANA, INDIA

Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority invites Global Invitation for Request For Proposal (RFP) to Design, Procure, Implement Proven Technological Intervention to arrest Odour nuisance, algal blooms and to improve water quality from the reputed National / International agencies in single stage three cover system (Cover-I-Eligibility Criteria, Cover-II-Technical Proposals, Cover-III-Financial Proposals). The scope of work, eligibility criteria and other details can be seen in the notifications in the website www.hmda.gov.in

Submission: upto 15.30 Hrs (IST) on 29.12.2020. Contact Person: Smt. Ch. Paramiyothi, Superintending Engineer-4, Mobile: 9849909811, Email: ce@hmda.gov.in

DPR No.12324PPCL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 Sd/- Chief Engineer, HMDA

ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED (A Government of Odisha Undertaking)

Regd Office: Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022

CIN:U40102QR2004SGC007553

e-TENDER NOTICE NO.TW-IT/TD/03/543/2020-21 DATE: 11.12.2020

Chief General Manager (IT), OPTCL, 3rd floor, IT Department, Janpath, Bhubaneswar on behalf of OPTCL invites bid in e-Tender Mode from

reputed eligible bidders for " Implementation of IP based CCTV Surveillance System at 29 Grid Sub-Stations of OPTCL-Phase 4"

conforming to the terms and conditions mentioned in the e-Tender document.

The interested bidders would be required to enroll themselves on the

the tender portal www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL. Complete set of bidding

documents are available at www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL and

www.optcl.co.in from 11.12.2020 (16:00 Hrs) to 31.12.2020 (16:00 Hrs).

The Techno-Commercial bid shall be due for submission on dated 31.12.2020(17:00Hrs.)

N.B.: All subsequent addendums/corrigendum to the tender shall be hosted in the OPTCL's official website: http://www.optcl.co.in and www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL only.

HPR-13/2020 CAD-995, OPR-04011/11/0060/2021 Sd/- Chief General Manager (IT) OPTCL

TAMILNADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD INVITATION OF BIDS – TWO COVER – ITEMWAR TENDER SYSTEM (E-Submission)

IFB No. 25/FJJM/Aravakurichi Package-1 to 4/SDO(T3)/CE/CBE/2020/Dated : 09.12.2020.

Fund JJM Fund 2020-2021

Eligibility Registered Class I Contractors

Tender Invitee The Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, No.30, Siruvani Nagar, Bharathipark Road, Coimbatore-641 043.

Sale of Bid 11.12.2020 to 08.01.2021 upto 17.45 hrs.

Available website E-Tendering website www.tntenders.gov.in.

Pre Bid meeting 31.12.2020 at 11.00 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee

Bid Submission 11.01.2021 before 15.00 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee. Digitally signed encrypted tenders through E-Tendering website www.tntenders.gov.in

Bid opening 12.01.2021 at 15.30 hours at the office of the Tender Invitee through E-Tendering

Sl. No. Name of work Approximate value of work (Rs. In Crore including GST) Bid security (Rs.lakhs)

Jal Jeevan Mission for 2020-2021: CVWS to 756 Habitats in K.Panamathi & Aravakurichi Unions in Karur District (Period of completion : 18 months, TrialRun : 8 months and Paid maintenance : 12 months)

1 Package-1 38.20 28.70

2 Package-2 51.10 38.40

3 Package-3 97.10 72.90

4 Package-4 91.50 68.70

DIPR / 4615 / TENDER / 2020

Chief Engineer (i/c), TWAD Board, Coimbatore.

SAVE WATER, CONSERVE WATER, EVERY DROP COUNTS

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS: TIRUPATI CHITTOR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Adv.No.48/43/CE/TD/2020-21

e-tenders are invited on e-procurement for Three (03) works of TTD Engineering Dept.

SI. No.	NIT No.	Name of the Work	Estimate Amount Rs. in Lakhs for completion	Schedule Download Start Date	Down Load End Date
---------	---------	------------------	---	------------------------------	--------------------

IN BRIEF



78% turnout in second phase of Bodoland polls

GUWAHATI The second phase of polling for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) saw 78.8% of the 10.23 lakh voters exercise their franchise to elect 111 candidates to 19 seats across Assam's Kokrajhar and Chirang districts on Thursday. The first phase saw a turnout of 77.2%. The Bodoland People's Front ruled the BTC from 2003 till its dissolution.

DRDO completes trials of indigenous carbine

NEW DELHI A protective carbine designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully undergone the final phase of user trials on Thursday, it said in a statement. The 5.56x30 mm Joint Venture Protective Carbine (JVPC), a gas-operated semi bull-pup automatic weapon, has a firing rate of more than 700 rounds a minute.

Nine newborns die in govt. hospital in Kota

JAIPUR Nine newborns have died at a State-run hospital in Kota city of Rajasthan within a span of hours, officials said on Thursday. Five of the babies, who were 1-4 days old, died on Wednesday night and four more on Thursday at the J K Lon Hospital, an official said. The hospital had hit national headlines in December last year over deaths of an unusual number of infants. PTI

Will probe if activist was denied specs: Minister

MUMBAI Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Thursday ordered a probe into allegations that activist Gautam Navlakha, who had been arrested in the Bhima Koregaon violence case, was denied spectacles at the Taloja Central Jail. "I believe this situation should have been handled humanely," Mr. Deshmukh tweeted.

Former Bengal CM still on ventilator support

KOLKATA The health condition of former West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya improved a bit on Thursday but remained "critical", hospital sources said. The 76-year-old politician is "still on ventilator support", they said. Mr. Bhattacharya was admitted to a private hospital on Wednesday as his breathing-related problems aggravated. PTI

India, Nepal to restart commercial flights

Plan for one daily service for now

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI India and Nepal have decided to launch an air bubble arrangement for restarting commercial flights, after months of disruption caused by the pandemic.

India had proposed the arrangement, which was cleared after the recent visit of Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla to Kathmandu, an informed source said on Thursday.

"Initially we are starting with one flight daily from each side between Delhi and Kathmandu. From the Indian side, it will be Air India which, in normal times, had a daily flight between Delhi and Kathmandu. We are starting with Indians, Nepalese, OCI/PIO cardholders of all nationalities and all valid Indian visa holders," said the source, adding that tourist visas would not be considered in the starting phase.

Usual medical protocols

The air bubble arrangement, the source said, would follow the usual medical protocols as mandatory in other cases and include the need for RT PCR test report 72 hours prior to travel.

Thursday's information came against the backdrop of the eighth meeting of the

Virus cases stay below 40,000

Daily deaths fall to fewer than 500 from 1,069 in October, says Health Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's cumulative COVID-19 testing has crossed 15 crore on Thursday, with one crore tests being conducted in the past 10 days, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday. India had conducted 10 crore tests by October 23.

A total of 9,22,959 samples were tested in the last 24 hours which has increased India's total cumulative tests to 15,07,59,726," the Ministry said in a release.

The Ministry added that India had reported less than 40,000 new daily COVID-19 cases for 11 straight days. In the last 24 hours, 31,521 persons had tested positive. 77.67 per cent of the 412 case fatalities reported in the past 24 hours are from 10 States/Union Territories and 18.2% of new fatalities reported are from Maharashtra, which reported 75 deaths.

Delhi also saw a fatality count of 50 contributing another 12.13 per cent of the fatalities.



On the road: People entering Ahmedabad by road getting tested for COVID-19 on the State Highway. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

The number of fatalities per day has been fewer than 500 for the last five days. India registered 1,069 fatalities in the beginning of October, which declined to 670 cases in November and had now fallen below 500, according to the Ministry.

"India also registered 37,725 new recoveries in the same duration which has led

to a further contraction of the active caseload. India's present active caseload of 3,72,293 consists of just 3.81% of India's total positive cases.

92.5 lakh recoveries

The total recovered cases have surpassed 92.5 lakh (92,53,306) on Thursday and the recovery rate has im-

Home Secretary seeks data on frontline staff

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Thursday held a review with the State police, Central Armed Police Forces and home guards, seeking a database of all frontline workers who will be eligible for COVID-19 vaccine as and when it is ready. Several vaccines are in the final phase of trial.

proved to 94.74%. The gap between recovered cases and active cases is steadily increasing and presently stands at 8,881,013," the release said. Also 77.30% of the new recoveries have been re-

ported by 10 States/UTs with Maharashtra registering 5,051 recoveries. Kerala and Delhi saw 4,647 and 4,177 new recoveries, respectively.



Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'

"remain same as the previous year". He added that the government was examining a proposal for giving students the choice to answer 75 questions out of 90. He said there were 75 questions to be answered in the JEE (Main) 2020.

Last week, the CBSE had announced that the board exams in 2021 would be in written mode only and not online.

He said the government would examine the suggestion that the JEE (Main) 2021 be held four times in 2021 – February, March, April and May.

He said the syllabus for the JEE (Main) 2021 would

ing Board examinations including practical. Consultations with the stakeholders are in progress." He added that alternatives would be explored if students are unable to take the practicals in classes before the exams.

Asked about the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), he said the schedule for NEET (UG) 2021 was being finalised and would be announced soon. He said the syllabus for the exam would stay the same as the previous year's.

He said the conduct of competitive exams such as NEET and JEE had continued safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Clarifying doubts among the students and teachers about deleted portions of Class 12 syllabus, the Minister said the CBSE had already uploaded the revised syllabus on its website.

(With PTI inputs)

Practical exams

Responding to a question about cancellation or postponement of the CBSE practical exams, he said the CBSE had "yet to take a decision on the dates of conduct-

for the relationship to continue as normal given the situation on the LAC. "We are very clear that maintaining peace and tranquillity along the LAC is the basis for the rest of the relationship to progress," he said. "You can't have the kind of situation you have on the border and say let's carry on with life in all other sectors of activity. It's just unrealistic," he said.

Ms. Hua repeated that view on putting the border tensions in a "proper" position on Thursday, saying "We hope India can work with us and contribute to solidarity, cooperation and common development."

"There are challenges in bilateral relations but China's position and policy on India hasn't changed," she said. "As two major countries and emerging markets, keeping good relations serves the fundamental interests of both and we will stay committed to safeguarding the peace and tranquillity in the border area. On the historical issues, China believes that we should find fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solutions based on equal-footed consultation and put it on the proper position in our bilateral relations. We hope we can reach consensus, properly manage differences, enhance practical cooperation and bring our bilateral relations back on the right track."

Deboo, the dancer who defied norms

He weaved multiple dance forms



Astad Deboo during a performance in Chennai.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

explored how political leaders have feet of clay. In "Rhythm Divine: River Runs Deep", he collaborated with Manipuri drummers to bring out the political turmoil in the northeast.

He was a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Padma Shri.

Born in Gujarat in 1947, he was introduced to Kathak by Guru Prahlad Das when he was six. He later learnt Kathakali under Guru E. Krishna Panicker and mastered the modern dance techniques of Martha Graham and Jose Limon in London and New York.

He collaborated with several international artists including Pina Bausch, Alison Becker Chase and Pink Floyd. A humanist, Deboo worked extensively with the deaf and underprivileged street children.

CBSE exam dates to be fixed after discussions: Minister

Centre looking at holding JEE (Main) four times in 2021

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' on Thursday said the schedule of Class 10 and 12 examinations was yet to be decided by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), but would be announced soon after consulting all stakeholders.

During a virtual interaction with students, parents and teachers, the Minister was asked about the dates for exams and their possible postponement.

Last week, the CBSE had announced that the board exams in 2021 would be in written mode only and not online.

He said the government would examine the suggestion that the JEE (Main) 2021 be held four times in 2021 – February, March, April and May.

He said the syllabus for the JEE (Main) 2021 would

Virus-wary Indians indulging film craze at home: Netflix

80% of its members watch a film a week, the platform says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

With much of 2020 spent indoors, Indians turned to watching movies on Netflix, with the country having the highest viewership of films on the video streaming platform globally. Over the past year, 80% of Netflix members in India chose to watch a film every week, the platform said.

"It's no surprise that we love films in India... This year, the most popular thriller that kept us on the edge of our seats was Raat Akeli Hai. Extraction, Maanglang and The Old Guard gave us our dose of adrenaline as the most popular action films," Monika Shergill, vice-president, content, Netflix India, said in a blog post.

She noted that Ludo was the most popular comedy film. Films such as Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo (Telugu), Kannum Kannum Kolaiyadithaal (Tamil), Kappella (Malayalam), and Uma Maheswara Ugra Roopasya (Telugu) were among India's top-10.

The U.S.-headquartered platform saw about a 250% increase in viewing in 2020 over 2019 for both non-fiction and romantic

series and documentaries.

The viewing of documentaries grew more than 100%, and Bad Boy Billionaires, The Social Dilemma and Money Heist: The Phenomenon were the most popular ones in India this year.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-



Pass the remote: Ludo was the most popular comedy pick.

films and series.

"In 2020, we explored the world of non-fiction series and documentaries. The viewing for non-fiction series on Netflix in India grew more than 250% in 2020 over 2019 and the most popular non-fiction shows that got us hooked were Too Hot to Handle, Indian Matchmaking and the recently released Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives," Ms. Shergill said.

The viewing of documentaries grew more than 100%, and Bad Boy Billionaires, The Social Dilemma and Money Heist: The Phenomenon were the most popular ones in India this year.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched were some of the most popular romantic films and series that made us swoon this year.

This year, Indians also explored stories from around the world, irrespective of the original language. The German series Dark was on the top-10 row in India for 95 days and the Spanish series Money Heist featured in the row for 170 days.

The Turkish series The Protector is among the most popular titles in the fantasy genre this year and was also the non-Indian, non-English title that was viewed the most with subtitles and/or dubs.

The viewing of kids' titles increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

in India in 2020 over 2019.

In romance, Love Aaj Kal, Ginny Weds Sunny and Mis-

matched increased more than 100%

PRABALIKA M BORAH

Bengalis, Odias and Biharis living outside their states will beam in delight at the mere mention of *khejur/khajur gur* or jaggery made from date sap. This winter speciality is so precious that a shopkeeper in Sainikpuri, Secunderabad, has been gifted a fridge by his regular Odia customer to prolong the shelf life of the seasonal product. Mohammed Ali, the 55-year-old shopkeeper says, "Last year, I had to discard a lot of *nolen gur* as it has a very low shelf life. If not stored well, it soon gives out a fermented smell. So this year, before the season started, a regular customer gifted me his refrigerator, saying he hated seeing so much gur go waste last year."

Soumyo Sengupta who works on sustainable agriculture practices in West Bengal, explains that date sap jaggery can be obtained in two forms. They are *nolen gur* and *patali*. *Nolen* means new. So *nolen gur* essentially means new/fresh *gur* made from date sap. *Patali* is solid *gur* that is commonly sold as a disc, and has a longer shelf life. It has a smoky, caramelised flavour because it is made over firewood; even though it is hard, it is actually fudgy when bit into.

Date sap or date palm jaggery is a small scale industry product in West Bengal and Jharkhand.

Drink or eat?

Every winter, fans of date sap toddy make at least a few trips to toddy sellers on the outskirts of their respective city or village.

As Bengal-based Sayantani Mahapatra, a food blogger, says, "The colder it gets, the sweeter is the toddy. I love the *nolen gur* made from date sap. This extremely prized seasonal produce, occupies a special spot in the hearts of those who dig in anything and everything that is authentically *mishti* (sweet). *Payesh* (kheer), *sandesh* and *rosgolla* made from *nolen gur* are seasonal delicacies in Bengali homes."

Down South in Telangana, the date sap itself is a prized natural winter drink, not only among villagers but also among urban picnickers who head to toddy outlets just for this. Distinctly sweet with a definite zing, the diluted milk-like toddy,



It's a DATE thing

if drunk fresh or within an hour of it being brought down the tree, does not leave the drinker intoxicated even when consumed in fairly large quantities. Raju Goud, a 40-year-old date toddy tapper in Siddipet, Telangana, says the trees are prepared every year before the season, by cleaning the old dried palms, cleaning the surroundings of the sap from where the toddy is to be extracted and by checking the health of the tree.

Says Raju, "Only an experienced toddy tapper can tell the health of a tree. There are male and female trees; female trees give better and more toddy. The demand is so high during this season that some people even adulterate it with sweeteners. So it's always advisable to drink toddy from a tapper you know and trust." Another toddy tapper, Akhil Goud says, "Extracting the sap is a dangerous task and requires talent. If there

is a lot of dew on the tree: tappers can slip and fall. We have to take care and precautions."

Telangana's villagers don't cook with the sap toddy. "Why waste a natural drink by mixing it with food, when you can drink it straight up?" asks Raju.

And he suggests an ideal food combination to go with it: "We call it Susheela. It is a combination of puffed rice and spicy *nattu kozhi* [country chicken] curry. No one knows why the locals call it Susheela. I feel it is because it complements the sweet toddy."

In parts of South India, date sap is not used to make jaggery, but instead finds its way into the

recipes of staples like *appams* and chicken curry.

Play with it

Executive Chef Thimma Reddy of The Park in Hyderabad, however, insists that there is no need to restrict its use to just those dishes. Fresh toddy can be used to make the batter for pancakes, he says, adding, "A sorbet with date toddy and Himalayan salt would be a winner at a Christmas lunch or dinner."

Soumyo points out that traditionally, Bengalis make it a part of their winter diet. Soumyo explains, "Date jaggery or date palm jaggery is an ideal sugar substitute and can be used as a natural sweetener. This jaggery is believed to contain far more nutrients which are beneficial for the body than white sugar."



Winter's offering
(Clockwise from far left) Date sap toddy; jaggery-based *narkel naru* or coconut *laddus*; pancake with toddy; blocks of *patali gur* • PRABALIKA M BORAH AND GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



Toddy sorbet with Himalayan pink salt

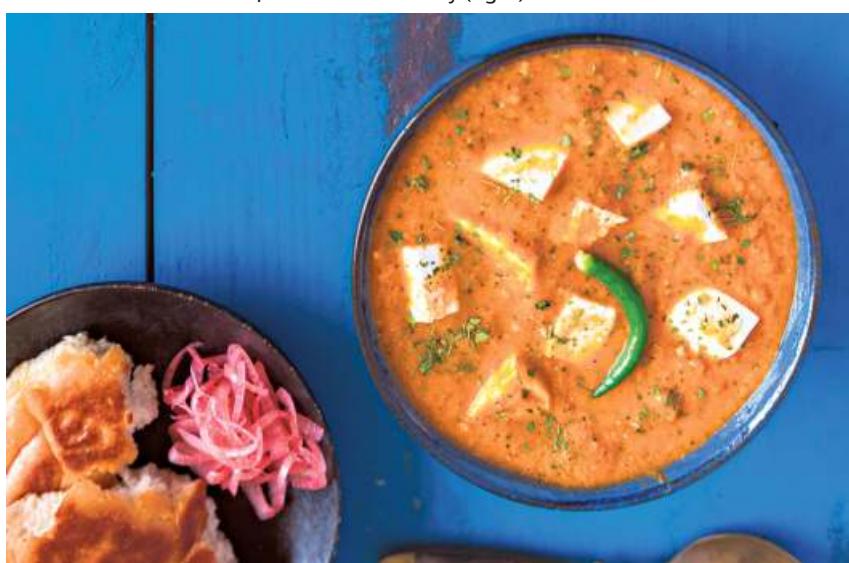
INGREDIENTS

- 1 litre toddy
- 50 gms liquid glucose or corn syrup
- 100 ml water
- 50 gms palm jaggery
- 5 gms black pepper
- Himalayan pink salt to taste

METHOD

Make a syrup with palm jaggery, liquid glucose and water by cooking all the ingredients in a pan. Add toddy and Himalayan pink salt and mix well. Freeze the mixture in the freezer for over 3 hours. Cook jaggery and crushed pepper and set aside. In a bowl/glass scoop out the frozen sorbet and garnish with sweetened black pepper and Himalayan pink salt and serve.

The good stuff Bengalureans can soon dig into (below) butter paneer and butter chicken, both best-sellers by (right) Saransh Goila ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Parotta with your butter chicken

Saransh Goila brings his signature dishes to Bengaluru, at South India's first Goila Butter Chicken outlet

APARNA NARRAIN

Saransh Goila has been busy. The 33-year-old chef and cookbook author, whose name is inextricably linked to butter chicken, is all set to bring his signature dish to Bengaluru with the launch of the first Goila Butter Chicken (GBC) in South India.

Come December 17 and Bengalureans will be able to dig into dishes (initially, the

menu will have only the best-selling items) like the Goila butter paneer, paneer tikka, Sindhi style mutton, naan bombs and, of course, the star attraction – the Goila butter chicken – from a cloud kitchen on Brigade Road.

Talking about the decision to focus on cloud kitchens, Saransh, who was in Bengaluru prior to the launch, says, "We have always been a quick service restaurant (QSR) where

we were doing takeaways and deliveries. Vivek (Sahani, co-founder of GBC) and I thought that QSRs are the future with the way things were heading (back) in 2016. We also realised that to grow restaurants across the country or the world is definitely a tougher ask. Our story is very clear: we have a great recipe and we want everyone to eat it. If we open a large restaurant, we may not be able to cater to everyone; it might become more premium."

While there are five GBC branches in Mumbai, a London branch also opened this November. There are plans to expand to cities such as Chennai, Kolkata and Delhi from June next year.

Acknowledging that the pandemic's impact on the hospitality industry has been high, Saransh says: "It led many restaurants to either shut or consolidate what they are doing. We thought that it served as an opportunity to collaborate with other restaurateurs and people in the industry to take GBC to different cities. Typically, our business requires us to pay heavy rentals and have brick-and-mortar structures. So, we are partnering with people who have the space and re-

sources but might not have as much business now. It is a value proposition without spending too much money on infrastructure; we are investing in a partnership."

In Bengaluru, the partnership is with A2Z Hospitality on a franchisee basis. "Traditionally, you sign a contract and take a franchise. We decided to be more involved in the product, including in kitchen design and planning. One of our in-house trained chefs is stationed in Bengaluru."

Saransh, who has an old connection with the city, having worked at The Leela Palace, says: "While the city loves North Indian food, I saw, being from Delhi, that

there was a market gap in terms of the kind of North Indian food I believe should be there. Generally, it is customised for the palette here. We do not customise our re-

cipes for any market, whether it is London or Bengaluru. And Bengaluru loves MasterChef Australia. The kind of love we have seen post the show exposure in 2018 (contestants had to cook the butter chicken as part of a pressure test); I can't even recall how many times people have asked us to come here."

All this, brings us to the million-dollar question? What should one expect before taking a bite of the Goila butter chicken?

"We have a consistent smoky flavour in the chicken and the gravy. Of course, there is butter but it is not too heavy; you can enjoy it guilt-free. We don't add sugar and colour and we use premium ingredients."

As for the best type of Indian bread to soak up the butter chicken, Saransh has this to say. "I get a lot of flak for this but I don't think that only naan works with butter chick-

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en. At GBC, we believe in serving good rumali rotis with it. But, I would say a good Malabar parotta goes exceptionally well with butter chicken. I don't see a bread not working well with this recipe.

The only thing I won't do is put idlis with it!"

en.

In it together Designers added embellishments that require handwork, to generate employment. (Clockwise from below) Designs by Rahul Mishra and Aisha Rao; an ensemble from Butterfly People and an ikat stole by Sonam Dubal

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



How the pandemic and its economic repercussions spurred designers and artisans to think on their feet and out of the box



Her collection of lehengas is playful, modern, sustainable, and made from, "the sock's elastic band, to be precise." She explains, "Sock waste comes in different colours and looks like kids' rubber bands. The bands are cut into fine bits and placed together with embroidery, and it looks like velvet." In her first experiment during the pandemic, she made 17 lehengas and some menswear "to see if our customers liked our ideology." She adds, "We want to make waste cool."

Concurring with her views is Mallika Reddy of another Hyderabad-based company, Cancelled Plans. She speaks about her street wear being completely made from "pre-cycled" products. "We collect industrial waste before it is trashed," says Mallika, explaining that they have made jackets with condom waste and bags from pharmaceutical packaging material.

Her latest collection – Jayanti Reddy Ex Cancelled Plans – uses zardosi waste from designer Jayanthi Reddy's sweatshirt unit. "The collection is a little bit party, a little bit stay-at-home," says Mallika, leveraging the uncanny connect of her label's name with the pandemic that has led to cancellation of plans across the globe. "When I founded the company in September 2019, it was about the idea of cancelling waste that goes in

to landfills and oceans and making a new plan with that," explains Mallika.

Meanwhile, artiste Sudhir Rajbhar's latest collection of recycled rubber bags, 'Mandi' is "a conversation about surviving the times." Working with three artisans from their homes in a Mumbai slum and collaborating with designer Camille Bastien in Paris, he has used a recycled material he created from leather after the beef ban displaced leather artisans out of jobs. "These nomadic studios are the new mode of working for us designers; collaborating, thus, is the result of the pandemic," he says.

Delhi-based fashion designer Sonam Dubal created jewellery from leftover fabrics. "One of the important tasks during the pandemic was to find markets for artisans. Necklaces and earrings with handmade fabric beads was an innovation of these times," says Sonam.

Rallying force

High fashion, too, was racked by unprecedented disruption during lockdown. Artisans migrated en masse and studios were left with huge quantities of dead stock. A majority of designers responded by upcycling their inventory, engaging artisans who had lost jobs. Many added embellishments that require more handwork, for the sake of generating more employment.

"I am not a designer without my artisans. I wanted to do things that would generate a life for another," says Sonam. The designer engaged the widows of Vrindavan to create his latest Christmas collection 'Gift That Gives'. The 25 women stitched vintage Ikat panels with merino wool for an international market, for the first time.

"The Coronavirus period has taught me three things: collaboration, communication and compassion," says Sonam, adding that he reached out to his team of workers with a stipulated amount of monetary assistance during the lockdown. He also took to hard marketing through social media to get orders.

"I asked my clients to not look at the product as personal but as something that will help another in these times," says Sonam, explaining that many in his industry rallied in this manner.

Rahul Mishra's first collection during the pandemic called Butterfly People, showcased at the Paris Haute Couture Week (online) in July, was created with the aim of employing all his craftsmen.

He concludes, "We are a big family – tailors, embroiderers, designers... We have been fortunate to be able to stand by them through this storm and are committed to continue doing so."

Pandemic-shaped couture

PRIYADERSHINI S

"Have you heard of T-shirts made of khadi?" asks Mukesh Lutada. The director of Magan Khadi (Magan Sangrahala Samiti), a Wardha-based organisation, believes that *khadi*, the fabric associated with the country's Freedom Movement, has morphed from its political straitjacket to don a casual, cool look due to the pandemic. He attributes this innovative twist of the handspun fabric to the current health crisis and its direct impact on the lives of artisans. Had it not been for the emergency that befell them, they would not have ideated on their feet and thus differently, he says.

The pandemic, interestingly, has become a trigger for artisan organisations to reinvent in ways they had never done before. "You cannot stop spinners and weavers from work even for a day, because it means no food for them," says Mukesh.

When the shutters came down on their unit, they were stuck with unwo-

ven yarn worth ₹1.25 crore. The organisation immediately brought out a Pay Now Buy Later scheme, and issued 'buy now' vouchers. It fetched them ₹3.5 lakh to tide over the crisis. They tied up with Kochi-based designer Ashima Bhan to convert their dead stock into a children's collection in *khadi* to be out in January 2021. This maiden children's line is a fallout of the ongoing crisis.

Though upcycling has been a buzzword for Hyderabad-based designer Aisha Rao, the disruption this time led her to use, for the first time, sock waste to create a faux velvet look on her lehengas.

"The pandemic makes upcycling the need of the hour. We do appliqués and patchwork with leftover cloth and upcycle it," says Aisha explaining that bias cut for lehengas leaves ample leftover material that she uses for patch-work.



2020 wrapped, on a winning note

With a virtual national event concluded recently, the country's wheelchair basketball players used this year to celebrate more than just their sporting acumen

ANISHA MENEZES

This festive season, wheelchair basketball athletes have one more reason to celebrate – the recently concluded national tournament, held online, for the very first time.

The Virtually Unstoppable Series Challenge, conducted by the Wheelchair Basketball Federation of India (WBFI) comprised events in four categories: art, quiz, fitness and sports skills, and preliminary rounds were conducted online across five zones: North, East, West, South and Northeast. With over 185 entries, the competition was keen.

The category that invited the most varied and interesting submissions was artistic expression.

Bengaluru-based Arun Lakshmi Sriram, a chartered accountant, who moonlights as a stand-up comic, judged the event. "We were looking at art from the heart, where athletes could ex-



Giving it a shot (Left to right) WBFI founder Madhavi Latha; players Suresh Kumar and Kunilata Barik

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

press themselves in an informal video, which is easier than performances on stage," says Arun. A five-member team across the West zone clinched that prize with entries across music, art and jewellery making.

The quiz was a mixed bag of technical questions from the

world of wheelchair basketball and general sport-related minutiae, while fitness and sports skills categories required specific challenges to be performed, while on a wheelchair.

South Zone outperformed the other teams at sports skills and the final quiz event, while the

North Zone bagged the fitness gold. South Zone took home cash prizes of ₹25,000 for the Overall Championship, followed by ₹20,000 for the runners-up, West Zone and North Zone in third place won ₹15,000.

Founder-president of the WBFI, P Madhavi Latha says,

"We saw tremendous improvement in players in the Northeast Zone in the online quiz category. In fact, they went from the bottom of the scoreboard to the top three. Our players from Jammu and Kashmir, in the North Zone, despite their sketchy 2G connection, participated in the final quiz event, which was via a live streaming link."

The grand finale quiz event, on November 29, was hosted by Sumanth C Raman, who holds the distinction for presenting the BSNL Sports Quiz on *Doordarshan's Podhgai* TV channel, India's longest running quiz programme with over 800 episodes.

Hari Prabhu Namalvar, from Coimbatore, says, "The final was poised like a nail-biting cricket match, and it was such an honour to be in the same frame as Mr. Raman, someone I have admired on TV, for so long."

The event that commenced early September, connected

players spread across State lines, and the WBFI also reached out to families facing financial difficulties, sponsoring care kits across the country. Mike Frogley, National Academy Director, Wheelchair Basketball Canada, was all praise for the virtual outreach.

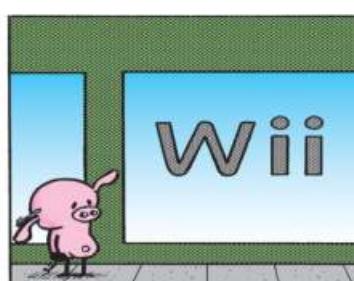
"I cannot tell you how impressed I am. I have not heard of any other federation helping their members with funding for people who are going through economic hardship. That sends a message that I always tell our athletes, 'Take care of the team and the team will take care of you'. It is about just refusing to let something fall short," he said.

Wheelchair basketball athletes are currently fanned out across the nation, practising at gyms and homes, as sports facilities slowly limp back to normalcy. The players are looking forward to practising as a team, as soon as the cloud of the pandemic lifts.

POOCH CAFE



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



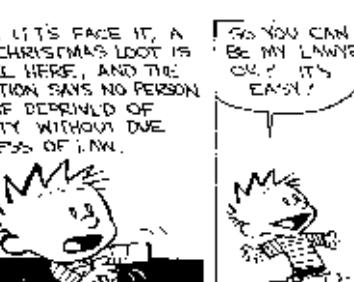
PEANUTS



TIGER



CALVIN AND HOBBES



Sunday deadline for Brexit talks

There isn't enough flexibility on the EU side, says U.K. Foreign Secretary

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Britain on Thursday said talks to secure a post-Brexit trade deal with the European Union will not go beyond this weekend unless there is "substantial movement" from Brussels in key areas.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen met in Brussels on Wednesday, and gave themselves until Sunday to decide whether to keep talking.

Asked if talks could be extended, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab told BBC television, "I can't rule it out but I think we are rapidly approaching the point now where we need some flexibility... I think it's unlikely but I can't categorically exclude it and of course it depends on the progress made between now and then."

Britain left the EU in Janu-



Slow progress: Boris Johnson arriving at the EU headquarters in Brussels on Wednesday. • AFP

ary and is in a standstill transition period until December 31 while both sides thrash out the terms of their new trading relationship. But months of negotiations have been stuck on the extent of EU access to U.K. fishing grounds and fair competition rules.

Mr. Raab, a former Brexit Minister in the government of Mr. Johnson's predecessor, Theresa May, said there had not been enough "pragmatism and flexibility on the

would not accept."

Britain's chief negotiator, David Frost, and his EU counterpart Michel Barnier resume talks in Brussels on Thursday in what could be a final push in the years-long Brexit process.

Contingency plan

The meeting comes as Ms. von der Leyen published a fallback plan in the event of "no deal", before she briefs leaders of the 27 EU member States about the talks.

Failure to secure a deal by the end of December will see Britain revert to World Trade Organization rules, with tariffs and quotas, from January 1. In Parliament, the opposition Labour party's Brexit spokeswoman, Rachel Reeves, said the failure to strike agreement had caused "huge dismay". "Businesses are desperately trying to plan and need to know what on earth is going on."

He later told BBC radio that Sunday's deadline was a "moment of finality" and said, "The EU has to move significantly on both those points because they're points of principle... We're not going to be treated in a way that no other country would accept or the EU

Morocco to normalise ties with Israel

It is the fourth Arab nation this year to do so after Bahrain, Sudan and the UAE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON

Morocco has become the fourth Arab nation this year to recognise Israel, U.S. President Donald Trump announced Thursday, as he, in turn, fulfilled a decades-old goal of Morocco by backing its sovereignty in disputed Western Sahara.

With barely a month left in his presidency, Mr. Trump, a staunch backer of Israel, tweeted: "Israel and the Kingdom of Morocco have agreed to full diplomatic relations - a massive breakthrough for peace in the Middle East!"

The White House said Mr. Trump spoke by telephone with Morocco's King Mo-



Benjamin Netanyahu

hammed VI, who was quoted as also agreeing to expand economic and cultural cooperation with Israel.

Minimal delay

The U.S. president "recognised Moroccan sovereignty over the entire Western Sahara territory," where the Algerian-backed Polisario

Front contests Rabat's control, the White House said.

King Mohammed VI said his country would "resume official contacts... and diplomatic relations with minimal delay" with Israel, according to a statement by the royal palace.

Morocco and Israel had respectively maintained liaison offices in Tel Aviv and Rabat in the 1990s, before closing them in 2000.

The King said these "measures do not in any manner affect Morocco's ongoing and sustained commitment to the just Palestinian cause", according to the royal statement.

After the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan,

Morocco is the fourth Arab State since August to commit to establishing diplomatic relations with the Jewish State.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu anticipated direct flights between the two countries soon. In a televised address, he thanked the Moroccan King "for taking this historic decision to bring a historic peace between us". Mr. Netanyahu said the people of Israel and Morocco have had a "warm relationship in the modern period".

"I've always believed that this historic day would come," Mr. Netanyahu said, before lighting a candle for the Jewish Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, which began Thursday.

IN BRIEF



Erdogan hails Azerbaijan's win over Armenia

BAKU

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on a visit to Azerbaijan on Thursday that Baku's struggle with Armenia was not over, as he hailed his ally's "glorious victory" in a bloody conflict with Yerevan. He arrived in Baku to attend celebrations marking Azerbaijan's military triumph over Armenia. AP

China curbs U.S. official travel to Hong Kong

BEIJING

China is imposing restrictions on travel to Hong Kong by some U.S. officials and others, the Foreign Ministry said on Thursday. U.S. diplomatic passport holders visiting Hong Kong and nearby Macao will temporarily no longer receive visa-free entry privileges, said spokesperson Hu Chunying. AP

Female Afghan TV journalist shot dead

She was killed along with her driver

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

JALALABAD

A female Afghan news anchor and activist was shot dead by assailants on Thursday, her employer said, the second journalist killed in a month in Afghanistan.

Malalai Maiwand, in her 20s, was killed along with her driver Mohammad Tahir in the eastern city of Jalalabad while they were travelling for work, said Enikass TV, the private television channel she worked for.

The journalist, whose activist mother was also killed by unknown gunmen five years ago, had previously spoken out about the difficulties of being a female reporter under Afghanistan's

Biden's son says he is under investigation for tax affairs

Some Republican lawmakers call for an independent probe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WILMINGTON



Hunter Biden

father's presidential transition team. "I take this matter very seriously but I am confident that a professional and objective review of these matters will demonstrate that I handled my affairs legally and appropriately, including with the benefit of professional tax advisors."

Mr. Hunter Biden, 50, is a lawyer who has founded

consulting and investment firms, worked in private equity, and served on the board of various organisations, including national railroad corporation Amtrak.

The investigation was disclosed just five days before the Electoral College is expected to formally select Joe Biden as the next President.

The New York Times, citing unnamed sources, said the probe was opened in late 2018 and included inquiries into "potential criminal violations" of tax laws.

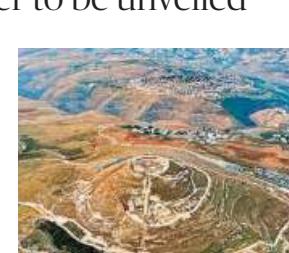
Some Republican lawmakers this week called for current Attorney General Bill Barr to launch an independent investigation of Mr. Hunter Biden – who has acknowledged struggling with addiction – before Mr. Joe Biden takes office on January 20.

Israel set to open up parts of Herod's palace

Private theatre, foyer to be unveiled

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

HERODIUM (PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES)



An aerial view of the Herodium fortress on November 20.

revamped site on Sunday, allowing visitors to see for the first time Herod's arched stairway, foyer and private theatre. The Judean desert complex was built by the Roman-appointed king known both for his brutality and the magnificent structures built during his reign over Judea from 37 to 4 BC.

Riot turns spotlight on Sri Lanka's jails

Prisons on the island have over 30,000 inmates, more than thrice their capacity

MEERA SRINIVASAN

COLOMBO



An inmate's relative seeking information at the Mahara prison on November 30.

lombo and other major cities" were operating at nearly "400% capacity".

The problem was clear and well known, but little action followed. Earlier this month, Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission urged the government to take immediate steps to address the problem of overcrowding.

On Thursday, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa instructed relevant authorities to "look humanely" at grievances of prisoners and address them immediately, a statement from his office said.

According to officials, a total of 2,643 prisoners and 94 prison staff are COVID-19 positive as of Thursday. "In a week's time, about 7,000 prisoners are likely to be released on bail. That will help ease the congestion to an extent," Mr. Rohana said. Meanwhile, prison authorities said about 500 antigen tests were being done every day, and inmates testing positive are immediately transferred to quarantine centres or hospitals for treatment.

Narcotics menace

"The recent prison riot is a black mark for this government. That is why you see some in the government spreading false information, claiming that the rioting prisoners were drug users," said Mr. Nandimal, who has himself been a prisoner from 2007 to 2013, after he was detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, for engaging in "illegal activities".

The prisons currently accommodate over 30,000 prisoners, officials said, which is more than thrice their capacity. In July, the Commissioner General of Prisons, Thushara Upuldeniya, said in a televised interview that prisons "in and around Co-

lobo and other major cities" were operating at nearly "400% capacity".

The problem was clear and well known, but little action followed. Earlier this month, Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission urged the government to take immediate steps to address the problem of overcrowding.

On Thursday, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa instructed relevant authorities to "look humanely" at grievances of prisoners and address them immediately, a statement from his office said.

"Prisons in several countries are faced with this problem of drugs. We have taken a host of measures here, by jamming telecom signals to prevent communication and increasing surveillance by special search teams to ensure there is no chance of narcotics entering the premises," he told *The Hindu*. "We will fully stop it."

Sri Lanka's narcotics problem is not unrelated to overcrowding in prisons, either. According to DIG Rohana, as many as 18,000 suspects were arrested last year alone, on charges of drug trafficking. Addressing the challenge was among President Rajapaksa's key poll pledges ahead of his election last November. "Of those, 8,000 are in remand, while 10,000 are out on bail," Mr. Rohana said.

The recent prison riot was a reality check. Amid Sri Lanka's persisting second wave – cases number over 30,000 – the violent incident showed how the triple challenges of the pandemic, a flourishing narcotics trade and poor prison conditions in Sri Lanka converged, eventually resulting in the death of 11 unarmed inmates.

(Names of family members were changed upon request)



WISH YOUR WORKPLACE CONVERSATIONS WERE MADE THIS EASY?

Presenting

STEP
FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS

A comprehensive course for everyone looking to improve their workplace interactions.



20-hour Online Course featuring workplace scenarios



6 Coach Calls focusing on professional speaking and writing



6 LIVE Classes on Professional Emails

STEP
Standardised Test of English Proficiency

from THE HINDU GROUP

Relatives carrying the coffin of Malalai Maiwand on Thursday.



ultra-conservative patriarchal system. Her death comes as targeted killings of prominent figures become increasingly common amid rising violence, despite ongoing peace talks between the government and the Taliban. No group has claimed the attack.

Female Afghan TV journalist shot dead

She was killed along with her driver

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

JALALABAD

A female Afghan news anchor and activist was shot dead by assailants on Thursday, her employer said, the second journalist killed in a month in Afghanistan.

Malalai Maiwand, in her 20s, was killed along with her driver Mohammad Tahir in the eastern city of Jalalabad while they were travelling for work, said Enikass TV, the private television channel she worked for.

The journalist, whose activist mother was also killed by unknown gunmen five years ago, had previously spoken out about the difficulties of being a female reporter under Afghanistan's

MARKET WATCH

	10-12-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	45960	-0.31
US Dollar	73.66	-0.12
Gold	48,652	-1.15
Brent oil	50.55	-2.39

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	471.00	7.10
Asian Paints	2526.05	3.75
Axius Bank	627.05	-7.15
Bajaj Auto	3290.85	-15.70
Bajaj Finserv	9028.85	18.20
Bajaj Finance	4794.80	-49.35
Bharti Airtel	505.15	2.10
BPCL	399.30	4.15
Britannia Ind	3739.75	112.65
Cipla	762.75	0.35
Coal India	134.85	0.15
Divis Labs	3732.25	6.85
D Dr Reddy's Lab	5053.10	-3.80
Eicher Motors	2492.65	-54.60
GAIL (India)	120.05	-2.45
Grasim Ind	909.50	-10.75
HCL Tech.	866.75	-3.80
HDFC	2289.10	-17.60
HDFC Bank	1385.85	-21.35
HDFC Life	659.45	6.85
Hero MotoCorp	3194.30	3.60
Hindalco	242.70	1.70
Hind Unilever	2350.45	58.25
ICICI Bank	506.95	-4.55
IndusInd Bank	915.85	-12.65
Infosys	1167.75	-7.45
Indian Oil Corp	92.45	-1.50
ITC	212.70	7.30
JSW Steel	362.30	0.45
Kotak Bank	1903.30	19.75
L&T	1190.35	9.35
M&M	736.15	-18.85
Maruti Suzuki	7736.00	26.75
Nestle India Ltd.	18352.70	783.55
NTPC	97.15	-1.15
ONGC	91.65	0.45
PowerGrid Corp	192.75	0.05
Reliance Ind	2007.00	-19.95
SBI Life	856.05	-1.95
State Bank	269.55	-0.80
Shree Cement	23758.10	-662.60
Sun Pharma	565.20	-4.35
Tata Motors	177.60	-5.10
Tata Steel	610.10	0.75
TCS	2784.30	-26.50
Tech Mahindra	927.30	-2.20
Titan	1424.20	-1.95
UltraTech Cement	4964.30	-180.50
UPL	438.45	-54.15
Wipro	355.90	-3.60

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit	against yen at 4 p.m. on December 10
CURRENCY	TT BUY TT SELL
US Dollar	73.46 73.78
Euro	88.90 89.29
British Pound	97.72 98.15
Japanese Yen (100)	70.30 70.61
Chinese Yuan	11.23 11.28
Swiss Franc	82.63 83.03
Singapore Dollar	54.90 55.15
Canadian Dollar	57.42 57.70
Malaysian Ringgit	18.07 18.17
Australian Dollar	55.00 55.25

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



HCL Tech announces foray into Vietnam

NEW DELHI
HCL Technologies on Thursday announced the unveiling of operations in Vietnam with a delivery centre in Hanoi. HCL's local entity, HCL Vietnam Company Ltd., aims to foster growth and train the nation's talent pool in collaboration with local ICT and engineering institutions, the company said.

Mrs. Bectors Food unveils ₹540.5-crore IPO

MUMBAI
Mrs. Bectors Food Specialties Ltd. has announced an initial public offering (IPO) to raise up to ₹540.5 crore. The price band has been fixed between ₹286 and ₹288 per equity share. The IPO will comprise a fresh issue of ₹40.5 crore and an offer-for-sale aggregating up to ₹500 crore, which includes ₹245 crore by Linus Private Ltd., and ₹30.5 crore by GW Confectionary PTE. Ltd. The issue will open on December 15 and close on December 17, 2020.

Majority Tata group conduct 'prejudicial, oppressive' reiterates Mistry's counsel

SC hears appeals in case concerning restoration of Mistry as Tata Sons' chairman

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI
The decades-old relationship between the Tata group and minority shareholder Shapoorji Pallonji Group was based on trust, but the management of company affairs by the majority Tata Group was conducted in a manner 'prejudicial' and 'oppressive' to the members, including Cyrus Pallonji Mistry, who was removed as executive chairman, senior advocate C.A. Sundaram, for Cyrus Investments, told the Supreme Court on Thursday. In his counter arguments before a Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde, Mr. Sundaram referred to how the National

ADB narrows India's FY21 GDP contraction projection to 8%

Asian lending agency cites faster-than-expected recovery, sees inflation at 5.8%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Thursday upgraded its forecast for the Indian economy, projecting 8% contraction in 2020-21 as compared to 9% estimated earlier, on the back of a faster-than-expected recovery.

Observing that the economy had begun to normalise, the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) Supplement said the second quarter contraction at 7.5% was better-than-expected.

The economy contracted by 23.9% in the June quarter on account of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The GDP forecast... is upgraded from 9.0% contraction to 8.0%, with GDP in H2



Pricey platter: Supply chain disruptions took food inflation to an average of 9.1% in the first 7 months of 2020-21. ■ REUTERS

probably restored to its size a year earlier," the ADB said.

It retained its growth projection for the next fiscal at 8%.

Highlighting that India was recovering more rapidly than expected, the ADB said the earlier South Asia forecast was

upgraded to (-)6.1% in line with an improved projection for India.

South Asia to rebound

Growth will return in 2021-22, at 7.2% in South Asia, the Asian lender added.

Earlier this month, Re-

serve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das had said the economy was recuperating faster than anticipated and that the growth rate was likely to turn positive in the second half of the current financial year.

Inflation, the ADB said, was expected to ease in the coming months, and maintained the 4% projection for 2021-22.

Supply chain disruptions had taken food inflation to an average of 9.1% in the first 7 months of 2020-21, pushing headline inflation to 6.9% in the same period, the regional lender said.

As a result, the ADB raised India's inflation projection for the current fiscal to 5.8%, from 4.5%.

L&T arm wins \$100 mn deal from oil firm

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

L&T Technology Services Ltd. (LTTS), an engineering services firm, won a five-year engagement, with a potential value of more than \$100 million, from a global oil and gas major, said the company.

Under the engagement, LTTS would be the primary engineering partner for the client and support two of its integrated refining and chemical manufacturing facilities in the U.S. It would also provide multidiscipline plant engineering activities, including site sustenance, discipline engineering and control automation support.

Mahindra Vehicle Manufacturers (MVML), a wholly-owned subsidiary, in the last quarter of FY21.

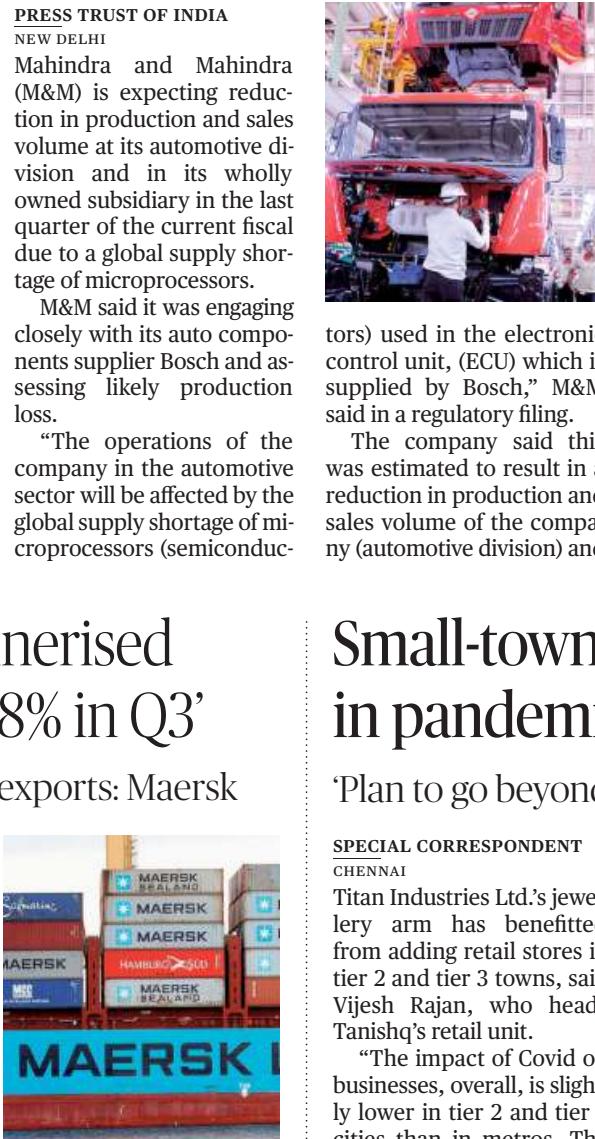
"The company is engaging closely with its auto components supplier Bosch and assessing likely production loss."

"The operations of the company in the automotive sector will be affected by the global supply shortage of microprocessors (semiconduc-

tors) used in the electronic control unit, (ECU) which is supplied by Bosch," MVML said in a regulatory filing.

The company said this was estimated to result in a reduction in production and sales volume of the company (automotive division) and

MVML for the last quarter is not ascertainable at this stage, the company added.



Plan to go beyond metros paying off'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

Titan Industries Ltd.'s jewellery arm has benefited from adding retail stores in tier 2 and tier 3 towns, said Vijesh Rajan, who heads Tanishq's retail unit.

"The impact of Covid on businesses, overall, is slightly lower in tier 2 and tier 3 cities than in metros. The strategy to expand our business in these cities, taken earlier, is paying off very well," Mr. Rajan told reporters.

He also said that despite the volatile swing in gold prices, consumers continued to invest in gold as it was a safe investment and this trend continued during the pandemic as well.

After inaugurating the 100th Tanishq store in the south and the tenth in the city, he said the company's plans to open more stores in the current year had been

tempered due to the pandemic.

"We will be opening 5-7 retail stores this year. The expansion is delayed a little bit. The expansion will be spread over 15 months, instead of the planned 12 months," he said.

Mr. Rajan said that the company was set to post 'good results' in the third quarter due to the festive season, but did not give an outlook for the fourth-quarter's sales.

Wipro buys automation firm PARI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Wipro Infrastructure Engineering's Industrial Automation Business signed an agreement to acquire Precision Automation and Robotics India (PARI), an industrial automation company based in Pune.

Earlier this year, Mr. Mistry had moved the Supreme Court in a cross-appeal, saying the NCLAT judgment did not secure the interests of Shapoorji Pallonji from prejudicial conduct in the future. The apex court by that time had already stayed the NCLAT verdict on the basis of the appeals filed by Tata Sons and its chairman emeritus, Ratan Tata.

The combined capabilities of Wipro Infrastructure Engineering and PARI would help broaden its offering and expand global footprint, Wipro said in a statement.

Indian Oil Corp. back at full capacity for first time since February

Runs all 9 plants at 100% in November



Nirmala Sitharaman

₹21,000 crore of dues paid to MSMEs: FM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

More than ₹21,000 crore of dues owed to micro, small and medium enterprises' (MSMEs) by Central government departments and public sector enterprises have been paid in the past seven months, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said after a review meeting on Thursday.

Under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package announced in May this year, the government had said that MSMEs' dues would be paid in 45 days. Ms. Sitharaman appreciated the work of Ministry of MSMEs, that led to the release of payments, through regular follow-ups with the concerned departments and public sector firms.

"The highest level of procurement from MSMEs was achieved in October of over ₹5,100 crore and payment of over ₹4,100 crore," the Finance Ministry said in a statement, adding this was expected to be surpassed in November which recorded ₹4,700 crore of procurement in the first ten days.

A report on the first seven months of the initiative suggested public procurement from MSMEs rose by almost 2.5 times since May while pendency of payments had reduced.

Local fuel demand – a proxy for oil consumption – in India has almost reached pre-COVID levels, IOC said. The company's fuel demand has been recovering from the lows seen in April with a gradual pick up in the industrial and economic activity after the lockdown was eased. Along with its subsidiary Chennai Petroleum Corp., IOC controls about a third of the 5 million barrels-per-day refining capacity in India, where fuel demand in October rose by 2.5%, its first year-on-year rise in eight months.

However, the company's diesel sales last month were 9% lower than the previous year, while jet fuel was down by about 45% as air travel restrictions continued.

Sales of diesel and jet fuel in November rose by 2% and 4% from October.

India's fuel refiner operated its plants at about 88% in October and at 99% in November last year, it said. "As we get closer to the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, the fundamentals of the economy being strong, we see a rapid V-shaped recovery in the overall consumption of petroleum products," said S.M. Vaidya, chairman of IOC.

'Revival at project sites'

"All our project sites too are witnessing a revival in terms of construction activities," he said.

IOC, also the country's largest fuel retailer, in November sold 1.06 million tonnes of gasoline, 4% higher than same month last year, and sales of cooking gas rose

Vihari and Kuldeep under the lens

Virat Kohli may miss Pink-Ball Test dress rehearsal commencing today

WARM-UP GAME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SYDNEY

Kuldeep Yadav and Hanuma Vihari will be under scrutiny by the India team management during the day-night First Class game against Australia-A from Friday. The warm-up game for the touring Indians will be the dress rehearsal for the Pink-Ball Test in Adelaide, starting on December 17.

The three-day game at the floodlit Sydney Cricket Ground will serve as simulation for the opening Test, but the flat batting track may not exactly be what the Indians need for preparation.

Grass cover

Adelaide Oval curator Damian Hough, according to Ian Chappell, will leave a 10mm grass cover on the strip.

The match, which will be streamed live, may not feature skipper Virat Kohli, who has hinted that he wants to go ahead with his own prep-



Time to deliver: Hanuma Vihari and Kuldeep Yadav will look to make the most of their chance. ■ FILE PHOTOS



aration routine.

It could also be a tactical move to ensure the Australians do not get a sneak peek at his long-format preparation.

Save Ajinkya Rahane and Cheteshwar Pujara in the first essay and Wriddhiman

Saha in the second innings, there wasn't much to write home about for India in the first game.

Also, the question of whether India can afford to go into the Test with five specialist bowlers will be addressed.

In case of a conservative approach, the four bowlers will be Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav and R. Ashwin. Vihari would then be expected to chip in with his part time off-breaks before the second new ball is taken.

Navdeep Saini was pretty disappointing in the ODIs, but India's fastest bowler could get a game looking ahead at the remaining matches of the series.

For Australia, Cameron Green will get another chance to impress.



Shami and Bumrah. ■ FILE PHOTO

games in absolutely no time is something that we all need to address and be wary of," Kohli said on Tuesday.

"You do not want guys starting the Test match feeling sore or feeling like their legs have had too many miles in them."

While veteran pacer Ishant Sharma has been ruled out of the Test series, starting in Adelaide on December 17, Bumrah, Shami and Saini have had a heavy workload in the IPL. Saini also has an injury scare, after complaining of a back spasm ahead of

the ODI series.

Kohli said that fitness more than skill would be the important factor ahead of the first Test and the team's focus is on ensuring the first-choice eleven are fully fit.

"We have a feeling our game is at a certain level but what is more important is that we are physically fresh. In a five-day game, we cannot afford a niggle or muscle strain. We want our key players to be physically fit. To start the series well, we need to have the fittest eleven on the park."

the ODI series.

Kohli said that fitness more than skill would be the important factor ahead of the first Test and the team's focus is on ensuring the first-choice eleven are fully fit.

"We have a feeling our game is at a certain level but what is more important is that we are physically fresh. In a five-day game, we cannot afford a niggle or muscle strain. We want our key players to be physically fit. To start the series well, we need to have the fittest eleven on the park."

But Italy's sporting icon almost missed out on the tournament.

He was caught up in a bribery scandal and banned for three years in 1980, but after continually protesting his innocence was cleared to play after two.

He exploded onto the stage of the 1982 tournament with a hat-trick in the 3-2 defeat of Brazil. In the semi-

Italian legend Rossi passes away

Rose from the depths of a bribery scandal to World Cup glory



Enduring image: Paolo Rossi, second from left, scores Italy's first goal in the 1982 World Cup final against West Germany. ■ AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESS
ROME

Paolo Rossi, a hero of Italian football who fired the Azzurri to victory in the 1982 World Cup, has died aged 64.

The cause of his death was not revealed but Italian media reported that Rossi had been suffering from "an incurable disease".

Tributes were paid to *Palibutto*, the star who was banned for three years for his part in a betting scandal, but returned to win the World Cup in Spain and the Ballon D'Or the same year.

Winning hearts

Rossi won the hearts of Italian fans during the summer of 1982, when his goals dragged Enzo Bearzot's *Azzurri* to a third World title. Italy started the tournament with three uninspiring draws before it came to life and marched to the title.

But Italy's sporting icon almost missed out on the tournament.

He was caught up in a bribery scandal and banned for three years in 1980, but after continually protesting his innocence was cleared to play after two.

He exploded onto the stage of the 1982 tournament with a hat-trick in the 3-2 defeat of Brazil. In the semi-

Rossi was my first hero: I.M. Vijayan

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
KOZHIKODE

There was no television at I.M. Vijayan's home in Thrissur in 1982. But, that didn't stop him from watching the World Cup in Spain that year; he would visit his neighbour Valsan's home, which boasted the only television set in the neighbourhood.

The goals Paolo Rossi scored in Italy's successful campaign at that World Cup are still fresh in Vijayan's memory. "It is the hat-trick he scored against Brazil (in the 3-2 victory) that first comes to the mind when I think of Rossi," the former India captain told *The Hindu*.

Rossi, who died on Thursday at the age of 64, was the first hero for Vijayan, widely regarded as one of the finest Indian footballers of all time. "He was the first great player I noticed; it was only later that I discovered the genius of Maradona," he said.

"Rossi wasn't quite in the class of the Argentine legend, whom we also lost recently, but he had great finishing skills, something every striker should possess."

Vijayan said he admired Rossi's ability to convert chances that came his way. "He had that knack to be at the right place to score goals, like Gary Lineker," he said. "Rossi was indeed an inspiration for me during my school days."

He was also a member of the Italy side that finished fourth in Argentina in 1978.

Along with Christian Vieri and Roberto Baggio, he holds the Italian record for nine goals scored in the World Cup.



BORN: Sept. 23, 1956 in Prato, Italy
48 Caps for Italy with 20 goals
With six goals, he won the Golden Boot for being the top scorer and was awarded the Golden Ball award for the best player. He also won the Ballon D'Or for his feats

■ Italy's joint all-time top goalscorer in the World Cup, alongside Roberto Baggio and Christian Vieri, with nine goals in 14 appearances

■ Won two league titles with Juventus as well as the European Cup in 1985

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13115

T	E	A	R	A	W	A	F	E	S	T	E	R
E	S	R	T		X	E	E					
M	E	S	Q	I	C	A	R	H				
P	E	B	A	I	A	R	H					
E	N	T	T	C	A	R	H					
R	S	R	A	Z	E	L	T	T	I	C	E	D
F	B	G										
O	E	U	V	R	E	S	S	O	D	A	C	H
O	M	E	T	H								
T	O	P	E	A	D	U	M	B	R	A	T	E
W	J	I	M	B	D	L	N	A				
Q	U	N	C	E	A	D	J	U	T	A		
R	I	T	N	E	S	A	E					
K	N	O	U	T	S	O	R	P	H	A	N	E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Power of Maya

Countless jivatmas pass through various countlessness births and it is astonishing to note that though beings are pushed towards the end by the powerful and irresistible Time, even as clouds are by the wind, they fail to understand their predicament. To reinforce this truth in a powerful manner the Lord in His incarnation as Kapila describes an extraordinary situation when the full-grown foetus in the mother's womb is shown to be fully aware of its plight ahead of its entry into the world, pointed out Sri R. Krishnamurthy Sastrigal in a discourse. It prays to God to halt its birth and grant moksha. It is a fervent prayer but the force of Maya that can draw a veil over this awareness is also indicated in this situation.

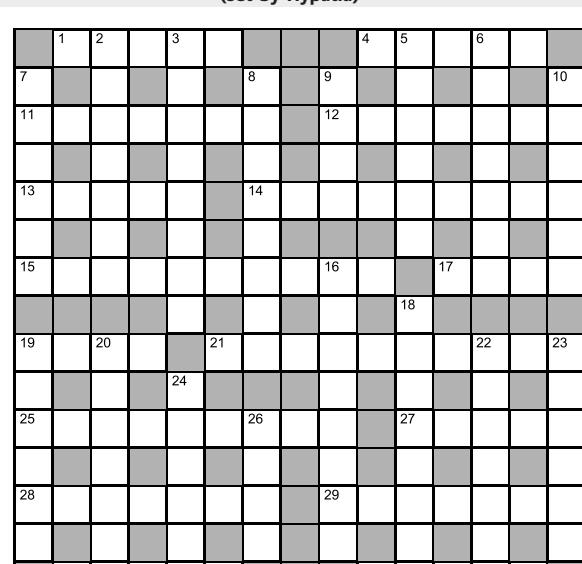
All this jnana is bound to disappear once it is born, as it would easily associate with the world of family, bondage and karma. Maybe it is an imaginary situation, but each one can vibrate with the anguish and desperate experience of the foetus.

Somewhat similar is the incident in the story of Chitraketu wherein crucial Vedanta truths are reinforced with a sense of practicality. Chitraketu is inconsolable when he loses his son whom he had gained with great penance and the grace of sage Narada. The sages Narada and Angiras console him and also make the dead son appear before him. The spiritual maturity in the words spoken by the son is astonishing. Who is the son and who is the father in this endless cycle of birth, he asks. All the souls are tossed into the world and come into contact or get separated as a matter of course. Should not one try to get out of this cycle by seeking the Lord's feet?

Incidentally, Chitraketu is born as Vritrasura and with the jnana gained intact in this birth he finally attains salvation.

CROSSWORD + 13116

(set by Hypatia)



Never go off the grid again.

We are digital now. Come solve online.

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

SCAN TO PLAY



17 Old medal covers instrument (4)

19 Agriculturist losing rights to celebrity (4)

21 Hear wet climate spoiling play (3,7)

</div

TV PICKS

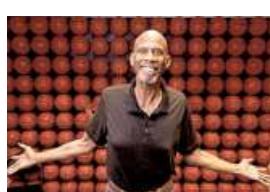
Australia A vs India: Sony Six (SD & HD), 9 a.m.
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Star Sports 3, 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Dad-to-be Williamson to miss second Test

WELLINGTON
New Zealand captain Kane Williamson is missing the second Test against the West Indies, starting on Friday, so that he can be with his wife who is expecting their first child. Williamson scored a career-best 251 in the first Test to steer New Zealand to an innings and 134 run-win. Opener Will Young, who made his debut in the first Test, will remain in the line-up and wicketkeeper B.J. Watling, who missed the first Test with injury, may return.



Abdul-Jabbar reveals he is cancer survivor

NEW YORK
The NBA's career scoring leader Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has revealed in an article for WebMD on health risks faced by Blacks that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2008. Abdul-Jabbar has provided no other details about the illness. In his article, titled 'Black Lives Matter', Abdul-Jabbar, now 73, writes that Blacks are at higher risk for heart problems and cancer, and said he also had heart bypass surgery. AP

World indoor athletics meet postponed again

PARIS
The World indoor athletics championships scheduled at Nanjing next year have been postponed until March 2023, World Athletics announced on Thursday. The event had already been moved from this year to March 19-21, 2021, because of the pandemic. The Nanjing event will now take place a year after the Belgrade 2022 World championships. AFP



ABU DHABI
Lewis Hamilton is back in training and set to return for Mercedes at this weekend's season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, but only if he is passed fit and returns negative tests for COVID-19. The seven-time World champion missed last week's Sakhir GP in Bahrain where his replacement and fellow-Briton George Russell finished ninth. Hamilton is expected to be given until Saturday morning to prove his fitness. AFP

Fitness initiative gets star backing

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
World badminton champion P.V. Sindhu, twice Olympic medal-winning wrestler Sushil Kumar, writer Chetan Bhagat and actor Anil Kapoor are among a host of celebrities to extend support to the newly-launched initiative 'Fitness ka Dose Aadha Ghanta Roz'.

Part of the nationwide Fit India Movement, the campaign has attracted among others, doctors, fitness influencers and several sportspersons of repute.

In a tweet, Sindhu stated, "Fitness is a huge part of my life and this is the chance for everyone to come together and unite for this great movement."

Among other sportspersons who took to social media to extend support were Apoorvi Chandela, Gagan Narang, Suresh Raina, Mithali Raj and Hima Das.

Benzema's double propels Real Madrid into last 16

Atletico and Atalanta also advance; Neymar tricks for PSG in suspended game

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Karim Benzema sent Real Madrid through to the last 16 of the Champions League on Wednesday alongside its rival Atletico, while Neymar scored a hat-trick as Paris Saint-Germain beat Istanbul Basaksehir in a match that had been delayed for 24 hours over a racism row.

Real needed to beat Borussia Monchengladbach to be sure of making it through the group stage of the Champions League for a 24th straight year and Benzema eased the pressure on coach Zinedine Zidane with two fine back-post headers in the first half to secure a 2-0 win.

It was a result that suited both teams, with a 0-0 draw between Inter Milan and Shakhtar Donetsk allowing Real to top Group B and Gladbach, former European Cup runner-up, to go through as runner-up.

Atletico needed to beat Red Bull Salzburg to qualify as runner-up in Group A behind Bayern Munich, and it did so with Mario Hermoso and Yannick Carrasco scoring in a 2-0 victory.

Unbeaten Bayern
Reigning champion Bayern completed the group stage unbeaten with a 2-0 win over Lokomotiv Moscow.

The other team to clinch qualification on Wednesday was Atalanta, whose 1-0 win away to Ajax, thanks to Luis Muriel, secured second place

in Group D behind Liverpool.

PSG had wrapped up its qualification for the last 16 on Tuesday thanks to Manchester United's defeat at RB Leipzig, despite its own game being suspended after an unprecedented walkout over a racist remark.

With a new set of officials, the game restarted in the 14th minute on Wednesday and an irresistible Neymar scored a hat-trick while also winning a penalty converted by Kylian Mbappe.

The draw for the last 16 is on Monday.

The qualifiers: Group winners:

Bayern Munich, Real Madrid, Manchester City, Liverpool, Chelsea, Borussia Dortmund, Juventus, and Paris Saint-Germain.

Runners-up: Atletico Madrid, Borussia Monchengladbach, FC Porto, Atalanta, Sevilla, Lazio, Barcelona, and RB Leipzig.

The results:

Group A: Bayern Munich 2 (Sule 63, Choupo-Moting 80) bt Lokomotiv Moscow 0; Salzburg 0 lost to Atletico Madrid 2 (Hermoso 39, Carrasco 86).

Group B: Inter Milan 0 drew with Shakhtar Donetsk 0; Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 9, 32) bt Borussia Monchengladbach 0.

Group C: Olympiakos 0 lost to Porto 2 (Otavio 10-pen, Uribe 77); Manchester City 3 (Torres 48, Aguero 77, Sterling 90) bt Marseille 0.

Group D: Ajax 0 lost to Atalanta 1 (Muriel 85); Midtjylland 1 (Scholz 62-pen) drew with Liverpool 1 (Salah 1).

Group H: Paris Saint-Germain 5 (Neymar 21, 38, 50, Mbappe 42-pen, 62) bt Istanbul Basaksehir 1 (Topal 57).



Saviour: Karim Benzema produced two fine back-post headers in the first half to help Real Madrid progress to the next stage. ■ REUTERS

East Bengal manages to earn its first point

Holds Jamshedpur to a goalless draw after losing a player early

ISL 2020-21

SPORTS BUREAU

A 10-man SC East Bengal

secured its first point in this edition of the Indian Super League when it held Jamshedpur FC (JFC) to a goalless draw at the Tilak Maidan in Vasco on Thursday.

Two red cards and a host of bookings highlighted the action which failed to rise above mediocrity.

East Bengal was put on the back-foot early on when Eugeneson Lyngdoh received marching orders after collecting his second yellow card in the 25th minute.

Harsh decision

The decision seemed to be a bit harsh as the player had accidentally touched Jamshedpur's Brazilian midfi-

ler Alexandre De Lima while going for a clearance.

Jamshedpur defender Lalindiana Renthlei met with a similar fate in injury time.

Jamshedpur dominated

the action and made a few

good effective inroads but success eluded it in the strik-

ing zone.

The first chance came its way in the sixth minute when a nice through-pass from William Lalunfela released Aniket Jadhav unmarked inside the East Bengal box. But the latter's shoddy finish saw the ball

sail over.

Still barren

East Bengal put up a better show as compared to its previous three matches but the search for a good striker continues as the Kolkata team stayed at the bottom after finishing its fourth outing without a goal.

The result: SC East Bengal 0 drew with Jamshedpur FC 0.

Off you go! East Bengal's Eugeneson gets the marching orders after collecting his second yellow card. ■ SPORTZPICS/ISL

der Alexandre De Lima while going for a clearance.

Jamshedpur defender Lalindiana Renthlei met with a similar fate in injury time.

Jamshedpur dominated the action and made a few good effective inroads but success eluded it in the striking zone.

The first chance came its way in the sixth minute when a nice through-pass from William Lalunfela released Aniket Jadhav unmarked inside the East Bengal box. But the latter's shoddy finish saw the ball sail over.

Still barren

East Bengal put up a better show as compared to its previous three matches but the search for a good striker continues as the Kolkata team stayed at the bottom after finishing its fourth outing without a goal.

The result: SC East Bengal 0 drew with Jamshedpur FC 0.

FRIDAY'S MATCH

ATKMB Hyderabad FC

7.30 P.M.

STAR SPORTS 2 (SD & HD), 3

Satyasagara's focus on strong defence

CCFC's new head coach wants team to be clinical upfront

I-LEAGUE

K. KEERTHIVASAN
CHENNAI



Satyasagara.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

waz] in 2018-19. We are keeping the core players from Tamil Nadu from last season such as Charles [Anandraj], Sriram, Vijay Thomas and Vijay Nagappan and goalkeeper Kabir Thauqiq will be our first choice," he said.

Pre-season

The 56-year-old Singaporean said the pre-season camp, that had started at Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research in the city, will end on December 25. "We are leaving for Kolkata for the I-League on the 26th," said the head coach.

"They will be good in set pieces too and I am looking at that. We also have Iqbal Hussain (winger/striker) who played for the Singapore National team."

CCFC owner Rohit Ramesh said: "He [Satyasagara] has been with us for two years now. He knows the culture and the pedigree of our club keeping in mind to promote our local talent. We wish him the best."



INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

WE STOOD UP FOR INDIA
LOST 700 DOCTORS
TO COVID.

YOUR TURN NOW
TO SAVE MODERN MEDICINE
FROM MIXOPATHY.
INDIA SAYS

NO TO
MIXOPATHY

EQUAL CARE FOR EVERY INDIAN

Dr Rajan Sharma
National President, IMA

Dr Ketan Desai
Past President, WMA

Dr R. V. Asokan
Hon. Secretary General, IMA

Chetan, Utsav and Vaibhav notch up tons

Vaibhav Rawal's unbeaten 126 for Om Sai Delhi Challengers proved in vain after Chetan Bisht (113) and Utsav Madaan (103 n.o.) added 198 runs and took Hari Singh Academy to a five-wicket win in the pre-quarterfinals of the 30th All India Sperry Om Nath Sood memorial cricket tournament.

The scores: Om Sai Delhi Challengers Academy 276/6 in 40 overs (Vaibhav Rawal 126 n.o., Ayush Jamwal 51, Amit Nagar 31 n.o., Shivank Vashisht 3/43) lost to Hari Singh Academy 279/5 in 39.1 overs (Chetan Bisht 113, Utsav Madaan 103 n.o., Rahul Yadav 33).

Yash hits unbeaten 146 as BBA makes final

Delhi under-19 captain Yash Dhull (146 n.o.) and Anuj Rawat (58 n.o.) scripted Bal Bhawan Academy's resounding nine-wicket win over Haryana Academy in the semifinal of the Eventeurers Cup cricket tournament.

The scores: Haryana Academy 267 in 49.5 overs (Rajat Paliwal 91, Ravi Chauhan 40, Akhil Kohar 31, Deepak Punia 4/26) lost to Bal Bhawan Academy 268/1 in 38.2 overs (Yash Dhull 146 n.o., Anuj Rawat 58 n.o., Arpit Rana 58).

Exciting win for Udaybhan Academy

Rishabh Rana (4/38), Amanpreet Singh (64) and Mridul Surroch (58) contributed to Udaybhan Academy's exciting one-

plus performance.

Parthiv joins Mumbai Indians as talent scout

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI**

A day after he retired from all forms of cricket, Parthiv Patel was unveiled as a Talent Scout for Mumbai Indians.

The former India wicket-keeper-batsman was part of

two of MI's five IPL titles during his three-year stint with the franchise from 2015 to 2017. He thus joins a high-profile battery of talent scouts for the franchise, who have unearthed exceptional talent in Indian domestic cricket.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those momentous three years with the champion side remain etched in my memory.

"It's time now to turn a new chapter in my life," Parthiv said.

"I had enjoyed my cricket playing for Mumbai Indians, those moment