



SC quashes admission
of students under test
conducted by NLSIU
page 8



India, China begin
6th round of talks
to end LAC stand-off
page 10



Modi-Mahinda virtual
summit to be held
on September 26
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Smith's Royals meet
Dhoni's Super Kings
in Sharjah today
page 13

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NEARBY



Virus cases fall below 3K in Delhi as testing drops

NEW DELHI

As many as 2,548 new COVID-19 cases were reported in the Capital in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 2,49,259, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government. The number of tests, as per Monday's bulletin, was 42% less than the average of the last three days.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3

Gurugram schools reopen with few students

GURUGRAM

Schools in Gurugram opened to a lukewarm response from the students on Monday. The poor turnout was in sharp contrast to a survey by the Haryana Education Department claiming that 84% and 73% parents were willing to send their wards to government and private schools respectively.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

Unchecked digital media a threat, Centre tells SC

NEW DELHI

An unchecked digital media is capable of spreading "venomous hatred, terror and violence", the Centre told the Supreme Court on Monday. It can tarnish reputations of institutions and individuals. In fact, the digital media has already done all of this, the government told the court.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 10

8 Opposition MPs suspended from RS for 'unruly behaviour'

Venkaiah rejects motion of no-confidence against Deputy Chairman Harivansh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Monday suspended eight Opposition MPs for their "unruly" behaviour with Deputy Chairman Harivansh on Sunday during the debate and voting on two farm sector Bills.

Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu also rejected the Opposition's no-confidence motion against the Deputy Chairman, saying the notice was not in proper format.

However, the suspended MPs refused to leave the House and the day's proceedings saw repeated disruptions and adjournments.

After four adjournments, Vice-Chairman Bhubaneswar Kalita adjourned the House till 9 a.m. on Tuesday.

Speaking on the events of Sunday after the completion of Zero Hour and special mentions, Mr. Naidu said the incidents were unfortunate and the image of Parliament had been "tarnished".

Mr. Naidu also rejected the Opposition's notice of no-confidence against Mr. Harivansh for not allowing a division of votes.

Stating that he had received a letter from Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad and 46 other MPs, Mr. Naidu said the no-confidence notice was not in the proper format, and the 14-day notice period was not followed as the session is set to end on October 1.



Night vigil: Suspended MPs protesting on the Parliament premises in New Delhi on Monday night. ▶ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

nate, unacceptable and condemnable," Mr. Naidu said, adding that the members had also violated COVID-19-related protocols.

He said the Deputy Chairman would have called for voting, which was the demand of the protesting MPs, had the House been in order.

Mr. Naidu also rejected the Opposition's notice of no-confidence against Mr. Harivansh for not allowing a division of votes.

Moved a motion for the suspension of eight MPs – Derek O'Brien and Dola Sen of the Trinamool Congress; Sanjay Singh of the Aam Aadmi Party, Congress's Rajeev Satav, Syed Nazir Hussain and Ripun Bora; and K.K. Raghav and Elamaram Kareem of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) – which was passed by voice vote.

Later, addressing a press conference to put forth the government's view on the developments in the Rajya Sabha, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the suspended MPs had violated Rule 256 of the general rules of procedure by not leaving the House after being suspended.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

A POINT OF ORDER ▶ EDIT

The government then

MPs launch indefinite sit-in

The eight Opposition Rajya Sabha members suspended on Monday began an indefinite sit-in within Parliament, even as 15 non-NDA parties appealed to President Ram Nath Kovind not to give assent to the two farm Bills passed in the Upper House on Sunday. The Opposition leaders will be marching to the President's House on Tuesday. ▶ PAGE 9

Need of 21st century: Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Monday that the farm sector reform Bills passed by Parliament were the need of 21st century India. He said that the minimum support price mechanism would continue. Attacking critics of the Bill, he said, "Some people are protesting against these reform Bills because control of farmers has slipped away from their hands." ▶ PAGE 9

Govt. unveils 2.6% hike in wheat MSP amid protests

Prices out so early in season for the first time in a decade

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

In the earliest announcement of minimum support prices in at least a decade, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar told the Lok Sabha that the Cabinet had approved MSP hikes for six crops, including a 2.6% increase in the rate for wheat. Last year, MSP for wheat had seen a 4.6% increase.



Last year, MSP for wheat had seen a 4.6% increase.

out of MSP and public procurement.

The MSP is the rate at which the government purchases crops from farmers, and is based on a calculation of at least one and a half

times the cost of production incurred by farmers.

Five other crops

The MSP for wheat will be increased by 2.6% or ₹50 per quintal to ₹1,975 per quintal for the upcoming rabi or winter crop season, according to the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Monday. The MSP rates were also hiked for five other winter crops – barley, gram, masur dal, safflower, and rapeseed and mustard.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Building collapse kills 13 in Bhiwandi

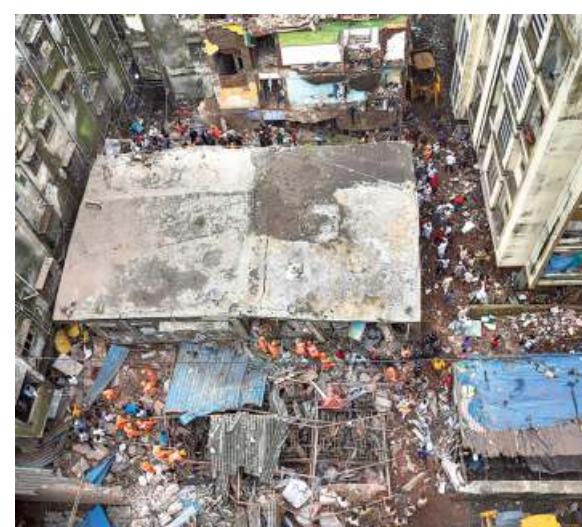
STAFF REPORTER

MUMBAI

Thirteen persons, including seven minors, died after a portion of a three-storey building in Bhiwandi, near Mumbai, collapsed in the early hours of Monday.

Many occupants were trapped in the debris, a Thane Municipal Corporation official said. Twenty people were rescued.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8



NDRF and fire brigade personnel carry out rescue operation at the building collapse site in Bhiwandi on Monday. ▶ PTI

‘Our final motive was to trigger violent riots’

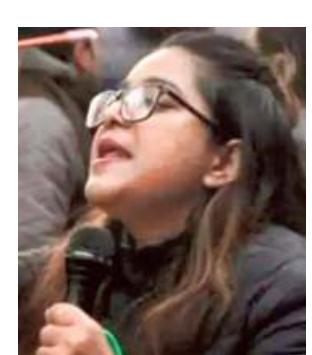
Delhi police chargesheet claims JCC was riots conspirator, Safoora ‘refuses to sign’

HEMANI BHANDARI

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell in its chargesheet number 59 against Jamia Millia Islamia student Safoora Zargar has claimed that the Jamia Coordination Committee (JCC), of which she was the media coordinator, was involved in a larger conspiracy to trigger "violent riots, give anti-CAA protests a secular colour and portray it as a students' movement". Ms. Zargar's 'Disclosure Statements' submitted in the court, however, has "refused to sign" written across all pages.

In the alleged statement, it is written that Ms. Zargar was a part of several protests, including the one at Jamia against fee hike. It is also stated that she was not a part of the protest which broke out on December 15 last year, but



Safoora Zargar

arrested in April on conspiracy charges over the northeast Delhi riots. Later, she was charged under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. She is currently out on bail.

'Riots plan'

"It was decided to mask the real conspirators & communal conspiracy and to give anti-CAA protest a Secular colour & to portray it as a Student Movement also involving women... We knew that due to inconvenience caused by Chakka Jams at different sites trouble would be caused to Hindu communities living in those areas who will definitely protest against it and it will, finally result in violent riots between Hindus and Muslims which was our final motive (sic)," Ms. Zargar was quoted as saying in the statement that she refused to

started an indefinite protest. The document allegedly quotes Ms. Zargar as saying that a WhatsApp group was formed, deleted and again created because of "unwanted infiltration" and social media accounts on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook were also created. Ms. Zargar was three months pregnant when she was

MORE REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 2

No question of material in sealed cover in my court

HC judge bats for open submissions

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

Justice Gautam Patel of the Bombay High Court refused to accept any document in a sealed envelope saying, "At least in my court there is no question – and there will never be a question – of anything being done in a sealed cover."

The High Court was hearing a bunch of 63 commercial arbitration petitions through videoconferencing on September 18. All petitioners claimed that Anugrah Stock And Broking Private Limited caused them extensive financial loss through unauthorised trades.

The petitioner, advocate Amit Sahni, said though the reason for the petition – the blockage of the main road by Shaheen Bagh protesters – has become infructuous, the court should pass specific orders that "in future, protests should not hinder public movement and causing traffic snarls. The protesters were later removed by the police on March 24 with the outbreak of the pandemic and the resultant lockdown.

The protesters had at the time written to Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde against the "forceful and vindictive

Patel said, "Anything that I can see, all parties before me are entitled to see. This is the only method that I know of to ensure an open and transparent decision-making process. Those details will, therefore, need to be set on affidavit. I am also making it clear that it is not possible for any party to unilaterally decide to put material in a sealed cover."

He went on to say, "Mr. Cama expresses an apprehension that this material will find its way into the press. That is not my concern. The fourth estate will do its job and I will do mine. I decide matters before me on the basis of the papers filed in court, not newspapers... I cannot and will not curtail the rights of the free press at the instance of this or that party. There will be no gag orders here."

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LIC/PRA/2021/08/ENG

'Damning confessions' in FIR no. 59 on riots conspiracy

Instigated youth who then killed man'

In his alleged confession, Tahir Hussain says he used funds from his firms for riots

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

In the chargesheet submitted by Delhi Police Special Cell in FIR Number 59 under sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, suspended Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillor Tahir Hussain's alleged confession statement details how he collected bottles, acid and petrol, and allowed his house to be used during the February riots in north-east Delhi.

In the alleged confession, Mr. Hussain claimed he met Kapil Mishra in 2015 when the latter was with AAP and also met activist "Khalid Saifi in AAP office".

Mr. Hussain claimed Mr. Saifi "had a good hold in AAP" due to which he had asked the activist to get him an MLA ticket but he could not get it. In 2017, Mr. Hussain got the councillor ticket and won from Nehru Vihar.

"Saifi told me now that you have both money and power... we will use it against Hindus and for our community," the police quoted Mr. Hussain in the documents.



Tahir Hussain

which will shake the government... I started collecting empty glass bottles from rag pickers, started getting stones from nearby construction sites on the pretext of cleanliness... I asked rag pickers to bring acid on the pretext of cleaning the terrace," Mr. Hussain is quoted as saying.

The former AAP leader allegedly stated that he called several people on February 24 and let them inside the house through a small shutter on the ground floor. Later in the night, Mr. Hussain hid in one Ilyas Hakim's house and sent his wife and kids to his father's house, he is quoted as saying.

On February 25, Mr. Hussain claimed he collected several Muslim youth and instigated them. "They caught hold of a Hindu man and attacked him with sticks, rods and knives on my orders and then asked them to dump his body in a drain," he is quoted as saying.

In the document, Mr. Hussain is quoted as saying that he used ₹1.5 crore from his

companies for the riots.

"So this money cannot be traced, I managed the entries and transactions in the accounts and collected cash," the document quoted Mr. Hussain.

Mr. Hussain's statement also mentions a meeting at Al-Hind Nursing Home in the presence of owner M.A. Anwar regarding instigating Muslims against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Inadmissible evidence'

"Any statement attributed to Mr. Saifi by the police is inadmissible evidence. It can neither be used by the prosecution to enhance its case nor can it be used to prove the culpability of Mr. Saifi. By and large confessional statements are recorded by the police to suit their case. This is no different unless there is any independent evidence to corroborate any of the averments made in the confessional statement. The same is without any value or merit," said senior advocate Rebecca John, who has appeared for Mr. Saifi.

'Was tasked with getting arms'

I got money from PFI, says Khalid Saifi in his 'statement'

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

In the alleged disclosure statement of United Against Hate member Khalid Saifi, it is claimed that he had met controversial Indian Islamic preacher Zakir Naik in 2019 during his visits to "propagate Muslim religion".

"I had visited Malaysia, Turkey, Singapore etc. to propagate Muslim religion in 2019. In Malaysia, I had met Zakir Naik, who is banned in India," he is quoted as saying.

Facebook page

Mr. Saifi, in the statement, is claimed to have said that he started an NGO with a friend by the name of New Education Welfare Society for which an account in a private bank is running and that he withdrew ₹1 lakh in the beginning of February for protests. "Some funds were given to me by the Popular Front of India about which I've already told you," he is quoted.

The document claimed



Khalid Saifi

the members who delivered provocative speeches during the protests.

The alleged disclosure claimed that Mr. Saifi was tasked to arrange for arms and ammunition.

"For this (arms) purpose and to give some money to Tahir bhai (Tahir Hussain), I was given money by PFI's Danish at their office in Shaheen Bagh," he was quoted as saying adding that "Tahir bhai" was tasked to arrange for weapons and investigate the riots and his house was chosen because people from both communities reside around it.

Mr. Saifi is quoted as saying that the weapon recovered from one Aftab - who was arrested along with him and Ishrat Jahan - was provided by Mr. Saifi and that he had bought the country-made pistol from Meerut for ₹5,000.

"I had also bought five country-made pistols for ₹25,000 which I had taken from Ishrat Jahan".

Prof. Apoorvanand tutored students, 'discloses' Narwal

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

In the alleged five-page disclosure statement of Pinjra Tod member Natasha Narwal it is stated that Delhi University Professor Apoorvanand called a few students to his residence and allegedly tutored them on what to say in case they were arrested.

On the last page of the statement is written 'accused refused to sign'.

"On 5/6 April, 2020, I and Devangana visited house of Prof. Apoorvanand at DU.. Danish, Suhail, Shahdab and Gulfishar also came. The prof. told them they have done a great job and in case of arrest they do not have to disclose his name or any other member involved in planning. He also briefed all on what to say in case of arrest and said we all have to say the same story regarding our role in protests, which led to rights," the document quoted her.

The document also quoted Ms. Narwal as saying that the prof. had informed them in mid-January that JCC members were planning riots in the "garb of protests and while the face of the protests should be peaceful, the ulterior motive should be riots". First step will be anti-CAA stir, second road block and third riots, Ms. Narwal is claimed to have said in a statement she refused to sign.

IN BRIEF

Amend dates of entrance exams: JNUSU

Traffic advisory issued for Ashram Chowk

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Traffic Police on Monday issued an advisory regarding traffic at Ashram Chowk due to the ongoing construction of an underpass and emergency repair work at the Sarai Kale Khan flyover, officials said. The underpass is likely to be completed by April-May 2021 which will help in mitigating the current traffic congestion.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Jawaharlal Nehru Union Students' union wrote to the National Testing Agency (NTA) director over dates for the conduct of the JNU entrance examination saying that the dates clash with the UGC NET exams.

The JNUSU said that the clash of dates would make it impossible for students to take both the examinations.

The NTA has announced that the computer-based examination will be conducted between October 5 and 8 at various centres across the country.

The JNUSU also added that the dates have been announced just 15 days prior to the actual test. "While the pandemic rages on and spreads and the transportation facilities are uncertain, this period is insufficient for

students to plan their travel. Also, opportunity must be granted to students to change their centres before announcement of the schedule," the students said. They added that final semesters of many universities are happening on these dates.

The JNUSU requested that students be given an advance notice so that they have sufficient time to prepare.

He was produced before Metropolitan Magistrate Pawan Singh Rajawat and the investigators said his further custodial interrogation was necessary since he has to be confronted with two of his associates: a Chinese woman and a Nepalese man, whose police custody was also extended till September 28.

The police submitted that they have written to the Ministry of Defence to ascertain the custodian of the classified documents that were allegedly recovered from Mr. Sharma, and they have to confront him with digital documents recovered from

Court extends scribe's custody in espionage case

Press Club of India attacks police track record, condemns high-handed action

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday extended by seven days the custodial interrogation of freelance journalist Rajeev Sharma, arrested in an espionage case under the Official Secrets Act.

He was produced before Metropolitan Magistrate Pawan Singh Rajawat and the investigators said his further custodial interrogation was necessary since he has to be confronted with two of his associates: a Chinese woman and a Nepalese man, whose police custody was also extended till September 28.

The police submitted that they have written to the Ministry of Defence to ascertain the custodian of the classified documents that were allegedly recovered from Mr. Sharma, and they have to confront him with digital documents recovered from



Rajeev Sharma •

his devices. A reply is awaited from the Ministry, added the police.

Senior advocate Adish Agarwala, who is representing the journalist, said Delhi Police was engaging in delay tactics. As per the police, they recovered the documents on September 14 and during six days of custody they could have approached the Defence Ministry, but the police deliberately delayed it, said the lawyer.

The bail application will be heard on September 28.

Meanwhile, Press Club of India (PCI) president Anand K. Sahay said: "We are astounded to hear of the arrest of Mr. Sharma, a well-known independent journalist of long standing and a member of the PCI. This is on account of the dubious track record of the Special Branch. More generally also, the record of Delhi Police is hardly a shining one".

"On the basis of the statement of the police released to the media, we have no hesitation in saying that the police action is high-handed and may be inspired by obscure or questionable considerations," he added.

'Preposterous arrests'

"Of late, Delhi Police, including Special Branch, has made preposterous arrests under the lawless law called Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, in which the word of the

government is enough to keep an innocent person behind bars for long periods. These have happened in matters relating to anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests and the carefully designed communal killings in the so-called February 2020 riots in north-east Delhi," the PCI stated.

Mr. Sharma's arrest also appears mind-boggling as he wrote on strategic affairs and may well have accessed routinely over-classified information on the Internet that is in the public domain, said the organisation.

Mr. Sahay also talked about the wrongful arrests in 2002 of Ifikhar Gilani, a senior journalist with Kashmir Times; and a Delhi journalist who wrote for Iran's official news agency. Both journalists were subsequently released after the cases turned out to be bogus, the PCI stated.

DU council opposes withholding of funds

Issues related to online exams discussed

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Various matters dealing with funding to colleges, online examinations, admissions and ad hoc teachers among others were raised at an Executive Council meeting of Delhi University held on Monday.

EC members said that they strongly opposed the withholding of funds by the Delhi government, pointing out that the irregular release of funds for the last one year had halted developmental work.

According to EC member Rajesh Jha, the university administration reported that it had sought time with the L-G, CM and the Deputy CM but it had not gotten an appointment with any of them.

HC to hear teachers' plea over salary on Thursday

NEW DELHI

The High Court on Monday posted for September 24, the hearing on a plea by Delhi University teachers seeking direction to the colleges, affiliated to the varsity and funded by the Delhi government, to release their salaries.

In response to this, the Delhi government said that the V-C had not sought any meeting with the CM or Dy. CM and added that despite repeated letters to him to discuss the issue, the V-C did not meet Mr. Sisodia or respond to the letters. It added that if the V-C is willing, he is welcome to discuss the issue in the next two to three days.

Man held for targeting, duping upcoming models

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 37-year-old man was arrested for allegedly creating fake profiles on social media and targeting upcoming models by deceiving them on the pretext of giving them lead roles in web series. He used to collect their objectionable photographs, the police said on Monday.

The accused has been identified as Mam Chand, a resident of Sultanpur. A 17-year-old girl lodged a complaint alleging that she was contacted by one Rashi Goel on social media. Goel introduced herself as a model, the police said.

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL RIDGE ROAD, DHAWLA KUAN, NEW DELHI-10

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from leading firms with professional expertise for providing security services to Army Public School, Dhaula Kuan. Those with experience in providing services in public schools and having registration No, EPF Code, ESI Code, GST Code etc may contact school office between 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on any working day for collection of tender forms costing Rs 500/- Last date for submission of tender from is 28.09.2020.

Principal

Expression of Interest for designing and providing UPI QR enable solution for Chandigarh Transport Undertaking/Chandigarh City Bus Service Society (CCBSS)

Ref. No.CCI/CTU/2020/9830
Dated: 18.09.2020

Chandigarh Transport Undertaking invites Expression of Interest from the Banks/Companies to work upon designing and providing UPI QR enabled solution for Chandigarh Transport Undertaking/Chandigarh City Bus Service Society (CCBSS) i.e. long route, tri-city & sub urban buses. The interested parties may send their proposals along with their credentials in the field of implementation of said system in India/abroad. The proposals should reach to the office of Divisional Manager, CTU & Director Transport, UT, Chandigarh, Plot No. 701, Industrial Area, Phase-1, Chandigarh on or before 25th September, 2020 up to 5.00 pm physically or through email at ctu-chd@nic.in. The detailed terms and conditions of the Expression of Interest can be seen on the website of this Undertaking i.e. http://chandigarh.gov.in & http://chdctu.gov.in.

General Manager,
Director Transport
U.T. Chandigarh

S. No.	Tender Description	Earlier Published Date & Time	Date & Time after Amendment
1.	Last Date/Time for Download the Bid Documents	21.09.2020 at 11:00AM	28.09.2020 at 5:00PM
2.	Last Date/Time for receipt of bid through e-Procurement	21.09.2020 at 11:00AM	28.09.2020 at 5:00PM
3.	Submission of required documents in Hard Copy	22.09.2020 at 1:00PM	29.09.2020 at 1:00PM
4.	Tender Opening(Technical Bid)	22.09.2020 at 3:00PM	29.09.2020 at 3:00PM

The Corrigendum regarding this has already been uploaded on website: http://www.uktenders.gov.in. Other term & conditions will remain same.
DIPR/UK/13190

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Timings

DELHI

TUESDAY, SEP. 22	
RISE 06:10	SET 18:18
RISE 11:19	SET 22:08
WEDNESDAY, SEP. 23	
RISE 06:10	SET 18:16
RISE 12:24	SET 22:59
THURSDAY, SEP. 24	
RISE 06:11	SET 18:15
RISE 13:26	SET 23:54

Delhi Weather

max min

Delhi City 37 27

Safdarjung 37 27

Palam 37 27

Delhi Pilm Today

36°C Short spells of rain and

thunderstorm with gusty winds

would affect some places with

partly cloudy to cloudy sky.

Delhi Pilm Tomorrow

34°C Few spell of light rain or

thunderstorm may occur at

some places with cloudy sky

and gusty winds.

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IN BRIEF

BJP blames govt. for rising COVID-19 cases

NEW DELHI

The BJP Opposition on Monday attacked the Delhi government over the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in the Capital, accusing it of "negligence". Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta said the data regarding the number of hospital beds, including those equipped with ventilators, were not being updated properly on the government-operated "Corona App".

Virus cases fall below 3K as tests drop by 42%

DMs working with NCDC officials to replan containment zones

NIKHIL M BABU
NEW DELHI

As many as 2,548 new COVID-19 cases were reported in Delhi in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 2,49,259, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Monday.

The total number of daily tests done as per Monday's bulletin was less than the average of the last three days by 42%. This trend is seen on most Mondays as data represents the tests done on Sunday.

Also, 32 more deaths were reported with the death toll touching 5,014. Of the total cases, 2,13,304 people have recovered and there are 30,941 active cases.

Map of centres

The Delhi government will put up maps with locations of COVID-19 testing centres at prominent locations in the city, including metro stations, according to officials. This follows an HC order.

"The map has been prepared by GSDL (Geospatial Delhi Limited) and will be given for printing. It will be put up at different places, including metro stations, and online within the next three-four days," a Delhi govern-



Rapid antigen test in progress at a dispensary in Seemapuri on Monday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

ment official told *The Hindu*. GSDL, a Delhi government company, has also submitted a soft copy of the map to the government for verification. The hard copy of the map at this point does not have phone numbers of these centres, but might be available when it is online, officials said.

Containment zones

Also, teams under the District Magistrates (DM) are working with the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to replan containment zones in the city following Lt. Governor Anil Baijal's directions.

"The idea is that the containment zones should be planned in such a way that most of the active cases will be in the zones. The govern-

ment will come out with the new plan in the next couple of days," a senior official said. Currently, only less than 20% of the active cases are from the containment zones.

The official also said that the Delhi government will conduct a meeting with an expert committee under V.K. Paul (member NITI Aayog) to formulate a plan to increase the number of RT PCR tests following last week's High Court order. RT PCR tests are more accurate than rapid antigen tests, but Delhi government currently depend heavily on the latter.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Satyendar Jain said that around 30% people admitted at hospitals for COVID-19 treatment are from outside the city.

LoP seeks permission for staging Ramlilas

Union Minister responded positively to request, assured quick decision: Bidhuri

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, on Monday handed over a memorandum to Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G. Kishan Reddy, seeking permission for staging Ramlilas with all safety norms in the Capital.

'Reconsider suspension of MLALAD fund'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

BJP MLA Vijender Gupta on Monday wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asking him to reconsider the suspension of the release of funds under the MLA Local Area Development (LAD) head due to the pandemic.

A total of ₹700 crore is released by the Delhi government annually and ₹10 crore per legislator is granted towards maintenance of parks, street lights, community centres, drainage systems among other such services.

"Not even a single proposal has been accepted since the constitution of the 7th Delhi Legislative Assembly in February 2020. There was no clarity on how long the work will remain stopped," Mr. Gupta wrote.

"The government should at least ask the department concerned to accept the development proposals under the MLALAD scheme so that a decision could be taken on the release of funds as soon as possible and delay in execution of these proposals is minimised," the MLA also wrote.

IN BRIEF

Over 1,000 properties to be de-sealed

NEW DELHI

Nearly 1,356 properties in north Delhi are liable to be de-sealed following the latest directions of the Supreme Court, said officials on Monday. North Delhi Mayor said that officials had been directed to expedite the process.

DPCC shuts down 30 illegal vehicle scrapping units in outer Delhi

Fumes while dismantling vehicles were causing pollution



The vehicles from illegal scrapping units were causing pollution. ■ FILE PHOTO

not have any waste water treatment facility and did not dispose of the oil properly.

Also, they were not operating in an industrial area and will not be allowed to open again," the official said

"The processes of dismantling and scrapping of End of Life Vehicles [ELVs] often in an unscientific man-

ner generate toxic fumes, chemicals which affect air quality. Last year, a large number of operators engaged in such activities were removed from Mayapuri and the problem in that area was largely contained," the DPCC said in a statement.

The DPCC on receiving reports that such illegal units were operating in a cluster in Nangli Sakrawati, carried out a survey and identified 18 such units and shut them.

"Penalties were also levied on the illegal operators. On receiving information, further survey was carried out in outline areas of Delhi as Nilothi, Mundka, Mangolpuri, Mukundpur, Gheva, Tikri Kalan and ten more units were found operating in such illegal activities.

Sisodia launches data analysis programme for govt. officials

It will run for a week for 25 officers

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday virtually inaugurated the Advanced Data Analysis Capacity Development Programme for government officials.

"We have plenty of data, but the important thing is to understand it. Its method of analysis, maintenance, and processing should be such that it helps us to meet future needs," he said, adding that the Planning Department should be equipped with every kind of data which different departments, Ministers

and officers may need in the future."

If we can identify how many one-year-old children we currently have in Delhi then only we will be able to estimate the total number of classrooms required to accommodate those children in the first grade after six years. If we estimate how many children are there in the first class today and how many seats of Class XII will be required after 12 years, then we will be able to plan the infrastructure needs accordingly," he said.

This programme will run for one week for 25 officers.

'Make scheme for equal salaries'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court asked the municipal corporations here on Monday to draw up a scheme for paying salaries out of the funds they have without picking or choosing one cadre of workers over another.

An HC Bench told the three corporations that they should have a policy in place for equal disbursal of their funds among all cadres of their workers when their coffers run low. The court was hearing pleas by various categories of civic body employees.

Cong. protests 'anti-farmer' Bills

Party cadre detained as they proceed to Parliament House

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Monday held a protest outside Parliament House against the "anti-farmer" Bills passed by the Central government. The party said that these Bills had been passed despite the strident objection by the Opposition parties in a bid to handover the farm sector, like all other sectors in the country, to the private players.



Delhi Congress workers during a demonstration near Parliament House on Monday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

already reeling under tremendous financial stress due to the pandemic.

'Crushes voice'

"The Modi government crushed the voice of farmers with the passage of the Bills in a dictatorial manner in Parliament without considering the opinions of the Congress and others. It has snatched away farmers' freedom to sell their products at competitive prices with a Mi-

nimum Support Price assured and to give the private players a free run," he added.

He alleged that the farmers of Delhi said that they are being forced to sell their wheat at prices lower than the Central MSP and this is in stark contrast to the announcements made by the Arvind Kejriwal government last year, when it had announced the "Mukhyamantri Kisan Mitra Yojna".

CPI(M) stir over 'anti-people' policies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Delhi State Committee of the CPI (M) on Monday organised protests at several places in the city to highlight the issues like unemployment, lack of rations, health and facilities during the pandemic due to "anti-people" policies by the Centre.

₹7,500 for every family outside the purview of tax for the next six months. He said allowance needs to be given to the unemployed as well.

Addressing a gathering at Vithalbhai Patel House, State Secretary K.M. Tiwari demanded that the government provide 10kg foodgrains for individuals and

No protests till Sept. 30: police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Citing an order of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), the police on Monday said people cannot be allowed to hold demonstrations in the city till September 30 due to the pandemic.

Amid protests against farm bills, the police informed about the order through a series of tweets. "The general public is hereby informed that in view of DDMA order dated 03/09/2020, 'Status Quo' is required to be maintained with respect to prohibited/ permitted activities in NCT of Delhi till 30/09/2020 [SIC]," the police tweeted.

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Dr. (Col) A. Balasubramanian
Chancellor, SBUP



Prof. (Dr) G. K. Shirude, Vice Chancellor, SBUP

...Yes, We Build the future

Gurugram schools reopen with few students

Poor turnout in sharp contrast to govt. survey prediction of high attendance

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

Schools in Gurugram, both private and government, opened to a lukewarm response from the students on Monday. Most of the prominent schools – Heritage Xperiential Learning School, Scottish High International School, Ajanta Public School and Delhi Public School (Sushant Lok) – either remained shut or recorded nil turnout.

The poor turnout was in sharp contrast to a survey by the Haryana Education Department claiming that 84% parents for government schools and 73% for private schools were willing to send their wards to schools for taking guidance from their teachers.

Deputy District Education Officer Kalpana Singh said the response was very "poor" and hardly 2-3% stu-



The scene inside Chhakpur Govt. School in Gurugram on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dents had turned up. She, however, said the exact statistics on the turnout were being compiled. "I visited the boys and girls schools in Badshahpur. Hardly 15-20 students had turned up in each of the two schools. The teachers spoke to the students to allay their fears on infection and asked them to bring along their friends as well," said Ms. Singh.

She added the priority of the education department

was to bring back those students to schools who did not have access to smartphones or were not active on online classes. "Let us see how the situation unfolds over the next one week. We will try to speak to the parents if the response remains poor," said Ms. Singh.

A survey conducted by Heritage Xperiential Learning School had only 8% of parents expressing their desire to send their wards to school.

Most of the parents stated that they were very happy with the online classes being offered. Ajanta Public School's Public Relations Officer, Leena, said the parents were not willing to send their kids to schools in the present condition.

Principal of Ryan International School, Sohna Road, Pooja Sharma said the response from the parents was not encouraging and the school would open only on Wednesdays and Saturdays for two hours for the students to come and clear their doubts.

Scottish High International School Director Sudha Goyal said the school was open, but no one turned up. DPS (Sushant Lok) admission team member Megha Gupta said the school was holding online exams for the first semester and the students were not allowed to come to the school.

Akali Dal urges President not to give assent to Bills

Farmers and labourers will suffer, says party chief Badal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal on Monday urged President Ram Nath Kovind not to give his assent to the three agriculture sector Bills passed by the Parliament.

'Rescue farmers'

A delegation led by party chief Sukhbir Singh Badal met the President in New Delhi and urged him to "act as the nation's conscience keeper and the custodian of the Constitution" and come to the rescue of farmers, farm and 'mandi' labourers and farm traders.

Mr. Badal said the core committee of the party would meet soon to decide on the course of action to



Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Badal in New Delhi on Monday.

■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

take the struggle for justice to the next level. "But we will stand by the farmers every inch of the way forward. We are a farmers' party and 95% of our members are farmers," he said.

Mr. Badal warned that "ignoring the sentiments of

farmers can have the potential to disturb social harmony and peace in the country".

He said the party has asked the President to heed to the sentiments of numerous beleaguered farmers, labourers and commission agents and send the Bills back to Parliament for reconsideration.

Committee sought

The memorandum submitted by the party also urged the President to advise the government to send the Bills to a select committee of Parliamentarians, which could then take the stakeholders on board before presenting the Bills to Parliament again.

Fire breaks out in COVID hospital

STAFF REPORTER
CUTTACK

Over 100 patients were safely evacuated after a fire broke out at a dedicated COVID-19 hospital at Jagatpur on the outskirts of Cuttack on Monday.

The incident took place just after noon at Sadguru Hospital, which has been declared a special COVID-19 hospital by the Cuttack administration. While the hospital has a total of 152 beds, 127 beds, including 20 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, were occupied.

"All the patients were rescued safely and they were immediately shifted to the nearby COVID facilities," said Cuttack District Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani.

"All the critical patients in the ICU were rescued first," Mr. Chayani added.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

GOVERNING BODY ELECTION
It is notified that the election of Governing Body of South Point College of Law, Sonipat and South Point Degree College, Sonipat under the Trust of Mange Ram Educational and Charitable Trust for the Post of President, Vice President, General Secretary, Treasurer, 11 members, 2 Teaching representative & 1 Non Teaching representative will be held as schedule given below.

Date of Filling of nomination	05.10.2020
Security of Nomination	12.10.2020
Date of Withdrawn of Nomination	19.10.2020
Date of Election and declare of result	04.11.2020

Returning Officer

For any other information contact 9812421919

Public Notice

I Ashok Kumar S/o Sh. Sukhdev R/o H.No. 5/597 Indira Colony, Sonipat have disown my son Amran from my all movable-immovable property as he is out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with him, he/she will do at their own risk.

LEGAL NOTICE

In the High Court of Himachal Pradesh at Shimla.
RSA No. 495 of 2017-D.
Shri Kushan Narain & others
.....Appellant(s)

Versus

Shri Subir Kumar deceased through Lrs. Arun Dhawan & others
.....Respondent(s)

(Proclamation under order 5 Rule 20 of the code of Civil Procedure)

Notice to:-

Respondent No. 4.5.8.9.10.11 &12
Respondent No- 4 Shri Anil Berry son of Shri Prem Berry, Respondent No- 5. Mrs. Asha Lal daughter of Sh. Prem Berry, Both resident of 61, Hemkunt Colony, New Delhi-110048
Respondent No-8 Smt. Chander Bidari daughter of Shri Prabh Dayal resident of D-11, DDA Flats, Saket, New Delhi-110171.

Respondent No-9 Smt. Rama Ghai daughter of Shri Prabh Dayal resident of 60, Navjivan Vihar, New Delhi-110017.

Respondent No-10 Mrs. Anu Nurala daughter of Smt. Uma Chopra daughter of Shri Prabh Dayal resident of 104, Silver Oak Apartments, DLF Enclave, Phase-I, Gurgaon- 122002 (Haryana).

Respondent No-11 Smt. Veena Malhotra daughter of shri Prabh Dayal resident of 202 Nirmala Apartments,Tilak Nagar,Amaravati Road, Nagpur- 440010 (Maharashtra)

Respondent No-12 Smt. Neena Khanna daughter of Shri Prabh Dayal resident of 37, Ishwar Nagar, New Delhi-110025.

Whereas in the above noted case, it has been proved to the satisfaction of this court that above named respondents can not be served in an ordinary way.

Therefore, the proclamation Under Order 5 rule & 20 of the code of civil Procedure is hereby issued against them that they should appear in this court either personally or through some duly authorized agent/pleader on 03rd day of November, 2020 (03.11.2020) at 10:00 A.M. failing which ex parte proceedings will be taken against them.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 15th day of September, 2020.
(Section officer (Judicial), High Court of H.P.)
Seal Shimla-171001.

Public Notice

We, Directors of Cogent consulting & advisory Pvt Ltd hereby provide that the use of the abbreviation "CA" and the logo was made inadvertently without any intention of committing fraud on our clients. We have removed the logo from the "Company Logo" and also removed the logo & abbreviation from the websites, visiting card and from all other places. Hence, we promise not to repeat the same in near future and tender an apology requesting the same.

For Cogent Consulting & Advisory Private Ltd
Dt: 18.09.2020 RAHUL Anand (Director)

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PariwarKalyanBhawan, Sheikhpura, Patna-800014

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

e-tender(NIT) Reference No.: - 12/SHSB/Virtual Classroom/2020-21

- The State Health Society, Bihar (SHSB), Patna intends to select agency-via-tendering for Supply, Installation & Integration, Management & Maintenance of Equipment for Virtual classrooms at ANMGNM Schools and IGIMS College of Nursing, and invites bid from eligible organisations suppliers.
- To participate in the e-tendering process, the bidder agency are required to get themselves registered with Bihar Government Centralized e-Procurement portal, i.e., <https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON>, shall contact the helpdesk at the following address, "e-Procurement HELP DESK, 1st Floor, M22, Bank of India Building, Road No. 25, Shree Krishna Nagar, Patna- 800001, Phone No. 0612 – 2523006, Mob. No 7542028164 (Timings Every Day from 0800 AM to 0800 PM) or may visit the link "Vendor Info" at <https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON>.

3. Schedule of Events

S.No.	Event Description	Timeline
3.1	Date & time of downloading the RFP	Till 21/10/2020 (Wednesday) up to 05:00 PM, on the e-Procurement Portal (https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON).
3.2	Last date & time for submission (upload) of online bidding document.	22/10/2020 (Thursday) till 05:00 PM, on the e-Procurement Portal (https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON)
3.3	Last date & time for submission of EMD in Hard (Physical) Copies (Offline Mode)	27/10/2020 (Tuesday) by 05:00 PM, to "The Executive Director, State Health Society, Bihar, PariwarKalyanBhawan, Sheikhpura, Patna-800014"
3.4	Time, Date of opening of Technical Bid	28/10/2020 (Wednesday) at 11:00 AM on the e-Procurement Portal (https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON)
3.5	Time, Date of opening of Financial Bid	25/11/2020 (Wednesday) on the e-Procurement Portal (https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON)
3.6	Pre-bid meeting (Date & time)	05/10/2020 (Monday) at 11:00 AM
3.7	Pre- bid meeting venue	Conference Hall, State Health Society, Bihar, PariwarKalyanBhawan, Sheikhpura, Patna-800014

Note –i) Interested tenderers may obtain further information about this Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) from the office of State Health Society, Bihar.

ii) No tender will be accepted after closing date and time in any circumstances.

- The interested bidders may download the tender documents (a complete set of documents is available on website) from e-Procurement Portal (<https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON>) and submit its tender by using the downloaded document.
- For further enquiry and information, please contact to the following officers during office hours 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM – Dr. Y.N Pathak, SPO Nursing Cell (9470003829) or Mr. Girish Kr. G (9431498238)
- All further notifications/Corrigendum/Addendum, if any shall be posted on e-Procurement Portal (<https://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in/BELTRON>), and shall be binding upon all bidders.

प्रियजनों के लिए state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar पर देखा जा सकता है।

Executive Director
State Health Society, Bihar

PR- 07263 (Ni Ni) 2020-21

नोटर जानकारी के साथ में विस्तृत जानकारी एवं सहायता हेतु [Toll Free No. 104](tel:104) पर संपर्क कर सकता है।

साथ सामग्री- संबंधी फ़िल्म तरत जानकारी अवया युक्त दृश्याभास संस्था 0612-2217636 पर संपर्क किया जा सकता है।

DEATH



SARASWATHI VALLIAPPAN

Feb 6, 1940 - Sept 19, 2020

Wife of Late Sri A. Valliappan (IAS)

Daughter of Sri A. V. Meiyappa Chettiar

An unexpected end to a full and generous life.

She is remembered as a mother, wife, friend, and mentor. She continues to inspire us.

Inserted by

Meena and Ramanathan Gurunath and Bhargavi

Krishna and Vallikannu Sandhya and Surya

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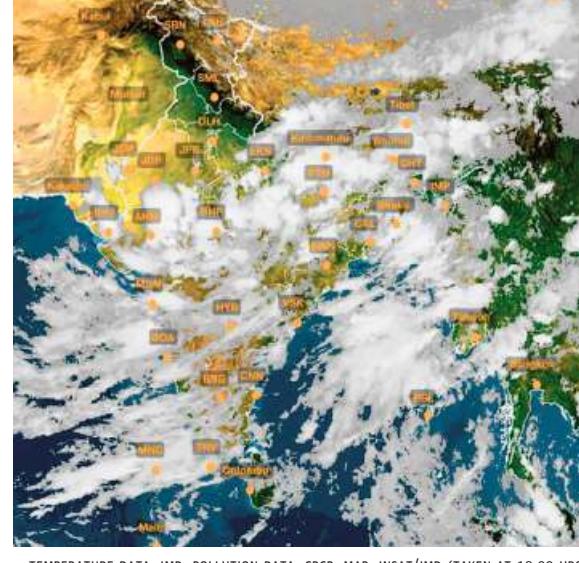
Farmers and labourers will suffer, says party chief Badal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal on Monday urged President Ram Nath Kovind not to give his assent to the three agriculture sector Bills passed by the Parliament.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Marathwada, coastal Karnataka and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	70...	32...	25.6	Kozhikode	35.2...	29.2...	23.4
Ahmedabad	7.4...	35.7...	25.5	Kurnool	19.1...	29.7...	23.1
Aizawl	—	29.9...	21.8	Lucknow	—	37.7...	27.2
Allahabad	1.2...	36.3...	27.0	Madurai	0.6...	33.2...	24.6
Bangalore	11.4...	26.6...	19.0	Mangaluru	66.3...	27.3...	22.4
Bhopal	—	32.4...	25.2	Mumbai	—	32.8...	25.5
Bhubaneswar	79.7...	30.4...	24.8	Mysuru	0.5...	27.0...	19.8
Chandigarh	—	37.3...	26.0	New Delhi	—	36.8...	26.6
Chennai	—	32.2...	26.0	Patna	0.6...	32.4...	25.8
Coimbatore	1.3...	30.1...	22.5	Pond Blair	6.4...	30.8...	25.1
Dehradoon	—	35.7...	23.2	Puducherry	—	35.2...	25.6
Gangtok	2.8...	21.2...	18.5	Pune	1.8...	29.5...	22.8
Goa	25.2...	26.5...	23.1	Raipur	6.6...	32.6...	25.0
Guwahati	—	34.5...	25.8	Ranchi	6.4...	30.8...	23.6
Hubballi	—	24.0...	22.0	Shillong	—	25.0...	19.5
Hyderabad	6.6...	30.9...	22.0	Shimla	—	28.2...	20.5
Imphal	1.9...	27.9...	20.1	Srinagar	—	28.6...	10.0
Jaipur	—	36.0...	26.8	Thiruvananthapuram	29.5...	28.8...	23.6
Kochi	11.2...	28.4...	24.8	Tiruchi	—	35.3...	25.8
Kohima	—	29.2...	17.7	Vijayawada	7...	31.0...	25.6
Kolkata	1...	31.1...	27.1	Visakhapatnam	1...	29.2...	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	27	46	47	...30	...54	■■■■■
Bangalore	—	2.1	28	...28	...41	■■■■■
Chennai	19	12	42	...91	—	■■■■■
Delhi	10	35	42	167	148	■■■■■
Hyderabad	6	47	13	...25	...21	■■■■■
Kolkata	5	15	59	...16	...10	■■■■■
Lucknow	5	55	63	...128	...116	■■■■■
Mumbai	18	30	40	...58	...117	■■■■■
Pune	—	—	—	—	—	—
Visakhapatnam	—	—	23	—	—	—

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

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bhopal, Rajasthan recorded an unhealthy quality index (AQI) score of 240 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

Strictly abide by COVID-19 protocol: HC

SIDHARTH YADAV

BHOPAL

The Gwalior Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court has directed political workers and State government officials to abide by the COVID-19 protocol prescribed for regulating congregations.

A Division Bench of Justices Sheel Nagar and Rajeev Kumar Shrivastava on September 18 expected the protocol to be "strictly abided by" at least until the next date of hearing of a public interest litigation filed by lawyer Ashish Pratap Singh.

The court observed law, whether statutory or in the shape of executive instructions, deserved respect and obedience, "as much from a common man as from a leader, a political functionary and even the head of State." The Justices said they were reminded of the maxim "Be you ever so high, the Law is above you."

The petitioner had prayed for a direction to the State government to restrain political parties from organising public functions, in view of the byelection pending to 28 Assembly seats, 16 in the Gwalior-Chambal region. Further, he sought action under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

The court appointed three lawyers as amicus curiae, tasked with reporting to the court any breach of the order so the case could be taken up at an earlier date.

on Maratha reservation.

He said Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray will address the community's concerns in a day or two. "Admissions and recruitments have been halted due to the stay. We have highlighted these issues in our petition," said Mr. Chavan.

The minister said the State Assembly had unanimously passed the Bill to provide reservation to the Marathas. "There are no two voices over this. But we have to follow the judicial process," he said.

NCP State president and Irrigation Minister Jayant Patil said the committee set up by the State government is taking into consideration the opinions of law experts on how to go ahead with the legal battle.

The court appointed three lawyers as amicus curiae, tasked with reporting to the court any breach of the order so the case could be taken up at an earlier date.

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Remarking that truth was deeper than merely getting into facts, Mr. Ram said that facts must never be allowed to get in way of truth, citing veteran journalist James Cameron's 1974 book *An Indian Summer*.

Stating that delivering news with responsibility was the need of the hour, Mr. Ram expressed concern at the rising levels of intolerance in the country.

"Tolerance levels have gone down and the law does not apply equally as is evident in the lynching of innocent members of the minority community and the Delhi riots. The role of the media has to be looked at carefully in such incidents," he said.

In different parts of the world, why are people losing trust in journalism? At least there is the perception that there's been a deterioration in the performance of the

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A point of order

Parliament must not abridge right of MPs to take a stand in debates and votes

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh's refusal to conduct a division of votes on two controversial pieces of legislation on Sunday, despite persistent demands from members, was unprecedented in its sheer brazenness. The Bills in question have been challenged on constitutional and practical grounds, but that is a different point. The rules of procedure regarding voting are unambiguous that if a voice vote is challenged, "votes shall be taken by operating the automatic vote recorder or by the members going into the Lobbies". Even if a single member demands a division, it is required to be carried out. Quite often, a division of vote is demanded even when the outcome is predictable, in order to bring on record the positions of parties and members on a particular bill. The explanation that members were not demanding a division from their seats and the House was not in order is disingenuous. To begin with, the disorder was triggered by the Chair's refusal to order a division. And curiously, the Chair went on to declare the Bills passed amid the din, this time unaffected by disorder. Significant amendments were sought and several parties had demanded that they be referred to a parliamentary select committee. The government's claim that it had the numbers to pass the Bills is dubious in the wake of the skulduggery it deployed for their passage. In any case, regardless of which side has the majority, procedure is sacrosanct and voting is the foremost tool of establishing parliamentary authority. It cannot be reduced to an act of belligerence by the Chair or the executive.

The chaos that followed in the Upper House, though not unprecedented, was unsavoury. Parliament is a deliberative forum and not a theatre for protest demonstration. Regardless of the provocation, the Opposition should have adhered to decorum while articulating its concerns. But, meaningful parliamentary discussions have become infrequent, and the voice of the Opposition is often ignored. Upper House functions have been significantly curtailed by the arbitrary labelling of money bills, which bypass it. The flat out denial of a division of votes was a new low in parliamentary history. Not stopping there, eight Opposition members were suspended for one week while notice for a no-confidence motion against the Deputy Chairman was rejected at the threshold by Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu. Opposition parties have now petitioned President Ram Nath Kovind to not give assent to the two Bills passed by voice vote. There must be immediate efforts led by the executive to restore the effective and meaningful functioning of Parliament.

In the air

With more evidence of aerosol transmission, physical distancing and masking are crucial

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is revising its guidelines to acknowledge the spread of the novel coronavirus through aerosols, and to point to inhalation of particles as a common way the virus spreads. A draft of the proposed changes to its recommendations, which was later withdrawn pending finalisation, confirmed that airborne particles can spread even by breathing, remain suspended in air and be inhaled and spread beyond six feet in certain enclosed settings. This comes after a body of evidence provided sufficient indication of aerosol (less than 5 microns) transmission, especially in closed settings with poor ventilation and after prolonged contact with an infected person. In February, researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, in a paper published in *Nature*, first proposed airborne transmission. The paper also identified and characterised the novel coronavirus and confirmed the receptor to which the virus binds. The World Health Organization had, on July 9, acknowledged that the virus can be airborne in closed settings after an open letter by more than 200 scientists appealing to the medical community and national and international bodies to "recognize the potential for airborne spread of COVID-19".

Beginning with the cruise ship, *Diamond Princess*, large outbreaks have been documented in churches in South Korea and Singapore, prisons, old-age homes, ski resorts in Austria and even choir practice in a church in Mount Vernon, Washington, providing strong evidence of aerosol transmission in certain closed settings early during the pandemic. It is therefore bewildering that both WHO and the CDC refused to adopt the precautionary principle and caution people even while collecting data to confirm or refute that possibility. However, even in the absence of guidelines from the global bodies, many countries had on their own denied permission for certain enclosed settings to operate, thus averting innumerable outbreaks and cases. With aerosol transmission now being confirmed and its spread to distances beyond six feet also known, the only way to prevent infection till such time and probably even when vaccines become available is through universal masking. Timely cautioning by global bodies of an aerosol transmission possibility might have encouraged universal mask wearing early on, thus preventing thousands of cases. Universal masking can avert infections, and if infected, the amount of viral load one is exposed to will be less, thus leading to only asymptomatic infections or mild disease. Unlike *Diamond Princess*, universal masking in another ship led to 81% of infections being asymptomatic. There have been similar results in other cases where universal masking was practised. With aerosol transmission now being established as a common way of spread in certain settings, the best way to avoid getting infected is by staying clear of crowded, closed settings that have poor ventilation.

Interpreting the India-China conversations

There is a divergence in views on both sides; India needs a plan to check Beijing's strategic objectives and ambitions



M.K. NARAYANAN

The ground situation in Eastern Ladakh shows little change; other than that, towards the end of August, India effectively thwarted an attempt by China to alter the *status quo* and take control of areas on the South Bank of the Pangong Tso. China's reaction was sharp, accusing the Indian Army of having "undermined the consensus reached" at the diplomatic and military talks. Several thousand troops of the People's Liberation Army, in the meantime, remain mobilised across the entire region.

Blunt exchanges

In the first statement made in Parliament (on September 15) on the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh lambasted China, stating that China was attempting to unilaterally alter the *status quo*, and that while India wanted to peacefully resolve the ongoing military confrontation, it was fully prepared to deal with any situation. China immediately rebutted the charge, blaming India for "violating" existing border agreements, and alleging that India bore responsibility for the recent situation. China observed that the most important task for India is to disengage on the ground as soon as possible, and take concrete action to ease the situation.

Earlier, on the sidelines of the Russia, India, China Trilateral meeting (RIC) in Moscow in early September, the Indian and Chinese Defence and Foreign Ministers had met to try and sort out matters. Mr. Rajnath Singh met his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Wei Fenghe on September 4, while the Indian and Chinese Foreign Ministers (S. Jaishankar-Wang Yi) held a meeting on September 10. Given the precarious military situation in Eastern Ladakh, both meetings

had been invested with considerable significance.

According to reports, Mr. Rajnath Singh, in his meeting, did not mince matters, putting the blame entirely on the PLA for its "aggressive actions and behaviour" in seeking to "unilaterally alter the *status quo*" in violation of all bilateral agreements. According to Xinhua, Gen. Wei is believed to have said "China's territory cannot be lost and the Chinese military is fully determined, capable and confident to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity". The blunt exchanges between the Defence Ministers did little to assuage ongoing concerns.

There was considerably great anticipation about a possible breakthrough during the September 10 meeting. On the eve of the talks, India's External Affairs Minister had even been quoted as saying that the situation called for "deep conversation between the two sides at the political level", and India and China "needed to find an accommodation".

More illusion

What emerged from the talks, however, fell well short of expectations. Some preferred to see in the outcome an illusion of forward movement where none existed. The 'Five Point Consensus' limited itself to urging the two sides to take guidance from "the consensus of their leaders on developing India-China relations, including not allowing differences to become disputes". The remaining points were confined to urging both sides to abide by all existing agreements and protocols on China-India boundary affairs and maintain peace and tranquillity; avoid any action that could escalate matters; reiterated the importance of the Special Representative Mechanism to maintain communications; and calling for the continuance of meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC). Work to conclude new Confidence-Building Measures to maintain and enhance border peace and tranquillity were shelved, to



be considered after the situation eases. Neither the Joint Statement, (nor the respective notes issued subsequently) specifically or obliquely mentioned a return to "the *status quo*" or to positions prior to the stand-off.

Confirmation of the wide divergence in views existing between the two sides were to be found in the contents of the separate notes circulated by the two sides following the meeting. China, for instance, claimed that the Indian side "does not consider relations to be dependent on the settlement of the boundary question". This, according to the Indian side, was very different from what the Indian External Affairs Minister had said at the meeting. The Chinese side was again dismissive of the tensions prevailing in India, claiming that the "Indian side believes that China's policy towards India has not changed". It, thereafter, goes on to pontificate that what China and India need now is cooperation not confrontation, mutual trust and not suspicion. It is evident that for China, despite all that had happened, and the ongoing tensions, it was "business as usual", ignoring the huge trust deficit that existed between the two countries.

Strategic thought

It is tempting to view the Jaishankar-Wang Yi interaction, as reflecting implicitly the contrasting strategic thought processes that are to be found in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. The two Foreign Ministers seem – separately and in their own way – to reflect the influence exerted on their thinking by these two texts; on how to deal with paradoxes

and on the prosecution of seemingly contradictory approaches to ensure success. While restraint and moderation, as well as a balanced attitude to the use of force, are recurring themes in both texts, there are clear divergences when it comes to methodologies to be employed. For Sun Tzu, strategic positioning is critical to obtain a strategic advantage. All warfare, according to Sun Tzu is based on deception, and deceiving the opponent. While Kautilya emphasises the significance of both power and morality, Sun Tzu seeks to subdue the enemy without fighting and resorting to attacking the enemy's strategy as the best option. For generations, China's leaders have imbibed and adhered to Sun Tzu's maxims, and Wang Yi seemed to have employed this tactic.

In the extant circumstances, the dilemma that India's External Affairs Minister probably faced was how best to achieve a *modus vivendi*, without compromising India's position and foreclosing all options with China, short of war. Unlike his opposite number, Mr. Jaishankar was possibly a prisoner of a separate set of beliefs, for in his own words, the challenge India faced is to "manage a more powerful neighbour while ensuring its own rise". To him, the bottom line for the relationship seemed clear: peace and tranquillity must prevail on the border, if progress made in the last three decades was not to be jeopardised. One could well ponder over the fact whether this dictated his approach during the two-hour-long discussion with his Chinese counterpart, in which the most conspicuous omission was the lack of any mention of restoration of the *status quo* as of April, as the starting point for any new round of diplomatic negotiations.

Dealing with China

Understanding Chinese motives are difficult at any time. At present under Chinese President Xi Jinping, it has become still more convoluted. Driven by his notion of the "Community with a shared future for Mankind" Mr. Xi's, and

Chinese intent today, is to achieve greater power status, and still more to ensure acknowledgement of its status by other countries. Unstated, but obvious, is that countries such as India should accommodate China's rise, and not cajol at this or pose a challenge to it.

Increasing resort to confrontational politics, in substance as well as in style, aggravates this situation further. Combined with constant references to superior capabilities, it creates a psychological impact on China's thinking, *viz.*, an exaggerated respect for their own strengths – including military – and a willingness to go to any extent to ensure its self-respect. Defusing tensions demands patient diplomacy, but it is not a character trait that Mr. Xi demonstrates. Even less, he shows a willingness to moderate ambition or take a step backward.

New Delhi must reach out

India needs a carefully drawn-up plan as also an effective strategy to deny Beijing its immediate objectives, including its determination to establish regional dominance. In this context, India must reach out to its neighbours, and even countries beyond, warning them about falling into the trap of allowing alluring prospects of both economic cooperation and military support for the maintenance of peace, to cloud their thinking. It might well be the case that the current regime in China may be manufacturing crises to play to a domestic audience, in part due to economic compulsions, but India must be on its guard. For this purpose, India must be prepared militarily and otherwise to keep a check on China's burgeoning ambitions. It also needs to take care to see that China does not exploit the present pandemic to deepen its influence in India's neighbourhood, as is patently evident from reports of China's plans to provide access to China's coronavirus vaccine to several countries of Asia and Africa.

M.K. Narayanan is a former National Security Adviser and a former Governor of West Bengal

With China as backdrop, New Delhi's Moscow watch

The evolving global order makes it difficult for them to pursue fully convergent policies; a long-term view is essential



HARSH V. PANT &
NIVEDITA KAPOOR

As India-China tensions along the Line of Actual Control continue to escalate, India decided to pull out of Russia's Kavkaz 2020 (or the Caucasus-2020) military exercises (September 15-26), where it was scheduled to participate alongside other Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states. While COVID-19 was cited as the official reason, it was the situation on the border with China that most likely prompted this decision.

LAC issue and Moscow's role
New Delhi's decision has led to questions about the possible impact of deteriorating India-China relations on the India-Russia partnership. Earlier in June, the Russia-India Foreign Ministers meeting, convened at Moscow's initiative and coming days after violent border clashes that led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers, ended without an official communiqué. It is hardly surprising that ongoing conflict between two prominent members, and both close partners of Russia, has given rise to concerns about its impact on India-Russia ties.

But this is only one side of a complicated story. Moscow has been playing a quiet diplomatic

role during the recent border clashes without actively taking sides. India's Russia engagement has remained steady and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Russia in June for the 75th Victory Day parade. He was in Moscow again on September 4 to attend the SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting, which also formed the setting for the bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart. These visits saw detailed discussions around furthering the India-Russia defence relationship alongside the promise to accelerate certain supplies based on New Delhi's requirements.

The September visit coincided with the biannual Indo-Russian naval exercises, INDRA, in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in the strategically crucial waters of the Indian Ocean. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the online BRICS foreign ministers meeting on September 4 and also travelled to Moscow for the SCO Foreign Ministers meeting (September 9-10). In fact, in November, India will host the SCO Heads of Government Meeting.

Forums are crucial
The multilateral forums are important as they foster continued India-Russia cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels. While increasingly divergent foreign policies of its members pose challenges of agenda-setting and overall scope, it also underscores that at this moment of flux, countries such as India and Russia are keeping all their options open. India was to have hosted the Quad foreign ministers meeting, but the

venue is likely to be now shifted to Tokyo. So alongside this, if this flurry of activity looks contradictory, it should not be surprising given the changes under way in the global order.

Mr. Jaishankar has noted that we live in a 'curious world' where one cannot view engagement with different parties as a 'zero-sum game'. As a result, worsening India-China ties or a burgeoning India-Russia relationship does not automatically mean a breakdown of the India-Russia strategic partnership. In fact, India and Russia have spent the past few years strengthening their partnership, particularly since the 2018 Sochi informal summit. From substantive defence engagement to regional questions in Central Asia, Afghanistan and West Asia, a conversation with Moscow remains an important element of Indian foreign policy.

India and Russia are pragmatic players looking at maximising their strategic manoeuvrability, which understandably has led them to align with different powers based on their respective geopolitical positioning. Both recognise the value of having a diversified portfolio of ties. This is not to deny that external events will have no impact on the part-

nership. But in order to understand this, one cannot see the India-China clashes in isolation.

China-Russia ties

In fact, a more aggressive China is a result of its rise that has led to a change in the existing balance of power. It is this systemic change that is likely to produce a long-term shift in India's posture, prompting it to take tougher, decisive positions. It is the combination of a changing regional order, closer Russia-China ties and India's alignment with the United States and other like-minded countries to manage Beijing's rise that has the potential to create hurdles for India-Russia cooperation in the Asia.

While India would like to secure Russian support in this changing Asian regional order, the latter has seen China become its key partner as relations with the West have hit a new post-Cold war low since 2014. This has led to a qualitative improvement in its ties with Beijing as the superpower looks to partner with a strong external player that can balance the West. The U.S. policy towards Russia has further pushed the latter towards China, strengthening the rising power, to the detriment of both Indian and western interests. While Russia has acknowledged that the Indian and Association of Southeast Asian Nations concepts of the Indo-Pacific do not include the aim of containment of another power, it has been critical of the American conception of the region that in its strategy classifies China as a revisionist power.

India on its part has sought to include Russia in its vision of the Indo-Pacific that does not see the region as 'a strategy or as a club of limited members'. In fact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 2019 visit to Vladivostok contextualised the cooperation in the Russian Far East as 'a confluence of the Eurasian Union on one side and the open, free and inclusive Indo-Pacific on the other' in an effort to bridge the strategic visions of the two countries. As part of the same effort, reports indicate that a proposal for an India-Russia-Japan trilateral is being explored.

A world split into two blocs would be detrimental to the interests of both New Delhi and Moscow – squeezing the space available for hedging – and that makes it imperative that seeming contradictions in their respective policies are managed pragmatically while taking a long-term view of the strategic partnership. Although the evolving global order makes it difficult for India and Russia to pursue fully convergent policies, it does not preclude the bilateral relationship from retaining its relevance. The strategic space both provide to each other is critical and only underscores the need to insulate their bilateral relationship from the vagaries of the international system.

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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.

Contentious Bills

Two pieces of legislation passed in the Rajya Sabha on Sunday, amidst ugly scenes, have left an indelible imprint as far as the functioning of our parliamentary system is concerned (Page 1, "Amid fierce protests, Rajya Sabha passes two farm Bills", September 21). First, and what is baffling, is what the immediate necessity was in having these Bills tabled in the midst of a pandemic.

Second, agriculture is a State subject and the government did not take the pains to consult the real stakeholders, especially farming organisations. Further, when the Opposition was keen on sending these Bills to a select committee, this was a genuine demand that could have been considered. Again, while passing these Bills, the government did not think it fit to listen even to the dissenting voices.

The procedure adopted by the Deputy Chairman to have the Bills passed did not adhere to democratic norms and are a stain on our democracy. S.K. KHOSLA, Chandigarh

- When the said Bills are perceived to be anti-farmer, why should the government have adopted an adamant and intolerant attitude? People gave a mandate to the government hoping that

people's interests would be looked after. The Prime Minister talked of inclusiveness in governance. Where has this gone? D. SETHURAMAN, Chennai

Service conditions
The details about four jawans of the Assam Rifles was sad reading (Inside pages, "Torture not firing, behind China border deaths in 1975, recalls veteran", September 21). Even sadder is this: that

personnel of the Assam Rifles are not recognised as "Sainik" by States in order to extend them ex-servicemen facilities, though this 185-year-old paramilitary Force has been under the operational control of the Indian Army and fought many battles in pre and post-Independent India. The Assam Rifles is under dual control (Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Defence), but its personnel, both retired and

serving, do not get the benefits of the Defence Ministry, which they are working under. On the contrary, the Special Frontier Force, also under the dual control of the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of Defence, and categorised as a paramilitary force, has been granted all facilities on a par with the Indian Army. V. TULSI NAIR, Peringandoor, Thrissur, Kerala



Dilution without adequate deliberation

It is important that there is wider scrutiny and public discussion on the labour bills



M.R. MADHAVAN

On September 19, the government withdrew three Bills related to labour laws and replaced them with new ones. These Bills make significant changes to regulation of labour and the employer-employee relationship in several ways. India has a complex regime of labour laws, and several committees have recommended simplifying and rationalising them. Last year, the government introduced four labour codes as Bills to replace 29 existing laws. These Codes dealt with regulation of wages, occupational safety and health, social security, and industrial relations. The Code on Wages was passed by Parliament last year. Over the last few months, the Standing Committee on Labour presented its reports on the other three Bills. It is these three Bills that the government has replaced and introduced in the Lok Sabha.

Major changes

There are several aspects of these Bills that differ significantly from the earlier Bills. Let us call the new Bills as the 2020 Bills to distinguish them from the 2019 Bills that were examined by the Standing Committee and subsequently withdrawn.

First, the 2020 Bills raise several thresholds. The Factories Act of 1948 defines any manufacturing unit as a factory if it employs 10 workers (and uses electricity) or 20 workers (without using electric power). These thresholds are being raised to 20 and 40 workers, respectively. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 requires any establishment employing over 100 workers to seek government permission before any retrenchment; the threshold has been raised to 300, with the government empowered to raise it further through notification. These changes have been debated for over two decades but were not proposed in the 2019 Bill. The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act of 1946 requires employers to formally define conditions of employment under them if they have at least 100 workers. The 2020 Bill has increased this threshold to 300



workers.

Second, they provide the government with the power to exempt establishments from any or all of their provisions. The Code on Industrial Relations governs working conditions, trade unions, retrenchment and layoffs, dispute resolution, and establishes industrial tribunals. The government may, in public interest, exempt any new industrial establishment from the provisions of this Code. The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions specifies leave and maximum work hours, requires health and safety norms including adequate lighting and ventilation and welfare measures. It subsumes 13 Acts including the Factories Act. The 2020 Bill allows the State government to exempt any new factory from its provisions in the interest of increased economic activity and employment generation. Given that every new factory would lead to incremental employment, this gives wide discretion to the State government to exempt new factories from basic safety and welfare norms. Note that the Factories Act permitted such exemption for a limited period of three months only during a "public emergency".

Third, there are some changes related to contract labour. The 2019 Bill was applicable to establishments which employed at least 20 contract workers and to contractors supplying at least 20 workers; these thresholds have been raised to 50 workers. Another important issue for consideration is whether there should be relaxations for small enterprises to reduce their compliance burden.

A shift in approach

All the three Bills (both the 2019 and 2020 versions) also show a major shift in approach from the earlier laws. Many essential features of the law are no longer specified in the Codes but have been delegated to be prescribed by the government through Rules. Examples of delegated items include setting the thresholds for application of various social security schemes, specifying safety standards and working conditions, and the power to increase the threshold for establishments that have to seek permission before retrenchment. An important question is whether such features should be hard-coded in the Acts.

Another important issue for consideration is whether there should be relaxations for small enterprises to reduce their compliance burden.

The 2020 Code prohibits the employment of contract workers in any core activity, and specifically permits employment in a specified list of non-core activities including canteen, security and sanitation services.

Fourth, the 2019 Bill on Occupational Safety allowed the government to prohibit employment of women in undertaking operations that could be dangerous to their health and safety. The 2020 Bill removes this power to prohibit employment and instead allows the government to require employers to provide adequate safeguards.

India and the Abraham Accords

Israeli foray into the Gulf could disrupt the politico-economic architecture India has built with the GCC



MAHESH SACHDEV

The White House ceremony on September 15 marking the formal normalisation of Israel's ties with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Kingdom of Bahrain has created a significant inflection point in regional history and geopolitics. Indeed, it helped ring in the Jewish new year (Rosh Hashanah 5781) last weekend with some extra cheers!

Two new friendships

The two Gulf states have, thus, joined Egypt and Jordan which had their peace treaties with Israel in 1979 and 1994, respectively. Still, several nuances make the September 15 reconciliation different. For one, the UAE and Bahrain do not have any territorial dispute with Israel, nor have they ever been at war with it. Although formally committed to an Arab consensus over a two-state resolution of the Palestine cause, these two countries have steadily, albeit furtively, moved towards having substantive links with Israel in recent years. Hence, the 'Abraham Accords' entered with the UAE and Bahrain are 'peace-for-peace' deals without any physical quid pro quo by Israel. Multiple drivers are likely to spur the two new friendships to grow faster and deeper than the 'cold peace' Israel has had with its two Arab neighbours. Externally, Israel, the UAE and Bahrain share the common threat perception of Iran against the backdrop of the ongoing diminution of Pax Americana in the region. Internally, while all three have their respective hotheads opposing this reconciliation, these seem manageable. They are relatively more modern societies which share the overarching and immediate priority of post-pandemic economic resuscitation. They have lost no time to set up logistics such as Internet connectivity and direct flights to pave the way for more active economic engagement. If these sinews evolve, other moderate Arab countries are likely to join the Israel fan club.

Israel's detente with Egypt and Jordan did not have any major impact on India as our ties with them were relatively insignificant. However, now India has stronger, multifaceted and growing socioeconomic engagements with Israel and the Gulf countries. With over eight million Indian diaspora in the Gulf remitting annually nearly \$50 billion, annual merchandise trade of over \$150 billion, sourcing of nearly two-thirds of India's hydrocarbon imports, major investments, etc.,

it is natural to ask how the new regional dynamic would affect India.

Implications for India

Geopolitically, India has welcomed the establishment of diplomatic relations between the UAE and Israel, calling both its strategic partners. In general, the Israel-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) breakthrough widens the moderate constituency for peaceful resolution of the Palestine dispute, easing India's diplomatic balancing act. However, nothing in West Asia is monochromatic: The Israel-GCC ties may provoke new polarisations between the Jihadi fringe and the mainstream. The possibility of the southern Gulf becoming the new arena of the proxy war between Iran and Israel cannot be ruled out, particularly in Shia pockets. India would have to be on its guard to monitor and even pre-empt any threat to its interests in the Gulf.

Even more important for India is to manage the economic fallout of the Israel-GCC synergy. With defence and security cooperation as a strong impetus, both sides are ready to realise the full potential of their economic complementarity. The UAE and Bahrain can become the entrepôts to Israeli exports of goods and services to diverse geographies. Israel has niche strengths in defence, security and surveillance equipment, arid farming, solar power, horticultural products, high-tech, gem and jewellery, and pharmaceuticals. Tourism, real estate and financial service sectors on both sides have suffered due to the pandemic and hope for a positive spin-off from the peer-to-peer interactions. Further, Israel has the potential to supply skilled and semi-skilled manpower to the GCC states, particularly from the Sephardim and Mizrahim ethnicities, many of whom speak Arabic. Even the Israeli Arabs may find career opportunities to bridge the cultural divide. Israel is known as the start-up nation and its stakeholders could easily fit in the various duty-free incubators in the UAE.

Israeli foray into the Gulf has the potential to disrupt the existing politico-economic architecture India has carefully built with the GCC states. India has acquired a large and rewarding regional footprint, particularly as the preferred source of manpower, food products, pharmaceuticals, gem and jewellery, light engineering items, etc. Indians are also the biggest stakeholders in Dubai's real estate, tourism and Free Economic Zones. In the evolving scenario, there may be scope for a profitable trilateral synergy, but India cannot take its preponderance as a given. It needs to keep its powder as dry as the shifting sands of the Empty Quarter.

Mahesh Sachdev, a former Indian Ambassador, is President, Eco-Diplomacy and Strategies, New Delhi

Beginning of the end?

The end to Belarusian independence vis-à-vis the EU and Russia could spell the end of Lukashenko

GARIMELLA SUBRAMANIAM

The embattled Belarusian President's charm offensive aimed at his Russian counterpart over a month after mass protests broke out against him following his August 9 re-election has paid off splendidly for him for now. It is, however, an open question how Alexander Lukashenko's views on deepening ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin will play out given his zealous assertion of national sovereignty versus Mr. Putin's vision of closer integration.

At their meeting held in the Black Sea resort town of Sochi, Mr. Putin pledged a \$1.5 billion loan to Mr. Lukashenko. He also said he would uphold his promises of security and joint military exercises "practically every month" for a year. In recent days, Mr. Lukashenko has addressed the Russian leader as an "elder brother" and praised him as a "friend in need". More significantly, Mr. Lukashenko has portrayed the popular unrest in Belarus as a test run for eventually overthrowing Mr. Putin.

Change in stance

These remarks imply that Mr. Putin's moves relating to Minsk are no less an act of self-interest. They are also a tacit allusion to the international fallout from the Kremlin's systematic suppression of dissent, illustrated by the poisoning of Russia's most prominent opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, in August.

Days before his meeting with Mr. Putin, Mr. Lukashenko asserted that he would not heed demands from the street for his resignation, insisting that the protesters would destroy the country. All of this is a marked change in tenor from the early phase of the unrest, when Mr. Lukashenko appeared desperate, pleading with Moscow for military assistance against what he then described as an external threat. When he addressed domestic audiences, the autocrat of 26 years, who in 2004 pushed through a constitutional referendum that scrapped presidential term limits, and swore on other occasions that he would die rather than give up power, had even referred to calls from countries in the region for him

to hold fresh elections.

Notable through this tumult was Russia's conspicuous overall silence, as also the focused target of the protesters demanding Mr. Lukashenko's exit. While Mr. Putin made known his readiness to deploy the police to quell the unrest if requested, the Kremlin was reluctant to risk any action that might turn the anti-Lukashenko tide against Russia. The recent shift to a more assertive stance is plausibly a reflection of a seemingly weakening opposition under a sustained crackdown since the controversial polls.

Treatment of opposition leaders

In the run-up to the election on August 9, a number of prominent candidates were imprisoned or barred from the contest, action that unwittingly united the people against the brutal regime. In the wake of the disputed victory of Mr. Lukashenko for the sixth time, an opposition leader was abducted, others were forced to flee the country, or forcibly deported. Most prominent of them is Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who fled to Lithuania after running against Mr. Lukashenko, when her husband Sergei, a YouTuber, was imprisoned on sedition charges months before the poll. Earlier this month, two opposition leaders were deported to Ukraine and a third was detained by authorities when she tore up her passport to avoid being forced to cross the border. The opposition coordination council has just one member remaining in Belarus with her liberty intact, the 2015 Nobel laureate, Svetlana Alexievich.

Paradoxically, as fatigue sets in among the protesters, Mr. Lukashenko's political options at home have also narrowed. A potential price for the recent package Moscow has offered could well be to breathe life into a 1997 Treaty on the Union between Russia and Belarus that envisages common legal and immigration policies.

The end to Belarusian independence vis-à-vis the European Union and Moscow could spell the end of Mr. Lukashenko.

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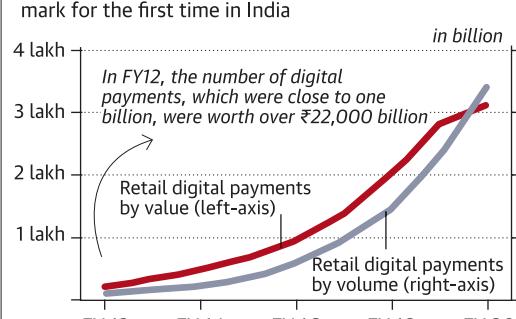
DATA POINT

More cards, more fraud

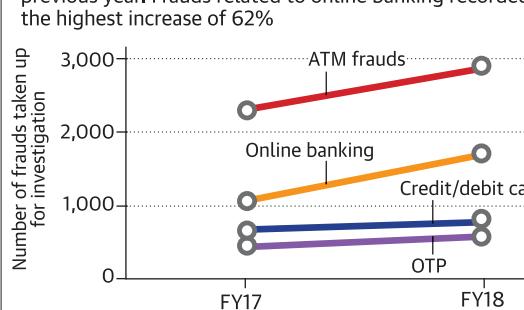
While the use of digital systems (credit cards, debit cards and national electronic funds transfers) has risen significantly, there has also been a concomitant increase in cyberfraud targeting digital users. Conviction rates for cyberfraud have been low. The complexity of the crimes committed could be a reason.

By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Suman Sen and Naresh Singaravelu

1. DIGITAL RISE | In FY20, the number of new retail digital payments breached the 30 billion mark and the value of such transactions went past the ₹3 lakh billion mark for the first time in India



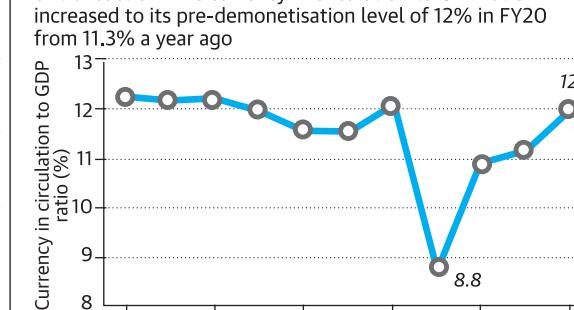
2. FRAUDS RISE | In FY18, 6,885 cases of cyberfraud were taken up for investigation, a 35% increase from the previous year. Frauds related to online banking recorded the highest increase of 62%



3. RARE CONVICTIONS | At the end of FY18, about 64% cases were pending police investigation; only 16.2% of OTP frauds were charged. Also, 95.9% cases were pending in courts; not one case ended in a conviction

Fraud type	Police charge sheeting rate	Police investigation pending rate	Court conviction rate	Court case pending rate
Credit/debit card	32.1%	65.8%	0%	97.9%
ATM	42.1%	64.8%	16.7%	97.1%
Online banking	30.3%	66.3%	0%	96.2%
OTP	16.2%	64.2%	0%	95.9%
All	35.6%	65.5%	14%	96.2%

4. CASH IS STILL THE KING | While digital payments have increased, cash continues to be the most preferred mode of transaction. The currency in circulation to GDP ratio increased to its pre-demonetisation level of 12% in FY20 from 11.3% a year ago



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 22, 1970

Luna-16 bringing moon rock

The Soviet unmanned spaceship Luna-16 is returning from the moon, bringing samples of moon rock, Tass, the Soviet news agency, announced to-day [Moscow, September 21]. The achievement in re-launching an unmanned probe from the surface of the moon through remote control from the earth marks a space first for the Soviet Union. Luna-16 landed on moon yesterday and began sending back scientific information. The Luna blast-off from the moon comes 14 months after American Apollo-11 astronauts made the first successful take-off from the moon. Luna-16 scooped up samples in the area around the sea of Tranquillity using an electric "probe" which bored to a depth of 350 millimetres, Tass said. The samples were then transferred by means of a manipulator to a container in the spacecraft and hermetically sealed. After the landing of Luna-16 on the moon a complex of technological operations was carried out.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 22, 1920

Juvenile offenders

(From an Editorial)

The juvenile offender presents one of the hardest problems of modern thought. Criminologists have envisaged him from all points of view and worked out uncertain hypotheses. The courts when they have him before them administer a sort of justice which fails in most cases to be either preventive or reformatory. What exactly turns a child to crime and how best to protect the innocent and wean the guilty back into goodness are questions to which in spite of laborious research, a conclusive answer has not been obtained. Some light is thrown on the subject by a report of the Juvenile Organisations Committee issued by the Board of Education in England. The committee examined the return of various juvenile courts and came to the disturbing conclusion that, in the case of theft, perhaps the commonest form of juvenile crime, poverty was not the primary incentive. About seventy per cent of the juvenile thefts examined by the Committee were found to be devoid even of the excuse of penury; and reason was found to justify a surmise that many a child turned thief at his parents' instigation or with his connivance. Another noteworthy circumstance that inspires a boy to crime is the love of adventure – a quality which under proper direction might easily run into channels far healthier than house-breaking or shop-breaking.

FROM PAGE ONE

8 MPs suspended from RS for 'unruly behaviour'

The motion moved by Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs V. Muraleedharan sought to suspend the eight MPs for "unruly behaviour especially with the Chair and their gross disorderly conduct in violation of the rules and etiquette of Rajya Sabha thereby bringing disrepute to this august house and causing insult to the Office of the Hon'ble Deputy Chairman" for one week or the remainder of the current part of the session.

Speaking to reporters, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said the Opposition MPs who continued to stay in the House after being suspended "do not have trust in institutions".

In his press conference, Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad responded to the Opposition's claim that the Deputy Chairman did not allow voting on their resolutions to the send the two farm Bills to a select committee on Sunday, and

said Mr. Harivansh had asked the MPs to go back to their seats so that a division can take place "13 times". Instead, he said, the conduct of the MPs was "shameful" as they broke mics and tore the rule book.

While the Opposition claimed the ruling party did not have the numbers, Mr. Prasad said: "We have a clear majority in the Rajya Sabha. Out of the members present, 110 were clearly supporting the Bills and only 72 were opposing".

He said the people of Bihar, where Mr. Harivansh is elected from, would "give a reply" to the Opposition parties, particularly the Congress and RJD, for the way he was treated in the House. Mr. Prasad's statement comes at a time that the Bihar Assembly elections are around the corner.

"Opposition parties will have to answer in Bihar... We won't make this a political issue," he said.

Govt. announces 2.6% hike in wheat MSP

Better support | The government has announced an increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for all mandated Rabi crops for the 2021-22 season. The expected returns to farmers over their cost of production are estimated to be highest for wheat

Crops	MSP for 2021-22 (₹/quintal)	Increase in MSP (₹/quintal)	Return over cost (%)
Wheat	1,975	50	106
Barley	1,600	75	65
Gram	5,100	225	78
Lentil	5,100	300	78
Rapeseed & Mustard	4,650	225	93
Safflower	5,327	112	50

For more than a decade, MSPs for the rabi season have been announced in October or November, as winter planting begins. However, this year's MSP announcement comes just a day after Parliament cleared two controversial Bills, which will facilitate contract farming and the sale of agricultural produce outside the notified Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis where most procurement takes place.

"While the Congress is telling the entire country that the MSP and APMC will be removed after the passing of the agricultural reform Bills, this Cabinet decision is a proof from the government that they will remain," Mr. Tomar told Lok Sabha.

Opposition parties and a range of farmers groups, including those affiliated to the RSS, have warned that the new legislation will result in a dilution of the MSP regime and government procurement. They are demanding that the government include a legal guarantee for MSP to ensure that neither public nor private buyers pay less than MSP rates, whether sales take place within or outside mandis. In actual fact, only a small percentage of farmers are able to sell to government at MSP rates, although Mr. Tomar claimed that procurement has shot up in both quantity and value terms under the BJP government.

Building collapse kills 13 in Bhiwandi



Disaster at dawn: Rescuers searching for survivors after the building collapsed in Bhiwandi on Monday. ■ AP

Gilani Building at the Patel compound near Bhiwandi's Dhamankar Naka collapsed around 3.15 a.m. on Monday.

A team of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) rushed to the spot for rescue related work. At the time of writing this report, the team had managed to rescue 20 residents, including a 4-year-old boy Ubed Quraishi. Thane district Guardian Minister Ek Nath Shinde announced ₹5 lakh aid to the families of the deceased.

The local civic body had served two notices on the owner and residents, declaring the structure dangerous and asking them to vacate the building. According to the police complaint filed

against the building's owner Sayyad Ahmad Gilani by the Bhiwandi-Nizampur Municipal Corporation, the building housed 40 rooms. "A survey to identify structurally dangerous buildings was undertaken in January 2020... On February 26, 2020, a notice was served to the owner and residents asking them to vacate the building. As they did not receive it, another notice asking them to vacate it within 24 hours was again served on April 23, 2020," stated the police complaint.

Two civic officials have been suspended in connection with the collapse and a case has been registered against the building owner, an official said.

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Suspended MPs stay put in protest

Various parties appeal to President to withhold assent to farm Bills, cite violation of procedures

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

Eight Opposition Rajya Sabha members suspended by the House earlier on Monday have begun an indefinite sit-in protest within Parliament, even as 15 non-NDA parties have appealed to President Ram Nath Kovind not to give assent to the two farm Bills passed in the Upper House on Sunday.

The Opposition leaders will be marching to the President's House on Tuesday.

In the resolution, the parties citing Article 111 and Article 90 of the Constitution, have argued that the passage of the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill,



Up in arms: The suspended RS members (sitting) along with other members in New Delhi on Monday. ■ PTI

2020 was flawed on many accounts.

The joint resolution states that the issue raised by the Opposition parties strike at the very backbone of the Indian Republic – the community of farmers.

"On an issue like this, majoritarian, insensitive and

uncaring governance has no role and all stakeholders have to listen, absorb, imbibe and thereafter act with humility," the resolution notes.

It then goes on to raise, several question on the process followed to pass the bill, including denial of vote and

not taking sense of the House before extending it beyond the scheduled time of 1 p.m. It also raised question on lack of quorum.

Rammed through'

memorandum, backed out at the last minute because it is still part of the NDA.

Soon after Rajya Sabha was adjourned for the day a little after noon, members of the Opposition marched to the Gandhi Statue on the Parliament premises, carrying placards reading "Democracy murdered", "We will fight for the farmers" and held a silent protest.

Derek O'Brien (Trinamool Congress), Sanjay Singh (AAP), Rajeev Satav (Congress), Syed Naseer Hussain (Congress), Ripun Bora (Congress), K.K. Raghesh (CPI(M)), Elamaram Kareem (CPI(M)) and Dola Sen (TMC) remained seated in a night-long dharna. Lawmakers from all the parties that had signed the memorandum to the President were also present.

Reforms are the road to 21st century India: PM

Farmers will have more options, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the farm reform Bills passed in Parliament were "historic" and the road to 21st century India.

Mr. Modi was inaugurating and laying the foundation for nine road projects and high-speed optical fiber

Internet services worth several thousand crores through videoconference in Bihar.

Earlier agriculture laws had chained farmers and middlemen were taking advantage of the archaic laws, he said. But now, through the reforms, new freedom had been given to the farmers who would have more options to sell their produce. "They can sell their produce either in the local mandis [markets] or beyond," said Mr. Modi.

"Farmers are selling potatoes and their mustard produce at 20-25% higher price in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and other States," he said. "Some people are protesting against these reform Bills because control of



Narendra Modi

farmers has slipped away from their hands," he said.

"These people [those opposing the farm Bills] are also misleading farmers on MSP [minimum support price]... But I want to make it clear that MSP will continue to function like earlier... On MSP our government has done that much of work which has not been done earlier," said Mr. Modi.

"These are the same people who kept sitting for years under the recommendations of the Swaminathan committee on MSP."

This was Mr. Modi's fifth foundation-laying programme in poll-bound Bihar. On September 23, he is scheduled to address the sixth and last such function.

Farmers groups call for Bharat Bandh

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

RSS-affiliated farmers groups are still demanding amendments to provide a legal guarantee to minimum support prices (MSP), although they will not join in plans for nationwide protests against the new agriculture reform Bills.

A wide coalition of farmers groups from across the country have called for a mass protest and Bharat bandh on September 25 to oppose the legislation.

"We welcome the one India, one market that has been introduced by this new law, but we still want our demand for MSP guarantee to be included," said Mohini Mohan Mishra, a general secretary with the Bhartiya Kisan Sangh, which is affiliated to the RSS.

"The Bills may have been passed by Parliament, but that does not stop the government from bringing in an amendment or even another law," said Ashwani Mahajan, co-convenor of the Swadeshi Jagran Manch, which is also affiliated to the RSS.

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Congress to launch nationwide stir

Protests against 'anti-farmer, anti-people laws' will continue till November 14

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Five Left parties came together to condemn the attempts to "silence" the Opposition during the monsoon session in the Rajya Sabha.

In a joint press statement, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), Revolutionary Socialist Party and All India Forward Bloc said that they would support the all India protest against the farm Bills on September 25. "The Left parties strongly condemn the manner in which all parliamentary procedures and norms have been thrown to the winds by this BJP government," it said.

The agitation will go on till November 14, which is also the birth anniversary of the first Prime Minister Jawahar-



The way forward: Congress MPs in the Rajya Sabha in New Delhi during the ongoing monsoon session. ■ PTI

al Nehru. Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said that Monday's was the first physical meeting of the party office-bearers during the COVID-19 pandemic and that it was called under directions from party president Sonia Gandhi and former party president Ra-

hul Gandhi. "We will begin with press conferences in each State. All State units will deliver memorandum to their respective Governors after marching to the Raj Bhavans. October 2 will be marked as 'Save Farmers and Farm Labourers Day'. On October 10, State-level Ki-

saan Sammelans will be held. We will also have a signature campaign that will end on November 14."

The government may be able to muzzle the voice of MPs inside Parliament, but it can't do so outside Parliament, Mr. Venugopal said.

The party will also submit a memorandum against the farm laws to President Ram Nath Kovind.

Congress leader Ahmed Patel pointed out that the two laws would not only impact the farmers, but also the beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act.

"The public food distribution system, minimum support price and government's food procurement system are all interrelated. This will have far-reaching consequences," he said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre informed the Rajya Sabha on Monday that due to some limitations, collating national data on the causes of farmers' suicides was untenable.

Minister of State for Home Affairs G. Kishan Reddy said in a written reply in Rajya Sabha that as informed by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), many State

governments and Union Territories had reported "nil"

data on suicides by farmers, cultivators and agricultural labourers after several validations, "even while reporting suicides in other professions".

'Due to limitation'

"Due to this limitation, national data on causes of suicide in the farming sector was untenable and not pu-

nished separately," Mr. Reddy said. Congress member P.L. Punia had sought to know whether the NCRB has

done away with enlisting causes for farmers' suicides and if so,



UN faces crisis without reforms: Modi

SRI RAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON DC

In his message to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter and the adoption of a Commemorative Declaration, Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the UN but said the institution faced a "crisis of confidence" without major reforms.

The Prime Minister delivered his address on Monday via a recorded video. The UN has adopted the format due to the pandemic to avoid the customary gathering of world leaders in New York for its annual General Assembly debate. "The Declaration also acknowledges the need for reform of the United Nations itself. We cannot fight today's challenges with outdated structures. Without comprehensive reforms, the UN faces a crisis of confidence" Mr. Modi said.

"For today's interconnected world, we need a reformed multilateralism that reflects today's realities, gives voice to all stakeholders, addresses contemporary challenges and focuses on human welfare."

The Prime Minister also said the "world was a better place" because of the U.N. He recognised those who had worked for peace under the U.N. flag including U.N. peacekeepers and noted India's contribution to peacekeeping.

Yet, the U.N.'s original mission remained incomplete, he said.

Mr. Modi will again address the General Assembly on Saturday as part of the general debate.

The speech is particularly significant this year as India will begin an elected, non-permanent, two-year term on the United Nations Security Council starting January 2021.

India, China begin 6th round of talks

Cannot meet China halfway in disengagement; have to maintain troops for security, says source

DINAKAR PERI
ANANTH KRISHNAN
NEW DELHI

India cannot meet China halfway in the disengagement process as India has to maintain troops for protection of territory, an official source said as the sixth round of Corps Commander-level talks on Monday morning aimed at ending the five month long standoff along the disputed boundary in Ladakh. The talks were still ongoing at the time of going to print.

MEA presence

The talks began around 9 a.m. on the Chinese side at Moldo, a defence source said.

The Indian side is led by Lt. Gen. Harinder Singh, 14 Corps Commander who was accompanied by Lt. Gen. P.G.K. Menon, set to take over as the 14 Corps Comman-



On full alert: An IAF fighter aircraft flying over the Ladakh region on Monday. • PTI

der in October. The Chinese side is led by Maj. Gen. Lin Liu, South Xinjiang military commander.

For the first time, Naveen Srivastava, Joint Secretary handling East Asia division

in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), is part of the Indian delegation.

Mr. Srivastava has been part of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) talks

between India-China border affairs and holding talks with the Chinese side during the ongoing standoff.

It cannot be mutual disengagement as China has moved inside Indian side at several locations, a second official explained on India's stand of disengagement. China must also strictly follow the five-point consensus decided by the two foreign ministers in Moscow on September 10, the first official stated.

The Indian delegation also includes two Major Generals, four Brigadiers and Inspector General Deepam Seth from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the official said.

Time-bound withdrawal

According to official sources, India's agenda at the talks is that China must withdraw from all friction points with a

timeline on de-induction of mechanised and motorised divisions. Also, withdrawal of Chinese forces from Depsang to Pangong Tso and free and unhindered access to Indian forces to all patrol points.

India's demand is also for strict adherence to laid down protocols on troop strength on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "Not just disengagement but also de-induction," the official added.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in Parliament last week that China has mobilised a large number of troops and armaments along the LAC as well as in the depth areas in violation of the 1993 and 1996 border agreements and there are several friction areas in Eastern Ladakh including Gogra, Kongka La and north and south banks of the Pangong Tso.

Pak. action on 26/11 under the scanner

FATF plenary to review grey list status

SUHASINI HAIDAR
DEVESH PANDEY
NEW DELHI

As a plenary session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) prepares to make a final decision on Pakistan's "grey list" status at a meeting from October 21 to 23, Islamabad's actions against 26/11 attackers will be under the scanner as part of a 27-point action list it has been handed to complete, sources said.

Last week, a meeting of the Asia Pacific Joint Group (APJG) of the FATF reviewed actions taken by Islamabad against terror-financing and money laundering. The group, comprising the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, China, India, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, last year recommended that Pakistan would stay on the grey list or "jurisdiction under increased monitoring" as the grey list is known.

The sources said while Pakistan had made "some progress" on the 27-point action plan, it is "likely" to be retained on the grey list.

However, the sources added that Pakistan was unlikely to be downgraded to a black list at present as had been speculated, due to several countries including China, "who tried their best to support Pakistan's poor performance" at the APJG.

Beijing's backing

On Thursday, China's outgoing Ambassador to Pakistan Yao Jing said the October meeting of the FATF would "go well" for Pakistan, according to a readout of his farewell call on Pakistan's Economic Adviser Abdul Hafeez Shaikh in Islamabad.

Subsequently on Sunday, Pakistan's Minister for Industries & Production Hamid Azhar said he "hopes" Pakistan will be taken off the grey list soon, and that dealing with the FATF's requirements and boosting tax revenues are the government's two biggest economic priorities at present.

Islamabad has also been very vocal on the need to work on FATF requirements, where it had been cleared on 14 of 27 points at last count, and has pushed a slew of FATF-related bills



Dawood Ibrahim

through its Parliament, tightened strictures on designated terrorists like Zaki Ur Rehman Lakhvi and Dawood Ibrahim, while maintaining it is abiding by UNSC sanctions against groups like the LeT, JeM, Al Qaeda, ISIS and others.

A government official dismissed the actions, pointing out that ahead of each FATF review, Pakistan's security agencies carry out arrests, seizures and display action against terrorists to evade black-listing.

The official cited a case in which an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan convicted three key figures linked to the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the associated Al-Hamid Trust on August 28. However, the court let off Abdul Rahman Makki – second-in-command of the LeT's political arm Jamaat-ud Dawah (JuD) – with only 18 months of jail and a small fine, purporting stating that he was the general secretary and, therefore, did not have any decision-making powers.

Another official pointed out that despite having received evidence of his role in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, the Pakistani establishment had not taken any strong action against Sajid Mir, LeT operations chief Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, who was granted bail about five years ago, is untraceable, along with his son-in-law Yusuf Muzammil, who was also involved in the Mumbai attacks.

LeT chief Hafiz Saeed, who has already been convicted and sentenced to 11 years of jail, is not even behind bars. According to Pakistani agencies, his whereabouts are not known," said the official.

Over 90,000 COVID-19 recoveries for third day

1,130 deaths in 24 hours; 10 States and Union Territories account for 86% of them, says Health Ministry

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India has reported more than 90,000 COVID-19 recoveries for the third day in succession on Monday, with 93,356 patients having been discharged in the last 24 hours, the Union Health Ministry said, adding that 79% of the new recoveries are from 10 States/Union Territories.

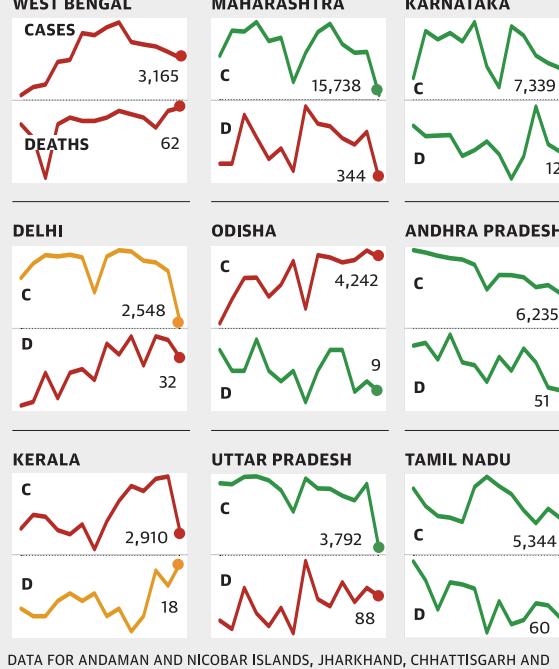
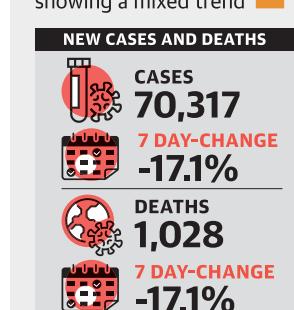
19% of world total
"The total recovered cases are close to 44 lakh [43,96,399] and India tops the global figure of total recoveries. It accounts for more than 19% of the world total," said a release.

According to the Health Ministry, a total of 86,961 new cases have been reported in the last 24 hours with Maharashtra contributing more than 20,000 cases and Andhra Pradesh more than 8,000.

"As many as 1,130 deaths have been registered in the past 24 hours and 10 States/Union Territories account for 86% of the deaths. Maharashtra reported 455 deaths followed by Karnataka and

Viral tracker

India recorded 70,317 COVID-19 cases and 1,028 deaths on Monday. As many as 4.75 lakh fewer samples were tested on Sunday, compared to the previous day. The graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days in select States. The States are classified based on where cases/deaths are rising — falling — or showing a mixed trend —



scientific learning along with acquiring the necessary theoretical as well as practical skills.

Lost time

"These students devote considerable time to research a topic of interest and publish their findings in the form of thesis but because of the pandemic thesis-related works have suffered considerably due to lack of study subjects for the selected topics and regular COVID duties. The deadline for submission of thesis in most of the States is approaching and this is a matter of grave concern," the federation said.

"Data collection, analysis, compilation, drawing conclusion and printing the final thesis require a lot of time, hard work and attention to details, which is next to impossible in the existing scenario. PG students of multiple States are currently lagging behind in their research work and have also given representations regarding the same to their respective universities," the federation added.

Uttar Pradesh with 101 and 94 deaths, respectively," said the Ministry.

Meanwhile, the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) has written to the Health Ministry

stating that medical post-graduate students will like to get a deferral for the deadline for thesis submission until the pandemic is under control.

"This will relieve the PG

students from unnecessary stress and anxiety," the Federation said.

FORDA has noted that postgraduate (M.D/M.S) qualification in any specialty includes research and

Army chief seeks report on SW Command

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A woman fighter pilot is expected to soon join the No. 17 Golden Arrows squadron of the Indian Air Force (IAF) flying the recently inducted Rafale fighter jets, a defence source said on Monday.

The officer has been trained on the MiG-21 fighters and is currently undergoing conversion training to fly the Rafale, it has been learnt.

Last week, the government informed Parliament that there were 10 women officer fighter pilots in the Indian Air Force since the stream was opened up for women in 2016.

Early this month, the IAF formally inducted five Rafale

fighter jets into service at Ambala. A second batch of four Rafales are likely to arrive in India in October.

Amid ongoing tensions on

the disputed boundary in Ladakh, the Rafale jets, which arrived in India at the end of July and were inducted on September 10, have been flying

They are capable of spreading venomous hatred, terror and violence, it tells SC

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

An unchecked digital media is capable of spreading "venomous hatred," terror and violence, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Monday.

It can tarnish reputations of institutions and individuals. In fact, the digital media has already done all of this, the government told the court. The court should first train its attention on digital media, it said.

'Wide reach'

"It is the need of the hour that the court start first with 'web-based digital media'

which includes 'web magazines' and 'web-based news channels' and 'web-based newspapers'. They not only have a very wide reach but are completely uncontrollable," the government's 89-page affidavit said.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud had asked the government for suggestions to improve the self-regulatory mechanism for electronic media. The government replied, asking the court to instead focus on digital media rather than mainstream ones.

The court's move had come in the aftermath of an injunction ordered on Sudarshan TV's 'Bindas Bol'

programme. This show had accused Muslims of "infiltrating" the civil services with the help of funding from terror-linked organisations abroad.

On Monday, Justice Chandrachud said the court was "very concerned about the balance between free speech in the media and the right of dignity of a community." The judge asked the lawyers to lead arguments on whether the court could order a blanket injunction of a programme or should restrict it self to only those portions

which hurt a community.

'Chilling effect'

Advocate Saideepak J., appearing for an intervenor, said the court should spare a thought about the "chilling effect" on free speech before it flexes its powers of injunction.

Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, for Sudarshan TV, urged the court to lift the injunction on Bindas Bol. He said the show, in his perception, met the requirements of the Programme Code under the Cable TV Act and required no change of tone in its next episodes.

Soldier injured in encounter in Budgam

Militants carry out 2 attacks in Kashmir

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

One soldier was injured in an ongoing encounter in central Kashmir's Budgam on Monday evening. Militants carried out two attacks on security forces in Srinagar and Anantnag districts but no loss of life was reported.

An official said a soldier

was injured in Budgam's Charar-i-Sharif in a gunfight, which erupted immediately after the security forces cordoned off a residential area where suspected militants were hiding. "The injured soldier was shifted to the Army 92 Base Hospital. The operation to flush out the militants is on," an official said.

+

REVIEW

The Samsung Galaxy Tab S7+ claims to be a workhorse to replace the traditional PC. We examine if it lives up to that promise

A clean slate?

■ DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

There are few devices that have the colours literally jump out at you in the dark. The Samsung Galaxy Tab S7+ is one of them. I was able to play around with the device to my heart's content, finding both nods and nays. The tablet sports a clean design with a magnetic strip for the S-Pen (which we will get into later). The matte finish on the back keeps it grip-friendly but given it was always attached to the stand, this did not matter.

Setting up the tablet itself was a breeze, and I had (probably too much) fun customising my home screen with widgets and ultra HD or 4K wallpapers to test the display, and I have to say, unlocking the device is a

visual treat.

Samsung knocks it out of the park once again with impressive displays; the Galaxy Tab S7+ has a vivid 12.4-inch Super AMOLED display, unlike its basic brother (Galaxy Tab S7) which has an 11-inch LTPO TFT display. The 16:10 display of the Galaxy Tab S7+ is elevated by the 120Hz refresh rate, decreasing blurs and preventing tears which ultimately make gaming, streaming and other heavy tasks smoother. This is enabled by the monster Qualcomm Snapdragon 865+ processor which powers a smarter voice assistant with contextual awareness. The AI in the Galaxy Tab S7+ is more

intuitive and this is evident when the device is on low battery.

Speaking of battery, this tablet model comes with a

SPECIFICATIONS
(GALAXY TAB S7+)

Display: 31.50cm (12.4")
; 2800x1752 (WQXGA+)
Super AMOLED ; upto
120Hz

Dimensions & weight:
185.0 x 285.0 x 5.7mm
; 759g

S-Pen: 5.79" x 0.32" ; 8g

Battery: 10,090mAh

RAM + Storage: 6GB +
128GB

whopping 10,090mAh capacity while the Galaxy Tab S7 comes with a somewhat disappointing 8,000mAh. I am, of course, joking; those who do not want to fork over the extra cash but still want the luxury experience of a high-end Android-powered tablet, should give the S7 a go. Use the in-box 45W charger, and the Super Fast charging is a treat. However, I found myself charging the Galaxy Tab S7+ twice a day, perhaps owing to the power distribution to the display and the high refresh rate.

Flip it

One of the many welcome joys of this device is the camera placement, encouraging more use of the tablet horizontally. Using the device in portrait orientation is awkward and feels a bit too weighted.

However, placed along the right length of the tablet, video-chatting is no longer awkward with vertical video nor was I finding myself staring off camera to stay in visual touch with others on a



call while my camera was in an entirely different spot.

One of the pitfalls of the experience has been the ergonomics of the device. At this point, after a successful range of devices and accessories, the kick-stand has been a disappointment from Samsung. The stand is a fuss to adjust while the magnetic latch key-

board has an overly bendable hinge which makes stability impossible. Working on the tablet at a desk is fine, but for lazing in bed or on the couch where the device would be on my lap, I was battling with the keyboard.

While we are on the topic of the keyboard, I have to hand it to Samsung for including a full

Function keys line and a large trackpad, emulating the authentic keyboard experience. The 2020 Apple iPad Pro's Magic Keyboard sadly does not have the Function keys and there is a considerably smaller trackpad. The keys' mechanism of the Galaxy Tab S7+ is much more sturdy but there are a few moments where the keys do not respond as quickly as they should have given the internal improvements, chipset-wise, to the tablet.

Such penmanship

The Galaxy Tab S7+ comes with an updated S-Pen, too. It is more ergonomic and also has reduced latency for quicker responsiveness to writing speed and sensitivity, which can be adjusted as per preference. The precision is also much appreciated; I found myself hitting undo a lot less. Sketching, creating diagrams and jotting down general notes were a breeze, engendering faster productivity.

When launched, the tablet promised a better experience with DeX mode, the brand's One UI task bar which mimics the typical desktop experience. I found switching between apps annoying and often, apps crashed and I lost work or a point of a YouTube video I was watching. DeX needs more of an overhaul rather than bells and whistles, especially when more potential users are looking for products which help them get work done without glitches.

The Galaxy Tab S7 series is pricey (starting at ₹55,999), if this is still too expensive for you, opt for the recently-released Galaxy Tab S6 Lite if you are keen on keeping it Samsung-relevant, which comes with a host of great basic features and is quite sturdy too. The after-care for the brand's ecosystem of products is also prompt and helpful, so do be sure to take on the insurance plans especially with the few ongoing glitches and drawbacks in the device itself.

Is this sip for real?

These Scottish researchers have leveraged Raman spectroscopies to detect fake Scotch whisky – without opening the bottle



■ ABHISHEK CHATTERJEE

Researchers have developed a method to detect any adulteration in Scotch whisky and other distilled alcoholic drinks, without opening their containers. Developed by physicists from the University of St Andrews in Scotland, the method leverages laser. It is a simple and low-cost way to examine expensive drinks while being non-destructive and contactless.

Scotch whisky can be very expensive, with the price usually increasing with the drink's age. While testing for suspected fraud or adulteration of such pricey drinks, touchless sensing without opening the bottles would be preferable. This would preserve the original value of these products.

The team at St Andrews demonstrated a method called Raman spectroscopic analysis to examine the liquids in the bottle. Raman spectroscopy is a powerful and popular method to gain information at the molecular level, it has a wide range of applications in biomedicine, cultural heritage, and defence.

In the context of whisky, a laser beam is focused on the bottle. This generates Raman signals from the alcoholic spirit inside the bottle. However, with glass being a highly Raman active substance, regions of interest within the bottle are often masked. Unwanted signals originating from the bottle can significantly interfere with signals from its contents, reducing their effectiveness. This is a major obstacle with the method, researchers said.

Whisky, a chemically complex mixture, comprises thousands of compounds that contribute to the colour, taste and aroma of the beverage. Researchers have used infrared rays as well as processes that do not include the use of light to detect the purity of such drinks but those studies required direct analysis of the sample.

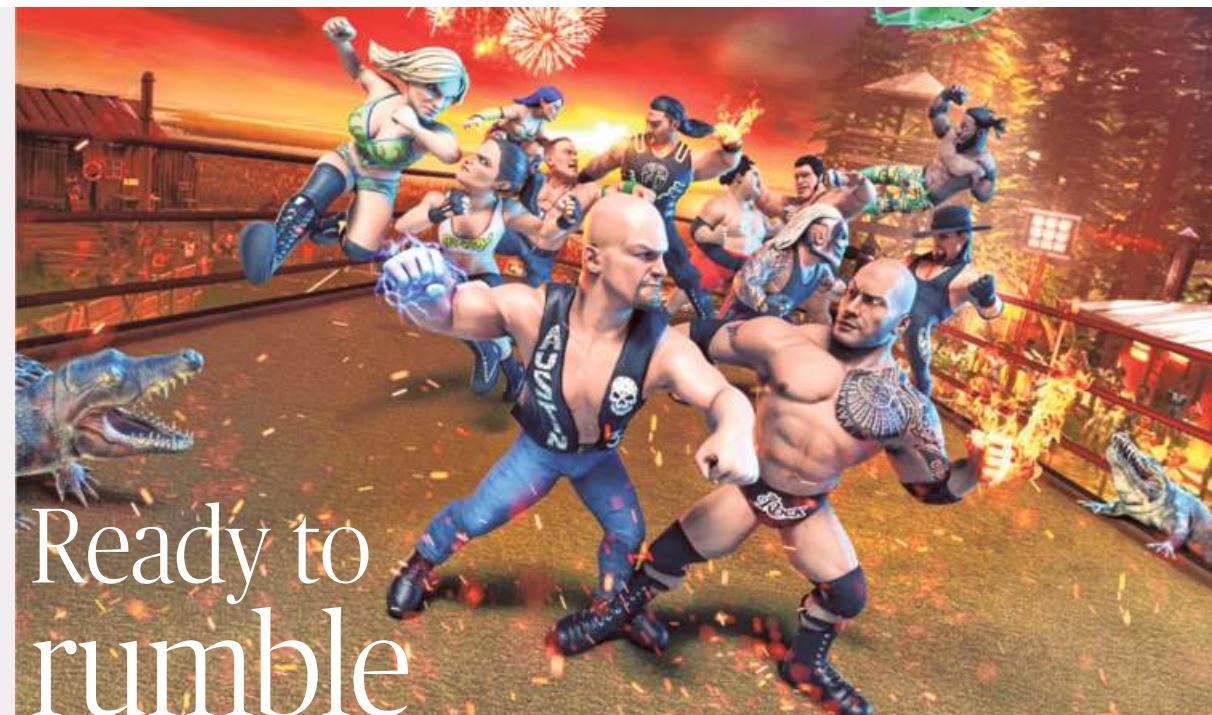
GAMESPOT

WWE 2k Battlegrounds from 2k Sports, sports a new look and power, bringing the ring to your home

■ JULIAN ALMEIDA

In the glorious days of cable television – before the Internet, smartphones, streaming and Fortnite – there was the WWF (World Wrestling Federation). Now known as WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment), it is still the same experience of muscular men and women pummelling each other in a rope-bound ring, in front of cheering fans... what is not to love? The franchise has had its share of excellent video games, though last year's 2k20 was a glitchy mess. Battlegrounds, recently launched, hopes to bounce back from that mess.

Like many 2k games there



Ready to rumble

WWE 2k BATTLEGROUNDS

DEVELOPER: Saber Interactive

PUBLISHER: 2k Sports

PRICE: ₹2,499 on PlayStation 4, Xbox One and Nintendo Switch

is a single-player story mode and tutorial; instead of a cutscene, you are expected to read a comic book. Which is fine, comics are great, except you will need to read this one in all its small font glory, whatever your screen size. While you are quietly moved through the story checkpoints, you play as several up-and-coming wres-

tlers. This is skippable, as you will want to jump into the ring as fast as you can.

The first thing you will notice is that all your favourite wrestlers have been given a look that can be only described as 'Fortnite meets Funko Pop figurines'. Very much like WWE All Stars, this over-the-top cartoon-y look works well when you consider how over-the-top

WWE can be. It is bold, it is colourful, and it is a whole lot of fun seeing your favourites in this new look.

Clever systems

Fighting against opponents – whether online, locally or even against the computer – is a lot of fun. The battle system is simple with punch, kick and grapple button presses. Perform a combo right, and your wrestler will hit or kick emanating a glow of a power move with surprising impact. The special moves are incredible as the wrestlers perform gravity-defying manoeuvres, with slow motion for effect. The system also makes use of clever timing-based reversals to counter attacks seamlessly. You can also jump out of the ring to pick up the usual chair, toy hammer or flaming barrels to demolish your opponents.

Wrestlers are categorised in classes, now based on speed. Each character has their own signature special moves, including the ability to heal and not to mention their finishers. There are a few environments, all colourful and deadly as you can use them to your advantage. While the battle is fun,

Punch, kick, throwdown
Screenshots from the video game ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



the micro-transactions sure are not.

WWE 2k Battlegrounds' micro-transactions are set up to inspire that same FOMO which Fortnite has perfected... except that Fortnite is free, and Battlegrounds requires a full price payment, of course. While there is an in-game store for cosmetics, which is expected, we are interested in the wrestlers themselves, and you can only play most of them after unlocking.

In order to level up, you earn Battle bucks and Golden Bucks which are harder to earn; these allow you to buy fighters. As fun as the game is, the slow grind to earn the bucks is daunting, especially given favourites such as Rhonda Rousey and The Rock are 300 Golden Bucks. You either pay for them in your money or time, either way you will be less ready to rumble and more than ready to grumble.

WWE 2k Battlegrounds is a step in the right direction and is perfect if you like this go-get-'em sport. While the excessive grinding feels over the top, it is a great game to play with friends, with an entertaining battle system and a novel style that should appeal to a broader range of players.

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



AVATARS OF UPCYCLING

From coasters to jackets, old scraps of cloth can be repurposed into almost everything. Here are a few small businesses helping keep landfills at bay

ANISHA MENEZES

Upcycling is not a new trend: Indians have always found ways to reinvent their gently used clothes. But over the past few decades, fast fashion with cheaper options has made apparel easily dispensable, and consequently more fabric ends up in landfills instead of being repurposed. Small businesses with an ethos of conservation, are focussing on a circular, sustainable and zero-waste model to reverse this trend.

**Artisan first: Green by Goonj**

Delhi-based Goonj, a social enterprise, has been at the forefront of taking urban excess and helping villages across the country since 1999. At the recently-launched Green by Goonj, unweary fabric, placed in the deft hands of rural artisans, is used to make a host of functional items.

Meenakshi Gupta, co-founder, explains, "Our women artists/didi's use their ingenuity to make over 100 products from scrap material – denim bags, bags made from shirts and trousers, mats out of torn saris, purses made of audio tapes. Goonj receives gently used clothes through collection camps at several corporate and educational institutes, and accepts donations as well. Even the small pieces of cloth wasted from upcycling go into making sujini, which are used in village communities as mattresses in summer and as quilts in winter." From ₹100 for a set of three jholas to ₹1,075 for eco mats, it's largely affordable.

Website: <https://goonj.org/green-by-goonj/>

**Upcycled accessories: Manikarnika**

Manikarnika stores, started in Bengaluru in 2017 by Vidya Ramamurthy, is known for its upcycled bags and patchwork quilts created with old saris and fabric waste. "We started with simple *pottis* and *thamboolam* bags, and grew into a fabric upcycling business. Today, we make placemats, quilts, carrybags, masks and accessories," states Ramamurthy. The business has also revived heirloom Guledgudda *khana* silk fabric from North Karnataka. The product line is so wide, that prices range from ₹20 to ₹4,000.

Email: vidya_anand@hotmail.com

Mending classics: Alter.it by Silkworm Boutique

Hisham Osman, who helms family-run sari and fabric store Silkworm Boutique in Chennai, says, "They just don't make Kanjeevarams like they used to, so we have expert craftsmanship that can restore saris to their former glory. We also undertake alteration for menswear at Alter.it, redesigning for fit and form, so that the lifespan of the item is stretched." The boutique, that has been running since 1999, charges ₹250 for darning, and upwards.

Call: 9841018191

New lease of denim: Punah

Aashita Jain, who hails from Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, in 2019 birthed Punah: an apparel brand that gives denim a second life. "Denim is versatile and sturdy, but very resource intensive. People don't realise it and discard their jeans so easily. That is why we have upcycled 58 denim articles and more than 100 kilograms of denim scraps in the last 10 months." From adding embroidery, *kantha*/sashiko stitching or patchwork to embellish jackets, to completely undoing a pair of jeans and creating an A-line dress or shirt, Punah believes in second chances. Prices begin at ₹3,500 and go up till ₹10,000: old family saris are converted to packaging material, and all items come with a patch kit, have seed paper care instructions and a scratch-off, cloth tag with tally marks for the number of times you wear it.

Email: contact@punah.co



Not just stationery: Paper Dolphin
For this popular, four-year-old business whose USP is its recycled paper, upcycling fabric waste was a happy coincidence. "We accept old home furnishing material and clothes with defects, and convert them into simple bags that you can slip into your purse on grocery runs," explains Urusha Maher, who only uses fabric that can't be salvaged. Other donations – in decent condition – are fixed and sent to old age homes across Chennai.

Email: thepaperdolphin@gmail.com



Thaan rejuvenated: People Kraft
It was in 2018 that Bengaluru-based Asha Scariya, armed with a background in fashion design, wanted to create a sustainable, women-centered business. She reached out to her network of suppliers in Bengaluru, to pick up the end pieces of rolls or *thaans*, that would otherwise be discarded. The result is a product line of 100 upcycled items created at People Kraft. Their bestseller is the Dumpling – a stylish and sturdy eight-compartment jewellery pouch. They also have reversible cloth coasters, zippered pouches, masks and collapsible tote bags – nothing costs more than ₹899. "During the lockdown, our employees started creating art with fabric waste and we are ideating on how to frame these stunning swatches or use them in new products," says Scariya.

Email: info@peoplekraft.com

POOCH CAFE**HAGAR THE HORRIBLE****TIGER****PEANUTS****CALVIN AND HOBBES****HOMING IN**

The year 2020 has been fertile for new **Podcasts**. Big media houses and home studios, produced new series of varied genres. You might have already listened to some of them. If not, here are some of our favourites from this year's releases.

PRAVEEN SUDEVAN

**Mission ISRO**

India's space missions – especially the latest ones, Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan – have attracted great fanfare. But not many know the story of how India's space

programmes started. ATS Studio's well-research podcast, Mission ISRO, featuring the delightful narration of Harsha Bhogle, tells us the story of how (and why) a fledgling nation, which was even struggling to feed its people, managed to kickstart a space mission. This is our must-listen recommendation for this year.

Episode length: 40 minutes (on average)

Available on: Exclusively on Spotify

**Today Explained**

Vox's Today Explained is over 300 episodes old. But the news explainer is more useful this year to make sense of the events unfolding around the world. The pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, the presidential elections... Monday to Friday, Sean Rameswaram and guests demystify the latest developments on important issues.

Episode length: 20 minutes (on average)

Available on: Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts and more

**Staying In With Emily & Kumail**

Emily V Gordon and Kumail Nanjiani's podcast isn't just a run-of-the-mill celebrity show. This is a pandemic-specific podcast in which the couple offers a lot of laughs along with some lessons. Emily's an immunocompromised person. Even before COVID-19, she has experienced the mental health ramifications of quarantining. Emily and Kumail talk about the challenges of isolation in detail.

Episode length: 90 minutes (on average)

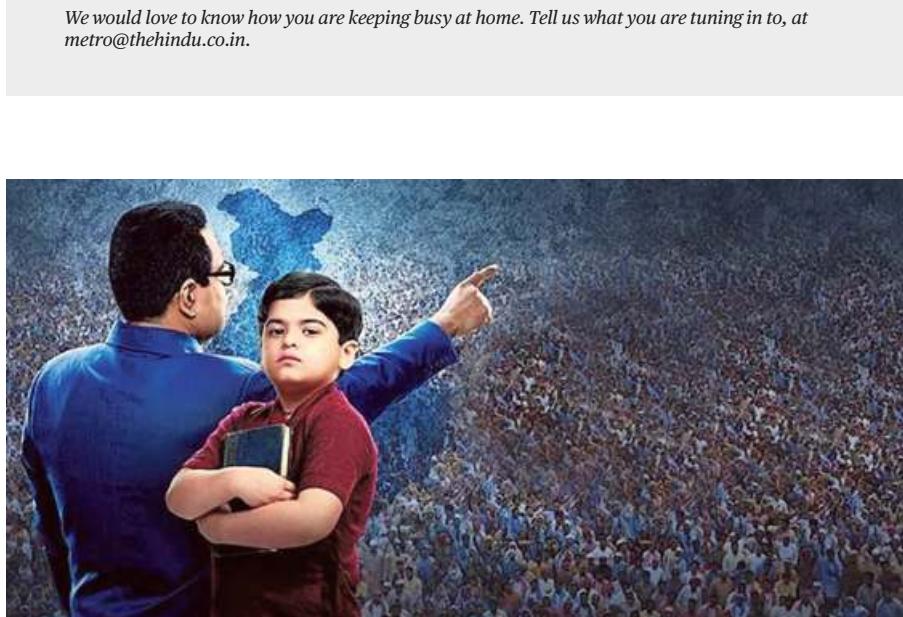
Available on: Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts and more

**The Rabbit Hole**

Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* has created a lot of buzz about the scary ramifications of extensive social media use. *The New York Times' The Rabbit Hole* also makes us ruminate on how technology – specifically, the Internet – changes us.

Episode length: 30 minutes (on average)

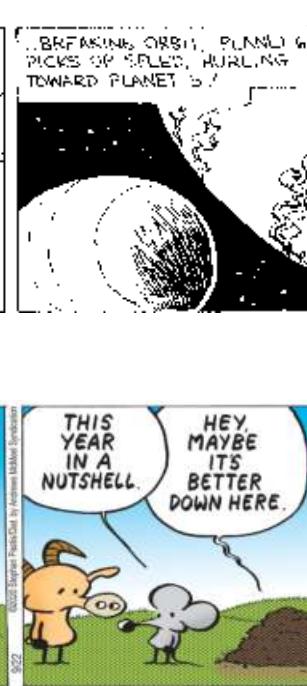
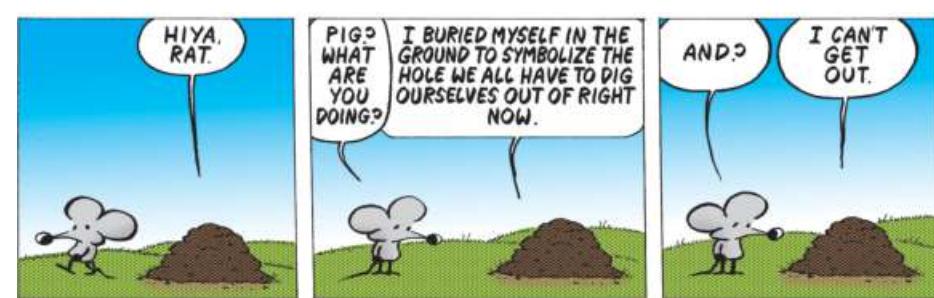
Available on: Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts, nytimes.com and more

**BR Ambedkar's life story**

A Telugu TV series on Zee Telugu is set to narrate the story of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, the Father of the Constitution of India. The social drama titled *Manu Ambedkar* in Telugu, dubbed from Marathi, is an inspirational on Babasaheb showcasing his journey from childhood to becoming India's first Minister of Law and Justice and later the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. With a compelling storyline, the series depicts his significant life events and inspirational qualities that made him the messiah of the less-privileged.

The show features Sagar Deshmukh in the role of Ambedkar.

Manu Ambedkar will be aired at 5.30 pm, Monday to Saturday, on Zee Telugu and HD.

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

Trump to pick SC nominee by Saturday

He rejects view that the Senate should wait to vote on the candidate until the Nov. 3 presidential poll

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump said on Monday he will nominate a replacement for the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Supreme Court at the end of this week and insisted that the Senate should vote before the coming election.

"I will announce it either Friday or Saturday and then the work begins, but hopefully it won't be too much work," Mr. Trump told Fox News. He said he wants to wait until after memorial services are over.

This will be Mr. Trump's third nominee for the top court since his 2016 election win, giving him the chance to cement a conservative-leaning majority on the panel for many years to come.

Mr. Trump rejected arguments that the Senate – controlled by his Republican party – should wait to vote on the nominee until after the November 3 presidential election, where he faces Democrat Joe Biden.

"The final vote should be taken before the election."



Final goodbye: A girl and her mother paying homage to Justice Ruth Ginsburg in front of the Supreme Court. ■AP

We have plenty of time for that," Mr. Trump said.

With Ginsburg's death last week, the constitutional court was left with only eight judges, raising the possibility of a 4-4 split in rulings just as the country enters what is widely predicted to be a close and contentious election. "We don't want to have a tie," Mr. Trump said.

Trump's shortlist

He confirmed that two women – Judge Amy Coney Barrett and Judge Barbara Lagoa – feature prominently on his

short list, noting that Ms. Lagoa is a Hispanic-American from the vital electoral state of Florida. Ms. Lagoa is "excellent, she's Hispanic, she's a terrific woman," he said. "We love Florida."

Mr. Trump dismissed reports that Ginsburg's dying wish, delivered to her granddaughter, was that her seat not be filled before a new President was sworn in. "I don't know she said that," he said, suggesting the statement was "written out" by Democratic leaders. "That came out of the wind."

Biden slams move to name SC candidate before polls

REUTERS
PHILADELPHIA/WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden urged Senate Republicans not to vote on any candidate nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court as the November election nears, calling President Donald Trump's plan an "exercise of raw political power."

A second Senate Republican on Sunday voiced objections to Mr. Trump's plan for a quick vote on a replacement to liberal Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died on Friday. Such an appointment by the President, if approved by the Senate, would cement a 6-3 conservative majority that could influence American law and life for decades.

"Voters of this country should be heard... they're the ones who this Constitution envisions should decide

who has the power to make this appointment," Mr. Biden, who leads Mr. Trump in national opinion polls, said. "To jam this nomination through the Senate is just an exercise of raw political power."

Mr. Biden said that if he wins the November 3 election, he should have the chance to nominate the next Supreme Court justice.

The former Vice-President rejected the idea of releasing the names of potential nominees, saying that doing so, as Mr. Trump did, could improperly influence those candidates' decisions in their current court roles and subject them to "unrelenting political attacks."

He reiterated his pledge to nominate an African-American woman to the court, which would be a historic first, if he has the opportunity.

Support for Taiwan independence doomed to fail: China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China ramped up its rhetoric over Taiwan on Monday, describing any support for its independence as "doomed to fail", and threatened retaliation against U.S. diplomatic visits to the island.

Taiwan has been ruled separately from China since the end of a civil war in 1949, but Beijing considers the island part of its territory.

awaiting reunification.

The island is a flashpoint with Washington, which promises military support to the elected government and has sent two envoys to Taipei in as many months.

At a press briefing on Monday, the Foreign Ministry said that the envoys' visits were a "political provocation" and threatened retaliation.

"China will take appro-

priate countermeasures, including targeting relevant individuals," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin, without elaborating.

He warned that the U.S. actions will "further damage the cooperation" between the U.S. and China.

Mr. Wang added that any support for Taiwan's independence is "doomed to fail".

Washington switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing in 1979.

Beijing rejects any recognition of Taiwan.

Washington's increased outreach to Taiwan under President Donald Trump is among sore points with Beijing as the countries clash over issues, including trade, security and the pandemic.

The U.S. Undersecretary of State for economic

growth, energy and the environment Keith Krach wrapped up a trip to Taiwan at the weekend, following on the heels of a trip by U.S. health chief Alex Azar in August.

Meanwhile, Taiwan said it scrambled fighters and deployed anti-missile systems on Monday after Chinese military jets entered its air defence zone for the fourth time in five days.

Modi-Rajapaksa virtual summit on Sept. 26

Colombo has asked New Delhi for a debt moratorium and an additional currency swap

MEERA SRINIVASAN
SUHASINI HAIDAR
COLOMBO/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold discussions with his Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa on September 26 in India's first virtual summit in the neighbourhood, even as Colombo awaits New Delhi's decision on its request for a debt moratorium and an additional currency swap.

"Yes, the meeting is confirmed," Rohan Welwita, media secretary to Mr. Rajapaksa, told *The Hindu* on Monday. The meeting will come two days after a scheduled virtual meeting of Foreign Ministers of the two countries, along with other regional counterparts, at the SAARC foreign ministers' forum on September 24.

The virtual summit is the

first official interaction between the leaders after they met in New Delhi in February this year. They have since spoken at least twice over the telephone, though. Mr. Rajapaksa's request at the February meeting for a debt moratorium of three years from New Delhi, to help Sri Lanka manage its fragile economy, is pending, as is Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's request to Mr. Modi – during a telephone call in May – for a "special" \$1.1-billion currency swap facility. Official sources in Colombo said both are "being discussed", while in July, the Reserve Bank of India signed a \$400 million swap facility with Sri Lanka's Central Bank.

Following Sri Lanka's August general elections, the Rajapaksa have consolidat-

ed political power with an impressive two-thirds in Parliament. However, they face one of the nation's biggest economic challenges yet, with the global pandemic only heightening it. Sri Lanka is due to repay outstanding loans amounting to nearly \$3 billion this year, including a non-negotiable \$1 billion sovereign bond maturing next month. While the official agenda of the 'virtual summit' is not known, issues of bilateral interest, including development projects and cooperation in the response to COVID-19, are likely talking points.

In particular, the leaders are expected to discuss the contentious East Container Terminal project at the Colombo Port, which India agreed to jointly develop with Japan and Colombo,

signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with the former government. However, the Rajapaksa administration is yet to give the proposal a thumbs up, after worker unions and nationalist groups protested "foreign involvement" in their "national assets". While those resisting the move recognise that over 70% of the transhipment business at the terminal – located near the China-backed 'Port City' in Colombo – comes from India, they are wary of the Adani group's reported interest in the deal.

13th Amendment

Sri Lanka's Tamil polity will keenly follow the summit to see if Colombo's commitment to implement the 13th Amendment – which devolves power to the provinces – is discussed, as some in

the Rajapaksa administration, including prominent Ministers, are consistently calling for the abolition of provincial councils that were created following the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987.

Following the global pandemic, India held its virtual summit in June, with the aim of continuing diplomatic engagement with its partners.

The first summit between Mr. Modi and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison saw nine agreements emerge, while the two countries issued a joint declaration on 'Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.'

India and Japan were expected to hold a summit early this month, but that did not happen in the wake of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's resignation.

Hundreds of whales stranded in Australia

Over 250 are stuck on a sand bar



Big challenge: Whales lie stranded on a sand bar near Strahan, Australia, on Monday. ■AP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SYDNEY

At least twenty-five whales have died and scientists are trying to rescue 250 more that are stranded in a remote bay on the Australian island of Tasmania, officials said on Monday.

Tasmania's environment department said the whales had become stuck on a sandbar in Macquarie Harbour, on the island's rugged and sparsely populated west coast.

Nic Deka, who is managing the incident response,

said two large pods were stranded on sandbars a few hundred metres apart inside the harbour. "They are in water but it's very difficult to see how many of those whales are deceased or what condition they're in," he told reporters in the nearby town of Strahan.

They are believed to be pilot whales but officials are yet to confirm the species.

Mass whale strandings occur often in Tasmania, but the large numbers involved present a daunting rescue prospect.

Israel to extradite sex crime accused

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JERUSALEM

An Israeli court ruled on Monday after years of legal wrangling that an ultra-Orthodox Jewish former school principal, suspected of dozens of cases of sexual abuse of her pupils in Australia, can be extradited to face trial.

The ruling delighted her alleged victims as "a victory for justice", although some steps remain in the extradition process as well as a possible appeal.

The Jerusalem district court, which in May determined Malka Leifer was mentally fit to stand trial, said in its ruling that "the defendant can be extradited to Australia for the crimes attributed to her in the extradition request".

Leifer, who was not in court on Monday but took part by videoconference, is accused of child sex abuse while she was a teacher and principal at an ultra-Orthodox school in Melbourne, where she had emigrated from Israel.

Bacteria behind deaths of 330 Botswana elephants

'They had consumed poisoned water'

REUTERS
GABORONE

Toxins in water produced by cyanobacteria killed more than 300 elephants in Botswana this year, officials said on Monday, announcing the result of an investigation into the deaths which had baffled and alarmed conservationists.

Cyanobacteria are microscopic organisms common in water and sometimes found in soil. Not all produce toxins but scientists say toxic ones are occurring more frequently as climate change drives up global temperatures.

Cyril Taolo, deputy director of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, told a news conference the number of dead elephants had risen to 330, from 281 reported in July.

Why not other animals? The department's principal veterinary officer Mmadi Reuben told the news conference: "Our latest tests have detected cyanobacterial

neurotoxins to be the cause of deaths. These are bacteria found in water." However we have many questions still to be answered such as why the elephants only and why that area only? We have a number of hypotheses we are investigating."

Other animals in the Okavango Panhandle region appeared unharmed.

Climate change

Some cyanobacterial blooms can harm people and animals and scientists are concerned about their potential impact as climate change leads to warmer winter temperatures, which many cyanobacteria prefer.

Southern Africa's temperatures are rising at twice the global average, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"It amounts to having the right conditions, in the right time, in the right place and these species will proliferate," said Professor Patricia Gilbert, who has studied cyanobacteria.

'World faces a surplus of multilateral challenges'

However, there is a deficit of solutions, says UN chief

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

Speaking at the UN's 75th anniversary commemoration, Secretary-General António Guterres said the world had a surplus of multilateral challenges but not enough multilateral answers to these.

"Never in modern history have we gone so many years without a military confrontation between the major powers, this is a great achievement of which member states can be proud and which we must always strive to preserve," Mr. Guterres said.



António Guterres

problematic before for other member states – such as those around common objectives and the down-ranking of human rights in the scheme of global challenges.

"The UN must focus on real action. It should aim at problem solving as it advances, security, development and human rights in parallel. The issue of development should be highlighted in the global macro framework," Mr. Xi said.

U.S. President Donald Trump was expected to deliver a video message on Monday morning but instead the U.S.'s Deputy Ambassador to the UN, Cherith Norman Chalet, delivered remarks on the country's behalf.

Resistant to reform

Ms. Chalet praised the UN for its achievements but also said the UN had been resistant to reform and vulnerable to autocratic regimes – presumably a reference to China.

"The United Nations has for too long been resistant to meaningful reform, too often lacking in transparency, and too vulnerable to the world's fragilities. We can only address them together today. We have a surplus of multilateral challenges and the deficit of multilateral solutions," Mr. Guterres said.

On Monday morning, the 193 members of the UN adopted a commemorative declaration, marking 75 years since the victors of the Second World War met in San Francisco to bring the

Real action

In a televised message, Chinese president Xi Jinping used phrases that have been

Pak. Opposition to start nationwide agitation

REUTERS
ISLAMABAD

Half a dozen major Pakistani opposition parties have joined forces to denounce the military, which they accuse of meddling in politics and rigging the 2018 elections to bring Prime Minister Imran Khan to power.

The six parties and some smaller groups signed a statement on Sunday an-

nouncing the creation of the Pakistan Democratic Movement to begin nationwide agitation, possibly culminating in a January march in Islamabad. "The (military) establishment should stop every kind of interference in politics forthwith," said the statement, which accuses Mr. Khan of failing on multiple counts, from the economy to foreign policy.

ELSEWHERE



Suga speaks to Trump in his first diplomatic call

TOKYO Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga held his first talks with U.S. President Donald Trump since he took office, a diplomatic phone call that was one of his first as the country's leader. AP

THE HINDU on Sunday
IN SCHOOL
AN EXCLUSIVE WEEKENDER FOR CHILDREN

30 TOPICS IDEAL FOR AGES 11 TO 17
3 ANNIVERSARY rd
4 OCTOBER 2020

BUMPER ISSUE

Brush up on all that is relevant in the context of today's rapidly changing world...

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CM YK

MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	38,034	-2.09
US Dollar	73.38	0.10
Gold	52,423	-0.47
Brent oil	41.48	-0.42

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	347.85	-10.00
Asian Paints	1972.55	-55.85
Axis Bank	423.35	-20.00
Bajaj Auto	2986.70	-64.25
Bajaj Finserv	5712.25	-176.20
Bajaj Finance	3330.15	-144.65
Bharti Airtel	467.75	-26.80
BPCL	401.45	-10.60
Britannia Ind	3629.30	-168.20
Cipla	768.10	-38.15
Coal India	121.65	-2.00
Dr Reddys Lab	5142.00	-191.35
Eicher Motors	2102.95	-50.00
GAIL (India)	88.20	-3.90
Grasim Ind	716.85	-28.15
HCL Tech	802.60	-8.00
HDFC	1708.15	-15.85
HDFC Bank	1049.30	-8.00
HDFC Life	579.35	-5.75
Hero MotoCorp	3055.35	-57.30
Hindustan	167.15	-12.35
Hind Unilever	2037.80	-60.90
ICICI Bank	350.70	-18.85
IndusInd Bank	560.60	-52.60
Bharti Infratel	188.75	-10.60
Infosys	1009.90	-7.75
Indian Oil Corp	77.70	-3.00
ITC	175.75	-3.35
JSW Steel	271.30	-16.40
Kotak Bank	187.85	-10.75
L&T	881.85	-18.85
M&M	622.45	-31.70
Maruti Suzuki	6626.95	-337.80
Nestle India Ltd.	15430.75	-656.30
NTPC	88.30	-2.25
ONGC	71.15	-3.15
PowerGrid Corp	170.50	-1.40
Reliance Ind	2255.85	-49.85
State Bank	185.80	-6.80
Shree Cement	18903.70	-617.25
Sun Pharma	503.65	-19.70
Tata Motors	137.45	-10.45
Tata Steel	373.40	-22.10
TCS	2465.30	-15.40
Tech Mahindra	787.25	-17.40
Titan	1119.90	-43.70
UltraTech Cement	3878.90	-123.70
UPL	532.20	-5.10
Wipro	311.90	-4.60
Zee Entertainment	210.70	-9.60

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	73.18	73.50
Euro	86.22	86.59
British Pound	94.07	94.49
Japanese Yen (100)	70.27	70.60
Chinese Yuan	10.79	10.84
Swiss Franc	80.02	80.37
Singapore Dollar	53.84	54.08
Canadian Dollar	55.29	55.55
Malaysian Ringgit	17.74	17.84
Australian Dollar	53.15	53.39

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



HCL Technologies may buy DWS for A\$158 mm
NEW DELHI
HCL Technologies on Monday announced its intent to acquire Australian IT services firm DWS for A\$158.2 million to enhance presence in the Australia and New Zealand. DWS' FY20 revenue stood at A\$167.9 million.

FSS to update card operations of Everlink

Financial Software and Systems (FSS), a global payments technology firm, has bagged a mandate from Canada's Everlink Payment Services Inc. to modernise its card operations. Everlink Payment Services, which is a provider of payment solutions and services for Canadian credit unions, banks and small and medium enterprises, chose FSS's Unified Card Management System. It is scheduled to go live in the fourth quarter of this year, said FSS.

SBI allows online check for COVID-19 loan rejig

MUMBAI
State Bank of India (SBI) has rolled out a facility on its website for restructuring COVID-19-impacted home, auto, personal and education loans. Retail borrowers need to enter the account number and after OTP verification, can find out if they are eligible. Under the resolution framework devised by RBI, borrowers whose loan accounts were classified as standard for more than 30 days as on March 1 and incomes impacted by COVID-19 are eligible.

Route Mobile shares jump 86% on debut

NEW DELHI
Shares of Route Mobile Ltd. on Monday made a stellar stock market debut as they jumped 86% at close of ₹350. On the BSE, it got listed at ₹708, reflecting a jump of 102.28% from the issue price. During the day, it rose to a high of ₹735, registering a gain of 110%. It later closed at ₹651.10, higher by 86%. On the NSE, it debuted at ₹717, up 104.85% from the issue price and finally settled at ₹650.30, up 85.8%. PTI

Banks not risk averse: SBI chief

'Lenders being prudent amid muted demand to avoid repeat of post-2008 scenario'



Equity gap: The number of people or businesses with the capacity to invest has shrunk, says Mr. Kumar. ■ SHASHI ASHWAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Asserting that there is a muted demand for loans, SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar on Monday said banks are not risk averse but being prudent in these trying times to avoid a repeat of the post-2008 scenario when there was 'dilution' in credit underwriting standards.

Data clearly shows that investment in the economy has come down, the head of the country's biggest lender said. "If the capex [capital expenditure] is not happening and investment in the economy is not happening at the same pace, then obviously this is a demand issue and the risk aversion would be where there is a demand and banks are not lending," he said at a virtual event organised by AIMA. Non-food

bank credit grew 6.7% year-on-year in July as against growth of 11.4% in the same month of 2019, as per latest data from the Reserve Bank of India. Bank credit in July stood at ₹1.48 lakh crore.

For banks, to give debt requires equity from promoters, Mr. Kumar said, adding

that the number of people or business houses with the capacity to invest had shrunk.

Want of entrepreneurs

In such circumstances, there was a need to create more businesses and entrepreneurs who have the capability to invest in operations and

borrow, he noted.

"If people are benchmarking that what happened after 2008 where there was a lot of money supplied by the banks and there was dilution of the credit underwriting standards and then banking system and the country paid a heavy price."

"Banks, in my view, they are being prudent," he said.

Asked if further rate cuts would spur growth, Mr. Kumar said whatever reduction had happened had not been able to push investment.

Inflation, the SBI chief said, was supply side driven.

"Right now, the demand is muted, discretionary spend is muted, so we have to do everything to keep our supply chains in order and put them up and running. Inflation will come under control," Mr. Kumar added.

HDFC Bank 'to vigorously defend itself' in U.S. suit

Lender denies claims tied to its ADR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

HDFC Bank has denied allegations made in a class action suit filed by a U.S. law firm and said it would defend itself vigorously.

The law firm's suit is seeking damages for the losses incurred by investors because of alleged "materially false and misleading" representations by the bank. It has specifically named the bank's CEO and MD of over 25 years, Aditya Puri, his designated successor Sashidhar Jagdishan and company secretary Santosh Haldankar as defendants.

The complaint did not mention the exact quantum of the damages sought.

The allegations pertain to the vehicle finance vertical, where the bank acknowledged some improprieties. (With PTI inputs)

Insurers can use video based KYC identification

Ensure process is encrypted: IRDAI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

Insurance regulator IRDAI has permitted life, general and health insurers to undertake video-based identification process (VBIP) of customers.

An optional, electronic way of identification as part of the know-your-customer (KYC) process, VBIP is to facilitate insurers or their authorised personnel to collect information, including necessary KYC documents.

This is for carrying out client due diligence and to ascertain veracity of information furnished by the customer/beneficiary.

Stating that the VBIP process has to be seamless, secure and real-time, the regulator said customer consent was a must for the audio-video interaction.

SBI raises ₹7,000 cr. via Basel III bonds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

State Bank of India on Monday said it had raised ₹7,000 crore via Basel III compliant bonds.

"The Committee of Directors for Capital Raising at its meeting of held today on September 21, 2020 accorded its approval to allot 70,000 Basel III compliant non-convertible, taxable, redeemable... debt instruments in the nature of debentures aggregating to ₹7,000 crore, to bond subscribers," SBI said in a regulatory filing. Allotment of bonds took place on the same date. The bonds qualify as tier II capital and have a face value of ₹10 lakh each, bearing coupon rate of 6.24% per annum payable annually for a term of 10 years, it said.



All accounts opened or any service provided based on VBIP will be "activated only after being subject to proper verification by the insurer to ensure that the integrity of process is maintained and is beyond doubt," the IRDAI said in a circular.

"India's imports from China have declined by 27.6% during April-August this fiscal to \$21.6 billion over the same period previous year, Parliament was informed.

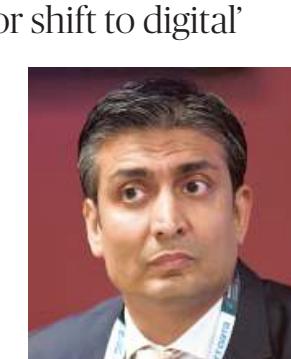
Value of imports from China stood at \$4.98 billion in August and \$5.58 in July, according to the data provided by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in his written reply to the Lok Sabha.

"India's imports from China have declined by 27.6% during April-August, 2020-21 over the corresponding period of the previous year," he said.

In a separate reply, the Minister said there is no proposal under consideration on withdrawal of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to China.

IT services industry has stabilised: Rishad Premji

Firms want help for shift to digital'



The IT services industry has stabilised with customers coming back, looking for a shift to digital, said Rishad Premji, chairman, Wipro.

Speaking at an All India Management Association (AIMA) event, Mr. Premji said Indian IT services industry struggled during the April-June quarter because customers had cut spending on technology early on during the COVID-19 crisis.

Since then, the industry has stabilised with customers coming back looking for help in shifting to the digital model. "There is a change in the customers' mindset and they are becoming more comfortable with the digital medium," he said.

He further said the digi-

tal-delivery model had opened up tremendous opportunities for the Indian IT sector, especially in the area of talent sourcing.

"We can crowdsource talent from anywhere in the world and provide the same quality of work from anywhere," Mr. Premji said, adding "this makes talent more inclusive."

bor, he noted.

"If people are benchmarking that what happened after 2008 where there was a lot of money supplied by the banks and there was dilution of the credit underwriting standards and then banking system and the country paid a heavy price."

"Banks, in my view, they are being prudent," he said.

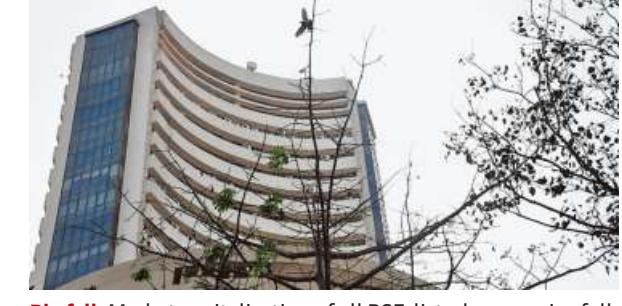
Asked if further rate cuts would spur growth, Mr. Kumar said whatever reduction had happened had not been able to push investment.

Inflation, the SBI chief said, was supply side driven.

"Right now, the demand is muted, discretionary spend is muted, so we have to do everything to keep our supply chains in order and put them up and running. Inflation will come under control," Mr. Kumar added.

Investors lose ₹4.23 lakh cr. as global sell-off hits stocks

Sensex dives 812 points, Nifty closes below 11,300-mark



Big fall: Market capitalisation of all BSE-listed companies fell to ₹154.76 lakh crore. ■ PAUL NORONHA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

The Sensex dived 812 points while the Nifty closed below the

Chahal triggers a collapse, spins it Royal Challengers' way

Sunrisers lose their way after the Bairstow-Pandey stand; Padikkal makes it a memorable debut with a classy knock

IPL 2020

SPORTS BUREAU

A terrific spell from Yuzvendra Chahal (three for 18) helped Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) defeat Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by 10 runs in its IPL opener at Dubai on Monday.

Leg-spinner Chahal, the leader of the RCB bowling attack, took three crucial wickets to drag his side back into the contest. He first stifled the settled Manish Pandey (34, 33b) before forcing a false shot from the batsman.

Chahal next scalped the key wicket of Jonny Bairstow (61, 43b, 6x4, 2x6), who made no contact off an attempted slog.

Luck had finally run out for Bairstow, who had received no less than three lives through dropped catches from Aaron Finch, Dale Steyn and Devdutt Padikkal.

Next man Vijay Shankar played all over a googly and

lost his stumps for a golden duck.

With the top-order back in the hut, RCB piled on the pressure. SRH all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, severely hampered by an injury, bravely came in to bat at eight-drop, but holed out for a duck. The last wicket pair of T. Natarajan and Sandeep Sharma were left with 18 runs to get in the final over – a bridge too far for the tailenders.

After being put in to bat, RCB roared on a sparkling innings from opener Padikkal (56, 42b, 8x4) and a late assault from A.B. de Villiers (51, 30b, 4x4, 2x6) to post a respectable total.

Showcasing his range

Padikkal shone bright in his IPL debut, showcasing a wide range of shots. He got going with a lofted shot over midwicket off pacer Sandeep and followed up with a glance to the fine-leg fence. Abhishek Sharma and substitute Fabian Allen nearly col-



Making it count: Devdutt Padikkal showed plenty of promise at the top of the order for RCB with a free-flowing half-century.

Right: Rashid Khan is bowled neck and crop by Navdeep Saini. • BCCI/IPL

southpaw, with flowing shots around the park.

Padikkal got to his fifty courtesy a mistake from Rashid Khan, who misjudged a skier at deep square-leg.

Fellow opener Finch made a sedate 27-ball 29, falling to a carrom ball from Natarajan to Rashid at deep mid-

lided and messes up another catch a few minutes later, before Vijay Shankar flattened Padikkal's stumps.

When it was time to open up, Kohli could only manage to heave a slower ball from Natarajan to Rashid at deep mid-

skipper Virat Kohli (14, 13b) and de Villiers kept the big hits at bay, preferring to take the singles and doubles.

RCB scored only 77 runs in the last 10 overs, a disappointing end to an innings which started so brightly.

wicket. de Villiers provided the late fireworks, clearing his left leg to get power on his bat swing.

Rashid Khan b Saini 0 (1b), Abhishek Sharma run out 7 (4b, 1x4), Rashid Khan b Saini 6 (5b, 1x4), Bhuvneshwar Kumar b Saini 0 (2b), Sandeep Sharma c Kohli b Steyn 9 (6b, 1x4), Mitchell Marsh c Kohli b Dube 0 (1b), T Natarajan (not

Fleming hails Sam's attitude



Sam Curran. • PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

CSK's head coach Stephen Fleming is impressed with debutant Sam Curran's attitude and said his contribution in the IPL opener went a long way in covering the absence of Dwayne Bravo.

"The things that impressed us with Sam is his attitude first and foremost, almost the harder it gets the better he gets, his all-round skill component and the fact that the captain was able to trust him straightforwardly to go in at a crucial time and hit the way he did."

Royals up against an upbeat Super Kings

Archer's presence could be vital to the fortunes of Steve Smith's side



Lungisani Ngidi...CSK's

hit-man. • BCCI/IPL



Jofra Archer.

• TWITTER/RAJASTHANROYALS

hasn't exactly been consistent. The likes of Sanju Samson, Robin Uthappa, Jaydev Unadkat and Varun Aaron have failed to live up to the expectations over the years.

Super Kings have once again showed how to work around with available resources and Sam Curran

coming good with an all-round show means that Dwayne Bravo's absence won't matter even if he misses a few more games due to injury.

Rayudu and Faf du Plessis perfectly maintained the CSK "run-chase template" of attacking in the back 10 ov-



ERS, while the addition of Piyush Chawla, a very successful IPL bowler, also paid dividends.

It needs to be seen how Deepak Chahar is shaping up after sustaining a niggle in the final over of the MI innings. In case he can't make it, CSK has a ready replacement in Shardul Thakur.

The Sharjah pitch will be a different challenge for the bowlers both in terms of surface as well as the size of the ground.

Smith hopes to be available for CSK game

Royals captain begins training

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

KOZHIKODE

Steve Smith looks quite likely to play on Tuesday.

The Australian, who had to sit out the ODI series against England earlier this month after being hit on the head during a nets session, expressed hope that he would be able to take the field for Rajasthan Royals' opening IPL fixture against Chennai Super Kings at Sharjah.

"[I have] been in Dubai for a couple of days now with some good rest and then got into a bit of running," said Smith. "Yesterday I did a bit of zig-zag running, which is part of the protocols to pass to get back to play. I'll have a hit in the nets. [I hope to] be good to play [on Tuesday]."

The Royals captain said it felt good to catch up with his teammates – old and new. "The guys have been



Steve Smith. • BCCI/IPL

here for a month now and from all reports, the training has been magnificent. We have a good squad this year, really strong," he said.

He said CSK and Mumbai Indians have been two really strong teams for a long time.

"Hopefully we can get our campaign off to a good start," Smith said.

Royals' new coach Andrew McDonald said the captain's availability was fantastic news.

Ruturaj back in training for Super Kings



Ruturaj Gaikwad.

• TWITTER@CHENNAIIPL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

Chennai Super Kings batsman Ruturaj Gaikwad was back in training ahead of

Tuesday's IPL game against Rajasthani Royals after clearing the two mandatory COVID-19 tests.

The 23-year-old had tested positive for COVID-19 and was in quarantine for two weeks. He had missed CSK's tournament opener against Mumbai Indians.

It really hurts, says Mayank

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

Crestfallen after losing its IPL opener, Kings XI Punjab's Mayank Agarwal said it felt terrible to not close the game after making a stupendous comeback against Delhi Capitals here.

Chasing 158 to win, KXIP was looking down the barrel at 55 for five but Mayank's blistering 89 took it to 157. The team needed one run off the final two balls but Marcus Stoinski's twin strike took

the game to the Super Over, in which Punjab came a cropper.

Tough day

"We had a tough day. There are a lot of positives to take out. The way we came back was fantastic, the way we bowled with the new ball was terrific. It really hurts to not close off the game from the situation we were in, feels terrible," Mayank told KXIP TV.

"This is just the first game. We can get things rolling again, let's see how we will go in the coming games. I think to play a game like that first up was fantastic. Everyone was up for it, guys really put in the effort.

Should have finished'

"Definitely, we should have finished the game when we needed one run. We batted extremely well to reach there. I don't know what to say (about the final moments)."

Super Kings have once again showed how to work around with available resources and Sam Curran



Mayank Agarwal...great knock, but to no avail.

• BCCI/IPL

Kings XI appeals against 'short run' call

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI

Kings XI Punjab has appealed against on-field umpire Nitin Menon's controversial 'short run' call during a crucial period of the game against Delhi Capitals. KXIP lost in a Super Over.

"We have appealed to the match referee. While a human error can happen and we understand that, there is no room for human errors like these in a world-class

tournament like the IPL. This one run could cost us a playoff berth," KXIP CEO Satish Menon said.

From TV footage, it was apparent that umpire Menon, positioned at square leg, had erred in calling non-striker Chris Jordan for a 'short run' during the 19th over of KXIP's chase.

Replays showed that Jordan's bat was inside the crease before he had turned for the second run.



Parallax error? Umpire Nitin Menon's positioning could well have been the reason for calling Chris Jordan's run one short.

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

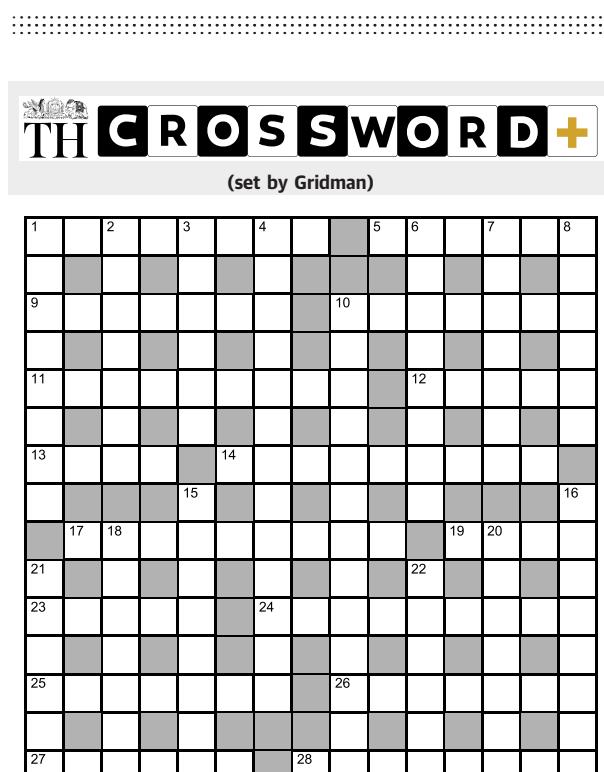
FAITH

Invincible Garuda

Garuda's strength was incomparable, which was why he was able to break through every barrier that stood in his way when he went to get the nectar in the celestial kingdom. Indra hurled the vajra at Garuda. But even this did not hurt Garuda. What was the secret behind Garuda's strength? Indra's disrespect of sages was one of the reasons for Garuda's power! And this arrogance of Indra predated the birth of Garuda, said V.S. Karunakarachari in a discourse.

Kashyapa, Indra's father, was going to perform a yaga. Many sages made their way to the yaga. Indra too set out to participate in the event. On the way, he saw the valakilyas, tiny sages not higher than one's thumb, also going to the yaga. They were unable to carry even the samit individually, and it required a joint effort of all seven of them to carry the samit. A little further on, there was a pond to be crossed, and the sages, unable to cross it, fell into it. Indra was amused by the sight. And he went on his way mocking them. When he arrived at the site of the yaga, he found his father waiting for the valakilyas. He told his father that he had seen them fall into a pond and had laughed at them. His father said he feared what the valakilyas would do because of the insult. He ran to apologise to them.

In the meanwhile, the valakilyas had themselves performed a yaga, and had brought forth a challenger to Indra, one who would be more powerful than Indra. Alarmed, Indra requested them not to endanger his position. They said that they could not undo what they had done, but the new leader would not become lord of the devas, but would be lord of the birds instead. This Pakshiraja was Garuda. He was the embodiment of the tapas of the valakilyas, and was hence strong.



ACROSS

- 1 Honest saint's honest about answer (8)
- 5 On reflection, wrong by one new resident (4-2)
- 9 A pencil drawing of a bird (7)
- 10 One involved in open case (7)
- 11 The man's simple and cruel (9)
- 12 Applaud principal head wanting increment (5)

DOWN

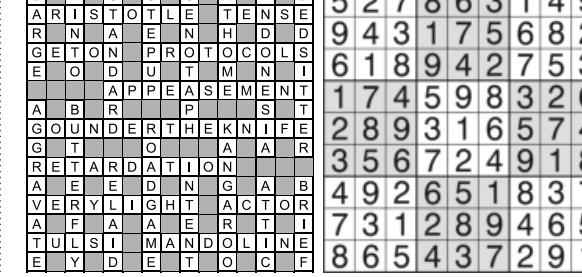
- 1 County accepts software for a gem (8)
- 2 About the property contract – let it go! (7)
- 3 Stimulate one new spy, say (6)
- 4 When, in a form of protest, you may yearn for a bite? (6,7)
- 6 Break in travel abroad (8)
- 7 Mournful English, and Gaelic outpouring (7)
- 8 Stone container turned upside down to get seasoning (6)
- 10 Assignment to worker relating to a wellness recovery period (4-9)
- 15 Vie with Arabs in a way that is irritating (8)
- 16 Gold thus put in container by islander (8)
- 18 Muzzle-loaders are strict disciplinarians (7)
- 20 Small child learner one had met with crash helmet (7)
- 21 Legal action to recover priest's last rupee ended (6)
- 22 Put faith in Len and Roy striving together (4,2)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13046 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



TV PICKS

FIH Pro League: SS Select 2 (SD & HD), 7 p.m. & 9.30 p.m.
Hamburg Open: SONY SIX (SD & HD), 2 p.m.

IN BRIEF



Davis' buzzer-beater lifts Lakers over Nuggets
ORLANDO
Anthony Davis drained a three-pointer as time expired to seal Los Angeles Lakers' 105-103 victory over Denver Nuggets Sunday for a 2-0 lead in the NBA Western Conference finals.
The results: WC finals: LA Lakers 105 (Davis 31, James 26) bt Denver Nuggets 103 (Jokic 30, Murray 25) Lakers 2-0. AFP



Barty picks up golf title during corona break

SYDNEY
Women's tennis World No. 1 Ashleigh Barty has won the Brookwater Golf Club title with a commanding 7 & 5 triumph in the matchplay final. Barty, who has also been a professional cricketer, has now added another string to her sporting bow. The Australian would ordinarily be in Europe at this time preparing to defend her French Open crown, but pulled out over coronavirus fears. AFP



Suarez cuts Barca ties, agrees Atletico terms

BARCELONA
Barcelona striker Luis Suarez has agreed a deal with the club to end his contract and settled on personal terms with Atletico Madrid, according to reports in Spain on Monday. Suarez, 33, who has one year to run on his Barcelona contract, agreed a deal with the club to cut it short, reports said. REUTERS



Vidal arrives in Italy to complete Inter move

MILAN
Chile midfielder Arturo Vidal arrived in Italy on Sunday to complete a move to Inter Milan after agreeing his exit from Barcelona, the Serie A club confirmed. Vidal is expected to sign the two-year contract, with an option of a third one, for six million euros (\$7.1 million) per season. AFP



Hall holds off Buhai in playoff for Portland title
LOS ANGELES
England's Georgia Hall won the Portland Classic with a par at the second playoff hole, denying South African Ashleigh Buhai a first US LPGA title. Thailand's Moriya Jutanugarn and American Yelimi Noor shared third place. AFP



Wawrinka splits with coach Magnus Norman
PARIS
Stan Wawrinka announced on Monday that he was separating from his coach Magnus Norman "by mutual consent", putting an end to eight years of collaboration during which the Swiss won his three Grand Slam tournaments. AFP

DeChambeau wins maiden Major

Matthew Wolff misses a couple of possible records in finishing second

US OPEN GOLF

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Bryson DeChambeau captured his first Major title on Sunday, firing a three-under 67 to win the 120th US Open.

The 27-year-old American, who bulked up during the coronavirus lockdown in a bid to add power to his game, eagled the par-5 ninth from just inside 40 feet and rolled to a six-stroke victory over 21-year-old countryman Matthew Wolff.

Wolff led partner DeChambeau by two strokes when the day began but, on his US Open debut, failed to become the youngest US Open winner since Bobby Jones in 1923 and youngest Major winner since Tiger Woods at the 1997 Masters.

"Oh my gosh. I can't believe it," said DeChambeau, renowned for his scientific approach to the sport.

"It has been a lot of hard work."

DeChambeau hit only 23



Prized possession: Bryson DeChambeau with his first Major trophy. ■ AFP

fairways for the week but finished 72 holes on six-under 274.

DeChambeau became the first player since 1955 to win with the only sub-par score in the final round, and just the fourth ever to do it.

South African Louis Oosthuizen was a distant third on 282, one stroke ahead of American Harris English af-

ter both fired 73 on Sunday.

Xander Schauffele shot 74 and settled for fifth on 284, one stroke ahead of two fellow Americans, top-ranked Dustin Johnson and Will Za-

latoris.

Thomas joint eighth

Third-ranked American Justin Thomas finished on 286 to share eighth in a pack with

fourth-ranked Rory McIlroy, who closed with a 75.

The scores: 274: Bryson DeChambeau (69, 68, 70, 67); **280:** Matthew Wolff (66, 74, 65, 75); **282:** Louis Oosthuizen (67, 74, 68, 73).

283: Harris English (68, 70, 72, 73); **284:** Xander Schauffele (68, 72, 70, 74).

285: Dustin Johnson (73, 70, 72, 70), Will Zalatoris (70, 74, 70, 71).

Leicester tops the charts after come-from-behind victory

Winning start for Pirlo as Juve coach; Real Madrid toils

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Leicester moved to the top of the table on goal difference ahead of Arsenal, Everton, Crystal Palace and Liverpool after it came from behind to beat Burnley 4-2.

After a disappointing end to last season when it missed out on Champions League football, Brendan Rodgers' side has responded well with two convincing wins to start the new campaign.

Chris Wood fired the visitors into a 10th-minute lead at the King Power, but Harvey Barnes sparked the fight-back before Erik Pieters'

own goal, James Justin and Dennis Praet's blistering finish handed the Foxes all three points.

Andrea Pirlo got his coaching career off to a winning start as Juventus launched its bid for a 10th consecutive league title with a 3-0 win over Sampdoria on Sunday.

Swedish debutant Dejan Kulusevski opened the scoring after 13 minutes in Turin with Leonardo Bonucci adding a second on 78 minutes and Cristiano Ronaldo a late third.

Real Madrid began the defence of its Spanish title with a tepid 0-0 draw at Real Sociedad on Sunday as Martin

Odegaard made his first league start for the reigning champion against his former club.

The results:

Premier League: Leicester 4 (Barnes 20, Pieters 50+og, Justin 61, Praet 79) bt Burnley 2 (Wood 10, Dunne 73).

Serie A: Genoa 4 (Destro 6, Pandev 9, Zappacosta 34, Djaja 75) bt Crotone 1 (Riviere 28); Sassuolo 1 (Bourabia 87) drew with Cagliari 1 (Simeone 77); Juventus 3 (Kulusevski 13, Bonucci 78, Ronaldo 88) bt Sampdoria 0.

LaLiga: Huesca 0 lost to Cadiz 2 (Negredo 11, Pombo 83); Granada 2 (Soldado 7, Machis 79) bt Alaves 1 (Joselu 22); Real Betis 2 (Fekir 10+pen, Carvalho 18) bt Valladolid 0; Real Sociedad 0 drew with Real Madrid 0.



Firing it in: Dennis Praet shoots past a maze of Burnley defenders to score Leicester's fourth. ■ AFP

An extravaganza with many thrills and spills

Pogacar's win is a generational shift to the ascendency of younger riders

TOUR DE FRANCE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

Cycling's rescheduled Tour de France made a proud entry into Paris on Sunday with its boyish champion Tadej Pogacar the figurehead of a storied 21-day extravaganza crowned by a twist in the tail.

Many predicted the pandemic would prevent the race making it the 3,400 kilometres from the Mediterranean city of Nice to the French capital.

And that ever-constant tension provided the drumbeat for the series of cautionary tales and the modern day David slaying Goliath re-enactment that unfolded before a stunned global audience.

Saturday's gut-wrenching penultimate stage time trial

saw the 21-year-old Pogacar rip the yellow jersey from his 30-year-old Slovenian compatriot Primoz Roglic.

So just how did Roglić's Jumbo-Vismara team that had appeared to dominate a Tour, destroying the hopes of the home nation and ending the reign of Dave Brailsford's British outfit Ineos, let victory slip from its grasp?

All-time great Eddy Merckx didn't mince his words.

"They were asking for it riding defensively like that. Imagine letting yourself get taken like that," said the five-time winner.

Pogacar's win is not only one of the sports stories of the year, but also marks a generational shift to the ascendency of younger riders, following as it does the story of Bernal's success a year ago at 22.

Who is Tadej Pogacar?

A factfile of the 2020 Tour de France winner

- At 21 years and 365 days, Pogacar is the second-youngest winner in Tour de France's 117-year history after Henry Cornet in 1904 (19 years, 352 days)
- He is the first Slovenian to win the Tour
- The 22-year-old is the 12th man to clinch the title on his debut. The last was Frenchman Laurent Fignon in 1983
- In May 2019, Pogacar became the youngest cyclist (20) to win a UCI World Tour race at the Tour of California
- The 2020 Tour was only Pogacar's second Grand Tour after the 2019 Vuelta a Espana where he finished third
- Pogacar held the Yellow Jersey during this year's Tour only for one stage - the last stage leading into Paris

Who is Tadej Pogacar?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PERTH

Djokovic wins record 36th Masters

Halep triumphs as injured Pliskova concedes final

ROME MASTERS

REUTERS
ROME

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic overcame a sluggish start to lift his fifth Rome Masters crown on Monday, defeating Argentine Diego Schwartzman 7-5, 6-3 for a record 36th ATP Masters crown.

Playing his maiden ATP 1000 final, eighth seed Schwartzman raced out of the blocks for a 3-0 lead as Djokovic struggled to put a lid on his backhand errors.

An on-and-off drizzle added to Djokovic's frustration but he still found a way past Schwartzman's serve to draw level at 3-3.

Djokovic's relentless baseline hitting came to the fore when he broke Schwartzman in the 12th game to take the opening set, despite committing 18 unforced errors.

Schwartzman snatched another early break in the second set but this time Djokovic was quick to respond. The top seed stepped up the



Third is the charm: Simona Halep got her hands on the Rome trophy after two failed attempts in 2017 and 2018. ■ AFP

intensity to break Schwartzman's serve twice before serving out the match comfortably to seal victory.

Earlier in the women's event, top seed Simona Halep won her first title here defeating defending champion Karolina Pliskova, who retired while trailing 6-0, 2-1.

World No. 2 Halep was competing in her third

Prajnesh advances, Nagal exits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PARIS

Indian tennis player Prajnesh Gunneswaran advanced to the second round of the French Open men's singles qualifying event. However, the country's top player Sumit Nagal bowed out after a narrow defeat here on Monday.

Seeded 16th, Nagal lost 7-6(4), 7-5 to Germany's Dustin Brown. Prajnesh got the better of Turkey's Cem Ilkel 6-3, 6-1.

Frenchman Tristan Lamasine defeated Ramkumar Ramanathan 7-5, 6-2.

Langer feels continuity could be the watchword for Australia against India

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PERTH

Australia head coach Justin Langer has hinted that they will go with tried and tested players when India arrives for a four-Test series at the end of the year unless an exceptional performer emerges from the Sheffield Shield.

Set for December 3 start

The series, India's first Test outing since the February-March contest in New Zealand, is set to start on December 3.

But there is still some con-



Justin Langer. ■ GETTY IMAGES

fusion over the venues since different Australian States have different lockdown protocols. "We've been able to play some great Test cricket in the last 12-18 months."

Gundogan tests positive for COVID



Ilkay Gundogan. ■ FILE PHOTO

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Manchester City midfielder Ilkay Gundogan has tested positive for coronavirus, the Premier League club announced on Monday.

"Ilkay is now observing a 10-day period of self-isolation in accordance with Premier League and UK government protocol on quarantine," said a City statement.

Gundogan is the third City player to return a positive test this month, following Aymeric Laporte and Riyad Mahrez.

"I think we had read and heard so much about the pandemic being a deadly disease, the first few days were stressful and anxious."

"Although I have been in some of the most difficult

match situations as a professional, I had never felt this stressed," Mandeep said in a Hockey India release.

New experience

"I was never taken away in an ambulance, never been seriously injured either. So, this phase was a new experience for me."

"After recovering, they (Hockey India) even gave us an option to return home to take a break if we felt like it but we wanted to stay back and rejoin the rest of the group," said the forward.



Mandeep Singh. ■ FILE PHOTO

Malleswari wants to open academy in Hyderabad

WEIGHTLIFTING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Sydney Olympics bronze medallist Karnam Malleswari has expressed willingness to start a weightlifting academy in Hyderabad.

Malleswari, who hails from Amudalavasa (