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Act tough if policemen found drunk: Nitish

PATNA
Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has directed officials to immediately dismiss police personnel from service if they are caught drinking alcohol or in a drunken state. The Opposition has slammed the State government's decision.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 6

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OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 2

'Sedition law can't be used to quell disquiet: court

Youth held over fake video granted bail

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Charges of sedition "cannot be invoked to quieten the pretence of muzzling the miscreants", a Delhi Court observed while granting bail to a 21-year-old labourer. The youth was arrested for posting a fake video about the Delhi police on the farmers' agitation.

Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana remarked that in the absence of any exhortation, call, incitement or instigation to create disorder or disturbance of public peace by resort to violence, the sedition law cannot be invoked against anyone.

Mr. Swaroop Ram had posted a fake video on his Facebook page with the tagline 'Delhi Police mae bagawat 200 policekarmiyon ne diya samuhik istifa'. (Rebellion in

Toolkit case: role of PJF under scanner

Delhi Police to question Disha, others on alleged pro-Khalistani organisation

HEMAMI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

The focus of investigation by the Delhi Police into the toolkit document case is centred on an alleged "pro-Khalistani" organisation, Poetic Justice Foundation (PJF), sources said.

A senior police officer said the roles of all the founders and the co-founders of the PJF are under scanner. "Depending on the interrogation of the three accused – Disha Ravi, Nikita Jacob and Shantanu Muluk – the roles of members and those associated with PJF will be probed."

Non-bailable warrants have been issued against Ms. Jacob and Mr. Muluk. The police said on Monday that

Ms. Jacob and Mr. Muluk, along with arrested climate activist Disha Ravi, created and spread the toolkit.

'Greta absolved'

However, sources said climate change activist Greta Thunberg, whose tweet brought the toolkit to the notice of security agencies, has been absolved of any criminality for now. They added that the PJF was not a "banned terrorist organisation" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The last group to be added to the list of banned Khalistani outfits was the Sikhs For Justice (SFJ).

"Delhi Police has, so far, not claimed nor stated that



Taking a stand: Activists protesting against the arrest of Disha Ravi outside the police headquarters in New Delhi. ▶ PTI

there is any link between SFJ and PJF," the officer said.

However, he said, "it cannot be a coincidence" that the PJF facilitated a toolkit mentioning an action plan for January 26 and the SFJ's

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

Rectifying injustices of history, says Modi

PM made the remarks while laying the foundation of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the country was rectifying the mistakes, injustice and tampering that was committed against those who created history. Mr. Modi made the remarks while laying the foundation stone of Maharaja Suheldev Memorial and development work of Chittaura Lake in Bahraich, U.P., through videoconferencing.

Medieval Bharat chieftain Suheldev is projected as a Hindutva icon by the RSS-BJP.

Mr. Modi said, "It is unfortunate that those who dedicated their lives to the protection of 'Bharatiya', innumerable such heroes and heroines did not get the due position that they deserved." The "injustice" and tampering done against those who created history in his legacy.



were being "rectified" by today's India, which was freeing itself of these mistakes, he noted.

Popular caste icon

Though Suheldev's historic existence is shrouded in mystery, he is popular as a caste icon among the Rajbhattas (OBC) and the Pasis (second largest Dalit caste in Uttar Pradesh), both competing for his legacy.

Mr. Modi said, India's his-

tory was not just about those "who enslaved the country and the history written by those with a mentality of slavery". India's history was also that which had been nurtured by the common people through folklores and transmitted from one generation to another.

There was no better occasion than the 75th year of Independence to remember and take inspiration from the contribution of icons like Suheldev and their sacrifice, penance struggle, valour and martyrdom, he said.

Citing examples of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and B.R. Ambedkar, along with Suheldev, Mr. Modi said there were many personalities in the country who had not got their due recognition.

Maharaja Suheldev's valour and courage may not have found their place in history books but from Awadh

to Terai region and Purvanchal, he had always found himself in folklores and in people's hearts. Suheldev was a sensitive and development-oriented ruler, he asserted.

The debate over Suheldev's caste legacy was triggered once again before Tuesday's event, as BJP MP from Bansgaon Kamlesh Paswan wrote to Mr. Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind demanding that the memorial built for Suheldev be named as Rashtreeta Suheldev Pasi Smarak, claiming that the icon belonged to the Pasi community and not Bharat as stated by Anil Rajbari, a Minister in the U.P. government.

The Om Prakash Rajbari-led Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party held its own event in Azamgarh to mark the 1012 birth anniversary of "Maharaja Suheldev Rajbari", hailing him as "rashtreeta rakshak rashtreeta".

4 cases of South Africa variant of virus found

One traveller found with Brazilian strain

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Four cases of the South African variant of SARS-CoV-2 and one case of the Brazil variant had been detected in the country, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday.



India has so far reported 187 cases of the U.K. variant.

and culture the SA variant."

Earlier this month, a case of the Brazil variant, which emerged independently in that country, was reported in India.

India has so far reported 187 cases of the U.K. variant.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

OXFORD VACCINE ▶ PAGE 12

Kiran Bedi removed as Puducherry L-G

Telangana Governor to hold charge

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Kiran Bedi was removed as the Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry late on Tuesday evening. Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundarajan has been given additional charge of the Union Territory until regular arrangements are made.



video reviewing the reasons for the low rate of COVID-19 vaccination in the UT.

The Congress had written to the President earlier to recall the L-G.

The move came on a day the Congress government, headed by Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy, lost majority following the resignation of two MLAs in the past two days. The high profile exit for the party as former chief Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to kick off the party's poll campaign on Wednesday.

45 killed as bus plunges into canal in M.P.'s Sidhi district

Seven swim to safety; PM approves ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each



Rescue mission: SDRF members looking for survivors of the bus accident in Sidhi district. ▶ PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SIDHI/REWA

At least 45 people, including 20 women, were killed when a packed bus skidded off the road and plunged into a canal in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday.

The accident took place around 8.30 a.m. near Patna village, around 80 km from the Sidhi district headquarters, when the ill-fated bus was on its way to Satna from Sidhi, a senior official said.

A search operation, involving members of the State Disaster Response Force and local authorities, was still on at the site.

Magisterial probe

Rescuers had retrieved 45 bodies, Rewa Divisional Commissioner Rajesh Jain said. "A total of 45 bodies – 24 men, 20 women and a child – have been fished out of the Bansagar canal until now," he said, adding that a magisterial probe had been ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident.

"Seven persons managed to swim to safety," he added. The packed bus veered off the road and rolled down the canal, which is part of the Bansagar project, said Inspector General (Rewa) Umesh Joga.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief at the "horrible" bus accident and approved an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the next of kin of those who lost their lives.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10

India, China pull back troops from Pangong

Restoration of dug-up land under way

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

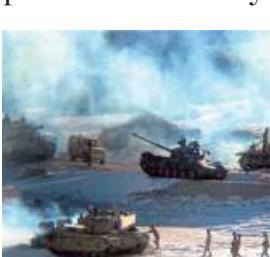
With the withdrawal of tanks from the forward areas on the south bank of Pangong Tso (lake) completed, India and China have started pulling back troops in large numbers from the north and south banks and also restoring land that was dug up during the heavy build-up of defences last year.

Videos released by the Army on Tuesday show the People's Liberation Army troops dismantling tents and bunkers and moving equipment in vehicles. Infantry troops can be seen moving out on foot as well as long convoys of vehicles with stores and troops as part of the disengagement agreement.

'Good pace'

"The de-induction of troops from the frontline is going on at a good pace. Indian troops too are withdrawing from the heights of the Kailash range as per the agreement," a government official said. On the south bank, tanks and troops of both sides had been deployed dangerously close to each other, and they have now been pulled back by some distance.

Stating that it doesn't



Chinese tanks withdrawing from the forward areas on the south bank of Pangong lake. ▶ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

mean they all go back to their original barracks, another official said they had moved back from the frontline now. The overall pull-back of troops and armaments from across the LAC to farther behind would be discussed once the disengagement from all the friction areas was over, the official said.

As reported by *The Hindu*, the Chinese troops have started clearing out from the ridgelines of Finger 4, a major area of contention.

On the north bank, the Chinese troops will withdraw to the east of Finger 8, while the Indian troops will move to the Dhan Singh Thapa post near Finger 3.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 10



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DCW notice to police over Disha Ravi arrest

Women's panel seeks copy of FIR

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Tuesday issued notice to Delhi Police over the arrest of climate change activist Disha Ravi.

Taking suo motu cognisance of the matter, the women's panel in its letter to police has sought reasons as to why a transit remand was not sought. "Please provide reasons for allegedly not providing a lawyer of her choice when she was produced before the Delhi court," the notice read.

The DCW also sought copies of the FIR and a de-

tailed action taken report by February 19.

DCW Chairperson Swati Maliwal said: "As per media reports, Disha was not given a lawyer of her choice neither were rules followed during her arrest. Police should inquire into the matter. However, it is extremely sad and unfortunate if Disha has been arrested because of her support for the protesting farmers."

A statement issued by the panel read: "Going by media reports, there has been severe and shocking abdication of judicial duties immediately after the arrest of Disha."

Minister lauds police for handling of protests, riots

Delhi Police marks 74th Raising Day

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police celebrated its 74th Raising Day on Tuesday with Minister of State for Home Affairs G. Kishan Reddy as chief guest. Police Commissioner S.N. Shrivastava was also in attendance.

Mr. Reddy lauded the force for their handling of communal riots which broke out a year ago, the pandemic-induced lockdown and January 26 violence. "Mr. Reddy said Delhi is always at the centre of all activities and hence, it is always at the target of intolerant forces that do not like the process of nation building. However, Delhi Police has led by example while



Minister G. Kishan Reddy at the event on Tuesday.

■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

handling violent organisations in anti-CAA protests with firm hands," said Public Relations Officer Chinmay Biswas.

The recently constituted all-women police band was the main attraction of the parade. Jan Sampark Vahan was also launched on the occasion.



Reinforcements arrive: Family members of farmers arrive from Ludhiana, Punjab, to join the ongoing stir at the Singhu border on Tuesday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



AISA protests at police HQ against arrest of activists

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The All India Students' Association (AISA) on Tuesday held a demonstration at the Delhi Police headquarters against the charges of sedition on climate change activist Disha Ravi. Terming the arrest as an "anti-democratic agenda", protesters also submitted a memorandum demanding the release of Disha Ravi, Nodeep Kaur and others.

The memorandum submitted to the Delhi Police read, "In a highly condemnable act, the Delhi police has arrested Disha Ravi, 21-year-old Bengaluru-based environment activist for supporting the farmers' movement. All activists such as Shiv Kumar and others, arrested for merely supporting the farmers' movement must be released."

The students' organisation said, "The arrest of Disha Ravi on the basis of a 'toolkit' is an atrocious manifestation of RSS-BJP's anti-democracy agenda. Toolkits have been a common tool of agitation and the malicious ploy to term it an 'international conspiracy' is BJP's way of defaming the mass farmer protest."

A public meeting was also held at the protest site. Madhurima Kundu, a student of Jawaharlal Nehru University said, "The slander campaign against Ms. Disha is shameful. The false links to an 'international conspiracy' is a prime toolkit of fascist politics."

Protesting farmers prepare for summer

They clear vacant land along the highway, pitch tents under trees to avoid direct sunlight

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

Over the last couple of days, protesting farmers at the Singhu border have started pitching tents on vacant grounds along the highway, in a bid to combat the changing weather.

A group of farmers from Punjab have cleared a piece of vacant land – which was earlier covered with shrubs and bushes – and pitched tents to avoid direct sunlight on the highway.

Basic comfort

Maninder Singh, a farmer from Punjab's Patiala district, said: "We are gradually shifting to this open ground mainly because of the natural shade that we are getting here. The tents are freshly installed and it is more conducive under the shade in



The protesters have set up around 10-15 tents on the vacant land and have plans to add more. ■ SHINJINI GHOSH

stead of directly under the sun."

Mr. Singh, who is also volunteering for the Hemkunt Foundation which provided tents for the "Tent City" which came up at the prot-

tents as of now, we have plans of adding more to provide some basic comfort to the farmers."

Around four to five larger tents, which can accommodate 15 people, have also been installed at this site.

"We have a constant stream of people who approach us for accommodation at the tents. The bigger tents that we have installed also have lights inside them to facilitate the farmers," said Mr. Singh.

Two tractors and around 15 people were involved over the span of three to four days, to clear the area of shrubbery, the protesting farmers said.

While the tents have been provided by NGOs, farmers said that they were in the process of procuring tents themselves as well. Some

have also moved their trolleys on the ground to avoid the heat.

Manjeet Singh Shergill, from Patiala's Bahal district said, "We used our own tractors and diesel to get the area cleared and liveable. We have also shifted our trolleys here, which were earlier parked on the highway. With the change in weather it is becoming difficult and so we thought of shifting."

"As the stir continues, we are becoming more innovative in terms of modifying trolleys. We have already installed fans and if needed, we will get air conditioners as well. Apart from the trolleys, we have tents and are sharing it as per need. The only thing we need to sort out is to install toilets so that it becomes more convenient for us," he said.

THE HINDU

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5	Psychiatry	1	1	-	-
6	Dermatology	1	1	-	-
7	General Surgery	-	-	1	-
8	Dentistry	1	1	-	-
9	Community Medicine	1	-	-	-
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DELHI

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THURSDAY, FEB. 18	RISE 06:57 SET 18:14
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Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 29 12
Safdarjung 29 12
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Delhi Palam Today
29°C Shallow to moderate fog likely during cool morning. A comfortable day with light winds.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
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THE HINDU
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15,053 get jab, city reports 6 adverse events

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A total of 15,053 beneficiaries, including healthcare and front-line workers, took the COVID-19 vaccination in the city on Tuesday.

There were six Adverse Events Following Immunisation, said a Delhi government spokesperson.

Of the total beneficiaries, 3,501 healthcare workers received the first dose and 2,532 their second dose. Also, 9,020 front-line workers received the first dose of the vaccine. The vaccination of healthcare workers started in the city on January 16 and front-line workers from the first week of February.

Meanwhile, Delhi witnessed 94 new COVID-19 cases in 24 hours, taking the tally to 6,37,181, said a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Tuesday. The death toll reached 10,894 after one fatality was reported. A total of 56,944 tests were conducted and of the total cases, 6,25,268 people have recovered and there are 1,019 active cases.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain said the Delhi government has firmly fought the war against COVID-19.

"We have provided 37 people with aid of ₹1 crore, which includes nine corona warriors, 19 police personnel, three Army and BSF personnel," he added.

Akbar-Ramani case: verdict likely today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court is likely to pronounce on Wednesday its verdict in M.J. Akbar's criminal defamation complaint against journalist Priya Ramani for her allegations of sexual harassment against him.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ravindra Kumar had on February 1 reserved judgment for February 10. However, the court deferred the judgment for February 17, saying the verdict was not complete since both the parties filed their written submission late.

Ms. Ramani had accused Mr. Akbar of sexual harassment in 2018.

CM expresses gratitude to Delhiites on first anniversary of third stint

Kejriwal talks about govt's achievements in fighting virus

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, on the occasion of the completion of one year of the Aam Aadmi Party Delhi government's third term in office, shared a video message to express his gratitude to residents on Tuesday.

A year ago, Mr. Kejriwal had said the citizens of Delhi gave one of their sons a chance to serve once again.

"One year ago, you all gave your son another opportunity to serve everyone. It has been a very tough year but all the citizens of Delhi have worked together. All of us together have made Delhi a model of success in the world," he said.

COVID-19 crisis
The Chief Minister said that the Delhi government's work on home isolation, plasma bank and oximeter against



Arvind Kejriwal

the novel coronavirus was being discussed all over the world. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, every citizen of Delhi has worked along with the government. Today the Delhi government's home isolation model, setting up of the plasma bank and oximeter distribution are being discussed around the world," he said.

The Delhi government, he said, fed millions of people during the lockdown, distributed free ration and arranged transportation for

trapped migrant labourers to their home and was able to continue subsidies on electricity and water amidst all the challenges.

"Amid all these limitations the government maintained free electricity and water schemes," he said.

Education and health

Meanwhile, he said, government school students scored 98% results in board examinations and the people of the city also continued to get good education and affordable healthcare.

"Delhi government school students scored 98% in Class 12 and made all the citizens proud. During these six years of development, every child of Delhi is getting quality education. Today, every patient is getting quality and affordable healthcare. Now Delhi gets 24 hours of free electricity," he also said.

Several BJP leaders have joined AAP, claims party

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday said that several BJP leaders, including Santal Chawaria and municipal corporation Sramik Sangh president J.P. Tonke joined the party.

Welcoming the new members, AAP leader Durgesh Pathak said: "Former BJP candidate and former

Safai Karamchari Commission president Santal Chawaria is joining AAP. In the last election, he was a BJP candidate and received 34,000 votes. I am happy to announce that J.P. Tonke is also joining. He has been fighting for sanitation workers and for the Dalit community. Inderjeet Yadav, a senior RJD leader, is also joining the party."

Congress says govt's report card shows nothing but all-round failure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP and Congress attacked the AAP government for alleged lack of achievement and non-fulfillment of promises made to the people.

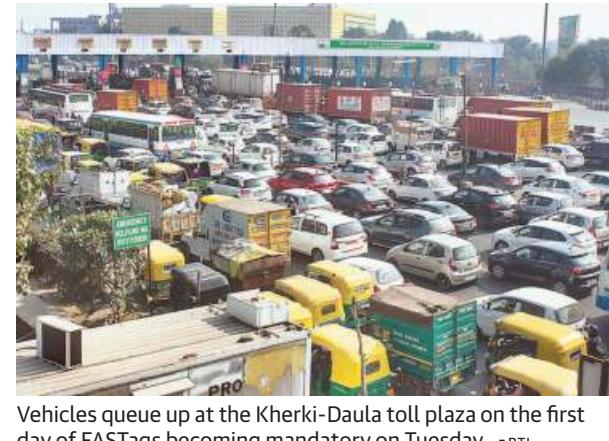
Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta alleged that the AAP

Motorists with invalid FASTags cause congestion in Gurugram

Barriers had to be lifted at Kherki-Daula toll plaza during peak hours: NHAI official

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

The implementation of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) directions for mandatory digital payment through FASTags at its toll barriers from Tuesday faced little hiccups at Kherki Daula here with motorists not maintaining sufficient balance.



Vehicles queue up at the Kherki-Daula toll plaza on the first day of FASTags becoming mandatory on Tuesday. ■ PTI

The barriers had to be lifted once during peak hours to avoid congestion due to long traffic snarls. NHAI (Gurugram) project director Shashi Bhushan said the implementation went off well but there were a few glitches. He said the problem was mostly caused due to the motorists not maintaining sufficient balance in the FASTags, leading to delays.

"Those without valid FASTags were also made to pay

double the toll fee. Hope the people will soon become aware and keep adequate balance in the FASTags," said Mr. Bhushan.

Sohrab Khan, Manager Toll Operations, Millennium City Expressway Private Limited, said the toll barriers were lifted once during the peak hours after the entry of heavy vehicles were allowed around 11 a.m. "The entry of heavy vehicles led to conges-

tion and the barriers had to be lifted to clear the traffic," said Mr. Khan, adding that overall the implementation was smooth.

Those paying in cash were diverted to extreme left lanes on both sides of the toll plaza to avoid inconvenience to the motorists with vehicles equipped with FASTags.

Earlier 14 marshals were deployed along with Lane Assistants in each of the three shifts, but the strength has now been augmented to 34 for each shift including 15 NHAI marshals.

Mr. Khan said double the toll fee was collected from those without valid FASTags or making cash payment. "It is not possible to identify and segregate those without insufficient balance before they enter the FASTag lanes," said Mr. Khan.

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Mr. N SELVA KUMAR

PH: 9820350726

selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in

THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

BJP attacks Kejriwal govt. for not keeping promises

government could not name even one achievement on the completion of one year of its government while the Congress recollects "communal mayhem" which had ensued in the Capital within days of its formation last year.

"The fact is Delhi has gone back more on development front during Kejriwal's tenure. Despite being in power for six years now, Delhiites are still waiting for power, drinking water, WiFi, electric buses, pollution free environ-

ment, clean Yamuna and adequate health service system," Mr. Gupta alleged.

Ex-MLA and former Delhi Minister Haroon Yusuf alleged that the report card of the Delhi government's first year in office of its third term was nothing short of disastrous and exhibited nothing but all-round failures.

Communal mayhem
"A few days after the AAP government assumed charge in its third term in February

2020, communal mayhem broke out in north-east Delhi and the government remained as mere bystanders," he alleged.

"Its first year of the third term was also notorious for job loss, price rise, air pollution, dirty drinking water, and the court directive to evict 48,000 shanties along the railway tracks in the Capital as the government had failed to properly present the case of these JJ clusters before the court," he also alleged.

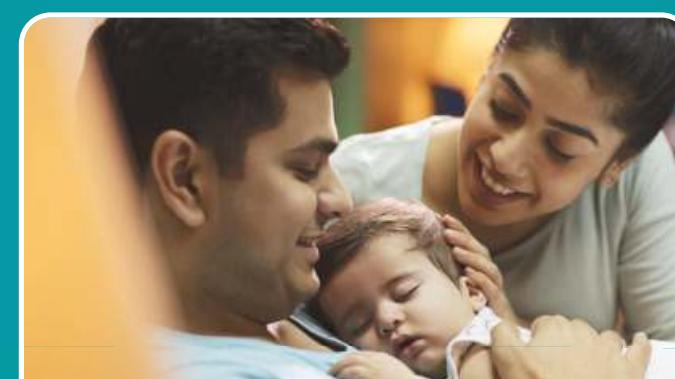
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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
A Delhi court is likely to pronounce on Wednesday its verdict in M.J. Akbar's criminal defamation complaint against journalist Priya Ramani for her allegations of sexual harassment against him.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ravindra Kumar had on February 1 reserved judgment for February 10. However, the court deferred the judgment for February 17, saying the verdict was not complete since both the parties filed their written submission late.

Ms. Ramani had accused Mr. Akbar of sexual harassment in 2018.

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If anybody finds the misplaced Original document, the same may be returned to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Janakpuri New Delhi, if anybody misuses the same shall be at his/her own risk. If anybody has any claim, right, interest in the said property shall also inform within 15 days to the undersigned on telephone no. 9120-4164364, 9891119161 & 9891119162 as applicant are mortgaging the above property.

S.C. Varsney (LICHL Panel Advocate)
R-14/178, Raj Nagar, Ghaziabad-201002

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अभ्यास कुमार	शास्त्र विज्ञानी	आर. युवराज	आर्थिक
गणना संस्कृति एवं एवं	अंतर्राष्ट्रीय समाज एवं समाजशास्त्रीय	अंवेषणी	विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी

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I Lipika Sharma have lost my original final year MA marksheet enroll no. G-1125206730 (Saroj Hinglajitton University of Agriculture, Technology and Science, ALLAHABAD). If found contact: 9911052935

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My client Mr. Sagar Singh Thakur & Ms. Sukanika Thakur are awaiting housing loan from LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Janakpuri New Delhi to Purchase the DDA Janta Flat No. 9 on First Floor situated at Site-Vikas Pur, New Delhi. Mr. Sagar Singh Chauhan is the owner of the property by virtue of Conveyance Deed regd. on 21.10.2020 as per document no. 5393 in his favour. Mr. Saubhag Chauhan have lost and misplaced the original Allotment Letter dated 27.05.1985, office Post Box Letter dated 21.07.2005 & NOC for Electric & Water Connection dated 24.10.1983 and regarding which police complaint has also been lodged on 27.07.2020.

If anybody finds the misplaced Original document, the same may be returned to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Janakpuri New Delhi, if anybody misuses the same shall be at his/her own risk. If anybody has any claim, right, interest in the said property shall also inform within 15 days to the undersigned on Telephone no. 9120-4164364, 9891119161 & 9891119162 as applicant are mortgaging the above property.

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POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Online percentage rate bids are re-invited on behalf of the Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh from the Original equipment manufacturer / Authorized dealer dealing in similar type of work on two bid system (Eligibility cum Technical Bid and Financial Bid).

NIT No.	PGI/Engg./RAC/2021/97
Name of Work:	CMC of Package type HVAC system (Volts make) installed at various locations, Nehru Hospital, PGIMER, Chandigarh
Estimated Cost:	Rs 5.91 Lac
Earnest Money :	Rs 11,820/-
Period of Completion:	Twelve Months
Last date and time of submission of bid:	23.02.2021 upto 15.00 hrs.
Date and time for submission of original EMD as uploaded	24.02.2021 upto 12.00 hrs.
Last date and time of opening of Technical cum Eligibility Bid.	24.2.2021 at 15.00 hrs.

The tender forms and other details can be obtained from the website: www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app and official website of the PGIMER. www.pgimer.edu.in. Press notice is also available on www.eprocure.gov.in. Contractors are requested to get their firm registered on the website www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app for participating in e-tendering process. (Helpdesk for registering 9988447783) For any technical information Contact (0172-2755861, 7087008861).

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Website: www.pspcl.in

e-Tender Enquiry No. 312/P-1/EMP-W-11795 dated 09.02.21 & ID: 2021_POWER_59991_1

Scope of Work: Routine cleaning of Tech. & Non-Tech buildings and Boiler area including toilets & cleaning of sewerage line at GGSSTP, Rupnagar.

EMD: Rs. 2,20,000/- (Rs. Two Lac twenty thousand only) for contractors & NIL for societies.

Date & time upto which tender shall be uploaded 16.03.2021 & 11.00 AM

Date & time of opening of tender 23.03.2021 & 11:30 AM

Tender specification can only be downloaded from PSPCL website <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.

Note:

- In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office and or e-procurement system Government of Punjab. Contact No. +91-(172)-2970284/63. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only.
- It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspaper. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on website eproc.punjab.gov.in

RTP 06/21
SE / Headquarters, GGSSTP, Roopnagar

2016 JNU sedition case: Delhi court summons Kanhaiya and nine others

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has taken cognizance of a chargesheet filed by Delhi Police against former Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) president Kanhaiya Kumar and nine others in a 2016 sedition case.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Pankaj Sharma also summoned all 10 accused in the case to appear before the court on March 15, the next date of hearing.

The court's order came almost a year after Delhi government gave its nod to police to prosecute Mr. Kumar and nine others for their involvement in a procession where they had allegedly supported seditious slogans raised on the vari-

ty's campus during an event on February 9, 2016.

The Aam Aadmi Party government had granted prosecution sanction against 10 accused: Kanhaiya Kumar, Syed Umar Khalid, Anirban Bhattacharya, Aquib Hussain, Muneeb Hussain Gattoo, Umair Gul, Rayees Rasool, Basharat Ali and Khalid Bashir Bhat.

The accused have been charged with offences under Sections 124A (sedition), 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 471 (using as genuine a forged document or electronic record), 143 (punishment for being a member of an unlawful assembly), 149 (being a member of an unlawful assembly), 147 (pun-

ishment for rioting) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code.

Sedition carries a maximum punishment of life imprisonment. "Chargesheet alongwith documents perused. The court hereby takes cognizance of offence under Sections 124 A/323/465/471/143/147/120B IPC. The sanction to prosecute the aforementioned accused persons has already been filed by Home Department, GNCT vide order dated February 27, 2020," the judge said.

On February 11, 2016, a case of sedition was registered against unidentified people on complaints from BJP MP Maheish Girri and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad.

HC asks lower courts if they can hold hybrid proceedings

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked its subordinate courts here whether they have the infrastructure for holding hybrid proceedings in which hearings can be held both physically and through video-conferencing simultaneously.

Justice Prathiba M. Singh called for the report on a plea moved by several lawyers who are senior citizens suffering from comorbidities and apprehensive of attending physical hearings during the pandemic.

The lawyers want the district courts to allow them to attend hearings through videoconference on days when they hold physical proceedings.

On January 14, the High Court, which oversees the functioning of all districts courts in the Capital, had issued a notification directing all subordinate courts to hold physical hearings on every alternate day. The court on Tuesday asked whether there was sufficient availability of internet connectivity and devices in the court premises and residences of the judicial officers to hold hybrid proceedings.

The High Court will hear the matter on February 26.

IN BRIEF**Independent MP says she got 'threat letter'**

NEW DELHI
Delhi Police has registered a case based on the complaint of Independent MP Navneet Ravi Rana stating that she has been threatened. The MP said she got a threatening letter, written on the letter head of Shiv Sena, at her premises in North Avenue. The complainant said the letter warned of dire consequences for speaking against the Shiv Sena in the Lok Sabha. An investigation is under way, said the police.

WESTERN RAILWAY**CORRIGENDUM TO e-AUCTION SALE PROGRAM OF MARCH, 2021**

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Secretary (Sd/-)

Secretary (Sd/-)

PSPL hydel projects achieves CEA electricity generation targets for the period April 2020 to January 2021

Shri A.Venu Prasad CMD PSPL disclosed that the hydel projects of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPL) has surpassed the electricity generation target set by the Central Electricity Authority for the period April-2020 to January-2021 by generating 110.79 percent of the stipulated target. CMD said that the hydel Projects of corporation has generated 4117.10 million units of energy against the target of 3716.46 million units for the period April-2020 to January-2021. In a message Shri A.Venu Prasad appreciated the commendable and untiring efforts of the PSPL officers and employees for maintaining their excellence for surpassing targets during Covid-19 lockdown period. CMD also added that with a capacity of 206 MW Shahpurkandi Hydro Electric Project is being constructed on River Ravi, 11 km downstream of the existing Ranjit Sagar Dam. The letter of award for construction of civil works of power houses was issued by Water Resources, Department Punjab Govt. to L-1 firm on 21.01.2021, as such, the project is likely to be commissioned by August, 2024.

GAIL acquires 5% stake in Indian Gas Exchange

GAIL (India) Limited has signed a Share Purchase and Shareholders Agreement (SPSA) with IGX and Indian Energy Exchange Limited (IEX), the promoter and parent company of IGX for acquisition of 5% equity stake in Indian Gas Exchange Limited (IGX). IGX, India's first automated delivery-based gas trading platform, was launched by Hon'ble Sh. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas

DELHI GOVERNMENT SETS A PRECEDENT IN COVID MANAGEMENT

Several exemplary initiatives and steps by the Delhi government made the fight against Corona in Delhi easier

There have been various instances of good governance and great governments throughout history. But such recognition does not come without its own trials and tribulations. They are especially tested on their ability and skill in handling disasters or challenges faced by the countries across the world. Perhaps the most formidable challenge to humanity at present is Coronavirus, which has impacted the entire world. There are very few governments in the world that have faced this unprecedented crisis with great skill, sincerity and patience. While the impact and fear of this pandemic is diminishing today, India is being praised all over the world for its handling of the pandemic. And in this concerted effort of the nation, the contribution of Delhi government is unforgettable. The sudden lockdown announced in the last week of March, not only impacted the health sector, but also challenged the governments on all fronts of everyday life. The attention of the entire country and the world was focused on Delhi, which with its dense population of nearly 2 crore people was especially vulnerable to the pandemic. In this dire situation, the Arvind Kejriwal led Delhi government courageously confronted and skillfully handled the combined onslaught of challenges like Coronavirus transmission, migration, hunger, unemployment and education. Each new initiative and scheme launched by the Delhi government to combat each challenge during lockdown became a precedent for the entire world. As the impact of the pandemic first began being felt in Delhi, the government started implementing ideas for the poor and destitute. The Delhi government immediately began providing free cooked food to nearly a million people during the lockdown. Not only this, the Kejriwal led government distributed dry rations free of charge, to millions of people trapped



within the confines of their homes during lockdown. For those who were impoverished but did not have ration cards, a new scheme was launched to register them online so that they could avail free ration. Financial assistance was provided to those employed in the public transportation sector as well as to construction workers. The biggest challenge was handling the mass migration of workers from Delhi. People come to Delhi to work from all over the country and with transportation closed, it became an especially onerous task to send them back to their homes. The entire nation was looking towards Delhi, but the earnestness and systematic manner with which the Delhi government overcame this challenge sets a wonderful example for good governance.



The Delhi government skillfully handled the combined onslaught of challenges like coronavirus transmission, migration, hunger, unemployment and education

Delhi has conducted the highest number of COVID testing, equivalent to more than half the population of Delhi being tested

This is an excellent illustration of the Delhi government's farsightedness. While even the governments of developed countries were unable to comprehend how to fight against Corona, the Delhi government launched several brilliant and effective initiatives during this period. The country's largest COVID care center was established in the capital. Many new hospitals were also opened in this period. Delhi was the first in the country to successfully deploy home isolation. The help of various agencies was taken to meet the challenges ahead.

ensure that such patients living in their homes did not have any problem with doctors or other medical facilities. Free oximeters were also provided to each patient. Delhi's home isolation model even received tremendous praise from the Central government. Similarly, when the rest of the

LAUNCH OF 'SWITCH DELHI' CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Delhi government is amongst the first state governments in India to notify an electric vehicle policy

The Delhi government's focus has been on establishing connectivity in every part of Delhi along with bringing an environment-friendly transport system. To fulfill this, Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government became one of the first state governments to draft an ambitious Electric Vehicle Policy and then in August 2020 the government notified this. The Delhi government launched the Electric Vehicle Policy under which it aims to waive off the registration fee, road tax, and provides an incentive of upto 1.5 lakh for new cars. Through this policy, the government aims to generate employment to give a boost to Delhi's economy and reduce pollution levels in the national capital. The Delhi EV policy envisages that 25% of all new vehicle registrations should be Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) by 2024. Under this policy, the Delhi government will give an incentive of up to Rs 30,000 for two-wheelers, autos, e-rickshaws and freight vehicles while for cars, it will provide an incentive of up to Rs 1.5 lakh. To expedite electric vehicle adoption, CM Arvind Kejriwal launched 'Switch Delhi' campaign on February 5.

CM Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government asked delivery chains and big companies, resident welfare associations, market associations, malls and cinema halls to promote electric vehicles and set up charging stations at their premises. In the first week of

clean and pollution-free. Appeal was made to the people to take part in the campaign to promote the replacement of polluting petrol and diesel vehicles with electric vehicles and make a contribution towards a pollution-free Delhi. The Delhi government has been combating the menace of air pollution through multiple measures. In the first week of

two-thirds of all vehicles in Delhi and cause maximum pollution. Incentives up to Rs 30,000 can be availed upon the purchase of two-wheeler listed under the policy along with scrapping incentives. Under Delhi's EV policy, 23 two-wheeler models are available and eligible for purchase and scrapping incentives across seven manufacturers. By switching to electric two-wheelers which have very low operating costs, an individual can make an annual saving of approximately Rs 22,000 as compared to using petrol scooter and Rs 20,000 as compared to a petrol bike. An average electric two-wheeler provides a lifetime savings of 1.98 tonnes of carbon emissions as compared to an average petrol two-wheeler, which is equivalent to planting eleven trees. The Delhi government has launched social media handles for its latest campaign "Switch Delhi". The DDC will be leading the social media outreach programme for the campaign on various social media platforms like on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, said an official statement. This will help the Delhi government to better connect with the citizens of Delhi.

In the 'Switch Delhi' campaign, awareness will be created about the benefits of electric vehicles and how it can contribute to making Delhi clean and pollution-free

youth to buy an electric vehicle as their first vehicle. He appealed to people to make the campaign a mass movement. The Delhi government's electric vehicle policy is being hailed as one of the best policies in the world. Through the 'Switch Delhi' campaign, awareness will be created about the benefits of electric vehicles and how it can contribute to making Delhi

the 'Switch Delhi' campaign which was launched by chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to promote electric vehicles (EV) in the city – the government will focus on outreach regarding the two-wheeler segment including electric bikes and e-scooters to accelerate its adoption. Delhi's EV Policy especially focuses on incentivizing the purchase of two-wheelers, which comprise



DELHI GOVERNMENT SAVES CRORES IN BUILDING OF FLYOVERS

To make commuting of Delhi residents faster, the Delhi government has built new flyovers and underpasses in record time



Delhi becomes the only Indian city to get featured in the list of the World's Best Cities for 2021

Under Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi has experienced rapid development in the past 6 years



Delhi got featured in the list of World's Best Cities for 2021 making our Delhi the only Indian city to rank among the 100 best cities across the world. Delhi, the national capital of India, secured the 62nd position in this prestigious list. Last year, Delhi was at the 81st position and has significantly improved its ranking this year. The continuous development work of CM Arvind Kejriwal has brought only great news for the citizens of Delhi. The ranking was done by Resonance Consultancy Limited which is based out of Vancouver and specialises in destination development, branding, marketing, design, tourism, data, and travel reports. Some of the other cities that have been featured in the list include Amsterdam, Rome, Washington DC, Toronto, Prague, and St Petersburg. CM Arvind Kejriwal said, "Such good news for all Delhiwalas. All dilliwala have worked so hard in the last six

years to make it happen. The world is noticing the positive changes happening in Delhi." Deputy Chief Minister Shri Manish Sisodia said, "Congratulations to all the proud people of Delhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for the leadership. Our beloved Delhi is ranked 62

in World's Best cities. The only Indian city in the list. There is a significant improvement from the past ranking i.e. 81." This ranking has given the national capital 62nd position, making it the only Indian city to feature in the list. Reportedly, the ranks have been given to 100 cities from across the world with a population of over 10 lakh. The ranking was based on the basis of diverse factors, including online hashtags, number of check-ins, diversity, tourist attractions, weather and more. It also included factors like Covid-19 infections in July, income incongruity and unemployment. While Rome (Italy), Chicago (United States), Toronto (Canada), San Francisco (USA), Amsterdam (Netherlands), Berlin (Germany), Prague (Czech Republic) and Washington DC (United States) took the new few spots, Delhi in India was ranked 62 on the list, the only Indian city to have been featured on the list.

To make commuting of Delhi smooth and faster, the Delhi government led by Arvind Kejriwal has built various new flyovers and underpasses across the capital which were completed even before scheduled time. The government in a record time completed two flyovers (Shastri Park and Seelampur) and both have been completed at Rs 250 crore, a cost less than the sanctioned cost of Rs 303 crore, saving Rs 53 crores. The construction of these flyovers has brought relief to around 1.5 lakh vehicle owners daily. The two flyovers will significantly reduce travel time between Shahdara in east Delhi to Kashmere Gate Interstate Bus Terminus. The upcoming Ashram underpass

Delhi government led by CM Arvind Kejriwal completed two flyovers (Shastri Park and Seelampur) in record time and saved Rs 53 crores in the construction cost

The two flyovers will significantly reduce travel time between Shahdara in East Delhi to Kashmere Gate Interstate Bus Terminus (ISBT)

Teachers' protest reaches Mamata's home

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Protesters demanding hike in salaries dodged the security and reached Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence, wading through knee-deep waters of the Adi Ganga on Tuesday.

Security alarm

Five of the protesters, who are teachers of non-recognized madrasas and vocational trainers (siksha mitra), used the river, which has turned into a canal, triggering a major alarm in the State's security apparatus.

The protesters used the canal from the side of Alipur Correction Home and then crossed using a rope to reach the other end. By the time the security personnel could spot them they have already arrived near Ms. Banerjee's residence. Kolkata Police Commissioner Soumen Mitra reached the spot and reviewed security. The five teachers were taken into custody.

Policemen will be dismissed if found drunk, says Bihar CM

Opposition parties slam State government's decision to target them

AMARNATH TEWARI
PATNA



Bihar CM Nitish Kumar

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has directed officials to immediately dismiss police personnel from service, if they are caught drinking alcohol or in a drunken state. Opposition parties have slammed the government's decision to "scapegoat" police personnel.

Mr. Kumar's directive came during a review meeting of the State prohibition, excise and registration department on Monday. "All police personnel across the State have taken a pledge of not drinking liquor in their lifetime. If anyone gets caught drinking alcohol or is found in a drunken state, disciplinary action must be initiated and he or she must be dismissed immediately," Mr. Kumar told officials during the meeting.

As many as 80,000 police personnel working in the State had taken an annual pledge of not drinking or

storing alcohol and also ensuring successful implementation of total prohibition. Bihar had become a dry State in April 2016.

'Publicise punishments'

While addressing department officials, Mr. Kumar asked them to ensure comprehensive inquiry in all bordering areas to check illegal supply of liquor from other States. The Chief Minister also told officials to publicise the punishment given to people involved in illegal trade of liquor as a warning to others.

In the recent expansion of the Cabinet, Sunil Kumar, a former Director-General rank police officer, was made Minister of Excise, Prohibition and Registration. He had won the previous Assembly election as a JD(U) candidate from Bhore constituency in Gopalganj district.

Meanwhile, the new instruction to dismiss police personnel caught drinking alcohol, has invited the ire of Opposition party leaders. "Why only police, the government should dismiss all those officials caught in drunken state. Through this new instruction, the police personnel have been made the scapegoat," alleged RJD leader and party spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari.

Mr. Tiwari further said, "Prohibition in Bihar has completely failed and the liquor mafia has been running a parallel economy."

However, the ruling party JD(U)'s chief spokesperson

Sanjay Singh emphasised that "the government has made laws and is ensuring its effective implementation". Party leader Suheli Mehta echoed the statement.

Regular affair

Of late, seizure of liquor in various parts of the State has become a regular affair. On Tuesday, over 500 cartons of liquor were seized under Chakand police station of Gaya district. "Since 2016, 52 lakh litres of liquor has been seized in the State," said an Excise Department official.

On January 6, Rakesh Kumar Sinha, an official of the State Excise and Prohibition Department, had sent a letter to his seniors accusing lower-rank officials of being involved in illegal supply of liquor. Mr. Sinha, however, was soon transferred from the department. Recently, some people from Haryana and Bihar were arrested in connection with illegal liquor trade.

No record of trusts headed by PM: PMO

List compilation would divert resources

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Information on the number of trusts (both public and private) that Prime Minister Narendra Modi heads by virtue of his office (ex-officio) is not maintained by the Prime Minister's Office.

7(9)

The compilation of this information from different units/files would disproportionately divert the resources of the PMO from the efficient discharge of its normal functions, thereby attracting the provisions under section 7(9) of the RTI Act, 2005."

As per section 7 (9) of RTI Act, 2005, an information shall ordinarily be provided in the form in which it is sought unless it would disproportionately divert the resources of the public authority or would be detrimental to the safety or preservation of the record in question.

"While I am unsatisfied over the response, what is more surprising is that beneath the reply even the name of First Appellate Authority in the PMO has not been mentioned where I (RTI applicant), if not satisfied with the reply, can file first appeal... it's a statutory right provided under the RTI Act," said Mr. Kumar.

Cong. to build memorial for CAA protest 'martyrs'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The Congress on Tuesday promised to build a memorial for the "martyrs" of the movement against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) if it is voted back to power in Assam.

Five people were allegedly killed in police firing during violent protests against CAA in December 2019. They were Azizul Hoque, 45, Ishwar Nayak, 25, Abdul Amin, 23, Dipanjal Das, 19, and Sam Stafford, 17.

"The grand memorial for those who sacrificed their lives to save Assamese pride by opposing CAA will be a landmark in Guwahati. This will be message to BJP that Assam does not want CAA," State Congress president Ripun Barua said.

"The memorial shall remember the people's struggle and sacrifices, protest songs and paintings," Lok Sabha Member and chairman of the Congress Campaign Committee Pradyut Bordoloi said.

Plan for loan disbursement to farmers revised in Rajasthan

It will make money available to cultivators during sowing

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

Facing charges of not waiving the debts of all farmers despite its poll-time promise, the Congress government in Rajasthan has revised the plan for agricultural loan disbursement this year. The modified plan will make the money available to the cultivators at the time of sowing of kharif crops.

Cooperative Minister Udai Lal Anjana said in the State Assembly that the farm loans would be disbursed from July 15 to facilitate the agricultural activities. The disbursement before July-end would also be helpful in the timely implementation of the crop insurance scheme, he said.

The loan disbursement was earlier carried out twice every year in the State, first in mid-August and later on December 31. The central



CM Ashok Gehlot

probe. Reports of some irregularities had been received in particular from Jhalawar district, he said.

The State government had launched online registration and disbursement of farm loans from the kharif crop cycle in 2019, which caused a partial delay that year. The loan disbursement for 2020-21 has started from the beginning of the financial year.

'In Centre's court'
More than 20 lakh farmers have received loan waiver for the money which they had borrowed from the cooperative banks, but the waiver of loans obtained from nationalised and commercial banks has not been done.

Probe into delay
Mr. Anjana said a delay was observed in the registrations for crop insurance scheme this year for the current cycle, into which a team headed by the Cooperative Department's Additional Registrar would conduct a

Odisha enhances land ceiling to be acquired by industry

Land will have to be purchased directly from farmers

STAFF REPORTER
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has enhanced the ceiling of land to be directly purchased from farmers and other land owners for setting up of industrial projects in the State.

In both rural and urban areas, extent of land to be acquired through direct negotiation has been doubled.

As per a resolution published by the government, private companies can now purchase 500 acres in rural areas and 100 acres in urban centres. Earlier, the limit for direct purchase of land was fixed at 200 acres and 50 acres in rural and urban areas respectively.

The government is taking some proactive measures such as the enhancement of the limit for acquiring land through direct purchase for quick and seamless development of industrialization in the State,"



CM Naveen Patnaik

says the resolution issued by Revenue and Disaster Management Department.

The land limit has been extended by exercise of the powers conferred by subsection (1) of section 46 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 read with rule 47 of the Odisha Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Rules, 2016.

The Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation

of Odisha Limited (IPCOL) has recently submitted the State Reform Action Plan – 2020 as stipulated by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under Union Ministry of Commerce.

'String of reforms'
"Odisha has considerably improved the ease of doing business, through a string of reforms. These, calibrated with the government's policy initiatives, have helped the State attract investments worth of ₹1,20,456.74 crore in the last one year across the six focused sectors," said the IPCL.

In its 98th meeting, the State Level Single Window Clearance Authority had approved eight industrial projects to the tune of ₹1,242.02 crore in the metal and metal downstream, IT, manufacturing, logistics and tourism sectors last week.

New Assam party takes crowdfunding route to polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The six-month-old Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) has taken the crowdfunding route to contesting the upcoming Assembly elections.

The party, which seeks to provide a regional alternative in alliance with jailed peasants' rights activist Akhil Gogoi's Rajgor Dal, has

promised to provide donors a weekly update on every paisa spent.

"We do not have the money power that the BJP and the Congress have. The people are our wealth and we appeal to them to donate for our party that seeks to give direction to their aspirations," AJP president Lurinjyoti Gogoi said.

Leopard population tracking gets new approach

Unique model to estimate their numbers where melanistic individuals are seen

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

Wildlife specialists have for long faced challenges estimating the density of leopards in areas where some of the spotted cats are melanistic or black.

Experts from three organisations, one of them Assam-based Aaranyak, have come up with a system that helps in properly estimating the leopard population in areas sustaining a mix of rosette and melanistic individuals.

Rosettes are jagged black circular marks on the tawny coat of a leopard. Like the tiger's stripes, the rosettes of each leopard are unique in shape and size, making the species identifiable individually.

But melanistic leopards – commonly called black leopards or black panthers or ghongs (Assamese) – have been difficult to estimate as their rosettes are invisible.

The Spatial Mark-Resight (SMR) models applied by the scientists of Aaranyak, Panthera and World Wide Fund for Nature-India have provided a way of counting the melanistic leopards too. The new model has been written about in the *Animal Conservation*.

U.S.-based Panthera is the only organisation in the world devoted exclusively to the conservation of the world's 40 wild cat species and their ecosystems. Melanism has been documented in 14 of these species, in-



Camera trapping images of a melanistic (top) and a rosette leopard from Manas National Park. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



and non-protected areas in India except on some occasions," he said.

M. Firoz Ahmed, the head of Aaranyak's tiger research and conservation division, said the team used three years of camera trapping data between 2017 and 2019 obtained from Manas National Park to establish the SMR approach.

The population density of leopards in Manas is 3.37 per 100 sq km. In the study, about 22.6% images of the leopards were of the melanistic kind.

'Major development'
"In the SMR models, we then borrow the capture history of the rosette leopards and apply the information on the melanistic leopards to estimate the entire population size of leopards. This is a significant analytical development that can help assess the population of leopards across a great part of the species range from where population estimates are scant," said Panthera's Abhishek Harihar.

The SMR method is expected to make it easier to assess the population status of leopards for informed conservation measures by applying the conventional camera trapping field method.

It can also be widely applied for other species that exhibit similar colour variation in nature, the wild cat specialists said.

conservation," Dipankar Lahkar, a tiger biologist with Aaranyak, said.

'Acute problem'
"This problem is acute in the tropical and subtropical moist forests of South and Southeast Asia where the frequency of melanistic leopards is high and leopards also face the greatest threat. No precise estimates of leopard population could thus be done in protected areas

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED GIRL



General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Taiba D/o Mohd. Nadeem Khan** R/o H.No. 2853, Kucha Chalan, Darya Ganj, Delhi. Description as on 13.10.2009 Age 3½ year (Now about 14 years), Height 2'6", Complexion wheatish, Face long, Built thin, Hair boy cut golden dyed, wearing Black colour frock, Black colour pajami and golden colour chapal in feet has been kidnapped by someone since 13.10.2009. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl, but no clue has come to light so far. In this regard a case FIR No. 217/09 U/s 363 IPC, dated 13.10.2009 has been registered at PS Darya Ganj, Delhi. This case is being investigated by Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, Crime Branch, Sector-16, Rohini, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Email: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-23011334
Ph: 011-23014046, 23015218
DP/77/Crime/2021

ACP
Anti-Human Trafficking Unit
Crime Branch, Sector-16, Rohini, Delhi
Ph.: 011-27892844, 27892866, 9810038885

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. PC

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused

1. Rajdeep Maan S/o Satpal Singh Maan R/o 77, Sec-3, R.K. Puram, New Delhi, 2. Bhupender Singh Rawat S/o Virender Singh Rawat R/o 383/2, East Azad Nagar, New Delhi, 3. Arun Sood S/o Ram Singh R/o T-338/A, Baljeet Nagar, Delhi and 4. Manoj Verma S/o Shyam Sunder R/o B-71, Gali No. 5, Bhajanpura, New Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence of case registered vide FIR No. 156/2015, dated 16/10/2015 u/s 420/120B IPC at Police Station - Crime Branch, Delhi and a warrant of arrest issued thereupon has been returned unexecuted stating that the said accused 1. Rajdeep Maan 2. Bhupender Singh Rawat 3. Arun Sood and 4. Manoj Verma could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused 1. Rajdeep Maan 2. Bhupender Singh Rawat 3. Arun Sood and 4. Manoj Verma have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the warrant).

Proclamation are hereby made that the said accused 1. Rajdeep Maan 2. Bhupender Singh Rawat 3. Arun Sood and 4. Manoj Verma are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 27.03.2021.

By Order
Ms. Chhavi Kapoor,
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No. 146, 1st Floor,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/78/Crime/2021

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, P&B Division, HPPWD Sangrah, District Sirmour, H.P. on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the item rates bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of Contractors registered with HPPWD for the works detailed in the table.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Date for Downloading Bid	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Deadline for Submission of Bid

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WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



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

Forecast for Wednesday: Thunderstorm accompanied by lightning/hail likely at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, central Maharashtra, Telangana, interior Karnataka and Kerala. Dense fog likely in isolated pockets over Haryana, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...29.5	14.6	14.6	Kozhikode	...34.5...	24.9	
Ahmedabad	...31.7	15.0	15.0	Kurnool	...34.2...	18.8	
Aizawl	...23.0	5.7	5.7	Lucknow	...27.6...	12.6	
Allahabad	...27.8	12.4	12.4	Madurai	...31.6...	23.4	
Bengaluru	...31.4	18.4	18.4	Mangaluru	...33.9...	23.3	
Bhopal	...29.1	15.4	15.4	Mumbai	...28.9...	20.5	
Bhubaneswar	...35.7	19.3	19.3	Mysuru	...32.0...	19.0	
Chandigarh	...27.4	11.2	11.2	Patna	...29.4...	11.6	
Chennai	...31.7	20.4	20.4	Pond Blair	...28.4...	11.8	
Coimbatore	...32.2	22.4	22.4	Puducherry	...30.8...	20.1	
Dehradoon	...27.5	9.9	9.9	Pune	...32.3...	17.2	
Gangtok	...2.1	11.8	7.5	Raipur	...33.5...	19.6	
Goa	...31.6	21.7	21.7	Ranchi	...30.0...	12.9	
Guwahati	...29.5	13.3	13.3	Shillong	...18.6...	7.6	
Hubballi	...32.0	17.0	17.0	Shimla	...16.5...	6.6	
Hyderabad	...33.6	19.5	19.5	Srinagar	...16.6...	0.9	
Imphal	...25.6	5.5	5.5	Thiruvananthapuram	...32.6...	24.2	
Jaipur	...30.2	15.0	15.0	Tiruchi	...32.3...	23.4	
Kochi	...31.0	24.8	24.8	Vijayawada	...32.6...	20.0	
Kohima	...20.5	6.8	6.8	Visakhapatnam	...30.1...	23.0	
Kolkata	...31.7	19.1	19.1				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES SO₂ NO_x CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE

Ahmedabad	17	.88	29	.82	.131	...
Bengaluru	11	.68	23	.111	.114	...
Chennai	10	.17	42	.61	.73	...
Delhi	33	139	78	.358	.316	...
Hyderabad	.6	.51	.24	.110	.127	...
Kolkata	40	.24	.58	.351	.220	...
Lucknow	.9	.102	.45	.343	.369	...
Mumbai	.1	.43	.30	.151	.142	...
Pune	.101	.51	.153	.116	.106	...
Visakhapatnam	—	—	—	—	—	—

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. Aggravated respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m. Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh recorded overall air quality index (AQI) score of 376 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Puducherry recorded a healthy AQI score of 38

Lockdown impact: 12,719 infants died in Maharashtra

Mumbai had highest mortalities among districts, finds RTI

ALOK DESPANDE MUMBAI

A total of 12,179 infants (zero to one year) died in Maharashtra between February 2020 and December 2020, during which the lockdown was imposed in view of COVID-19, a query under the Right to Information (RTI) has revealed.

The district-wise figure has shown that Mumbai, Akola, Aurangabad, Nashik, Nagpur, and Pune accounted for 4,411 infant mortalities which is 36.22% of the total deaths. During the period, Mumbai saw the highest number of deaths at 1,097 followed by Akola (783), Aurangabad (729),

Nashik (664), Nagpur (587), and Pune (551). Sindhudurg (46), Latur (78), and Washim (89) are the three districts which recorded the lowest infant deaths.

The RTI query was filed by Samarthan, an NGO, which has been working in the field of human rights and malnutrition. "The information we have obtained is shocking. While the infant deaths are 12,179, the number of deaths of children between the age group of 1 and 5 is 1,872. The period of February to December last year was of lockdown," Rupesh Keer, a coordinator with Samarthan, said.

Mr. Keer further said that

they had been highlighting the problem of malnutrition in rural and tribal belt of the State, but these numbers pointed to the need to work in cities like Mumbai.

Samarthan has sent a letter to Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope highlighting the data it had received under the RTI. The letter cited various reasons for the infant deaths, which included preterm birth, malnutrition of mother and child, infection, pneumonia, and problems in breathing.

"The higher number of deaths in areas with urbanisation is a concern and steps need to be taken to counter this," the letter said.

TRP manipulation case: HC reserves order on former BARC CEO's bail plea

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday reserved its order on a bail plea filed by Partho Dasgupta, former chief executive officer of Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC), who is an accused in the television rating point (TRP) manipulation case.

A single judge Bench of Justice P.D. Naik was hearing Mr. Dasgupta's plea filed under Section 439 (special powers of High Court or Court of Session regarding bail) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. It sought bail on merits as the charge sheet in the case has been filed.

Special public prosecutor Shishir Hiray opposed the bail on the grounds that WhatsApp chats had been leaked in which there were

conversations between him and the Prime Minister's Office, which showed that he was an influential person and could tamper with evidence and sway witnesses who were either former or current employees of BARC.

Mr. Dasgupta was arrested from Pune on December 24, 2020, and is currently lodged in the Taloja Central Jail. On January 20, the City Civil and Sessions Court rejected his bail and on January 4, the additional chief metropolitan magistrate too rejected his bail.

However, Mr. Dasgupta's

Pointing out the role played by co-accused and BARC's chief operating officer Romil Ramgarhia, Mr. Ponda argued that he had an equally important role and he was an active participant. However, he had been granted bail.

Mr. Dasgupta was arrested from Pune on December 24, 2020, and is currently lodged in the Taloja Central Jail. On January 20, the City Civil and Sessions Court rejected his bail and on January 4, the additional chief metropolitan magistrate too rejected his bail.

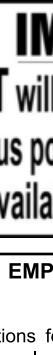
Santosh Namdev Patil (47), a resident of Saraswati CHS at Sector 12, Kharghar, was found dead on the ground floor of his two-storey house. "After dinner on Monday, he went to the room on the ground floor while his wife

was a fight between him, his wife, and mother at night after which he went down. His wife kept telling him to go back to work," a police officer said.

Those who require assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts may contact:

BMC mental health helpline 022-24131212 (24x7); Vandrevala Foundation: 18602662345/18002333330 (24x7); I Call: 022-25521111 (8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday to Saturday); The Samaritans Mumbai: 8422984528/8422984529/8422984530 (3 p.m. to 9 p.m. all days).

KALAM INSTITUTE OF HEALTH TECHNOLOGY (KIHT)



Kangana withdraws suit against BMC notice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut on Tuesday withdrew her suit filed in a civil court against the notice issued by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) for alleged illegal merger of flats.

The MCGM, also known as the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), had in March 2018 issued a notice to Ms. Ranaut over merger of three flats owned by her in Orchid Breeze building in Khar. It was alleged that the flats were merged into a single unit in violation of sanctioned plans.

In December last year, the Dindoshi civil court had dismissed her application challenging the notice, following which she moved the Bombay High Court.

But later Ms. Ranaut

6 die in multi-vehicle collision on Mumbai-Pune Expressway

Four injured; NMMC veterinary doctor, family among deceased

RAINA ASSAINAR NAVI MUMBAI

Six people, including a veterinary doctor and his family, were killed and four others sustained injuries in a collision of multiple vehicles on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway in the early hours of Tuesday.

According to the police, a little after midnight on Monday, a heavy container vehicle coming towards Mumbai on the second lane lost control and rammed into an Innova which was ahead of it.

Dr. Vaibhav Zunjare (41), a veterinary doctor with the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) and his family, were travelling in the Innova, which got sandwiched between the container and the road divider. The container further dashed into a Creta car and then toppled after hitting a tempo.

Zunjare, his mother Usha Vasant Zunjare (63), wife Vaishali Vaibhav Zunjare (38), and five-year-old daughter Shriya, died on the

spot. His 11-year-old son Arnav who was in the middle of the rear seat has survived with multiple fractures and is in a critical condition at Apollo Hospital. Manju Prakash Nahar (58), a resident of Goregaon (West), who was in the Creta, also died on the spot. The cleaner of the container, Kaluram Jamnaji Jaat, succumbed to injuries during treatment at Ashavainayak Hospital in New Panvel.

"A perfect joint family is what they were. He didn't want to risk the health of his elderly parents and children and thus he had asked them to stay at Solapur. He was infected with COVID-19 and recovered. A few months ago, he had got his wife and children back to Navi Mumbai but since the schools were yet to physically open and the children started missing their grandparents, he again dropped them back," a colleague of Zunjare said.

On Friday, the colleague said, Zunjare went to Solapur to get them back and they started from there on Monday. "His father who had stayed back at Solapur has now come here to be with his grandson in the hospital," the colleague said.

and two children were on the first floor. After some time when she went to call him, she found him dead. It was a case of suicide," senior police inspector Shatrughna Mali from Kharghar police station said. Another police constable Satish Pawar, who stays in the same locality and is attached to the Vashi traffic police, rushed to Patil's house and took him to Terna hospital where he was declared brought dead.

According to the police, Patil had been in sick leave for the last 10 days and had domestic issues too. "There was a fight between him, his wife, and mother at night after which he went down. His wife kept telling him to go back to work," a police officer said.

Kangana Ranaut

were a fight between him, his wife, and mother at night after which he went down. His wife kept telling him to go back to work," a police officer said.

withdrew the appeal and told the High Court last week that she would apply to the MCGM for regularization of changes in the flat.

Last year, the civic body had initiated demolition of alleged unauthorised construction at Ms. Ranaut's bungalow in Pali Hill, but the High Court subsequently termed the action illegal and malicious.

In December last year, the Dindoshi civil court had dismissed her application challenging the notice, following which she moved the Bombay High Court.

But later Ms. Ranaut

Applications for one post of Process Server (General category) in the pay scale of Rs. 4440-7440+1650 G.P. (DL), purely on temporary basis for Ambala Sessions Division are hereby invited from the general public. The essential qualification for the aforesaid post shall be as follows:-

PROCESS SERVER

Appointment to the post of Process Server shall be made from the candidates who have passed matriculation examination with knowledge of Hindi or Punjabi.

AGE

The minimum age limit of candidate for appointment to the post of Process Server shall be 18 years and the upper age limit shall be 42 years as on 1.1.2021 in accordance with the latest instructions of the Haryana Government in this regard.



Freedom and security

The govt. must view freedom of speech as an aid, not impediment, to national security

By calling on social media platforms operating in India to follow the law of the land, as it did last week in Parliament, the government has not just stated the seemingly obvious but also delivered a warning to Twitter that it ought not to defy its orders again, the way it did in early February, when the government wanted certain handles blocked for spreading incendiary content. "We respect criticism... you can criticise even the Prime Minister," said Minister of IT and Communications Ravi Shankar Prasad in Parliament on Thursday. "But if social media is used to propagate hate, then action will be taken." Further, he asked, why "when police act in Washington's Capitol Hill ransacking, a micro blogging site stands in their support, but when a similar action is taken at Red Fort, our national pride, the platform opposes it?" That the government wanted problematic hashtags blocked is understandable, given the tense situation on the ground on the day of the farmer protests, but what is difficult to appreciate is that it also wanted handles of some journalists, activists and politicians to be blocked. Twitter eventually complied, but not fully. "We have not taken any action on accounts that consist of news media entities, journalists, activists, and politicians," it said in its blog. "To do so, we believe, would violate their fundamental right to free expression under Indian law."

After all this, the issue is still in the realm of statements and counter-statements. While keeping up the pressure on Twitter by threatening to take action, the government, at least for the time being, seems to have stopped short of taking action. And while being defiant initially, Twitter also seems to have stopped short of escalating it and going to court. This is significant because if either one of the parties had decided to escalate the issue, the contentious law under which social media platforms are required to comply with blocking orders could come under legal scrutiny. The reference is to Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, under which the government can order a digital intermediary to block any content on grounds including security of the state and public order. Sure, the Supreme Court did uphold the constitutionality of Section 69A in the Shreya Singhal vs. the Union of India case in 2015, but criticism over the secrecy of the process and the arbitrariness with which it has been used over the years has never ceased. This Section, in a way, represents the wide censorship powers that the government has. It is, therefore, important that freedom of speech is not seen as the antithesis of security of the state, but as one of its key facilitators.

Ominous precedent

With Trump surviving the Senate trial, his politics will remain relevant till 2024

Donald Trump has survived, by a mere 10 votes, the Senate trial that might have convicted him for inciting insurrection. All 50 Democrats of the Upper Chamber voted 'guilty,' and seven Republicans joined them, yet the tally fell short of the two-thirds necessary for conviction. The charges framed against the former U.S. President came from the House of Representatives, which impeached him – for the second time – last month, this time for goading on a mob to attack the U.S. Capitol building on January 6. The attack came after months of sloganising by Mr. Trump on Twitter to the effect that the mail-in voting, a necessary feature of the pandemic-era election, was fraudulent and that his supporters ought to #StopTheSteal. Statistics from every previous presidential election suggest that this claim is entirely unfounded. The result was that a woman was killed at the site of the siege, and four others died during the course of the attack and its aftermath, including a police officer. Beyond the loss of life, the attack was recognised by President Joe Biden as an "unprecedented assault" on the soul of American democracy. In a sense, it marked the culmination of Mr. Trump's relentless disregard of the traditions and norms of governance whether in terms of harsh immigration policies, the rejection of major global alliances and multilateral forums, a willingness to spark off trade wars and exacerbate tensions over tariffs, or to brazenly use his public position for personal gain.

The fact that Mr. Trump survived the vote to convict him of high crimes and misdemeanours and potentially bar him from running again, leaves ominous questions regarding the future of the Republican Party. Its leader in the Senate, Mitch McConnell, waxed eloquent about Mr. Trump's culpability for incitement yet failed to grasp the irony that he had led the majority of his party to acquit the very man he claimed to denounce. This potentially raises at least two scenarios. The first is that Congressional Republicans are not, as a group, convinced that the harm that Mr. Trump did to the presidency and the fabric of American society warrants banning him from the highest office in the land. Second, even though they might secretly believe that Mr. Trump's views were not in line with mainstream conservative values, they fear that convicting him and banning him from a second run for the White House might have the reverse effect on his supporter base – strengthening the Make America Great Again "movement". After all, Mr. Trump did end up garnering over 74 million votes in last year's election, and he mobilised these numbers through a relentless barrage of rhetoric fuelling nativist populism and a sense of disenfranchised white privilege, a political phenomenon not seen in recent decades. Unless the Grand Old Party pivots away from this Trump-centric view of its political fortunes, the bitter polarisation of the past few years will almost certainly make an ugly revival by 2024.

Looking ahead after the Ladakh walk back

After making a political choice in the disengagement, the government has to now deal with the strategic consequences



SUSHANT SINGH

In the end, the murmurs of an imminent breakthrough after the last round of military-diplomatic talks between India and China on January 24 were finally confirmed last week when Beijing made the announcement of the start of disengagement between the two armies, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Indian Army, in Ladakh. New Delhi followed suit the next day with a selectively detailed announcement by the Defence Minister in Parliament, where he again took no questions, confirming that the two Himalayan neighbours had started walking back from the brink in Ladakh. This is not the end of the 10-month-old military stand-off yet but, palpably, the beginning of the end. It is a welcome move because heightened tensions between the two nuclear-armed Asian powers serve no useful purpose for anyone, certainly not India's.

Political priority

The current disengagement is limited to two places on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh: north bank of Pangong lake and Kailash range to the south of Pangong. There are three other sites of contention on the Ladakh border where the PLA had come in – Depsang, Gogra-Hot Springs and Demchok – and talks will be held to resolve these after the current phase of disengagement is completed. There have been regular clashes between the soldiers of both sides at the north bank of Pangong lake, and nearly a quarter of all the Chinese transgressions on the LAC between 2014 and 2019 have taken place in the area. It has limited strategic importance, but is a popular tourist spot after the climax of

the superhit Hindi film, *3 Idiots*, was shot there.

Moreover, unlike other areas of contestation, there are habitations in the vicinity of the north bank which can observe any Chinese ingress. These sightings have been reported by the elected Ladakhi representatives to the media, including in this newspaper, to the embarrassment of the central government which has been keen on keeping the news of Chinese control of Indian territory off the news cycle and out of public sight.

This means the disengagement at north bank was a political priority – imagine the impact of tourists visiting the area again to signal normalcy – and led to it being clubbed with the Kailash range to the south of the lake. While Chinese troops had moved into the Indian side of the LAC in the other areas, the Kailash range was the only place where Indians had taken the initiative to hold hitherto unoccupied peaks in end-August. A heavy deployment of troops and tanks caught the Chinese by surprise who responded by their own deployment, with the two sides separated by a few yards.

A stance that is unclear

With soldiers and tanks in eyeball range, the Kailash range was a tinderbox that could spark off a much bigger crisis with a minor accident. The Chinese have been insistent in the talks that the two sides disengage from this area first. Knowing that this was the only leverage it had, New Delhi had resisted taking that call until now, instead seeking a simultaneous resolution of all the flashpoints on the Ladakh border. In its statement, the government has not clarified the reasons for its change of stance which was clearly dictated by something more than the desire to remove the most dangerous flashpoint on the border.

Even though it does not restore the *status quo ante* of April 2020 and the details about the south bank are sketchy, the disengage-



ment deal on the two banks of Pangong is a fair deal for India when seen from the limited prism of only these areas. But when considered from the perspective of the whole LAC in Ladakh, it raises questions about the wisdom of giving up the only leverage India had for the sake of disengagement at north bank.

Depsang issue, buffer zones

The Indian military leadership is aware of the strategic importance of the Dapsang plains in the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) sector, not only due to its proximity to the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi (DSDBO) road, the DBO airstrip and the Karakoram Pass, but because of the threat it poses to Indian control over the Siachen glacier. This remains the only area on the Indian landmass where China and Pakistan can physically collude militarily, and has been identified by former northern army commanders as tough to defend in case of a Chinese military attack. The excuse that the Dapsang problem precedes the current crisis on the LAC and thus must be treated separately holds little water, for it would be in India's interest to club them together and find a holistic solution. Moreover, even the current crisis on the north bank of Pangong lake has been there since at least October 2019 though it flared up substantially in May 2020.

The current disengagement plan provides us with a window into the mindset of the Indian decision makers who prefer the crea-

tion of a 'no patrol' zone or buffer zone as a solution to the tensions on the LAC. Before the buffer zone was created at the north bank of Pangong, a similar buffer zone was created in Galwan in July 2020 around the place where India lost 20 soldiers in a deadly clash a month earlier. That buffer zone has held good till date, even though it denies India access to the areas up to PPI4 which it patrolled earlier. There are worries that such buffer zones would lie majorly on the Indian side of the LAC, thus converting a hitherto Indian-controlled territory into a neutral zone.

A no patrol zone has not been announced, at least publicly by the Defence Minister, for the Kailash range and that exposes the limitations of any plan to create such buffer zones in all the contentious border areas for the sake of peace and tranquility on the LAC. Owing to the disputed nature of the border and a lack of trust between the two sides, any perceived violations of 'no patrol' zones can lead to deadly outcomes as seen in Galwan on June 15, 2020. At best, these buffer zones can provide a temporary reprieve but are no alternative to the mutual delineation of the LAC and a final settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary.

A power differential

As the Indian media highlighted the rapid pace of the PLA's withdrawal from disengagement sites, obliquely suggesting a Chinese weakness, the response from Chinese experts was in the form of a threat. Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University was quoted in the *Global Times* saying that if the PLA can withdraw this many armaments and ground forces in one day, it can also return equally swiftly. It goes to the nub of New Delhi's weakness vis-à-vis Beijing: India does not have the military capacity and the political will to evict the Chinese troops out of its

territory. Because of the power differential with China, India's best-case scenario is to deploy sufficient troops to prevent any PLA ingress as was done with a massive deployment on the LAC after May 2020. The option of undertaking a prompt *quid pro quo* military operation in Chinese territory, as advocated by the Non-alignment 2.0 strategy document produced by Centre for Policy Research in 2012 (<https://bit.ly/37BGGTB>), contains escalatory risks which an India in economic recession lacks the appetite for.

The enduring impact

The Ladakh border crisis of 2020 will leave a lasting impact on India's strategic calculus. The political imperative of defending every inch of territory, while lacking the wherewithal to reverse a Chinese ingress, is likely to favour an enhanced deployment of the Indian Army all along the LAC, from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh. Not only will it stretch the Army, it would divert scarce resources towards the continental border away from the maritime domain. With India's attractiveness to the United States and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, better known as the Quad, firmly anchored in the Indian Ocean, such a move would work to China's advantage. It is another matter that having struck a disengagement deal with China, New Delhi itself may no longer be as enthusiastic about the Quad as it was a couple of months ago when the Chinese threat was imminent. Will it lead to a reset of ties with Beijing?

By seeking the restoration of peace and tranquillity on the LAC instead of a reversion to the status quo ante as of April 2020, the Narendra Modi government has made a political choice in Ladakh. It will have to bear the strategic consequences of that choice.

Sushant Singh is a Senior Fellow at the Centre for Policy Research. The views expressed are personal

In telehealth, scaling up the Indian advantage

There are lessons from the pandemic that can be applied usefully to how health care can be delivered



KAMALINI RAMDAS & SOUMYA SWAMINATHAN

In the novel coronavirus pandemic, health-care providers have been reassigned from other specialties to COVID-19, restricting high quality care for other conditions.

Simultaneously, lockdowns and fear of transmission have dampened demand for non-emergency care. A survey conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 105 countries in July 2020 (<https://bit.ly/3aqKJ6R>) showed that essential services were disrupted in the majority of countries, with immunisation, antenatal and childcare services among the most widely affected. About 45% of low-income countries incurred at least partial disruption of over 75% of services, relative to only 4% of high-income countries. Almost 60% of services were at least partially disrupted in South East Asian countries.

COVID-19 impact

In India, detection of tuberculosis cases was down by 50% in April–December of 2020 relative to the same period in 2019, and antenatal care visits were down by 56% in the first half of 2020. With stoppage of routine follow-ups, blood sugar control for diabetics was at risk, increasing the chances of adverse events requiring hospitalisation, including worse outcomes in the case of COVID-19 infection.

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.

Repression

Arbitrary arrests, with scant regard to the rules of the game, incarceration on flimsy and unproven grounds, and a high level of intolerance have become the order of the day in India today. The inability of the government to stomach even the slightest criticism of its policies or its leadership is amply manifest in the goings-on in the country today and it certainly does not augur well for the future as dissent is a *sine qua non* in

a vibrant democracy. The first term of office of this NDA government (2014–2019) was infinitely better than the second term, that has witnessed among other things, the reduced stature of Parliament and the passing of draconian laws by the Centre and the States where the BJP is in the saddle. The only silver lining is that the government's all-out-bid to stifle dissent has not really succeeded.

C.V. ARAVIND,
Bengaluru

Many Indians have voted for the BJP in the hope of living better and enjoying key rights as enshrined in the Constitution. But the government seems to be leading India toward some kind of a dictatorship. Actions now amount to subjugating if not terrorising us into not expressing displeasure of the style of governance.

C. SACHIDANANDA NARAYANAN,
Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

■ By declaring your stand in its Editorial (February 16), is

not *The Hindu* taking a unilateral stand, and not giving the law-enforcing authorities the space and the time to prove their case? After all, this does not come under the count of regular cases. This does not behave the paper's standards. I call for a course-correction here.

S. HARIHARAN,
Bengaluru

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In cricket gear, a snapshot of India today

The accusations against Wasim Jaffer inject a new toxicity that could corrode Indian cricket from its roots



SHARDA UGRA



V.S. SUBRAHMANYAM

On February 11, after Wasim Jaffer, former Test opener and the country's most prolific first-class batsman, was made to defend himself against allegations by a State cricket official of communal bias in coaching, Indian cricket was left peering over the edge of its abyss. It's not a place visited often because elsewhere Indian cricket remains shiny and happy. The national team is dominating England, the IPL's mini-auction promises large payouts and fans don't care what administrators do.

Except last week, an official was allowed to pull off the grotesque. Cricket Association of Uttarakhand (CAU) secretary Mahim Verma framed Indian cricket with a familiar political narrative meant to reinforce stereotype, destroy reputation, cause damage and protect his own skin. What he actually did was reveal the venality of our cricket administration and the shallowness of its wealthy and influential. A snapshot of contemporary India, except clad in cricket kit.

The events

This is what happened: On February 9, Mr. Jaffer emailed his resignation as coach of the Uttarakhand team citing "interference and bias of selectors and secretary in the selection matters for non-deserving players." He said Mr. Verma was "pushing the names of players for selection who were not at all deserving." Mr. Verma's response on February 10 was headlined on the front page of the Hindi daily, *Dainik Jagran*, as "Coach Wasim Jaffer caught in a religious dispute". Mr. Verma accused Mr. Jaffer, their Muslim coach, of dividing the team with "mazhab gatividhi (religious/ communal activity)", fighting with officials and using coercion to replace captain Kunal Chandela with fellow Muslim, Iqbal Abdullah. Team manager Navneet Mishra told *Jagran* that maulvis had turned up for Friday prayers during a training camp.

On February 11, Mr. Jaffer called the allegations "lowly" and "sad." It was chief selector Rizwan Shamshad and his panel who had put forward

Mr. Abdullah's name as captain to him. The maulvi had been called in by Mr. Abdullah. Mr. Jaffer would not move practice for the Friday afternoon prayer for the team's Muslims and told Mr. Abdullah that if wanted a maulvi in after training, he needed official permission. Mr. Mishra gave Mr. Abdullah permission saying, according to *The Indian Express*, "No problem, Iqbal, prayer and religion are most important."

Maybe Mr. Abdullah shouldn't have asked for the maulvi. Maybe Mr. Verma shouldn't have allowed it. Maybe there is actually a bad time or a wrong place to show *bhaichaara* (brotherhood) or indeed faith itself. In the exchange between Mr. Mishra and Mr. Abdullah lie Indian cricket's routinely messy multifaith entanglements. Its varied religious demographic has always stood for India's once-celebrated plurality. A 1980 poster for communal harmony featuring Kapil Dev, Maninder Singh, Mohammad Azharuddin and Roger Binny read: "If we can play together, we can live together." In the Jammu and Kashmir team, regardless of political trouble, Hindus from Jammu and the Muslims from the Valley remain united not just by cricket but by having to cope with their shabby administration.

In 2013-2014, as J&K neared their first Ranji Trophy knockout qualification, crowds packed into Srinagar's Sher-e-Kashmir stadium. News crews gathered to record a tight chase and chants of 'Azaadi, Azaadi' broke out for the cameras. The J&K batsmen, one Muslim and one Hindu, joked mid-increase, "Yaar, lekin jeetenge haarengae, azaadi kahan se aayegi? [Whether we win or lose, where will freedom come from?]" In a recent tribute on Ishant Sharma's 100th Test, Munaf Patel spoke of how Ishant as a rookie wanted to bunk with Munna bhai on tour because he

wasn't used to sleeping alone even in sealed-off luxury.

Timidity of players

But Indian cricket does not always smell of politically correct roses. Sniff around and the word '*niyavaad*' (roughly translated as Muslim-centrism) appears. As Mumbai captain, Mr. Jaffer knew that if he made a case for cricketers who happened to be Muslim, people would mutter. In his press conference, he said, "It was the selectors who had selected them... Iqbal was a part of the India Under-19 World Cup squad and when Sachin Tendulkar took Rahil Shaikh to Mumbai Indians, nobody spoke about that."

Young Muslim cricketers, like Muslims in India today, know that knives can arrive without warning. With Mr. Jaffer, they see, no matter their achievements, neither their institution nor the majority of their peers will speak for them. A State official makes grievous, unsubstantiated accusations against a giant of the Indian game, but the BCCI president Sourav Ganguly says nothing in public. If a player president won't speak for a teammate, why expect secretary and dynast administrator Jay Shah to bother? Or the many ethics officers and ombudsmen around Indian cricket? The mute Indian Cricketers Association is now proven lily-livered. Players' bodies elsewhere would have protested vociferously and demanded official apologies.

It is no surprise either that only a handful of former players, Anil Kumble being the most prominent, spoke up for Mr. Jaffer. As an excuse, it's argued that cricketing celebrities have much "at stake", "to lose." What they guard so preciously with their wallets is timidity. Rarely outspoken on anything outside cricket, we see them today as hollow men even inside their sport, reduced to rapidly

retreating feet, always backing away to leg. Several have joined politics to receive new training in trolling.

Two days after Mr. Jaffer's conference, Mr. Verma denied making communal accusations, to a *Jagran* rival, *Amar Ujala*: "I have got tired of replying to this question, this is completely baseless... Why is he making these accusations against me, I can't understand."

Understand instead CAU's 'chronology': Mr. Jaffer is the third Uttarakhand coach in its three years. Previous coaches, K.P. Bhaskar and Gursharan Singh, had good first seasons but were not given longer runs. When Mr. Jaffer called out electoral malpractice, Mr. Verma chose India's latest and most efficient diversionary tactic – the 'Muslim card' – to dodge real issues: about Mr. Jaffer's complaints; why CAU picks 56 probables for two limited-overs tournaments; why its website is useless, minus annual accounts; what its elected officials squabble over.

In its first year, the BCCI oversaw Uttarakhand cricket as four factions fought for recognition. The group headed by Mr. Verma's father P.C. Verma (over 70 and ineligible for office) won that contest. Verma Jr., previously a sports co-ordinator at the Uttarakhand Technical University, was named Mr. Ganguly's BCCI vice-president, but quit in April 2020. He returned to where the real power plus access to the annual ₹30 crore BCCI subsidy rested – with CAU. His BCCI replacement was Rajeev Shukla, a 'non-retiring director' in the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association, where before its cricketing statehood, Uttarakhand was a mere district association. Mr. Shukla, mover and shaker in the region, with volatile Indian cricket omnipresence and enjoying unconstitutional dual roles, has no words on Mr. Jaffer either.

Politicians involved in Indian cricket usually sought clout, office, money and match passes. The Jaffer affair exposes our game to the poison-spreading day job of its political volk. Mr. Verma's casual induction of Mr. Jaffer's Muslim-ness in a debate over cricketing competence injects a new toxicity that could corrode Indian cricket from its roots. One petty official, one corrupt association at a time. There is no shortage of those.

Sharda Ugra is an independent sports journalist based in Bengaluru

Combating vaccine hesitancy

A storm of misinformation around COVID-19 vaccines may seriously dent the fight against the pandemic



RAKESH DUBBUDU & NANDITHA KALIDOS

biases i.e., information overload and limited attention spans.

The debates around hesitancy for COVID-19 vaccines include concerns over safety, efficacy, and side effects due to the record-breaking timelines of the vaccines, competition among several companies, misinformation, and religious taboos. According to a survey conducted by LocalCircles in December, a community social media platform, about 69% of the respondents said they will not rush to vaccinate themselves against the pandemic. Another survey indicates that 55% of healthcare professionals are hesitant to take the vaccine; 64% prefer to do an antibody test before vaccination. Despite negligibly low cases of adverse effects reported so far, such notions have silently wormed into our vaccination efforts.

People can choose to not be inoculated, but to break the chain of transmission, it is imperative to have the right strategy in place. Hence, it is suggested that we adopt the idea of libertarian paternalism, a concept of behavioural science, which says it is possible and legitimate to steer people's behaviour towards vaccination while still respecting their freedom of choice. Vaccine hesitancy has a different manifestation in India, unlike in the West. According to the World Economic Forum/Ipsos global survey, COVID-19 vaccination intent in India, at 87%, exceeds the global 15-country average of 73%.

The way forward

Instead of anti-vaxxers, the target audience must be the swing population i.e., people who are sceptical but can be persuaded through scientific facts and proper communication. The second measure is to pause before you share any 'news' from social media. It becomes crucial to inculcate the habit of inquisitive temper to fact-check any news related to COVID-19 vaccines.

The third measure is to use the celebrity effect – the ability of prominent personalities to influence others to take vaccines. Studies suggest that celebrities can serve as agents of positive social change, erasing scepticism associated with vaccine adoption and prompting information-seeking and preventative behaviours. We can start with politicians and government officials who are next in line for vaccination. Celebrities can add glamour and an element of credibility to mass vaccinations both on the ground and on social media. The infodemic around vaccines can be tackled only by actively debunking myths, misinformation and fake news on COVID-19 vaccines.

Rakesh Dubbudu is the founder of the fact-checking initiative Factly and Nanditha Kalidoss is Health Fellow (Misinformation) at Factly

The viability of two proposals

While four capitals may not be feasible in India, a Supreme Court Bench in south India can be created

M.P. NATHANAL

Speaking at a roadshow in Kolkata on January 23, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee asked why India should have only one capital and suggested that there be four. She directed Sudip Bandyopadhyay, MP and leader of the Trinamool Congress in the Lok Sabha, to raise the issue in Parliament. She suggested that Parliament sessions should be held in each of the four capitals in a rotating manner. While Ms. Banerjee has the right to have her opinion on the issue, she doesn't seem to have given much thought to the feasibility of the proposal.

inaugurated in 1931. One of the factors that may have weighed in favour of New Delhi could be its proximity to the summer capital, Shimla.

But today, even shifting a State capital would involve huge expenditure. In the 1980s, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister proposed to shift the State capital to Tiruchirappalli in central Tamil Nadu. The plan was ultimately shelved when the huge burden it would impose on the State exchequer became apparent. The cost to the government exchequer to have capitals in three other States will be mind-boggling and our nation can ill-afford this.

A proposal to be considered

A similar request was made in January 2021 when the Bar Councils of the five southern States called for a Supreme Court bench in south India. This has been a long-standing demand. Unlike the proposal to establish four capitals, this one merits serious consideration given the prohibitively long distance between the southern States and Delhi. Not many can afford to travel all the way to New Delhi to engage lawyers and plead their cases. The exorbitant fees of the Supreme Court lawyers in New Delhi is another deterrent.

While speaking at an online event last year, Attorney General K.K. Venugopal suggested that four benches of Court of Appeal with 15 judges each be created across the country to reduce the burden of the Supreme Court. This would enable judges to go through each case thoroughly and deliver a well-thought-out verdict. Setting up these courts would call for an amendment in the Constitution. Though the demand is to set up a bench in the south, southern Bar Councils may later take up the issue of setting up separate appellate benches in regions in the south. Such an arrangement would leave the apex court free to deal with constitutional issues. With cases mounting in various courts, a viable solution needs to be worked out. Easy accessibility to justice for every citizen is a right that cannot be countered.

Calcutta (now Kolkata) was once a capital of this country until King George V announced in December 1911 that Delhi would be the new capital. Parliament House was opened in 1927 and the magnificent Viceroy's residence (now Rashtrapati Bhavan) and the government buildings were

DATA POINT

Vaccine tracker

The pace of COVID-19 vaccinations in Tamil Nadu and Punjab is slow compared to other major States. As of February 15, both States had vaccinated less than 40% of their registered healthcare workers. Also, Tamil Nadu has administered 0.3 doses per 100 people, the lowest among all States/UTs as of February 15. Overall, India has administered 85,16,771 doses – the fourth highest in the world among 48 countries with updated data. However, only 0.63 doses have been administered per 100 people – the fifth lowest among these nations. By Sumanth Sen and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

BENEFICIARY COUNT | As of Feb. 15, 84,18 lakh people received the first dose (blue) of vaccination in India. Additionally, 98,118 healthcare workers received the second dose.

Health workers 60,57,162
Frontline workers 23,61,491
2nd dose 98,118

VACCINATION COVERAGE | The map shows the share of registered healthcare workers who were vaccinated as of Feb. 15. Fourteen States/UTs have vaccinated more than 70% of the healthcare workers (blue) while five States, including T.N. and Punjab, have reported less than 40% coverage (red). Bihar reported the highest coverage.

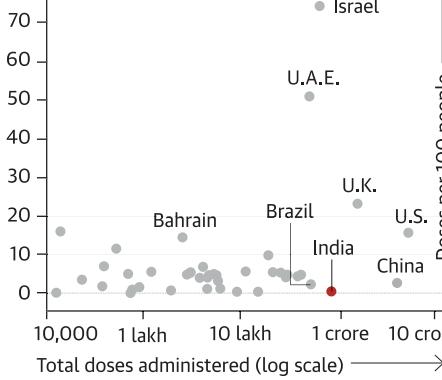
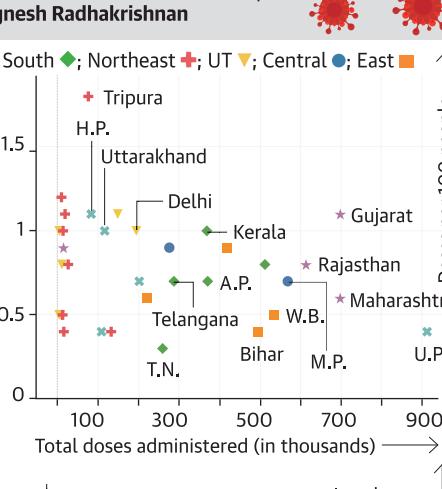
Punjab (<40%)
U.P. (72%)
Bihar (81.6%)
T.N. (<40%)
Data were not available for States coloured grey

STATE-WISE DATA

The chart plots the total number of doses administered and the number of doses administered per 100 people in a State/UT as on February 15. Tamil Nadu has administered 0.3 doses per 100 people, the lowest among all States/UTs. Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan in the west & U.P., Uttarakhand, Delhi and H.P. in the north are leading the nation in the vaccination drive.

GLOBAL COMPARISON

The chart plots the total number of doses administered and the number of doses administered per 100 people in 48 nations with updated data. While India has administered the fourth highest number of doses, its vaccination rate is among the lowest in the world. As many as 5.28 crore doses have been administered in the U.S., the highest in the world.



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 17, 1971

Cows join EEC meet in Brussels

Common market cows yesterday [Brussels, February 16] were herded carefully up three flights of stairs to join E.E.C. Ministers in their deliberations on the Community's agriculture problems.

About 100 Belgian opponents of the Community's food prices policies drove the cows up the staircase straight into the centre of the chamber where the Ministers had just settled down for what was planned a routine meeting. Usheers struggled with demonstrators as the protesters shouted, "We want to live", "Give us a fair price", and "Hang Mansholt" (E.E.C. official in charge of farm affairs).

Apart from the cows, Mr. Sicco Mansholt seemed the calmest person present. Around him raged the storm, as ushers tried to persuade the cows to leave peacefully.

Calm was restored by the police – who held about 20 demonstrators for questioning. In all the protest lasted a little over an hour.

Chairman Michel Cointat of France then ordered the session suspension for mopping up operations, since cows, it was noted, will be cows. – AFP

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEB. 17, 1911

Beer and crime

Lahore, Feb. 16: The following communiqué has been issued by the Punjab Government: Two private soldiers of an Ammunition Column about to proceed as part of an escort to ammunition from Campbellpur to Rawalpindi by the evening goods train on 14th February on being placed by the warrant officer under arrest for concealing beer in the wagon began firing at random from the shelter of wagon at about 8 P.M. The station staff and the few passengers about took cover, but unfortunately a passenger who was crossing the line was shot dead a few yards from the wagon. A railway menial servant was slightly injured in the head. Military aid arrived from cantonments and the men were disarmed and confined. A British soldier got a bullet through his cap in making the arrest. The O.C.R.A. and two other officers of the R.A. with the D.C. and D.P. arrived at the station and a joint military and police enquiry began which continued till next day. The case will be dealt with by civil courts and committal proceedings will be held this week in the court of the District Magistrate.

FROM PAGE ONE

Toolkit case: role of PJF under scanner

Pannu had announced a reward of \$2,50,000 for Punjab farmers protesting at the Singhu border to raise the Khalistani flag at India Gate on January 26.

Sources also said that during Ms. Ravi's interrogation, it had been revealed that in the now deleted WhatsApp group, which was created on December 6, Ms. Jacob became a member on December 11 and the members of the PJF were added on December 12.

'Not directly linked'

"It appears that Disha may not be directly linked to PJF because if that had been the case, they wouldn't be added into the group after Nikita. However, the case is still in early stages of investiga-

tion," the officer said.

The Delhi Police is investigating a sedition and conspiracy case after a toolkit was shared on social media, which is a document with a section titled 'prior action plan' about digital strikes to be conducted through hashtags on and before January 26, tweetstorms from January 23 onwards, physical action on January 26, and joining the farmers' march into Delhi and back to the borders.

The police claimed that the events of January 26, including the violence, were a copycat execution of the action plan.

Ms. Ravi was arrested from Bengaluru on February 13 and is currently in police custody.

4 cases of South African variant of virus found

"This variant has shown mutations in the receptor binding domain of the spike protein... India has confirmed one case of the variant strain detected in a Brazil returnee in the first week of February. The traveller and contacts have been tested and quarantined. The virus strain has been successfully isolated and cultured at ICMR-NIV, Pune, and experiments to assess vaccine effectiveness are under way," Dr. Bhargava said at the press conference. He added that the U.K. strain, which emerged in September 2020, had so far spread to 86 countries. "Neutralisation potential with the U.K. variant of the virus is there with the vaccine that we have," he added.

Speaking about the measures to restrict and check the entry of the virus strains into the country, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said flights from South Africa and Brazil are being routed through the Gulf countries. "So though there are no direct flights, the government is looking at bringing in measures to check passengers from these countries," he said.

NITI Aayog member V.K. Paul said India should continue its vigil to contain the vi-

rus despite the fall in the number of active cases. He added that India was now providing 24 countries with COVID-19 vaccines. "We don't still fully understand the virus and need to be serious about vaccinating while following COVID-appropriate behaviour. The vaccines are safe and can be given to people on blood thinners and aspirin," he added.

Two States

Giving data on the COVID-19 cases in the country, the Ministry said currently two States accounted for 72% of the active cases. "Kerala (61,550) and Maharashtra (37,383) continue to top the list of States with most active cases and we are closely monitoring the situation," Mr. Bhushan said.

He added that 11 States and Union Territories with vaccination coverage of less than 50%, including Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Chandigarh, Nagaland and Puducherry, had been instructed to conduct multiple vaccination sessions. The Ministry added that more than 88.5 lakh COVID-19 vaccine doses had been administered so far, and more than 1.3 lakh doses were given on Tues-

45 killed as bus falls into canal in Madhya Pradesh



Crash site: Rescuers pulling the bus out of the canal in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday. ■ PTI

Mr. Modi said, "The bus accident in MP's Sidhi is horrific. Condolences to the bereaved families. The local administration is actively involved in rescue and relief work."

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed grief over the tragedy and announced an ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased.

India, China pull back troops from Pangong

As part of the mutual and reciprocal steps, it was agreed that structures built by both sides on the north and south banks of the lake since April 2020 would be removed and the landforms restored. The disengagement be-

gan last Wednesday and is expected to be completed by the end of the week, following which the Corps Commanders will meet within 48 hours to discuss disengagement at the other frictions areas.

The Chief Minister said he ordered to stop the outflow from the Bansagar dam so that water level in the canal could go down.

Madhya Pradesh Congress president Kamal Nath also expressed grief over the tragedy.

Witnesses said the bus sank completely into the canal water and was not visible in the morning hours.

"A crash is something horrible... People are trapped inside the flight," Chief Justice Bobde, heading a three-judge Bench, observed on Tuesday. The court asked Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the government and agreeing with the CJI's oral

observations, to file its response to the petition.

The writ petition filed by Delhi resident Rajen Mehta sought the installation of the Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS) in at-risk airports across the country, more importantly at tabletop airports in Kozhikode and Mangalore.

He said the EMAS could have averted the tragic Mangalore air crash of 2010 and the recent one in Kozhikode.

"The existence of EMAS was brought to the knowl-

Frayed tempers, confusion reign at toll plazas

Motorists without FASTags resist paying double fee

SUCHITH KIDIVYOR
BENGALURU



No way out: A traffic jam in front of the toll gate near the airport in Bengaluru. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

As the new rule to collect a double fee from vehicles entering toll plazas without FASTags kicked in on Tuesday, tempers soared and confusion reigned in Bengaluru, Karnataka. Motorists without FASTags were seen arguing with toll plaza employees over paying the double fee.

At the Sadahalli gate toll plaza, cars heading towards the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) without a FASTag ended up paying ₹380 as toll fee for the round trip, whereas ₹140 was collected from cars fitted with it. Some of the taxi drivers who did not have enough cash to pay the fee were seen taking a U-turn at the toll plaza. Somasundaram, a resident of Bengaluru, said:

"The NHAI [National Highways Authority of India] should have given more time to install FASTags... The new rules burden the common people. It costs ₹400 to buy a FASTag. The government should have made it more affordable."

Rajesh M., a taxi driver, said: "Most taxi drivers are not in a position to make an advance deposit for FASTags as we all depend on a daily income. They ask for a dou-

ble fee for not maintaining a balance. The NHAI should have continued with at least one cash lane."

Local police were deployed to maintain law and order. Kannada activist Vatal Nagaraj staged a protest at the toll plaza and accused the Central government of "daylight robbery" by making FASTags mandatory. "By increasing fuel and LPG prices, and now imposing hefty penalty on motorists at toll

plazas, the Union government is harassing common people. We will protest on all the highways if the Central government fails to repeal the new rules within a week," he said.

Arguments were also seen at the toll plaza located near the Nagasandra metro station on Tumakuru road. Vehicle owners, especially goods vehicles and autorickshaws, resisted imposition of the hefty penalty.

zas under the NHAI, motorists with functional FASTags had a smooth ride. However, vehicle owners without FASTags argued with the staff at the booths and refused to move along the lane for those without FASTags.

KSRTC buses that did not have the FASTag added to the confusion as drivers refused to use the non-dedicated lane

by paying double the user fee or by taking the monthly pass. With the toll plaza staff taking a tough stance, the crew parked the buses haphazardly. "The KSRTC is not ready to take the FASTag despite intervention from the Secretary, Public Works.

They want exemption from toll," official sources said.

IN BRIEF



'Excluded for being a Congress supporter'

KOCHI
Actor Salim Kumar said on Tuesday that he was not on the list of 24 film personalities who will light a lamp at the Kochi leg of the International Film Festival of Kerala as he was a Congress supporter. "This is a festival conducted by those affiliated to the CPI(M)," he said.

Will revive nominations withdrawn under duress'

VIJAYAWADA
State Election Commissioner (SEC) S. Ramesh Kumar on Tuesday decided to take a fresh look at what he called "unnatural" withdrawal of nominations filed by the contestants in the fray for the municipal elections in Andhra Pradesh.

Unitac MD arrested in dollar smuggling case

KOCHI
Santhosh Eapen, managing director of Unitac Builder, was arrested by the Customs Preventive Commissionerate here on Tuesday and released on bail the same day. The arrest was recorded in the case related to the smuggling of dollars worth ₹1.30 crore.

'Can't share confessional statements with ED'

KOCHI
The Customs has opposed the sharing of confessional statements of Swapna Suresh and P.S. Sarith, the key accused in the gold smuggling case, with the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The Customs raised the objection while considering the ED's plea on Tuesday for the certified copies of the confessional statements.

Cases shoot up in Bengaluru complex

Infections rise from 28 to 103 in one day

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The number of COVID-19 positive cases at the SNN Raj Lake View Apartment complex at Bilekahalli in Bengaluru, which has emerged as a cluster for COVID-19 cases, shot up to 103 on Tuesday. It was 28 on Monday.

"All 1,052 residents of the apartment complex have been tested and the results are out now. As many as 103 have tested positive," Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad said on Tuesday.

Significantly, a majority of those who tested positive,



Virus hotspot: The SNN Raj Lake View Apartment complex at Bilekahalli in Bengaluru. ■ BHAGYAKRISHNA

96, are over the age of 60. However, many of them are asymptomatic and none of them has been hospitalised. The situation was being constantly monitored and all necessary medical care was being provided. "It is under control now," he said.

The Commissioner attri-

buted the spread of the infection in the apartment to a get-together at the club house 10 days ago. "The event, held in an air-conditioned room, seems to have acted as a superspreader," he said.

However, Kishore (name changed on request), 39, a resident of the apartment who has tested positive, told *The Hindu* that not one, but

Karnataka tightens norms for travellers from Kerala

'Negative report mandatory for entry'

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Karnataka has issued new guidelines mandating compulsory COVID-19 tests for all those who have entered the State from Kerala in the last two weeks, exempting those with a negative test report not older than 72 hours. Those coming from Kerala have to carry a negative RT-PCR test report not older than 72 hours, it stated.

A similar restriction was placed earlier in the month in four districts bordering

Kerala, but it was expanded to the entire State on Tuesday. This comes in the light of a COVID-19 cluster at a nursing college in Bengaluru being traced back mostly to Kerala returnees. The guidelines said students in engineering and other professional colleges who recently arrived from Kerala have to be tested for COVID-19.

The guidelines call for strengthening COVID-19 surveillance at all education institutions that accommodate students who have travelled from Kerala.

Classes 6 to 8 to reopen in Karnataka on Feb. 22

'Decision on Classes 1 to 5 next week'

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Schools for Classes 6 to 8 will reopen in Karnataka from February 22, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar said on Tuesday. However, only Class 8 will be reopened in Bengaluru Urban and the Kerala and Karnataka border areas, he added.

Mr. Kumar said the decision was taken after consulting with the COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Minister said the decision on reopening

Classes 1 to 5 would be taken on February 24 or 25, after a meeting with the TAC. Two analytical reports would be submitted by the committee to the government by the end of this week, after which a decision would be taken, he added.

Teachers and students coming from Kerala would have to be tested and can attend classes only after producing a COVID-19 negative certificate, Mr. Kumar said.

The Minister also said the 2021-2022 academic year would begin from July 15.

Film body slams OTT release of *Drishyam 2*

Chamber says no to theatrical release

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

The Kerala Film Chamber of Commerce has denied theatrical screenings for movies released first on over-the-top (OTT) platforms.

The apex body of film organisations in the Malayalam industry reiterated its position on Tuesday after reports emerged that actor Mohanalal, whose *Drishyam 2* had opted for a direct-to-digital premiere, was willing to release his movie on the big screen later.

"Superstars in Malayalam should take a leaf out of the stance taken by Tamil actor Vijay who had waited for nearly a year to release his *Master* in cinemas following the COVID-19 crisis. Actor Mohanalal could have opted for a similar position," said K. Vijayakumar, president, Kerala Film Chamber.

He said the business model where a movie was released first on the digital



platform would hit the prospects of the theatre owners hard. He flayed the current trend by lead actors of pushing the release date of their movies though cinemas resumed operations in the second week of January. "Why are they not even showing the patience and determination shown by a young filmmaker like Tharun Moorthy and his producer, who had the courage to release their *Operation Java* in cinemas despite having the option to go for a direct-to-digital premiere?"

SC seeks Centre's response on plea for safety system at airports

Petition also seeks inquiry into delay in installation

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI



Tragic accident: The Air India flight that skidded off a runway at the Kozhikode airport last year. ■ SAKER HUSSAIN

observations, to file its response to the petition.

The writ petition filed by Delhi resident Rajen Mehta sought the installation of the Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS) in at-risk airports across the country, more importantly at tabletop airports in Kozhikode and Mangalore.

He said the EMAS could have averted the tragic Mangalore air crash of 2010 and the recent one in Kozhikode.

"A crash is something horrible... People are trapped inside the flight," Chief Justice Bobde, heading a three-judge Bench, observed on Tuesday. The court asked Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the government and agreeing with the CJI's oral

leg of Air Authority of India (AAI) and the respondents [the DGCA and the Civil Aviation Ministry] in 2008. However, for no plausible reason, it has not been installed till date," the petition said.

Mr. Mehta also sought an inquiry into the delay in installing EMAS despite specific knowledge about the vulnerability of the Mangalore and Kozhikode airports. He said criminal action should be initiated against officials responsible for the delay.

Justice P.S. Dinesh Kumar dismissed the petitions filed by Dr. Shetty.

HC rejects plea filed by B.R. Shetty

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka rejected a petition filed by NRI entrepreneur and promoter of UAE-based NMC Healthcare B.R. Shetty against the action of the Bureau of Immigration restraining him from leaving India based on the lookout circulars (LOCs) issued by two public sector banks to whom his companies owe around ₹2,800 crore.

Immigration authorities denied Dr. Shetty permission to fly to Abu Dhabi from Bengaluru airport last November, based on the two LOCs issued by the Bank of Baroda (BOB) and the Punjab National Bank (PNB) in May and July respectively, in relation to the default of loans granted to companies promoted by him.

Superstars in Malayalam should take a leaf out of the stance taken by Tamil actor Vijay who had waited for nearly a year to release his *Master* in cinemas following the COVID-19 crisis. Actor Mohanalal could have opted for a similar position," said K. Vijayakumar

HC order on Nikita's plea today

The advocate has sought transit anticipatory bail in the toolkit case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court will pronounce on Wednesday the order on a plea filed by advocate Nikita Jacob seeking transit anticipatory bail in the toolkit case, while a single Bench of Justice Vibha Kankwadi of the Aurangabad Bench of the court granted 10 days of the same bail to Shantanu Muluk in connection with the same case.

Mr. Muluk, an aeronautical engineer, filed his plea through advocate Satej Jadhav.

In Mumbai, Justice P.D. Naik heard Ms. Jacob's plea after a non-bailable warrant (NBW) was issued by the Delhi Police Cyber Cell hours after 22-year-old Disha Ravi from Bengaluru was sent to



anticipatory bail but this is a transit bail application."

Mr. Venegavkar pointed out that under Section 438 (direction for grant of bail to person apprehending arrest) of CrPC, the court did not have the power for cases outside the jurisdiction of court to grant anticipatory bail.

Devices seized

Senior advocate Mihir Desai, for Ms. Jacob, urged the court to look at the limited purpose of granting transit anticipatory bail as the NBW was issued by the Tis Hazari court. He said the Delhi Police had raided Ms. Jacob's house and seized her electronic devices.

He contended that she was an advocate of this court and environmental enthui-

sist. According to them, she was preparing the toolkit but then it did not contain any violent acts or anything pertaining to taking over the Red Fort, he stated.

The court said the merits of the case would be considered by the court concerned.

The Bench exclaimed, "Should we grant transit when a warrant has been issued?"

Mr. Desai replied, "They do not need a warrant to arrest. This is a cognisable, non-bailable offence."

He informed the court that Mr. Muluk had been granted transit anticipatory bail by the Aurangabad Bench. The court said it would pass an order on Wednesday.

five-day police custody.

Hiten Venegavkar, counsel for the Delhi Police, raised questions about the maintainability of the application. He said there was no provision for transit bail under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). The offence was registered in Delhi. Therefore, no cause of action had arisen here.

The court, however, said, "Cause of action arises for

Shah meets MPs, MLAs over farmers' protest

BJP lawmakers told to reach out to community groups

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

The BJP's national leadership has gone into a huddle with party MPs and legislators from Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and a few districts of Rajasthan over the farmers agitation. The top brass have urged them to proactively reach out to agitating farmers from their areas, particularly the Jat community, to resolve the protests by farmer unions over the three contentious laws related to agriculture.

At a meeting held at the BJP's national headquarters in New Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar, party president J.P. Nadda, and general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh urged legislators and local leaders to get in touch with local khans, panchayats and community groups in these areas to explain the party and government's position.

The party was constrained to hold the meeting not just because the agitation was not coming to an end but also because of ground-level feedback from its own workers who warned that the continuation of the agitation without any outreach or proactive step by the party and the govern-



Seething rage: Farmers gathered at a mahapanchayat recently held in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh. ■ PTI

ment would alienate farming communities, especially the Jat community, which has voted for the BJP in Uttar Pradesh since 2014.

Home Minister Amit Shahi said it was clear that the agitation was being exploited by certain political groups to effect changes other than the farmers' demands. The agitation was about anything but the laws. It seems to be an ideological war with the government," said a senior leader who was present at the meeting.

"We have been asked to remain in our areas for the next 15-20 days at least and get in touch with all khans, panchayats and community leaders to explain our position," he said. Sources confirmed that legislators gave the feedback that more work

needed to be done by the government to mollify agitated farmers, than the rounds of talks held till now.

While the BJP will fight the Punjab election on its own and does not have a lot riding on it, the party's majority in Uttar Pradesh, which go to the polls with Punjab in 2022, will be affected by any alienation of the Jat community. In Haryana, while the BJP does not count on the support of the Jats, it is in alliance with the Janayak Janata Party, led by Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, which commands the community's support and has been facing a backlash.

A senior Minister told *The Hindu* that the government was ready to talk to farmers groups on specific issues.

Unions ask farmers to go back to Delhi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Punjab's farmer union leaders have decided to cancel plans for large maha-panchayats in the State and mobilise people to come to Delhi instead. They hope that large mobilisation for a country-wide rail roko protest on Friday will prove a turning point in their demands for repeal of the three farm reform laws.

The decision was taken at a meeting of 32 Punjab unions at the Singhu border on Tuesday, leaders said at a press conference.

Buta Singh Burigill, president of Bharatiya Kisan Union-Dakunda, said it was more important to strengthen the morcha in Delhi. He appealed to all unions and protesters to cancel any plans for maha-panchayats in the State.

All India Kisan Sabha's Punjab head Major Singh Punnawal urged Punjab's villagers to collect money and travel together to Delhi to counter the idea that the movement was losing momentum.

The former judge said "moving to the capital of the country to press forth your demands is not an act of se-

Court allows Disha to speak to kin

22-year-old climate activist to be provided warm clothes, books and masks

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

A Delhi Court on Tuesday directed the Delhi police to provide 22-year-old climate activist Disha Ravi a copy of the FIR and other documents related to her arrest in connection with the "toolkit" case.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Pankaj Sharma also allowed Ms. Ravi to speak with her family members over phone for 15 minutes a day and meet with her lawyer for 30 minutes a day, while she remained in police custody.

The court also directed the Delhi police to provide Ms. Ravi with copies of the arrest memo and remand paper which was placed to seek her custodial interrogation. The court also allowed



In solidarity: Voices were raised in support of Disha Ravi at a demonstration in Bengaluru on Wednesday. ■ MURALI KUMAR K

her to get warm clothes, masks and books.

Ms. Ravi was arrested by a Cyber Cell team of the Delhi Police from Bengaluru on Saturday and brought to the capital. She was sent to five

days police custody by a Delhi court on Sunday after the police sought her remand to probe an alleged larger conspiracy against the government of India and to ascertain her alleged role relating

to the Khalistan movement. According to the police, Ms. Ravi is an editor of the "Toolkit Google Doc" and was a key conspirator in the document's formulation and dissemination.

The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Tuesday issued notice to the Delhi Police over the arrest of climate change activist Disha Ravi.

Taking *suo motu* cognisance of the matter, the women's panel in its letter to the police, has sought reasons as to why a transit remand was not sought.

"Please provide reasons for allegedly not providing a lawyer of her choice when she was produced before the court in Delhi," the notice read.

Indian Mission writes to U.K. lawmaker

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI

The new farm laws were "duly discussed and debated" in Parliament before being passed, the High Commission of India in the U.K. said in an unusual "open letter" to a British lawmaker.

Responding to public comments by MP Claudia Webb, the High Commission on Monday said a "small section" of farmers are protesting and urged British citizens who are part of Ms. Webb's constituency to reach out to it for further information regarding the legislations.

"The farm laws were duly discussed and debated in Parliament and their benefits have started reaching more than 100 million small farmers instantly. Since the enactment of these reforms, discussions have been held with farmers and other stakeholders on their efficient implementation," it said.

The letter said the protesting farmers were "treated with utmost respect" by the security agencies.

Toolkit content does not disclose sedition: ex-judge

Charges 'non-application of mind': Justice Deepak Gupta

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

Publicly available content of the toolkit, which led to the arrest of 22-year-old climate activist Disha Ravi, does not disclose sedition, the former Supreme Court judge Justice Deepak Gupta told *The Hindu* in a phone interaction on Tuesday.

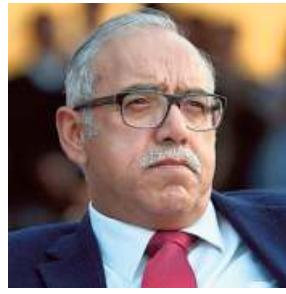
"The first toolkit that I read which is in public domain... I don't know whether the police have something else, but what is in the public domain does not disclose anything to indicate there is any incitement to violence. I heard some police official say in an interview that on January 26 they said 'you march to Delhi', but he forgets they also said 'we will come back with the farmers'. At best, it could be an offence of violating Section 144 which may have been in force in Delhi," Justice Gupta said.

The former judge said "moving to the capital of the country to press forth your demands is not an act of sedition". Justice Gupta said charges in the toolkit case show a "non-application of mind".

"They have also put Section 153 and 153A (IPC), which is disaffection against society and religion. I don't know where they get these from... In my view there is no case of sedition made out," Justice Gupta said.

Ms. Ravi was remanded to custody on multiple charges like sedition, criminal conspiracy and promoting enmity between groups in connection with a toolkit on the farmers' protest.

Noting there has been an "exponential increase in ar-



Justice Deepak Gupta

rests in the past few years", Justice Gupta said this may "create a sense of fear".

"Youngsters and activists, they may be right or they may be wrong. I may not agree with what they say, but they have a right to say it. By arresting you, are sending a message that don't become an activist or don't take part in this or your future could be in jeopardy. If you do that and succeed, then we will no longer be a democracy. We will not be the India which our founding fathers wanted it to be. Every voice should be heard," Justice Gupta said.

He explained that a show of disaffection would not amount to sedition. Disaffection has to be accompanied with incitement of violence or public disorder to constitute the offence.

Justice Gupta cited the Balwant Singh case in which the apex court had set aside the conviction of two men accused of raising some slogans like "Khalistan zindabad".

Justice Gupta cited the Balwant Singh case in which the apex court had set aside the conviction of two men accused of raising some slogans like "Khalistan zindabad".

NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY AND JUDICIAL ACADEMY, ASSAM
Hajo Road, Amaingaon, Guwahati-31
Advertisement No.NLUJAA/VC/Off-VCSC/2021/ Date:17.02.2021
SELECTION OF VICE-CHANCELLOR
Applications are invited by the Selection Committee appointed by the Executive Council for the post of Vice Chancellor, National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam from eligible persons. Details relating to the eligibility and service conditions, and the format of the application is available on the university website www.nluassam.ac.in. Duly filled in applications should be sent by email to: searchcommittee@luluja@gmail.com and/or by speed post to :
Justice Hirshikesh Roy, Judge, Supreme Court of India
34, Prithviraj Road, New Delhi - 110011
Application forms must be received latest on or before 10.3.2021.

**Department of Culture
Government of Madhya Pradesh**
Dr. Vishnu Sridhar Wakankar Rastrya Samman
2018-19 & 2019-20
Proposal / Recommendation
Government of Madhya Pradesh (Dept. of Culture) has instituted an annual National Award for Indian Archaeological Studies and Conservation of Cultural Heritage named Dr. Vishnu Sridhar Wakankar Rastrya Samman 2005-06
The Samman carries an amount of Rs. two lakh, a citation and a plaque of honour. The award will be given to active Indian citizens / institutions for their constructive contribution, creativity and outstanding achievements in the field of conservation of archaeological heritage and archaeological culture. The norms for selection of recipient of the award will be high level creativity, outstanding achievements, continuous perseverance and undoubted and undisputed contribution in the respective field. It is mandatory that the recommended person / institution is creatively active at the time of selection. Over all construction of the entry recommended for the award will be taken into consideration.
Recommendation can be sent in prescribed proforma as given below:-

1- Name
Address
Telephone No.
2- Recommendation
1- Book / research / important achievement in the field of archaeology
2- Name of the author / researcher / archaeologist.
3- Year of publication / research / achievement.
3- i- Name of the institution / person
ii- Detail about the archaeologist / researchers / author or archiver in the field of archaeology
a) Date of birth
b) Present address with Tel No.
c) Important information / achievements
d) Other published research work / contribution / list of work.
4- other remarks
Date. Name and Signature of the recommending person
Note:-
1- Please attach a separate sheet if required.
2- This form may please be sent to this office or Email-mparcaheology@gmail.com before 15th March, 2021 addressed to the Commissioner Archaeology, Archives and Museums, Banganga Raod, Bhopal-462003 M.P. Nomination received will be put before a high power jury for consideration and selection. State Government have taken a policy decision that the recommendation of the selection panel would be binding on them.

Commissioner Archaeology, Archives & Museums Govt. M.P. Bhopal
Tel. 0755-2553307

Attempt to abduct child thwarted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR

A resident from Bandipora in Kashmir on Tuesday alleged that three persons, working with the Army, tried to molest and abduct his minor daughter on February 10. The police said the accused have been held.

"My daughter was at a family-run shop when a vehicle stopped. One person disembarked and handed over money to my daughter and grabbed her hand, in a bid to push her into the vehicle. However, she raised a hue and cry. Later, locals secured her release," the victim's father, a labourer, told *The Hindu* over the phone.

The Army has not commented on the incident.

PURABI DAIRY
The West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Ltd. Jurupar, Panjabari, Guwahati-781037 World Bank Financed Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART)
Ref. No. MD/PC/APART/E-Tender/2020-21/03 Dated: 17th February, 2021
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
The West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Limited (WAMUL) as an implementing agency of World Bank Financed (APART) Project, now intends to purchase the following item from the eligible bidder as mentioned below:
Sl. No. Category Date of publishing Tender Last date of submission of Quotations
1 Frozen Semen Dosages 20.02.2021 20.03.2021
The details of the e-tender will be published and available at www.assamtenders.gov.in as mentioned above.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA LAKSHADWEEP ADMINISTRATION (DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES) KAVARATTI ISLAND-682555, Ph: 04896 262316, 048962 2817, E-mail: dhsut@gmail.com
F.NO. 53/30/2020-DHS (AB-PMJAY) Dated 16th February 2021
e-TENDER NOTICE
The Department of Health Services, Union Territory of Lakshadweep invites e-tender in two bid system from the Insurance Companies of India for implementing "AB-PMJAY in Lakshadweep". The tender shall be on or before 5.00 PM on 1st March 2021. The details such as eligibility criteria and other terms and conditions etc. can be had from the website www.tendersltd.gov.in
Sd/- (DR. M.K. SOUDHABI)
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES, U.T. OF LAKSHADWEEP

KUVEMPU UNIVERSITY
Office of the University, Jhanasahayadri, Shankaraghatta - 577451, Shivamogga District
Phone No : 08282 256149 Fax : 08282 256262
email: kuvempuacademic@gmail.com website : www.kuvempu.ac.in
NO/KU/ACADEMIC/08/4957/2020-21 Date : 15.02.2021
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
Tender is invited from authorised insurance companies to provide insurance facilities for the Students of Post Graduate/Constituent/ Direct administration colleges. The proposal should reach this office within 15 days from this date of this notification. Details can be obtained from a E-Procurement portal <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> For further details contact Deputy Registrar, Academic Section, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta-577451.
Principal Chief Material Manager, Southern Railways Egmore, Chennai - 600008
Follow us on: [Twitter](https://twitter.com/GMSRailway)

4 more bodies found, Chamoli death toll 58

Search to continue till last person located, says police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Search teams have so far found 58 bodies of those killed in the Chamoli flash floods in Uttarakhand. The identities of 31 bodies have been established so far.

Uttarakhand Director-General of Police Ashok Kumar said the search, rescue and relief operations in Joshimath, Rauri and Tapovan areas would continue. The work of digging out bodies from under the debris would be completed in three or four days. However, the operations would go on until the last person was located.

On Tuesday, three bodies were found in the Tapovan hydel project tunnel, and one from Maithana. The search teams have also re-



Doing their bit: Villagers prepare food for people involved in the rescue operations at Tapovan, on Tuesday. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

covered 24 body parts from different places so far.

A joint team of the Army, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) have cleared over 145 metres of the Tapovan tunnel filled with sludge and debris.

The Joshimath police station has so far registered 179

missing reports.

According to the Chamoli police, the DNA samples of unidentified bodies and 91 family members of the missing persons have been stored for matching.

A portion of this glacier is believed to have crumbled down and caused an avalanche that destroyed the Rishiganga and Tapovan hydropower projects in Chamoli as well as trapping at least 150, many fatally, in

Lab study to trace origin of disaster

Scientists at WIHG in Dehradun are analysing fragments of ice, rock and mud

JACOB KOSHY
DEHRADUN

A week after a landslip claimed 58 lives in Chamoli, Uttarakhand, a team of scientists at the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) in Dehradun are analysing fragments of ice, rock and mud in their labs to better understand the origins of the disaster.

On-site study

Five WIHG researchers travelled to the disaster site and later undertook aerial surveys right up to the vicinity of the Raunthi glacier, near the Nandadevi biosphere reserve, in the Himalayas.

A portion of this glacier is believed to have crumbled down and caused an avalanche that destroyed the Rishiganga and Tapovan hydropower projects in Chamoli as well as trapping at least 150, many fatally, in



On the job: The five-member team from the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology that visited Tapovan. ■ V.V. KRISHNAN

muck and slurry.

Sameer Trivedi, who was among those involved in the reconnaissance and analysis, said he and his colleagues had managed to extract several boulders of glacier – some about 25 kg – from the slurry even as rescue operations were on.

"We have collected several samples. We also have sediment samples from gla-

ciers in the region from previous expeditions. We can now compare them and be more certain of the glacial origin of the avalanche," he told *The Hindu*.

His team included Manish Mehta, Amit Kumar, Vineet Kumar and Akshaya Verma.

An outstanding research question that the scientists are poring over is what might have caused the rock

to break off.

The current hypothesis is that it was a natural process of freezing and thawing of the icy mountains over eons that might have caused cracks to develop, weakening the structure and causing it to crumble.

Another suggestion is that a heavy mass of snow may have fallen over the glacier, which was already partially melting, causing it to break off.

Loud blast

However the scientists' team reports that residents of Rai-ni village, located near the Rishiganga, have reported hearing a loud blast just prior to the avalanche. "It could be due to an enormous volume of water, or there could be another source, we don't know yet," said WIHG Director Kalachand Sain.

Godhra accused held after 19 years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD

Rafiq Bhatuk, an alleged key conspirator in the 2002 Godhra train burning case, has been arrested. He had been on the run for 19 years.

As per the local police, Bhatuk, 51, was part of the main group that hatched a conspiracy to target the train in which kar sevaks were returning from Ayodhya. The mob torched a coach of Sabarmati Express near the Godhra railway station and 59 persons were charred to death on February 26, 2002.

On tip-off, the police raided a house in Signal Fa lia area near the Godhra railway station on Sunday night and picked up Bhatuk. The police said he was involved in throwing stones on the coach and pouring petrol inside.

Nepal objects to Tripura CM's claims

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Kathmandu on Tuesday formally objected to reports of the BJP allegedly planning to expand its presence in neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Foreign Minister of Nepal Pradeep Kumar Gyawali announced the move on social media after Chief Minister of Tripura Biplob Kumar Deb quoted Home Minister Amit Shah saying the BJP will soon form governments in Sri Lanka and Nepal.

"Noted. Formal objection has been already conveyed," said Mr. Gyawali on social media after people demanded that Nepal take steps against the assertions by Mr. Deb. This is the first high-level statement from Nepal on Mr. Deb's comments.

Mr. Deb had said during a meeting in Agartala that Mr. Shah had informed him about the plans. "We were discussing about the party in Agartala when he [Mr. Shah] was the national president. Someone from among us pointed out to Amitji that the BJP was doing well in the country... In response, Amit Shah said there is still Sri Lanka, Nepal left. We have to take the party there," Mr. Deb told a gathering.

Oxford jab gets WHO green light

The two variants of the vaccine will now be rolled out through COVAX

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI



Going places: The Covishield vaccine is produced by the Serum Institute of India. ■ FILE PHOTO

val to import and administer vaccines," it said.

"Countries with no access to vaccines to date will finally be able to start vaccinating their health workers and

populations at risk, contributing to the COVAX Facility's goal of equitable vaccine distribution," Mariangela Simão, WHO Assistant-Director General for Access to

Medicines and Health Products, said in a release.

It said there was a need to keep up the pressure to meet the needs of priority populations everywhere and facilitate global access. "To do that, we need two things – a scale-up of manufacturing capacity and developers' early submission of their vaccines for WHO review."

The world body had also listed the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for emergency use on December 31.

SII's head Adar Poonawalla on Monday tweeted about awaiting regulatory approvals from Canada to, "Fly out COVISHIELD in less than a month; I'm on it!" he said.

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The Altroz iTurbo boasts excellent ride and handling; the well-judged suspension, along with the stiff and taut body shell, enables the car to sail over bad stretches with ease

A meeting of power and performance

By SERGIUS BARRETO

The Altroz is a striking looking hatchback with ample space offering an excellent ride and handling balance; a fly in the ointment was the sole petrol engine on offer. Now however, there is a new turbo-petrol which promises improved performance. So what is it like?

On paper it certainly delivers. Power is bumped up to 110hp while torque has risen from 113Nm to 140Nm. Coming to its performance, there is good news and bad. The good bit is that the extra power is certainly apparent – the car no longer feels underpowered. Demand more, however, and it will leave you wanting. The trouble is that, while performance is an improvement over the naturally aspirated unit, it is still not as strong as some other small displacement turbo-petrols. Also, the Altroz uses indirect or port injection, which is not as sophisticated as the direct-injection turbo-petrols of its rivals.

Riding the torque wave

Look at the Altroz Turbo as a more powerful version of the regular Altroz and it starts making sense. The turbocharger rewards you with a nice step up in power, which improves even at a high-ish 4,800rpm. At low revs there is some turbo lag but it is not excessive, and at around 1,800 rpm you get a nice shove. The strong mid-range and good part throttle response mean you do not have to use the 5-speed gearbox and can



merrily amble along on a wave of torque.

The Altroz iTurbo gets two drive modes – City and Sport (the regular car has Eco and City) – and we recommend using the latter as the default. It is not snappy and feels quite easy to drive, though you will have to watch the fuel consumption because turbo-petrols can be quite thirsty. In terms of outright performance, while Tata claims a sub-12sec 0-100kmph time for the car, a quick test by us returned a time of 12.68 sec in Sport mode. The vibrations are well contained at idle and you can feel the gentle rock of the three-



cylinder engine, though it is not disturbing. Press down on the throttle, however, and the engine feels a touch coarse. Overall refinement could certainly do with some improvement.

Coming to the dynamics, Tata says they have made small tweaks to the suspension and steering setup. As with the standard Altroz, the ride and handling are excellent, the well-judged suspension

along with the stiff and taut body shell enable the car to sail over bad stretches with ease, and deliver a confident and mature ride. Sharp ruts and potholes, too, are not a bother. The steering is nice and light at low speeds and has sufficient weight at higher speeds, but the diesel Altroz still feels a smidgen better, thanks perhaps to the extra weight over the front wheels. All in all, the road manners of the Altroz are certainly a high point.

Stand-out car

The Turbo petrol is available in top three variants including a new top-end XZ+ trim, which sees the addition of a few new features such as Tata's iRA connected-car technology, What Three Words navigation, an express cool button, new perforated leatherette seats and a new interior colour scheme. On the Turbo version of the XZ+, there are also two additional tweeters in the sweet-sounding Harman sound system.

There is a lot to like about the Altroz such as the excellent dynamics, generous boot and comfortable cabin. It clearly stands out from its peers, and also boasts a 5-star Global NCAP crash rating. The turbo power definitely transforms the way the car drives but quite frankly this isn't the hot-hatch we expected, especially as a follow on to the Tiago JTP. The engine isn't as smooth and strong, and there is no automatic option – the DCT variant is coming later in the year.

However, over its naturally aspirated sibling, the iTurbo is definitely a big step-up and the extra performance is nicely in-sync with the car's sporty character. And with prices ranging from ₹7.73-8.85 lakh (ex-showroom, Delhi), the iTurbo is about ₹60,000 dearer than the regular petrol Altroz which is a fair deal for the improved performance.

TATA ALTROZ iTURBO

ENGINE 1199cc, 3 cyls, turbo-petrol

MAX POWER 110hp at 5500rpm

MAX TORQUE 140Nm at 1500-5500rpm

GEARBOX 5-speed manual

FRONT SUSPENSION

Independent, MacPherson struts

REAR SUSPENSION

Twist beam

FRONT BRAKES

Discs

REAR BRAKES

Drum

LENGTH (MM) 3990mm

WIDTH (MM) 1755mm

HEIGHT (MM) 1523mm

WHEELBASE (MM) 2501mm

GROUND CLEARANCE (MM)

165mm

BOOT CAPACITY (LTS) 345 litres

Smooth sailing Sharp ruts and potholes are not a deterrent for the Altroz iTurbo ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

AUTO SNIPPETS



IIT Hyderabad-incubated startup to launch its first electric motorcycle

IIT Hyderabad-incubated startup PURE EV is all set to launch its first electric motorcycle – ETRYST 350. This flagship product is completely designed, developed and manufactured in India and represents a major leap in the Indian electric vehicles sector. The company will deploy 50 demo vehicles by end of March 2021 across India to make them available for test drives at specific outlets. ETRYST 350 is scheduled to hit the roads in August this year at a price that would be economical in comparison with similar motorcycles in India.



Jaguar to launch I-Pace in India on March 9

Jaguar is set to launch its all-electric I-Pace SUV in India on March 9, 2021, having opened bookings for the model late last year. Jaguar's EV will come with a 90kWh battery pack, which will send power to two electric motors that develop a combined 400hp and 696Nm of torque. The I-Pace will be available in three variants – S, SE, and top-spec HSE. The I-Pace will come with a complimentary 5-year service package and 5 years of roadside assistance, along with a standard 8-year or 1,60,000km battery warranty. A complimentary 7.4kW AC wall-mounted charger will also be provided.



Yamaha launches updated FZ-Fi, FZS-Fi

Yamaha has updated the FZ-Fi and FZS-Fi for 2021 with a few minor updates; the two bikes are now priced at ₹1.03 lakh and ₹1.07 lakh (ex-showroom, Delhi), respectively. The naked motorcycles now get a side-stand engine cut-off function, which is a useful safety feature. Yamaha has also said that the kerb weight of the motorcycles has gone down from 137kg to 135kg. Bluetooth connectivity has become part of standard equipment for the FZS. The FZS also has new 3D emblems and a new colour – matte red. Everything else remains the same, including the 149cc, single-cylinder engine.

Q AND A WITH HORMAZD



The KTM 250's firm yet absorbent ride is exactly the same as the 390's – one of the many features it shares with its bigger sibling

■ RISHABH BHASKAR

Buying a second-hand car

I currently own a 2012 BMW 320d (E90) top end trim and am looking for a new or second-hand car within ₹35-40 lakh (on road, Gurgaon). I am not sure of the current diesel regulations, but I still want one. I was very impressed with the Mahindra Alturas but then I believe the car isn't selling well. Arjun Srivastava, Gurgaon

• We wouldn't advise a second-hand luxury car as that has its own issues. Also, being in Delhi, you will be getting a car with a fair bit of its registration life used up, especially if it is a diesel. Why not consider the Skoda Superb? It is a great car and apart from the badge, offers the same luxury feel as some of the German brands.

Choice of video recorder

Many cars today have 360-degree cameras. Is it not possible to enable attachment of a plug-in recorder so as to get a built-in DVR? I hate attaching a separate DVR because of the dangling power cable. Is it possible to attach a recording device to my Passat B8 to enable recording from its built-in cameras?

Phiroze B Javeri, via email

• While we empathise with your concerns of third-party video recorders spoiling the clean look of the cabin with a visible power cord, it must be noted that a DVR is an amalgamation of hardware and software. We are afraid we haven't come across a recording device that could take the feed from the factory-installed cameras in the vehicle. Moreover, such a system wouldn't offer the convenience of seamlessly transferring the video files to your phone, or any other device for easier access on the move.

We suggest you hardwire an external DVR at the front by routing its power cable through the headliner and A-pillar garnish, and tap power directly from the fuse box. This would leave a clean look to the interior and also make the dashcam an integrated accessory of the car.

Regarding a rear DVR, its power cable could be routed to the fuse box from underneath either of the door sill garnishes, as the side window trim would house the curtain airbag module.

When Adventure beckons



feet firmly on the ground.

Since the 250 had to be positioned below the 390, it loses out on a chunk of features to arrive at the desired price point. Hence, a halogen headlamp instead of an LED unit and a simple LCD display in place of the 390's fancy Bluetooth-enabled colour TFT display. The 250 also doesn't get the 390's up and down quickshifter, traction control and cornering ABS. The KTM 250 Adventure's 248.8cc

engine is identical to the one in the KTM 250 Duke and the Husqvarna 250s, down to even the state of tune (30hp/24Nm). While accelerating, the engine only begins to come alive post 4,000 rpm, with a notable surge after 7,500 rpm and all the way to the



engine is identical to the one in the KTM 250 Duke and the Husqvarna 250s, down to even the state of tune (30hp/24Nm). While accelerating, the engine only begins to come alive post 4,000 rpm, with a notable surge after 7,500 rpm and all the way to the

10,500 rpm limiter. The engine's happy-to-rev nature is appreciated but the accompanying buzz one feels, especially in the pegs, isn't welcome. That said, vibrations are reasonably controlled between 80-100kph. The engine can hold 120kph too, if you are willing to ignore the buzz, but anything beyond that and it begins to feel stressed.

If you can afford the KTM 390 Adventure, we recommend that you go ahead. But if budget is a constraint, the 250 Adventure is an interesting proposition.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

As ComicCon India turns 10, we explore how and why the fan-fuelled trade show switched up pop culture in India



Colourful stories ComicCon India over the past 10 years has seen more business, diversity and acceptance; (below) Sudhakara Jain and Murali Kumar K ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



delved into character design. She now works with advertising agencies and film teams, as well as cosplaying.

Within this space, CCI diverged the cosplay contests according to the fan type: novice and professional.

Jatin reasons, "We did not want to intimidate the 'casual fans' because cosplay is supposed to be about fun." Medha agrees, "All professionals start somewhere and CCI has to highlight the novices too." They both bring up Sameer Bundela from Mumbai, who is the reigning cosplay champion. Jatin explains, "Sameer came to the first show as a volunteer but was asked to cosplay to engage a conversation. He came dressed as Rorschach from *Watchmen* and did a good job! He's now a VFX artist, a prop-maker, does costumes for films and Ad agencies, on top of being a professional cosplayer."

Medha points out, "As cosplayers, we also found ourselves help shape the pop culture discourse for the following years, so we have a lot of talks with Jatin and the team about the future. But in the future, I would love to see a woman win CCI's cosplay championship. It can happen!"

Connecting people

CCI has made for not just remarkable business collaborations but some pretty solid friendships. Jatin loves watching this happen at every city's event. "We've seen groups and clubs – from comic book collectors to cosplayers – made by people who connected at the show, and they organise meets among themselves. They become the uber fans who have to be catered to well by the IP owners who want to break into the market."

Then there is the side of CCI we do not see: the business side. Fans often forget this is a big job for many involved. Convention culture is a big part of the future of entertainment, and these trade shows are no small feat; everyone on board has to research relentlessly, and be detail-oriented, especially when it comes to collaborations.

"I think the success of a convention is based not just on us organising it, but also on the people participating and how well they're doing to engage fans. It is easy to set up a stand or an experience for a video game or a film, but you have to ensure that whoever is in that zone leaves with a memorable experience." Jatin explains that over the years, they have gone to all lengths to find right partners and convince them that CCI is the place to be – an advertisement is too clinical, he states, and the connection quality needs to be more personable for the collaboration to take root.

Cult of the COMICS

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

A lot can change in 10 years, and for ComicCon India founder Jatin Varma, it is the fans that shape popular culture. It is not just the inclination of the fan, but their personal lives too, he points out. "We see couples who met at ComicCon India who are married now and still attend. We've had a lot of young parents – who've been attending since our first convention – come in with their kids now! In fact, in our first year, a couple dressed its newborn as Krishna in the first ComicCon India and now the grown kid sees those photos and complains, 'why did you do that?' It's hilarious, but also touching to see how far we have come. Plus, I feel old now!"

Fan following

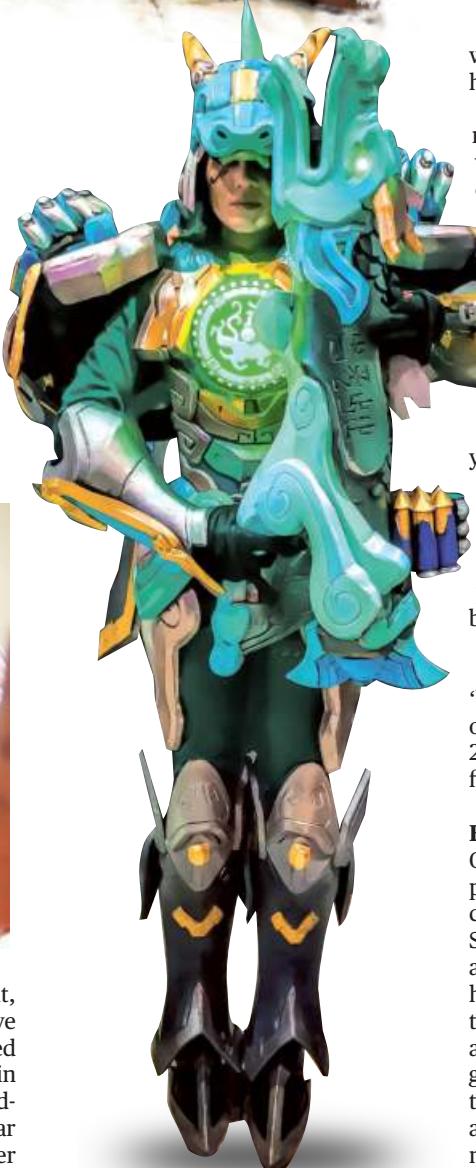
ComicCon India (CCI) has been an oasis for India's 'pop culture micro-populations' that share the love for anything geeky. While chances of a tour this year



are low owing to the pandemic, 2021 still marks 10 years of the massive trade show's being.

CCI has seen significant growth so far and Jatin says, "The key catalyst is the evolving fan. As fans get more intense and passionate about what they like

and how they want to get a piece of it, everything comes together. Fans have pushed things forward as they accessed new worlds through the Internet." Jatin says that as a platform, CCI had to address this new supply chain of popular culture because the country no longer



wants to be in a bubble where the West has access to everything.

Lately, it has been cyclical; the fan is now empowered to ask for what they want: access to storytelling platforms, cosplay materials and more. "For most people trying to enter the Indian market – whether they are international or Indian players in content or art – we actually ended up being a test dipstick area where they would gauge interest for their work," he recalls.

Jatin explains that for the first two years, no one in India could get access to licensed merchandise, which led to a lot of bootleg products or imports from private entities, which would inevitably mark up the selling price. Now, do a simple web search to buy authentic goods for the same cost. "To find out what is niche in terms of an India fanbase, we have to do a 'backward search,'" he points out. Part of this has been introducing CCI in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, with last year being a first for Ahmedabad.

Business boom

CCI has birthed burgeoning markets for prop-making, game design, motion capture, concept art, and more. Medha Srivastava, a cosplayer, concept artist and illustrator in Bengaluru, states she has never experienced a career trajectory quite like the one after appearing at ComicCon India, "because of the growing awareness around how serious the cosplay profession is. My parents are able to see tangibly how I have made it a career." As an illustrator, she

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

Siddharth Agarwal has been following India's rivers on foot for four years. Ask him, and he has many stories to share – about apple trees that are believed to go into slumber when it snows; about fishermen who have to be content with working behind dams instead of across entire rivers; about waters that are flowing less, over the years. These stories have made their way into photo stories, educational events, news reports, articles, and even a film.

Says Siddharth, "My first walk was along the Ganga; I started from Ganga Sagar in West Bengal and went all the way till Gangotri in Uttarakhand. This was in 2016-17. When the river banks were not conducive for walking right alongside, I would walk a little distance away, on a parallel route. But for the most part, I could look at the river



Wherever she flows (Left) Layers of sediments behind Tehri Dam reservoir on the Bhagirathi in Uttarakhand; Siddharth ■ SHRIDHAR SUDHIR, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



the water itself; stories that are not being told. His walks over the years have put him in touch with myriad communities, and made him bear witness to a number of developmental projects' impact on the ground. From dying river beds to disrupted livelihoods, Siddharth's observations and writings have made their way to platforms like the South Asian Network Of Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP), and are now being told as a documentary, titled *Moving Upstream*.

Says Siddharth, "We hope to showcase the documentary in schools and colleges soon; it is currently doing the rounds in a few festivals." The film has been made by Veditum India Foundation, started by Siddharth for the dual purpose of helping others continue such walks. "It's a media and research organisation," says Siddharth, "All of our work has been crowd-funded."

To that end, *Moving Upstream* is also a project that looks at organising more such solo walks. Siddharth points out two reasons for doing so: "One person's perspective on these issues is not enough. There is also a sense of urgency, because these landscapes are changing so drastically."

In some cases, however, the team has managed to go a step further than just documentation. "For example, in the Char Dham project in Uttarakhand, we managed to connect some people on the ground to people who were part of a Supreme Court committee looking into the project," he recalls. *Moving Upstream* has now constituted a fellowship that encourages young Indians to walk along rivers. "We are not looking for a particular skill set or background. People from different walks of life can go experience the rivers, and help create an archive of stories."

POOCH CAFE



PEANUTS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



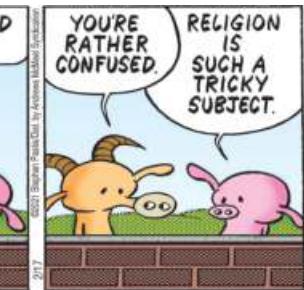
CALVIN AND HOBBES



TIGER



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



Police file a second charge against Suu Kyi

Internet blackout for second straight night to curb anti-coup uprising; junta promises election

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Myanmar's deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi was hit with another charge on Tuesday, after the military imposed a second straight overnight Internet shutdown in an attempt to grind down an anti-coup uprising.

In the two weeks since the Generals ousted Ms. Suu Kyi and put the civilian leader under house arrest in the administrative capital Naypyidaw, big cities and isolated village communities alike have been in open revolt.

The military justified its power seizure by alleging widespread voter fraud in November elections that Ms. Suu Kyi's party won.

After her detention in a dawn raid on February 1 – the day of the coup – she was charged under an obscure import and export law, over walkie talkies that were found in her home during a search.

The Nobel laureate's lawyer told AFP on Tuesday she had been hit with a second charge, of violating the country's disaster management law.

"She was charged under section 8 of the Export and Import law and section 25 of the Natural Disaster Manage-



Monks on the march: Buddhist monks during a protest against the military coup in Yangon on Tuesday. ■ AP

ment law as well," Khin Maung Zaw told AFP.

While it was unclear how the disaster law applied in Ms. Suu Kyi's case, it has been used against deposed President Win Myint – also arrested on February 1 – relating to a campaign event that the junta alleges broke coronavirus-related restrictions.

'In good health'

Mr. Khin Maung Zaw added that Ms. Suu Kyi and Mr. Win Myint, both of whom he has yet to have any contact with, were expected to appear via video conference during a March 1 trial.

Both defendants were in a

"safer place" and "in good health", according to military spokesman Zaw Min Tun.

"It's not like they were arrested – they are staying at their houses," the Brigadier General, who became Vice-Minister of information after the coup, said during a press conference.

"Our objective is to hold an election and hand power to the winning party," he said. "We guarantee... that the election will be held," he added.

More than 420 people have been arrested since the coup, according to a list of confirmed detentions from the Assistance Association

End military rule: monks

REUTERS
NAYPYITAW

A group of Buddhist monks marched against Myanmar's military junta on Tuesday, joining a campaign for an end to the military rule and for the release of detained leaders of the ousted elected government, including Aung San Suu Kyi.

About 20 monks in dark red robes walked through the streets of the main city

for Political Prisoners monitoring group. There are numerous unconfirmed reports of other arrests.

Security forces have used increasing force to quell huge nationwide street protests and a disobedience campaign encouraging civil servants to strike.

Protests continue

Troops have fanned out around the country in recent days. They fired rubber bullets to disperse one rally in Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, hours before authorities again cut Internet access.

"They shut down the Internet because they want to

do bad things," said 44-year-old Win Tun, a resident of commercial capital Yangon.

"We didn't sleep the whole night so we could see what would happen."

The Internet blackout came after another day of protests in Yangon and Mandalay, where police used slingshots against protesters and fired rubber bullets into the crowd. At least six were injured in the clashes.

Crowds returned to the streets of Yangon and around the country on Tuesday morning. "I want more people to join the protests, we don't want to be seen as weak," said university student Thwe Ei Sann.

France passes Bill to battle extremism

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS

Lawmakers overwhelmingly approved on Tuesday a Bill that would strengthen oversight of mosques, schools and sports clubs to safeguard France from radical Islamists and ensure respect for French values – one of President Emmanuel Macron's landmark projects.

The vote in the lower house was the first critical hurdle for the legislation that has been long in the making after two weeks of intense debate. The Bill passed 347 to 151 with 65 abstentions.

The Bill that covers most aspects of French life has been hotly contested by Muslims, lawmakers and others, who fear the state is intruding on essential freedoms and pointing a finger at Islam, the nation's second major religion.



A file photo of Nainativu North Jetty with the gopuram of Naga Pooshani Ambal temple in the background. ■ GETTY IMAGES

Sri Lanka considering India's grant instead of China project

Tamil parties also oppose Chinese involvement

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

In an apparent bid to displace a Chinese company that had won the contract to install renewable energy systems in three small islands off Jaffna Peninsula in northern Sri Lanka, India has offered a grant of \$12 million to execute it, Colombo-based media reported.

Sri Lanka's Minister of Power Dullas Alahapperuma has recently said that the government would consider India's proposal, and that he would present a Cabinet paper on the matter soon. Newspaper reports quoted him as saying that receiving a grant "is an advantage" that would ease the burden on the Treasury, as opposed to an Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan, as per the original project proposal, that would have to be repaid.

The development comes less than a month after the Cabinet cleared a project to install hybrid renewable energy systems in Nainativu, Delft or Neduntheevu, and Analaitivu, located in the Palk Bay, some 50 km off Tamil Nadu. The Cabinet de-



A file photo of Nainativu North Jetty with the gopuram of Naga Pooshani Ambal temple in the background. ■ GETTY IMAGES

cisions taken on January 18, published officially, included a proposal to award the contract to Sinoosar-Etechwin Joint Venture in China, with funding from the ADB.

'Security threats'

Meanwhile, a group of northern Tamil political parties have voiced opposition to Chinese involvement in the project, citing "security threats" to Tamil people and India. "We are not opposed to China but given that India has known security concerns in this regard, and also because the project is to come up very close to Tamil Nadu, we oppose Chinese involvement," Jaffna parliamentarian Dharmalingam

It remains to be seen if India's proposal gets official clearance, but India's swift offer comes in the wake of being ejected – along with Japan – out of the East Container Terminal (ECT) development project at the Colombo Port, following another Cabinet decision taken on February 1 this year.

Congressman sues Trump for Capitol attack

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON

A senior Democratic Congressman sued former President Donald Trump on Monday, accusing him of violating the 19th century "Ku Klux Klan Act" by supporting the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Bennie Thompson accused Mr. Trump, his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, and extremist groups the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers of violating the 1871 act by supporting efforts to stop Congress from certifying Joe Biden as the new U.S. President.

Mr. Thompson, who is Black and the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, cited a law originally created to protect the rights of African Americans after the Civil War and the end of slavery.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Washington two days after Mr. Trump was acquitted of supporting insurrection in an impeachment trial in the Senate.

The act was designed to give the U.S. President powers to oppose violently racist groups like the Ku Klux Klan, which sprung up in the wake of the 1861-65 Civil War to oppose equal rights for Black Americans.

One seldom-invoked clause of the act, 1875, forbids conspiracy to obstruct federal officeholders from performing their jobs.

Mr. Thompson alleged that Mr. Trump, Mr. Giuliani and the two groups conspired "by force, intimidation and threats" to prevent him from discharging his official duty to carry out the certification of Mr. Biden's election win.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Lower Cauvery Basin Circle, Thanjavur - 613 001
Tender Notice
NIT No.14/2020-2021/LCB Circle/Thanjavur dated: 15.02.2021

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamilnadu, sealed tenders are invited from the eligible contractors for the following works at the office of the Superintending Engineer, WRD., Lower Cauvery Basin Circle, Thanjavur - 1.

Date and Time of Tender documents available : 18.02.2021 to 22.03.2021 Up to 5.45 PM

Submission of Tenders : 23.03.2021 Up to 12.00 Noon.

Date and Time of Opening Tenders : On The Superintending Engineer, WRD., Lower Cauvery Basin Circle, Thanjavur - 613 001

Approximate Value of Work Rs. 180.46 Lakhs.

No. of Work : 3 (Three)

(Rate Quoted Two Cover Tender System)

For further details and tender documents can be downloaded freely from the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://tenders.tn.gov.in). In the event of specified date for submission of tender is declared as a holiday, tender will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time and venue. Other details can be obtained from the above office.

Any corrections, modification and extension will be published on website only.

Superintending Engineer, WRD, Lower Cauvery Basin Circle, Thanjavur.

NOTICE INVITING BID

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL)

In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-II, Bhubaneswar-751001

Tel.: (0674) 2380660; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in; Email: logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in

Bid Ref.No.: OSMCL/2021-22/(SUT-SURG.& OTHER)-DHS/07 Date: 17/02/2021

Online Bids through e-Tender portal (<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>) are invited from eligible bidders for Supply of Surgical, Sutures, Syringes and Other items as per the particulars mentioned below:

SL. No.	Particulars	Date and time
1.	Date & time of release of bid	17/02/2021, 3 PM
2.	Date & time for submission of queries by E-Mail id- logistics.osmcl.od@nic.in	22/02/2021, up to 5:00 PM
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time End Date & Time 25/02/2021, 3 PM 16/03/2021, 6 PM
4.	Date & time for submission of Document cost and MDM amount as per section-IV	17/03/2021 25/03/2021, till 11 AM
5.	Date & time of sample submission as per section-IV of tender documents.	25/03/2021 upto 11:30 AM
6.	Date & time of Online Technical bid Opening	25/03/2021, 11:30 AM
7.	Date of opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the qualified bidders

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, EMIs, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: www.osmcl.nic.in and <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- Managing Director, OSMC Ltd., Odisha OPR-1012/11/0047/2021

Rocket strike at U.S. base in Iraq kills contractor, injures 5

At least 3 rockets landed near Erbil International Airport

REUTERS
ERBIL

A rocket attack at a U.S.-led military base in Kurdish northern Iraq on Monday killed a civilian contractor and wounded five other people, including a U.S. service member, according to initial reports, the U.S. coalition in Iraq said.

It was the most deadly attack to hit U.S.-led forces in almost a year in Iraq, where tensions have escalated between U.S. forces, their Iraqi and Kurdish allies on one side and Iran-aligned militias on the other.

A coalition spokesman said on Twitter the attack hit coalition forces in the Kurdish regional capital of Erbil.

Kurdish security sources said at least three rockets landed near Erbil International Airport in the autonomous region late at night. Reuters reporters heard several loud explosions and saw a fire break out near the airport.

U.S. troops occupy a military base adjacent to the civilian airport.

A statement from the Kurdish interior ministry said a



Serious threat: Shattered glass of a shop after an attack in Erbil, the capital of the Iraqi Kurdish autonomous region. ■ AP

number of rockets were fired towards Erbil and its outskirts around 9:30 p.m. local time and some people were wounded, but it offered no further details.

'Outraged by attack'

A group calling itself Saraya Awliya al-Dam claimed responsibility for the attack on the U.S.-led base, saying it targeted the "American occupation" in Iraq. It provided no evidence for its claim.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday the United States was "outraged" by the attack.

'North Korean hackers target vaccine tech'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SEOUL

North Korean hackers attempted to steal information about coronavirus vaccines and treatments, South Korea's intelligence service said on Tuesday, but it denied a lawmaker's claim that vaccine maker Pfizer Inc. was targeted.

Earlier on Tuesday, Ha Tae-keung, a Member of Parliament's intelligence committee, told reporters that the National Intelligence Service told him and other lawmakers during a closed-door briefing that North Korea hacked Pfizer to obtain COVID-19 vaccine technology.

After Mr. Ha's comments made headlines, the NIS said it didn't mention any pharmaceutical company by name.

Mr. Ha, however, stood by his claim when contacted by the Associated Press.

Dhaka court sentences 5 to death for killing writer

U.S. blogger Avijit Roy was killed in 2015

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

Five Islamist extremists were sentenced to death on Tuesday over the brutal murder of a Bangladeshi-American writer and rights activist six years ago.

Avijit Roy, a prolific blogger and the author of 10 books including the best-selling *Biswasir Virus* ("Virus of Faith"), was hacked to death outside Bangladesh's largest book fair by machete-wielding extremists in February 2015.

The murder, part of a reign of terror by extremists at the time, enraged the Muslim-majority nation's secular activists who staged days of protests.

The judge at Dhaka's Special Anti-Terrorism Tribunal found six people guilty, sentencing five to death and one to life in prison, prosecutor Golam Sarwar Zakir

It comes less than a week after eight Islamist extremists were sentenced to death for the murder of a publisher who brought out books by secular writers, including two by Roy.

MARKET WATCH

	16-02-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	52104	-0.10
US Dollar	72.69	-0.01
Gold	46900	0.15
Brent oil	62.94	-0.56

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	636.55	+8.80
Asian Paints	2450.25	-6.50
Axis Bank	775.05	-18.95
Bajaj Auto	4132.85	+10.55
Bajaj Finserv	10460.60	-77.10
Bajaj Finance	5760.25	-19.60
Bharti Airtel	593.95	+0.25
BPCL	417.95	+1.05
Britannia Ind	3389.45	-27.55
Cipla	848.35	+4.05
Coal India	133.75	+1.50
Divis Lab	3686.50	-24.55
Dr Reddy's Lab	4696.60	+13.25
Eicher Motors	2726.95	-43.10
GAIL (India)	133.10	-0.70
Grafix Ind	1243.75	+15.80
HCL Tech	952.30	-2.35
HDFC	2858.65	+1.80
HDFC Bank	1626.65	+10.05
HDFC Life	695.35	+0.10
Hero MotoCorp	3461.55	+3.85
Hindalco	302.70	+11.30
Hind Unilever	2196.10	-19.10
ICICI Bank	658.35	+15.60
IndusInd Bank	1058.25	+0.65
Infosys	1290.40	-19.25
Indian Oil Corp	95.60	+1.45
ITC	218.25	-0.35
JSW Steel	407.65	+3.95
Kotak Bank	2019.65	+33.70
L&T	1549.45	+11.80
M&M	912.20	+0.35
Maruti Suzuki	7697.05	+100.40
Nestle India Ltd.	17217.25	+262.60
NTPC	98.00	+2.80
ONGC	103.75	+5.30
PowerGrid Corp	225.55	+13.10
Reliance Ind	2059.50	+26.90
SBI Life	872.00	+5.25
State Bank	402.35	+4.60
Shree Cement	28597.40	+55.85
Sun Pharma	631.15	+3.65
Tata Motors	329.20	+4.15
Tata Steel	699.20	+27.05
TCS	3108.80	+31.05
Tech Mahindra	986.80	+7.60
Titan	1471.85	+12.90
UltraTech Cement	6457.80	+50.05
UPL	538.95	+1.50
Wipro	437.55	+2.15

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.50	72.82
Euro	88.19	88.59
British Pound	100.96	101.45
Japanese Yen (100)	68.79	69.12
Chinese Yuan	11.23	11.28
Swiss Franc	81.65	82.02
Singapore Dollar	54.80	55.05
Canadian Dollar	57.40	57.66
Malaysian Ringgit	17.99	18.09

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



'Tatas to buy 68% in BigBasket for ₹9,500 cr.'

NEW DELHI
The Tata group will acquire 68% stake in online grocery platform BigBasket for about ₹9,500 crore, sources said. The group has signed an agreement, the sources added. The agreement puts BigBasket's enterprise value at more than ₹13,500 crore. PTI

ALL invests ₹19 cr. in Prathama Solarconnect

CHENNAI
Ashok Leyland Ltd. (ALL) has picked up a 26% stake in Prathama Solarconnect Energy Pvt. Ltd. (PSEPL) by investing ₹18.66 crore. The commercial vehicle manufacturer, in a filing, said PSEPL was engaged in solar power generation business and the investment had been made for purchase of solar power at a subsidised rate under group captive scheme.

SPORT

Batting or bowling, Ashwin is very very special too



BETWEEN WICKETS

SURESHE MENON

The definition of the term 'all-rounder' in cricket is quite simple. Would the player find a place in the team on the basis of either of his skills (batting, bowling, wicket-keeping) alone? If he does, then he is.

Top of the ICC's ranking is Ben Stokes, and he can play for England either as a batsman or as a bowler. His incredible catching is a bonus.

Sixth on the list is R. Ashwin, and we have been reluctant to call him an all-rounder despite his five centuries and 11 fifties. We called another great spinner S. Venkataraghavan an all-rounder on the basis of just two fifties.

This is partly Ashwin's fault, as between centuries he gave the impression he was not focussed on

batting. Now he has told us he has rediscovered the joy of batting – hinting that he is going to take this aspect of his game more seriously. Once you enjoy something, communicating that enjoyment is part of a performer's instinct.

Rare intelligence
Had Ashwin not been the bowler he is, it is likely that he might have played as a batsman alone. There is something of V.V.S. Laxman about his touch and natural sense of timing. He is a player of rare intelligence.

In Australia recently he showed he has a big heart to go with his sharp mind, taking blows on his body and carrying the team on his shoulders – and fingers and hands and chest – in an unexpected draw that set up the series win in the final Test.

When he speaks, he gives the impression of being an intelligent sportsman – and he doesn't care who knows it. He has given his bowling deep thought, and worked out the angles and release points that suit him best.

Like all top bowlers he remembers every wicket, and it doesn't take him long to retrieve past dismissals from the storage place in his mind.

Such profound involvement in his craft can be intimidating; but the seriousness is lightened by a sense of fun that comes naturally to a certain kind of person born and bred in Chennai.

Ashwin was born a day before the tied Test began in Chennai; he has been tied to history and cricket ever since, getting to the various landmarks quickly as he made up for a late start (he was 25 on debut).

He is six wickets short of the 400-mark. Muttiah Muralitharan made it in 72 Tests. Richard Hadlee and Dale Steyn got there in 80; Chennai was Ashwin's 76th.

Ashwin might once have nurtured dreams of leading India. He is better qualified than many who have. But the bias against bowler-captains stood in the way. And once Virat Kohli, a younger man took charge, that road was shut.

If he was disappointed in not getting the chance to pick up ten wicks-

ets as India won the Test, he didn't show it. In Australia, Tim Paine had sledged Ashwin saying (in effect): nobody likes you in your team. You only had to see the manner in which the non-striker Mohammed Siraj celebrated his century to see how laughable that was.

The man-of-the-match is an all-rounder. Let us say that without embarrassment. Ashwin has done it before – a century and eight wickets – but it is doubtful if he has bat-batted better.

Regardless of what former England captains and Australian leg-spinners think sitting thousands of kilometres away, the second Test in Chennai wasn't played on the beach.

When teams lose in India it is because the pitch is doctored, when India lose in England it is because batsmen lack the technique. This trope has outlived its utility either as an explanation or as a joke.

India averaged over 300 per innings while England didn't manage even half that. When a number eight batsman scores a century in the second innings on a seemingly

poor track, the opposition shouldn't waste time looking at the pitch. There are more relevant issues to look at.

To be fair, the England team and management didn't think the track was unplayable, their skipper Joe Root saying, "We were outplayed in all three departments. It's a bit of an education..."

Enviable roster

India's conveyor belt of players is enviable. A replacement (for Ravinder Jadeja), Axar Patel begins his career with a five-wicket haul.

The replacement of a replacement (Shahbaz Nadeem), Kuldeep Yadav who has been sitting idle for two years while going around with the team, picks up two and might have had Root himself early on but for a dropped catch.

It is remarkable that sitting among the reserves in Chennai were K.L. Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Jasprit Bumrah, Widdhiman Saha, Washington Sundar, Hardik Pandya, Shardul Thakur, all top performers in recent years. Indian cricket never had it so good.

Bielefeld in the Bundesliga. Bayern is still five points clear at the top.

The results:

Premier League: Chelsea 2 (Giroud 31, Werner 39) bt Newcastle 0; West Ham 3 (Rice 41-pen, Diop 58, Fredericks 90+6) bt Sheffield United 0.

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 3 (Lewandowski 48, Tolisso 57, Davies 69) drew with Arminia Bielefeld 3 (Vlap 9, Pieper 37, Gebauer 49).

La Liga: Cadiz 0 lost to Athletic Bilbao 4 (Berenguer 4, 29, Lopez 15, Williams 52).

Serie A: Hellas Verona 2 (Grassi 13-0g, Barak 61) bt Parma 1 (Kucka 8-pen).



Amazon to manufacture Fire TV stick at Chennai facility

A unit of Foxconn to start contract production by year end

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

U.S. e-commerce major Amazon on Tuesday said it plans to begin manufacturing electronic devices including the Fire TV stick, in India, by the end of this year.

The contract facility at Chennai would be Amazon's first production line in India.

Cloud Network Technology, a unit of Foxconn, would start contract manufacture of the Amazon devices later this year, the e-commerce company said in a blogpost.

India's finance and external affairs ministries did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Cairn aims to enforce the award under international arbitration rules, commonly called the New York Convention, and recover losses caused by India's "unfair and inequitable treatment of their investments", the court filing showed.

■

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The announcement followed a virtual meeting between Union Minister for Communications and IT Raavi Shankar Prasad and Amazon's Global Senior Vice-President and Country Head for India Amit Agarwal.

"India is an attractive investment destination and is poised to become a major player in the global supply

chain in the electronics and IT products industry," Mr. Prasad said. "We welcome Amazon's decision... as it will enhance domestic production capacities, and create jobs," he added.

'Own production'

"What we understand is Amazon would first manufacture the devices through contract manufacturer Foxconn and later might start their own production," a senior Tamil Nadu government official said.

"We are delighted to announce Amazon's first manufacturing line in India to produce hundreds of thousands of Fire TV Stick devices every year," Mr. Agarwal said. "This further reiterates our commitment to the Government of India's 'Make in India' initiative."

SAT stays SEBI ban order on Biyani, others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

■

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has stayed the order passed by market regulator SEBI, that had put a one-year ban on Future Retail Chairman Kishore Biyani and some other promoters from the securities market.

The SAT also directed Future Group promoters to deposit ₹1 crore as an interim measure. "The [SAT] stayed the... operation of SEBI's order accusing the promoters of the Future Group of insider trading in the context of purchases of Future Retail shares made in March 2017," Future Corporate Resources Pvt. Ltd. said in a statement.

The net neutrality principles prohibit service providers from discriminating against Internet content and services by blocking, throttling or according preferential higher speeds.

Nestle India net rises 2.3% to ₹483 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

FMCG major Nestle India Ltd. on Tuesday reported a 2.3% rise in net profit to ₹483.3 crore for the fourth quarter ended December.

The company, which follows the January-December financial year, had posted a profit of ₹472.6 crore in the same period a year ago, Nestle said.

Net sales rose 9.2% to ₹3,417.5 crore during the quarter under review. Export sales dipped 7.7% to ₹156.8 crore.

Its board recommended final dividend of ₹65 per equity share of ₹10 each for the year 2020.

Twitter starts voice message testing for DMs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Axar puts the finishing touches to India's stirring comeback

Chennai leg 1-1 after Kohli's men register a 317-run win; memorable outing for Ashwin who ends up with an eight-wkt. match haul and a century

ENGLAND IN INDIA

S. DINAKAR
CHENNAI

Axar Patel lived a dream in the field of dreams; a five-wicket innings haul on debut that fired India to a victory in the second Test at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Tuesday.

India completed the formalities soon after lunch on day four, winning by a massive 317 runs. The series is level 1-1 after two Tests.

The caravan now moves to Motera for the third Test – a day/night affair from February 24. India needs to win the series 2-1 to make the World Test championship final.

Major difference

The difference between the two sides was Rohit Sharma's iridescent 161 in the first innings after India won a crucial toss on a dusty surface that turned from day one.

Then home boy R. Ashwin held centrestage with a century and an eight-wicket match haul. Things happened quickly on day four of the second Test at Chepauk.

And left-arm spinner Axar got the prize wicket of Joe Root (33) with a delivery that turned from day one.

bounced more and kissed the glove even as the batsman pushed forward.

Control is the tall Axar's strength and he gets extra bounce too releasing the ball from a high-arm action.

Axar has an easy relaxed release, spins the ball away from the right-hander and throws in variations in speed and trajectory. Importantly for a left-arm, he possesses an arm ball.

Axar's extra bounce drew the error from Ollie Pope too; his attempted sweep resulted in a catch to deep mid-wicket.

Pant's stature grows

Moeen Ali (43) struck some lusty blows before stepping down to wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, missing and Rishabh Pant pulling off an acrobatic stumping to end the Test. Pant has grown in stature as a keeper in the match.

Ashwin bowled with rhythm and skill.

He is employing more body in his action which, consequently, gives him greater bite off the surface.

Now, Ashwin is more side-on in his release which means he is pivoting better with a more pronounced hip drive. Ashwin imparted serious revs



Spin and win: Axar Patel made his maiden Test a special one with a match-winning spell.

• SPORTZPICS/BCCI

on the ball and there was flight, dip and turn in his delivery.

And his release points are excellent. His seam position is good and he can bowl both top spin (upright seam) and side-spin (the release point is from a lower arm and the seam does not face the ground).

With top spin, he gets the

ball to dip. With side spin, Ashwin gets the sphere to drift.

Ashwin struck early in the day when he got one to turn through Dan Lawrence's legs – he releases the ball a tad late and could have, from the corner of his eyes, seen Lawrence stepping out.

He fired a quicker one, and the fighting Lawrence (26,

missed his flick and Pant pulled off a difficult leg-side stumping. Ben Stokes was a big wicket and Ashwin got the left-hander with a fuller length slider from round the wicket.

Among Ashwin's strengths is his use of the crease and the ability to harness the angles.

Man-of-the-Match, he was.

It was the perfect game for us, says a delighted captain Kohli

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

Captain Virat Kohli called it the perfect game after India cruised to a 317-run win over England and levelled the four-Test series 1-1 here on Tuesday.

"Our application with the bat was outstanding. The conditions were challenging for both sides, but we showed more application with the bat," Kohli told the host broadcaster after the match.

"We didn't panic out there looking at the turn and bounce; we showed grit, got into the game and scored 600 runs in the game. We know our bowlers are going to do the job for us if we put up these runs in home conditions."

Kohli also felt the toss did



Lights out! Lawrence steps out to Ashwin and Pant does the rest.

• SPORTZPICS/BCCI

not play as much of a vital role as it did in the first game. "The toss wouldn't have mattered much in this game, because if you looked

at our second innings, we still applied ourselves and got [close to] 300 as well.

"It wasn't unfair if the toss went either way. Both teams

should be in the game from the first session, whether it is on spinning or seaming tracks, and that exactly was the case in this game."

Qualification scenarios

- India needs to win 2-1 or 3-1 to qualify for the final against New Zealand
- A 3-1 win in the series against India will help England book a berth
- Australia will make it to the summit clash if the India-England series is drawn or if Root's men win 2-1

SOURCE: ICC

WTC points table (top-4)

	PCT (%)	Points	Series	Matches		
				Won	Lost	Drawn
New Zealand	70.0	420	5	7	4	0
India	69.7	460	6*	10	4	1
Australia	69.2	332	4	8	4	2
England	67.0	442	6*	11	5	3

Teams are ranked based on PCT

PCT is points earned/points available

* indicates ongoing series

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SOURCE: ICC

Ajinkya told me I was overthinking it, reveals Ashwin

Talks about how a switch in focus from technique to tactics helped him bat better

S. DIPAK RAGAV
CHENNAI

After scoring his fifth Test century on Monday, R. Ashwin felt that a return to basics had helped him rediscover his batting form, the first signs of which were evident in his match-saving Sydney epic.

"I'm someone who tries hard. When it doesn't go my way, I try harder. A lot of my batting was about me internally thinking about what was happening with the

crease, the set-up, the technique and all that sort of stuff. Whereas my batting was more about hands, getting through the ball and sort of thinking tactically rather than thinking technically," said Ashwin.

Sydney set the tone

"[Batting coach] Vikram Rathour came in and Ajinkya [Rahane] played a crucial role in terms of telling me that I'm overthinking it and have to just get it done. All

those things played a massive role but that innings Sydne really set the tone for me," he added.

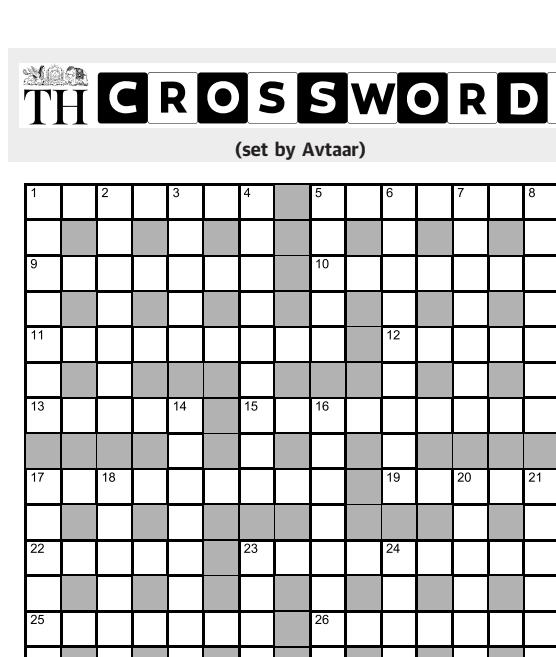
On his partnership with Virat Kohli in the second innings, Ashwin said, "Virat was playing well and I was looking to support him. I just wanted to go out there and carry out the plans I had practised before the game. I played with a bit of a counter-attacking streak, as once I got in I understood what can be done."

Ashwin also felt that it was the most special of his four Tests at home.



Partners in business: On a conducive pitch, Ashwin and Kuldeep teased and tormented Root's men.

• SPORTZPICS/BCCI



ACROSS

- 1 Indian and Nepalese leaders hold brief amongst themselves (5,2)
- 5 Dollar advanced and collapsed (7)
- 9 Headgear in unusual shade of peach and gold (7)
- 10 UCLA questions admitting persons who are hired to say "Yes, Sir" (7)
- 11 8 Down is X (6,3)
- 12 Avtaar's boy rallied to get gold, perhaps? (5)
- 13 Oriental king beheaded mathematician (5)

Never go off the grid.

We are digital now. Come solve online.
<https://www.ergo.page.link/jjpTn>



SUDOKU

8	3	1	6	2
8	2	5	4	
	4	3		
3		8	5	
2			9	
9	1		6	
	8	2		
3	1	4	8	
5	4	9	3	2

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13172

C	O	A	R	S	E	S	T	O	F	F	I	C	E
A	N	E	E	L	T	L							
P	R	I	V	S	O	T	W	A	R	E			
A	P	I	E	N	A	H	I	O	S	T	M	A	N
J	I	R	E	T			T						
C	A	D	C	E	S	O	O	D	I	N			
N	E	R	A	H	L	T							
E	A	R	A	H	L	T							
V	A	R	A	H	L	T							
A	R	A	H	L	T								
B	R	A	H	L	T								
C	A	D	C	E	S	O	O	D	I	N			
G	D	C	E	J	A	L	T						
O	N	E	R	A	C	H	I						
I	M	N	V	I	K	R							
F	L	Y	A	S	H	U	N	D	R	E			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

FAITH

Sacred story of Dhruva

The Bhagavata Purana contains many instances of how Divine Grace is sought through prayer, worship, practice of meditation and dhyana, performance of yagas and yagnas, etc. Sage Narada sings the praises of his disciple Dhruva in the sacrificial hall of Prachetasas. He hails the story of Dhruva for the many lessons it imparts and inspires, pointed out Sri R. Krishnamurthy Sastrigal in a discourse.

As a child of five years, whose earnest wish is to receive his father's love, he is pained when the step mother Suruchi speaks sharp words. Seeing no way out of the situation, he goes to the forest with the aim of propitiating the Lord. Narada guides him in the path of meditation and penance and imparts the sacred Dwadasa mantra. Based on the sage's teachings, Dhruva does severe penance that is beyond the limits of a child. The determination and sincere prayer of the child wins for him the darshan of the very Lord within a short period. It is something not attained by any Kshatriya even through many long years. Dhruva is overawed by the Lord's presence and, unable to speak anything, he falls prostrate at His feet. The Lord touches the child's head with His conch and this gives Dhruva the jnana and power to express this in words. He praises the Supreme Lord by whose power he is now able to speak of His glories. His words echo the very essence of what the Vedas proclaim.

TV PICKS

Australian Open: Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 5.30 a.m. & 1.30 p.m.; Sony Ten 3 (SD & HD), 1.30 p.m.

Champions League: Sony Ten 1, 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 1.30 a.m. (Thursday)

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD), 11.30 p.m. & 1.45 a.m. (Thursday)

ISL: Star Sports 1, 2 & 3 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Clarkson shines for Utah

SALT LAKE CITY

Jordan Clarkson helped Utah Jazz overcome big nights by Ben Simmons and Tobias Harris while leading the NBA's hottest team to a 134-123 win over Philadelphia 76ers on Monday.

Other results: Chicago bt Indiana 120-112 (OT); Washington bt Houston 131-119; New York bt Atlanta 123-112; Golden State bt Cleveland 129-98; Clippers bt Miami 125-118; Brooklyn bt Sacramento 136-125. REUTERS

Hyderabad blasts Kerala

VASCO DA GAMA

Hyderabad FC defeated Kerala Blasters 4-0 at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Tuesday.

The result: Hyderabad FC 4 (Fran Sandaza 58 & 63-p., Aridane Santana 86, Joao Victor 90) bt Kerala Blasters 0.

Wednesday's match: FC Goa v Odisha FC, 7.30 p.m.

Mixed luck for Ankita

MELBOURNE

Qualifier Ankita Raina lost 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 to Australian Kimberly Birrell in the second round of the Phillip Island Trophy WTA 250 tournament here. In the doubles draw, Ankita and Russia's Kamilla Rakhimova beat Mihaela Buzarnescu and Patricia Maria Tig of Romania 6-1, 7-6(3) to progress to the second round.

Other results: \$52,080 Challenger, Potchefstroom (South Africa): First round: Akira Santillan (Aus) bt Prajesh Gunnaneswar 6-3, 3-6, 7-5. \$15,000 ITF women, Monastir (Tunisia): First round: Melis Yasar (Swe) bt Zeel Desai 0-6, 6-4, 7-6(1).

Karatsev's march continues

Djokovic overcomes Zverev; Serena takes out Halep, plays Osaka next

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

REUTERS
MELBOURNE

Qualifier Aslan Karatsev continued his stunning run into the Australian Open semifinals on Tuesday, beating an ailing Grigor Dimitrov 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 to become the first man in the Open era to reach the last four in his maiden Grand Slam.

The Russian, whose success at getting into the Australian Open came on his 10th attempt to qualify for a Grand Slam, will meet eight-time champion Novak Djokovic for a place in the final.

The Serb overcame several dips in form to beat Alexander Zverev 6-7(6), 6-2, 6-4, 7-6(6).

In the women's section, 10th seed Serena Williams came through a huge test of her Australian Open title credentials to reach the last four at Melbourne Park for the ninth time with a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Simona Halep in a high quality quarterfinal.

The 39-year-old went toe-to-toe with the Romanian second seed over 80 minutes on Rod Laver Arena before she was finally able to move to within two victories of a record-equalling

Who is Karatsev?

■ The 27-year-old World No.114 had earlier tried and failed to qualify for nine Majors

■ Coming into the Australian Open, the Russian had won just three matches on the ATP Tour (3-10)

■ After the COVID-19 lockdown last year, Karatsev won 18 of his 20 ATP Challenger matches, including two titles, to rise from 253 to 116 in the world rankings

■ He was part of the Russian team which won the ATP Cup recently, alongside Medvedev, Evgeny Donskoy

24th Grand Slam title.

The American, who has not landed one of the game's Major prizes since her seventh title here in 2017, next plays Naomi Osaka who beat Hsieh Su-wei 6-2, 6-2 in a one-sided bat-

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals: Men: Aslan Karatsev (Rus) bt 18-Grigor Dimitrov (Bul) 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2; 1-Novak Djokovic (Srb) bt 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) 6-7(6), 6-2, 6-4, 7-6(8).

Women: 3-Naomi Osaka (Jpn) bt Hsieh Su-wei (Tpe) 6-2, 6-2; 10-Serena Williams (USA) bt 2-Simona Halep (Rom) 6-3, 6-3.

The day in numbers

0 Zverev is yet to register a win against top-10 players at Majors in nine attempts

1 Karatsev is the first man in the Open Era to reach the last four on his Grand Slam debut

5 Karatsev is the fifth male qualifier to reach the last four at a Major after McEnroe (Wimbledon 1977), Bob Giltinan (Aus Open 1977), Filip Dewulf (French Open 1997), Vladimir Voltchkov (Wimbledon 2000)

15 Serena has made at least one Grand Slam semifinal for 15 straight years now

114 Karatsev's ranking, the lowest for a men's semifinalist at a Grand Slam since Ivanisevic (ranked 125)

362 Number of Grand Slam singles wins for Serena, tying Federer's all-time record

WEDNESDAY'S PICKS

MEN

2-Nadal vs 5-Tsitsipas

4-Medvedev vs 7-Rublev

WOMEN

1-Barty vs 25-Muchova

22-Brady vs Pegula



KARATSEV

It's an unbelievable feeling. It's my first time playing main draw. It's incredible. It was really tough from the beginning to hold the nerves

Serena on having crowds

It's an unbelievable feeling. It's my first time playing main draw. It's incredible. It was really tough from the beginning to hold the nerves

Karatsev after his win over Dimitrov

Indian team for shooting World Cup

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

All the 15 Olympic quota winners earned their berth with good scores as the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) announced a 57-strong Indian team for the World Cup in rifle, pistol and shotgun to be staged at the Dr. Karni Singh Range from March 18 to 29.

The team: Men: 10m air rifle: Divyansh

Singh Panwar, Arjun Babuta, Deepak Kumar, Pankaj Kumar, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar.

50m rifle 3-position: Sanjeev Rajput, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Niraj Kumar, Swapnil Kusale, Chain Singh.

10m air pistol: Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma, Sarabjit Singh, Ravinder Singh, Shahzar Rizvi.

25m rapid fire pistol: Vijayveer Sidhu, Gurpreet Singh, Anish Bhawana, Arpit Goel, Adarsh Singh.

Trap: Kynan Chenai, Lakshay Sheoran, Prithviraj Tondaiman, Zaravari Singh Sandhu, Namanveer Singh Brar.

Skeet: Angad Vir Singh Bajwa, Mairaj Ahmad Khan, Gurjeet Singh Khangura, Karam Sukhbir Singh, Amrinder Singh Cheema.

Women: Air rifle: Elavenil Valarivan, Anjum Moudgil, Apurvi Chandela, Shriyana Sadangi, Nisha Kanwar.

Rifle 3-position: Tejaswini Sawant, Sunidhi Chauhan, Anjum Moudgil, Gaayathri Nithyanandan.

dam, Shreya Saksena.

Air pistol: Manu Bhaker, Yashaswi Singh Deswal, P. Shri Niwetha, Shweta Singh, Esha Singh.

Sports pistol: Manu Bhaker, Rahi Sarnobat, Chinki Yadav, Neeraj Kaur, Abhidnya Patil.

Trap: Rajeshwari Kumari, Shreyasi Singh, Manisha Keer, Kirti Gupta, Neeru.

Skeet: Ganemat Sekhon, Parinaaz Dhaliwal, Karttiki Singh Shaktaut, Darshana Rathore, Zahra Mufaddal Deesawala.

Rifle 3-position: Tejaswini Sawant, Sunidhi Chauhan, Anjum Moudgil, Gaayathri Nithyanandan.

Manika, Archana scrapes through

Madhurika finds her touch in time; Shamini fails to advance

NATIONAL TT

RAKESH RAO
CHANDIGARH

Manika Batra and Archana Kamath, along with upcoming talent Diya Chitale, represent the present and future of Indian women's table tennis.

Another ex-winner National champion K. Shamini could not find the high gear and made a first-round exit. Looking vulnerable throughout the league phase, Shamini could not match Telangana youngster Varuni Jaiswal's firepower on this

Covid-break.

On Tuesday, the trio won their opening round matches in the National table tennis championship at Panchkula, near here, in contrasting styles.

If former champion Manika and Archana looked rusty for the better part of campaign-openers, the reigning National youth and junior champion Diya gave nothing away to Tamil Nadu girl N. Vidya. Manika survived three game-points in the first set, a

five-point deficit in the second and a dropped fourth set to stop Andhra's Kajol Ramjali.

Manika Batra and Archana Kamath, along with upcoming talent Diya Chitale, represent the present and future of Indian women's table tennis.

Now that the competitions are back after 11 months, their performances this week will reflect their hard work done during the Covid-break.

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If former champion Manika and Archana looked rusty for the better part of campaign-openers, the reigning National youth and junior champion Diya gave nothing away to Tamil Nadu girl N. Vidya. Manika survived three game-points in the first set, a

five-point deficit in the second and a dropped fourth set to stop Andhra's Kajol Ramjali.

Manika Batra and Archana Kamath, along with upcoming talent Diya Chitale, represent the present and future of Indian women's table tennis.

Now that the competitions are back after 1