

INDIA OPENED UP  
PREMATURELY:  
DR FAUCI

P10



IT'S TIME FOR  
EL SUPREMO  
TO GO

P7

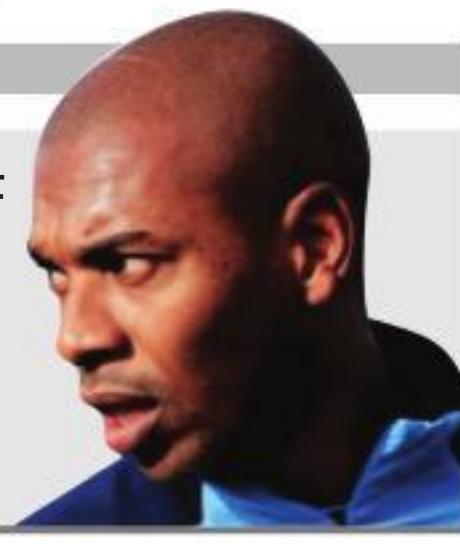


PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

HARDLINER AGAIN  
SEEKS TO BE  
IRAN'S PRESIDENT

THE HAPPY HALF  
OF SOCCER'S  
DIVIDED CITY

P9



P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with very light rain/thundershowers. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 36 and 24 degrees Celsius.

RAINFALL: 0.0 mm

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 68% Min: 27%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 36.8°C (-3) Min: 23.5°C (-2)

SUN RISES

04:57 hrs

MOON RISES

05:52 hrs

SUN SETS

18:08 hrs

MOON SETS

19:33 hrs

THUMBNAILS

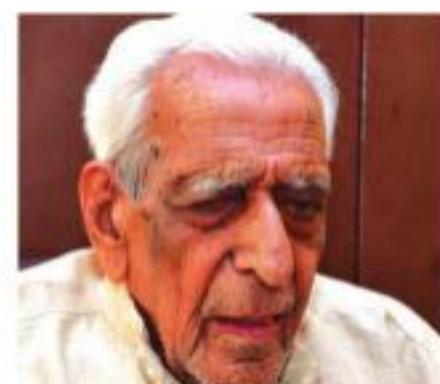


A Palestinian man passes by the remains of a building destroyed by Israeli airstrikes in Gaza City on Wednesday. **AGENCIES**

**Justice Chandrachud tests positive:** Supreme Court judge Justice D Y Chandrachud has tested positive for Covid-19, the apex court sources said on Wednesday. The top court meanwhile issued a notice which said the scheduled hearing on Thursday before a three-judge bench headed by Justice Chandrachud in the suo moto case for ensuring distribution of essential supplies and services during the Covid-19 pandemic stands deferred as one of the judges of the bench had Covid.

**SC denies Navlakha bail plea:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea of activist Gautam Navlakha, seeking bail in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist link case of Bhima Koregaon in Maharashtra. A bench of justices UU Lalit and K M Joseph dismissed the appeal of Navlakha against the Bombay High Court order denying him bail in the case. On March 26, the top court had reserved its verdict on a plea of Navlakha against the Bombay High Court order.

103-year-old  
Gandhian back  
home after  
beating Covid



BENGALURU, 12 MAY

Eminent Gandhian and freedom fighter H S Doreswamy has won the Covid-19 battle at the ripe old age of 103 and is returning home.

"I developed symptoms five days ago but there were no complications as such. Yet, I decided to get admitted because I have respiratory problems. Now, I am getting discharged," the centenarian told PTI on Wednesday.

According to him, he got admitted to Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research (SJICSR), a government-owned autonomous hospital. Sources close to him said the director of the Jayadeva Institute Dr C N Manjunath, cardiologist and the son-in-law of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, personally monitored the treatment for Doreswamy.

Born on April 10, 1918, Harohalli Srinivasaiah Doreswamy plunged into the freedom struggle by taking part in the Quit India movement and was jailed for 14 months from 1943 to 1944. The Gandhian had also participated in the Mysuru Chalo movement to compel the Mysuru Maharaja to accede to the Indian State post-independence.

A graduate of the Central College, Bengaluru, he was a teacher before he tried his hand at journalism. **PTI**

## Vax drive stumbles due to shortages

Maha to halt vaccination for 18-44 age group; Delhi shuts Covaxin centres

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, 12 MAY

**A**s states face an acute shortage of COVID-19 vaccines, Maharashtra decided on Wednesday to suspend its drive to vaccinate people in the age group of 18 to 44 years while Delhi also temporarily shut Covaxin administering centres for them as it has run out of stock.

The Tamil Nadu government was the latest to announce global tenders for procurement of Covid-19 vaccines, while the Rajasthan government was also mulling a similar step.

Uttarakhand officials said the state will import 20 lakh doses of Sputnik vaccine over the next two months.

States like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Delhi have already opted for global tenders to meet their needs.

While the vaccination drive appeared to be faltering in several states, Union health minister Harsh Vardhan urged them to first focus more on second dose vaccinations. He stressed that India is the fastest country globally to reach the landmark of administering 17 crore doses in 114 days.

The minister pointed out that of this, while 13.66 crore people have been administered the first dose, the second dose has been administered to only 3.86 crore, the ministry said.

"Hence, it is very important that we first focus more on second dose vaccinations. States should not lose sight of those who are to get the second dose of the Covid

vaccine. "Seventy per cent ought to be allocated to meet the requirement of the second dose, while 30 per cent ought to be reserved for the first dose," he was quoted as saying in a statement.

Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said SII has informed it that it would be able to provide 1.5 crore Covishield vaccines to the state only May 20 onwards.

"There is no sufficient supply of vaccine vials by the Centre for inoculation of above-45 age group people. Hence, the state cabinet decided to divert the stock, purchased for the 18-44 age group, for the above-45 age group.

Therefore, we are suspending the inoculation of the 18-44 age group for some period," Tope said.

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said Bharat Biotech has informed the Delhi government that it cannot provide "additional" Covaxin doses to the national capital.

The stock of Covaxin in Delhi has finished and as a result around 100 vaccination centres set up in 17 schools have been closed, he said.

The national capital received 2.67 lakh more doses of Covishield on Tues-

day evening and there are 4.18 lakh Covishield doses left for people in the 18-44 age group which can last up to nine days, AAP leader Atishi said.

"The Covaxin manufacturer has in a letter said that it cannot provide Delhi government vaccines due to unavailability, under the instruction of concerned government official. It means that the central government is controlling the supply of the vaccine," Sisodia said.

However, Joint Secretary in the Union health ministry Lav Agarwal on Tuesday denied that the Centre had any role to play in the purchase of vaccines by the states.

Bharat Biotech Joint Managing Director Suchitra Ella said the company has already dispatched Covaxin lots to 18 states on May 10 and said it was disheartening to listen to some states complaining about Bharat Biotech's intentions regarding the supply of Covid vaccine.

"50 of our employees are off work due to covid, yet we continue to work under pandemic lockdowns 24x7 for U," she said in a tweet.

The Tamil Nadu government said an allocation of about 1.3 lakh vaccine doses to the state is not sufficient to cover all those in the 18-45 age group. Hence, "the government has decided to go in for global bids to procure vaccines," an official.

The Rajasthani government is exploring the possibility of purchasing Covid-19 vaccines from other countries through global tenders. Health Minister Raghu Sharma said, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, however, said it would have been better if the central government had procured the vaccines by floating global tenders and distributing them to states. (SEE P2)

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We will utilize their experience of running the civic board

GAUTAM DEB, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS, SMC

ON TWO LEFT FRONT LEADERS OF SILEGURI SWITCHING SIDES TO THE TRINAMUL CONGRESS

# 'No Covaxin supply forces Delhi to shut 100 centres'

Bharat Biotech says can't supply addl doses to Delhi, citing Centre's directives & limited stocks: Sisodia

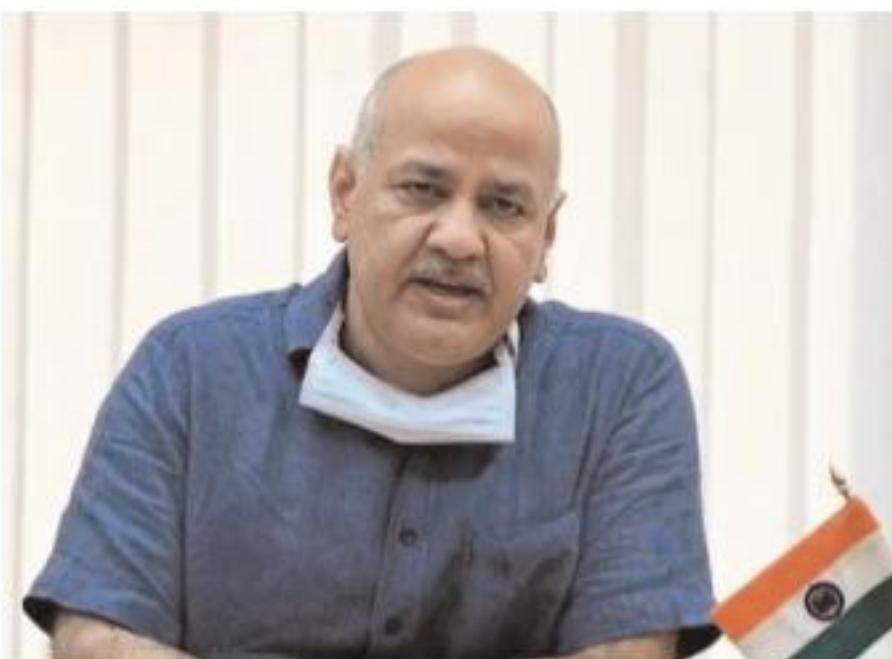
SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

**W**ith the national capital also running short of Covid vaccines like many other states, Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia today charged that the Covaxin vaccine-maker Bharat Biotech has "refused" to provide "additional" vaccine doses to the Delhi government, citing the Centre's directives and its limited availability.

The development is likely to severely hamper the inoculation drive for people in the 18-44 age group in Delhi, with Sisodia saying

that the Delhi government has now been forced to shut down 100 Covaxin vaccination centres in 17 schools due to "no supply" of the vaccine. "Vaccine mismanagement by Centre Gov-Covaxin refuses to supply vaccine citing directives of Gov & limited availability. Once again I would say exporting 6.6 cr doses was biggest mistake. We are forced to shutdown 100 covaxin-vaccination sites in 17 schools due to no supply," Sisodia tweeted.

He also told an online press briefing that the stock of Covaxin in Delhi has finished following which about 100 vaccination centres set up in 17 schools had to be closed.



"The Covaxin manufacturer has in a letter said that it cannot provide the Delhi government vaccines due to unavailability, under instruction of government officials concerned. It means that the central government is con-

trolling supply of the vaccine," Sisodia said.

Joint secretary in the Union health ministry, Lav Agarwal, had on Tuesday denied that the Centre had any role to play in the purchase of vaccines by the states.

Sisodia accused the Narendra Modi-led central government of "vaccine mismanagement" and iterated that its decision to export 6.5 crore Covid vaccine doses to foreign countries was the "biggest mistake".

The Delhi government had ordered 67 lakh doses each of Covishield and Covaxin vaccines on 26 April, the deputy CM said.

According to the Delhi

government figures, it has received 1.5 lakh Covaxin and 4 lakh Covishield doses so far to vaccinate people against Covid in the 18-44 age group.

Till now, a total of 48.7 lakh doses of both the vaccines have been received for various categories of beneficiaries, it showed.

"I had already said exporting 6.5 crore doses to foreign countries was the biggest mistake. It would have been sufficient to vaccinate everyone in Delhi and Mumbai with two doses each," Sisodia added.

During the online briefing, he read the letter received from Bharat Biotech, which said "...we are making dispatches

as per the directions of the government officials concerned. We therefore sincerely regret that we cannot make any additional supplies as required by you".

The letter written by Bharat Biotech chairman and managing director Dr Krishna Ella, on 11 May, to the Delhi government's principal secretary (health and family welfare) also mentioned "unprecedented demand" of Covaxin.

Bharat Biotech's letter referred to another note written to it by the Delhi government on 7 May regarding supply of Covaxin.

The deputy CM said that the Centre should stop export of Covid vaccines and share

the vaccine formulae of these two manufacturers with other pharmaceutical companies in the country to ensure their mass scale production. This was yesterday demanded by Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal too, who had also written a letter to PM Modi in this regard.

Sisodia also urged the Union government to approve Covid vaccines available in the international market for use in India and direct states to vaccinate everyone within three months.

In its reaction, Bharat Biotech said that it was "quite disheartening" that some states were complaining about its "intentions" regarding the supply of Covaxin.

## DU's Hansraj College sets up RT-PCR testing centre

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Delhi University's Hansraj College on Wednesday opened an RT-PCR testing centre on its premises, principal Rama Sharma said.

"The lab is approved by the ICMR AND NABL. It has been set up by the college in collaboration with JITM Skills Pvt Ltd. The testing centre will be open for everyone," Sharma told PTI.

On May 9, Sharma had written to Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other authorities offering the college hostel to set up a 100-bed health facility for COVID-19 patients.

The principal had also sought the setting up of a vaccination centre at the college for administering Cov-

ishield vaccine to university staffers.

"Delhi University's Health Centre in Shivaji College is administering Covishield so we thought we could get Covishield administered on the campus. But even if we are given both Covishield and Covaxin, we will be happy," she said.

Around 8 to 10 staffers of the college had tested COVID-19 positive but have recovered, she said.

"Hansraj College, University of Delhi has always come forward and stood by the country whenever the need has arisen. Hansraj College has a hostel that caters to 200 residents. We are ready to offer the space with your support that can be converted into 100 ICU facility as the Covid patients are not getting hospital beds and that is causing anxiety," she had said in the letter.

## 5 held in Delhi for black marketing oxygen concentrators, flow meters

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Five persons were arrested from various parts of the national capital in two separate cases for allegedly selling oxygen flow meters and oxygen concentrators at exorbitant rates, police said today.

An information was received that one person was selling oxygen flow meters for Rs 5000 per piece at Burari, Delhi. Keeping in view of the gravity of allegations, present scenario and sensitivity of matter, special staff, north district, conducted a discreet enquiry, recce of the area, and deployed sources

to bust the racket," Delhi police said.

Police formed a special team and laid a trap to arrest the accused who was selling oxygen flow meters at higher rates in Burari.

Assistant Sub Inspector Yashpal Singh posed as a customer and contacted the accused. He requested them to provide an oxygen flow meter urgently, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Anto Alphonse said.

The accused agreed to meet at a petrol pump opposite the Transport Authority in Burari, he said.

The accused, identified as Karanjeet Singh, 20 and

Bhanu, 21 were apprehended. Thirty-two oxygen flow meters were recovered from their possession, the DCP said.

Singh, who worked at a medical store, and Bhanu purchased oxygen flow meters from Shafiq, a resident of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, and later sold the equipment at Rs 5,000, according to the police.

After interrogating the two miscreants, another accused Arun Gupta was arrested from Shastri Nagar Metro Station and four oxygen flow meters and one two wheeler were seized from his possession, police said.

"Gupta came in contact with Singh on social media and started supplying oxygen flow meters at higher prices to the needy," the DCP added.

Gupta is pursuing Bachelor of Architecture from a reputed institute in Gurugram.

A case was registered against the three men and efforts were being made to trace the supplier, the police said.

In another incident, two people were arrested for allegedly selling oxygen concentrators at higher rates.

The accused were identified as Neelansh, 24, resident of Dwarka, and Mohd Danish, a resident of Chandni Chowk, 31, police said.

ka Industrial Metro Station and at 11.15 pm, Neelansh arrived at the spot.

Head constable Rupesh approached him as a customer and struck a deal for supply of one oxygen concentrator for which Neelansh quoted Rs 70,000, DCP (Outer) Parvinder Singh said.

He was arrested and later, a raid was conducted at his associate Danish's shop in Old Delhi's Chandni Chowk.

The police said they recovered 2,000 oximeters from the shop. Danish procured these oximeters for Rs 325 per piece and later sold them at exorbitant rates, they added.

## Classified

### PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Be it known to all that my client Virender Kumar, s/o Late Sri. Sham Lal Singh, d/o Late Mr. P. Lal Singh, Nagar, Delhi-110092, has disowned/debarred his elder son Pawan Kumar from all his movable and immovable properties due to his misbehaviour and bad attitude towards my client and has severed all relations. My client member - s/o Sh. to be responsible for any act, dealing transaction or omissions of his aforesaid son.  
Mohd Naseem

Smt. Jolly, w/o Sh. Parveen Kaushik, d/o Late Sh. Rejinder Sharma who was the successful applicant in the draw, dated 22-04-2021, has claimed/applied for the transfer of the said Prov. No. 679, Final Registration No. 108, Type-B, Sector-18, Defence Scheme Rewari in her name due to death of successful applicant.

If anybody have any objection to the transfer of the said Prov. No. 679, Final Registration No. 108, Type-B, Sector-18, Defence Scheme Rewari in favour of the applicant Smt. Jolly, w/o Sh. Parveen Kaushik, d/o Late Sh. Rejinder Sharma, d/o Late Sh. Gauri Harsara, Tehsil & Distt. Gurugram. They may furnish their objection in writing in the office of the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the transfer of the said Prov. No. 679, Final Registration No. 108, Type-B, Sector-18, Defence Scheme Rewari shall be transferred accordingly and no further claim whatsoever shall be entertained later on.

Chief Revenue Officer (PM), Housing Board Haryana, Panchkula.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Sub: Transfer of Prov. No. 679, Final Registration No. 108, Type- B, Sector-18, Defence Scheme Rewari, due to death of successful applicant.

It is notified for the information of General Public and all concerned that Prov. No. 679, Final Registration No. 108, Type-B, Sector-18, Defence Scheme Rewari shall be transferred accordingly and no further claim whatsoever shall be entertained later on.

Chief Revenue Officer (PM), Housing Board Haryana, Panchkula.

**Advocate**

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## Jamia teachers' association urges VC to build hospital

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The Jamia Millia Islamia teachers' association has urged Vice Chancellor Najma Akhtar to build a 50-bed hospital by raising funds.

According to the Jamia Teachers' Association (JTA), four serving teachers have lost their lives in the coronavirus pandemic, besides the death of many non-teaching staff members and retired teachers.

The appeal, which requested the VC to create a financial contribution head to raise funds, saw its secretary M Irfan Qureshi make the first contribution of Rs 50,000 for the proposed hospital on the campus.

JTA president Majid Jamil said the university should have some landmark achievement amid the completion of 100 years of its foundation.

The coronavirus pandemic and loss of many lives have compelled us to leave with no option other than to release an appeal to fundraising for the noble cause of serving Jamia fraternity and humanity as a whole", Jamil said in a statement.

"I am confident that Jamia teachers, alumni and fellow citizens who want to support Jamia will contribute with an open heart and actively take part to translate this dream into a reality," Jamil said.

According to the professor, it had been a 100-year-long dream for Jamia to have a full-fledged medical college and establishing a 50-bed hospital "will open the way for Jamia Medical College soon, for which we are very hopeful and confident".

Delhi witnessed people scrambling for oxygen supplies, beds and anti-viral drugs amid the ferocious second coronavirus wave. It reported 13,287 new coronavirus cases and 300 more fatalities on Wednesday, while the positivity rate came down to 17 per cent.

Nafis Ahmad, a dentist in the faculty of Dentistry in Jamia, said the need of the hour was to raise a hospital at the university at the earliest.

"Once ready, Jamia hospital will be operated in a manner to practice high-quality medical and healthcare," Ahmad said. "We hope that university will equip the proposed hospital with the most advanced equipment and expert medical and paramedical staff."

## ITBP-run Covid centre deploys stress counsellors as O2 support improves

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)-run COVID care centre in south Delhi is now providing "uninterrupted" medical oxygen to patients, while a team of at least 30 stress counsellors has been deployed to soothe the frazzled nerves of the inmates and their attendants, officials said on Wednesday.

Started on April 26, the 500-oxygen bed Sardar Patel COVID care centre (SPCC) in the Chhattarpur area here has about 357 coronavirus-infected patients admitted at present and activities here are much more streamlined now, they said.

Donning white PPE or personal protection suits with "stress counsellors" scribbled on them, these professionals take rounds of the facility and interact with the patients in the morning hours. "The ITBP is probably the only force that has stress counsellors in its ranks. They have been trained from the National Institute of Mental

Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru," a senior officer of the border force said.

During regular times, the stress counsellors interact with the troops but now they have been deputed at the SPCC to help in reducing the anxiety of patients and their attendants, officials said on Wednesday.

"Some old or weak patients have been allowed to have attendants at the centre. The counsellors talk to them about everything... physical exercises to keep fit, how to divert mind from the fear of the unknown, anxiety and even what is happening across the globe on the COVID-19 battlefield," the officer added. Yoga sessions are also being held on certain days with the instructor addressing the patients in a large hall through a public address system, he said.

An ITBP spokesperson said a team of about 30 stress counsellors is working under the command of senior psychiatrist Dr Prashant Mishra at the cen-

tre. "These counsellors also provide food and other essentials to those patients who cannot leave their beds, he said.

"The SPCC is providing uninterrupted oxygen to the patients and treating them with all possible medical aid," he added.

For about two weeks, the facility funded and administered by the Delhi government faced lack of medical oxygen, following which it was not able to take full capacity admissions. The Union government had entrusted the ITBP medical wing, its doctors and paramedical staff to run the centre as they did the same last year when coronavirus cases peaked very fast. The centre was again opened as the COVID-19 wave got more ferocious this time with an increased number of infected people requiring medical oxygen support while many required ICU and ventilator aid.

According to official data, the centre has seen a total of 1,089 admissions, 648 discharges and 84 deaths till now.

## Delhi records 13,287 fresh Covid cases, 300 deaths

SNS & PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The national capital today reported 13,287 new coronavirus cases and 300 more fatalities,

while the positivity rate came down to 17.03 per cent, the lowest in nearly a month, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The fresh infections were detected from 78,035 tests, including 63,315 RTPCR/CBNAAT/True Nat tests, the health bulletin said.

During the last 24 hours, 14,071 patients recovered from the infection in the city.

There were currently 82,725 active cases, down from 83,809 the previous day, and 49,974 of them were under home isolation.

The cumulative tally of Delhi's coronavirus cases rose to 13,61,986 while the death toll mounted to 20,310, the bulletin stated. Over 12.58 lakh people have recovered from Covid in the city so far.

Of the 23,202 hospital beds for

coronavirus patients in the city, 4,469 were vacant, the bulletin claimed.

Delhi had reported 12,481 Covid cases yesterday, 12,651 on Monday, 13,336 on Sunday, 17,364 on Saturday, 19,832 on Friday, and 19,133 last Thursday, according to official figures.

Today's positivity rate is the lowest since 14 April

TMC MP KALYAN BANDYOPADHYAY  
ON GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO AREAS HIT BY POST-POLL VIOLENCE

# More Pb ministers seek action against Sidhu

Chorus grows in Punjab Cong dispensation for disciplinary action by party high command against dissident MLA Navjot Sidhu for publicly attacking CM Capt Amarinder ahead of Assembly polls

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 12 MAY

**W**ith Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu attacking his own government in Punjab alleging the state was not being run by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh but by the "Badals" ~ leaders of the Opposition Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) ~ more state Cabinet ministers on Wednesday urged the Congress high command to take strict disciplinary action against the dissident party MLA.

While on Monday three Cabinet ministers, including Brahm Mohindra, Sunder Sham Arora and Sadhu Singh Dharamsot, had criticised Sidhu's actions and open criticism of Chief Minister Captain Amarinder, four more ministers have now joined the chorus for strong disciplinary action by the party high command against cricketer-turned-politician Sidhu.

Sidhu's provocative and targeted attacks on Captain Amarinder over the past several days were an "invitation for disaster" for the Congress, said ministers ~ Balbir Sidhu, Vijay Inder Singh, Bharat Bhushan Ashu and Gurpreet Singh Kangar ~ not ruling out an alleged collusion between Sidhu and state opposition par-



ties, such as the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) or the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

It was quite possible, they alleged, that Sidhu's targeted attacks on the CM were instigated by the AAP or BJP leaders to create problems in the Punjab Congress to further their electoral agenda in the state.

In a hard-hitting joint statement two days after three of their colleagues had also launched a counter-offensive against Sidhu, these four ministers said the Congress MLAs' verbal assaults on Capt Amarinder on sacrilege and other issues amounted to open rebellion against the

party. Terming Sidhu's "blatant defiance" as an act of "total indiscipline", the ministers said such anti-party activities cannot be tolerated by any political establishment, and more so in a state headed for elections.

"He should be immediately suspended, if not expelled, as his continued presence in

Punjab Congress was creating a mess in the party's state unit and diverting its attention from the more important task of gearing up for the polls," they stated.

"Sidhu is nothing but a trouble-maker whose contribution to the Congress and the state government in Punjab



in all these years has been virtually nil," the ministers said, questioning the rationale behind allowing him to continue in the Congress at a time when the party was preparing for the coming Assembly elections in Punjab and the state government was battling an unprecedented Covid crisis.

Citing Capt Amarinder's open challenge to Sidhu to contest against him from Patiala instead of raving and ranting against him publicly, the ministers said the MLA should quit the Congress and pit his self-proclaimed might against that of the CM if he really believed in his own political prowess.

# HP Cong calls for using AIIMS Bilaspur for Covid patients

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 12 MAY

Himachal Pradesh Congress chief Kuldeep Singh Rathore on Wednesday called on the state government to utilize AIIMS Bilaspur premises as Covid care centre and said the services of doctors and OPD building can be used to treat patients.

Rathore while addressing a virtual meeting with Bilaspur district Congress unit office bearers, said the people of the district were facing inconvenience as district hospital and Ghumarwin hospital had been converted into Covid care centres.

"Congress workers should provide medical assistance as well as food to people affected by the pandemic and work as per guidelines of the party leadership," he said, while directing them to submit daily report to state headquarters.

The record number of Covid cases in the state had become a cause of concern for all and the lacklustre attitude of the state government on guidelines to check the spread of viral disease had further worsened the situation in Himachal.

# HP to start Covid vaccination for 18-44 age group soon

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 12 MAY

Sons who have registered themselves in the COWIN portal to schedule their appointment on the given vaccination centres. Without registration and scheduled appointment, no person in this category will be vaccinated and everyone should keep this in mind to avoid any inconvenience.

Jindal stated that the state government had allowed private hospitals/labs to conduct RT-PCR tests now as well and had fixed the rates for these tests.

"The private labs/hospitals will charge Rs 500 for samples collected at their facilities or designated collection centres while a rate of Rs 750 has been fixed for samples collected through home visits."

However, these private health facilities will have to follow guidelines issued for sample collection, transport, testing (including the bio-safety precautions) and biomedical waste management," he added.

The vaccines will be supplied to Himachal from the government store at Karnal in Haryana, he said.

He further stated that the vaccination of the people from 18-44 years of age will be started as soon as the vaccines are distributed to the districts, the sessions will be visible in the COWIN portal.

The NHM mission director appealed to all eligible persons to get themselves vaccinated as it will not only prove instrumental in creating goodwill but would also help in vaccinating maximum people in the state.

He said that this was the moral responsibility of every citizen of the civilised society to help the state government in checking the spread of this virus. "The panchayats must identify people in distress in various villages of the state so that they could be provided shelter, food and any other requirements during this hour of crisis."

For the elected representatives of the PRIs must extend all possible help to them and also inform the district administration so that they could be provided the required assistance," he stated.

He added the second wave of Covid pandemic was far more lethal and was a matter of concern for all of us.

The state government is creating additional bed capacity to meet the requirement and there is no dearth of medicines, oxygen and other logistics required to ensure proper treatment of Covid-19 patients," the CM added.

# HC pulls up Delhi govt for not fully operationalising 1,241-bed Hosp

PTI  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday pulled up the Delhi government for not yet fully operationalising its 1,241 bedded Indira Gandhi Hospital, which presently has only 80 beds available that too for non-serious COVID patients, saying the state should learn from the "bitter experience" of the people during the present onslaught of the second wave of the pandemic.

A bench of Justices Vinod Sanghi and Rekha Palli said that had the Delhi government taken up the completion of the hospital as a pressing issue, it would have been up and running by now.

"If a third wave comes, as many experts are warning it might, and your facility is not up and running (to full capacity), then again we would be back to this situation," it said after senior advocate Rahul Mehra said completion of the hospital was not a pressing issue as around 4,500 beds were available in the national capital at present.

He said that in view of the availability of such a large number of beds, there was no "grave urgency" to complete the operationalisation of the hospital.

The bench said that according to the Delhi government the situation regarding availability of beds may have

improved, but the court cannot forget the situation which existed just a couple of days ago when serious COVID-19 patients in need of oxygen supported and ICU beds, ventilators and medicines were running from pillar to post to get admitted in a hospital and many of whom succumbed to the disease without getting the chance to be treated.

The court further said that the experts were of the view that a larger third wave would come and therefore, the state has to "use its resources to the hilt" to complete ongoing healthcare projects and make them operational at the earliest, "lest we are faced with the same situation where we run out of hospital beds and infrastructure."

The bench said that since the state has "heavily invested" in the project for the benefit of the citizens, "there is no reason why the state should not complete the project".

The court observed that the project appeared to have been not completed due to "lethargy of the state".

To this, Mehra said there has been no lethargy on the part of the state and in fact the central government was not allocating beds for the national capital as it had promised.

The central government was not being put to terms, he told the bench which said he was taking the matter "on a tangent".

The court directed the

# HP CM urges PRIs to help Covid patients under home isolation

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 12 MAY

state to file an affidavit giving the time lines that were initially set for completion of the hospital, the reason for not completing it within that and the subsequent new time frame set for finishing the project.

The bench said the time lines should be realistic and once placed before it, "should be adhered to".

The court said the affidavit be filed within 10 days and listed the matter for hearing on May 24.

"This is urgent. Please understand. We all became complacent after the first wave and when things eased up. That should not happen," the court said and added that the infrastructure and equipment at the temporary medical establishments set up by it can be utilised in the hospitals once the temporary units are not required.

The directions from the court came after it was informed that only 80 beds were operational in the Indira Gandhi Hospital and of that only 8 were in occupation.

The court was also told there was no piped oxygen, ICU beds or ventilators available at the hospital.

Thakur stated that the PRIs

must also keep a strict check of people coming to the villages from outside the state so that they could be motivated to remain in home quarantine.

The district administration must also be informed regarding people coming from outside and also about the event in which large gatherings were expected.

He further stated that they

must also come forward to provide a helping hand for creation of the Covid-19 patients.

Besides, proper protocol must be followed while cremation of the body of the deceased due to Covid-19 and people must also be motivated to go for vaccination.

He also urged to provide support and assistance to the

## Adopt safety measures to stay safe from Covid -19



### Follow these suggestions while taking care of home isolated Corona Patients



Caregiver should wear a triple layer medical mask

Immediately change mask if it's wet or dirty

Discard the mask after use properly in a dustbin with lid

Avoid touching own face, nose or mouth



Clean hands properly after coming in contact with patient

Wash hands before and after preparing the food

Use disposable gloves while taking care of patient

Perform hand hygiene before and after removing gloves



Do not share utensils, food, drinks, towel, bed sheet and dishes etc. used by the patient

Do not touch anything used by patient

Helpline For Assistance Regarding Covid-19

8558893911

(for Entire State)

& 1075

(Except Gurugram & Faridabad)

Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

www.prharyana.gov.in @Cmohry @DiprHaryana

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

It is notified for the information of passengers that Railways have decided to withdraw the stoppage from Dimapur station and to provide temporary alternate stoppage at other stations on temporary basis upto 15.05.2021 instead of till further advice. The details are given below:-

Train No. & Name	Alternative Stoppage	Arr.	Dep.
05909 Dibrugarh - Lalganj Jn. (Via Barabanki & Lucknow) Special Express	Bokajan Station	15:42	15:44
05910 Lalganj Jn.- Dibrugarh (Via Lucknow & Barabanki) Special Express	Bokajan Station	08:50	08:52
05933 New Tinsukia Jn. - Amritsar Special Express	Bokajan Station	13:41	13:43
05934 Amritsar - New Tinsukia Jn. Special Express	Bokajan Station	21:25	21:27
02503 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Express Special	Bokajan Station	00:04	00:06
02504 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express Special	Diphu Station	01:17	01:19
02423 Dibrugarh - New Delhi Rajdhani Express Special	Diphu Station	23:03	23:05
02424 New Delhi - Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express Special	Bokajan Station	00:54	00:56
	Diphu Station	01:38	01:40
	Diphu Station	02:39	02:41
	Bokajan Station	00:07	00:09
	Bokajan Station	01:22	01:24

Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

For any kind information passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139  
Visit RailMadad website : [www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in) & download Railmadad app.

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**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Government celebrated 'Tika Utsav' but made no arrangements to provide vaccines.

SLAMMING GOVT SHARING GRAPHICS COMPARING NUMBER OF VACCINATIONS ON 12 APRIL AND 9 MAY

**CONGRESS LEADER PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA**

**The Statesman**  
NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 13 MAY 2021

**04**

**THUMBNAILS**



A waterlogged Ram Charan Sett road in Howrah on Wednesday.  
BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

**Paddy damage:** Unseasonal rain for a week has caused substantial damage to Boro paddy just ahead of harvesting across Burdwan (East) - the district regarded as the rice bowl of Bengal. "Mostly the paddy crop harvested manually but couldn't be shifted to the courtyard by the farmers suffered the worst and there's a bleak possibility of recovery of food-grain value from the fallen sticks," said Jagannath Chatterjee, Deputy Director, Agriculture for Burdwan (East). He added: "Burdwan (east) cultivated 36,000 hectares of Boro paddy this year of which the cultivation on 11,500 hectares has been washed away by unseasonal rain. We have gathered reports from the most affected blocks today." Worst-hit areas recorded 40 to 42 mm single-day rainfall yesterday, officials said. SNS

## Visit to turbulent area flouts norms: WBCM to Guv

Miss Banerjee referred to 'manual' which says Guv's visit is finalised after govt orders

**SNS & PTI**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

**A** head of Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar's visit to Cooch Behar, chief minister Mamata Banerjee wrote to him claiming that his visit violates the long-standing norms and protocols.

"I find from social media that you are unilaterally proceeding to Cooch Behar district on May 13 and, sadly, I find that to be violative of the long-standing norms as evolved over several decades."

**MAMATA BANERJEE**  
CHIEF MINISTER

strict on Thursday.

"Governor ... will be leaving Kolkata by BSF Helicopter on May 13 to visit post poll unprecedented violence affected areas @MamataOfficial #Sitalkuchi and other places in Cooch Behar to connect with sufferers," he tweeted.

She referred to the 'Manual of Protocol and Ceremonials' of the home department of the state government, which says that visits of governors are finalised by the secretary of the governor after obtaining the orders of the government.

Alleging that Dhankhar has been directly communicating with government officers and dictating them though she had requested him against it, Miss Banerjee said that the governor is "steadily ignoring" this advice.

Dhankhar today said he will visit areas affected by post-poll violence in Cooch Behar dis-

at influencing the judiciary as a case is being heard in Calcutta High Court," he said.

State minister Rabindranath Ghosh, who hails from the north Bengal district, said "Dhankhar is coming to disrupt the peaceful situation in Cooch Behar."

Countering TMC charges, BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya wondered why would TMC object if the governor visits a place rocked by political violence and he wants to be on the side of the affected people.

"They (TMC) have got the mandate of people. Then why are they upset if the governor of the state wants to meet the people? Are the injured and affected in political violence not residents of Bengal?" he asked.

**Dhankhar to visit Assam camps tomorrow:** Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday said that he will visit camps in Assam where some people from West Bengal have reportedly taken refuge due to post poll violence.

Dhankhar will travel to Assam on Friday after his visit to post poll violence affected areas in Cooch Behar on Thursday, he said in a tweet.

On Friday Dhankhar will visit "Ranapali & Srirampur camps in Assam where due to post poll retributive violence @MamataOfficial some people of WB had taken refuge for safety."

### SC Commission chairman to visit Bengal

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Taking serious note of complaints regarding atrocities being committed on the Dalits in West Bengal, the Chairman of National Commission for Scheduled Castes Vijay Sampla left for a two-day visit to West Bengal.

He will be visiting the state on 13 and 14 May.

He will be visiting the complainant villages where he will meet the victims and take a stock of the spot where incidences have occurred.

As per press statement released by the commission, on 13 May, he will be visiting village Nabagram and village Balacaba, both in East Burdwan district.

Similarly on 14 May he will be visiting Sarisa village under South 24 Parganas district, where he will listen to the first-hand account of victims.

On the evening of the same day, he has called a meeting of West Bengal's Chief Secretary and DGP to ensure justice to schedule caste victims.

SNS



In the 2021 Bengal Assembly elections, the BJP had fielded four Lok Sabha MPs including Sarkar and Pramanik. The other two are Locket Chatterjee and Babul Supriyo. Both Chatterjee and Supriyo have lost, and will therefore, continue as MPs.

A fifth nominee, Swapan Dasgupta who was a member of the Rajya Sabha, had resigned before filing his nomination from the Tarakeswar seat. Dasgupta lost the Assembly polls too.

Bengal BJP leaders on Tuesday indicated that the party's Parliamentary board was in favour of retaining the two Lok Sabha seats of Ranaghat and Cooch Behar.

## Two BJP MLAs quit, to retain Lok Sabha seats

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

Cooch Behar MP Nisith Pramanik and Ranaghat MP Jagannath Sarkar who had won the Assembly elections from Dinhata and Santipur, respectively, resigned today, retaining their MP seats.

The BJP's strength in the Assembly now comes down from 77 to 75 and resignation of the two MLAs implies by-elections in the vacant seats within six months.

The two leaders hadn't taken their oath of office and secrecy with others during the ceremony held last week, triggering speculations that they might prefer being Lok Sabha MPs to MLAs.

While Sarkar won the seat with a handsome margin of 15,878 votes over his nearest rival from TMC Ajoy De, Pramanik managed to win the seats with a wafer-thin margin of 57 votes defeating

## Didi congratulates TMC MLAs, their families

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee today wrote to her all new MLAs congratulating them and their family members for their astounding victory in the recently concluded Assembly polls.

In that letter, she urged the newly elected MLAs to stand



constituencies. Meanwhile, Aroop Biswas, state sports and youth affairs minister told the reporters all stadium would be converted into safe homes to combat the surge of Covid-19 pandemic. He said these homes will have oxygen facilities and beds. Those who have difficulties to stay at home and not serious to be hospitalised can be shifted to these safe homes.

## 'Power theft' led to youth's death, tech panel to probe: Hakim

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

With yet another case of electrocution where the dead body of a man was found floating near Raj Bhavan, yesterday, the chairman of the KMC board, Firhad Hakim today said it was power theft that led to this tragedy and ordered the formation of a technical committee comprising Kolkata Police and the CESC to crack down on the offenders.

Locals were horrified when they noticed the body of a 25-year-old youth at the Raj Bhavan area.

The deceased, floating after the torrential rain in the afternoon that continued till evening, was later identified as Rishab Mondal.

An autopsy was conducted at the SSKM hospital and report confirmed that the cause of death was electrocution.

A group of forensic experts today visited the spot where after investigation they concluded that the mishap was caused due to a snapped live wire connected to the feed box of a lampost.

The reason for a snapped wire lying on the ground has been attributed to power theft.

The electrocution was caused due to what being termed as a "ground fault" where a live wire comes in contact with a ground.

It was deduced that the man was electrocuted as soon as he walked into the area around that particular lampost.

## Midnapore: Mamata's six ministers to end Adhikaris' sway

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

To witter the Adhikari's clout which has posed the most serious challenge to Trinamul Congress hegemony in Midnapore, chief minister Mamata Banerjee has picked six ministers from this district.

Ostensibly Midnapore was the Adhikari's fiefdom but six TMC MLAs have battled successfully against the myth.

Trashing all speculation of a rout, TMC candidates won nine out of 16 seats in Midnapore (east) and 13 out of 15 seats in Midnapore (west).

It was a pyrrhic victory for Suvedu Adhikari, now the Leader of the Opposition,

## Covid surge: HS board exams uncertain

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY

After the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBSE), there is uncertainty over the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) exams.

If the Madhyamik exams are deferred or cancelled, the HS exams are also likely to be affected, officials of the WBCHSE informed today.

The WBSE informed the school education department of the state that it is not possible to hold the Madhyamik exams which are scheduled to be held from 1 June to 10 June.

The board has also sought the state government's decision as to whether the Mad-

hyamik exams will be deferred or cancelled. Around 10 lakh candidates are supposed to appear for the exam this year.

According to sources in the board, suspension of local train services, lesser numbers of metros and fewer buses along with 50 per cent of the total strength of officials, could be problematic for teachers and students during the exams.

A meeting between the officials of the state government and the board was held but a final decision could not be taken.

After the WBSE, the officials of the higher secondary board informed about the uncertainties over the exams, scheduled from 15 June this year. "The decision on high-

er secondary exams to some extent depends on the final call taken by the authorities to conduct the secondary exams," said Mahua Das, president of WBCHSE.

"If Madhyamik exams are deferred or scrapped, the higher secondary examinations will also be postponed or cancelled. To us, the lives of teachers, students and other people concerned with the conducting exams, are a priority at this point of time," she added.

About 8.5 lakh students were to sit for the higher secondary board exams in the state. According to the president of the board, whenever the exam is held, the present model of conducting it at the school will be followed.

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**

HOOGHLY, 12 MAY

Taking a serious note of the attack on the former Bansberia vice-chairman Aditya Neogi in which the assailants fired two rounds at Neogi, one of the bullets seriously injured his rear, the state party leadership prompt-

ly took a stern decision to bring back normalcy and initiate investigation against the prime suspect.

Neogi from his hospital bed narrated the entire sequence of the incident and said that he suspected Sona Sil, husband of Arigita Sil, the Bansberia civic body admin-

istrator to be behind the attack.

Sona was previously suspended from the ruling party for his alleged anti-party activities, however according to the party sources his activities continues unabated.

The department of urban development and municipal affairs issued a notification on

consider taking additional measures for these two hotspots.

According to the state health department, of the 1,249 Covid deaths recorded in the state since 1 May, North 24 Parganas and Kolkata alone account for as many as 674 fatalities.

While Kolkata reported 313

deaths, the adjacent North 24 Parganas district recorded a whopping 361 deaths in the last 11 days. The total number of deaths in these two districts is 51.9 per cent of the state's toll.

According to the state health department officials, while Chief minister Mamata Banerjee has

already announced a series of measures to control the spread of the virus, the reality is something different.

On 2 May, the state had reported 92 deaths, which climbed to 107 on 4 May and kept increasing gradually from then onwards.

TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited invites tenders (part bidding) from eligible vendors for the following packages:

1) **TPWODL/SD/O/SER/010 - Rate Contract for Enforcement Activities**

Interested bidders to submit Tender Participation Fee and Authorization Letter through email before 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 2021, 1500Hrs, after which link from e-Tender system shall be shared.

**Corrigendum to Following Tender is being Issued:**

2) **TPWODL/MK/SER/003 - Rate Contract for 11 KV & 1.1KV associated work (Construction / augmentation).**

3) **TPWODL/MK/SER/005 - Rate Contract for 33 KV associated work (Construction/augmentation)**

4) **TPWODL/PN/SU/006 - SCADA/ADMS system at TPWODL.**

Date for submission of Tender Participation Fee and Authorization Letter is extended till 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021, 1500 Hrs.

For detailed tender documents of all tenders mentioned above, please visit Tender section on website [www.tpwwesternodisha.com](http://www.tpwwesternodisha.com). Further details for participating in tender is given in the tender document.

All future correspondence regarding the tender, bid submission, bid submission date extension etc. will happen with participating bidders only through E-Tender system.

Sd/- **Chief Contracts and Stores**

## City, N. 24-Pgns account for over half of Bengal's Covid deaths

KOLKATA, 12 MAY

Two districts in West Bengal - Kolkata and North 24 Parganas have cumulatively reported more than 50 percent of the total deaths caused by Covid-19 in the state since 1 May, prompting the state government to

consider taking additional measures for these two hotspots.

According to the state health department, of the 1,249 Covid deaths recorded in the state since 1 May, North 24 Parganas and Kolkata alone account for as many as 674 fatalities.

While Kolkata reported 313

deaths, the adjacent North 24 Parganas district recorded a whopping 361 deaths in the last 11 days. The total number of deaths in these two districts is 51.9 per cent of the state's toll.

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already announced a series of measures to control the spread of the virus, the reality is something different.

On 2 May, the state had reported 92 deaths, which climbed to 107 on 4 May and kept increasing gradually from then onwards.

Three companies of Mangalore, Mumbai and Kolkata have expressed interest to purchase the know-how of the technology of the low-cost oxygen concentrator machine developed by NIT Durgapur, sources said. During the first wave of Covid in the country, NIT Dur-

gapur scientists have successfully developed the artificial breathing units-AMBU which automatically pumps oxygen to patients. The machine has been a success even in primary health care.

There has been a tremendous crisis of LMO in the country as the demand has touched the peak due to increase in number of Covid-19 patients.



I salute the nurses and it is the duty of everyone in other departments to work in unison so that Puducherry will become Covid-free and a fatality-free UT

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF PUDUCHERRY TAMILISAI SOUNDARARAJAN  
FELICITATING NURSES ON INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

## THUMBNAILS



A man rides his cycle on Patiala-Chandigarh road during rainfall on Wednesday. IANS

**Homen Borgohain dies:** Eminent Assamese litterateur and journalist Homen Borgohain (89) died at a hospital in Guwahati on Wednesday, after post-Covid complications, doctors said. He is survived by two sons. He has been separated from his wife Nirupama Borgohain, also a noted litterateur and journalist, for several years. PTI

**PB ex-min dies of cancer:** Senior Congress leader and former Punjab minister Inderjit Singh Zira (63) died of cancer on Wednesday at a private hospital in Mohali. He is survived by his wife and two sons. His elder son, Kulbir Singh Zira, is a Congress MLA from Zira assembly constituency of the state. PTI

**Ex-CBI officer passes away:** Former CBI officer K Ragothaman (76), who was the Chief Investigating Officer in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, died in Chennai, on Wednesday, police and hospital sources said. He was admitted to a private hospital in Chennai last week for Covid treatment and breathed his last on Wednesday morning. PTI

**Cabinet: ITBP land to be used for U'khand ropeway project**

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The Union Cabinet today approved transfer of 1500 square meters of land belonging to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police at Mussoorie to the State Government of Uttarakhand for its 'Aerial Passenger Ropeway System' project between Dehradun and Mussoorie. The Cabinet took the decision at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The proposed ropeway will be a mono-cable ropeway of 5580 meters length under a Public Private Partnership mode project between Purkul Gaon, Dehradun (Lower Terminal Station) and Library, Mussoorie (Upper Terminal Station).

It will be constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 285 crore with a carrying capacity of 1000 persons per hour per direction. This will considerably reduce the traffic flow on road from Dehradun to Mussoorie. The MHA said the ropeway will generate direct employment of 350 and indirect employment of more than 1500 people. SNS

# Save India from human catastrophe: Opp to PM

In a joint letter to PM 12 Opp party leaders ask him to start free vaccination drive

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Asserting their renewed strength after the recent Assembly elections, Opposition parties today asked the Government to take immediate steps to control the pandemic which has assumed "dimensions of a human catastrophe" in the country.

In a joint letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, 12 major Opposition including the Congress, DMK, Trinamul Congress and the CPI (M) asked him to begin a free, universal mass vaccination campaign across the country immediately.

They said: "We have repeatedly in the past drawn your attention, independently and jointly, to the various measures that are absolutely imperative for the Central government to undertake and implement."

"Unfortunately, your government has either ignored or refused all these suggestions. This only compounded the situation to reach such an apocalyptic human tragedy," they said. "Without going into all the acts of commission and omission by the Central government that have brought the country to such a tragic pass," the Opposition leaders said the Government must procure vaccines centrally from all

available sources. Spend budgetary allocation of Rs. 35,000 crores for the vaccines and asked the PM to "stop Central Vista construction," the leaders said.

They urged Modi to give all jobless at least Rs 6000 per month and begin free distribution of foodgrains to the needy. They even demanded: "Repeal farm laws to protect lakhs of our

annadatas becoming victims of the pandemic." The joint letter was signed by Sonia Gandhi (INC), H D Deve Gowda (JD-S), Sharad Pawar (NCP), Uddhav Thackeray (SS), Mamata Banerjee (TMC), M K Stalin (DMK), Hemant Soren (JMM), Farooq Abdullah (JKP), Akhilesh Yadav (SP), Tejaswi Yadav (RJD), D Raja (CPI) and Sitaram Yechury (CPI-M).

## TAKING PLEDGE



Nurses take oath on the occasion of International Nurses Day, in Thane on Wednesday. PM Narendra Modi praised nursing staff, saying their commitment towards a healthy India is exemplary. In Jammu, Lt-Gen YK Joshi, Army Commander, Northern Command, appreciated the Military Nursing Service officers for their relentless service during the pandemic. IANS

## BJP working out plans for change!

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

BENGALURU, 12 MAY

The BJP's central leadership appears to have started preparing the ground for a change in the state. This is evident by the spurt in political activity in the last one week, going by party insiders here.

It started first with the meeting that state home minister, Basavaraj Bommai had with union home minister, Amit Shah, in Delhi last week.

Importantly, he was accompanied by chief minister, B S Yeddyurappa's son and one of the party's vice-presidents in Karnataka, B S Vijayendra, according to BJP sources in Delhi.

Ostensibly, the meeting was to discuss ways and means of handling the raging Covid pandemic in the state and the availability of oxygen, along with the proposed cabinet expansion, something people here take with a pinch of salt.

Secondly, despite his

acquired position, Vijayendra does not have any hold in the party, other than being Yeddyurappa's son. Not surprising, therefore, to see that his presence in Delhi did fuel speculation.

If this was not enough, much to the surprise of party leaders here, B L Santosh, BJP's general secretary, organisation, landed in the city yesterday. He held separate meetings with Yeddyurappa and his ministers, including deputy chief minister, C N Aswath Narayan, whose name has been cropping up as BSY's successor.

Despite the inevitability of a change at the state level, therefore, what has surprised the party leaders and workers is the sudden activity now. Nobody wants a change now, for obvious reasons. All they hope is for the government to finish its job of tackling the Covid pandemic effectively, including vaccination of the people.

A senior BJP functionary, however, told The Statesman, that the central leadership appears to be working out plans for the change, as and when it happens.

In this context he also quoted party's state unit president, Navin Kateel as saying that under the present environment and the pandemic, nobody can think of any change.

Accordingly, speculation is rife over the possible successor. For now Ashwath Narayan's name appears to be gaining ground considering that the BJP now wants to woo his community, the Vokkaligas. Others in the race include Basavaraj Bommai, a Lingayat, notwithstanding his denials to the contrary yesterday.

This apart, the central leadership would need to contend with Yeddyurappa himself. Willy nilly, even if he agrees to give up the chief minister's post, he is unlikely to do so without ensuring that Vijayendra gets accommodated suitably in the party.

## Covid casts shadow over Ramadan mood

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The shadows over Ramzan are darker this time and the despair deeper, the scramble for oxygen, hospital beds and even a decent burial for their loved ones eclipsing the gloom that marked the fasting month last year. With no large congregations in mosques, no iftar parties and no late night shopping, it was said, 2020 Ramzan was like no other in living memory. But as a second, deadlier Covid wave ravages large parts of the country, Ramzan 2021 has rewritten even that pandemic norm.

Almost every family across the country is affected by the pandemic in one way or another with many losing friends and family members and several others battling the dreaded virus. "Ramzan is a time for family and friends, but this year I have lost many of



my near and dear ones and many in the family have been infected by the virus. This has been a tough month and I spent it just praying to Allah that this deadly virus goes away from our lives," said Tanvir Parvez, a lawyer from Ghaziabad.

The festivities, the cheer, the morning sehri' at food joints that underscored

Ramzan and Eid for not just devout Muslims but for others as well have receded like a distant dream for those like Parvez. Who would have thought that instead of dwelling on the spread laid out across virtually every dining table in a Muslim household at 'iftar', families this Ramzan would be sweating over arranging oxygen cylinders, oxygen

concentrators, hospital beds and plasma or a burial spot for friends and family hit by the deadly virus. 'Iftar is such an amazing time when we pray to God, have a wholesome meal with the family and count our blessings. But it has not been so this time where we are daily dealing with some bad news or another, Parvez said as India on Wednesday again reported more 4,000 Covid deaths.

As the holy month of Ramzan nears its end with Eid likely to be celebrated on May 13 or 14 in India, depending on the sighting of the moon, Covid fears hang like a cloud over the festivities.

"This year, the fasting month went by running around dealing with health emergencies, deaths and funerals for relatives and friends," said Qazi Rafat Masood, an agriculturist from Uttar Pradesh's Nagina district.

I salute the nurses and it is the duty of everyone in other departments to work in unison so that Puducherry will become Covid-free and a fatality-free UT

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF PUDUCHERRY TAMILISAI SOUNDARARAJAN  
FELICITATING NURSES ON INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 13 MAY 2021

05

## Stalin on poll promise mission

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHENNAI, 12 MAY 2021

Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin is on mission to fulfil his poll promises and also to resolve some of the issues he and his party had raised during the AIADMK regime.

As part of this, he announced incentives for medical professionals in the government sectors who are on the frontline fighting the second wave of the pandemic. He also announced solatium to the families of the doctors who died during Corona pandemic. Stalin announced that healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses and other support staff, will be given incentives for three months for their work.

Chief minister announced a compensation of Rs 25 lakh each to the kin of the 43 doctors who lost their lives fighting Covid-19 in Tamil Nadu.

From April to June 2021, the government will offer Rs 30,000 each to doctors treating Covid-19 patients, Rs 20,000 each to nurses and Rs 15,000 each to other workers in Covid-19 wards. Additionally, Rs 20,000 will also be given as incentives to PG students (house surgeons) and

trainee doctors to motivate them.

In a statement, Stalin said, "Doctors, nurses and other medical staffs have been battling against covid for the past one year. A few doctors who were working on the field have lost their lives. This government understands that their loss cannot be compensated, however as a small gesture Rs 35 lakh each will be given to the family members of the 43 doctors."

The death of these doctors were a contentious issue during the AIADMK regime when DMK youth leader Udhayanithi Stalin tweeted about the it.

In August 2020, the Indian Medical Association had also issued an official statement that 43 doctors had died in Tamil Nadu treating Covid patients. However, the AIADMK government and then health minister C Vijayabaskar had dismissed this data.

Meanwhile, to increase oxygen support capacity for patients in the second wave, the government is procuring oxygen concentrators from countries such as Singapore and China.

In Chennai, the Greater Chennai Corporation will set

up 100-bed centres in three regions to admit patients who require oxygen support.

Patients who have oxygen saturation levels of 90-92 and need oxygen support will be admitted here.

Chennai is also expected to receive 3,500 oxygen concentrators. Oxygen concentrators have been allocated to the city's big hospitals dedicated to Covid care including Stanley, Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital and other centres.

In the livelihood issue, the government, following the discussions held with the representatives of various industries on 9 May, announced many concessions for the MSME sector.

Rs 280 cr allocated towards Investment Subsidy for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) during the current financial year. 60% (Rs 168 cr) of it will be released immediately to all eligible MSME sector that are yet to get capital subsidy. One Lakh employees in SIDCO complexes and MSME sector who are above the age of 45 will get free Covid-19 vaccination. About 5% interest subsidy received under CGTMSE and Technology Upgradation Scheme will be disbursed to MSME units.

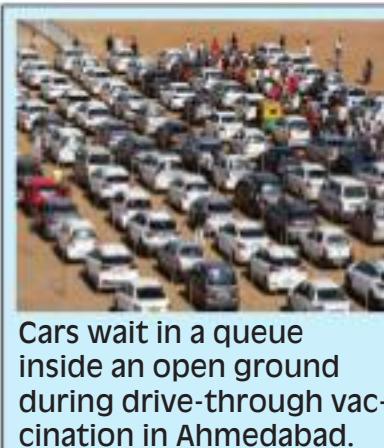
## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age : Around 30 years, Height : 5'8", Build : Medium, wearing green colour shirt, black colour jeans pant and black colour belt, was found dead floating in Kondli canal, near Kheda Devta Mandir, Dallupura, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 13-A dated 05.05.2021 has been lodged at P.S. New Ashok Nagar, Delhi. The deadbody has been preserved for identification in the mortuary of Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO : P.S. New Ashok Nagar, Delhi  
Tel. No. : 011-22610954, 8607788667  
DP/508/ED/21



Cars wait in a queue inside an open ground during drive-through vaccination in Ahmedabad.

**Azam Khan stable:** The condition of senior Samajwadi Party leader and Rampur MP Mohammad Azam Khan, admitted to a private facility in Lucknow, is stable but the next 72 hours will be "critical", the hospital treating him said on Wednesday. Khan and his son Abdullah were shifted to Medanta hospital for treatment. PTI

**Video Conferencing facility in ICU:** Government hospitals in six districts Meerut division will be equipped with video calling facility for the families of critical patients getting treatment in ICU. This initiative would be helpful for the family members of the patients who are undergoing treatment in ICU. sns

**500 more ICU beds set up at Ramlila Maidan:** Amid the second wave of pandemic assuming dangerous proportions, an additional 500 ICU bed facility is being set up at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi in front of the Lok Nayak Jaya Prakash Narayan Hospital which will be operational from Thursday onwards. PTI

**More restrictions in Assam:** The Assam government ordered to shut all offices, religious places and weekly markets for 15 days in urban and semi-urban areas of the state, besides banning the movement of people from 2 pm to 5 am in the wake of the rising cases. PTI

**Heavy rains likely in Kerala:** Kerala is likely to receive heavy rains this week, the weather department has predicted, prompting authorities to sound heavy to very heavy rain alerts in a few districts. The IMD said a low pressure is likely to form in the south eastern part of Arabian sea on 14 May.

Heavy rains and strong winds have been predicted in Kerala and Lakshadweep for the next five days. These will be very rough. Owing to the rough weather condition, the Kerala government has requested everyone to follow safety guidelines. PTI

**Eid ul-Fitr**

DELHI POLICE SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

**This Year Offer Namaz from Home**

**Our Request**

**Maintain Social Distancing**

**Avoid Personal Greetings or Hugs**

**Avoid Social Gatherings & Wear Mask**

**IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORONAVIRUS NO GATHERING ALLOWED AT RELIGIOUS PLACES/ PUBLIC PLACES/ GROUNDS/ PARKS ETC.**

**Follow Latest DDMA Guidelines & Have a Safe Eid**

Email to CP, Delhi at : cp.snsrivastava@delhipolice.nic.in | Write to CP, Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

FOR IMMEDIATE POLICE HELP CALL: 112 | TO SHARE INFORMATION CALL: 1090

## Worst violence

The violence is said to be the worst in years. With governance in limbo in Israel, the Middle East, explosive even in normal times, is in ferment yet again. The country's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has declared a state of emergency in the central city of Lod after rioting by Israeli Arabs. This is the first time since 1966 that the government has used emergency powers over an Arab community, a fact that reaffirms the magnitude of the conflict. Over the past couple of days, the confrontation between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants has intensified. At least 40 people had perished till Wednesday morning. The Palestinians said they fired hundreds of missiles at the Israeli capital of Tel Aviv after an Israeli air strike demolished the Hanadi Tower in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday. Hamas, the militant group that rules Gaza, said it had launched rockets at Tel Aviv and its suburbs in response to "the enemy's targeting of residential towers". Israel's military says it is targeting militants in Gaza in response to rocket attacks on Jerusalem and other areas. The fighting came after weeks of mounting tension that was stoked by violent confrontations between Israeli police and Palestinian protesters at a site in Jerusalem that is holy to both Muslims and Jews. The enormity of the current crisis in the Middle East has deepened in the closing stage of the month of Ramadan and on the eve of Eid, profound occasions both. The international community has reacted with remarkable promptitude, urging both sides to end the escalation. The UN's Middle East peace envoy, Tor Wennesland, said the crisis was "escalating towards a full-scale war". Protests by Israeli Arabs broke out in Lod, a city near Tel Aviv, and escalated to full-scale rioting, with protesters throwing rocks at police, who responded with stun grenades. The protests followed the funeral of an Israeli Arab man who died during unrest in the city a day earlier. There has also been unrest in other cities with large Israeli Arab populations, as well as in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The fighting between Israel and Hamas was triggered by days of escalating clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police at a holy hilltop compound in East Jerusalem. The site is revered by both Muslims, who call it the Haram al-Sharif (Noble Sanctuary), and Jews, for whom it is known as the Temple Mount. Hamas demanded that Israel remove police from there and the nearby predominantly Arab district of Sheikh Jarrah, where Palestinian families face eviction by Jewish settlers. Hamas launched rockets when its ultimatum went unheeded. Palestinian anger had been stoked by weeks of rising tension in East Jerusalem, inflamed by a series of confrontations with police since the start of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan in mid-April. The occasion is profound and the world must hope that peace returns.

## Breaking ranks

The unprecedented move earlier this week by a group of serving French soldiers of "warning" President Emmanuel Macron in an open letter published in the conservative magazine 'Valeurs Actuelles' that the "survival of France is at risk" because he has made "concessions" to Islamism, has expectedly raised a furore. The letter comes after a missive similar in tone and substance was published in the same magazine last month. This was signed by a handful of officers and some 20 serving and retired generals. It led the French Prime Minister to term it "an unacceptable interference in politics by the military" and France's Chief of Staff to assert that those behind it would face disciplinary action. While it is not clear how many people are behind the latest epistle, it is widely being conjectured that the number is significantly higher than those who signed the first letter and that they cut across all ranks. In contrast to the previous letter, the current open letter was also open for signatures to the general public.

The timing of the letters is significant as it marks, in the view of many observers, the beginning of a sotvoce campaign for next year's presidential poll where Mr Macron's main challenger is expected to be the right-wing leader Ms Marine Le Pen. The substance of the letters, which includes a dire prognosis of "civil war" and questions the very survival of France if the current regime's attitude towards Islamism doesn't change, is quite controversial. But the fact that it has self-admittedly been signed by a younger generation of French soldiers ~ the so-called "generation of fire" that has seen active service fighting Islamic radicals at home and abroad ~ makes it more incendiary. The signatories assert they "have offered their lives to destroy the Islamism to which you (Macron) have made concessions on our soil" and served in the security operation launched in France after a wave of Islamist terror attacks in 2015. They said that for some religious communities "France means nothing but an object of sarcasm, contempt or even hatred." All of this is grist to Ms Le Pen's mill as she outlines her poll campaign premised on promoting traditional "French values" which include a hard line towards religious ideologies that militate against them. President Macron, who has been trying to balance the need to accommodate the feelings and beliefs of the largest Muslim population in Europe with the state's commitment to, for lack of a better word, hard secularism, is understandably enraged at the intervention of an avowedly apolitical military in matters deeply political. That France is observing the bicentenary of the death of Napoleon Bonaparte this month ~ he died on 5 May 1821 ~ in the midst of the row is perhaps apposite because he is a symbol of greatness for the rightist and centre-right political forces in the country while his "greatness" is a subject of mirth for those on the Left and multiculturalist side of the debate who believe he destroyed the gains of the French Revolution.

# Lackluster Performance

Political parties could be persuaded to campaign virtually, and shun roadshows and rallies, at least in urban and semi-urban areas where such mediums are much in use and where intensity of Covid infections is also higher, mainly due to density of population. A properly developed portal could give voters the option of online voting, again in metros



The Assembly Election of West Bengal will go down in the annals of electoral history of the country as an event marked by tectonic shifts in the political landscape of the country. West Bengal stopped the juggernaut of the mighty electoral machinery of Bharatiya Janata Party which used its full vigour to capture power in the state. Political pundits continue to debate whether the outcome of the election is a severe blow to the alleged divisive politics and the technique of communal polarization followed by the challenger or a victory of the welfare measures, differently construed as dole politics, pursued by the incumbent. But the election held amidst an unprecedented health emergency will also be viewed by future analysts as one of missed opportunities as grossly inappropriate management of the electoral process by the Election Commission has already faced severe opprobrium from different corners.

The Election Commission has suffered from a crisis of credibility. Genesis of the problem, analysts believe, lies in the flawed system of appointment of Election Commissioners, who are appointed unilaterally by the government of the day.

The Law Commission's recommendation for formation of a collegium, consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Justice of India for conducting the process of appointment of Election Commissioners has fallen on deaf ears as successive governments, not willing to let go of their power of influencing the functions of the Commission, have avoided the issue of depoliticising the appointment of the Commissioners through a process of broad-based consultation.

Political observers have commented in recent times that on all those occasions when the present dispensation at the Centre wanted the Election Commissioners to bend, they have actually crawled. The unusual and unreasonable schedule of election charted by the Commission for West Bengal, conducted in eight phases and spread over five weeks, in the midst of a raging pandemic, despite West Bengal

being a smaller state than Tamil Nadu, which was also due to elect a new assembly but where the EC had mandated that all voters would vote on a single day, predictably generated doubts about the impartiality and professional integrity of the Commission.

It was perceived as a step to help star campaigners of the BJP to make repeated forays into the electoral battleground of Bengal. While granting that elections in West Bengal have always been bitterly contested, and often violent, the decision to hold elections in so many phases so as to facilitate the movement of central forces from one polling area to another, as claimed by EC, seemed spurious and unacceptable to most observers and political parties in the fray. After the Calcutta High Court sought an action taken report on measures the EC was adopting in the context of rapidly rising numbers of Covid infections in the state in the midst of the election process, the Commission ordered the cancellation of all mega rallies and roadshows for the last two phases of election, while at the same time rejecting the desperate appeal of doctors, epidemiologists and political parties to club the last phases, a measure viewed as too little and too late. EC's intransigence, finding endorsement again only from BJP came under scathing criticism from different quarters.

The Madras High Court severely castigated the EC for the surge in Covid-19 cases during the second wave of the pandemic, holding it "singularly" responsible for the spread of the viral disease as it failed to rein in large gatherings. The court called it the "the most irresponsible institution" and even said its officials may be booked under murder charges. It is even more distressing that instead of doing some serious introspection about where it went wrong, the EC approached the Supreme Court for a gag order on media reports about its indictment by the Court. Fortunately,

the Supreme Court declined the plea of the Commission, while observing that live reporting of court proceedings by the media is an extension of the freedom of speech and expression that the media possesses and is a cause of celebration rather than apprehension.

While it is true that the EC is not empowered to disqualify candidates who commit electoral malpractices, nor does it have the power to deregister any political party, appropriate changes in the People's Representation Act, 1951

are much needed for effectively addressing innumerable flaws in the electoral process. One has to admit that in the ultimate analysis, the quality of leadership defines the stature of an institution more than its procedural framework. The stellar performance of the country's first Election Commissioner Sukumar Sen, who had the guts to ask Prime Minister Nehru to be patient in matters of holding election so that the Commission could mobilise officials to prepare the country's first electoral roll with precision, elevated the stature of the country as Asia's largest functional democracy. The country's tenth Election Commissioner T N Seshan took many momentous decisions to make EC function as a truly autonomous body, not taking orders from the Central government.

Some exceptional measures could be initiated during the elections held in the midst of an unprecedented public health calamity this year. For more than a year, teachers across India are struggling to make maximum use of digital technology so as to ensure that the process of imparting education does not come to a grinding halt, something so crucial for the future of any nation. There has been considerable increase in internet penetration, even in the rural hinterland, and proliferation of the use of mobile phones.

Political parties could be

persuaded to campaign virtually, and shun roadshows and rallies, at least in urban and semi-urban areas where such mediums are much in use and where intensity of Covid infections is also higher, mainly due to density of population.

A properly developed portal could give voters the option of online voting, again in metros. This would have greatly reduced the need for polling personnel. The citizens watched with horror as thousands of polling and police personnel gathered at centres without social distancing norms being followed. While talking to the media, many polling personnel expressed apprehension about getting infected.

The way even college and University teachers are deployed in election duties is almost similar to the practice of conscription, something not acceptable in a democracy and hence was shunned by the architect of our constitution. Educated youth of a particular locality can be trained to perform election duties in that locality, sparing teachers of this ordeal, many of whom are middle-aged family persons, not oriented to such work. Quite a few teachers have succumbed to Covid infections in Bengal after returning from poll duties, as gathered from newspaper reports, and since years of education and pedagogic excellence are required to enter the academic fraternity, death of teachers amounts to significant loss of valuable human resources. Unfortunately, those at the helm of affairs in EC this time lacked both the vision or the will power to chart a new course.

Scientists have warned us that even after the pandemic subsides, the virus is not going away any time soon and large gatherings are to be avoided for a long time to come. One hopes that in future, in its zeal to make elections 'free and fair', the EC does not act in total disregard of the health-related concerns of the ordinary populace, and a democratic exercise is not conducted in an anti-people, autocratic manner. The vitality of Indian democracy considerably hinges on the restoration of the credibility of this important institution.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**  
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

**ASIAN VOICES**

**Oh, what a fall it was**

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli lost the vote of confidence in the House on Monday, but that is just an arithmetical manifestation of the moral-political legitimacy he had already lost in December last year after he dissolved Parliament.

At a time when he should have shown utmost humility and humanity to rescue the nation out of the pandemic-induced crisis, all he did was debilitate democratic politics and enable the dance of death.

No other leader has squandered as big an historic electoral mandate and established that the practice of democracy in Nepal is a zero-sum game. This is not to overlook the role of Oli's friends and foes in Parliament and the ruling party who have fished in the water muddied by Oli.

But the largest piece of the stale cake of notoriety should automatically go to Oli, as he has been at the helm for the past three years, and is the primary architect of the project to weaken democracy for personal reasons.

KP Sharma Oli will be remembered as someone who attempted to break all boundaries of ethics, values and integrity in Nepal's democratic politics, intoxicated as he was with greed for absolute power.

He has little to show in terms of strengthening constitutionality, federalism and secularism. On the contrary, he played a pivotal role in eroding the utility and meaning of those concepts altogether. Perhaps the greatest crime Oli committed against Nepali citizens is that he sowed in their minds the seeds of suspicion about the utility of democracy.

It will take years, even decades, for the suspicion to fade away. He single-handedly drove democratic politics to the brink when his attempts at emerging as the absolute authority faced challenges. He exhibited how democracy can become a dangerous

**THE KATHMANDU POST**

weapon when it falls into the hands of an unrestrained demagogue.

KP Sharma Oli will go down in history as a leader who crushed the dreams of a generation of Nepalis to see the country leave behind a troubled past and carve out a democratic and prosperous future for itself.

He exhibited in himself a great combination of ineptitude in governance and arrogance in partisan politics. He showed how one person's lust for power can turn democratic politics into a loss-making enterprise.

When Nepali citizens entrusted Oli with the reins of a young federal democratic republic, the expectation was that he would keep his personal bias against federalism, secularism and marginalised communities at bay, and help the people realise their dreams of peace, prosperity and justice.

With great power comes great responsibility, and it was hoped he would honour what he was entrusted with. He did quite the opposite.

KP Sharma Oli was given a rare chance to lead Nepal into the future, but he showed how far a democratically elected leader could go to buttress his image, consolidate his authority and prolong his rule at the cost of democratic values.

His rise and fall in Nepal's democratic politics should serve as a cautionary tale of how not to practise democratic politics.

A section of those who elected him to power three years ago are perhaps eager to see him head to the exit today, for he has killed their hopes and dreams.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

## Public and business administration

SIR, This refers to 'Virtues of Management' by Prafull Goradia (9 May). Goradia says, "like corporations and enterprises the administration of countries too needs management." This is an ambiguous statement but the purport is to say that countries should be "managed" (or administered) like

business enterprises.

That said, Business Administration vastly differs from Public Administration. There is a plethora of material available on the subject of Public Administration.

Hence, it is not correct to say that "No one seems to have attempted to write a thesis on how to manage a

country."

Again, it is fallacious for Goradia to assert that "There does not seem to have been any attempt at forging a science of national management." Centuries back in India, Kautilya wrote his *Artha Shashtra*. Goradia thinks that the hijacking of Air India's IC-814 flight to

Kandahar was a case of "colossal mismanagement." Similarly he thinks that "India's sound case on Kashmir was ...spoilt" by Krishna Menon's marathon speech at the UN in 1955. Goradia also opines that in the wake of the Chinese invasion of India in 1962, Nehru's broadcast on the AIR was "demoralising" to the people of Assam and depressed them.

In the same sweep, Goradia refers to Dr Manmohan Singh as a much touted economist and alludes to Singh's (famous) statement that "The Muslims of the country must have the first claim on 15 per cent of the country's resources." By no stretch of logic can such instances given by Goradia be likened to managerial failures in business enterprises.

Referring to the transi-

tion of Singapore from "Third World to First", Goradia says "... there was and is until today no book to guide them to rise" and "Lee had to dream and discuss with a few colleagues to convert the ideas into reality."

This is certainly like what President Roosevelt's New Deal did to the USA and also what Prime Minis-

ter Thatcher did to Britain in the years 1979-1990. Thus Goradia should realise that "Business Administration" and "Public Administration" should not be confused and mixed up with each other. They stand on different footings and are distinct streams of knowledge.

Yours, etc., R C Jain,  
10 May, Kolkata.

## OXYGEN POLICY

SIR, I refer to your editorial 'Mamata's template' published today, wherein you have mentioned anguish voiced by Mamata Banerjee against the central government by saying "our oxygen supplies are being diverted to other states".

If that is true, the people of West Bengal have reason to be dissatisfied with the Prime Minister for his discriminatory policy towards West Bengal and that too at a time when the state is badly in need of at least the allotted quantity of oxygen to enable hospitals to save lives of hundreds of patients.

It is hoped that Mr Modi would be kind enough to order immediate release of oxygen.

Yours, etc., AK Deb Biswas,  
Hooghly, 10 May.



# Democracy and rights in Myanmar need support

BHARAT DOGRA

The immediate and spontaneous response to the army in Myanmar clamping down on democracy and preventing clear winners in elections from taking up their democratic positions was one of fierce anger against the army and support for the democracy movement. To this day this remains the dominant view for all supporters of democracy and this writer of course would like to associate himself strongly with this group and reemphasize his strong support for the democracy movement.

At the same time, however, some more complicating views have been emerging and as senior, respected and experienced observers have also been associated with such views, these deserve attention. One view seems to have been partly prompted by the reality that despite its clear assault on democracy, the Myanmar army has not been isolated at all. It seems to still enjoy the confidence of China and perhaps Russia as well. Most of its Asian neighbours appear agreeable to continue to have working relations with the army regime, even though they make some routine statements in support of democracy. On the other hand, more support for the democracy movement appears to be coming from western sources.

This has prompted comparisons with some other movements in countries which while claiming to stand for democracy were also exposed for their close linkages to the West, especially the US. If this assessment of the democracy movement in Myanmar is accepted then some spontaneous, honest and sincere support for the Myanmar democracy movement will suffer and diminish. Therefore, such assessments should not be given much importance and the support for the democracy movement should

continue as the overwhelming reality is that the army thwarted clear winners of elections to fulfill their democratic functions. This is not to deny that certain big powers are trying to use the emerging situation to their own advantage but isn't this the case almost always? Such are the realities of the present-day world and its big powers.

The second complication arises from the fact that apart from the main democracy movement in the heartland there are several movements of ethnic and religious minorities, some in border areas, which have been fighting for more rights and autonomy, as also for ending various injustices, for a very long time. Some of them have received support from various human rights groups in the past, and some of these may be based in Western countries. Several of these grievances are likely to be genuine, and deserve support or at least honest appraisal. From news reports, several of these movements, despite earlier reservations, appear now to be more in the mood of going with the main democratic forces in the heartland. Some of them have clashed with the army in recent days and suffered repression as well, with more of them crossing into neighbouring countries.

While the overall emphasis should be on peaceful opposition, on the whole several of these minority groups also deserve support as long as they are committed ultimately to a peaceful resolution and do not indulge in avoidable, indiscriminate violence. If they can enter into a comprehensive understanding with the main democratic forces of the heartland, then a future for Myanmar democracy can be worked out in which the pending problems and grievances of these minorities can be resolved peacefully, while maintaining the integrity and unity of the



country in a democratic framework which emphasizes that no discrimination will be allowed on the basis of religious, regional and ethnic identity and all citizens will have equal rights and will be able to practice their religion and protect their culture. This surely should be the way forward for all those who believe in democracy and in the welfare of the people of Myanmar.

The problem is how to realize this. Myanmar waits, with increasing tension and uncertainty. The biggest worry is that as the ideal situation will take its own time to emerge, if at all, with each passing month Myanmar may well be heading towards a humanitarian crisis. The country may not be deficient in essential goods like food and medicine, and in essential

services like medical care, but how to ensure that these will reach the needy in troubled areas will be an increasing problem and concern.

Myanmar has been known for surplus production of its staple food, rice, and has been known also for its exports of rice. Countries like China which are friendly to the ruling junta can make up the deficiency in other essential goods including medicines. However, if violence and strife continue to escalate and spread to more areas, then farm production can also decline and transport of essential goods from outside could be disrupted. There have been instances in various countries when there were no overall shortages at a national level but in conditions of violence and strife, serious shortages emerged in

specific areas over prolonged periods. Add to this the more direct toll of violent clashes and a serious humanitarian crisis can emerge, keeping in view the additional fact that the world is anyway passing through serious pandemic times with many uncertainties.

In such a serious situation, other countries particularly neighboring countries should decide their policy keeping in view the overwhelming objective of reducing the distress of people of Myanmar, avoiding a humanitarian crisis and establishment of a pluralistic democracy, based on unity and diversity and commitment to peace by all sides.

The writer is a journalist and author. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children and Man Over Machine (Gandian Ideas for our times)

## It's time for El Supremo to go

C K LAL

The farce of Nepal Premier Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli seeking a vote of confidence from the *Pratinidhi Sabha* is over with predictable results. Supreme Sharma Oli did not trust Parliament to do his bidding and had it dissolved in December 2020 on a whim. The House has now reciprocated in kind by unequivocally expressing that it had no confidence in his ability to govern anymore.

The whole exercise was pointless, if not downright harmful, in the middle of the raging Covid-19 pandemic. Determined to stay at Baluwatar come what may, the verdict of Parliament holds little meaning for the self-styled *El Supremo* of the ruling party. The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court had declared the dissolution of the House unconstitutional early this year and reinstated it through a landmark verdict. Premier Sharma Oli should have resigned immediately after the humiliating defeat. Instead, he showed his disdain for the restored Parliament by not attending any of its sittings.

Sharma Oli packed several statutory bodies—including the National Human Rights Commission—with his loyalists without mandatory parliamentary hearing. The controversial ordinance was re-issued to reward some more of his political favourites.

While seeking the vote of confidence, Sharma Oli spoke with his characteristic arrogance reeking of hubris. He dismissed all allegations of opposition leaders with haughty superciliousness. Soon after the Speaker announced the result, the supremo was seen on television screens cracking his fingers with a sigh of relief. He seems to be in no mood to honour the verdict and vacate Baluwatar without a fight.

Erstwhile supporters of the



supremo in the media, the intelligentsia and the civil society ignore the fact that he hasn't done anything that he wasn't capable of doing, or intended to do, once he had managed to orchestrate a 'state capture' with their active collusion.

In the ethical standards of the constitutionally christened Khas-Arya community, Brahmins sit at the top of the Hindu hierarchy and aren't answerable for their actions to anyone other than themselves. That is the reason why Brahmins have traditionally been considered unsuitable to be rulers. Having imbibed those values at an early age, it is quite natural that Sharma Oli takes his supremo position of being the ethical as well as temporal leader of the society seriously.

It is said that Marxism is a theory which is logically 'a scientific, objective and free science, without value judgements'. Leninism is a pragmatic doctrine of state capture by a revolutionary vanguard. The argument that the hyphenated ideology of Marxism-Leninism amounts to yoking the horse of European capitalism with

Asiatic despotism has proven to be true in many developing countries.

A complete disregard for 'bourgeois morality', however, is the common thread of all communist ideologies. It is unclear whether it was the lack of moral convictions that made a young Sharma Oli adopt Naxalism or he became amoral only after being inducted into the Jhapali campaign of beheading class enemies. What is apparent, though, is that he considers the amoral pragmatism of Marxism-Leninism and Maoism to be the guiding principle of his political life.

Through a complex process of religious upbringing, social conditioning and political schooling, Sharma Oli has developed a complete disregard for constitutional propriety. A 14-year jail term with hardened criminals perhaps made him realise that victory in any contestation is its own justification. Fragility of personal health may have hastened his resolve to grab power through any means and be at the helm till the end.

Once the ethical foundations and the moral structure of the evolution of the ethnonational chieftain is

understood, the path he has chosen for the political economy of his regime begins to make sense. The gold-plated jalhari of Pashupati costing over a billion rupees was meant to buttress his communal credentials. The fictional formation of Ayodhya-puri in Madi is a transparent attempt to project his religious identity.

On the political front, Sharma Oli perhaps feels that it was the 1990 constitution that prepared the ground for his phenomenal rise in national politics. That could be why he vehemently contested constituent assembly, opposed republicanism tooth and nail, rejected federalism out of hand, resisted the idea of inclusive governance till the last moment and has failed to accept the fact of Nepal being a multi-national state. He has little, if any, attachment to the 2015 constitution despite his steering role in its promulgation through the 16-point conspiracy. The charter was for him just a stepping stone for the seemingly legitimate act of state capture.

On the foreign policy front, Sharma Oli has adroitly kept himself out of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) controversy. The Xi Jinping Thought was meant to boost his bargaining power. Over the last five years, he has let loose more abuses at New Delhi than all other prime ministers put together but has no hesitation in seeking India's help to entrench himself in power. Come what may, Sharma Oli is extremely unlikely to go on his own unless the force of circumstances makes him do so.

Once, Tulsi Giri, a Nepali Congress turncoat and one of the architects of the Panchayat regime, had quipped that he was not at all concerned with the judgement of history. Considering the way Sharma Oli has handled Madhesi, Janjati and Dalit issues, it is perhaps right to assume that he belongs to the nihilist school of the late Giri. His obsession with the hubristic erection of Dharahara, however, shows that the supremo is not

completely ambivalent about his ethnonational legacy.

Among all the dramatis personae of the political drama that is likely to unfold at Shital Niwas from Thursday, May 13, the character of Nepali Congress chairman Sher Bahadur Deuba appears to be most uninspiring. He has been a collaborator of Sharma Oli for far too long to claim the right of being an alternative. Maoist Centre chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal helped Sharma Oli become what he is and thus appears equally unacceptable for the same reason.

Most rumours in Kathmandu turn out to be true. But if Janata Samajbadi Party co-chair Mahantha Thakur is under the impression that the Hindutva regime in New Delhi can push him to the top with the help of a relentless demagogue, then he is in serious delusion. When speaking in his own defence in Parliament, Sharma Oli refused to even pronounce the term Madhes altogether.

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Hard as it may seem to accept, only the CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal seems to have the cultural capital, social sagacity, political heft and diplomatic credibility to force Sharma Oli fade away from the political scene with dignity. A coalition government of the CPN-UML and the Janata Samajbadi Party under the leadership of acrobatic dealmaker Madhav Kumar Nepal, with the outside support of the Maoists, appears to be the least unacceptable proposition at this juncture.

But for that to happen, some CPN-UML lawmakers such as Subash Chandra Nembang or Bishnu Paudel need to gather the moral courage and repeat what the Conservative backbencher Leo Amery once told his own parliamentary leader: 'You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go.'

The Kathmandu Post/ANN

NO 28911

### 100 YEARS AGO

#### OCCASIONAL NOTE

On taking over the Philippines twenty years ago the Americans took up with characteristic energy and enthusiasm the task of educating the population of the islands, with results that are described by Professor D.J. Fleming in the International Review of Missions. The education of a population of 11,000,000 is, of course, a simple task compared with that which confronts those who are responsible for the education of a county like India; yet the difficulties have been considerable and the conditions in which the work was undertaken were by no means favourable. The Bureau of education, we are told, keep steadily in view as their ideal what they speak of as their "three-phase" system; they set out to help each student academically, industrially, and physically. They arrange for specialisation to take place amongst teachers and supervisors along those lines, and it has not always been easy to attain an ideal balance among these objectives. The three elements are represented in the primary schools to begin with. Academically, it is the aim of these schools to give the pupils an English education up to at least the fourth standard, while industrially they aim at instilling a respect for labour. The boys are taught to cultivate their home gardens, to weave hats, mats, slippers, and baskets, and to handle simple business affairs. The girls are taught to cook simple meals, to make their own clothes, and to weave hats, mats, etc.

**NEWS ITEMS**

**PROPOSALS FOR REFORMS IN BURMA**

A communiqué states:- In order to give all parties in Burma an opportunity of laying before the Joint Committee their views on the proposals for constitutional reform in that province, the Government of India proposed to the Secretary of State that representatives of various parties should be invited to go to England to give evidence before the committee. The proposal was made because it was believed that it would meet the wishes of the Burmese people. It appears, however, from information furnished by the local Government or published in the press that both the General Council of the Burmese Association and Young Men's Buddhist Association would refuse to be parties to sending any more deputations to England.

### CONSPIRING TO EXCITE DISAFFECTION

The result of the Tonk case is that of the 28 accused persons placed in the dock (apart from eight absconders, two of whom were arrested at the close of the hearing of the case), one was pardoned before a charge was framed, 17 were discharged and 10 were charged with an offence of conspiring to excite disaffection against the Nawab and His Government under Section 124(A) read with 120 (B) of the Indian Penal Code, as applied to the Tonk State. Of these 10, one was pardoned before judgment was pronounced by the Nawab, two were acquitted and seven were convicted. Of the seven convicted, one was sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment and the other six to six months' rigorous imprisonment.

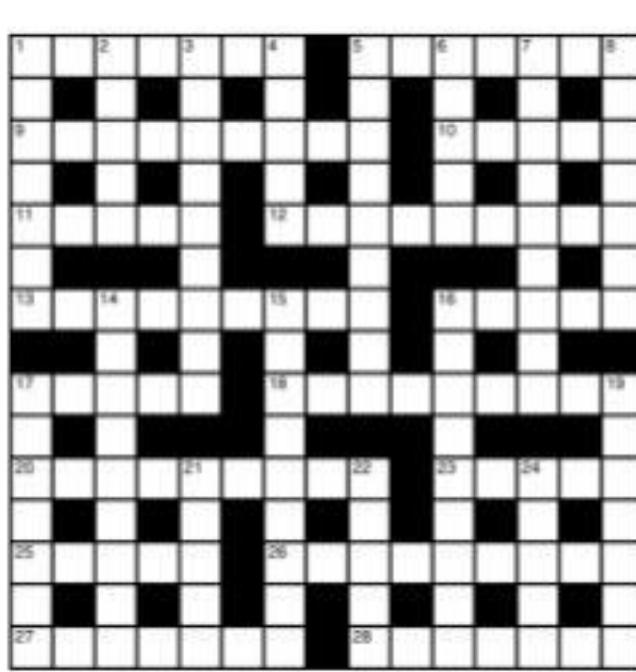
### EARNINGS OF STATE RAILWAYS

The total approximate gross earnings of State railways from April 1 to April 30 amounted to Rs 7.05 crores. The Budget estimate for the current year was framed in anticipation of total gross earnings of Rs 87 crores, and the results of the first four weeks given above have fallen short of the estimate for that period by Rs 55.82 lakhs. Although, however, the results for the last week are still short of what was estimated would be earned, several important lines show an improvement over the previous week. The unfavourable results are principally due to shortage of booking of coal and jute on the Bengal-Nagpur and Eastern Bengal Railways, and to coaching traffic on the North-Western and Bombay-Baroda and Central India Railways being below the normal expected.

### INDIA'S TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

Lord Reay presided at the annual meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society, when the Prince of Wales was invited to follow the example of his father and grandfather by becoming Vice-Patron. A similar invitation was extended to Lord Reading. Lord Merton, in recalling the distinguished group of civil servants and orientalists in the United Provinces when he went out, said that the traditions of scholarship attaching to public services in India had grown a little thin of recent years. The right spirit had not departed but had increased, though pressure of life and strain of work were giving scanty leisure for the old pleasure of communion with the older school of cultured Indians.

### CROSSWORD



#### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

- 1 Card game on which bridge is based? (7)
- 5 Low level of interest is danger sign during high economic growth? (7)
- 9 Horse and cart transported pit workers? (9)
- 10 Perhaps counters United being disqualified from event? (5)
- 11 State time to head off? (5)
- 12 Qualification voided company's ability to negotiate? (9)
- 13 Item in magazine about game starting late? (9)
- 16 City earnings initially take a dip? (5)

- 17 Additional payment supported by British and American bank? (5)
- 18 Musical about leaders of early English rebels looks like Les Misérables? (9)
- 20 Sailor from Arab country returns with adult girlfriend? (9)
- 23 Meet with expert flying from terminal? (5)
- 25 Joint resolution of Kremlin was regularly ignored? (5)
- 26 Pariah state is expelling six in breach of protocol? (9)
- 27 University degree oddly inspired by academic resentment? (7)
- 28 High-pitched male parts

- 1 Article penned by expert really is dull? (7)
- 2 Specialised hospital takes delicate case? (5)
- 3 Gets upset on account of changes? (9)
- 4 Well-known day school suffering setback? (5)
- 5 Curse affected sheep and lamb? (9)
- 6 Wireless router's last two bits connected by plug? (5)
- 7 Strip clubs airbrushed from record cover? (9)
- 8 Steamy games at school produce inappropriate

- 14 Car close to black sedan crashed and turned upside down? (9)
- 15 Idiot can't supply reading material? (9)
- 16 Obstacle to travel around lines? (9)
- 17 Outlaw musicians stealing equipment? (7)
- 19 Unusual mountains covered with stone? (7)
- 21 Honour terms of previous invoice with large corporation? (5)
- 22 U-boat could be somewhere nearby? (5)
- 24 Conservative member's route to the top? (5)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



Liquidity should be addressed by encouraging banks to lend to the export sector and more importantly instantly releasing all export benefits.

S K SARAF  
PRESIDENT, THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN EXPORT ORGANISATIONS

## THUMBNAILS

Petrol, diesel prices up by 25 paise each: Petrol and diesel prices on Wednesday were hiked by 25 paise per litre each, the third increase this week, propelling petrol price to cross Rs 100 per litre mark in more cities, including Bhopal and Indore. Petrol and diesel prices are now at record highs across the country, price notification of state-owned fuel retailers showed. In Delhi, petrol now comes for Rs 92.05 per litre and diesel is priced at Rs 82.61. This was the third increase in prices this week and seventh hike since 4 May when the state-owned oil firms ended an 18-hiatus in rate revision they observed during assembly elections in states like West Bengal. PTI

Retail inflation falls: Retail inflation slowed to 4.29 per cent in April from 5.52 per cent in March, mainly due to easing food prices, government data showed on Wednesday. The Reserve Bank mainly factors in the retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) while arriving at its monetary policy. As per the data released by ministry of statistics and programme implementation, inflation in the food basket was 2.02 per cent in April, down from 4.87 per cent in the preceding month. PTI

HDFC Bank-CSC: HDFC Bank and Common Services Centers (CSCs) on Wednesday launched chatbot "Eva" on CSCs Digital Seva Portal to support village-level entrepreneurs in providing banking services for last-mile rural consumers. The partnership will empower 1.5 lakh village-level entrepreneurs (VLEs) to provide financial services at the last mile in semi-urban and rural areas, according to a Press release. SNS

UTI MF sales head: UTI Mutual Fund on Wednesday announced the appointment of Peshotan Dastoor as group president and head of sales. Dastoor will be responsible for developing UTI's sales strategy, providing leadership to the sales team and exploring new opportunities for distribution and growth, said a Press release. SNS

JSPL profit: Jindal Steel and Power on Wednesday reported manifold jump in its consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 1,900.51 crore during the fourth quarter ended March 2021, mainly on account of higher income. Its net profit after tax from continuing operation in the year ago quarter was at Rs 82.13 crore, JSPL said in a BSE filing. PTI

NMDC price hike: Iron ore miner NMDC on Wednesday announced a hike in the prices of lump ore by Rs 700 per ton and fines by Rs 1,500 per ton with immediate effect. Iron ore is a key raw material used in steel making. Any change in its prices has a direct impact on the rates of steel. PTI

## Income tax dept issues ₹17,061 crore refunds

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

The income tax department today said it has issued over Rs 17,061 crore of refunds to more than 13 lakh taxpayers so far during this financial year.

In a Press note, the I-T department mentioned that refunds worth Rs 5,575 crore were issued in over 12.71 lakh cases and corporate tax refunds of Rs 11,486 crore were issued to 29,592 taxpayers.

"CBDT issued refunds of over Rs 17,061 crore to more than 13 lakh taxpayers between 1 April 2021 and 10 May 2021. Income tax refunds of Rs 5,575 crore have been

## ₹18,100-crore PLI scheme to promote ACC battery making

The scheme is expected to attract foreign and domestic investment of ₹45,000 crore: Javadekar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

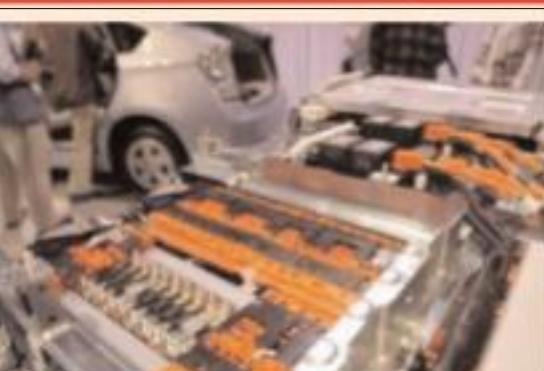
**T**he government today approved the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for manufacturing advanced chemistry cell (ACC) battery at an estimated outlay of Rs 18,100 crore.

With the objective to promote the "Make in India" initiative, the National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage is expected to attract foreign and domestic investment of Rs 45,000 crore, information and broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters after the Cabinet meeting.

The proposal aims to achieve manufacturing of 50 gigawatts of battery storage, he said, adding these incentives will be available to those companies having higher production and sales capability.

The policy aims to make manufacturers globally competitive, boost exports, achieve economies of scale and produce cutting edge products.

### MOVE TO PROMOTE 'MAKE IN INDIA'



available to those companies having higher production and sales capability.

"As India pursues an ambitious renewable energy agenda, the ACC programme will be a key contributing factor to reduce India's Green House Gas (GHG) emissions which will be in line with India's commitment to combat climate change," it said.

Major battery consuming sectors like consumer electronics, electric vehicles, advanced electricity grids, solar rooftop etc, are expected to achieve robust growth in the coming years, it said, adding it is likely that the dominant battery technologies will control some of the

world's largest growth sectors.

This is a win-win formula for climate change, green growth, Indian philosophy of "Make in India" and "Aatmanirbhar Bharat", Javadekar said, adding it will bring in foreign as well as domestic investment and create more job opportunities.

The manufacturing of ACCs is expected to facilitate demand for electric vehicles (EVs), which are proven to be significantly less polluting.

"In India, the ACC programme will be a key contributing factor to reduce India's Green House Gas (GHG) emissions which will be in line with India's commitment to combat climate change," it said.

While several companies have already started investing in battery packs, though the capacities of these facilities are too small when compared to global averages, but there still is a negligible investment in manufacturing, along with value addition, of ACCs in India, it said.

With regard to incentive mechanism, it said, the amount will increase with higher specific energy density and cycles and improved local value addition.

All the demand for the ACCs is currently being met through imports in India.

The National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage will reduce import dependence and also support the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

ACC battery storage manufacturers will be selected through a transparent competitive bidding process, it said. It is estimated that it could lead to net savings of Rs 2.5 lakh crore on account of oil import bill reduction during the period of this programme due to electric vehicle adoption as ACC manufacturing is expected to accelerate EV adoption.

The manufacturing facility will have to be commissioned within a period of two years. The incentive will be disbursed thereafter over a period of five years, it added.

With the resumption of economic activities, factory output posted a rise of one per cent in September. The IIP had grown by 4.5 per cent in October.

During financial year 2020-21, the factory output fell 1.6 per cent, and it again entered the positive territory by growing

2.2 per cent in December 2020.

The IIP had recorded a contraction of 0.9 per cent in January and 3.4 per cent in February this year.

The government had imposed a lockdown to contain the spread of Covid-19 infections on 25 March 2020.

The manufacturing sector had recorded a contraction of 22.8 per cent in March 2020. Mining sector output too fell by 1.3 per cent in the same month last year. The electricity generation had declined by 8.2 per cent in March 2020.

The output of capital goods, which is a barometer of investment, grew by 41.9 per cent in March 2021, as against a contraction of 38.3 per cent a year ago.

Consumer durables manufacturing increased by 54.9 per cent in the month under review, compared to a 36.8 per cent decline in March 2020.

Consumer non-durable goods production grew 27.5 per cent in March this year, compared to a contraction of 22.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

During financial year 2020-21, the IIP contracted 8.6 per cent as against 0.8 per cent contraction in fiscal 2019-20.

## CIL accounts for 0.65% of country's CO2 emission

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 12 MAY



Country's largest coal producer Coal India Limited (CIL) accounted for only 0.65 per cent of India's total carbon-di-oxide (CO2) emission of 2,616 million tons (MTs) during 2019-20. This is according to the data sourced from Global Carbon Project: Carbon Di-Oxide Information Analysis Centre of US, said a Press release issued by CIL.

A back-of-the-envelope calculation estimates 30 Kg of CO2 emission for every ton of coal produced. With CIL's opencast output at 572 MTs during FY'20, a little over 17 MTs of CO2 equivalent was emitted out of CIL's coal mining operations, compared to the country's total of 2,616 MTs. Pollution arising out of

coal mining operations is not much compared to burning of the fossil fuel, from where major emissions emanate, it said.

"Mining is a conflict with nature which impacts environment to a certain degree. The effort is to cap it to the minimum. We are committed to fulfil our part in reduction of GHG emissions in the

nationally determined contributions (NDC) submitted to UN. Offsetting the carbon footprint to a bare low is a continuous activity for us," said a senior executive of CIL.

To balance the CO2 emission, CIL has taken up large-scale plantation in its mining areas where the green cover increased to 862 hectares in FY'21. This is 116 per cent achievement of the targeted 739 hectares and 6 per cent more compared to 813 hectares of fiscal 2019-20, CIL said.

So far, CIL has created 2.4 hectares of plantation for every one hectare of land used for mining. For the ongoing fiscal the company is targeting plantation over 1,300 hectares, a jump of more than 50 per cent compared to FY'21.

For the full fiscal 2020-21, the company registered highest-ever full-year net profit of Rs 630.14 crore, up 24.7 per cent over the previous fiscal. SNS

## Birla Corp Q4 profit jumps by 28%

KOLKATA, 12 MAY

Birla Corporation Limited today reported a net profit of Rs 249.33 crore for the fourth quarter of financial year 2020-21, up 28 per cent from Rs 194.73 crore in the same period last year, as sales by volume jumped by 24.5 per cent to 4.17 million tons.

Revenue for the quarter ended 31 March 2021 at Rs 2,146.12 crore was up by 24.9 per cent over the previous year, which, combined with a capacity utilisation of 108 per cent, made the quarter one of the best ever for the company in terms of production and sales, Birla Corporation said in a Press statement issued here.

For the full fiscal 2020-21, the company registered highest-ever full-year net profit of Rs 630.14 crore, up 24.7 per cent over the previous fiscal. SNS

## Sensex falls 471 pts on negative cues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MUMBAI, 12 MAY

The BSE Sensex spiralled lower for the second straight session today, weighed by heavy selling in banking and finance stocks, as global equities extended their losses on concerns that soaring commodity prices will trigger earlier-than-expected rate hikes.

"Indian indices extended its losses due to concerns over hike in global interest rates and bond yield due to rising commodity prices and inflationary pressure," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

International commodity prices will have to stabilise to provide sustenance in the equity market, he added.

Sector-wise, BSE metal, basic materials, bankex, oil and gas, energy and finance indices tanked up to 3.22 per cent, while the auto index settled with gains.

## Cadila arm to sell animal health biz for ₹2,921 crore

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Cadila Healthcare today said its wholly-owned subsidiary Zydus Animal Health and Investment has entered into definitive pacts for sale of its animal healthcare established markets undertaking to Multiples Alternative Asset Management-led consortium for Rs 2,921 crore.

The consortium, including Canada Pension Plan Investment Board and RARE Enterprises, has agreed to purchase the undertaking through an special purpose vehicle (SPV) controlled by them, in the name of Zenex Animal Health India, Cadila Healthcare said in a statement.

Animal Healthcare Established Markets Undertaking on a slump sale basis as a going concern, for a lump sum consideration of Rs 2,921 crore on a cash-free and debt-free basis, subject to certain closing date adjustments and other conditions, Cadila Healthcare said.

Zydus AH employs around 700 people and has one manufacturing facility in Haridwar, it added.

"The transaction involves transfer of immovable assets, movable assets, inventory, brands and intangible assets, contracts, licences and permissions, business records, employees along with employee benefit funds, insurance policies, other assets and assumed liabilities," Cadila Healthcare said.

The deal is to sell Animal Healthcare Established Markets Undertaking on a cash-free and debt-free basis, subject to certain closing date adjustments and other conditions, Cadila Healthcare said.

The transaction is subject to closing conditions and receipt of final statutory and other approvals and is expected to be completed within a period of 90 days, it added.

Shares of Cadila Healthcare were trading at Rs 656.75 per scrip on BSE, up 4.30 per cent from its previous close. PTI

## Power ministry to ensure 24x7 power supply to oxygen plants

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 12 MAY

The ministry of power today announced "pro-active preventive and remedial measures" to ensure uninterrupted power supply to oxygen plants across India, particularly the supply to 73 major identified oxygen power plants, including 13 in the national capital region (NCR).

Measures include a daily review by the secretary, ministry of power, along with the concerned energy secretaries of states, senior officials in the Power System Operation Corporation (Posoco) on a case by case basis. The Power Grid Corporation of India had established Posoco in 2010 to monitor power supply across India.

As part of corrective action strategy, besides a 24-hour oxygen plant control room, and an internal control group set up at the Mumbai-based Rural Electrification Corporation (REC Ltd) with the Oxygen plant nodal officers.

All issues related to 24x7 power supply to existing oxygen plants are to be discussed "threadbare" during the daily reviews, according to power ministry officials. Necessary interventions will be through electricity distributors (Discoms) in states, with the help of Posoco and the central electricity authority.

A round-the-clock control room has become oper-

ational as part of corrective action strategy, besides a 24-hour oxygen plant control room, and an internal control group set up at the Mumbai-based Rural Electrification Corporation (REC Ltd) with the Oxygen plant nodal officers.

The power ministry has also tasked Posoco to carry out technical audits of power supply of each oxygen plant, particularly those supplying oxygen to the Delhi and NCR region. As of now, 13 plants supplying oxygen in the capital region have been audited.

An additional 20 plants have been audited, with the technical audit results being shared with the respective state governments for urgent necessary action. The technical audit for oxygen plants across India is likely to be completed within the next seven days, according to the ministry.

Some of the corrective measures advised included resetting of relays at the Barotiwala plant in Himachal Pradesh and the Kerala Mineral & Metal plant, and lay-

ing a 132kV underground cable for the oxygen plant at Salequi in Uttarakhand, a stretch the ministry has deemed to be prone to bird fault.

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PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN

DENOUNCING AIRSTRIKES IN GAZA STRIP BY ISRAELI FORCES

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 13 MAY 2021

# Death toll from Israeli strikes rises to 43 in Gaza

Six dead in Israel in Hamas rocket attacks; Hamas Gaza City commander killed in Israeli airstrike

AGENCIES

GAZA CITY, 12 MAY

Israel carried out hundreds of air strikes in Gaza on Wednesday and Palestinian militants fired multiple rocket barrages at Tel Aviv and the southern city of Beersheba in the region's most intense hostilities in years.

At least 43 people have been killed in Gaza since violence escalated on Monday, according to the enclave's health ministry. Six people have been killed in Israel, medical officials said. Military group Hamas confirmed that Bassem Issa, its Gaza City commander, was killed in an Israeli airstrike, the highest-ranking militant killed since the 2014 war in the Palestinian territory.

In Gaza, a multi-storey residential building collapsed after Israel warned its occupants in advance to evacuate, and another was heavily damaged, after they were hit in the air strikes.

Israel said its warplanes had targeted and killed several of



A Palestinian man looks at a broken road following Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City, Wednesday

restraint. Gazans' homes shook and the sky lit up from Israeli attacks, outgoing rockets and Israeli missiles.

Israelis ran to shelters or lay flat on pavements in communities more than 70 km (45 miles) up the coast from Gaza and into southern Israel as explosions were heard and interceptor missiles streaked into the sky.

An Israeli was killed on Wednesday by an anti-tank missile fired from Gaza at a vehicle near the border, Israel's national ambulance service said.

Two people were killed by a rocket that hit their car in Lod, near Tel Aviv. Lod and other mixed Arab-Jewish towns have been gripped by demonstrations over the Gaza violence and tensions in Jerusalem.

In Gaza, 11 people were killed in Israeli strikes Wednesday, the health ministry said. Hamas' armed wing said it fired 210 rockets towards Beersheba and Tel Aviv overnight in response to the strikes on the tower buildings in Gaza City.

Hamas's leaders early on Wednesday. Other strikes hit what the military said were rocket launch sites, Hamas offices and the homes of Hamas leaders.

The heaviest offensive between Israel and Hamas since a 2014 war in the Hamas-ruled enclave has increased international concern that the situation could spiral out of control. "Israel has gone crazy," said a man on a Gaza street, where people ran out of their homes as explosions rang out. Many Israelis also

spent a sleepless night, with sirens sounding at 3 am in Tel Aviv, heralding several waves of rocket strikes in Israel's heartland.

"The children have escaped the coronavirus, and now a new trauma," an Israeli woman in the coastal city of Ashkelon said in footage shown by Channel 11 television.

The UN Middle East peace envoy Tor Wennesland said the United Nations was working with all sides to restore calm. Egypt made calls overnight to Palestinian leaders to urge

## Israel needs a lesson: Erdogan

ANKARA, 12 MAY

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has told Russian President Vladimir Putin that the international community should "give Israel a strong and deterrent lesson against its conduct toward the Palestinians."

That's according to the Turkish Presidential Communications Directorate, which said the two leaders talked by phone Wednesday about the escalating confrontation sparked by tension over contested Jerusalem.

The statement said Erdogan stressed the need for the international community to give Israel a strong and deterrent lesson and pressed for the United Nations Security Council to rapidly intervene with determined and clear messages to Israel. AP

## Quad 'exclusive clique' against Beijing: China



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, 12 MAY

China on Wednesday accused the Quad of being an exclusive clique against Beijing as it defended its Bangladesh Ambassador's warning to Dhaka against joining the US-led alliance, saying the envoy has made the country's position "clear" on the issue.

China's Ambassador in Dhaka Li Jiming China on Monday warned Bangladesh against joining the four-nation group comprising the US, Australia, Japan and India, saying that Dhaka's participation in the anti-Beijing "club" would result in "substantial damage" to bilateral relations.

Asked for her reaction to Momen's comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told the media here that she has not seen the remarks.

"China and Bangladesh are very good neighbours. We have been developing bilateral relations based on mutual trust and peaceful co-existence, and we have been firmly supporting each other," she said.

About Chinese Ambassador's remarks on the Quad which involves Japan, US, India and Australia, we have made our position clear on this issue. We believe it is an exclusive clique against China and trying to rally countries around China to work against China.

"We are an independent

and sovereign state. We decide our foreign policy," Momen had said, adding that

Bangladesh has been following a "non-aligned" and "balanced" foreign policy and the country would decide what to do in line with that principle.

Asked for her reaction to Momen's comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told the media here that she has not seen the remarks.

"China and Bangladesh are very good neighbours. We have been developing bilateral relations based on mutual trust and peaceful co-existence, and we have been firmly supporting each other," she said.

About Chinese Ambassador's remarks on the Quad, what is the true intention, is it trying to exclude China to target against China. If so, then it is not about interference, it is about expressing opposition against this Quad group. Also express the hope that it will stop doing so, she said.

So I believe you understand our position very clearly," Hua said.

Replying to a question in the light of Momen's assertion that Bangladesh is a sovereign country and decides its own foreign policy, how China would respond to criticism that it is aggressively pushing its stand on issues on smaller countries, Hua said Beijing always treats other countries as equals.

"About the protest from the Bangladesh foreign minister, I'm not sure what exactly the protest is and what the accurate words are. But we always treat other countries despite their sizes as equals. We always follow the peaceful coexistence principle in developing bilateral relations and we always support each other and it is not China who has been interfering in others internal affairs, she said.

Hua said China follows the principle of non-interference in others internal affairs and has been doing it. India knows better than us about this Quad, what is the true intention, is it trying to exclude China to target against China. If so, then it is not about interference, it is about expressing opposition against this Quad group. Also express the hope that it will stop doing so, she said.

## Pak to start vaccine drive for aged 30, above

ISLAMABAD, 12 MAY

Chairman of Pakistan's National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) Asad Umar said on Wednesday that the registration of vaccination against coronavirus for citizens aged 30 to 39 will be open from 16 May.

Pakistan also commenced the process of walk-in vaccination for the citizens aged 40 to 49 on Wednesday. IANS

## Hard-liner Ahmadinejad again seeks to be Iran's president

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, 12 MAY



Iran's former hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad registered Wednesday to run again for the Islamic Republic's presidency, raising the possibility that the populist leader who rapidly advanced Tehran's nuclear programme to challenge the West could return to the country's top civilian post.

Ahmadinejad's attempt to run again in 2017 disregarded the words of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had warned the firebrand, Holocaust-questioning politician his standing for office would be a polarised situation that would be harmful for the country. This time, however, Khamenei seemingly isn't directly challenging the candidacy of the 64-year-old former Tehran mayor, who joins a wide-open election to replace the relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani.

A council Khamenei oversees ultimately will determine if Ahmadinejad and other hopefuls can run in the 18 June poll.

As Iran negotiates with world powers over its tattered nuclear deal amid ten-

sions with the US, the entry of Ahmadinejad could enliven an election that Iranians so far appear unenthusiastic about during the coronavirus pandemic and crushing sanctions.

Thronged by shouting supporters, Ahmadinejad marched to a registration centre at the Interior Ministry, where he filled out registration forms. He held up his hands in a V-for-Victory salute before addressing reporters.

My presence today for registration was based on demand by millions for my participation in the election, he said, adding that the move also came after considering the situation of the country, and the necessity for revolution in the management of the country. Ahmadinejad previously served two four-year terms from 2005 to 2013.

Under Iranian law, he became eligible to run again

after four years out of office, but he remains a polarizing figure, even among fellow hard-liners.

His disputed re-election in 2009 sparked massive Green Movement protests and a sweeping crackdown in which thousands of people were detained and dozens were killed.

Abroad, he became a caricature of Western perceptions of the Islamic Republic's worst attributes, such as questioning the Holocaust, insisting Iran had no gay or lesbian citizens and hinting Iran could build a nuclear weapon if it chose to do so.

But Ahmadinejad remains popular among the poor for his populist efforts and home-building programmes.

Since leaving office, he's raised his profile via a social media presence and written widely publicized letters to world leaders.

## China gifts Bangladesh 500K doses of Sinopharm vaccine

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DHAKA, 12 MAY

China delivered 5,000,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine as a gift to Bangladesh on Wednesday to help it cope with a shortage.

Bangladesh, a nation of 160 million people, is in desperate need after India banned exports of Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines produced by the Serum Institute of India because of its own devastating surge in infections.

Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jiming formally handed over the Sinopharm vaccines in Dhaka on Wednesday.

Bangladesh has already approved the Chinese vaccines after the World Health Organization has recently listed the Sinopharm for emergency use globally.

Bangladesh received about 7 million doses from the Indian institute, but its deal had called for 30 million doses to be delivered by June.

## New coronavirus cases cause worry in Taiwan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAIPEI, 12 MAY

Taiwan's president on Wednesday sought to reassure the public that the government is capable of withstanding a further outbreak of Covid-19 after 16 local cases were detected.

The exact origins of the cases have not yet been discovered. The challenge at this moment is still severe. Please be alert and follow the guidelines," President Tsai

Yin-wen said in televised remarks. She called on people not to panic.

Tsai said medical supplies were sufficient and vaccines would continue to be distributed.

Taiwan had virtually eradicated domestic transmission of the coronavirus through strict mask wearing, case tracing, travel restrictions and quarantine measures.

It has counted 1,210 confirmed cases to date, with the vast majority imported.

## Drop in Xinjiang birth rate largest in recent history: Report

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING, 12 MAY

Xinjiang in far western China had the sharpest known decline in birth rates between 2017 and 2019 of any territory in recent history, according to a new analysis by an Australian think tank.

The report from the Australian Strategy Policy Institute, obtained exclusively ahead of publication by The Associated Press, showed the 48.74 per cent decline was concentrated in areas with many Uighurs, Kazakhs and other largely Muslim ethnic minorities, based on Chinese govern-

ment statistics over nearly a decade.

Birth rates in largely minority counties fell 43.7 per cent between 2017 and 2018 alone, with over 160,000 fewer babies born. That compares to a slight increase in births in counties populated mostly by China's Han majority.

Such an extreme drop in birthrates is unprecedented in the 71 years since the United Nations began collecting global fertility statistics, beating out even declines during the Syrian civil war and the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia, said Nathan Ruser, an ASPI researcher and co-

author of the report.

As far as it's possible to find out, it is by far the largest drop there is, Ruser said.

It makes you realize the scale of these family planning policies and the scale of this crackdown, the scale of societal control that authorities are looking for. The ASPI report corroborates an AP story and a report by German researcher Adrian Zenz last year that found the Chinese government was systematically slashing Uighur birthrates with sterilizations, abortions and intrauterine devices, and fining and detaining people with three or more children.

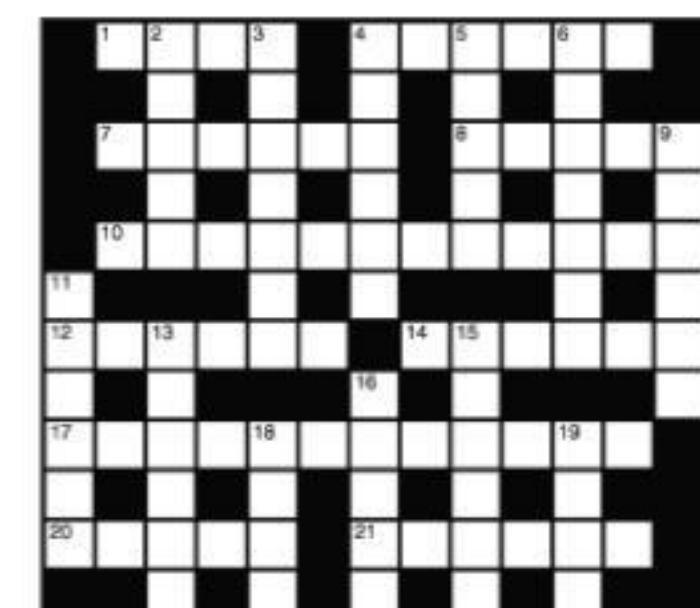
The Chinese Foreign Ministry and the Xinjiang government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

However, Zenz and ASPI have come under increasing attack from Beijing, which points to their funding from the governments of the US and other Western countries to discredit them. It confirmed many of the figures were based on Chinese government statistics.

Over the past four years, the Chinese authorities have carried out a brutal campaign of forced assimilation targeting the Uighurs.

## LEISURE

## 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



**CROSS**  
1 Row (4)  
4 Bobbed down (6)  
7 Bird of prey (6)  
8 Golf clubs (5)  
10 Repetition of first letters (12)  
12 Street seller (6)  
14 Base coat (of paint) (6)  
17 Race over open ground (5,7)  
20 Fruit (5)  
21 Sufficient (6)  
22 Rehearsal (informal) (3,3)  
23 Bare (5)  
  
**DOWN**  
2 Considering everything (2,3)  
3 Take delivery of (7)  
4 Peril (6)  
5 Porcelain (5)  
6 Self-centredness (7)  
7 Miscellaneous (6)  
11 Latin-American dance (3-3)  
13 Huge lie (informal) (7)  
15 Dilapidated (3-4)  
16 Rule (6)  
18 Very steep (5)  
19 Stiff (5)

**SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD**

1 Carry, 4 Boo-Carri-, 6 Desolate, 8 Ju-Hee-, 9 Alive, 10 Lair, 11 Aloë vera, 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

1 Caje, 3 Rubbish, 5 York, 7 Bracelet, 9 Onice, 11 Bell-bottoms, 13 Chromone-ter, 15 Aspect, 17 Stalk, 19 Onus.

2 Rubber, 4 Carbo-, 6 Share, 8 Juke, 10 Lair, 11 Aloë vera, 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

3 Dye, 5 Desolate, 7 Ju-Hee-, 9 Alive, 10 Lair, 11 Aloë vera, 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

4 Bobbed down (6), 6 Desolate, 8 Ju-Hee-, 9 Alive, 10 Lair, 11 Aloë vera, 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

5 Peril (6), 7 Bracelet, 9 Onice, 11 Bell-bottoms, 13 Chromone-ter, 15 Aspect, 17 Stalk, 19 Onus.

6 Self-centredness (7), 8 Juke, 10 Lair, 11 Aloë vera, 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

7 Miscellaneous (6), 9 Onice, 11 Bell-bottoms, 13 Chromone-ter, 15 Aspect, 17 Stalk, 19 Onus.

10 Repetition of first letters (12), 12 Colliery, 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet.

11 Latin-American dance (3-3), 13 Chromone-ter, 15 Aspect, 17 Stalk, 19 Onus.

12 Street seller (6), 14 Educate, 16 Dusk, 18 Gums, 20 Share, 21 Man-made, 22 Key, 23 Sheet



*This isn't a video game where you can move forces with a flick of the thumb or a movie that glosses over the logistical challenges.*

FORMER UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHRISTOPHER MILLER

ON 6 JANUARY RIOT AT THE US CAPITOL

## WEATHER

CITY	MAX (°C)	MIN (°C)
SINGAPORE	29	24 H
HONG KONG	27	23 H
TOKYO	18	14 H
LONDON	14	05 H
DUBAI	33	27 S
SAN FRANCISCO	09	05 H
NEW YORK	10	07 S
MOSCOW	23	10 H

S=sunny, CL= clear,  
H=hazy, R=rainy...

## THUMBNAILS



Manaf Albarakati, 14, of Narberth, Pa., receives a Pfizer Covid-19 vaccination from registered nurse Alicia Jimenez at a Montgomery County, Pa., Office of Public Health vaccination clinic at the King of Prussia Mall. **AGENCIES**

**Colombia protests:** Forty-two people have died during anti-government protests that began two weeks ago amid discontent fueled by growing poverty and inequality during the pandemic, Colombia's human rights ombudsman said Tuesday. The government agency added that 168 people had been reported missing during the protests, which were set to continue Wednesday. On May 5, the human rights ombudsman said 24 people had been killed in the protests and 89 were missing. **AP**

**Fire in Egypt hospital:** A fire broke out in an intensive care unit of an Egyptian hospital, leaving at least two patients dead, an official said. The fire erupted overnight at a government-run hospital in the Nile Delta city of Kafr el-Sheikh, said Ahmed el-Samahi, a spokesman for province. The hospital is treating those suffering from respiratory diseases. **AP**

## House GOP ousts Trump critic Liz Cheney from top post

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON, 12 MAY

House Republicans ousted Rep. Liz Cheney from her post as the chamber's No. 3 GOP leader on Wednesday, punishing her after she repeatedly rebuked former President Donald Trump for his false claims of election fraud and his role in fomenting the Jan. 6 Capitol attack.

GOP lawmakers gathered privately in the Capitol Visitor Center on Wednesday and were expected to vote to remove Cheney, R-Wyo., from the party's No. 3 House position, a jarring turnabout to what's been her fast-rising career within the party. She is Congress' highest-ranking Republican woman and a daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, and her demotion would provide the latest evidence that challenging Trump can be career-threatening.

Cheney took to a nearly empty House chamber Tuesday evening to deliver an unapologetic four-minute assault on her GOP adversaries and defense of her own position.

Cheney's replacement was widely expected to be Rep. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y., who entered the House in 2015 at age 30, then the youngest woman ever elected to Congress.

Stefanik owns a more moderate voting record than Cheney but has evolved into a vigorous Trump defender who's echoed some of his unfounded claims about widespread election cheating.

It was initially unclear when the separate vote on Cheney's replacement would be. Stripping Cheney, 54, of her leadership job would stand as a striking, perhaps historic moment for the GOP.

One of the nation's two major parties was in effect declaring an extraordinary admission requirement to its highest ranks: fealty to, or at least silence about, Trump's lie that he lost his re-election bid due to widespread fraud.

## Number of injured in Russia school shooting rises to 23

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MOSCOW, 12 MAY

Twenty-three people remained hospitalised on Wednesday following a school shooting in the Russian city of Kazan which killed nine people, including seven youngsters.

All 23 were in stable condition Wednesday morning, the authorities said, though at least eight people three adults and five children were to be transferred to Moscow for treatment.

A gunman on Tuesday morning attacked a school in Kazan, a city 430 miles (700 km) east of Moscow, sending students hiding under their desks or running out of the building. Nine people seven students and two school employees were killed.

The attacker, identified only as a 19-year-old, was arrested. The authorities gave no immediate details on a motive, but said he legally owned a firearm.

In 2018, a teenager killed

Wednesday was declared a day of mourning in Tatarstan, the Russian region of which Kazan is the capital, with funerals of the victims expected to take place.

Russian media said the gunman was a former student at the school who called himself a god on his account on the messaging app Telegram and promised to kill a large amount of biomass on the morning of the shooting.

Attacks on schools are rare in Russia, and President Vladimir Putin reacted by ordering the head of the country's National Guard to revise regulations on the types of weapons allowed for civilian use.

The deadliest school attack in Russia took place in 2004 in the city of Beslan, when Islamic militants took more than 1,000 people hostage for several days. The siege ended in gunfire and explosions, leaving 334 dead, more than half of them children.

Officials in Kazan said the school had a doorman for security during day time, and she was the one who hit the panic button, alerting law enforcement about the attack.

Russian officials promised to pay families of those killed 1 million rubles each.

20 people at his vocational school before killing himself in Kerch, a city in the Russian-annexed peninsula of Crimea. In the wake of that attack, Putin also ordered authorities to tighten control over gun ownership. But most of the proposed measures were turned down by the parliament or the government.

Russian lawmaker Alexander Khinshtain said on Telegram that the suspect in the Kazan attack received a permit for a shotgun less than two weeks ago and that the school had no security aside from a panic button. Authorities did not specify what kind of gun the attacker used.

Officials in Kazan said the school had a doorman for security during day time, and she was the one who hit the panic button, alerting law enforcement about the attack.

Russian officials promised to pay families of those killed 1 million rubles each.

## LIFE SAVERS



Nursing and care personnel lay on the floor in an ICU unit, during a demonstration on International Nursing and Care Day, at the Mont Legia Hospital in Liege, Belgium. **AGENCIES**

committing to donate 60 million AstraZeneca vaccines to other countries by July 4, she said. "India's outbreak underscores the need for a robust public health infrastructure in the US to respond appropriately to this pandemic and future outbreaks, as well," Senator Murray said as she asked Fauci what can the US learn from India's outbreak.

"One of the important things is don't ever underestimate the situation," Fauci said as he referred to India's incorrect assumption and premature opening up.

"The second thing is preparedness with regard to public health, preparedness, which we, as a lesson learned for future pandemics, have to realize that we need to continue to build up our local public health infrastructure, which over the last decades we have let actually in many respects go into disarray, likely because

of our successes in controlling so many diseases," Fauci said.

The other lesson that is learned is that this is a global pandemic that requires a global response, and one has to pay attention to the "responsibility that we have, not only for our own country but to join

## New interim govt in Bulgaria

SOFIA, 12 MAY

Bulgaria's president on Wednesday appointed a retired general as interim PM in hopes of ensuring stability in the country until an election is held in July.

Presenting the new Cabinet, President Rumen Radev said a body made of experts aspires to embody democratic unity and prove that it is possible for democrats of various political affiliations to overcome obsolete divisions and red lines.

He said that while the Cabinet will work in a limited timeframe, it will tell the truth and will not conceal the real condition of the country. It will make initial steps to strengthen statehood and show Bulgarians that their country can be run with honesty.

## Kremlin-imposed cuts at US embassy leave thousands adrift



ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MOSCOW, 12 MAY

birth of his daughter, a record of the child's claim to U.S. citizenship.

My expectation was as things get better with the situation with the pandemic, gradually the consulate would open more and more and more, he said. It was a big shock to suddenly get an email from them, about two weeks ago, saying effective on the 11th we will no longer be offering any consular services.

Because this means his daughter, who was born before the pandemic, will not be able to travel to visit her grandparents in the United States in the foreseeable future.

The embassy has made no statements on whether it is taking measures to beef up the consular staff with new employees from the United States.

Embassy spokespeople could not be reached for clarification on how the mission will handle other jobs also filled by locals, such as security.

An order signed last month by President Vladimir Putin called for creating a list of unfriendly countries whose missions could be banned from hiring Russians or third-country nationals. The list includes the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Poland and several other European countries, but the United States is the first for which the ban is being enforced.

The move followed U.S. sanctions imposed over Russian interference in the 2020 U.S. presidential election and involvement in the SolarWinds hack of federal agencies.

Each country expelled 10 of their diplomats. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the ban on local employees is in line with convention.

We rarely employ any local personnel in the country where our diplomatic mission is. And thus we have the full right to transfer this practice onto the regulations which manage the work of the U.S. Embassy and their general consulate in the Russian Federation," he said last month.

Julia Kukula, a university student who was accepted for a PhD program in sustainable energy at Arizona State University, may have found a laborious and costly way around the problem of getting her visa to attend university.

After searching online for advice from others in her situation, Kukula was able to sign up for an interview for a visa at the U.S. consulate in neighboring Kazakhstan. But that's a 2,300-kilometer (1,400-mile) trip from Moscow, and the interview isn't until October.

The United States once had three other consulates in Russia in Yekaterinburg, Vladivostok and St. Petersburg which somewhat eased the travel burden for people seeking visas.

But those consulates have closed or stopped providing visas amid diplomatic spats in recent years, in what Alexei Rodzianko, head of the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia, called a visa war.

That had already placed a burden on the companies in his chamber whose executives needed to travel. Now it looks like it's impossible for the indefinite future, he said.

The travel restrictions of the pandemic have shown that videoconferencing can't entirely replace the in-person contact of business travel, he said.

They're especially good for people who already know each other and they're much less effective for people getting to know each other, he said.

## Indigenous New Zealand lawmaker censured for Maori haka protest

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WELLINGTON, 12 MAY

An Indigenous New Zealand lawmaker was thrown out of Parliament's debating chamber on Wednesday for performing a Maori haka in protest at what he said were racist arguments.

Rawiri Waititi's stance came after ongoing debate among lawmakers about the government's plans to set up a new Maori Health Authority as part of sweeping changes to the health care system.

Some conservative lawmakers have said the plan is separatist. Waititi, the co-leader of the Maori Party, said those arguments amounted to racist rhetoric.

Waititi told lawmakers in the chamber that he was forced to listen to a constant barrage of insults directed



toward Indigenous people. If that kind of attitude was unacceptable, he said, then I find this House in disrepute.

Speaker Trevor Mallard then told Waititi to sit down but instead he performed a haka, a traditional dance or challenge accompanied by a chant.

Order. The member will now leave the chamber," Mallard told Waititi, which he did along with his party's other co-leader, Debbie Ngarewa-Packer.

It's not the first time Waititi has clashed with Mallard.

## UK economy showed resilience ahead of big lockdown easing

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LONDON, 12 MAY

The British economy contracted by a quarterly rate of 1.5 per cent in the first three months of 2021, a relatively modest contraction given that the country was in the midst of a strict lockdown to combat a second wave of the coronavirus.

The Office for National Statistics also said Wednesday that the economy even managed to grow by a monthly rate of 2.1 per cent in March when the country began easing some restrictions, notably by reopening schools.

The overall first quarter figures provide further evidence that businesses and consumers have adapted to the constraints of lockdown by increasing their online activities. In the second quarter of 2020, when the first lockdown was in place, the British economy contracted by

5.8 per cent. The agency said the strong recovery seen in March was led by the retail sector and the return of schools. The construction and manufacturing sectors also did well as businesses continued to adapt to the pandemic.

Treasury chief Rishi Sunak said the March performance is a promising sign of things to come." Despite the March bounce-back, the British economy remains 8.7 per cent smaller

than it was on the eve of the pandemic. That compares unfavorably with other Group of Seven industrial nations, such as the U.S., which is only 0.9 per cent smaller. France, Germany and Italy, too, have also clawed back more ground.

Hopes are high though that the British economy can recoup more of its pandemic losses over the coming months as restrictions are eased in the wake of sharply lower coronavirus infections.

and a successful vaccine rollout program.

The Bank of England even thinks that the British economy will have recouped all its COVID-related losses by the end of this year.

Since the reopening of schools in early March, the lockdown has been eased further with pubs and restaurants, for example, allowed to serve customers outside and shops selling nonessential items allowed to open their doors again.

Over coming weeks, the lockdown will be eased further and life is expected to be more or less normal by the summer subject to there not being another resurgence of the virus.

There's never been a recession caused by having to close the economy and there's never been a recovery caused by re-opening it, said Ian Stewart, chief economist at Deloitte.



Separately, the statistics agency also said that exports of goods to the European Union increased in March and are now almost back to where they were in December, the last month that Britain was part of the European single market and customs union.

The new free trade deal between a post-Brexit Britain and the EU came into force at the start of 2021, leading to disruption in trade in which the British government said represented some early teething problems.

Though the deal ensured that tariffs and quotas would not be slapped on traded goods, other non-tariff barriers, such as customs checks, came into force. Though exports have seemingly recovered, imports from Europe remained sluggish in the first three months of the year, outstripped by non-EU imports for the first time on record.

# Collegium without collegiality

**It is important for the new Chief Justice of India to revive the process required to fill vacancies of judges, say YOGESH PRATAP SINGH & LOKENDRA MALIK**



iStock

## SEEING MAY NOT BE BELIEVING

**Video evidence can be differently interpreted by courts as cases from Rodney King to George Floyd show, says SANDRA RISTOVSKA**

Like his predecessors, Justice S. A. Bobde's 17-month tenure as Chief Justice of India (CJI) was also eventful. Two waves of Covid, transition of the physical functioning of courts to a virtual mode and an accusation that CJI turned a blind eye to people's sufferings were the most striking features. His passion for motorcycles, specifically a Harley Davidson was another significant feature which resulted in a dramatic contempt of court case against activist lawyer Prashant Bhushan. Earlier this year, CJI Bobde courted controversy when he asked a government official whether he would marry the victim he was accused of allegedly raping.

But above all, Justice Bobde became the first CJI who could not make even a single recommendation for appointing a judge of the Supreme Court during his tenure. The last appointment in the Supreme Court was made in September 2019 during the then CJI Ranjan Gogoi's tenure. Currently, the Supreme Court has seven vacancies of judges, and four more judges will retire by the end of this year. Although in his last days in office, Chief Justice Bobde called a meeting of the collegium despite reservations of at least two of his colleagues, he failed to break the deadlock. This shows that the trust deficit amongst members of collegium runs deep and the new CJI should take it seriously.

The constitutional scheme settled after three *judges cases* decided in 1993, 1999, and 2015 respectively has established that the President of India appoints judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts in consultation with the CJI and some of his senior-most colleagues who are part of collegium. The CJI heads the collegium but he has no veto power over his colleagues. He convenes the meeting of the collegium; sets its agenda and presents the proposals for judges' appointments before his four/two colleagues (G-5&G-3) who consider such names and take the decisions by consensus in writing.

The CJI cannot recommend any name to the President of India if two or more collegium members oppose such a name, and even if he sends his recommendation to the President of India, the latter is not bound to accept such recommendation. On the other hand, no proposal for recommending a judge's appointment can be approved if the CJI does not give his nod to the same. In other words, the four collegium members cannot send their recommendations to the President by ignoring the CJI's view. The CJI thus is the lynchpin between the President of India and the Supreme Court collegium. Therefore, the CJI needs to carry all collegium members with him so that the recommendations could be made collectively and unanimously.

In the scheme of judicial appointments, the Central Government is an important stakeholder. Before giving a green signal to the collegium's recommendations, the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Government of India completes certain administrative formalities like background checks of the recommended persons through the Intelligence Bureau. This is a crucial process that provides space to the Central Government to delay/dilute the implementation of the collegium's recommendations. But finally, the collegium has the power to accept or reject the objections of the Central Government.

In *Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association v. Union of India*, (2016) 5 SCC 1 at 588, the Supreme Court has reiterated this view: "If the Chief Justice of India and others with whom he/she has discussed the matter conclude unanimously that the person ought to be appointed as a judge of a High Court or the Supreme Court despite the antecedents, peculiarities, and angularities, there can be no earthly reason why that collective view should not be accepted. The Chief Justice of India is in a sense the captain of the ship as far as the judiciary is concerned and his/her opinion (obtained collectively and unanimously) should be accepted rather than the opinion of someone who is a passenger (though an important

one) in the ship."

Needless to say, the Central Government is entitled to check the antecedents of the recommended persons but this process should not be used as a tool to delay the appointment of selected candidates who do not fall in line with the government's thinking. Professor Upendra Baxi precisely states: "To be sure, a national security check on the names finalised by the collegium is the prerogative of the Union of India but this does not furnish any ground for reportedly adding new conditions regarding judicial elevations beyond the NJAC decision itself. The collegium that makes the final choices is best assisted by the national intelligence agencies. However, constitutional good faith requires the appointment process be reasonably expeditious and efficient. In case of elevation of high court chief justices and associate justices such an enquiry would not involve much time as would first-time elevations to the Supreme and high courts. In any case, a national security check cannot be an alibi for much delayed executive and judicial action. Nor can it be a cover for bringing back some aspects of the NJAC amendment and the Act." (Indian Express, August 24, 2016)

Since 2014, a trend is visible where the Central Government has delayed several judicial appointments and also segregated some recommendations without taking the collegium into confidence. This practice undermines the authority, primacy, and independence of the Supreme Court collegium. This is an interference in judicial appointments that violates the independence of the judiciary. Former Chief Justice of India R. M. Lodha makes it succinctly clear: "When we send the names of judges, and when it is more than one, the collegium considers many factors. One of which includes who all the collegium feels fit to become CJI in due course of time. So, when the list is prepared, serial numbers of 1,2,3,4 are given to the names recommended to the government. These serial numbers are given to indicate who is to remain senior to whom, who is to become CJI, etc. So, if the government is segregating names, it is tinkering with the list the collegium sent". (*The Hindu*, April 28, 2016)

The segregation of recommendations made by the Central Government affects the seniority of the judges adversely. The Central Government can always express its objections about the recommended candidates if it finds something objectionable that goes against the national security or judicial independence but finally, it must honour the collegium's view. And if it proposes to segregate some names of judges recommended by the collegium, it should always take the latter into confidence. "The first thing required of the government is to write to the CJI, saying, 'Look, in the list of two you sent us, we have a problem with this person. So, if you want the other name to go ahead, we can proceed'. This is how the primacy of the collegium is maintained. The government cannot do indirectly what it cannot do directly," the former CJI Lodha said on the segregation issue. "*The executive cannot split the recommendation. It is for the Supreme Court to do so*", states former CJI M. N. Venkatachaliah,

Perhaps, the collegium is responsible for its own decline. The trust deficit prevailing among the collegium members is causing irreparable damage to the credibility of the institution. Transparency in the collegium is another issue that requires serious attention by the judge-makers. The new CJI Justice N. V. Rama should eliminate this deficit to protect the integrity, sanctity, and authenticity of the decision-making process of the collegium. Otherwise, the judicial independence argument would remain a shallow drum being played often by the collegium.

The writers are, respectively, Professor of Law at the National Law University Odisha and an Advocate, Supreme Court of India.

**N**ews media coverage of Derek Chauvin's trial for the murder of George Floyd highlighted the role of video as a 'star witness.' Jurors in this trial saw footage from cellphones, police body cameras, dashboard cameras and surveillance cameras. In his closing arguments, prosecuting attorney Steve Schleicher even told the jurors, "Believe your eyes. What you saw, you saw."

For the past eight years I have been studying the use of video as evidence both in international human rights courts and tribunals and in state and federal courts in the U.S. As a media scholar, I pay close attention to how people interpret video as evidence. One of the things I have found is that the argument "seeing is believing" is not as intuitive as it sounds.

On 3 March 1991, a Los Angeles resident named George Holliday saw, from his apartment balcony, four Los Angeles policemen beating a Black man. He recorded the violence on video and eventually sold it to a local TV news station. This bystander footage of the beating of Rodney King quickly made headlines in the U.S. and around the world.

Holliday's video also became crucial evidence in the trial of the officers on charges of assault and excessive use of force. Lead prosecutor Terry White ended his closing arguments with a final showing of the video, asking the jury: "Now who do you believe, the defendants or your own eyes?"

The jurors responded by acquitting the officers, discarding the seemingly obvious interpretation of Holliday's video. They instead believed the skillful frame-by-frame analysis of the defense attorneys, who argued that the video was not evidence of police misconduct but of a justified response to King's allegedly frightening actions.

One could ask why the jurors did not believe their own eyes. It is thus important to note that seeing involves not only what the eyes see, but the experiences and ideas that the viewer brings to the image. What people see is affected by what they already know and believe, a phenomenon that art critic John Berger in 1972 enduringly termed "ways of seeing."

Race is one factor that shapes seeing.

In 1952, psychiatrist and political philosopher Frantz Fanon famously described an incident in which a white boy felt frightened just by looking at a Black man. That some might find the mere appearance of Black people threatening speaks to a long history of racism that has framed people of colour as less than human. In other words, seeing is influenced by power and other differences that shape the conditions of how we as humans experience the world.

Cognitive factors also have an impact on seeing. Not everyone who sees a video interprets it in the same way. Selective attention is one cognitive process that accounts for different ways of seeing. For example, a psychology experiment found white participants more likely to notice a Black man appearing in the middle of a video than a white man.

Camera angles affect perception as well. Another study found when the camera is focused on the

suspect, viewers tend to find a videotaped confession more voluntary, and thus less coercive, than when the camera is focused on the officer.

Even the associations that a video brings to mind can influence seeing. In *Scott v. Harris*, a prominent 2007 Supreme Court case involving a police car chase that left a Black driver paralyzed, video evidence was an important part of the trial and the decision. Writing for the majority, which sided with the police, Justice Antonin Scalia said the case was "clear from the videotape," and that "what we see on the video more closely resembles a Hollywood-style car chase of the most frightening sort, placing police officers and innocent bystanders alike at great risk of serious injury."

During the oral arguments, Justice Scalia even compared the dashcam footage with the famous fast and violent police car chase in the movie "The French Connection."

In a lone dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens sided with lower court judges who disagreed with this interpretation. "This is hardly the stuff of Hollywood," Justice Stevens wrote. The video "surely does not provide a principled basis for depriving the respondent of his right to have a jury evaluate the question whether the police officers' decision to use deadly force to bring the chase to an end was reasonable."

This case serves as another reminder that seeing is not intuitive. Courts may use video evidence differently, even within the life span of the same case.

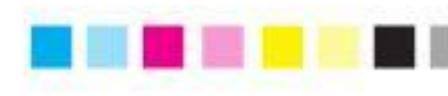
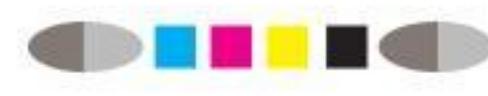
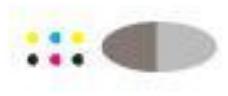
Video is neither a transparent nor an opaque form of evidence but an opportunity to ask important questions, just as with any other type of evidence.

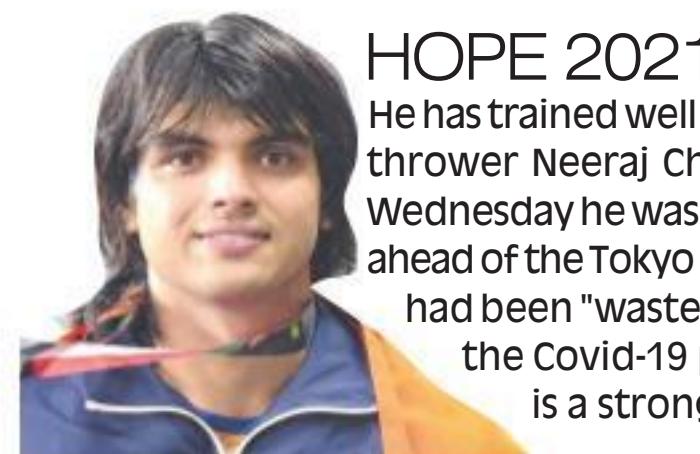
Some of these questions cannot be answered by any one video on its own. Not all court cases feature multiple videos that authenticate one another, but Derek Chauvin's trial relied on numerous videos from different cameras and locations, each providing a distinct perspective on the crime scene. These videos corroborated one another, helping reconstruct what led to George Floyd's death on 25 May 2020.

The trial also featured 37 witnesses for the prosecution. Among them was Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo, who testified that Chauvin's actions violated relevant department policies. For the jury, the multiple videos and witness testimonies proved the murder charges beyond a reasonable doubt.

Bystander, bodycam and dashcam videos of police can be powerful forms of evidence that help jurors bear witness to an event from the complicated scenes of its occurrence. Yet judges, attorneys and jurors may see and treat video in varied ways that can lead to inconsistent renderings of justice. U.S. courts thus need safeguards to ensure that video evidence is rigorously assessed during trial.

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## HOPE 2021

He has trained well but Olympic-bound javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra (photo, left) said on Wednesday he was desperate for competition ahead of the Tokyo Games, given that two years had been "wasted" because of an injury and the Covid-19 pandemic. The 23-year-old is a strong medal hope.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

# 'Dip in tune-up will be offset by Indians' experience'

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Quarantine restrictions might hamper the Indian cricket team's preparation for the World Test Championship final in England but bowling coach Bharat Arun and fielding coach R Sridhar say the players' abundant experience will counter that challenge.

India are expected to depart for the UK in the first week of June following a week of hard quarantine. It is not yet known if Virat Kohli and Co will be allowed to train ahead of the marquee clash against New Zealand during their quarantine in Southampton. The match starts on June 14.

The team are also scheduled to play five Tests against England after that in August.

"I don't think we have a choice," Sridhar said when asked how much time the team would need to be ready for the big game. "We would like to make the most of what we get because it all depends on how many days of hard or soft quarantine we are going to have, when we are going to land and if at



all we get a practice game so I don't think we have a choice," he added.

Given the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, a strict bubble life, including quarantine upon arrival, has made the schedule particularly taxing for the players. Sridhar said going to the UK with a "slight under-prepared mindset" could also bring the best out of the players.

"It's time to be mentally

smart, we have a very experienced team going into the game," he said.

New Zealand cricketers, including skipper Kane Williamson (in photo), quarantining in the Maldives after the Indian Premier League's suspension, might head to England this weekend for a two-Test series, coach Gary Stead said.

Williamson, Mitchell Santner, Kyle Jamieson, and physio

Tommy Simsek are currently undergoing isolation in the Maldives and the Test series against England is to start on 2 June 2, followed by the World Test Championship final against India in Southampton.

"I don't know all the details right now," Stead was quoted as saying by a website.

"My understanding is that they are looking to leave somewhere around the time that we leave (May 15, 16 or 17). My

understanding is the England board is still working through the final details of what it means to come through the Maldives as opposed to New Zealand," he added.

The Maldives has been placed on the UK government's red list, which means that no direct flights from that country will be allowed in England and residents coming from there will have to undergo a 10-day quarantine period.

Stead also hinted that paceman Trent Boult, who went home after the IPL's suspension, might be available only for the WTC final and the preceding Tests against England.

"Everyone has got their reasons around it," Stead said.

"India changed very quickly, over the space of two or three days, and there were options put in front of the guys and he (Boult) felt for him and given his mental health, the best thing he could do was get home for a while."

"He will be ready. We are working through a build-up for him and will scrutinise his readiness for the World Test Championship final when he

comes back to us."

## Watling's decision

New Zealand wicketkeeper-batsman BJ Watling has announced he will retire from all cricket after the World Test Championship final against India in England next month.

South Africa-born Watling made the announcement ahead of the release on Friday of the list of New Zealand Cricket's 20 contracted players for the next season.

"It is still not clear if Shreyas will recover fully and will be match-fit on time for the tour of Sri Lanka. Normally, surgery of this scale along with rest, extensive rehab and training to get back in shape take around four months," a senior Board of Control for Cricket in India source said today.

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly on Sunday said the Indian team, minus their top players, would tour Sri Lanka in July for a limited-overs series. "In case Shreyas was available, he would have been the automatic choice for captaincy," the source said.

From then on, he was an automatic choice for New Zealand teams. He scored 3,773 runs in 73 Tests at an average of 38.11 with eight centuries and 19 half-centuries. At the same time, he was responsible for a New Zealand record 257 wicket-keeping dismissals, including 249 catches.



## Dhawan in reckoning for lead role in Lanka tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, 12 MAY

Shikhar Dhawan (in photo) and Hardik Pandya will be locked in a two-way fight for India's captaincy if Shreyas Iyer does not get fit on time for a white-ball tour of Sri Lanka in July.

India's limited-overs specialists will be playing three Twenty20 Internationals and as many One-Day Internationals in the island nation in the second half of July, when big guns like Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma will be in England for a five-match Test series.

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Perera chosen

Wicketkeeper-batsman Kusal Perera was today named Sri Lanka's One-Day Internationals captain with Kusal Mendis as his deputy for an away series against Bangladesh this month.

Perera, who has represented Sri Lanka in 101 ODIs, 22 Tests and 47 Twenty20 Internationals, takes over from Dimuth Karunaratne.

Karunaratne, senior all-rounder Angelo Mathews, top-order batsman Lahiru Thirimanne and wicketkeeper Dinesh Chandimal have been dropped from the squad by the selection committee of Sri Lanka Cricket.

The squad includes several new faces. Paceman Chamika Karunaratne and batsman Shiran Fernando got their first limited-overs call-ups, while speedster Binura Fernando, who has played a couple of T20Is, was also named.

## Arjuna winning former TT player V Chandrasekhar dies due to COVID complications

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHENNAI, 12 MAY

Arjuna award-winning former India table tennis player V Chandrasekhar died at a private hospital here on Wednesday due to COVID-19 related complications, family sources said.

He was 64 and is survived by his wife and a son.

Chandrasekhar, as he was popularly known, was a three-time national champion and the president of Tamil Nadu Table Tennis Association and Director and head coach of the SDAT-Medimix TT Academy in the city.

The Chennai-born player, who had reached the semi-finals of the Commonwealth Games in 1982, was also a successful coach.

His playing career was cut short in 1984 following a botched knee surgery at a hospital here which led to him losing mobility, speech and vision. He fought back to recover and served the game as a coach.

He also fought a legal battle against the hospital and got a verdict in his favour.

The paddler was a three-time national champion and a gold medallist in BA (Economics) and Law at the time of the career-ending injury.

## Frustration in Japan as leader pushes Olympics despite virus

AGENCIES  
TOKYO, 12 MAY

Subsequently, sheer willpower helped Chandra return to 70-80 percent of his normal mobility and he decided to focus on training promising players.

According to a few paddlers who have played with him, Chandra was one of the most attractive players and took risks at crucial stages of the game to unsettle opponents.

Chandra last appeared in the Indore nationals, held in 1983, losing to the eventual champion Kamlesh Mehta.

Chandra had beaten Kamlesh in the previous nationals at Palghat for the Chennai paddler's third consecutive and last national crown.

Mehta, recalling his association with Chandra, said it was difficult to find such an amiable character.

"He was friendly on and off the court. It was he who made topspin popular in India. He learned the skills at (Ichiro) Ogimura's academy in Japan."

"I spoke to him on the day he got admitted to the hospital (May 8). But who would have thought he would leave us all so soon, he added."

In 1984, he participated in the central zone event at Indore, conceding the final to Manjit Singh Dua, when the crowd booed and pilloried Chandra on some personal issues.

That has since been extended through May 31. On Wednesday, two more areas, Aichi in central Japan and Fukuoka in the south, were placed under the emergency measures.

No vaccine. No medication. Are we supposed to fight with bamboo spears? We'll be killed by politics if things remain unchanged," said the critical ad, which showed an illustration of a red coronavirus symbol on a World War II-era photo of Japanese children practicing to fight with naginata sword-shaped sticks.

The ad by Tokyo-based publisher Takarajimasha, known for its outspoken stance on political and social issues, urged the public to demand that the government poorly conceived coronavirus measures.

We have been deceived. What was the past year for it said.

The publisher said many Japanese people have faced medical and financial problems amid ramped-up planning for the resource-draining Olympics, which are to start in about two months.

Last month, Suga declared a third state of emergency in Osaka, the center of the current surge in virus cases, as well as in Tokyo and two other areas.

That has since been extended through May 31. On Wednesday, two more areas, Aichi in central Japan and Fukuoka in the south, were placed under the emergency measures.

The ad caused a stir on social media. But there was also wide public interest in a session of parliament in which scores of opposition lawmakers asked Suga how he could guarantee a safe Olympics during an expanded state of emergency.

Suga repeatedly dodged giving a direct answer, saying more than a dozen times that he was committed to holding the games safely and to protecting people's lives and health.

Videos of Suga's parliamentary remarks were shared on social media, and people posted comments such as The prime minister is broken.

Suga and his government have faced criticism for being too slow and lax on virus measures. Even though Japan has managed to keep its number of cases and deaths below those in the U.S. and Europe without lockdowns and other mandatory measures, the results are worse than some other places in Asia.

Japan has also lagged far behind in vaccinations. Though officials blame a lack of supplies imported from Europe, progress is slow because of staff shortages.

Play was then suspended for approximately three hours.

Fritz held his service game after the resumption to force the tie-breaker, but Djokovic closed out the win on his first

## Djokovic loses cool, wins match against Fritz

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ROME, 12 MAY

Top-ranked Novak Djokovic (in photo) shouted at the umpire before regaining his cool to see out his rain-delayed second-round match against Taylor Fritz at the Italian Open.

With conditions worsening during the second set and rain getting heavier, the defending champion's temper boiled over and he roared, "How much more do you want to play?" at the umpire. He added: "I asked you three times and you are not checking anything."

Djokovic, who has won the Italian Open five times, went on to beat the American 6-3, 7-6 (5).

"I was stressed out in the end obviously, but I think it was the right call to stop the match," Djokovic said. When I came back, I thought we were quite even actually till the last point. I'm glad that I managed to finish off this match in straight sets. I know I can play better."

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match point.

It was a very strange match with strange conditions, Djokovic said. "Obviously... it is challenging for both me and him. I thought that I had an advantage there because the conditions were slower which allows me to return his serves, because he's got really big serves," Djokovic continued.

"So I kind of kept the match under my control for most part of the two sets, then served for the match. Very sloppy service game. He played well, made a great passing shot to come back."

Last year, Djokovic was disqualified from the US Open for unintentionally hitting a line judge in the throat with a ball.

Djokovic will next play a qualifier in either Alejandro Davydovych or Grigor Dimitrov 6-4, 7-6 (2), or Cameron Norrie.

Daniil Medvedev's scheduled showdown with fellow Russian Aslan Karatsev was

among the matches postponed on Tuesday.

Earlier, ninth-seeded Matteo Berrettini rallied to beat Nikoloz Basilashvili 4-6, 6-2, 6-4 less than 48 hours after losing the final in Madrid. Fellow Italian Lorenzo Sonego also advanced, celebrating his birthday by beating 14th-seeded Gael Monfils 6-4, 5-7, 6-4.

Kei Nishikori was handed a walkover in his second-round match against 11th-seeded Pablo Carreno Busta. Eighth-seeded Diego Schwartzman was beaten 6-1, 6-3 by Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, who moves into the third round.

In the women's tournament, former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko ousted 16th-seeded Johanna Konta 6-3, 6-1 and Kristina Mladenovic upset 10th-seeded Belinda Bencic 6-3, 6-4.

Madison Keys rallied to win an all-American derby against Sloane Stephens 4-6, 6-2, 7-5.

## City's dominance cemented by third title in four seasons

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
MANCHESTER, 12 MAY

until 1999 and won two English titles in the previous century in 1937 and 1968.

Within minutes of the final whistle blowing at Old Trafford - after Caglar Soyuncu's 66th-minute header sealed the Leicester win that ended United's hopes of catching City - a "Champions" banner was unfurled over the entrance to the Etihad.

Soon, fans were setting off blue flares and parading small replica Premier League trophies.

They will finally be allowed back into the stadium - up to 10,000 of them - to see City collect the real trophy after the final game of the Premier League season against Everton on 23 May.

But it's not the first trophy

they have missed the fans so much," City captain Fernandinho said. "We wanted to do this for them. We will enjoy this moment and we hope the fans do too. Rest assured we will continue to do everything we can to bring the Champions League home this season."

Ending Liverpool's reign as champions gives Pep Guardiola

a third Premier League title in four seasons, adding to the trio of domestic titles he won at both Barcelona and Bayern Munich as coach. And he could yet complete the season by ending his 10-year wait to win the Champions League again, just as he did twice leading Barcelona.

"This has been a season and

a Premier League title like no other - this was the hardest one," Guardiola said. "To come through this season - with all the restrictions and difficulties we've faced - and show the consistency we have is remarkable. It is relentless. Every single day, they are there, fighting for success, trying always to be better."

They have been so, so resilient." In a congested pandemic-impacted season that stretched the resources of teams, City was eight points from the lead in November languishing in 11th place after eight games. But Guardiola turned City's campaign around, embarking on a 28-match unbeaten run from November to April.

"We've shown where the bar is. I want to congratulate Pep."

Kevin De Bruyne remains an integral part of Guardiola's winning formula, setting up 11 goals to see him reach double figures for assists for the fourth time in six seasons. The Belgian playmaker