



Congress, BJP stage  
demonstrations over  
Kerala Secretariat fire  
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Jaish role in Pulwama  
attack established  
with FBI's help  
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Has Lionel Messi  
played his last game  
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## NEARBY



Narwal bail plea: HC to  
examine police case diary  
NEW DELHI  
The Delhi High Court on  
Wednesday said it will first  
examine the police case diary  
of the north-east Delhi riots  
before deciding on the bail  
plea of Pintu Tod activist  
Natasha Narwal. The court  
asked the police to submit the  
case diary in a sealed cover.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

## 10-year-old girl raped, murdered in Palwal

GURUGRAM  
A 10-year-old speech and  
hearing impaired girl was  
raped and murdered in a  
village in Palwal here. The  
police suspect the culprit  
could be a fellow villager.  
The girl was found murdered  
on the outskirts of the village  
on Tuesday evening, a day  
after she had gone missing.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

## 23 Punjab Ministers and MLAs test COVID-positive

CHANDIGARH  
Punjab Chief Minister  
Amarinder Singh on  
Wednesday said 23 State  
Ministers and MLAs have  
tested COVID-19-positive  
two days before the Vidhan  
Sabha session on August 28.  
He, however, did not disclose  
how many legislators and  
Ministers have recovered  
from the infection so far.

NORTH & EAST ▶ PAGE 4

# At Opposition meeting, CMs plan to move SC on JEE, NEET

Sonia, seven Chief Ministers attack Centre over key issues such as GST dues

SOBHA K. NAIR

NEW DELHI

States ruled by BJP rivals are  
likely to file a joint review petition  
in the Supreme Court against the Union Education  
Ministry's decision to go ahead with the JEE and  
NEET in September.

This decision was taken at  
an online meeting of seven  
Chief Ministers, who also bitterly attacked the Centre and  
demanded a revisit of the  
GST framework if the Union  
government is unable to pay  
compensation.

Congress president Sonia  
Gandhi attended the meeting along with Chief Ministers  
Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal), Uddhav Thackeray  
(Maharashtra), Hemant Soren (Jharkhand), Ashok Gehlot  
(Rajasthan), Captain Amarinder Singh (Punjab),  
Bhupesh Baghel (Chhattisgarh) and V. Narayanasamy  
(Puducherry).

In her opening remarks, Ms. Gandhi said the meeting  
had been called owing to  
pressing issues that impinged on Centre-State relations.  
She cited delayed GST  
payments, ordinances issued on agricultural marketing,  
the draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification  
2020, auction of coal mines,  
privatisation of public sector assets and the National Education  
Policy.

### Raising concerns

A look at what Sonia Gandhi and  
some of the CMs said during their  
virtual meeting



**SONIA GANDHI  
CONGRESS  
PRESIDENT**  
**This refusal to compensate the States on GST revenue is nothing short of a betrayal by the Modi government and a betrayal of trust of the people of India**

It is my request to all the State governments... let us go together to the Supreme Court and request them to postpone exam [NEET] till such time that the situation allows holding it

**MAMATA BANERJEE  
WEST BENGAL CM**

We have given power of taxation to the Union govt... so let us all go to the Prime Minister and ask him as to how do we run the State without funds

**AMARINDER SINGH  
PUNJAB CM**

In GST council meeting, I am going to say that either you give us revenue within 15 days or let us raise our own revenue

**V. NARAYANASAMY  
PUDUCHERRY CM**

All the Chief Ministers  
stressed the need to meet  
regularly instead of having  
event-based meetings.

Ms. Banerjee said students were going through a period of "uncertainty" and "mental agony". How will students reach the examination centres, considering the curtailed transport facilities in many States due to the pandemic? It is my request to all the State governments, let us go together to the Supreme Court and request them to postpone the exams," she said.

The Punjab Chief Minister

endorsed her proposal.

Mr. Soren suggested that the Opposition parties could first approach President Ram Nath Kovind or Prime Minister Narendra Modi. But the suggestion was shot down by Ms. Banerjee and the others. They said letters to Mr. Modi had gone unanswered.

Mr. Thackeray said his government had postponed exams in June because of the spiralling cases and now the spread had only increased. "If we were not in a position to hold examinations in June, now the numbers have

First we have to decide whether we have to fight or fear the Central government. Otherwise, we will keep meeting and discussions will keep on happening

**UDDHAV THACKERAY  
MAHARASHTRA CM**

We will have to make this [economic crisis] an issue, because without it, they are not going to pay attention

**ASHOK GEHLOT  
RAJASTHAN CM**

In GST council meeting, I am going to say that either you give us revenue within 15 days or let us raise our own revenue

**V. NARAYANASAMY  
PUDUCHERRY CM**

gone far higher," he said.

He cited the example of the U.S., which saw a hike in COVID-19 cases after reopening of schools.

Ms. Gandhi mentioned the Finance Secretary's submission at a meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance that the Centre was not in a position to pay the mandatory GST compensation of 14%. She said this was nothing short of a "betrayal of trust of the people of India" by the Centre.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

RELATED REPORTS ON ▶ PAGE 10

# SC hits out at Centre on loan moratorium scheme

Don't hide behind RBI... consider providing relief, says court

## LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday criticised the Union government for "hiding behind the Reserve Bank of India" without making its stand clear on the loan moratorium scheme introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The top court wanted to know whether the deferment of loan interest to prop up borrowers through their financial crisis during the national lockdown would lead to accrual of further interest once the freeze is lifted on August 31. The government is yet to file its affidavit.

The court noted that the issue had been pending indecisively for some months now and advised the government to adopt a balanced vision, focusing only on matters of business of banks and not looking at the plight of the people financially dented by the "problems created by your lockdown". It said the government was empowered to take an independent stand under the Disaster Management Act.

"The problem was created by your lockdown... Our concern in these proceedings is only whether the interest that has been deferred will be added to charges payable later and whether there will be interest on the interest."

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

**Government of India**  
has ample powers  
under Disaster Management  
Act. You should clarify two  
issues: whether interest  
can be charged and  
whether interest on  
interest can be levied



the Bench maintained.

The debate was sparked by the RBI's response in court that it would be imprudent to go for a forced waiver of interest, risking the financial viability of the banks it was mandated to regulate and putting the depositors in jeopardy.

The court is hearing a petition filed by Gajendra Sharma challenging the charging of interest rate on loans even during the three-month moratorium period declared amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the national lockdown.

The central bank, in its affidavit, had said its regulatory package introduced amid the lockdown was "in its essence in the nature of a moratorium deferral and cannot be construed to be a waiver".

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

# COVID testing to be doubled in Delhi, says CM

Recent spike in number of cases prompts AAP govt. to enforce strict measures

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The daily COVID-19 tests in the national capital will be doubled from 20,000 to 40,000 and stringent enforcement of pandemic-related guidelines will be ensured in view of the "marginal rise" in the number of cases, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said following an emergency meeting here on Wednesday.

"The situation of coronavirus in Delhi is under control for the last one and a half months. There is a decline in the number of positive cases

and deaths, and the recovery rate has considerably improved. But since August 17, the number of daily cases has been around 1,200-1,500," he said in a digital briefing.

## 'City fully prepared'

Reiterating that Delhi was fully prepared to handle the crisis, Mr. Kejriwal said there were 14,130 beds in city hospitals of which 10,448 remained vacant. "A meeting was held today [Wednesday] and I have directed the officials to increase the number of tests. Around 20,000 tests are con-

ducted in Delhi today, which will be increased to 40,000 tests in one week," he said.

According to Mr. Kejriwal, the recovery rate of COVID-19 patients in Delhi was more than 90%.

The death rate in August so far has been 1.4%, he said, which is among the best in the country.

"Our strategy to test and isolate will remain the same. Coronavirus patients will be aggressively marked and isolated," said Mr. Kejriwal.

The AAP government has, he said, also decided to supply oximeters to patients who

have recovered. If their oxygen levels continue to remain low, oxygen concentrators will also be installed at their homes for free, he said.

"We have also instructed that enforcement must be made stricter. I request everybody to wear masks and practise social distancing. I am happy that the confidence of the people of Delhi has increased in the last few days but there should be no complacency because of this confidence," he said.

HIGHEST CASES IN 45 DAYS ▶ PAGE 3

## Baby steps



Treading cautiously: A member working out at a fitness club, which reopened after five months of COVID-induced shutdown, in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

# From the kitchen to his real love – books

Writer Manoranjan Byapari worked as a school cook, but will now move to a library

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

After 23 years when he worked as a cook in a State-run school, celebrated writer Manoranjan Byapari can now work amidst books.

On Tuesday, the West Bengal government accepted his petition to relieve him of his job in the school and decided to transfer him to a library at Amtala in South 24 Parganas district.

Mr. Byapari, who has emerged as an important figure in the literary circles of Bengal, learnt writing in a correctional home in Kolkata. Popularly known as the first Dalit writer from West Bengal, his autobiographical book *Interrogating my Chandal Life* ("Itibrte Chandal Jibon") had won the The Hindu Award for Non-Fiction in 2018.

A chance encounter with



Manoranjan Byapari

renowned writer Mahasweta Devi while plying a rickshaw sent Mr. Byapari on a new journey as a writer. Devi, who turned out to be the writer's mentor, published his first essay 'Rickshaw chalal' ('I pull a rickshaw') in her non-fiction magazine *Bartika* in 1981.

Late on Tuesday, the West Bengal Information and Cultural Affairs Department said that the writer had requested Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee

to relieve him from the arduous work that his job as a cook at the Hellen Keller Badhir Vidyalya of the Mass Education Department entailed. "Chief Minister intervened and directed the Mass Education officials to place the writer at the Vidyanagar district public library, South 24 Parganas, as applied for by the ageing writer," the communication said, adding that Home Secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay had spoken to the writer and told him of the government's decision.

"I have taken up several jobs but this was my first formal job with a salary of ₹2,500," the writer told *The Hindu* on Wednesday. Mr. Byapari said he had made the request long ago as, after a knee operation, he was unable to perform the heavy lifting for cooking.

"I have not been getting a salary for the past several

months and the school is also closed due to the lockdown," he said. In an interview to *The Hindu* in February, Mr. Byapari said that he might have "become a regular at fashionable literary events but life will never really change for people like me. That is the impossible truth."

The writer said he likes the idea of working amidst books but does not think the job involves the responsibilities of a librarian. "I don't think my job will be that of a librarian; the government order is not clear about it. I am a Group D staff. Maybe I will be moving books from one place to another or dusting them," he said, expressing satisfaction over the development. The library job will involve a long commute and the writer plans to rent a place not very far from work.

## HC steps in for man accused in CAA case

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

The Allahabad High Court has granted interim protection from arrest to a person who was booked under the Gangsters Act by the Uttar Pradesh government for his alleged involvement in the vandalism during the anti-CAA, NRC protests last year.

Mohammad Shoib had filed a petition for quashing the FIR against him dated June 20 under Sections 2 and 3 of the U.P. Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act at Qaiserbagh, Lucknow.

He was arrested in connection with the vandalism in the Qaiserbagh area on December 19, 2019, but was granted bail by a local court. However, on June 20, the Lucknow police booked him and 14 others in a fresh case, claiming that they worked as a criminal gang.

The counsel for the petitioner submitted that he was not part of any gang.

The court observed that the petitioner shall not be arrested till the submission of the report under Section 173(2) of the Cr.P.C. provided he cooperated in the probe.

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Delhi court dismisses Brinda Karat's FIR plea

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday dismissed a petition filed by CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat seeking lodging of FIRs against BJP leaders Anurag Thakur and Parvesh Verma for their alleged hate speeches in relation to anti-CAA protest at Shaheen Bagh.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja dismissed Ms. Karat's plea, noting that "no previous sanction obtained by the complainants from the competent authority to prosecute the respondents [Mr. Thakur and Mr. Verma] for the offences alleged in the complaint".

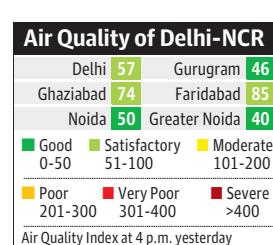
**Prior sanction**  
The court stated that prior sanction of competent authority – Central government – is required as per Section 196 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) at the stage of ordering of registration of FIR as both persons are MPs.

Ms. Karat had sought registration of FIR against Mr. Thakur and Mr. Verma under Sections 153A 153B 295A and 505 of the Indian Penal Code.

Ms. Karat had stated that Mr. Thakur raised chants of "Desh ke gaddaro ko, goli maaro salao ko" during a rally in Delhi. The complaint stated that Mr. Verma gave false, provocative and communal statements against the Shaheen Bagh protesters.

The counsel appearing for Ms. Karat argued that sanction is only required before taking cognisance by the court and not before passing of order of registration of FIR.

The court, however, said it did not agree with Ms. Karat's counsel.



# HC to examine police case diary before deciding on Narwal's plea

Pinjra Tod activist has challenged a trial court's order in Delhi riots case

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday said it will first examine the police's case diary of the north-east Delhi riots case before deciding on the bail plea of Pinjra Tod activist Natasha Narwal.

Justice Vibhu Bakshu asked Delhi Police to submit the case diary in a sealed cover and posted the hearing on August 31.

Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, representing the Delhi police, said there are sensitive information in the case diary which cannot be shared with Ms. Narwal's advocate at this stage.

**Separate web link**  
Taking note of the submission, Justice Bakshu said the court proceedings, which has been carried out through videoconferencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will take place through a separate web link where only the Delhi police's



Security personnel on vigil in Shiv Vihar after the north-east Delhi riots. ■ FILE PHOTO: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

advocate and the investigating officer will be present.

During the hearing, Ms. Narwal's lawyer informed the court that the bail of another co-accused was heard and reserved by a trial court here. However, the decision could not be pronounced as the case diary has been taken away for the purpose of showing to the High Court.

Following this, Justice Bakshu told the Delhi police to show the case diary to be produced before the trial court concerned before August 29, so that the proceeding before the trial court could be concluded.

**Certain videos**

Ms. Narwal's lawyer also urged the HC to consider watching certain videos which he has submitted along with the bail application. "The videos show that Ms. Narwal was never there.

They [police] have the videos. They don't want to show it because the videos show Ms. Narwal was not there," the lawyer argued.

Ms. Narwal has challenged a trial court's order which had dismissed her bail plea. She was arrested on May 23, along with fellow JNU student Devangana Kalita in relation with an FIR registered on February 24 over the sit-in protest at Jatrabar metro station against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The Crime Branch has lodged a separate FIR against both – Ms. Narwal and Ms. Kalita in connection with the Delhi riots.

On June 14, a trial court had dismissed bail pleas of Ms. Narwal and Ms. Kalita on the ground that there was no merit in the applications and that it was amply clear from the chargesheet that the investigation was still pending and it has been filed against other accused persons also.

# 10-year-old raped, murdered

Autopsy confirms rape; no signs of brutality: Palwal police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GURUGRAM

A ten-year-old speech and hearing impaired girl was raped and murdered in a village in Palwal here. The police suspect the culprit could be a fellow villager.

The girl's body was discovered in the fields on the outskirts of the village on Tuesday evening, a day after she had gone missing. The family alleged that her eyes

had been gouged out.

But Palwal Police Superintendent Deepak Gahlawat said the body had decomposed to give the impression that the eyes were damaged.

Mr. Gahlawat said that autopsy had confirmed rape, but there were no signs of brutality. He said the girl was strangled to death.

The family reported the matter to the police on

Tuesday noon when they were unable to find her after several hours of searching.

They alleged that a head constable at Hodal Police Station abused them and initially refused to take their complaint. The family said the case was registered only after political intervention.

A few hours after the complaint was filed, the girl's body was spotted in the fields.

# Two brothers found dead in their shop

A note recovered from the spot cites financial crisis

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Two brothers, owners of a jewellery shop, were found dead at their store in central Delhi's Chandni Chowk, the police said on Wednesday.

The brothers lived with their family in Bazar Sitaram area, the police said.

A note recovered from the spot cited financial crisis as the reason for taking the step, the police said.

The bodies have been shifted to the mortuary.

legedly thrashed by money lenders, said locals.

The police, however, said they are verifying the allegations and said the two brothers have not named anyone in the note. "We are recording statements of the family members and the matter is being investigated," the officer said.

*Suicide prevention helpline: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, OII-4076 9002, Monday-Saturday (10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)*

# Delhi Metro awaits govt's green signal

Slew of safety measures to include longer 'dwell time' of trains at metro stations

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Members of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation warned of protests outside the Chief Minister's residence in case funds to the civic body were not released within 15 days.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation Mayor Anamika Mithilesh attacked the government for turning the municipal corporation into "deadwood" by politicising the allocation of funds. The total receipts of funds from the government under the plan and non-plan had been receding during the last five years from ₹1,628.09 crore in 2017-18 to ₹741.44 crore in 2019-20, the Mayor said.

South Delhi Municipal Corporation Mayor Anamika Mithilesh attacked the government for turning the municipal corporation into "deadwood" by politicising the allocation of funds. The total receipts of funds from the government under the plan and non-plan had been receding during the last five years from ₹1,628.09 crore in 2017-18 to ₹741.44 crore in 2019-20, the Mayor said.

Metro services which have remained suspended since March 22 following the nationwide lockdown imposed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, are likely to resume operations under the Unlock 4.0 guidelines to be issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

"Tokens will not be permitted for travelling, only smart cards will be allowed. All transactions for recharge of cards will be done through

## Safe ride

- Passengers to sit on alternate seats or stand at a distance of one metre
- Trains will not stop at stations falling in containment zones



■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Use of Aarogya Setu

- Use of Aarogya Setu necessary before entering stations



■ SOURCE: DMRC

cashless mode, tokens will not be allowed for travel, only smart card or QR code will be allowed, ticket vending machine will not accept cash," read the SOP.

"Tokens will not be permitted for travelling, only smart cards will be allowed. All transactions for recharge of cards will be done through

would help commuters recharge their smart cards automatically at the Automatic Fare Collection (AFC) gates at metro stations.

Among other measures, apart from thermal screening of all passengers at frisking points, commuters will also need to have the Aarogya Setu App.

"Passengers to sit on alter-

nate seats in the train or stand, maintaining a gap of one metre. Suitable marking on the seats will be made. The dwell time of trains will be substantially increased so that passengers have sufficient time to board and alight. This will avoid pushing by passengers," the document read.

While stations and trains are to be disinfected after operational hours, steps are also being taken to provide maximum fresh air inside the trains and in underground stations to reduce transmission of the virus, it said.

The SOP added that metro trains will not stop at stations falling in containment zones and some stations maybe "skipped if sufficient passengers are not available".

Parking and feeder bus services will, however, remain suspended, according to the document.

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



CrPC, dated 22.08.2020, has been lodged at P.S. Kamla Market, Delhi.

His dead body has been preserved in MAMC Mortuary, Delhi for identification purpose. 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. Kamla Market, Delhi  
Ph.: 011-23230623, 8750870424  
DP/290/CD/2020

## IN BRIEF

### North Delhi Mayor raises alarm over Yamuna level

NEW DELHI

North Delhi Mayor, Jai Prakash on Wednesday wrote to the Delhi Urban Development Minister Satyendar Jain over concerns about the rising level of the Yamuna river. With water being released from the Hathini Kund barrage in Haryana, the water level in the river had been continuously rising, posing a risk to low-lying areas around the river, the Mayor warned. People in the area were facing problems because of this, he said.

## Delhi Police to get smarter with e-beat book system

With facial recognition software, details of suspects can be accessed on the spot, increasing productivity

SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI

To reduce the burden of beat constables and increase their efficiency, the Delhi police is set to introduce e-beat book system, beginning with South-West district and 14 other police stations in the city.

Devender Arya, DCP (South-West) said that physical infrastructure like mobile set and SIM cards are in place and they are in the final phase of updating entries like pro-

minent locations, details of religious places, RWAs, details of banks and ATMs in the e-book.

with the e-book and can be accessed in real-time basis," said Mr. Arya.

He said that like at present, if a beat constable nabs any suspect during checking, he needs to take the suspect to the nearest police station and check his records manually. This is a time-taking process.

But in case of an e-beat book, with the help of facial recognition software, the details will be accessed on the spot that will increase productivity

of the policeman.

A police officer said that with the help of mobile service providers, they will have live location of a caller in distress and it will further reduce their response time.

The e-beat book will be given to each police beat in a police station. For better monitoring, the e-book has been given to divisional officer and SHO.

"The details of stolen or robbed vehicle will be updat-

## HC rejects plea of Nitish Katara murder convict

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected the parole plea of Vikas Yadav, who is serving life term for killing business executive Nitish Katara in 2002, has to attend his ailing mother.

Justice Vibhu Bakshu remarked that Yadav's mother is not immobile and there are sufficient numbers of relatives to look after her.

The HC also considered that Ajay Katara, a key prosecution witness, and Nilam Katara, mother of the victim, have serious objections to Yadav being released as they fear for their safety.

This court is not persuaded to accede to the prayers made in the present petition, the HC said, dismissing the plea.

Yadav had sought parole on the ground that he has to take care of his mother, who was stated to be suffering from spinal medical condition along with thyroid and inner stress causing her depression.

**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT Short Notice Inviting Tender**

Short terms sealed tenders are hereby invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Himachal Pradesh for No.6&8 for the following work from the approved and eligible contractors. The tender should reach in this office on or before 21.09.2020 up to 11.00 AM and the same will be opened on the same day at 11.30 AM. In the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives if present. The telegraphic and Conditional tender shall not be accepted. The undersigned reserve the right to reject or accept all tenders without assigning any reason. The tender form can be had from office of the Assistant Engineer, Steel Bridge Construction Sub Division, HPPWD, Bhatakkher Shimla-6 against cash payment of Rs.350/- (Non refundable) up to 19.09.2020 during working hours. If the date of opening of tenders is declared as holiday, the tenders shall be opened on the next working day at the same time.

**SR. No.** **Name of Work** **Estimated Cost** **Cost of tenders.** **Earnest Money.** **Time.**

1. R / IM of S.B.C. Workshop Bhatakkher Shimla-6 against cash payment of Rs.350/- (Non refundable) up to 19.09.2020 during working hours. If the date of opening of tenders is declared as holiday, the tenders shall be opened on the next working day at the same time.

**Terms and Conditions:-**

- Payment for the job shall be released on completion of work.
2. Sale tax and income tax shall be deducted as applicable.
- The firm shall have to complete the job within the period mentioned above.
4. The earnest money will be received with tender form in shape of fixed deposit KVP duly pledged the name of the undersigned which will be refunded after 6 months of the completion of work.
5. Work should be done to the entire satisfaction of Engineer-in-Charge.
6. The firm shall have to rectify any defect occurring in repair free of cost up to 6 months.
7. 5% security will be deducted and will be released after successful working for 6 months.

**Executive Engineer,**  
Mechanical Division,  
HPPWD, Dhali, Shimla-12.

HP/2497/20-21 **HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPAK**

**H. P. P.W.D. TENDER**

Sealed item rate tenders on the form 688 are invited by the Executive Engineer Fatehpur Division HPPWD, Fatehpur on behalf of the Governor of HP for the following works from the approved and eligible contractors enlisted in HPPWD.

**TENDER SCHEDULE:**

- Date and time of receipt of application for tender form: 18.09.2020 upto 2.00 PM
- Date and time of issue of tender form: 18.09.2020 upto 5.00 PM
- Date and time of receipt of tenders: 19.09.2020 upto 10.30 AM
- Date and time of opening of tenders: 19.09.2020 at 11.00 AM

The tenders form will be issued against cash payment (non refundable). The earnest money in the shape of NSC/FDR/Deposit at call of any of Post Office/Bank in H.P duly signed in the name of the Executive Engineer, Fatehpur Division HPPWD Fatehpur must accompany with each tender.

Job No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs)	Time limit of form	Cost of tender	Eligible class of Contractor
1.	Construction of SunharkhadiNangal road					

Timings  
DELHI

THURSDAY, AUG. 27
RISE 05:57 SET 18:48
RISE 14:31 SET 00:13
FRIDAY, AUG. 28
RISE 05:58 SET 18:47
RISE 15:31 SET 01:04

SATURDAY, AUG. 29
RISE 05:58 SET 18:46
RISE 16:24 SET 01:59

Delhi Weather	max min
Delhi City	34 27
Safdarjung	34 27
Palam	33 27

Delhi Pali Today
33°C Light to moderate rain and thundershower with cloudy sky and gusty winds would affect area.

Delhi Pali Tomorrow
33°C Few spell of rain and thunderstorm would occur with light winds and cloudy sky.

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IN BRIEF

Staffer jumps to death at NDMC headquarters

NEW DELHI An employee of the New Delhi Municipal Council died after she allegedly jumped from the 11th floor of the NDMC Headquarters at, Palika Kendra, on Wednesday morning, NDMC spokesperson said. "She was a Class-D employee. She had gone to the office in the morning and jumped from the building around 9.45 a.m.," the spokesperson said.

CPI(M) seeks ₹7,500 a month for ones outside IT bracket

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI The Delhi State Committee of the CPI(M) on Wednesday organised a protest demonstration at Vithal Bhai Patel House demanding that the government transfer ₹7,500 per month to people outside the income tax-paying bracket for the next six months and provide 10 kg food grains to every individual for six months.

These were among the demands that the party made during its week-long protest that culminated on Wednesday.

# 'Spike in COVID-19 cases not a second wave'

Experts say relaxation in restrictions and people defying norms are reasons behind the increase

NIKHIL M BABU  
NEW DELHI

On a day when the national capital reported the highest daily new COVID-19 cases in over 45 days, experts and officials said that Delhi is not witnessing a second wave of infection, but number of cases could increase if people are not careful.

While some experts said that the number of cases will increase over the next 10-15 days and then come down, officials said that it is too early to tell. However, experts and officials said that the reason for the current spike in numbers is the relaxation of restrictions and more importantly people not following social distancing and other rules.

After the number of daily new cases in the city on June 23 touched almost 4,000 - the highest so far - it was dropping. However, this week, daily new cases hit a 30-day high and then breached the 1,500 mark, after remaining below that level for 39 consecutive days. The positivity rate and number of active cases have also shown a slight increase over the past week.

Naval Vikram, Professor, Medicine Department of AIIMS, said that people need to be very careful to avoid such increase in cases. "Cases had dropped in Delhi, but people became careless and more sectors opened up too. In the beginning, there was a fear of the disease and it has probably gone down. More people have started to meet and gather now," he said.

Dr. Vikram also said that the number of cases might increase a little more and urged the government to intensify messages on social distancing and precautions to be taken by people.

**'No chance'**  
Jugal Kishore, head of Community Medicine Department of Safdarjung Hospital,



People standing in queue for rapid antigen testing in Jhangipuri on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

vel for 39 consecutive days. The positivity rate and number of active cases have also shown a slight increase over the past week.

probably gone down. More people have started to meet and gather now," he said.

Dr. Vikram also said that the number of cases might increase a little more and urged the government to intensify messages on social distancing and precautions to be taken by people.

"It is too early to tell whether it is a second wave, but it doesn't look so. We will have to wait for at least a week more. We are expecting about 2,000 cases a day, but we hope it does not happen," a Delhi government official said.

Mr. Kishore said that the government should rather concentrate on strengthening healthcare facilities," he said.

The last time the number of cases was more than this was on July 11 when 1,781 cases were reported.

Also, 17 more deaths have been reported, taking the total number of deaths to 4,347 on Wednesday.

Of the total cases, 1,48,897 people have recovered and there are 12,520 active cases - the highest in over a month - in the city at present. The last time the number of active cases was more than this was on July 25 when the active cases were 12,657.

The active cases, which were 27,007 on July 1, had

fallen to 9,897 on August 4, but since then it has remained above that mark.

Though Delhi has a capacity to conduct around 11,000 RT-PCR tests a day, only 5,912 were done in the past 24 hours.

The last time the number of cases was more than this was on July 11 when 1,781 cases were reported.

When asked about how the government is going to increase the number of testing, a Health Department official said, "The number of people with whom each COVID-19-positive person is in touch has increased now, compared to the lockdown phases, as people are moving around more. So we plan to strengthen our tracing mechanism [after a person tests positive], which will naturally result in more number of people being tested. But doing 40,000 tests a day is going to be difficult."

Dr. Kishore, however, said that there was no point of the government imposing more restrictions. "The government should slowly open up different sectors, including the Metro services and make sure that people are following social distancing norms. The government should rather concentrate on strengthening healthcare facilities," he said.

The last time the number of cases was more than this was on July 11 when 1,781 cases were reported.

Also, 17 more deaths have been reported, taking the total number of deaths to 4,347 on Wednesday.

Of the total cases, 1,48,897 people have recovered and there are 12,520 active cases - the highest in over a month - in the city at present. The last time the number of active cases was more than this was on July 25 when the active cases were 12,657.

The active cases, which were 27,007 on July 1, had

## City sees highest number of virus cases in 45 days

Active cases cross 12,000 mark again

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Delhi on Wednesday witnessed the highest number of fresh COVID-19 cases in 45 days, with 1,693 cases being reported in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 1,65,764, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government.

The last time the number of cases was more than this was on July 11 when 1,781 cases were reported.

Also, 17 more deaths have been reported, taking the total number of deaths to 4,347 on Wednesday.

Of the total 19,816 tests done in the past 24 hours, 70.16% were rapid antigen tests, which have shown a low positivity compared to RT-PCR tests.

The positivity was 8.5% on Wednesday.

The number of containment zones in the city increased to 716 on Wednesday.

### Virus spread

Total number of COVID-19 cases	Total deaths
1,65,764	4,347
New cases in the past 24 hours	New deaths
1,693	17

SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT HEALTH BULLETIN

## Cong., BJP hit out at AAP govt. over climbing COVID-19 cases

'Not enough testing, AAP has failed to protect Delhiites'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Wednesday said that the number of COVID-19 cases in the Capital has started to rise again as the government has lowered its guard with reduced testing after the pandemic showed fractional recession.

The party said that the current rate of 20,000 tests per day is inadequate, and even if it is doubled, it will be "too little, too late".

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta alleged that though COVID-19 cases are on the rise in the Capital again, the focus of the AAP-led Delhi government "is on the Uttarakhand and Punjab elections".

The Delhi government had failed to implement guidelines to protect the people

of Delhi from the virus, Mr. Gupta alleged.

The BJP demanded that the Delhi government focus on its responsibility.

Delhi Congress chief Ch. Anil Kumar alleged that the government created a false sense of security among the people, without realising the fact that the rapid antigen tests were not foolproof and did not give a clear picture of the spread of the virus.

**'One lakh tests a day'**

"The Chief Minister's claim that currently 20,000 tests are being done daily, which will be doubled, is false as testing mostly was between 10,000 and 20,000 a day. Mr. Kejriwal has a tendency to play with distorted statistics to confuse people and derive political mileage," Mr. Kumar said.

It alleged that Mr. Kejriwal had squandered precious time by patting his own back for a job not well done.

He added that even if the testing is doubled to 40,000 per day, it will still be inadequate for a city like Delhi with nearly two crore population. "Daily tests should be raised to at least one lakh per day to get a fair idea about the spread of the pandemic. Due to the prolonged lockdown, the economy of the Capital and the lives of people have been ruined and it will be hard on Delhiites to face another lockdown if COVID-19 cases shoot up," Mr. Kumar said.

The party called for enforcing COVID guidelines strictly, like wearing masks, using sanitisers, maintaining social distancing and enhanced testing.

It alleged that Mr. Kejriwal had squandered precious time by patting his own back for a job not well done.

## Hope springs eternal



Wholesale vegetable vendors awaiting customers at Azadpur Mandi in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

## CGHS starts tele-consultation services through e-Sanjeevani

It will be initially available for beneficiaries in Delhi-NCR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

To facilitate consultations with specialists through virtual mode, CGHS has started tele-consultation services from August 25 for its beneficiaries.

Initially, the services will be available for beneficiaries in Delhi-NCR. The e-services are available between 9.00 a.m. and 12 noon on all working days, said the Ministry in a release issued on Wednesday. It added that CGHS is using the existing e-Sanjeevani platform of the Health Ministry to deliver the service.

"For ease of use, this platform has been linked with the beneficiaries' ID. For availing specialist OPD ser-

vices, beneficiaries are required to register on the platform using their mobile number after which an OTP will be generated. After verification, beneficiaries can log on to the system, fill patient registration form, request for a token and upload health records [if required]," said the release.

"Patients will receive ID and token through SMS and they will also be intimated about their number in the online queue," it said.

On their turn, a 'call now' button will be activated and using the same, the beneficiary can initiate a video call with a specialist for consultation. After the tele-consultation, an e-prescription will be generated. Using this, pa-

tients can get medicines issued from CGHS Wellness Centre.

### Available services

To begin with, specialist consultation under the services will be available for – medicine, orthopaedics, Eye and ENT.

"For regular OPD services, each CGHS beneficiary is attached to a particular Wellness Centre (WC), although beneficiaries can avail of OPD services at any WC anywhere in the country. For availing consultations with specialists, CGHS beneficiaries get referred by the Medical Officers of their WCs [for senior citizens such referral from the WCs is not required]," said the Ministry.

A senior police officer said that the police force is witnessing around 20 cases of COVID-19 daily. More than 2,500 policemen have tested positive till date and 15 have succumbed to the virus so far.

On Monday, Mr. Shrivastava, via videoconference, instructed all police personnel to revisit the circular and implement it completely.

In May, Mr. Shrivastava

had issued a circular to all district DCPs and police heads of other units. As per the circular, all police personnel should wear masks and gloves and disinfect weapons, dragon light, computers and printers. Barracks at police stations should be sanitised on a daily basis.

The circular reads that

each group should be appropriately rotated in a manner that 15-20 staffer is always on quarantine for a fixed period and available for duties any time, as per requirement.

The sentry, the first contact point at all police stations, should be equipped with face mask, face shield, full arm gloves, sanitiser and extra masks, it says. A thermal meter temperature handler, equipped with protective gear, is to be posted with the sentry at police stations.

The picket staffers should be more careful and make least possible close public contact and barricades being brought in to use should be sanitised along with reflectors, reads the circular.

## BJP releases list of 250 block presidents for city

Party is reorganising its Delhi unit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday released a list of 250 mandal in-chargers or block presidents as part of an ongoing reorganisation of its State unit.

The national unit has appointed Mr. Singh and Mahila Morcha president Vijaya Rahatkar as observers for the organisational restructuring of the Delhi unit.

The maximum age of block presidents, according to party sources, has been fixed at 45 years.

The appointment of block presidents will be followed by the appointment of district presidents and later

## 23 Ministers and MLAs test positive: Punjab CM

State Assembly session on August 28

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday said twenty-three Ministers and MLAs were COVID-19 positive two days before the Vidhan Sabha session on August 28.

Captain Amarinder gave the figure during a videoconference convened by Congress chief Sonia Gandhi with Chief Ministers of seven Opposition-ruled States to discuss various issues.

With this, the Chief Minister tried to emphasise that the scenario was not conducive for holding physical examination for JEE-NEET.

He, however, did not disclose how many of MLAs and Ministers have recovered so far.

"As of today, two days before the scheduled Punjab Vidhan Sabha session, 23 Ministers and MLAs were Covid positive," said the CM in an official release.



CM Amarinder Singh

"If this was the state of the Legislators and Ministers, one can only imagine how grave the situation on the ground was. The scenario was not conducive to holding physical examinations," he said.

### Review petition

Separately, the Chief Minister asked the State Advocate General to coordinate with his counterparts in other Opposition-ruled States for filing a collective review petition in the Supreme Court, to seek deferment of the exams.

He gave directive to Advocate General Atul Nanda following the video conference.

## SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one boy namely **Pramod** S/o Hanuman Prasad, R/o B-180, Gali No. 5, Mandawali Fazalpur, Delhi. Age - 16 Years, Height 5'2", Complexion- Shallow, Built: Thin, has been missing since 10.07.2018 from the area of PS Mandawali, Delhi. In this regard a vide FIR No. 185/18, U/s 363 IPC dated 13.07.2018 at **PS Mandawali, Delhi**

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

Web-site <http://cbi.nic.in>  
E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641  
Fax: 011-24368639  
DP/159/ED/2020

SHO  
P.S. Mandawali, Delhi  
Phone: 011-22720808,  
22720809

## APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Name Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown, Age: about 65 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: White colored trouser was found dead under AIMS Flyover, From Mehrauli to INA at 11:10 AM on 24.08.2020. Dead body has been preserved at Safdarjung Mortuary. In this regard a DD No. 37-A dated 24.08.2020 has been lodged at P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO  
P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi  
Ph.No.: 011-24106346  
011-24106345

DP/265/SW/2020

## GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. No.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	PWD B&R, PANCHKULA	RE-INVITE TENDER FOR THE WORK OF PROVIDING LIFT IN VAN BHAWAN BUILDING IN SECTOR-6, PANCHKULA	27.08.2020 03.09.2020	10.30 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a> TENDER NO 2020_HRY_138986_1	0172-2920477 <a href="mailto:pwd-eepd-panchkula@hry.nic.in">pwd-eepd-panchkula@hry.nic.in</a>
2	PWD B&R REWARI	RAISING OF BOUNDARY WALL ENTRANCE AND EXIT GATE OF SANIK SCHOOL SEC.4 AT REWARI IN REWARI DISTT	27.08.2020 19.09.2020	12.57 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0172-253703 / <a href="mailto:pwd-eepd-rewari@hry.nic.in">pwd-eepd-rewari@hry.nic.in</a>
3	PWD B&R, KARNAL	CONSTRUCTION OF STANDARD HOUSES FOR CIVIL JUDGE SENIOR DIVISION AND JUNIOR DIVISION SOO CIVIL CUM JUDICIAL COMPLEX AT SAMALKHA DISTT. PANIPAT. (PDG. EI ONLY). RECALL 2020_HRY_133607 4 + 4 OTHER WORKS	26.08.2020 07.09.2020	22.32 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0184-2265696 <a href="mailto:pwd-eepd-karnal@hry.nic.in">pwd-eepd-karnal@hry.nic.in</a>
4	PWD B&R, SONIPAT	CONSTRUCTION OF E.V.M WARE HOUSE (4000 UNIT) AT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE AND JUDICIAL COMPLEX IN SONIPAT DISTT.	24.08.2020 14.09.2020	332.22 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0130-220075 pweepd2-sonipat@hry.nic.in
5	PANCHAYATI RAJ YAMA NAGAR	CONST. OF 19 NO. VILLAGE KNOWLEDGE CENTERS + 13 NO. ANANWARI CENTER	27.08.2020 18.09.2020	555.50 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01732-237833 / <a href="mailto:prexeeng.ynr@hry.nic.in">prexeeng.ynr@hry.nic.in</a>
6	PANCHAYATI RAJ, NUH	CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY SANITARY COMPLEX (2 NOS TOILETS)VILLAGEATERNA SAMASABAD & MADHI BLOCK NAGINA DISTT. NUH +BOTHERS WORKS	29.08.2020 04.09.2020	35.90 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Prexeeng.mwt@hry.nic.in
7	PANCHAYATI RAJ, PALWAL	CONSTRUCTION OF HALLS (2 NOS) AND ENTRY GATE IN BRIJ PRIKRAMA MARGVILLAGEBANCHARIBLOCK HOODA DISTT. PALWAL + JNU	26.08.2020 09.09.2020	1.43 CRORE	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	<a href="mailto:Palwalprexeeng.pwl@gmail.com">Palwalprexeeng.pwl@gmail.com</a> 01275-298060
8	PANCHAYATI RAJ, NUH	CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY SANITARY COMPLEX (2 NOS TOILETS)VILLAGECHAKHEERA & KIRI BLOCK INDIU DISTT. NUH +BOTHERS WORKS	01.09.2020 07.09.2020	53.85 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Prexeeng.mwt@hry.nic.in
9	PANCHAYATI RAJ SIRS	CONST. OF GVH AT VILLAGE GORIWALA AND 7 NOS. OTHER WORKS	26.08.2020 22.09.2020	1.94 CRORE	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01666-247479
10	PANCHAYATI RAJ, NUH	CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY SANITARY COMPLEX (2 NOS TOILETS)VILLAGEALIPUR TIGRA & HIRAWARI BAWANTERI BLOCK F P JHIRKA DISTT. NUH +BOTHERS WORKS	26.08.2020 01.09.2020	35.90 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Prexeeng.mwt@hry.nic.in
11	PANCHAYATI RAJ FATEHABAD	CONST OF BLOCK OFFICE BUILDING AT BHUNA BLOCK BHUNA DISTT. FATEHABAD	31.08.2020 14.09.2020	1.48 CRORE	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01667-230855
12	PANCHAYATI RAJ BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK DABWALI	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK DABWALI IN DISTRICT SIRS.	25.08.2020 14.09.2020	NIL	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9416127276
13	PANCHAYATI RAJ BLOCK LEVEL E-TENDERING COMMITTEE, BLOCK NATHSARI CHOPTA	SUPPLY OF RAW AND BUILDING MATERIAL IN VARIOUS VILLAGES OF BLOCK NATHSARI CHOPTA IN DISTRICT SIRS.	25.08.2020 14.09.2020	NIL	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	94676-88298
14	IRRIGATION & W.R. DEPARTMENT HARYANA PANCHKULA	REAL TIME CANAL DATA ACQUISITION SYSTEM WITH DATA AS A SERVICE MODEL FOR 150 CANAL LOCATIONS FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS	26.08.2020 22.09.2020	EML RS-NIL BID SECURING DECLARATION IS REQUIRED	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	xen.nhp@gmail.com 0172-2560080
15	IRRIGATION & W.R. DEPARTMENT HARYANA PANCHKULA	RETENDER FOR PURCHASE OF INSTRUMENTS UNDER NHP	25.08.2020 01.09.2020	EML RS-NIL BID SECURING DECLARATION IS REQUIRED	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	xen.nhp@gmail.com 0172-2560080
16	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT KURUKSHETRA	CONSTRUCTION OF PUCCA PATH (INTERLOCKING PAVING PATH) FROM SAMASPUR PUMP HOUSE TO PUCCA PATH SAMASPUR TO FIELD ON LUKHI BUND + 1 OTHER WORK	26.08.2020 07.09.2020	29.38 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01744-239164 <a href="mailto:exenwsdlnvkkra@gmail.com">exenwsdlnvkkra@gmail.com</a>
17	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGG. PALWAL	REPAIR/STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING DAMAGE 1000 MM I/D RCC PIPE SEWER LINE FROM MANGLA MEDICAL HALL TO GOVT. MIDDLE SCHOOL NO.2, ON OLD SONHA ROAD PALWAL DISTT. PALWAL	CLOSING DATE 07.09.2020	93.50 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	Executive Engineer
18	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGG. NARNAUL	LAYING OF SEWER LINES IN BALANCE APPROVED AREA OF NARNAUL TOWN DISTT. MAHENDRA GAHKAH. "PROVIDING & LAYING OF 1000 MM OD HDPE PIPE SEWER BY TRENCHLESS TECHNOLOGY AT REWARI ROAD NARNAUL TOWN AND ALL OTHER WORKS CONTINGENT THERETO"	25.08.2020 07.09.2020	89.42 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a> TENDER NO 2020_HRY_140947_1	01282-260091/ <a href="mailto:eepnaraul@gmail.com">eepnaraul@gmail.com</a>
19	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION NARNAUL	GAHRA : ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR AUG. OF DRINKING WATER SUPPLY SCHEME (CANAL BASED) WATER WORKS GAHRA. + 1 OTHER WORK	25.08.2020 31.08.2020	10.95 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a> Tender No. HRY_2020_141138_1. + 1 other	9315512333 <a href="mailto:ee3naraul@gmail.com">ee3naraul@gmail.com</a>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

PRDH-82460

## Stand-off between Mizoram govt., Assam Rifles escalates

Paramilitary force boycotted I-Day celebration, State Chief Secy. tells Centre

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

The Mizoram government has shot off letters to the Centre alleging that Assam Rifles deals with the civil administration "with contempt" and "fails to recognise" that the AFSPA is no longer in force in the State. It also accused the paramilitary force of having boycotted the Independence Day celebration in the State.

"We are of the firm view that no issue between Assam Rifles and the state administration is so serious that it cannot be resolved through discussions with open minds... The failure to recognise, on the part of Assam Rifles, that Mizoram is a peaceful state where Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 had long been withdrawn, and the insensitivity and contempt with which they deal with the civil administration

is coming in the way of good relations and cooperation between Assam Rifles and the civil administration," read one of the letters sent by the State's Chief Secretary, Lal-nunmawia Chuango, to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

**Virus protocol violated** Mr. Chuango had on August 24 informed the MHA that the head of the Assam Rifles in Mizoram boycotted the August 15 celebration over the Warrant of Precedence issued by the State government. He also apprised it of violations of the COVID-19 protocol by Assam Rifles personnel at Vairenge on the Assam-Mizoram border on August 18. The personnel, he said, had barged into the State by defying the entry and safety protocols laid down by the State government to prevent the spread of the novel

coronavirus.

The administrative control of Assam Rifles lies with the MHA while the Defence Ministry wields operational control.

"The Chief Secretary told the Union Home Secretary that the Assam Rifles head had no authentic reason to bunk the I-Day celebration because of the Warrant of Precedence as a Brigadier or equivalent rank in the para-military force is elevated from the rank of Additional Secretary to Secretary to the State government," said Ramdinilia, Additional Secretary to Mizoram's Home Department.

The grievances of the para-military force, she added, could have been addressed if the matter had been brought to the notice of the State government before boycotting the I-Day celebration.

Rochangkimi Khenglawt, Under Secretary to Mizoram's General Administration Department, had on August 21 written to Vinod S., Assam Rifles' Mizoram sector head, regarding the I-Day boycott.

The Mizoram government had deferred the Bodoland Autonomous Council polls scheduled in April for fear of community spread of the novel coronavirus. A similar reason made Arunachal Pradesh put the panchayat elections on hold.

The Assam government

Mizoram to conduct rural, local body elections today

Opposition plea for deferment ignored

RAHUL KARMAKAR  
GUWAHATI

The rural and local body polls on Thursday will make Mizoram the first among eight States in the Northeast to hold any election after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Assam government had deferred the Bodoland Autonomous Council polls

where the municipal council polls are being held.

State Election Commissioner Laima Chozah said the counting will start as soon as the polling is completed for 2,454 seats in village councils and for 558 seats in local councils.

**Campaigning suffered**

"The MNF was desperate to hold the elections despite our requests to defer them by taking public health into account. The campaign process of the Opposition parties suffered because of the virus, lockdown and resultant scarcity of fuel," Congress spokesperson Lal-lianchhunga told *The Hindu* from Aizawl. The Congress controls about 80% of the village council.

The State Election Commission officials said polling would not be held in areas declared as containment zones.

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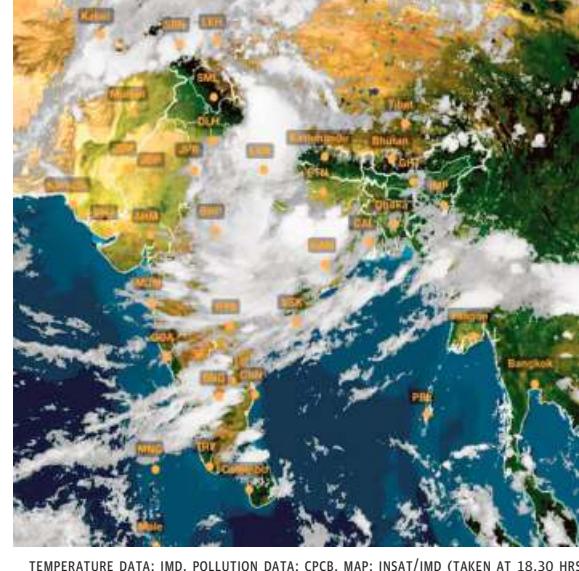
• English-Hindi Translator (prior experience)

**Skills Desired :**

✓ Comfortable in translation (

**WEATHER WATCH**

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.30 HRS)

**Forecast for Thursday:** Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, west Madhya Pradesh, east Madhya Pradesh, and Vidarbha

CITY RAIN MAX MIN CITY RAIN MAX MIN

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	9...	33.0	25.0	Kozhikode	...-31.4...	25.2	
Ahmedabad	4.8...	32.0	25.0	Kurnool	...-32.1...	25.4	
Aizawl	9...	27.0	20.3	Lucknow	1.3...	35.3...	25.2
Allahabad	1.6...	33.2	25.6	Madurai	6.8...	36.5...	24.4
Bangalore	-30.0...	22.0		Mangaluru	2.1...	30.3...	23.5
Bhopal	1...	30.3	22.6	Mumbai	11.6...	31.4...	25.5
Bhubaneswar	3.3...	26.6	23.4	Mysuru	...-31.9...	19.8	
Chandigarh	2.1...	34.2	27.5	New Delhi	...-34.2...	26.5	
Chennai	-36.4...	27.1		Patna	10.6...	34.0...	28.4
Coimbatore	-33.2...	24.0		Port Blair	...-32.2...	25.3	
Dehradoon	0.4...	33.0	23.7	Puducherry	9.6...	32.8...	26.2
Gangtok	5.3...	22.6	19.0	Pune	...-30.4...	22.0	
Goa	0.2...	30.1	25.8	Raipur	7.8...	26.8...	25.2
Guwahati	-36.0...	26.2		Ranchi	2.2...	28.7...	24.0
Hubballi	-29.0...	21.0		Shillong	23.2...	25.0...	17.2
Hyderabad	-30.9...	24.3		Shimla	15.7...	25.1...	20.1
Imphal	3...	29.8	22.5	Srinagar	9.2...	20.0...	18.9
Jaipur	-31.7...	25.1		Thiruvananthapuram	...-33.2...	25.4	
Kochi	-30.4...	26.8		Tiruchi	...-35.9...	25.4	
Kohima	-29.8...	19.4		Vijayawada	0.8...	31.6...	28.1
Kolkata	12.8...	30.4	26.1	Visakhapatnam	12.6...	30.0...	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES SO NO CO PM2.5 PM10 CODE

CITIES	SO	NO	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	22	37	35	56	59	■■■■■
Bangalore	14	21	36	67	76	■■■■■
Chennai	7	16	68	121	76	■■■■■
Delhi	38	42	94	26	75	■■■■■
Hyderabad	7	51	15	33	70	■■■■■
Kolkata	-2	23	59	18	20	■■■■■
Lucknow	5	36	28	41	84	■■■■■
Mumbai	59	11	1	18	31	■■■■■
Pune	22	8	53	21	21	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	-48	17	101	104	■■■■■	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Palwal, Odisha recorded an air quality index (AQI) score of 111 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Shillong, Meghalaya recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

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

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

**NO:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

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

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

**Thane court discharges 28 Tablighi Jamaat members**

THANE

A magistrate's court has discharged 28 members of the Tablighi Jamaat, including 21 foreign nationals, in two separate cases. The cases were registered after the Tablighi Jamaat event in Delhi. The foreign nationals were accused of violating visa rules and norms put in place by the authorities following the COVID-19 outbreak. PTI

**SC urged to set up 11-judge Bench on quota cap**

The court was hearing a bunch of petitions challenging Maratha reservation law

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday was urged to set up an 11-judge Bench to reconsider the 50% cap on reservation.

The push for it came while the court was hearing a challenge to the Maratha reservation law.

A bunch of petitions contended that the law, which provides 12% to 13% quota for the community in Maharashtra, breached the 50% cap on reservation declared by a nine-judge Bench of the court in 1992.

Lawyer Mukul Rohatgi appeared for the respondent Maharashtra government and lawyer Kapil Sibal appeared for an applicant supporting the State government.

Appearing before a Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao, the senior advocates

asked the court to refer the case to a numerically superior Bench of 11 judges.

This Bench should, rather than restricting itself to the Maratha law, set about reconsidering the 50% ceiling itself.

Mr. Sibal reasoned that 28 States had granted reservation exceeding 50% to their respective backward classes. He suggested that the court should hear all these States. "Eighty-five per cent in Maharashtra belong to backward classes, so is it in many States," he submitted.

Indira Sawhney preceded these amendments.

The 50% limit in reservation declared by the nine judges on the Bench in the Indira Sawhney case was nearly 30 years old, he noted.

The lawyers submitted that the court should revisit the percentage of reservation, taking into consideration the recent developments

in the front, including the 10% quota for economically weaker sections introduced recently through the 103rd Constitutional Amendment.

**Amendments recalled**  
Mr. Sibal said the amendments made to Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution entailed both "empowerment" and "employment" to the backward classes. Empowerment of backward classes was a different concept from mere employment.

"The Maharashtra government has made a mockery of the rule of law. It has also used its constitutional powers arbitrarily and purely for political gains", the petitions said. One of them argued,

"The High Court erred in concluding that the mere fact that other OBCs would have to share their reservation quotas with the Marathas [if the Marathas were simply included in the existing OBC category] constitutes an exceptional circumstance warranting a breach of the 50 per cent ceiling limit set by Indira Sawhney".

The appeals have been filed by individuals from all walks of life and NGOs

against the High Court decision upholding the Maratha law. They argued that the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act was born under "political pressure" and in "full defiance" of the rule of law and equality.

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**ASI creates 7 new circles**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Culture on Wednesday announced the setting up of seven new administrative circles of the Archaeological Survey of India in order to improve the management of monuments.

Culture Minister Prahpal Singh Patel said the decision was taken in accordance with PM Narendra Modi's call to facilitate and strengthen the process of preservation and registration of monuments, along with registration of artefacts with self-declaration.

New circles in Jabalpur, Tiruchi, Jhansi and Meerut, Hampi, Raiganj and Rajkot have been created.

**Sushant case: panel sends notices to police, hospital**

SONAM SAIGAL

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission on Wednesday sent show-cause notices to the Mumbai Police and Cooper Hospital at Juhu for allowing actor Rhea Chakraborty to enter the hospital's mortuary when Sushant Singh Rajput's post-mortem was being conducted.

The Commission's chair told *The Hindu*, "I cannot confirm receiving any notice."

The Enforcement Directorate is investigating a money laundering case against Ms. Chakraborty and her brother Showik and looking into the start-ups owned by the duo and Rajput.

Dr. Pinakin Gujjar, Dean

**NCB files case against Rhea**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Narcotics Control Bureau has registered a case under the NDPS Act against actor Rhea Chakraborty in the investigation into the drug angle in actor Sushant Singh Rajput death case. An NCB team is expected to arrive in Mumbai from Delhi on Thursday.

The ED had shared information with the NCB and the CBI, after it came across evidence indicating that some persons dealing in banned or controlled drugs were in touch with the suspects.

The ED has now summoned a talent manager named Jaya Saha.

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## A shot in the dark

Pakistan's allegations have little merit, but India must take its diplomatic strategy seriously

India's strong protest to the UN Security Council over Pakistan's so-called "statement" to a special discussion on terrorism is explained by a number of factors. First, the statement, which Pakistan's mission to the UN published as something delivered at an "open" debate on a report by the UN Secretary General, was never actually delivered. The only countries invited to the discussion were permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC and officials briefing them. Neither does the UNSC take cognisance of statements by non-participating countries. The statement, then, appeared to be an exercise by Pakistan in repeating its allegations against India. In the letter, Pakistan's Ambassador sought to portray Pakistan as a victim of "cross-border terrorism", and claimed that Pakistan is "responsible" for "decimating" al-Qaeda in the region. As India's mission at the UN retorted, the envoy could not have forgotten that Osama bin Laden and other leaders of the terror group were all found in Pakistan. The statement then went on to list "four types of terrorism" Pakistan confronts, each of which was attributed to India. The first included some of the attacks in Pakistan carried out by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a group that according to Pakistan's unsubstantiated claim has been funded by an "Indian terror syndicate" based in Afghanistan. That claim has been rejected by the UNSC in part already, as two of the four names forwarded by Pakistan weren't accepted into the terror designations list. The second allegation was that India has "hired" mercenaries to carry out attacks, in operations Pakistan claims have been organised by Kulbhushan Jadhav, a former naval officer. Next is Pakistan's contention that policies of the government amount to "Hindutva terrorism", with specific references to the Citizenship Amendment Act and the Ram temple construction. Finally, there is the oft-repeated allegation about Indian government actions in Jammu and Kashmir which it refers to as "state terrorism".

India, which has described these allegations as "preposterous" and "laughable", need not worry about its reputation, given its acclaimed role in fighting terror and cooperating on the international stage to deny terrorists funding and safe haven. Pakistan has consistently done the opposite, and its continued grey-listing at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), as well as the presence of the names of hundreds of Pakistani terror groups and individuals on UN terror lists, are proof of that. Even so, it is important that the government take the Pakistani attempt to build its case seriously, and pre-empt its larger strategy of painting India in a poor light ahead of its tenure at the UN Security Council 2021-2022 and the upcoming scrutiny process at the FATF.

## Sobering assessment

The RBI's annual report makes clear there is more pain in store for the economy

Three weeks after its monetary policy committee decided to hold fire on interest rates amid accelerating retail inflation, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has forecast more pain for the economy. Its assessment of the economic landscape and its prognosis for near-term prospects posit a stark picture: of demand hollowed out by the severe shock to private consumption, public finances strained by the imperative of funding mitigation measures, anaemic appetite for investment among corporates and credit-flow-impeding risk aversion among bankers, to name but a few. The COVID-19-induced economic contraction that manifested itself in the fiscal first quarter, is now almost certain to extend through the July-September period, the RBI said in its Annual Report. Observing that the "reimposition or stricter imposition of lockdowns" in different parts of the country in July and August had mainly contributed to damping the tentative revival in momentum seen in the preceding two months, it said several recent high-frequency indicators pointed to an unprecedented retrenchment in activity. Noting that the services sector has been a prime mover of the Indian economy, the central bank flagged the fact that whatever consumption had survived the shock was now manifesting as essential spending with services including transport and hospitality almost completely eviscerated.

The Central government, which has gamely attempted 'pandemic proofing' demand by increasing its net revenue expenditure by a third in the first quarter, is, however, likely to find itself strapped for resources in the coming months. As a result, it would have little leeway to continue to undergird momentum. States too are expected to find their finances so tightly squeezed as to have to cut capital spending. In its prescription to overcome the funds crunch, however, the central bank appears to run into a contradiction. The RBI suggests that the government should help "crowd in" private investment through targeted public investment that could be funded by monetising assets in steel, coal, power, land and railways. But given that private companies have been either too highly in debt and therefore keen to use gains from the government's corporate tax rate cut to repay loans, or loath to raise capital spending when saddled with excess capacity, it is hard to see the government raising much out of its privatisation efforts. Ultimately, as Expenditure Secretary T.V. Somanathan has acknowledged, the Centre may opt to marshal its meagre resources more prudently and wait for the curve of infections to start flattening before committing to any further stimulus spending. A revival will ensue only once consumers regain confidence to go out and spend. And that, as of now, seems a fair distance away.

# Perils of prematurely imparted literacy

By making foundational literacy and numeracy a target of early schooling, we will stress further an embattled childhood



KRISHNA KUMAR

**O**verhaul has a nice connotation. The smooth first run of one's childhood bicycle after it got overhauled is a lasting memory. When people say that a system has become so bad that it needs an overhaul, they actually believe that such a thing is possible, that someone can do it. In popular imagination, an overhaul also carries an association with radical improvement. Machines improve quite radically after an overhaul, but social systems like education behave more like living beings as they carry legacies and tendencies rooted in the wider social ethos. These tendencies need to be studied and recognised before radical remedies are administered for improvement.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers to revise and revamp the system of education. Such a promise carries great public appeal because a lot of people feel quite fed up with the system. Any doubt about the need for an overhaul in education today is likely to be stigmatised as a sign of conservatism. Disruptors and out-of-the-box solutions have been in the air for some time.

The National Knowledge Commission (NKC-2008) had set the stage for this kind of popular radicalism. We now have a fuller script. At times, it falls back on older, tired ideas, such as the three-language formula. It evinces approval for the recent trajectory of ideas like quantifiable basis for seeking credit ratings and rankings, outcome-based assessment,

technology-driven governance, and so on. They are treated as pointers to a bolder agenda. Little room is available for doubting, let alone debating, the impact such measures have had so far.

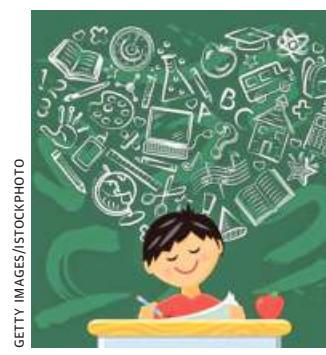
### New break-up

One significant shift NEP proposes is in the re-organisation of elementary education. As of now, it comprises eight years of schooling starting with Grade 1 at age six as Article 45 of the Constitution envisaged. The Right to Education (RTE) act promulgated a decade ago treats these eight years as a composite stage, consisting of five years of primary and three years of upper-primary education. NEP offers a surgical procedure which will graft the first two primary grades on to three years of preschool education. On the face of it, this idea looks great as it starts a child's educational journey from age three instead of six.

The plan also implies a historic break from the system as envisaged in the Kothari report (1964-1966) which recommended the present 10+2 system. NEP proposes a new structure. Instead of 10+2, we will now have a 5+3+4 system, in which the first five years include three years of preschool education (starting at age three), followed by Grades 1 and 2 of the primary school.

Although a wide spectrum of goals is mentioned for the preschool years, the overarching focus is on making children 'school-ready' in the context of reading, writing and arithmetic. The term used in NEP is 'foundational literacy and numeracy'. A separate section is devoted to it, underlining its importance as a 'prerequisite to learning'. It sounds great, but let us stop to study its implications.

Visit a nursery in any part of the



country and you will inevitably find three- to four-year olds reciting the English alphabet and numbers. The idea that learning begins with the alphabet and numbers is very popular indeed. Many people believe that there is nothing wrong in introducing a child of three to reading and writing. If you express some doubt about such an idea, some people might agree to delay this plan by a year or so, but that is the limit. The reasoning behind this belief is that if reading and writing are the two fundamental skills a child will need to do well at school, what is the harm in cultivating these skills from the earliest possible age?

Indeed, the faith in early acquisition of literacy and numeracy extends to the feeling that any delay on this front will harm the child's development. Nothing could be more contrary to truth although we must acknowledge that the matter is still regarded by many as a subject of debate. The key issue in the debate is our concept of reading itself. There is a sharp division among perspectives on what constitutes reading; more specifically: how is reading learnt?

The older perspective is that reading starts with familiarity with the alphabet. According to this view, the child must learn to recognise individual letters and their

sounds first, and then move towards recognising simple words by recognising the letters that comprise it. This view has prevailed in human history for so long that scientific research on how our eyes and mind process a written text has made no decisive difference in countries like ours. This body of research has demonstrated that a child's search for meaning is a far sounder basis for learning to read than mechanical practices like letter recognition and associating letters with their names and sound values. Prematurely acquired literacy can be harmful in that it creates a habit, difficult to remedy later, of ignoring the message.

In daily life, we see plenty of evidence of such a habit. Reading without relating to the text or to its author is far more common than using one's ability to read in order to make sense of a text. Despite education, many literates develop no interest in reading. An introduction to the alphabet and being drilled for letter recognition at a very young age is a major source of reading without deriving any meaning or showing any interest.

Similar harm is done to writing when it is acquired before one needs it. Writing is basically a means of conveying one's ideas to someone else. It becomes a meaningful activity when an intended audience begins to matter for the small child. If no need is felt for an audience, acquisition of writing becomes merely the attainment of a mechanical skill.

What applies to reading and writing is equally true of prematurely acquired numeracy. Mathematics offers to the child a means to make sense of the world, but the desire to relate to different objects arises with the widening of experience and engagement. Pro-

longed drills to habituate the child to chant numbers aloud, and then to learn how to manipulate them damages the bridge that connects numbers with real things or matters of interest and curiosity. By starting too early, the need for such a bridge is precluded. This has long-term consequences for learning mathematics and for perceiving it as an attractive subject.

### Culture of speed

A culture of speed pervades all spheres of school life. Middle-class parents set the norm for this culture by pushing their infants to consume the various products sold in the pedagogy market. Digital equipment is the latest addition to the educational toys that have long been favoured over cottage toys which quietly represent the wider world and serve as a symbolic bridge to what all lies outside the home.

The school's long shadow now extends to the home, and parents sigh with relief when they secure their children's admission to a nursery in the third year of their life, if not earlier. Changing family norms and social conditions make the transfer of the young child from home to a nursery inevitable. Although nurseries routinely use the rhetoric of play-way, their programmes are mostly a downward extension of the school. This social reality makes early childhood education in its present form a mixed blessing. By promoting foundational literacy and numeracy as a key educational target of early schooling, we are likely to stress further an already embattled childhood.

*Krishna Kumar is a former Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training and the author of *The Child's Language and the Teacher**

# Making agricultural market reforms successful

Consistency in Central policy, complementary reforms and a collaborative Centre-State approach are necessary



C.S.C. SEKHAR

**T**he recent reforms in agricultural marketing have brought a sea change in policy. The removal of restrictions under the Essential Commodities Act (ECA) should help attract private investment in agriculture and help farmers of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, onion and potato, who have been adversely affected by the policy regime hitherto that discouraged private investment. The two new ordinances are expected to enable inter-State trade and promote contract farming, thereby providing a large number of options to farmers.

However, there are several difficulties that need to be addressed before the full benefits of these policies are realised. The first one is what the behavioural economists call the 'time-inconsistency' problem, or in simple terms, the policy credibility problem. This situation arises when decision maker's preferences change over time in such a way that the preferences are inconsistent at different points in time. Why is this problem relevant in the present context? Because the policy signals are not very clear in the last few years as relates to agricultural marketing, as we will see below.

In 2016, the electronic national

agricultural market (e-NAM) was launched with a lot of fanfare. The e-NAM was intended to be a market-based mechanism for efficient price discovery by the farmers. In the first phase, 585 markets across 16 States and 2 Union Territories were covered. States needed to amend their respective Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Acts to put in place three prerequisites for the success of this programme – a single licence across the State; a single-point levy of the market fee; and electronic auctioning in all the markets. Several States could not or did not carry out these amendments and the e-NAM proved to be far less effective than desired.

### Policy reversals

As a result, the government reverted back to public price support by launching an ambitious programme, PM-AASHA, in September 2018. The main objective of this programme was to provide an assured price to farmers that ensured a return of at least 50% more than the cost of cultivation. The programme was confined to pulses and oilseeds to limit the fiscal costs, although many other crops, which did not receive the benefits of the MSP-procurement system, also needed this coverage. Public procurement, deficiency payments and private procurement were the main planks of this programme. However, only public procurement was carried out in a meaningful way. Deficiency payments were only implemented on a pilot basis in Madhya Pradesh



and private procurement was not initiated, even on a pilot basis, in any State. However, the initial budgetary outlay did not match the level of ambition of the programme. An outlay of only ₹4721 crore was made in 2018-19. A study by the Institute of Economic Growth at the time showed that the programme needed a much larger outlay to provide comprehensive coverage.

The initial outlay further dwindled to ₹321 crore in 2019-2020 and only ₹500 crore have been earmarked in 2020-2021. In addition to the PM-AASHA programme, two Model Acts were formulated by the Central government in 2017 and 2018 to promote agricultural marketing and contract farming in States. States were required to legislate these Model Acts. However, progress has been tardy and many States have not adopted the Model Acts. This uninspiring performance of PM-AASHA necessitated a more radical and direct approach. Thus evolved the PM-KISAN, a direct cash transfer programme, in the interim Budget of 2019-2020 (February 2019). This programme involved a fixed payment of ₹6,000 per annum to each

farm household with a budgetary outlay of ₹75,000 crore. This programme has worked reasonably well so far with many States toppling up the amount at their end. With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, improving the market functioning received renewed attention. E-NAM has been scaled up to cover 415 more markets, farmers have been allowed to sell and transport directly from registered warehouses and Farmer Produce Organisations (FPOs) and app-based transport services have been devised. Taking this thrust further, the government announced a slew of reforms on May 15, including the major marketing reforms mentioned above.

However, some of the issues that impeded the success of the earlier initiatives still remain. The frequent flip-flops in farm policy – from a market-based e-NAM to a public funded PM-AASHA and now back to market-based measures – may not inspire much confidence in the minds of private investors about the continuance of the present policies. This may result in the investors adopting a wait-and-watch approach.

### Better coordination

The second issue is the Centre-State and State-State relations. Although the Ordinances were passed by the Central Government using the constitutional provisions, the implementation of the same vests with the States. Also, inter-State trade involves movement of goods across the State boundaries. Thus, coordination

between the Central and the State governments, and also among various States becomes crucial. Also, the States must have faced several problems in legislating and implementing the earlier Model Acts. Thus, the Centre must engage with the States about these constraints in order to iron out the potential problems in implementation of the ordinances. Such a consultative and conciliatory approach will also minimise friction between the Centre and the States when the ordinances come up before Parliament.

The third important issue is the multiple market failures and the resultant inter-linkage of rural markets. Absence or failure of credit and insurance markets may lead a farmer to depend upon the local input dealer or the middleman to meet his/her farming needs. This, in turn, may tie him to these intermediaries and constrain his choice of output markets. Similarly, the widespread restrictions on land leasing in many States lead to inefficient scale of production. Thus, reforms in the output market alone are not sufficient and must be supplemented and complemented with liberalisation of the lease market and better access to credit and insurance markets.

In conclusion, consistency in policy, collaborative approach and complementary reforms are necessary for the success of the recent agricultural market reforms.

*C.S.C. Sekhar is a Professor of Economics at Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Congress meet

The Congress Party lost a golden opportunity to undertake a serious introspection that would have helped it get rid of many archaic practices irrelevant in modern political discourse. It is evident from the Congress Working Committee (CWC) deliberations that loyalty to the family continues to be the only way to grow in the party. Now, it is clear that the words and actions of Congress are not only harming the party, but also helping the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Perhaps, the refusal of Congress to reform itself may be due to its hope that the BJP will

commit blunders and implode, which looks impossible in the near future.

THUMATI ANURADHA,  
Hyderabad

■ The Congress, instead of reinventing itself after its second successive defeat in Lok Sabha elections, continues to hop from one crisis to another. The latest crisis that surfaced after a host of senior leaders wrote a letter to Sonia Gandhi seeking a change in leadership has led to the alliance parties raising doubts on Congress's ability to take on the ruling BJP. Significantly, the development comes ahead of

the crucial Assembly election in Bihar. It is the Gandhis, not the signatories of the letter, who have emerged bruised amid an orchestrated chorus of support for the former. The signatories of the letter have also added grist to the BJP's propaganda mill about the Nehru-Gandhi family.

R. SIVAKUMAR,  
Chennai

**Contempt case**  
I don't understand why the Supreme Court is wasting its precious time on a contempt case, when we have a backlog of important cases waiting to be heard. This case is moving more into the territory of personal

vendetta, rather than justice, for stating an opinion. What we need today is judicial reforms and accountability of judges. We should not forget that even the heads of courts are accountable for their deeds and the public has a right to voice its opinion when it feels something is wrong with the judiciary.

ANAHATHA D. KALYANI,  
Palakkad, Kerala

**Jimmy crosses 600**  
James Anderson, who became the first fast bowler to achieve the milestone of 600 Test wickets, has been an indispensable bowler for England for 17 years now. It is not just difficult but

exceptional that he could maintain such high-level bowling skills, supreme fitness and the undiminished passion for the art over these years. He took a studied decision in 2015 to stop playing the shorter formats of the game and this enabled him to remain fresh and free from injuries so that he could continue to serve England in white flannels. In countries like England and Australia, even a marginal drop in form can force selectors to go for

new faces. Amidst such intense competition, Anderson had carved a niche for himself. He is, even at 38, a force to reckon with and could take another 50 wickets. Apart from Stuart Broad, who is around 100 wickets behind him, it is unlikely that any fast bowler will emulate Anderson's feat in the foreseeable future.

V. LAKSHMANAN,  
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

**CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:** -->A report titled "Monsoon session from Sept. 14" (August 26, 2020) erroneously said as per the convention, Parliament has to meet within six months. It should have said as per the legal position flowing from Article 85.

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# The uncharted territory of outer space

India's space vision also needs to address global governance, regulatory and arms control issues



SYED AKBARUDDIN

Outer space has been the arena of some of the most memorable technology demonstrations. Russia's Sputnik and the U.S.'s Apollo 11 were metaphors of geopolitical competition. For India, Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan were symbols of national pride. Today, outer space no longer captures our mind space in the way cyberspace does.

Several space events planned well in advance have proceeded amidst the COVID-19 pandemic without much attention. The launch of missions to Mars by China and the U.S. along with the UAE's Mars orbiter; the first astronaut trip to orbit on a commercial enterprise built by Space X; the completion of the Chinese 'BeiDou' satellite navigation system; and the U.S. Space Command statement that Russia conducted a "non-destructive test of a space-based anti-satellite weapon" all portend a trend that outer space is witnessing a welter of new activity.

**Growth of the space industry**  
Technological changes augur well for the peaceful use of outer space. The price tag for reaching low Earth orbit has declined by a factor of 20 in a decade. NASA's space shuttle cost about \$54,500 per kg; now, SpaceX's Falcon 9 advertises a cost of \$2,720 per kg. In a decade, the cost could be less than \$100 per kg. It not only enhances human space travel possibilities by leveraging new commercial capabilities but will usher in applications dismissed earlier as science fiction.

According to a Bank of America Report, the \$350 billion space market today will touch \$2.7 trillion by 2050. Space industries are likely to follow a path akin to the software industry. When Apple allowed developers to design apps for the iPhone, it unleashed innovations that put more technology in the hands of common people and transformed lives. Starlink, the constellation being constructed by SpaceX to provide global Internet access, plans more than 10,000 mass-produced small satellites in low Earth orbit. It



hopes to transcend the digital divide and provide everyone, everywhere access to services such as distance education and telemedicine. Amazon's Project Kuiper received U.S. Federal Communications Commission approvals for more than 3,000 micro-satellites. In a decade, 80,000 such satellites could be in space compared to less than 3,000 at present. Companies such as Planet, Spire Global and Iceye are using orbital vantage points to collect and analyse data to deliver fresh insights in weather forecasting, global logistics, crop harvesting and disaster response. Space could prove attractive for high-tech manufacturing too. In short, an exciting new platform is opening up for entrepreneurs. However, what is technologically feasible is not easily achievable. The challenges to fulfilling the potential of space are many.

**Challenges in fulfilling potential**  
First, as outer space becomes democratised, commercialised and crowded, the multilateral framework for its governance is becoming obsolescent. Space law is a product of a golden age of two decades – the 1960s and 1970s. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 enshrines the idea that space should be "the province of all mankind" and "not subject to national appropriation by claims of sovereignty". The Rescue Agreement, Space Liability Convention, and the Space Registration Convention expanded provisions of the Outer Space Treaty. The Moon Treaty of 1979 was not ratified by major space-faring nations. Space law does not have a dispute settlement mechanism, is silent on collisions and debris, and offers insufficient guidance on interference

with others' space assets. These gaps heighten the potential for conflict in an era of congested orbits and breakneck technological change.

Second, the legal framework is state-centric, placing responsibility on states alone. However, non-state entities are now in the fray for commercial space exploration and utilisation. Some states are providing frameworks for resource recovery through private enterprises based on the notion that this is not expressly forbidden for non-state actors. U.S. President Donald Trump's Executive Order on Encouraging International Support for the Recovery and Use of Space Resources of April 2020 falls in this category. According to NASA, the asteroid named 16 Psyche is so rich in heavy metals that it is worth \$10,000 quadrillion. The incentive to proceed is evident. On the other hand, some scholars and governments view this as skirting the principle of national non-appropriation, violating the spirit if not the letter of the existing space law. The lack of alignment of domestic and international normative frameworks risks a damaging free-for-all competition for celestial resources involving actors outside the space framework.

Third, strategists extol the virtues of holding the high ground. Space is the highest ground. States are investing in military space systems for communications, navigation, and reconnaissance purposes, so as to ensure operability of a range of capabilities. Reliance of militaries on satellite systems means that space assets become potential targets. So investment in technologies that can disrupt or destroy space-based capabilities is under way. The space arms

race is difficult to curb, especially since almost all space technologies have military applications. For example, satellite constellations are commercial but governments could acquire their data to monitor military movements.

Despite concerns about military activity in outer space for long, not much progress has been made in addressing them. The UN General Assembly passes a resolution on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space since 1982. Chinese- and Russian-backed Treaty proposals were initiated in 2008 and updated in 2014. For various legal, technical, and political reasons these have not advanced at the Conference on Disarmament. Groups of Governmental Experts have not helped in making progress. The EU's International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities has not gained traction. The current geopolitical situation does not hold hope for addressing concerns of a space arms race.

#### Need for a space legislation

India has invested enormous resources in its space programme through the Indian Space Research Organisation. More importantly, our space assets are crucial for India's development. India's future plans are ambitious. These include a landing on the Moon; the first Indian solar observatory; the first crewed orbital spaceflight mission; and installation of a modular space station in 2030. This calendar is designed to establish India as a major space-faring nation by the end of the decade.

The proposed involvement of private players and the creation of an autonomous body IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) under the Department of Space for permitting and regulating activities of the private sector are welcome efforts. However, the space environment that India faces requires us to go beyond meeting technical milestones. We need a space legislation enabling coherence across technical, legal, commercial, diplomatic and defence goals. Our space vision also needs to address global governance, regulatory and arms control issues. As space opens up our space vision needs broadening too.

Syed Akbaruddin has served as India's Permanent Representative at the UN

# The battle for Parshuram

In U.P., the Opposition's tested strategy of reaching out to the Brahmins shows a lack of imagination and vision



OMAR RASHID

Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, the Samajwadi Party (SP) announced it would build a 108-feet tall statue of Parshuram, known as the sixth avatar of Lord Vishnu, in Uttar Pradesh. Not to be left behind, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati promised to build a bigger statue if she came back to power. Congress leader Jitin Prasada demanded that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government restore Parshuram Jayanti as a public holiday, there was hardly any backlash from the community.

In fact, the Opposition's move could end up alienating other communities averse to the Brahmins, in particular the Thakurs, whose ancestors Parshuram is believed to have slain. This singular appeasement of Brahmins at a time when sections of Dalits and Other Backward Classes feel short-changed by the government could only push them away further from the Opposition.

**A failed strategy**  
This is not the first time that the BSP and SP are trying to woo the Brahmins. Both SP president Akhilesh Yadav and Ms. Mayawati rewarded them with important posts while in power. Mr. Yadav even built a huge park in Lucknow after Janeshwar Mishra, a former party leader. Ms. Mayawati has regularly demanded a quota for the upper caste poor. However, under the changed scenario of a Narendra Modi-led BJP, and the limits of traditional caste arithmetic catching up, these strategies failed to produce results. The breakup of the SP-BSP alliance after a failed 2019 campaign and the shift of the two parties from the promise of social justice to appropriating Parshuram is perhaps a demonstration of their realisation that the utopian mobilisation of '85 vs '15' (Bahujans versus upper castes) along with Muslims is not practical under the current wave of dominant Hindutva. The contradictions within castes hurt the two parties and haunt their prospects.

If the Opposition parties are interested in altering the political discourse, they need to build trust among the communities within the numerically dominant OBCs and Scheduled Castes who once supported them. For the SP, that would mean shedding its Yadav image and bridging gaps between the Yadavs and other OBCs and Dalits. For the BSP, it would mean building a stronger base of Dalit support beyond the Jats and winning back the trust of the MBCs. However, they have not shown any concrete strategy to do so. Playing politics over Parshuram only reflects their lack of imagination and vision.

omar.rashid@thehindu.co.in

## Bringing the Internet to everyone

For everyone to access the same economic opportunities, we need to bridge the digital divide

ANIL K. ANTHONY

must deeply prick our conscience.

#### Last mile connectivity

In 2016, the UN General Assembly passed a non-binding resolution that declared Internet access as a human right. However this hasn't translated to affirmative governmental action. In 2011, the Indian government launched the National Optical Fibre Network project for providing broadband connectivity to 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats. In 2015, the programme was renamed Bharat Net and integrated into the Modi government's Digital India initiative. It included plans for tying up with and subsidising 4G telecom operators for setting up 700,000 Wi-Fi hotspots spread across each of our villages for last mile connectivity. But the rate of Internet penetration still stands at 50%.

Internet connectivity has to be ensured in our remotest areas by accelerating the deployment of additional optical fibres, wireless technology, drones and satellites. Community access points have to be installed in every nook and corner to ensure that even those who lack their own devices can access the digital space. The Punjab government has just started distributing 1.75 lakh free smartphones to its students. There have to be many more initiatives of distribution of subsidised smart devices along with low cost data plans to lower income groups for us to have a fair chance in bridging our digital divide.

The National Education Policy 2020 advocates greater integration of technology. However, India still lacks a concrete roadmap for ICT training in various proficiency levels for our diverse population segments. Staying connected online has become a necessity for us to survive this pandemic. The post-COVID world will be more digitised than before. Those with the ability to navigate the digital landscape would get more economic opportunities and receive more avenues of social mobility than others. Therefore it should be our priority to ensure basic digital literacy and Internet connectivity for every Indian.

Anil K. Antony is the National Co-coordinator of the AICC Social Media and Digital Communications Department

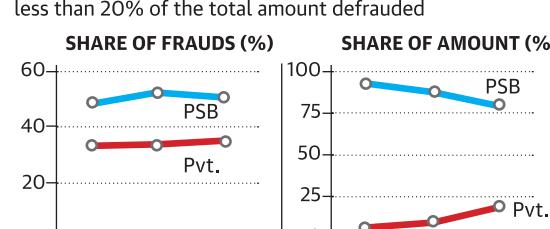


#### DATA POINT

## Frauds on the rise

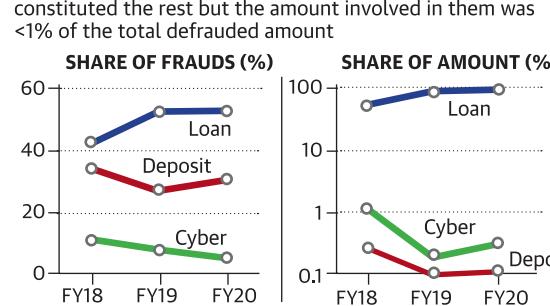
#### 1. SHARE OF BANK FRAUDS

In the last three years, PSBs accounted for 50% of the total number of frauds but more than 80% of the total amount defrauded. On the other hand, private banks accounted for about 35% of the total number of frauds and less than 20% of the total amount defrauded.



#### 2. TYPE OF FRAUDS

Loan frauds (blue) accounted for >98% of the total amount defrauded in FY20. But they accounted for only 53% of the total number of frauds. Other types such as card-/Internet-related (cyber) frauds (green) and deposit-related frauds (red) constituted the rest but the amount involved in them was <1% of the total defrauded amount.

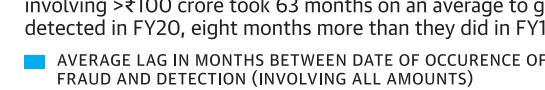


Bank frauds<sup>a</sup> in India increased by 28% in total numbers and 159% in value in FY20 compared to the previous year. However, some of the massive frauds detected in FY20 occurred five years ago. Public Sector Banks (PSBs) were impacted the most. The frauds in FY20 were largely related to loans disbursed by PSBs.

By Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Naresh Singaravelu and Sumanth Sen

#### 3. POOR RESPONSE TIME

Banks take years to report frauds due to poor implementation of early warning systems, the RBI said. On an average, it took 24 months for a fraud to be detected from its date of occurrence, in FY20, two months more than it did in FY19. More importantly, bigger frauds involving >₹100 crore took 63 months on an average to get detected in FY20, eight months more than they did in FY19.



The RBI noted that there "was a concentration of large value frauds" in FY20 as the top 50 loan-related frauds constituted 76% of the total defrauded amount. The surge in loan-related frauds has come at a time when the RBI is predicting a two-decade-high NPA ratio by next March.

\*Loan frauds include mortgaged assets being compromised or divested off, forged documents, availed funds diverted or siphoned off, or letter of credits/guarantees misused.

<sup>a</sup>Includes frauds >₹1 lakh

Source: RBI Annual Report 2019-20, Speech by R.Gandhi (former Deputy Governor, RBI)

The Hindu

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 27, 1970

Karunanidhi discusses flag demand

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi discussed with the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi today the State Government's demand to have a flag of its own. Mr. Karunanidhi told pressmen that the Prime Minister was not shocked by the proposal as she had seen States having separate flags in other countries. The Prime Minister, according to him, repeated what she had stated in Parliament that she would consult the Chief Ministers. Mr. Karunanidhi said he handed over to Mrs. Gandhi a copy of the statement he had made in the State Assembly to-day and the design of the proposed State flag. Mr. Karunanidhi told Mrs. Gandhi that the Tamil Nadu Governor never intended to show disrespect to the national flag. If that were so, it would not have sought to incorporate the national flag in the State flag. He wanted national integration and had no intention to revive the sucessionist demands. Mr. Karunanidhi told pressmen that the Prime Minister did not try to dissuade him from the move. The Chief Minister said in reply to a question that constitutionally and legally there was nothing to prevent the State from having its flag.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 27, 1920

The Leper Problem

(From an Editorial)

At a meeting this evening under the Presidency of her Excellency Lady Chelmsford a lantern lecture on the leper problem in India was delivered by Rev. Frank Oldrieve. Much interest was evinced in the movement and a large and distinguished gathering including a good number of members of the Council were present. H.E. Lady Chelmsford in opening the address emphasised that the interest now exhibited on the part should grow with the growth of years. The leper problem had been by this time sufficiently adverted and it was now only a matter of degree of interest. The amended Leper Act which was going to come before the Imperial Council this session intended to enforce segregation of pauper cases and provide better safeguard for fighting this most infectious and contagious disease. The provincial Government would, after the passage of the proposed amendment, build leper settlements and the land has already been given in this direction by the Bengal government.

A ND-NDE



**IN BRIEF**



Former Tripura CM, CPI(M) leaders detained

AGARTALA  
Former Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar, senior CPI(M) leaders and a few hundred party workers were arrested following an attempt to hold a rally here on Wednesday against the "anti-people" policies of the BJP-led government at the Centre and the State. Former CPI(M) MPs and several Ministers of the erstwhile Left Front government joined the protest. They were released after a brief detention. The police said the CPI(M) had not sought permission for holding the protest.

**Nagaland doctors on strike over assault**

GUWAHATI  
Most healthcare services shut down across Nagaland for 24 hours from 6 a.m. on Wednesday to protest police assault on doctors in the State. This call followed the alleged assault on Dr. Atoka Wotsa by Indian Reserve Battalion personnel at Dimapur on August 21. Two other doctors - Mongshithung and Nosezol Sezo - had earlier been assaulted by the police.

**ED files chargesheet in Bihar shelter home case**

NEW DELHI  
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a chargesheet against prime accused Brajesh Thakur and others in connection with the money laundering probe in the case of sexual abuse of minor girls at a Muzaffarpur shelter home in Bihar. The agency also urged the court to allow confiscation of assets worth ₹8.3 crore, which were in the name of Thakur, his family members and other suspects.

**Brahmaputra ropeway suspended due to snag**

GUWAHATI  
The 1.82-km Brahmaputra ropeway in Guwahati, said to be the longest in India across a river, has been suspended within 48 hours of its official launch on August 24 due to malfunctioning of the motor that powers it. An official of the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) said, "The motor was installed in 2011, two years after work on the project had begun. Lying idle for years, it performed well during the trial run after the completion of the project in 2019 but could not take the load of commuters after a few runs."

# Opposition to build on 'Janta Parliament' ideas

Parties propose common agenda with civil society leaders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders from the Congress, Left and other non-BJP parties have asked civil society leaders to work together with them to develop a common minimum agenda, based on resolutions framed during a virtual "Janta Parliament" held over the last week.

Important demands which could be included are universalisation of the public distribution system (PDS), the right to healthcare, opposition to the government's agriculture marketing ordinances and the possibility of a universal basic income. Such an agenda could provide input into Opposition strategy in the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament.

"From the resolutions you have made here, it would be helpful to resolve a common minimum agenda and identify the most important priorities that can be agreed on by most Opposition parties also," said K. Raju, bureaucrat-turned-Congress politician, who is a close aide of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, speaking at



Sitaram Yechury

the closing session of the event.

"With the economic slowdown and COVID-19, the worst sufferers are the poorest of the poor. From the beginning, Congress has been demanding that the government put money into the hands of the poor in the form of a universal basic income. That is the most urgent collective demand," said Mr. Raju, who was formerly the member secretary of the National Advisory Council in the United Progressive Alliance government.

He added universal PDS, problems caused by Aadhaar verification, right to healthcare legislation, environment impact assessment draft, and the agriculture ordinances as other major priorities.

Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Sitaram Yechury initially proposed the idea of working together with civil society to develop a common agenda. "We need to have a joint action plan to raise these issues within Parliament and outside," he said.

The Congress' chief whip in the Lok Sabha Kodikunnil Suresh said the party would work to take up the major issues mentioned in the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament.

"We should strategise together so there is convergence between Parliament House in Delhi and this Janta Parliament which has gathered voices from the ground across the country," said Rashtriya Janata Dal leader and Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha, promising that his party would also take a cue from the civil society demands during upcoming Bihar elections.

Aam Aadmi Party MP Sanjay Singh and CPI leader D. Raja also spoke at the event, slamming the ruling BJP government for its handling of the COVID-19 crisis and failure to convene Parliament.

# J&K police book many over slogans during procession

Two youths held in midnight raids, more arrests likely, say police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

The police on Wednesday lodged a case against those who raised pro-azaadi (freedom) and anti-India slogans during a Muhamarr procession on the outskirts of Srinagar.

A police official said the Parimpura police station took "strong cognisance" of a video that surfaced on social media platforms. The video, apparently filmed on Tuesday, showed scores of peoples raising pro-freedom and anti-India slogans during the congregation.

"The police acted swiftly and identified the location, situated 2.5 km from the main road at the end of Hokersar-Nowpora Bund [near Srinagar]. The area is isolated and there was no history of



No leeway: Muhamarr processions have been banned on certain routes in J&K since the 1990s. ■FILE PHOTO

organising any such unlawful gathering before", the police said.

Two youths were arrested in midnight raids and "further arrests are expected", the police said. The police lodged a case in the incident under Section 13 UL (P) Act and Sections 143, 188, 269

of the Indian Penal Code. The police said they had identified youth from the adjoining areas of Budgam "who took advantage of the area".

The government has banned the remembrance processions on certain traditional routes since the 1990s.

# One killed in landslip as rain lashes J&K

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

One person was killed in landslip triggered by heavy rain in parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday.

An official said Shoket, a resident of Rajouri in the Pir Panjal Valley, was killed after he came under a landslip, triggered by torrential rain, in Kotli village of Manjkote. "Locals managed to retrieve the body," officials said.

The district administration has alerted its men and machinery in Rajouri after water levels rose in the Saktoh and Dharhali rivers. The Rajouri administration has sounded an alert and asked "people to contact the police for help".

Meanwhile, three vehicles were damaged in the Surankote area in Poonch district in a major cloudburst.

Multiple cloudbursts were re-

ported from south and central Kashmir but "there has been no casualties," according to officials. Kashmir's main Jhelum river witnessed a sudden rise in the water level due to the rain.

The Srinagar-Jammu highway, connecting the Kashmir Valley with the Jammu region, remained closed due to the landslips. Jammu and Kashmir has been witnessing heavy rain since Tuesday night.

# Cancel panel meet on Internet shutdown, BJP MP tells Tharoor

Issue is *sub judice* and violates the Speaker's advisory, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

BJP MP and member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, Nishikant Dubey, in a letter to the panel's Chairman and Congress leader, Shashi Tharoor, has demanded that the meeting on suspension of Internet services in various States and Union Territories including Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled for September 1, be cancelled since the subject is *sub judice*.

Mr. Dubey's letter came a day after Speaker Om Birla issued an advisory to the Chairmen of all parliamentary panels asking them to adhere to rules while conducting meetings.

"Since this issue is presently pending before the Supreme Court, any further deliberations on this would again be a violation



Nishikant Dubey

of the relevant rules/directions as well as disregarding the recently issued advisory of the Speaker," Mr. Dubey wrote. He had earlier in a letter to Mr. Birla demanded Mr. Tharoor's removal from the Chairman's post. He was backed by another BJP member Rajayavardhan Rathore who accused Mr. Tharoor of going public with the decision to summon Face-

book on the controversy regarding them going easy on pages affiliated to the BJP carrying hate speech.

**Confidential proceedings**  
Referring to the Speaker's instructions, Mr. Dubey said the advisory has clearly said the proceedings shall be treated as confidential and the panel may not take up those issues which are pending in courts.

"Therefore, [I] appeal to your good-self that the sitting of the committee on information technology convened for the aforementioned purpose may be immediately revoked."

He requested Mr. Tharoor to not take up those issues for deliberation which are of national importance as otherwise, the panel would again be showing courtesy to the desire of the Speaker.

# Jaish role established with FBI help'

Phone recovered from encounter site was a key link in the Pulwama case: NIA

VIIAJITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) helped Indian security agencies in establishing the role of the Pakistan-based terror group Jaish-e-Mohammad in the Pulwama terror attack, a senior official of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Pakistan on Wednesday rejected the chargesheet of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) regarding the February 14, 2019 Pulwama terror attack, which blamed Pakistan-based Masood Azhar and his relatives for the bombing.

The statement referred to the pre-election "timing" of the Pulwama attack and said the explosives for the incident were procured from inside the Jammu and Kashmir region.

(MoFA) said: "India failed to provide any credible evidence for its inventive and has instead been using the attack for its malicious propaganda campaign against Pakistan."

The statement referred to the pre-election "timing" of the Pulwama attack and said the explosives for the incident were procured from inside the Jammu and Kashmir region.

The IP address was traced to a camp in Muzaffarabad in Pakistan. The video was released by one Mohammad Hussain, who introduced himself as a Jaish spokesperson. The phone number from which the WhatsApp message was sent was registered in the name of a fictitious woman in Jammu and Kashmir, the NIA said, adding that in the video, Dar, sitting against the backdrop of a black and white flag, says that "by the time the video is released, he will be in heaven".

A battered Samsung phone lying at a police station in South Kashmir was also a key to cracking the 2019 Pulwama terror attack case, the NIA said. It said that from the phone it recovered an audio note that was sent by Jaish chief Masood Azhar to motivate the suicide bomber.

Dar had on February 14 last year rammed a car laden with 200 kg of explosives into a CRPF bus killing 40 personnel at Pulwama on the Jammu-Srinagar highway.

In the voice note, the Jaish chief mentioned that because of the mujahideen (fighters), the U.S. troops were withdrawing from Af-

ghanistan and reminisced how the group defeated the Soviet Union in the past. A senior government official said there were no direct calls or chats from Azhar to the members of the group.

Earlier this year, Pakistan had claimed before the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) that the UN-designated terrorist and his family were "missing".

The findings are part of a 13,500-page chargesheet filed by the NIA in a Jammu court on Tuesday against 19 accused, including Azhar.

The damaged phone recovered from an encounter site

on March 29, 2019, where the main planner Mohammad Umar Farooq (24) was killed, was kept at the Nowgam police station till November last year.

Farooq was a nephew of Masood Azhar. His father Ibrahim Ather is one of the main accused in the IC-814 Kandahar hijacking case of 1999 and looks after a joint training camp of Al Qaeda-Jaish in Afghanistan. It was at one of these camps that Farooq received training in assembling bombs and exploding buildings in 2016.

After groping in the dark for months, the NIA later decided to scan all the cases related to Jaish terrorists. While scanning one such case, it came across the phone. All data on the phone, which had double layered encryption, had been deleted, a government official said. The NIA then requested the local police to send the device to the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) in Delhi for forensic analysis.

On February 5, 2019, when the Jaish members, including Rauf Asghar and Ammar Alvi, were addressing a rally in Pakistan on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day, Umar Farooq sent them pictures of the two bombs.

# Pranab's renal parameters decline

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Former President Pranab Mukherjee's renal parameters have shown a decline while he continues to remain in coma, the Army's Research and Referral (R&R) hospital here said on Wednesday.

"Pranab Mukherjee is being treated for lung infection. His renal pa-

rameters are slightly deranged since yesterday. He continues to be in deep coma and on ventilator support," the hospital said in a statement.

On August 10, Mr. Mukherjee underwent a life-saving emergency surgery for a brain clot and has since been on ventilator support.

He had also tested positive for CO-VID-19.

## RAVENSHAW UNIVERSITY (A State University, NAAC Accreditation: 'A' Grade) CUTTACK - 753003, ODISHA

### ADVERTISEMENT FOR RECRUITMENT TO VARIOUS TEACHING POSTS

In continuation with the advertisement No. 058 to 097, dated 07.01.2020 (and the Addenda and Corrigenda) Online applications have been invited from the eligible candidates for the posts of **Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors** in different subjects of Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha, vide advertisements Nos.2044 to 2083 dated 25.08.2020 posted on the University website. The last date of the payment of application fee and submission of online application are **11<sup>th</sup> September 2020**, and **15<sup>th</sup> September 2020**, respectively. The candidates, who have applied earlier in response to the advertisement No.058 to 097, dated 07.01.2020, need not apply again. However, they can submit an update of their submitted application in the prescribed format. The details are available in the University website [www.ravenshawuniversity.ac.in](http://www.ravenshawuniversity.ac.in). The candidates are also requested to visit the University website regularly for any addendum / corrigendum / update. No.2165 / Dt. 25.08.2020 CAD-411 Registrar OPR-11008/11/0003/2021

**Government of Tamil Nadu STATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT, JAL JEEVAN MISSION**  
4<sup>th</sup> floor, TWAD House, 31, Kamarajar Salai, Chepauk, Chennai - 5 EOI.No. 31720/F.TPI/2020 Dt : 26.08.2020  
**Empanelment of Third Party Inspection Agency**  
State Project Management Unit, Jal Jeevan Mission invites Expression of Interest for the Empanelment of Third Party Inspection Agency under Jal Jeevan Mission, Tamil Nadu.  
Interested firm/agency/organisation may submit their Expression of Interest in the prescribed forms on or before **11.09.2020** by **03.00 pm** in the sealed envelope to the O/o Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission.  
The terms of reference and forms for Expression of interest can be downloaded from the <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in/> & <http://www.twadboard.gov.in/> upto 5.30 pm on **09.09.2020**.  
DIPR/ 713 /DISPLAY/2020  
Mission Director, JJM, Tamil Nadu.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
Buildings (C&M) Circle, Madurai - 625 002.  
Notice Inviting Tenders Short term Pre Qualification Tender (Two cover system) and Price Tender System  
Tender Notice No: 9SE/Buildings (C&M) Circle / Madurai / 2020-2021 / Date:25.08.2020.  
For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu sealed tenders are invited from the contractors registered in Public Works Department in the appropriate class to the office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Buildings (C&M) circle, Madurai.  
Tender Schedule Available Date : 27.08.2020 to 14.09.2020 Up to 5.45 PM.  
Tender Schedule Receiving Date : 15.09.2020 Up to 3.00 PM.  
Tender Opening at : 15.09.2020 at 3.30 PM.  
Total No. of Works : 5 (Five)  
PO Tender System : Sl.No. 1, 2 & 4  
Price Tender System : Sl.No. 3 & 5.  
Tender system : Short term Pre Qualification Tender (Two cover system) & Price Tender System  
Total Approximate Value of Works : Rs.105.25 Lakhs.  
For further details and tender documents visit the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) and [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in)  
DIPR/3200/Tender/2020 Superintending Engineer, (lc) PWD, Buildings (C & M) circle, Madurai-2.

**PUBLIC (GENERAL II) DEPARTMENT**  
Tender Reference No. 6353 / Public (General II) Department / 2020  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
Sealed tenders are invited by the Deputy Secretary to Government (Protocol), Public Department, Secretariat, Chennai - 9 from reputed Agencies / Organisations for Mechanized Housekeeping / Utility Management Services at the Tamizhagam Guest House, Udhagamandalam. The tender document can be downloaded free of cost, from the web site [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) from **27.08.2020 @ 10.00 A.M.** onwards. Earnest Money Deposit of Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees one lakh only) must accompany the tender for this work. The duly filled in sealed tenders should reach the Deputy Secretary to Government, Public (Protocol) Department, Secretariat, Chennai - 9 on or before **18.09.2020 upto 03.00 P.M.**  
DIPR/ 31



## Tarun Gogoi tests positive for COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**PUNE**  
The second phase of the clinical trial of the eagerly anticipated University of Oxford COVID-19 vaccine, being manufactured by the city-based Serum Institute of India (SII), commenced at Bharati Vidyapeeth Medical College and Hospital here on Wednesday.

Hospital authorities said that two male volunteers, ages 32 and 48, were administered the first shots of the 'Covishield' vaccine. The trial began around 1 p.m. and the volunteers were discharged after half-an-hour of being administered the vaccine.

"Doctors at the hospital administered a 0.5-mL dose of the 'Covishield' vaccine to both volunteers after their COVID-19 and antibodies test results returned negative. Their temperature, blood pressure and heartbeat parameters were checked before the vaccine was administered to them," said Sanjay Lalwani, Medical Director of Bharati Vidyapeeth's Medi-

## RS Chairman writes to panel heads on rules

He stresses keeping meetings confidential

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI**  
A day after Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla wrote to chairpersons of parliamentary standing committees advising them to ensure confidentiality of panel meetings, Rajya Sabha Chairman M. Venkaiah Naidu too wrote an advisory on similar lines.

Writing to heads of eight standing committees that come under the Rajya Sabha purview, Mr. Naidu said the committees were mandated to carry out a detailed scrutiny of legislative proposals which was not feasible for Parliament to do so in transaction of its day-to-day business. While commanding the standing committees, he wrote, "However, for some time now, it has been observed that the media has been found quoting, in their reportage, the proceedings of the committees related to the subject matters or the legislative Bills under their consideration and examination".

He reiterated the rules and procedures that govern the meetings of the parliamentary panels. The meetings are confidential and "it is not permissible for a member of the committee or anyone who has access to its proceedings to communicate, directly or indirectly, to the media any information regarding its proceedings, including any part of the report or any conclu-

## Two get Oxford vaccine shot in Pune

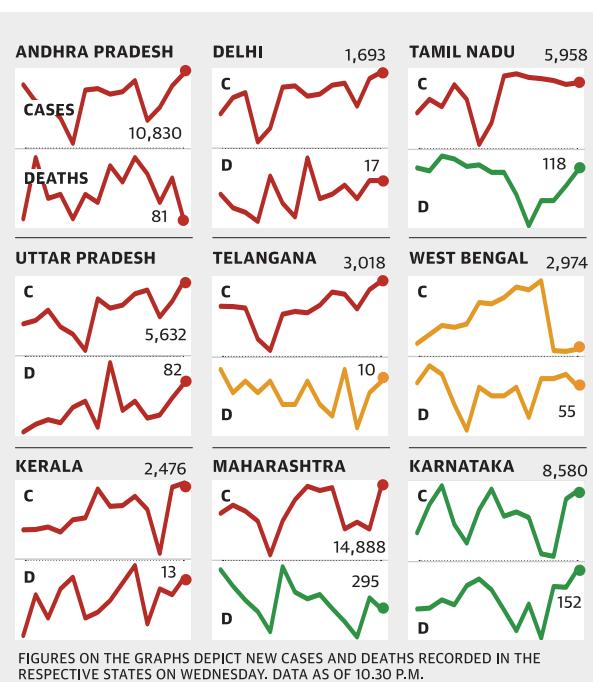
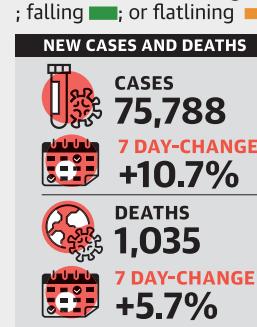
Phase 2 trial commences; the men, aged 32 and 48, will get a second dose after 28 days

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**PUNE**

### Viral tracker

With 75,788 new cases recorded on Wednesday, the highest single-day surge, India's COVID-19 tally rose to 33,07,407. As many as 1,035 new deaths were recorded, taking the toll to 60,647. Graphs depict new cases and deaths in the last 14 days across select States which are classified based on where cases or deaths are rising (red); falling (green); or flattening (orange).



cal College, Hospital and Research Centre.

He further said that a second dose would be given to both volunteers after 28 days, while they would be summoned to the hospital after a period of 180 days.

Authorities said that only after this six-month period could the success of the vaccine be properly ascertained. In all, five volunteers had enrolled themselves for the Phase 2 clinical trial after the vaccine doses were received from the SII on Tuesday, Dr. Lalwani said.

The COVID-19 and antibodies tests were conducted on all five volunteers. However, the antibodies test report of three of them returned positive, rendering

them ineligible for the trial," he said. According to Dr. Lalwani, a further 25 volunteers would be administered the vaccine over the next seven days. The 32-year-old volunteer, who works for a private company, said he had come to know of the trials at the Bharati Hospital through social media and expressed happiness on being declared eligible to be given the dose after his tests returned negative.

Talking about the trials, Maharashtra Minister Dr. Vishwajeet Kadam, who is also pro-Vice-Chancellor and Secretary, Bharati Vidyapeeth, said: "I think it is indeed a historic moment that self-declared volunteers are to be administered the first dose of the Oxford vaccine being manufactured by the SII at the Bharati Hospital".

The SII has signed an agreement to manufacture the 'Covishield' vaccine, which is being developed by the University of Oxford in collaboration with the British-Swedish pharmaceutical major, AstraZeneca.



A health worker in Mumbai with a sample that will be tested for COVID-19. • AFP

to set out a framework for the secure processing of personal and sensitive personal data of individuals who are a part of the national digital health ecosystem. This will be in compliance with all applicable laws and international standards that define the set of frameworks of consent for the collection and processing of health data by healthcare practitioners and other entities, and other relevant standards related to data interoperability and data sharing, said a release by the NHA.

## Draft policy on health data open for feedback

It will be available to public till Sept. 3

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI**

The National Health Authority (NHA) has released the draft Health Data Management Policy of the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) in the public domain. The draft has been released on the website of the NDHM and will be available for public comments and feedback till September 3. The policy will be finalised after receiving suggestions from the public.

NHA Chief Executive Officer Indu Bhushan said, "The draft is the maiden step in realising the NDHM's guiding principle of 'Security and Privacy by Design' for the protection of individuals' data privacy. It encompasses various aspects pertaining to health data such as data privacy, consent management, data sharing and protection etc."

**Main objectives**  
One of the main objectives of the draft policy is to provide adequate guidance and

## State officials will help with exams, says NTA

'Many have downloaded admit cards'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI**

The National Students' Union of India (NSUI) started an indefinite hunger strike on Wednesday against the conduct of the scheduled Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) during the pandemic.

The student wing of the Congress said that despite the opposition and concerns raised by the students' community, the government is moving forward with the decision of conducting the ill-suited exams when COVID-19 cases are rising.

NSUI national president Neeraj Kundan, who started his hunger strike demanding the postponement of the



Up in arms: NSUI members in New Delhi protesting against the government's decision to hold the exams. • PTI

NEET and the JEE, asked the government to consider conducting exams using alternative methods.

"We demand the postponement of NEET, JEE and NET considering the safety and security of students and

their family members and waive off the fees for at least six months, considering the economic distress due to the lockdown," Mr. Kundan said.

He added that the NSUI was afraid that conducting examination would deny the

constitutional promise of equal opportunity to the aspirants as many parts of India are still under the lockdown, making accessibility a major problem.

**Alternative method**  
Apart from the NSUI, Delhi's Education Minister Manish Sisodia also reiterated his stand on the conduct of the NEET and the JEE exam, and called for its postponement.

In a letter to the Education Minister Ramesh Pokhrayal, Mr. Sisodia said that he was not calling for a zero academic year but for the government to find an alternative method for selecting students in engineering and medical competitive entrance examinations.



Students checking their names before appearing for NEET in 2019.

to be postponed as well as those who do not, and had decided to go ahead in the interest of the students' academic career. Of the 8.5 lakh students who have registered for JEE, 7.4 lakh have downloaded their admit cards.

"If the examinations are postponed again, the year will be lost. There are those calling for the examination to be held after Diwali, but that is followed by the Chath festival in eastern India on November 26. If the exam is held in the first week of December, then results will not come until January and 2020 will be lost," said Higher Education Secretary Amit Khare, noting that other undergraduate admissions will be pushed further if professional college admissions are delayed again.

NTA Director General Vinod Joshi told Doordarshan News that the agency has received representations from large groups of students who want the examination

on to be postponed as well as those who do not, and had decided to go ahead in the interest of the students' academic career. Of the 8.5 lakh students who have registered for JEE, 7.4 lakh have downloaded their admit cards over the last week. NEET admit cards were made available on Wednesday, and 6.8 lakh candidates (of the 15.9 lakh registered) downloaded their documents in the first five hours.

**Onus back on States**  
Mr. Joshi said the NTA is working with the State police and local officials to ensure smooth movement of students on the examination date and make safe arrangements to let students arrive and leave examination centre venues, putting the onus back on States.

On Wednesday, the Tamil Nadu government has communicated its unwillingness to conduct the medical entrance examinations.

## Panel to review charter of DRDO labs

Five-member committee constituted to ensure charter is up to date, says official



G. Satheesh Reddy

With a focus on indigenous development of futuristic technologies, a five-member expert committee has been constituted to review the charter of duties for all laboratories of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The committee was constituted by G. Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development (DDR&D), who is also the Chairman, DRDO.

According to a letter dated August 24, the terms of reference are: to study and review the charter of duties of all the labs of the DRDO, to redefine the charter of duties of the labs on the current and futuristic defence and battlefield scenario, and to

are up to date and non-overlapping," a Defence official said on condition of anonymity. The five-member committee is headed by Professor V. Ramgopal Rao, Director, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

According to a letter dated August 24, the terms of reference are: to study and review the charter of duties of all the labs of the DRDO, to redefine the charter of duties of the labs on the current and futuristic defence and battlefield scenario, and to

minimise the overlap of technologies amongst the labs. The committee has to submit its report within 45 days, the letter states.

The other members include S. Somnath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre; Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, Deputy Chief of Air Staff; Dr. Samir V. Kamat, Director General-Naval Systems and Materials; and Benjamin Lionel, Director, Instruments Research and Development Establishment.

Among the many qualities, which such divinely blessed people have, is the quality of akrodah. Akrodah is the opposite of krodha. Anger leads us to torment others. A person who has daivam sampath, does not harass others. The Lord says that those with daivam sampath have santih and damah. It might seem that both are the same. Both deal with control of the senses. Why then should both words have been used by the Lord, if they are merely repeating the same idea? Actually, there is a subtle difference in meaning between santih and damah. Damah is control over the senses, but santih goes beyond this. It is not just controlling the senses, but it means directing the senses in the proper path. Streamlining the senses, and controlling the mind – that is santih. Control over the senses does not mean that your eyes no longer see, or your ears no longer hear. The sense organs will continue to perform their functions. What santih means is that we ensure that the eyes do not see unnecessary and undesirable things. Santih means putting the sense organs to proper use, always keeping in mind the ultimate goal of moksha. Krishna speaks of satya as one of the qualities that a person with daivam sampath has. But Krishna Himself told many lies. How can He preach truthfulness, we may ask. Krishna's lies were harmless. They were told playfully, not with an intent to hurt anyone. His lies were unbelievable exaggerations, and were amusing. In the Gita, Krishna is not talking of such lies, when He talks of satya.

## FAITH

### Laudable qualities

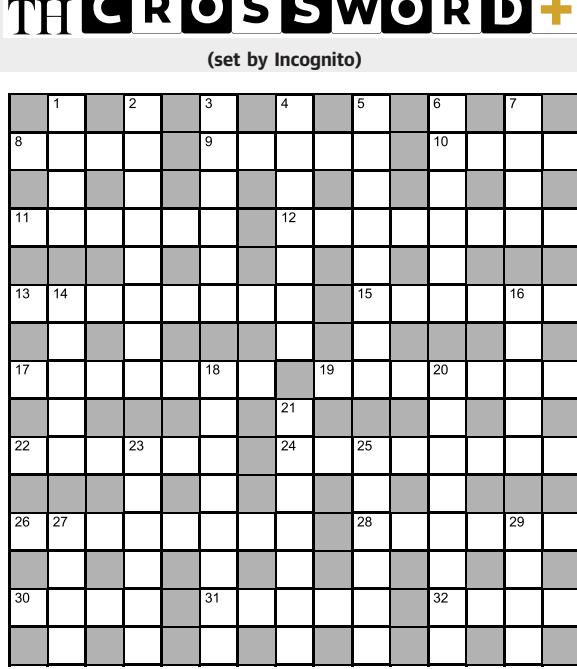
Lord Krishna tells Arjuna about those who have daivam sampath. Such people are blessed to have had the Lord's kātaksha at birth. That is, he is seen by the Lord, when he is born, and the Lord's glances are enough to make him seek moksha, said Valayapet Ramachariar, in a discourse.

Among the many qualities, which such divinely blessed people have, is the quality of akrodah. Akrodah is the opposite of krodha. Anger leads us to torment others. A person who has daivam sampath, does not harass others. The Lord says that those with daivam sampath have santih and damah. It might seem that both are the same. Both deal with control of the senses. Why then should both words have been used by the Lord, if they are merely repeating the same idea? Actually, there is a subtle difference in meaning between santih and damah. Damah is control over the senses, but santih goes beyond this. It is not just controlling the senses, but it means directing the senses in the proper path. Streamlining the senses, and controlling the mind – that is santih. Control over the senses does not mean that your eyes no longer see, or your ears no longer hear. The sense organs will continue to perform their functions. What santih means is that we ensure that the eyes do not see unnecessary and undesirable things. Santih means putting the sense organs to proper use, always keeping in mind the ultimate goal of moksha. Krishna speaks of satya as one of the qualities that a person with daivam sampath has. But Krishna Himself told many lies. How can He preach truthfulness, we may ask. Krishna's lies were harmless. They were told playfully, not with an intent to hurt anyone. His lies were unbelievable exaggerations, and were amusing. In the Gita, Krishna is not talking of such lies, when He talks of satya.

## TH CROSSWORD + 13025

(set by Incognito)

Are you good with numbers or better with words? Pick from Sudokus and crosswords.  
at <https://qrqo.page.link/jjpTn>



- ACROSS
- 8 Indian clerk's degree has note to university (4)
- 9 Naidu left Telugu movie-maker's theatrical performance (5)
- 10 Dance, hags, dance! (4)
- 11 Fat Queen's pantry (6)
- 12 Hot father left Rene, for example, and turned into an accomplice (8)
- 13 Male singer's language (8)

## SUDOKU

2			5	6	1			
			3	4				
8	7			5				
4	7				8			
1			6					
2			5	4				
7		9	4					
3	4		6					
1	6	7						9

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13024

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# Not the last LEAF

Despite the pandemic bringing about lockdowns and physical distancing, restaurants are innovating to ensure that customers enjoy *sadhyam* this year

PRIYADARSHINI PAITANDY

For Malayali families, Onam *sadhyam* is a tradition. Eaten on banana leaves, the 22-course vegetarian meal has moved from homes to restaurants to large wedding halls, served by caterers. This year, because of COVID-19, *sadhyam* is home again.

Roshina Tharakar of That Mallu Joint, in Chennai, says that Onam is their busiest time of the year: the 60-seater restaurant had 400 people lunch with them on Onam day last year. This year, maintaining 50% occupancy means they plan to focus more on takeaway and delivery. They are also spreading it out through the week, so they can meet the inevitable demand.

"We are serving *sadhyam* till September 2. So far we have sent out around 60 *sadhyam* boxes (₹499)," says Roshina. Since it is a course by course meal that is laid out left to right, with a progression from light dishes like *paruppu* to heavy ones like *pulissery*, the parcels will be labelled. "The rice will be packed in banana leaf, so all you have to do is roll it out and serve



the accompaniments on it," she adds.

Though it is the same menu every year there is always a clamour for *sadhyam*. It is an emotion, a novelty for those trying it for the first time, and it is also one of the largest vegetarian meals served once a year, says Zachariah Jacob, who along with Thomas Fenn, co-owns Mahabell in Delhi and Gurugram.

He says that they ran a survey this year, and found 65% of clients wanted delivery, 15% preferred take away, 10% wanted to dine in and the remaining 10% did not want *sadhyam*. "Keeping the COVID-19 situation in mind, we thought it's best to shift the whole experience into a takeaway/delivery format," he says. Their meal (₹899 for takeaway) has 25 items, including ghee. They are also thoughtfully including

banana leaves and step-by-step illustrations to make up for the lack of personal explanation that usually accompanies these meals.

Across India, restaurants serving Kerala cuisine have been fielding calls from patrons enquiring about

*sadhyam* for the past few weeks.

Given the the lockdown restrictions in different States, ingredients had to be ordered well in advance. "There has been a bit of difficulty in procuring banana chips, *shakara varatti* and *poovan palam* that usually come from Kerala and Tamil Nadu," says Zachariah. That Mallu Joint, which uses coconut milk and *ada* from Kerala, had to rely on Amazon, while Chennai's

Ente Keralam sourced its jackfruit from local farmers.

Ente Keralam normally has a long queue waiting outside the restaurant every Onam. But this year, it is a whole new ball game, says Tarun Mahadevan, director of Advantage Foods, which owns Ente Keralam. To better manage physical distancing, their *sadhyam* will take place across four different locations: Ente Keralam Poes Garden and Anna Nagar, Eastern Wedge and The Marina.

Diners will need to pre-book. "Upto 46% of all our seats have already been taken," says Tarun adding that the *sadhyam* will have 30 dishes including four types of payasam.



While packaging is a concern, the restaurants say they are trying to be eco-friendly. But there have been logistical issues.

#### How eco-friendly is it?

"Some of the dishes tend to leak and if one leaks, it will ruin the others. So, we have used high grade plastic containers; these are not single use plastic," says Zachariah.

People are also sending *sadhyam* as gifts this year. "So we are customising and packaging them in gift boxes that use recycled paper and some plastic," says Roshina.

Savya Rasa this year has a vibrant *sadhyam* box with compartments for their 30 dishes (₹749). They are also open to clients bringing their own containers for takeaway.

Though *sadhyam* is traditionally a vegetarian meal, the restaurant often gets requests for non-vegetarian accompaniments. "So, last year we had introduced sides of chicken or lamb at an additional cost," says Japtej Ahluwalia, co-founder and executive director of the Pricol Gourmet that owns the restaurant. Though they will not be doing that this year, for the dine-in guests, the meal will start with drumstick rasam, believed to be an immunity booster.

Onam *sadhyam* is a family event, says Japtej adding that last year they sold 900 covers on the two main days. This time the numbers are a few, in comparison, he says.

"Our restaurant capacity is 75 but now with distancing norms we are restricting it to 40 diners," he informs.

Over the years, this traditional meal has become popular with more restaurants that serve Malayali food opening in Chennai.

For some, this year there is a shortage of manpower, as many staff returned to their hometowns when lockdown began. Kappa Chakka Kandhari, with branches in Chennai and Bengaluru, has decided to forgo their annual traditional *sadhyam* for this reason. But if it is any consolation, they are offering four *payasams* for takeaway over four days, including *ada pradhaman* and *palada payasam* (250 ml of four for ₹750).

Mumbai's popular Sneha restaurant has shrunk its *sadhyam* to 10 dishes since they are short-staffed. A staffer adds that they are also not sure "how many people will actually order *sadhyam* this time".

But it is not all gloom and doom. There are restaurateurs like Anna Jomon, whose eight-month-old restaurant Achyatis (Chennai) is benefiting from the harvest festival.

"After we launched, lockdown was implemented and we had to shut. But now with so many orders for *sadhyam* we are open and delivering too," says Anna, who does the cooking. "I'll be making the *Aramala Valla Sadhyam* that I used to relish with my parents during childhood, she says, adding that her cooking is "Kottayam-style".

Her *sadhyam* (25-plus items priced at ₹520) will feature *kadali pazham payasam*, *munthiri pachadi* (made of grapes), *unniyappam*, and red *cheera thoran* among others.

## Written in stone

Thanks to a fisherman in Pulicat, the last of the 25 milestones along the Buckingham Canal, now stands firm

AKILA KANNADASAN

It was a sore sight; but one that the people of Pulicat had got used to: a seemingly ordinary stone column was lying on the ground amid thorn bushes. Nearby, people defecated in the open.

Then, M Suman, a local fisherman hired two people to lift the column and fix it firmly. He knew it was no ordinary stone.

"It is the 25th milestone: the last one along the East Coast Canal, starting at Basin Bridge," says Xavier Benedict of AARDE Foundation (Art & Architecture Research Development and Education), a non-profit Trust in Chennai.

The milestone dates back to 1840, according to Xavier. There were 25, from Madras to Pulicat, set along the Buckingham Canal, once an important waterway.

"People have forgotten how historic the canal is," says Xavier. "It is the only known canal to have milestones, and also boasted an ingenious locking system." If it existed today in its original form, it would take us only an hour to travel from Chennai to Pulicat, Xavier says; on road, this takes twice the duration.

Sadly, several of the milestones are missing, including the first one at Basin Bridge, he points out.

Fortunately, cheered on by Xavier, Suman saved the final one. A heritage enthusiast, Suman talks with fascination about the milestone.

"We walked into garbage



**Love for heritage**

Fisherman M Suman who strengthened the milestone

\* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

and thorn bushes, but behind them all, was this stone... *bejaar ah irundhadhu* [Was too much to handle].

Suman says that he initially hesitated to approach the fallen milestone number 25. But he finally did.

"We took photos once the stone was strengthened and shared it on the Pulicat WhatsApp and Facebook groups," says Xavier, adding that hopefully, it will inspire more people to learn about Buckingham Canal. "We can judge the width of the Canal using the position of the milestones," he says.

However, over the years, thanks to the development of the city, the canal has shrunk, and "beyond Royapuram, we cannot even see it".



**GOWRI S**

One cannot miss him in a crowd: tall, with greying, wavy hair up to his shoulders, the man exudes convivial energy. And more often than not, one will catch him mid-hug or cheery hello. Helmut Schippert has become a familiar face in Chennai's vibrant arts and culture milieu over the past six years.

Even now, he laments (on a call, from Berlin) that he will not be able to invite guests and have a "proper" farewell party, given the situation.

"And now I am leaving at such strange times that the first moments are very 'present' again.

Soon enough, warming up to

## A lifetime of the arts

Helmut Schippert, director of Goethe-Institut, Chennai retires after a 35-year-long run with the institution

Sometimes, it plays out like a film," he says.

Schippert distinctly remembers his first Museum Theatre play. It was a Tamil production which went on for a few hours. He laughs adding it was a fascinating experience; that too, in his first week in the city. He confesses that before he moved, he used to spend time listening to Carnatic music in preparation for Chennai, and its culture.

Schippert started working with the Goethe-Institut as early as 1985, and has had a career spanning many locations: Cairo, Paris, Munich and Mexico. Ask him his favourite place, and he stops the question midway to say that each place has had its own situational effect on him.

"The first two months were kind of dream-like for me. I came from a different world in Mexico. Starting from the traffic to life in town, I was sort of in a trance," says Helmut.

Soon enough, warming up to

the city, he also realised Chennai's strong hold on the traditional arts.

"As for the contemporary arts, very soon, I thought there weren't many physical spaces [of performance]," says Schippert. This, along with a few other observations, led him to explore what Goethe-Institut could inch closer to existing realities.

One such reality was the deteriorating condition of Chennai's lakes and rivers; Schippert took an interest in promoting awareness on the sustainable management of water bodies.

"Through my perception of the general ecological problems in Chennai, I thought water management might be a good theme to look at," he recalls.

This led to many projects under the umbrella of 'Embracing Our Rivers', an artistic venture that encouraged dialogue on water in urban spaces, which started in 2015. "When you work with

arts and culture, you believe that artistic thought brings new answers and opens up spaces for alternatives," he says.

Goethe-Institut has for the past few years also taken an interest in collaborative musical events. To the question if this has something to do with the fact that he plays the piano and guitar, Schippert laughs. "We try to arrange residencies or meetings of musicians from very different backgrounds and work on improvisations on creating something new," he says.

The South Asian Music Residency in collaboration with AR Rahman's KM Music Conservatory is a testament to this idea.

Another project that remains close to his heart, is the Chennai Photo Biennale founded with Chennai Photo Biennale Foundation, which launched in 2016 and is growing steadily in size and stature every year with the ambition of putting Chennai on the global map as a potential centre for contemporary arts and photography. He hopes to continue this collaboration as a well-wisher.

But, moving forward, there are things to be done: For starters, "A grand piano (Steinway from 1895) and two guitars are eagerly waiting for me," he says. Living for some time without any plans, obligations and daily responsibilities is also on the agenda. Schippert also hopes to engage in the fight against the climate catastrophe, in whatever capacity. "Also, in the future, I need days with more than 24 hours!"

## Gamers, this way!

Skyesports Championship 2.0, a two-month online e-sports tournament, kicks off on August 27



**SUSAN JOE PHILIP**

"We are getting bigger and better," says Sivaneshwaran S, the CEO of Chennai-based Skyesports, with excitement palpable in his voice. The firm is coming up with the second edition of Skyesports Championship 2.0, an online e-sports tournament. The two-month event will commence on August 27 and comes with a total prize money of ₹11 lakh. This edition features six games – PUBG Mobile, Brawl Stars, Clash of Clans, Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege, World Cricket Championship Rivals, and Valorant.

Entry is free and the event is

open for anyone over 16 years of age with prior experience of playing e-games. "People can register for Brawl Stars and Valorant."

Skyesports Championship 2.0 will also have a celebrity Valorant showdown between well-known teams from the country including Team Tamilas, 8 Bit, and Globalesports. The games will be live-streamed in Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, and English.

Visit <http://tournaments.skypesports.in/brawlstars> to register.

A N D E

## IN OUR BACKYARD

ABHISHEK GULSHAN

Birds are often named after their appearance, behaviour, habitat, the person who first described them and sometimes even after their wives. This bird's name is the perfect amalgamation of its colour and its preferred food - bees.

The Green Bee-eater (*Merops orientalis*) is dainty (16-18 cm), bright green in plumage, slender-bodied, with blood-red eyes. Its slim lengthened black bill is slightly curved, characteristic of an insect-eater (insectivore).

Along with green, there's also blue on the chin and throat, yellow and reddish-orange on the head and nape, thus making it very noticeable. A black stripe runs from the base of the bill across the eye all the way to the ear-coverts (feathers that cover the ear), and also fashion a black collar at the top of the breast.

Though the Green Bee-eater likes to eat bees, it does consider other wasps, butterflies, dragonflies, and beetles. It will station itself on conspicuous perches like the top branch of a high tree, a shrub, or a stalk of grain or grass, electricity poles or wires and other vantage points, that make it easy to spy on insects and to also have an uninterrupted flight.

It usually crushes the insect



## Beauty and brains

Ask the Green Bee-eater how to catch a bee so it doesn't sting you

**What's in a name?** The Green Bee-eater is named for its appearance and what it consumes ■ ABHISHEK GULSHAN

in flight and so avoids being stung. On returning to its perch, it smashes the unfortunate prey on the branch to remove its sting and dirt, as well as to break the exoskeleton before swallowing it whole.

Its long, pointed wings help it cut through air and make agile swift dashes in pursuit of the zig-zag haphazard movements of insects in flight. The flight is also aided by moderate or long tails with frequently elongated central tail feathers that make its flight so elegant and graceful.

On several of our nature trails guiding children through a journey amidst nature, we have observed these creatures to be bold and very camera-friendly.

We have also seen them near cattle, who disturb insects as they walk, which makes it very easy for these birds to catch them in flight.

Green Bee-eaters are quite widespread and are resident (with slight seasonal movements locally) across the country.

They are very common in all kinds of habitats: wetlands, scrublands, even our densely

populated urban settlements.

Sometimes seen alone, or in gregarious small parties seated next to each other, they hunt independently. They also indulge in communal dust-bathing to keep their feathers healthy and dry.

The calls are long, repetitive, and rather pleasant:

*tree-tree-tree* whistling trills, especially in the morning and towards the evening and can be often heard while in flight for hunting.

They only nest in holes, on banks of rivers but also in mud-banks of arid scrublands,

such as in Sultanpur. And while they're open to us taking a photograph or two, I've noticed that even though I observe them from a distance, they keep a keen eye on me, and do not enter the nest until I move away - a predator-avoidance behaviour that was new to me.

*The writer is the founder of NINOX - Owl About Nature, a nature-awareness initiative. He is the Delhi-NCR reviewer for Ebird, a Cornell University initiative, monitoring rare sightings of birds. He formerly led a programme of WWF India.*

## A song for the moment

Shyam Renganathan and Keethan Sivanathan's song 'Banjaare' is a dose of happiness and comfort designed to lift the lockdown-hit

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR



**Happy feels** Keethan in a still from the video ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

London-based Keethan Sivanathan and Chennai-based Shyam Renganathan's song 'Banjaare' is about places, people, and moments we call our own.

Released earlier this month, the song has crossed 6,000 views in the past two weeks. The video has simple, slice-of-life moments shared by people

from around the world. Keethan's sunny, straightforward melody and Shyam's self-affirming Hindi lyrics is about abandoning the long wait for tomorrow and prioritising things in life that bring you peace today.

Sung by Shyam, Sharanya Gopinath and Pavitra Krishnan, the number features a surprisingly peppy violin interlude by Shravan Sridhar and bass by Akhilesh Subramanian. The entire number is an exercise in nostalgia for simple times shared with friends and family.

"Shyam had written the music from a personal space, and I wrote the lyrics for it accordingly, to make it relatable. In times like these, where we don't know what is going on, the song celebrates acceptance and celebration of the only thing we have in control: this exact moment," says Keethan. For the

video edit, "We asked our followers on social media to send in footage from their lives. We received about 20 to 30 clips, from Chennai, Delhi, London, Toronto and parts of Kerala. Putting it together was an emotional process."

From friends playing basketball to drinking together, potting plants and laughing, to just taking a stroll late at night, the scenes stitched together form a montage of everything we have been missing in our friendships, since the series of lockdowns began in March. The simplicity of all those moments is what hits the hardest – there are no sweeping shots of cityscapes, just personal moments and heartfelt smiles.

*'Banjaare' is available on all major streaming platforms.*

## HOMING IN

A pianist, a pop star and a host of comedians make up your **Live Gigs** roundup for the coming weekend

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR



### Ellie Goulding - The Brightest Blue Experience

The last time Grammy-nominated UK singer-songwriter went live, it was for One World's global Together At Home concert in April. Goulding's next performance promises to be memorable as well: she will be going live from London's iconic Victoria and Albert museum, with a few select accompanying artistes and a surprise guest.

The two-hour performance will focus mainly on *Brightest Blue*, her latest album that was released last month. Curtains rise at 10 pm IST on July 27, and passes are on bookmyshow.com, the concert's official ticketing partner for India.

## Paradise

This is a big one. Chennai-based Spade Events has really come into its own during lockdown, shifting from hosting corporate gigs to a string of online standup shows and a series of witty JAMs (Just A Minute shows) with the likes of Sumukhi Suresh, Naveen Richard and Kanan Gill. Spade is now gearing up to host a three-day music and standup event, featuring an impressive, largely-Chennai lineup. From Karthick Iyer's Indosoul and rapper Voltage B to standup comedian Sarvesh CK and improv trio The BisibeleBois, the talent pool here is vast. Keep an eye out for some exciting up-and-coming names as well as Looney Tunes, a fun music act put together by some leading names. The show goes on through Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Check @spade\_events on Instagram for schedule and passes.



## Sofar Rotterdam

The beauty of Sofar going live during all these months of lockdown is that the hyperlocal, grassroots talent that form the backbone of these intimate gigs are now streamed on a global platform, giving the hitherto small-audience artistes a wider reach and giving Sofar's followers access to musicians they don't otherwise have access to. Take, for instance, Rotterdam-based Nana M Rose, who describes herself as "singer, songwriter and mistress of melancholy". Nana will be taking her stirring piano ballads online at www.sofarsounds.com/v/listeningroom on August 27. Check the Sofar Sounds websites for time zones and other details.

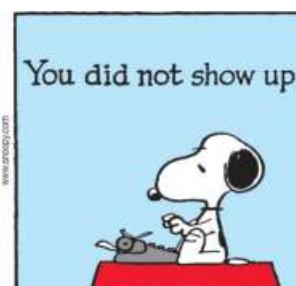
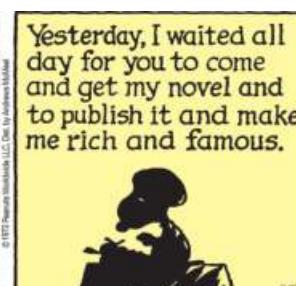


*We would love to know how you have been keeping busy at home. Tell us what you are listening to, at metro@thehindu.co.in*

## POOCH CAFE



## PEANUTS



## HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



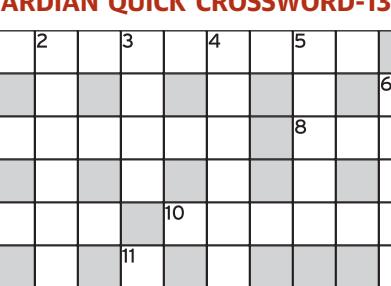
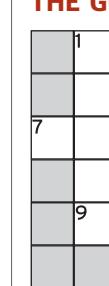
## CALVIN AND HOBBES



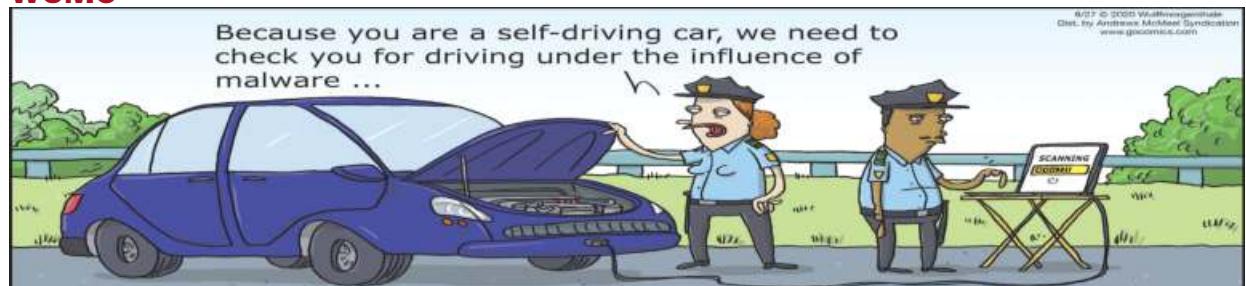
## TIGER



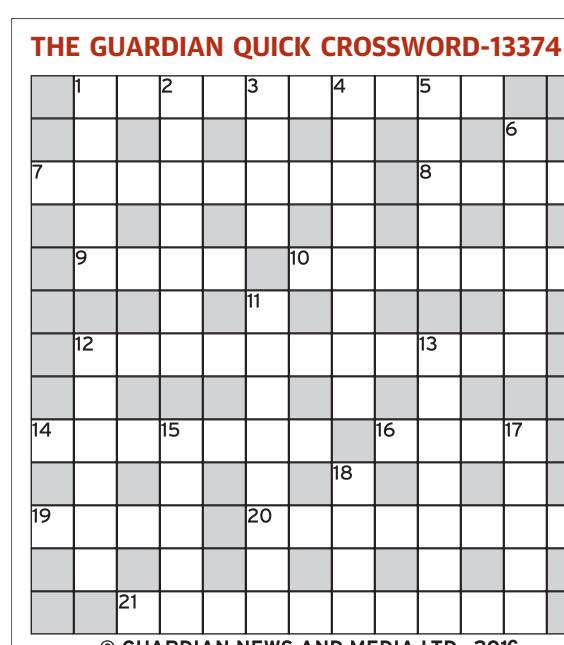
## GRAFFITI



## WUMO



## THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13374

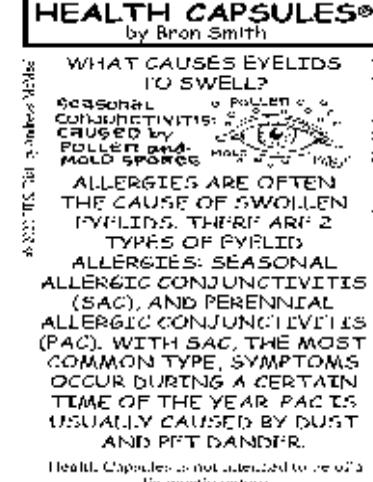
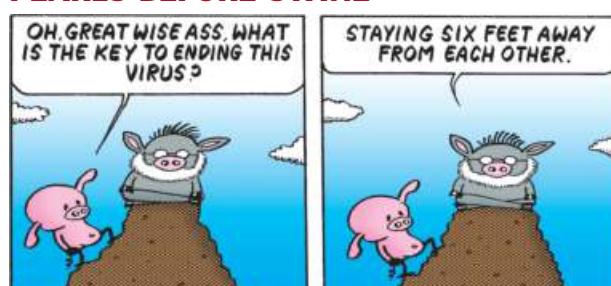


To play The Guardian Quick Crossword, The Hindu Cryptic crossword, Sudoku & other puzzles online, scan the QR code.

- 11 Perhaps (8)
- 12 Fair-haired (6)
- 13 Countryside walker (7)
- 15 Showing willingness to get the job done (3-2)
- 17 Stun gun (5)
- 18 Spots (4)

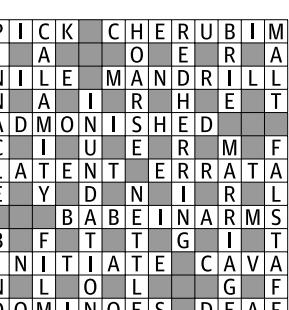
The solution will appear on September 3, 2020  
Solution No. 13373

## PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



- Across
- 1 Advantageous (10)
- 7 Common sense (8)
- 8 Unit of land measurement (4)
- 9 Lug - proceeds of robbery (4)
- 10 Young hen (7)
- 12 Sabine roués (anag) - Spanish-speaking city (6,5)
- 14 Involving few words (7)
- 16 Speck of soot (4)
- 19 Supreme Norse deity (4)
- 20 Older books still (6)

available from a publisher (8)  
21 Troublesome child (4,6)  
■ Down  
1 Branch (5)  
2 Planet, identified (13)  
3 Somersault - hot drink (4)  
4 Marital (8)  
5 Be of use (5)  
6 One of Caesar's assassins (6)  
7 Old (6)



CM YK

## ELSEWHERE



Two shot dead during protests in U.S. city

KENOSHA  
Two people were shot dead on Tuesday night in the U.S. city of Kenosha as groups clashed during protests over the police shooting of a black man. Violence broke out as hundreds of protesters marched for a third night after Jacob Blake was seen in video footage being shot several times at point-blank range by a white police officer. Blake was trying to get into his car, with his three children inside, when he was shot on Sunday. AP

## North Korea's Kim raises alarm over COVID-19

SEOUL  
In a rare display of urgency, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Wednesday held his third high-level political conference in as many weeks, where he raised alarm about the nation's COVID-19 response. Mr. Kim lamented unspecified "defects" and "shortcomings" in the country's anti-virus campaign and urged that they be corrected swiftly, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency. AP

## Israel strikes Hezbollah posts

It says shots were fired from militant positions in Lebanon

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MANARA

Israel said on Wednesday it had launched air strikes against Hezbollah observation posts in Lebanon after shots were fired from across the border towards its troops the previous evening.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu blamed the shooting on Shiite militant group Hezbollah with which Israel fought a devastating month-long war in 2006, and pledged a "forceful" response to any further incidents.

"I advise Hezbollah not to test Israel's crushing strength," he wrote on Hebrew on Twitter.

"Hezbollah is once again endangering the state of Lebanon due to its aggression."

The border flare-up came hours after Lebanon rejected an Israeli call to reform the UN peacekeeping force which patrols the border

## U.S. blacklists 24 Chinese firms amid South China Sea dispute

Visa restrictions on individuals for their role in building artificial islands

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON

The United States on Wednesday blacklisted 24 Chinese companies and targeted a number of individuals it said were part of construction and military actions related to disputed islands in the South China Sea.

The U.S. Commerce Department said the two dozen companies played a "role in helping the Chinese military construct and militarise the internationally condemned artificial islands in the South China Sea."

The State Department, in a separate statement, said it would impose visa restrictions on Chinese individuals "responsible for, or complicit in," such action and those linked to China's "use of coercion against Southeast Asian claimants to inhibit their access to offshore resources."

The move marked the Trump administration's latest efforts to crack down on companies whose goods may support Chinese military activities.



Choppy waters: A file photo of Chinese construction on Johnson South Reef in the disputed Spratly Islands. NYT

The Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

## Act of 'intimidation'

The United States accuses China of militarising the South China Sea and trying to intimidate Asian neighbours who might want to exploit its extensive oil and gas reserves.

The U.S. has conducted multiple freedom of navigation operations by sending its warships through the area to assert the freedom of access to international waterways.

China claims 90% of the potentially energy-rich South China Sea, but Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also lay claim to parts of an area through which about \$3 trillion of trade passes each year.

Companies blacklisted by the Commerce Department include Guangzhou Haige Communications Group, several firms that appear to be related to the China Communications Construction Co, as well as Beijing Huanjia Telecommunication, China Electronics Technology Group Corp, Changzhou Gu-

oguang Data Communications and China Shipbuilding Group.

A message left with Shanghai Cable Offshore Engineering Co Ltd, an engineering company that specializes in the laying of submarine cables for Chinese utilities and telecom companies on the listing, was not immediately returned. Several other companies on the list could not immediately be reached or could not immediately be located.

The Commerce Department said it was adding the firms to its "entity list," which restricts sales of U.S. goods shipped to them and some more limited items made abroad with U.S. content or technology. Companies can apply for licenses to make the sales, but they must overcome a high bar for approval.

The actions follow the same blueprint used by Washington in its attempt to limit the influence of Huawei Technologies Co for what it says are national security reasons.

## Lines between party politics and government blur in U.S.

Secretary Pompeo praises Trump at Republican convention

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN

By featuring a naturalisation ceremony at the White House, using the Rose Garden to host First Lady Melania Trump's speech and enlisting Secretary of State Michael Pompeo to speak, Republicans and U.S. President Donald Trump blurred the lines between government business and party politics on the second night of the Republican National Convention (RNC).

Speaking from Jerusalem on an official trip, Mr. Pompeo talked about President Donald Trump having made families safer with his America First vision. "It may not have made him popular in every foreign capital, but it has worked," he said.

The State Department says its employees are not permitted to "speak for or against a partisan candidate, political party or partisan political group at a convention". While his predecessors have attended political conventions, no sitting Secretary of State has delivered a speech at one. Responding to criticism, a State Department official had said, as per reports, that Mr. Pompeo was speaking in his personal capacity and had not used government resources.

During his speech, Mr. Pompeo talked about Mr. Trump's actions against the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), Iran and North Korea. "The President has held China accountable for covering up the China virus and allowing it to spread death and economic destruction in America and around the world, and he will not rest until justice is done," Mr. Pompeo said.

"He has ended ridiculous unfair trade deals with China that punched a hole in our economy. Those jobs are coming back home," Mr. Pompeo said. Both parties have used the China trade deals as material for their conventions. The Democratic convention last week included a video from a farmer who had been impacted negatively by Mr. Trump's trade deal with China.

Germany has sought to mediate between Ankara and Athens. Greece and Turkey said they want dialogue but each warned that they would continue to defend their rights in the region.



Melania Trump

ing done in the name of justice and never make assumptions based on the colour of a person's skin," Ms. Trump said.

She said "total honesty" was what citizens deserved from their President. "Whether you like it or not, you always know what he's thinking." While the President is known to frequently tweet what is on his mind in a stream-of-consciousness style, he is also known for frequent deviations from fact-based statements.

One of the themes of Day Two was immigration and it included a naturalisation ceremony filmed at the White House. The Trump administration has taken a number of steps making it harder for would-be immigrants to settle in America and naturalise – from the suspension of work visas to hiking application fees. The ceremony, presumably intended to show the administration in a different light with regard to immigration, featured six immigrants, all from minority backgrounds, including an Indian software developer, Sudha Sundari Narayanan, whom Mr. Trump described as a "phenomenal success."

Mr. Trump presided over the ceremony, while Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf administered the Oath of Allegiance. Critics have argued that the ceremony could violate the Hatch Act, which prohibits federal employees from participating in political activities on federal property.

Other themes for the evening included the economy, and a continuation of Monday's ideas of the Democrats as "radicals" wanting "mob rule" and "anarchy". Two of Mr. Trump's children – Tiffany and Eric – spoke on Tuesday.

"I can relate to so many of you who might be looking for a job. My father built a thriving economy once, and believe me, he will do it again," Ms. Trump, a recent law school graduate, said. Both Trump children took shots at the media. Ms. Trump accused media and tech giants of wanting to promote a "biased and fabricated view".



An Israeli artillery gun deployed near the border with Lebanon. AP

ahead of a UN Security Council vote to renew its mandate.

The Israeli Army had said earlier that a "security incident" was unfolding near Manara, a kibbutz near the UN-demarcated border between the two countries, and urged residents to take shelter. "During operational activity in northern Israel last night, shots were fired from Lebanon toward (Israeli) troops," the military said on Twitter.

"Hezbollah is once again endangering the state of Lebanon due to its aggression."

The border flare-up came hours after Lebanon rejected an Israeli call to reform the UN peacekeeping force which patrols the border

## Won't compromise over rights at sea: Erdogan

Conflicting claims by Turkey, Greece

REUTERS  
ISTANBUL

Turkey is determined to do whatever is necessary to obtain its rights in the Black Sea, Aegean and Mediterranean, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday.

"We will not compromise over what belongs to us... We are determined to do whatever is necessary," Mr. Erdogan said, a day after Germany's Foreign Minister sought to ease tensions between Turkey and Greece in their dispute over control of eastern Mediterranean waters.

Speaking at an event commemorating the 11th century military victory by Seljuk Turks over the Byzantine empire at Malazgirt, Mr. Erdogan also called on Ankara's counterparts to avoid mistakes that he said would bring their destruction.

Afterwards "attack helicopters and aircraft struck Hezbollah observation posts". It reported no Israeli casualties.

Lebanon's top security body, the Supreme Defence Council, decided to file a complaint to the UN Security Council over the Israeli fire into Lebanon, NNA reported.

Tensions between Turkey and Greece escalated after Ankara sent a survey vessel to disputed eastern Mediterranean waters this month, a move Athens called illegal.

Turkey and Greece, NATO allies, disagree over claims to hydrocarbon resources in the area based on conflicting views on the extent of their continental shelves in waters dotted with mostly Greek islands.

"If there is anyone who wants to pay its price, they are welcome to confront us. If not then they should go away so we can handle our own business," Mr. Erdogan also said.

Germany has sought to mediate between Ankara and Athens. Greece and Turkey said they want dialogue but each warned that they would continue to defend their rights in the region.

Mr. Pompeo praised Mr. Trump's controversial shift-

## Filmmaker Saba Sahar shot at in Kabul

REUTERS  
KABUL

A prominent female Afghan film director, who is also an actor and a senior police officer, was recovering from bullet wounds on Wednesday after unidentified gunmen shot her as she was being driven through the capital, Kabul, her husband said.

Saba Sahar, 44, is one of Afghanistan's first female

film directors who produced critically acclaimed documentaries and movies.

She has also been a vocal critic of the Taliban and the dominant role conservative men play in social and political institutions.

Three gunmen opened fire at her in her vehicle on Tuesday. She was accompanied by two bodyguards, a child and a driver at the time. The bodyguards were

wounded while the child and driver were not harmed.

"She was in coma for almost 20 hours as she was hit



Saba Sahar

with four bullets in the stomach... now she's out of danger," said her husband, Emal Zaki.

Ms. Sahar has served in the police department for more than 10 years and was recently appointed deputy of special police forces overseeing gender issues.

This month, another prominent Afghan women Fawzia Koofi, a rights advocate, was shot at, but survived.

## Migrant workers in Maldives face abuses'

Expats are being safely repatriated, says govt. in response to HRW report

MEERA SRINIVASAN  
COLOMBO

The COVID-19 pandemic has made many migrant workers in the Maldives vulnerable to abuse, according to Human Rights Watch.

In a recent statement, the rights watchdog pointed to migrant workers in the Maldives facing "a range of entrenched abuses from employers", including deceptive recruitment practices, wage theft, passport confiscation, unsafe living and working conditions. "The spread of COVID-19 and the lockdown to contain it has exacerbated these conditions, as workers face job loss, unpaid leave, reduced salaries, and forced work without pay," the statement said.

The observations, HRW said, were based on telephonic interviews held in July with seven migrant work-

ers – including some involved in protests at the time – as well as lawyers representing detained workers in the Maldives. Their accounts revealed that the Maldives government, as well as some international and domestic companies, are failing to protect workers from "serious abuses", HRW said.

When contacted, the office of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih said in a written response that in order to ensure a safe passage for expatriate workers to their home countries, the Ministry of Economic Development initiated a voluntary self-reparation programme. "So far, a total of 5,333 undocumented workers have been repatriated by the government," Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Hood told *The Hindu*. Further, recognising the large number of undocumented workers in the coun-

try, President Solih set up the 'National Taskforce on Issues related to Migrant Workers' in October 2019 to document them and "revamp the expatriate management system", he added.

The Maldives employs a high number of migrant workers – they make up about one third of its resident population. A total of 1,61,325 expatriates are currently working in the Maldives. "The Government is providing accommodation to undocumented workers who are quarantined or isolated due to COVID-19," Mr. Hood said.

Gayoom tests positive

Meanwhile, former Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who helmed the country's top office for three decades, on Tuesday said he had tested COVID-19 positive. "I have tested positive

for COVID-19," the 82-year-old politician said in a tweet.

After apparent improvement, he tweeted again on Wednesday, saying: "Thank you so much friends and well-wishers for your prayers. Praise be to Allah, I feel reasonably well. May Allah protect you from all misfortune. Aameen!"

The Maldives has witnessed a steady increase in COVID-19 cases in the recent weeks. A total of 7,047 cases and 28 fatalities have been reported so far.

Home to about 5,00,000 people, the Maldives is among many countries struggling in the face of the global pandemic.

With the country's crucial tourism sector badly hit, the government is struggling to keep the economy running. Local media reported a GDP loss of nearly 7% due to the pandemic.

**National Fisheries Development Board**

Department of Fisheries  
Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying,  
Government of India

File No: NFDB/Admin/PMMSY/2020 Dated: 27.08.2020

Notice inviting Request for Proposal (RFP) for Programme Management Consultancy (PMC) for implementation of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) under the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India, invites Request for Proposal (RFP) from interested Consulting Firm/Company/Institution (i.e. Programme Management Consultant) for providing PMC services for implementation of PMMSY in accordance with the Scheme objectives and deliverables as brought out in RFP document. The detailed RFP document providing the salient features of the PMMSY, bid schedule, Terms of Reference, pre-qualification and other eligibility criteria, evaluation criteria, terms and conditions, formats for submission etc. are available on the NFDB website <http://nfdb.gov.in>, the Department of Fisheries, Government of India website <http://dfd.gov.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal (CPPP) <http://eprocure.gov.in>.

Sd/- Chief Executive, NFDB

**KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Office of the Project Manager, Ladrum & Marmala Small Hydro Electric Projects - Erattupetta  
Tender ID: 2020\_KSEB\_377545 \* Construction of New Building for PETCAR Moolamattom \*  
PAC : Rs.2,30,93,148/- \* Last Date : 28-09-2020  
Visit [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://etenders.kerala.gov.in) & [www.kseb.in](http://www.kseb.in)  
Ref. PR/MC/1/E 223/E-Tender/2020

**Indian Railway Catering And Tourism Corporation Ltd**  
(A Government of India Enterprise - Mini Ratna)  
CIN-L-74899DL1999GO101707

(a) NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER/SZ/RNP/BOPP LABELS NIT/2020/01 dated 27.08.2020  
Rail Neer Plant/Palur : GGM/SZ invites E-Tender (through two bids system) for supply of BOPP Labels.

S.No. Sale of Tender Last Date & Time for submission of E-Tender  
1 27.08.2020 17.09.2020 at 11:00 hrs.  
Pre-bid meeting at Rail Neer Plant/palur on 04.09.2020 at 15:00 hrs.

(b) Notice Inviting E-Tender SZ/NIT/Refreshment Room/2020-21/01 & Jan Aahar/2020-21/01  
GGM/SZ invites E-Tender (through two bids system) for setting up of Refreshment Rooms & Jan Aahars at Stations over Southern & South Western Railways.

S.No. Sale of Tender Last Date & Time for submission of E-Tender  
1 27.08.2020 17.09.2020 at 15:00 hrs.  
Tender document download & participation can be done on website:-<[www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC](http://www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC)>

## MARKET WATCH

	26-08-2020	% CHANGE
Sensex	39,074	-0.59
US Dollar	74.30	0.04
Gold	51,963	-0.74
Brent oil	45.88	0.33

## NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	354.25	+8.15
Asian Paints	1971.40	-29.20
Axle Bank	463.35	+11.55
Bajaj Auto	3082.20	+72.80
Bajaj Finserv	6564.40	+61.80
Bajaj Finance	3645.55	+2.65
Bharti Airtel	514.50	-14.15
BPLC	410.10	-2.80
Britannia Ind	3829.25	-67.60
Cipla	748.00	+0.25
Coal India	141.95	+1.50
Dr Reddy's Lab	4434.75	+7.05
Eicher Motors	2248.85	+31.60
GAIL (India)	99.85	+0.15
Grasim Ind	667.20	-6.55
HCL Tech	712.80	+11.20
HDPC	1816.00	-13.60
HDPC Bank	1118.45	-1.25
HDPC Life	592.05	-7.75
Hero MotoCorp	3160.75	+19.00
Hindalco	193.50	+2.20
Hind Unilever	2182.80	+3.70
ICICI Bank	389.35	+3.00
IndusInd Bank	567.65	+31.15
Bharti Infralet	200.50	+2.25
Infosys	950.80	+12.70
Indian Oil Corp	87.90	-0.40
ITC	194.95	-0.45
JSW Steel	286.20	+1.30
Kotak Bank	1436.70	+36.60
L&T	968.95	-11.45
M&M	613.35	+4.00
Maruti Suzuki	7008.65	-101.30
Nestle India Ltd.	16190.55	-98.15
NTPC	102.80	-1.00
ONGC	81.40	+0.90
PowerGrid Corp	185.35	+0.60
Reliance Ind	2137.30	+55.20
State Bank.	209.85	+1.90
Shree Cement	21710.65	+100.10
Sun Pharma	525.15	+0.05
Tata Motors	137.90	+10.80
Tata Steel	425.00	+1.00
TCS	2253.50	+10.85
Tech Mahindra	732.85	-5.75
Titan	1134.20	-2.30
UltraTech Cement	4079.65	-92.70
UPL	493.55	+1.45
Wipro	272.05	+2.10
Zee Entertainment	211.50	+11.55

## EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.10	74.42
Euro	87.52	87.93
British Pound	97.46	97.88
Japanese Yen (100)	69.71	70.01
Chinese Yuan	10.75	10.80
Swiss Franc	81.39	81.75
Singapore Dollar	54.17	54.41
Canadian Dollar	56.22	56.46
Malaysian Ringgit	17.76	17.85
Australian Dollar	53.33	53.57

Source: Indian Bank

## IN BRIEF



## 'COVID-19 leading to focus on the economy'

NEW DELHI

The coronavirus pandemic is creating a greater awareness among people in India that this is the time to make radical changes and take steps for faster growth of the manufacturing sector and the economy, Maruti Suzuki India Chairman R.C. Bhargava said. He said the key to grow the economy and create jobs is the growth of the manufacturing sector. PTI

## M&amp;M, Israel's REE sign MoU on electric CVs

MUMBAI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. (M&M) and REE Automotive of Israel have signed a MoU to explore the development and manufacturing of electric commercial vehicles (CVs) for global markets. This collaboration will leverage REE's electric vehicle corner module and platform technology of integrating powertrain, suspension and steering components in the arch of a vehicle wheel, both the companies said.

## Telecom subscriber base drops to 116.4 cr. in May

NEW DELHI

Telecom subscriber base in the country dipped to about 116.4 crore in May but service providers were able to narrow the loss of subscriber base to 57.6 lakh as compared to the previous month, according to data released by the sector regulator TRAI on Wednesday. The subscriber base had declined 85.3 lakh in April, when the country was under lockdown, to 116.4 crore. PTI

## RIL hires former IOC chairman Sanjiv Singh

NEW DELHI

Former Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) chairman Sanjiv Singh has joined Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as group president for the firm's oil-to-chemicals business. A communication by RIL's executive director Hital R. Meswani to the company employees said Mr. Singh, who superannuated from India's largest oil firm on June 30, will be a member of the oil-to-chemicals business leadership team. PTI

# India risks stagnation if GDP doesn't grow over 8% annually'

Reforms needed in 12-18 months to boost productivity, create jobs, says MGI

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

India's GDP needs to grow annually at 8-8.5% to create opportunities in the post COVID-19 era, and the country risks a decade of stagnating incomes and quality of life if urgent steps are not taken to spur growth, says McKinsey Global Institute (MGI).

India will have to undertake a slew of reforms over the next 12-18 months with the aim of increasing productivity and creating jobs, MGI said in a report.

**Urbanisation trend**  
Given the increasing urbanisation and population trends, there will be 90 million additional workers in search of non-farm jobs by 2030 and India will have to triple job creation to 12 mil-



**State of change:** About 60% of the reforms will have to be undertaken by States and 40% by the Centre. ■ REUTERS

lion gainful non-farm jobs per year from the 4 million achieved between 2013 to 2018, it said.

The GDP, which is set to contract by over 5% in FY21 as per some estimates, needs to grow at 8-8.5% per annum for the next decade to create the opportunities, it said, warning of difficulties if it is

not achieved. On the reforms front, it advocated attention to manufacturing, real estate, agriculture, healthcare, and retail sectors, unlocking land which can reduce prices by up to a fourth, creating flexible labour markets, enabling efficient power distribution to reduce tariffs for consumers

by over 20% and privatising 30 top state-run enterprises.

## Financial sector reforms

From a financial sector perspective, it said reforms and streamlining fiscal resources can deliver \$2.4 trillion in investment while boosting entrepreneurship by lowering the cost of capital for enterprises by about 3.5 percentage points and also pushed for creation of a 'bad bank' to take care of bad assets.

A bulk 60% of the reforms will have to be undertaken by the States and the remaining 40% by the Centre, it added.

MGI pointed out that the manufacturing and the construction sectors offer the most opportunities for economic growth and also for higher employment.

## LVB may raise ₹1,000 cr. via equity issue

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

CHENNAI

The board of Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. (LVB) on Wednesday gave its approval for increasing its authorised capital by ₹350 crore to ₹1,000 crore to meet its capital requirement.

In a regulatory filing, the private sector lender said that it plans to raise up to ₹1,000 crore by way of issue of equity shares or securities and ₹500 crore through bonds or non-convertible debentures or debt securities in one or more tranches at a price as may be permissible under law.

Interim MD and CEO S. Sundar had been stating they need at least ₹2,000 crore to keep afloat. On Wednesday, Union Bank of India floated an expression of interest (EOI) for the sale. The bank holds 25.1% in Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. With the Andhra Bank amalgamation on April 1, Union Bank obtained its holding in IFLIC.

## Union Bank to divest stake in IndiaFirst Life

Floats EOI to shed up to 30% holding

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

Nearly five months after the amalgamation of Andhra Bank that also brought along a 30% stake in IndiaFirst Life Insurance Company (IFLIC), Union Bank of India has kickstarted the process of divesting the holding in the insurer.

This follows regulatory limits on promoter holding in multiple insurance firms.

On Wednesday, Union Bank of India floated an expression of interest (EOI) for the sale. The bank holds 25.1% in Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. With the Andhra Bank amalgamation on April 1, Union Bank obtained its holding in IFLIC.

Bank of Baroda and Carmel Point Investments hold 44% and 26%, respectively, in IFLIC. According to the EOI document, the life insurer commenced operations 12 years ago and in 2019-20, had total premium of ₹3,360 crore.

## BPCL resumes ₹50,300-crore project works

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) said it has resumed work on 2,118 projects, costing an estimated ₹50,300 crore, in a bid to revive economic growth.

Work had been progressing since April 20 by adhering to pandemic-related standard operating procedures, said BPCL.

The projects of BPCL, joint ventures as well as subsidiaries include refinery, petrochemicals, bio-refineries, marketing infrastructure projects, pipelines and CGD projects.

Of the total estimated cost, ₹9,597 crore will be the capital expenditure for FY21, the company said.

## Interest on net tax due for late GST payment

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

The government has said that interest on delayed payment of Goods and Services Tax (GST) will be charged on net tax liability with effect from September 1.

The industry had earlier this year raised concerns over the directive for recovery of about ₹46,000 crore of unpaid interest on delayed GST payment. The interest was charged on gross tax liability.

The GST Council, at a meeting in March, had decided that interest for delay in payment of GST will be charged on net tax liability with effect from July 1, 2017. However, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, on August 25, notified September 1, 2020, as the date from which interest would be charged on net tax liability.

## Amazon faces antitrust case from online sellers

Over 2,000 Indian vendors move CCI

## REUTERS

NEW DELHI

A group of more than 2,000 online sellers has filed an antitrust case against Amazon in India, alleging the U.S. company favours some retailers whose online discounts drive independent vendors out of business, a legal filing showed.

The case presents a new regulatory challenge for Amazon in India, where it has committed \$6.5 billion in investment but is battling a complex regulatory environment.

In January, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) had ordered an investigation of Amazon and rival Flipkart over alleged violations of competition law and certain discounting practices, which Amazon is challenging.

In the latest case, the All India Online Vendors Association, whose members sell goods on Amazon and Flipkart, allege Amazon engages in unfair business practices.

The group alleges that Amazon India's wholesale arm sells goods at a loss to sellers. ciation, whose members sell goods on Amazon and Flipkart, allege Amazon engages in unfair business practices.

The group alleges that Amazon India's wholesale arm buys goods in bulk from manufacturers and sells them at a loss to sellers such as Cloudtail. Such sellers then offer goods on Amazon.in at big discounts.

## 'Secure digital payments are an imperative'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Digital Payments have been growing in India at a much faster pace than global markets and thus, safeguarding payments for consumers, MSMEs, businesses is now the utmost priority. This imperative was highlighted by a study titled 'Fraud & Risk Management in Digital Payments' released by Data Security Council of India (DSCI) and PayPal India.

The report attempts to discuss the sophisticated online payment fraud mechanisms, threats in the payment ecosystem and incorporation of better fraud prevention strategies among others.

## Paytm to hire 1,000 for financial services unit

Firm to 'scale up products for masses'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Financial services platform Paytm said it is in the process of hiring more than 1,000 people, including engineers, data scientists and financial analysts, as it is looking at "rapid expansion" of its financial and wealth management services.

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# Leo: only for the rich and ambitious

Manchester City and PSG front-runners to land the Barcelona legend

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MADRID

If Lionel Messi's mind is made up to leave Barcelona, the question turns to where he goes next.

On the back of its Champions League triumph, Bayern Munich is the pre-eminent force in Europe but it is unlikely to be able to afford Messi, aged 33, and with a base salary of around €60 million per year.

The same goes for Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool, as well as Juventus, which remains restricted by the enormous outlay needed to sign Cristiano Ronaldo two years ago.

Madrid, meanwhile, would love nothing more than to prize Messi from its rival – and it has tried before – but even if Messi wants to leave Barca, he is not out to burn his reputation and legacy.

## Wealthy left standing

Only the wealthiest are left standing but would the history of Manchester United or the upward momentum of Frank Lampard's Chelsea be enough to persuade Messi?

Those able both to afford Messi, and convince him, may only be Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Manchester City, with Inter Milan a third option.



**Adieu?** Six-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi has told Barcelona that he wants to leave on a free transfer. ■ GETTY IMAGES

City would appear favourites but the club has always trodden carefully around the prospect of Messi.

Messi could propel City in the Champions League and launch its brand, so important to the Abu Dhabi owners, to a different level.

Inter's pitch would be more personal, given Messi's father Jorge has reportedly bought a house close to the club's offices while the Italian outfit has fostered close relations with the Messi family for years.

But all this is conjecture till Messi's departure is confirmed. The Argentine's re-

quest to leave is based on a clause in his last contract which allows him to leave for free at the end of the season.

But the club maintains that clause expired on June 10 this year, and that the player is still legally bound by his contract.

Under the terms of the contract which expires in 2021, the only way Messi can leave without the club's consent is if a rival side pays his release clause of €700 million.

# Lionel has not told us he will miss training: sporting director

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MADRID

Lionel Messi has not informed Barcelona coaches he will not attend training on Wednesday, according to the club's newly appointed sporting director, Ramon Planes.

"Messi has not informed us that he was not going to show up for training," Planes said during the official unveiling of Portuguese striker Joao Trincao.

"But all exchanges will remain between the two parties (the club and the player) and out of respect we will not communicate on what is said because we are putting all our efforts in this dialogue."

Messi, Planes insisted, was "important news. But what we think, and we've said it many times, is that we see Messi as a Barca player."

Planes added: "Barca has rebuilt itself several times in its history, and it has always come back more powerful. Our idea is to do it once again, around the best player in the world."

"You have to have enormous respect for what Messi is and for his history."

Planes stressed that there was "not an argument between Messi and Barca – neither deserves it".

## Messi at Barcelona

**Matches 731**

**Goals 634**

**FIRST-TEAM DEBUT:** vs Espanyol, Oct. 16, 2004

**FIRST GOAL:** vs Albacete, May 1, 2005

**LATEST GOAL:** vs Napoli, Aug. 9, 2020

### HONOURS :

**La Liga titles**  
10 (2004/05, 2005/06, 2008/09, 2010/11, 2012/13, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2017/18, 2018/19)

**Champions League crowns**  
4 (2005/06, 2008/09, 2010/11, 2014/15)

**Copa del Rey trophies**  
6 (2008/09, 2011/12, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18)

**Club World Cup**  
3 (2009/10, 2011/12, 2015/16)

**European Super Cup**  
3 (2009/10, 2011/12, 2015/16)

COMPILED BY ANANTAJITH RA



Guardiola wants Messi at Man City

ANI  
MANCHESTER

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has held talks with Argentine striker Lionel Messi in order to bring him on board the English club.

This revelation comes a day after Messi told Barcelona that he wanted to leave the club.

Guardiola is looking to sign the 33-year-old Messi and this could very well be possible as City has the financial capacity to make this happen, Goal.com reported.

Reuters reports from Barcelona

**'Bartomeu resign'**  
Angry Barcelona fans chanted for the resignation of club president Josep Maria Bartomeu. "We love you, Messi stay, Messi stay!" and "Bartomeu resign!" chanted several hundred fans outside Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium on Tuesday night.

"I am very upset, for me Barca is Messi and Messi is Barca. They are the same, he is the symbol of Barca... they should erect a monument in Camp Nou," 80-year-old Joana Polo said.

"It's led to huge outrage," said Oriol, 40.

## IN BRIEF



### Murray excels as Nuggets stay alive

ORLANDO

Jamal Murray scored 42 points as Denver Nuggets avoided elimination by beating Utah Jazz 117-107 in Game 5, to trail the latter 3-2, here on Tuesday.

**The results:** Denver Nuggets 117 (Murray 42) bt Utah Jazz 107 (Mitchell 30), **Jazz 3-2;** LA Clippers 154 (George 35, Leonard 32) bt Dallas Mavericks 111 (Donic 22), **Clippers 3-2.** AP

### Dinda gets NOC from CAB

Y.B. SARANGI  
KOLKATA

Ashoke Dinda on Wednesday got a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) to play for another State unit in the 2020-21 domestic season.

The 36-year-old pacer, who was left out of the Bengal squad last season, had approached the CAB and expressed his desire to play for another State.

Dinda, who made his debut for Bengal in 2005, led the attack for many years and consistently emerged as its leading wicket-taker, scalping 420 First Class wickets. He played for India in 13 ODIs and nine T20s.

# McGrath doffs his hat to Anderson's achievement

The Australian great praises the 38-year-old Englishman's durability and work ethic

## EXCLUSIVE

S. DINAKAR  
CHENNAI

It doesn't get bigger than this. One legend on another. Glenn McGrath, the fast bowling great with 563 Test scalps, was full of praise for James Anderson, who became the first paceman in Test history to reach 600 wickets. Speaking to The Hindu from his home in Sydney, McGrath dwelt on the qualities that made his great Ashes rival special.

"What makes Anderson unique is that he has been playing for 17 years. To play 156 Test matches is exceptional for a batsman but for a paceman to play the same number of Tests and pick 600 wickets is incredible,"



McGrath. ■ FILE PHOTO

said McGrath.

"Don't forget he is 38. It's a tribute to his fitness, endurance, longevity, durability, and work ethic."

### Done it all

The rigours of pace bowling can be hard on the mind and the body.

"The mental strength to

go on for so long, putting your body through the fire, coming back from injuries, Anderson has done it all," McGrath noted.

"And he swings the ball beautifully. There are not many such bowlers around. Maybe Wasim Akram was one whom you could put in the same category."

Asked how long Anderson could go on, McGrath replied that it depended on the Englishman's physical health. "600 was his goal. Now that he has achieved that I would like to see what his next motivation is. Maybe 650, [but] depends on his body."

McGrath felt Anderson was at his deadliest in England with the Duke ball. "He is dangerous with Duke,

swinging it both ways at will. The ball has a big seam. Just feels nice in the hands, feels a little smaller. In English conditions, it is perfect. Even as he swings it, he makes things harder for the batsmen with his control."

"Anderson's performances in the English conditions have always been brilliant. Maybe not as good when he travels. When you bowl in perfect conditions with Duke and then bowl in tougher terrains, it's hard to adapt. But Anderson is a lot better now overseas than he was earlier."

"The batsmen struggle to pick him as he mixes his outswingers and inswingers. The batsmen are not used to playing swing bowling. Most pacemen are of the hit-the-

deck kind."

Bowling in partnership with Stuart Broad had helped Anderson, McGrath felt. "They build pressure, working at the batsmen from both ends. Great pair, great rapport and variations. Anderson swings it and the taller Broad hits the deck and gets bounce and seam movement."

McGrath marvelled at Anderson's hunger and desire to keep picking wickets. "His passion is the secret of his success," he said.

# VPS Healthcare to conduct Tests during IPL 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DUBAI

provision of providing other allied support medical services in line with the requirement for the conduct of the tournament," the release further stated.

**Before entering bubble**  
All players and staff members of the teams are being tested on days 1, 3 and 6 before they are being allowed to enter the bio bubble.

After that players and others are supposed to be tested every fifth day throughout the course of the tournament.

"We are also in discussion with the BCCI on the

## England-Pakistan Test series in numbers

A look at the top performers in the England-Pakistan three-Test series which the former won 1-0



### BATTING

Name	Inns	Runs	HS	Avg	50s/100s
Zak Crawley	2	320	267	160.00	1/1
Jos Buttler	4	265	152	88.33	1/1
Azhar Ali	5	210	141*	52.50	0/1
Babar Azam	5	195	69	48.75	2/0
Shan Masood	5	179	156	35.80	0/1
Mohammad Rizwan	4	161	72	40.25	2/0

### BOWLING

Name	Inns	Wkts	BBI	Avg	5W/10W
Stuart Broad	5	13	4/56	16.46	0/0
James Anderson	5	11	5/56	23.45	1/0
Yasir Shah	4	11	4/66	33.45	0/0
Chris Woakes	5	6	2/11	27.50	0/0
Mohammad Abbas	4	5	2/28	35.80	0/0
Shaheen Afridi	4	5	2/121	51.60	0/0



## TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Six, 6.30 a.m.  
PGA Tour: Eurosport (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Friday)  
Cincinnati Open: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Friday)



### Bravo first bowler to reach 500 in T20s

PORT OF SPAIN  
Dwayne Bravo on Wednesday became the first bowler to pick 500 wickets in T20s. Bravo, who had a wicket each in his last two appearances against Guyana Amazon Warriors and Jamaica Tallawahs, reached the mark when he dismissed St. Lucia Zouks' Rahkeem Cornwall. Bravo's variations and his control over the slower delivery have made him a potent force in T20 format.

# Time warning flusters Serena

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
NEW YORK

Serena Williams was flustered when she got called for taking too much time between points, flung away her racket after letting a lead slip away and finished surprisingly meekly in a 5-7, 7-6(5), 6-1 loss to Maria Sakkari at the Western & Southern Open on Tuesday.

"You should tell me on the sidelines next time if I need to play faster. Believe me, I will. You didn't even give me a warning," Serena told chair umpire Aurelie Tourte, clearly not happy with his decision to call a time-violation.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic



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