

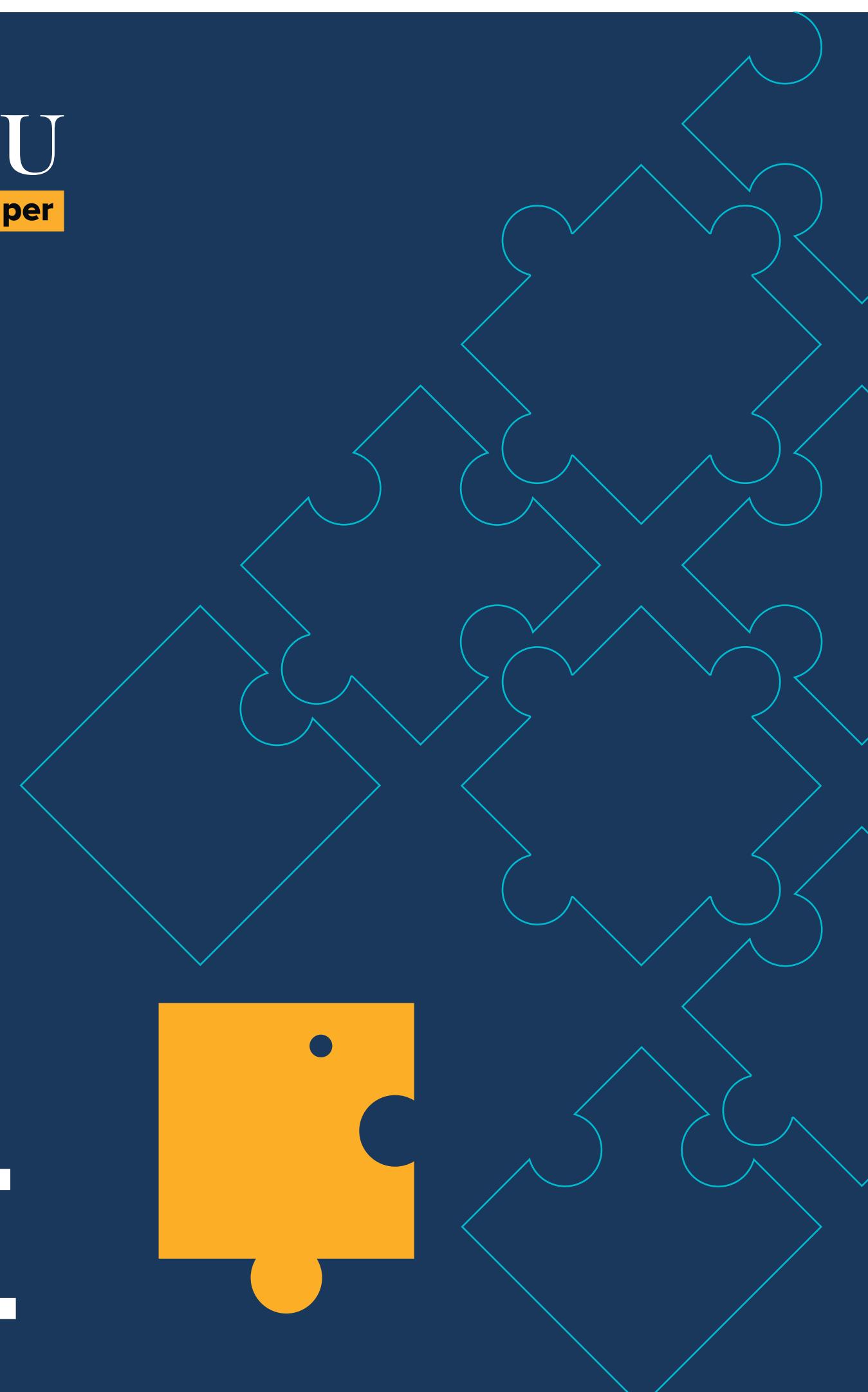
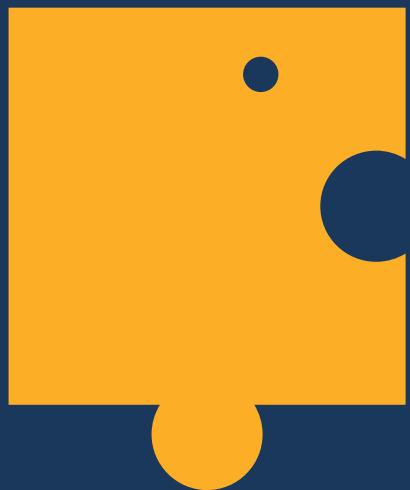
THE  HINDU
e-Paper

Introducing The Hindu e-Paper

DAILY QUIZ

★★★ FREE ★★★

TAKE
THE FIRST
CRACK AT
UPSC
with ease!



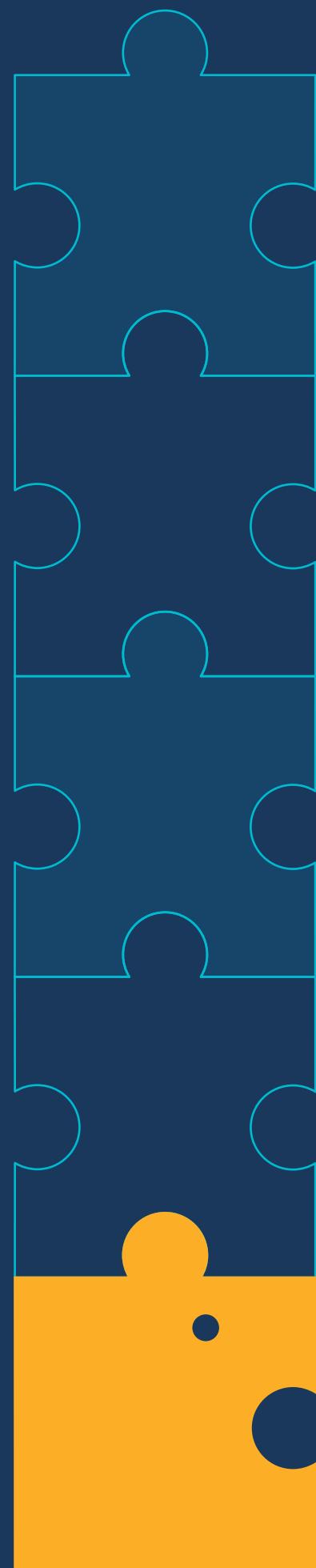
Just scan the QR code and enter your email ID;
let's get cracking!

To know more Visit: EPAPER.THEHINDU.COM/QUIZ.HTML

THE HINDU

e-Paper

READ THE HINDU E-PAPER REGULARLY AND ACE YOUR UPSC EXAM IN 5 EASY STEPS:



Take our FREE news quiz for the day with 10 questions from across topics

Get your score

Read the brief explanation on the answers

Click the accompanying links to read the reports in detail

Come back the next day
for more!

Just scan the QR code below and enter your email ID; let's get cracking!



To know more

Visit EPAPER.THEHINDU.COM/QUIZ.HTML



/thehindu



/The_Hindu



/the_hindu



In third hike this month, LPG prices go up by ₹25 per cylinder

Page 10



Mamata rides electric bike to protest against hike in fuel prices

Page 10



Biden revokes Trump's immigrant visa ban, says it harms country

Page 11



Axar Patel, R. Ashwin spin India to victory in third Test

Page 13

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

NEARBY



'Test must for visitors from Kerala, Maharashtra'

JAIPUR
With COVID-19 cases registering a surge in several States, the Rajasthan government on Thursday made it mandatory for those travelling from Maharashtra and Kerala to carry their negative RT-PCR test report with them. The health protocol will be strictly enforced to check the spread of the virus in the State.

REGION ▶ PAGE 5

Police use animation to explain riots 'conspiracy'

NEW DELHI
The Delhi Police Special Cell on Wednesday submitted in Karkardooma court the third supplementary charge sheet in the Delhi riots case. The document has been supported by animation to explain that the riots were part of a 'large-scale conspiracy', said a senior police officer. The chargesheet mainly focused on evidence that they got after forensic laboratory report, said the officer.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3



Govt. to monitor OTT content

3-tier mechanism to address plaints against platforms

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

For the first time, the government, under the ambit of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021, has brought in detailed guidelines for digital content on both digital media and Over The Top (OTT) platforms, while giving itself overriding powers.

Emergency powers
The new rules, unveiled at a joint press conference by Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar, will give the government "emergency" powers to block public access of any information. The rules state, "in case of emergency nature" the Secretary, Ministry

The digital media platforms have no monitoring mechanism like TV or print media... There must be a level playing field. All media platforms must have the same justice system

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR, INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING MINISTER

The government welcomes criticism and right to dissent... It is important that social media users running into crores should be given a platform for raising their grievance to raise complaints about abuse of social media

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD, ELECTRONICS AND IT MINISTER

kar, lay down a three-tier grievance redressal mechanism.

However, over and above this framework, the government has equipped itself with "emergency" powers to block public access of any information. The rules state, "in case of emergency nature"

of Information and Broadcasting, may "if he is satisfied that it is necessary or expedient and justifiable" give orders to block access. Such orders can be released "without giving an opportunity of hearing" to the publishing platform.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Tighter norms in place for social media

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday notified new, stricter guidelines for social media intermediaries, making it mandatory for platforms such as WhatsApp to help identify the "originator" of "unlawful" messages.

It will also require the likes of Twitter, Facebook and YouTube to take down such messages within a specific timeframe and set up grievance redressal mechanisms.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

India, Pakistan agree to adhere to 2003 ceasefire

Announcement comes after discussions between DGMOs

DINAKAR PERI
SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

In a first joint statement issued by the two sides in years, India and Pakistan on Thursday said they have agreed to a "strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease fire along the Line of Control (LoC) and all other sectors" with effect from the midnight of February 24-25.

The decision was announced after discussions between the Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both sides over the established hotline on February 22.

Keeping watch: This file picture shows Army jawans patrolling at the border in Kashmir's Kupwara district. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

"In the interest of achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable peace along the borders, the two DGMOs agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have [the] propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence," the statement issued in Delhi and Islamabad said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

J&K PARTIES HAPPY ▶ PAGE 9

Same-sex marriages will cause havoc, govt. tells HC

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday opposed any changes to the existing laws on marriage to recognise same-sex marriages, saying such interference would cause "a complete havoc with the delicate balance of personal laws in the country".

"Living together as partners and having sexual relationships by same-sex individuals is not comparable with the Indian family unit con-

cept of a husband, a wife and children, which necessarily presuppose a biological man as a 'husband', a biological woman as a 'wife' and the children born out of their union," the Centre argued in the Delhi High Court. It said the 2018 judgment of the Supreme Court decriminalising homosexual sex was "neither intended to, nor did it in fact, legitimise the human conduct in question".

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 2

45+ need certificate to get vaccine

Ministry to issue format for medical certificate soon

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry will soon issue the format of the medical certificate required by beneficiaries in the 45+ category with comorbidities, who have become eligible for COVID-19 vaccination from March 1 along with those above 65 years of age.

"The government will also require beneficiaries to register on the CoWIN app – along with Aadhaar card de-



A policewoman getting vaccinated in Visakhapatnam on Thursday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

tails, photo ID and signed medical certificate (if needed) to get the details of where and when to get the

vaccine. We are getting queries about older persons not being able to use the app and their registration. This is also being looked into," said a senior Ministry official.

The Ministry is also yet to release the list of co-morbidities or the cost of the vaccination in the private medical care sector.

"An announcement will be made soon," a health official said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

London court's nod for Nirav Modi's extradition

DEVESH K. PANDEY
NEW DELHI

The Westminster Magistrates Court in London on Thursday allowed India's extradition request against businessman Nirav Modi, who is wanted in connection with the ₹13,758 crore Punjab National Bank fraud, ruling that a *prima facie* case had been made out.

The order will be sent to the Secretary of State for the United Kingdom's Home Department for further action.

The Secretary of State has to take a decision within two months or seek an extension from the High Court. Appealing the Secretary of State's decision in the High Court is only possible with the court's permission.

Notice of application for approval to appeal has to be sought within 14 days of extradition, or discharge, ordered by the Secretary of State.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

VAJIRAM & RAVI Institute for IAS Examination

— NEW DELHI | CHENNAI —



WE ARE THE MASTERS!

At chiseling the best version of you for UPSC and beyond.

We do not hire the best teachers in the country. We make them.

And they in turn carefully nurture our students through quality teaching and content. For the last 45 years, we have meticulously devised our coaching programme to shape success stories. That could be why making it into the UPSC top 10 ranks has become an annual tradition for our students.

— The holy trinity that makes us the masters: —



Mentorship by India's Leading Faculty

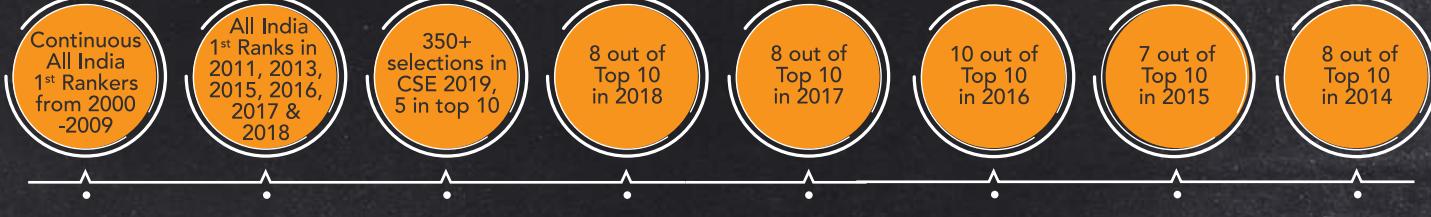


Updated Quality Study Material



Enriched Prelim & Main Tests

ADMISSIONS OPEN FROM APRIL 2021



POWERUP PRELIMS AND POSTAL COURSE FOR 2021 GENERAL STUDIES IS ALSO NOW AVAILABLE!

New Delhi Centre: 9-B, Bara Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi - 110060. Ph: 011 - 41007400 | South Regional Centre: 43, 2nd Floor, Haddows Road Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044 - 43302121 | Email: online@vajiramandravi.com



Timings
DELHI

FRIDAY, FEB. 26
RISE 06:50 SET 18:19
RISE 17:21 SET 06:17
SATURDAY, FEB. 27
RISE 06:49 SET 18:20
RISE 18:26 SET 06:59
SUNDAY, FEB. 28
RISE 06:48 SET 18:21
RISE 19:31 SET 07:38

Delhi Weather max min
Delhi City 33 13
Safdarjung 33 13
Palam 31 16

Delhi Palam Today
33°C Day temperature would remain above normal. Warm day likely. Dryness likely to increase towards day.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
34°C Morning and day temperature likely to increase further mainly mist/haze at many places during morning.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2019
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD, the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the accuracy of any statement or advertisement or any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In event can the Owner, Publisher, Writer, Editor, Director, Employees of the said company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Animation used to explain 'conspiracy' in Delhi riots

Delhi police submit third supplementary chargesheet

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI



Children enjoy a ride in north-east Delhi's Shiv Vihar. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Delhi Police Special Cell on Wednesday submitted in Karkardooma court the third supplementary chargesheet in Delhi riots case. The document has been supported by animation to explain that the riots were the part of 'large-scale conspiracy', said a senior police officer.

The court is yet to take cognisance in the chargesheet filed. The Special Cell investigating the alleged 'large-scale conspiracy' behind the north-east Delhi riots has arrested 15 people under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

A senior police officer said that the chargesheet mainly focused on evidence that they got after forensic laboratory report and other technical examinations that were pending in the case.

"We have identified the rioters after analysing CCTV

footage of the area when they were functioning and with the help of facial recognition system, tallied those with the ones seen on mobile videos of the violence and the phone location of the suspects. It was clearly seen how all CCTVs in the locality were made dysfunctional, while CCTVs located in other areas were functioning well. It establishes that the violence was not spontaneous but was a well-planned one. In CCTV footage, suspects were seen armed with modified weapons made of iron-cutting tools," the officer added.

In one of the cases, during investigation, they found that around 35 cameras located in a lane in Chand Bagh were "dysfunctional" and in a mobile video, a large group of rioters were seen using the same lane. It establishes that the attack was planned, he added.

Man held for wife's murder

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Thursday arrested a man who killed his 30-year-old wife and slept next to the body after the murder, in north Delhi's Burari.

The accused husband, Raj Kumar, 32, was drunk when an argument ensued between them, the police said.

The couple used to fight on petty issues and over his drinking habit, DCP (North) Anto Alphonse said.

'NIC proposals on DU UG courses to be placed before Academic Council'

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi University acting V.C. P.C. Joshi said that recommendations of the NEP Implementation Committee on a four-year programme for undergraduate courses will be put before statutory bodies "very soon."

The NIC has suggested a multidisciplinary learning that would include skill enhancement and research.

"While a date has not been fixed yet, the recom-

mendations will be placed before the Academic Council very soon," said Mr. Joshi.

The proposed programme is not comparable to the FYUP which was there earlier. The previous one was much more rigid. The new programme is more flexible and dynamic. Students will get more options under the new programme and it is more empowering," said Mr. Joshi.

The NIC has held 14 meetings since October 8.

The programme will allow students to pursue a three-year honours or a four-year honours in a discipline or a four-year honours in a discipline with research.

The committee also recommended renaming the BA Prog. course to BA (Hons.) Humanities and Social Sciences while the BSc in physical science, Life Science or Mathematical Science Programme to BSc (Hons) in the respective subjects.

The accused husband, Raj Kumar, 32, was drunk when an argument ensued between them, the police said.

The couple used to fight on petty issues and over his drinking habit, DCP (North) Anto Alphonse said.

NEW RENAULT KIGER

SPORTY
SMART
STUNNING

introductory price

₹5.45 lakh*
bookings open

special loyalty benefits*



multi-skin 17.78 cm reconfigurable TFT cluster with multi-sense drive modes



wireless smart phone replication



c-shaped signature LED tail lamps

for a test drive, call on 1800 315 4444. for further details, visit renault.co.in

terms and conditions apply. model/accessories shown may not be a part of the standard fitment. *price mentioned is for KIGER Petrol RXE for ex-showroom all India and is exclusive of local taxes. #loyalty benefit includes either exchange benefit with Renault model or cash discount on buying additional Renault model. the colour in the image may vary slightly from the actual colour of the product. the above mentioned offers & benefits are valid till 28th February 2021 and are through Renault dealership. for detailed offers, visit www.renault.co.in/offers. Renault India Pvt. Ltd. reserves the right to change or modify the mentioned schemes and conditions without prior notice. Renault India Pvt. Ltd. shall not be liable for any loss or damage arising from your failure to comply or understand the offer details. in the event of any dispute, all matters shall be governed by all applicable laws of India and court at Gurugram shall have the exclusive jurisdiction. contact your nearest dealership or visit www.renault.co.in for more details.

SHOWROOMS: DELHI-NCR: SOUTH DELHI:
RENAULT Bhikaji Cama Mob: +91 8377003363
RENAULT Mathura Road Mob: +91 7428201764

GHAZIABAD:
RENAULT Ghaziabad City (Meerut Road) Mob: +91 7838216898
RENAULT Modinagar Mob: +91 9818992255

BULANDSHAH: RENAULT Bulandshahr Mob: +91 8373914175. HAPUR: RENAULT Hapur Mob: +91 8373914282. REWARI: RENAULT Rewari Mob: +91 9643335838, RENAULT Dharuhera Mob: +91 9311700656. ROHTAK: RENAULT Rohtak City Mob: +91 9311700651. SAHIBBAD: RENAULT Sahibabad Mob: +91 9311700658.

WEST DELHI:
RENAULT Mayapuri Mob: +91 7290039351
RENAULT Moti Nagar Mob: +91 7428390229

GURUGRAM:
RENAULT Sohna Road Mob: +91 8860025119
RENAULT Sohna Mob: +91 9311700657
RENAULT MG Road Mob: +91 9311700637

NORTH DELHI:
RENAULT North Delhi (Azadpur) Mob: +91 729003961

FARIDABAD:
RENAULT Faridabad City (Bata Chowk) Mob: +91 8860681876

EAST DELHI:
RENAULT Patparganj Mob: +91 9311243651

NOIDA:
RENAULT Noida (Sector 2) Mob: +91 7290041479
RENAULT Noida (Sector 63) Mob: +91 7603976213

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE:
[www.thehinduad.com](http://thehinduad.com)

PUBLIC NOTICE

EDUCATIONAL
PHOTONS IAS
EO/AO-EPFO
TEST SERIES

26 SELECTIONS IN APFC 2012-13



Form No. INC-26
(Pursuant to Rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014)
Before the Central Government
Regional Director, Northern Region, New Delhi
In the matter of sub-section (3) of Section 13 of
Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of
sub-rule (5) of Rule 30 of the Companies
(Incorporation) Rules, 2014
AND

SHIVAM INFOCOM PRIVATE LIMITED
(CIN-U51395DL2003PTC122654)
having its Registered Office at
SHED NO. 185, DSIDC COMPLEX, OKHLA
INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-I,
NEW DELHI-110020

.....Applicant Company / Petitioner
NOTICE is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under Section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on 11th February, 2021 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "National Capital Territory of Delhi" to "State of Haryana".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver or file his/her objection supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, Northern Region Ministry of Corporate Affairs, B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor, Pandit Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003 within fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant Company at its Registered Office at the address mentioned below.

SHED NO. 185, DSIDC COMPLEX, OKHLA
INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-I,
NEW DELHI-110020
For & on behalf of Applicant
SHIVAM INFOCOM PRIVATE LIMITED
Sd/-
Place : New Delhi
DIN: 02580827

TOP THE UPCOMING 9TH MAY
EPFO EXAM
JOIN
CRASH COURSE @5500

Starting from Scan QR Code

O1
MARCH
2021

FOR ADMISSION

WWW.ASPIREIAS.COM

Call/WhatsApp 8010068988

BUSINESS OFFER

CREDIT CARD & Loan problems, over-

due, Closure, cibil 8939116893

SABA INFOMEDIA PVT LTD Invites applications from vendors/agencies for all kinds of nationwide Outdoor Publicity, Publicity through customized branded mobile vans, Events, Road shows, on ground publicity activities, Physical Branding, Digital Banner/Branding activities and Expertise in any other similar activities with minimum experience of one year. Please apply to: info@sabainfmedia.com with complete details of area of operations, commercials and other information in the format provided on our website: www.sabainfmedia.com. All vendors who have past/present dealing with us can also apply.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MISSING

PUNEESH BAJAJ



Father's Name
Avinash Chandra
Bajaj
(Puneesh Bajaj is missing from
Gurgaon DLF Phase 2
since 05/01/21)

Police Station DLF
Phase 2, Gurgaon

FINDER MAY CONTACT

Avinash Bajaj (M): 8448939779

PUBLIC NOTICE
We, Mrs Kamla Bali w/o Mr R.B. Bali and Mrs. Shalu Singh w/o Mr Devinder Singh are the R/O Shop No. 1, Old P.D. building, Mehrauli, N.D. are the GPA holder of Smt Rekha w/o Sri. P.D. Singh R.O./P.M. Company, Ward no. 1, District Sohna, Gurgaon. For Plot no. 1190, Sec-38 (50 Sq mtr) Gurgaon. Now Kamla Bali and Shalu Singh want to apply for the transfer permission of the above said plot through this GPA in the office of Estate Officer-II. If any person has any objection against regarding the above said plot he/she can submit his/her objection in the office of Estate Officer HUDA-II, Sec-34, Gurugram within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Mrs. Kamla Bali

Mrs. Shalu Singh

NOTICE

The plaintiff has filed the above suit seeking a decree of declaration and injunction, along with the above petition for injunction against the defendants. The defendants are hereby requested to appear in person or through their counsel before this Hon'ble court at 11 O' clock on 01/03/2021 and file their contentions, failing which, the case will be proceeded ex parte against them.

Dated this the 10th day of February, 2021

Sd/-

K.R. VINOD

COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFF

EDUCATIONAL

BE N BY IAS
India's only Institute RUN by an IAS Officer
LAW OPTIONAL Classes
Fresh Batch Civil Services Exam 2022 Limited seats !!!
Batch Starts from 1st March, 2021
ONLINE **LIVE** (Not pre-recorded)
INTERACTIVE CLASSES
Live Online Classes Conducted by Expert Faculty
Clarify doubts in real time during LIVE Class Sessions
Access to well-researched Study material-PDF and Videos
Class Recordings Available Till Examination
Website: www.beandbyias.com | Email id : info@beandbyias.com
Contact us : 9958294810, 995826967

EDUCATIONAL

KSG
An Institute For IAS Exam...
POWER OF CLASSROOM COURSES
RACHIT RAJ CSE-2013 TINA DABI AIR- CSE-2015 SRUSHI JAYANT DESHMUKH CSE-2015
GS HIGHEST MARKS IN INDIA 3 TIMES IN 5 YEARS
GENERAL STUDIES FOUNDATION COURSE
NORTH DELHI (Vijay Nagar) CENTRAL DELHI (Rajender Nagar)
1 st Mar 2021
9717 380 832 9811 293 743
SPECIAL FOCUS ON ANSWER WRITING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
ADVANCE FOUNDATION COURSE ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS 2 Years Programme **ONLINE COURSE** **NEXT BATCH 3rd MARCH**
NORTH DELHI CENTRAL DELHI JAIPUR BENGALURU BHOPAL INDORE PATNA RAJBHAR
9717 380 832 9811 293 743 8290 800 641 7619 166 661 7509 975 361 9893 772 941 7463 950 774 939 982 007
www.ksgindia.com

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

OBITUARY

S. R. Ramakrishnan
(Feb 4, 1935 – Feb 22, 2021)

Srirangam Rengaswamy Ramakrishnan was born in Tanjore on Feb 4, 1935. He did his schooling in Srirangam before joining Anantapur College. He graduated with a B.E. in Mechanical Engineering in 1956. During this time, he was the captain of the tennis team and the director of English Drama.

He joined Hindustan Steel Ltd., now the Steel Authority of India Ltd., or SAIL in March 1957. He trained at the Coke Oven Plant in Pittsburgh, and studied Metallurgy and Business Management at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. He held several leadership positions at the Bhilai Steel Plant including Chief Engineer, Coke Ovens and Byproducts, Chief Personnel Manager, and General Manager. He was the Managing Director at the Bokaro Steel Plant and later joined the SAIL headquarters as a director on the board. He was responsible for solving the problems of Indigenous coal supplies at the SAIL Corporate office in 1980, and the commissioning of the Cold Rolling Complex in Bokaro Steel Plant in 1990. During his tenure, the Steel Industry in India went through a very important phase of deregulation and subsequent changes in SAIL's marketing policy. Earlier he was associated with the modernization programs at Rourkela and Sambalpur Steel Plants.

Mr. Ramakrishnan's service with SAIL was punctuated by a brief stint as the Managing Director of Nagarjuna Steels Ltd. Hyderabad, from 1985-86. He was an advisor to the Birla Group from 1993-1998, a member of the board for Sesa Goa, and a director and later the chairman of the board for Shriram EPC from 2005-2016.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Hema Ramakrishnan, his sons Vijay and Jayant, his daughters-in-law Maneesha and Peggy, his grandchildren Priya and Sonia, and his siblings Rengaswamy Jagannathan, Kamala Kasturi, Kalyani Raghavan and Radha Srinivasan.

DEATH

Kalaimamani Smt. Prabhavathi Ganeshan (1941 - 2021)
Passed away peacefully on 17.02.2021.
Her passion for the Veena was only surpassed by her dedication to her husband and family.
Remembered by family, friends and music lovers worldwide.
Tel.: 044-24413224

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

FIRST ANNIVERSARY
Smt Balasundari Vetrivel 1940 - 2020
Fondly remembered by M. Vetrivel, Commandant (Retd) RPSF, Sons: Kumanan, Asokan, Sekar Daughters-in-law & Grandchildren Mob: 98402-99479

For enquiries on announcements in this section, please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. and 8p.m.
New Delhi : 011-43579797
Rate for New Delhi : (Minimum Rs. 320/- 2 Lines Extra Line -Rs. 160/-)
(B/W Display): Rs.60/Per Sq.cm (C/I Display): Rs.70/Per Sq.cm
Log on to www.thehinduad.com
For Placing Advertisements Online

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Electrical (General) Branch OPEN TENDER

NIT No.: JBP/LT/No./02/2021, dtd. 23.02.2021

The Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical General), West Central Railway, Jabalpur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites applications on prescribed tender form for the following works -

NIT No.: JBP/LT/No./02/2021, Dated 23.02.2021. Name of work

with location: Electrification and Earthing of various location in JBP-Dn. Approx. cost of the work: ₹ 1,46,77,863.36. Cost of tender form: 0.00. Address of the office where the tender form can be purchased: Sr. DE/Gen./Jabalpur. Earnest Money: 0.00.

Completion Period: 4 months. Date & Time for submission of tender (upto 15.00 Hrs. on): 17.03.2021. Date & Time for opening of tender (at 15.30 Hrs. on): 17.03.2021. Complete details of tender notice available on the Railway website www.reps.gov.in. Complete tender form can be downloaded from above website.

रेल यात्रा के दौरान विकासकर है 138 पर

एवं सुरक्षा है 162 पर संपर्क करें।

North House passes resolution to retain makeshift temple

Old one at Chandni Chowk was demolished as 'encroachment'

up overnight near the site on the median verge of a street, leading a war of words between the AAP and the BJP.

The

decision was taken during a meeting of the North House on Thursday.

On

Tuesday, an "all-party meeting" of senior leaders of the North body was held to seek consensus before putting a proposal in its House for getting a "legal status for the prefabricated steel structure, which Mr. Prakash had claimed was "made by devotees of Ramji and Hanuman ji".

IN BRIEF

Maximum temp. settles at 33.2°C in Capital

NEW DELHI
It was a warm Thursday in the national capital as the maximum temperature settled at 33.2 degrees Celsius and the minimum at 13.4 degrees Celsius, a notch above the season's average. PTI

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

(E-Tender Notice)

By CME/Works for Chief Workshop Manager, North Eastern Railway, Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur-for and on behalf of President of India invites open tender through on line (E-Tendering) for the following work:-
S.No.-1, E-Tender Notice No & Name of the work: Tender No.: 13-GKP-MWS-2020-21 "Outsourcing of activity of Helical Spring at Mechanical Workshop, Gorakhpur for 02 Years (24 Months)" Estimated Cost ₹69,55,522.56, Earnest Money: Zero. Cost of Tender forms: Zero. Last date of tender submission: Upto 11:00, Date 26-03-2021, Period of Contract: 24 Months

The details of above tenders are also available on Indian Railway website www.reps.gov.in
By CME/Works, Mech. Workshop, CPOR/Yantrik-106, Gorakhpur
About any passenger amenities complaint SMS on Mobile No.: 09794845955
Do not smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train.

Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly

WESTERN RAILWAY

CANCELLATION NOTICE

Tender No. : BCT/20-21/349
Dt 10/02/2021, DOP : 09/03/2021.
Above tender may be treated as **Canceled** due to Technical Reason.

Like us on: facebook.com/WesternRly

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer HP PWD Kasauli Dist. Solan HP on behalf of Governor of HP invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors. Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Job No	Name of Work	Tentative Cost	Earnest Money	Time Allowed	Cost of Form
1.	Annual Maintenance Plan for the year 2021-22 for Dharampur to Kiyard road in Km 0/0 to 5/00 (SH- Providing and Laying renewal coat by providing 30mm thick Bituminous Concrete, thermoplastic edge line in Km 0/0 to 2/00) Under PMGSY.	23,63,626/-	43,000/-	3 Months	500/-
2.	Annual Maintenance Plan for the year 2021-22 for Kheel Ki Mour Subath road in Km 0/0 to 6/570 (SH- Providing and Laying renewal coat by providing 30mm thick Bituminous Concrete, thermoplastic edge line in Km 0/0 to 6/00) Under PMGSY.	11,70,336/-	23,400/-	3 Months	500/-
3.	Annual Maintenance Plan for the year 2021-22 for Garkhal to Ghai road in Km 0/0 to 6/200 (SH- Providing and Laying renewal coat by providing 30mm thick Bituminous Concrete, thermoplastic edge line in Km 0/0 to 6/00) Under PMGSY.	23,04,456/-	42,067/-	3 Months	500/-

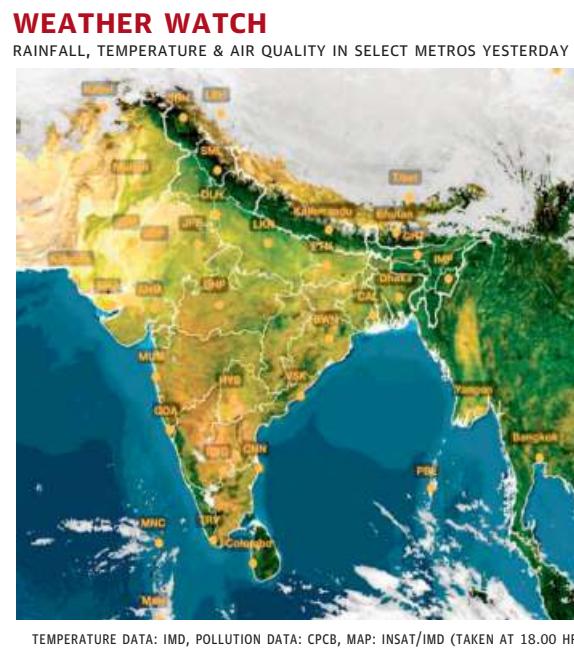
1. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission:
The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <https://htptenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized certifying authorities (CA) "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: <https://htptenders.gov.in>. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.

2. Key dates.

- Date of Online Publication 03-03-2021 10:00 AM
- Document Download Start Date 03-03-2021 11:00 AM
- Bid Submission Start and End date 03-03-2021 at 11:00 AM to 10-03-2021 at 4:00 PM
- Physical Submission of EMD And Cost of Tender Document 10-03-2021 at 10:30 AM
- Date of Opening of Bid 10-03-2021 at 11:00 AM

3. TENDER DETAILS:

- The tender Document shall be uploaded online in 2 cover: Cover 1: shall contain Scanned copies of all" Technical Documents/Eligibility information"
- Cover 2: Shall contain "BOQ/Financial Bid", where contractor will quote his offer for each item,



Capital sees 224 fresh infections

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A total of 18,945 beneficiaries - healthcare and front-line workers - took COVID-19 vaccine in Delhi on Thursday and six minor adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) were reported, said a Delhi government spokesperson.

Of the total beneficiaries, 13,403 received their first dose and 5,542 their second one.

Vaccination of health-care workers started in Delhi on January 16 and front-line workers from the first week of February.

The second dose of the vaccine is taken after 28 days of receiving the first dose and it started from February 13.

Till now, 1,44,346 health-care workers and 2,02,945 front-line workers have received the vaccine, the spokesperson said.

Delhi, meanwhile, recorded 220 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of cases to 6,38,593, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Thursday. With no new death in the past 24 hours, the total number of deaths stood at 10,905. A total of 63,998 tests were done in a day.

Of the total cases, 6,26,519 people have recovered and there are 1,169 active cases.

Virus test must for visitors from 2 States to Rajasthan

Those from Kerala, Maharashtra need a negative report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

With COVID-19 cases registering a surge in several States, the Rajasthan government on Thursday made it mandatory for those travelling from Maharashtra and Kerala to carry their negative RT-PCR test report with them. The health protocol will be strictly enforced to check the spread of the virus.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, who presided over a review meeting on the infection and vaccination here, said there was no scope for negligence in the control of the pandemic. Mr. Gehlot gave instructions for mandatory screening of passengers from the two States at all railway stations and airports.

An awareness campaign on the infection, its symptoms, vaccination and the safety measures will also be



CM Ashok Gehlot

launched from the first week of March. Mr. Gehlot said there was nothing to be afraid of the vaccine and all of those whose turn was coming should go for it without any fear.

Precautions must'
He said precautions were necessary to avoid the third wave of infection. "Though Rajasthan is a leading State in terms of vaccination, we will make an attempt to achieve 100% targets and remove misgivings among the people. A letter will be sent to the Centre with the details of our experiences in the vaccination exercise," he said.

Tanwar launches new political platform

Oppn. dumb and govt. deaf, says ex-Haryana Congress chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former president of Haryana Congress Ashok Tanwar on Thursday launched a new outfit, 'Apna Bharat Morcha', which is positioning itself as an alternative political platform.

A source close to Mr. Tan-

war said the morcha is "a platform to raise people's issues" and not yet a political party.

His former party colleague and former chief of the Congress in Tripura, Pradyot Manikya, also joined him on stage at the event held at the Constitution Club here.

"The Opposition is dumb and the government is deaf. So when the politics is between them, the people will suffer. The new political formation has to struggle for the people," Mr. Tanwar told an audience of mostly his supporters.

AMU student goes missing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ALIGARH (U.P.)

An undergraduate student of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) has been found missing from his hostel room, university authorities said here on Thursday.

Ashraf Ali, who hails from Bihar and is a final year student of BA, left his room in the SS South Hall on Tuesday afternoon and is not traceable since then, they said.

TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT

Mr. N SELVA KUMAR

PH: 9820350726

selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in

THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

TELANGANA FOODS
IDA, NACHARAM, HYDERABAD - 500076. Phone No. 27152207, 08 & 09
Short Tender Notification
No.TF/GG/Tender/RG Dall and WMP/342/2020-21, DT. 24.02.2021
Telangana Foods invites Tenders for procurement of 530 Mts of Red Gram
570 Mts of Whole Milk Powder and 650 Mts of RBD-RPO. For details
please visit website : <https://tender.eprocurement.gov.in> from
25/02/2021 at 1.00 pm onwards. On line Bids submission closing date is
01.03.2021 upto 12.00 PM.
RO No: 1516-PPCL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21
Sd/-
MANAGING DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HANDLOOMS AND TEXTILES AND APPAREL EXPORT PARKS, Telangana, Hyderabad National Handloom Day -2021, Hyderabad

NOTIFICATION

Paper Notification was published on 07-02-2021 inviting applications from Upcoming/Reputed Designers for participation in National Handloom Day Celebrations 2021 to be held on 7th of August, 2021 in Telangana State. Based on the requests made by interested Designers. It has been decided to grant additional time for submission of filled in applications from Upcoming / Reputed Designers upto 5:00 PM on 01-03-2021 in the Office of Commissioner of Handlooms & Textiles & Apparel Export Parks, 3rd Floor, Chenchetha Bhavan, Nampally, Hyderabad. Interested Applicants / Designers can download the Application form from the official website viz., <http://handtex.telangana.gov.in>

Sd/- Shailaja Ramaiyer,
Commissioner H&T & AEPs (FAC)

ANDHRA PRADESH INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CORPORATION LIMITED (APIIC)
(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking)
MEGA FOOD PARK, MALLAVALLI (M), KRISHNA (D), ANDHRA PRADESH
APIIC has developed a Mega Food Park under the Mega Food Park Scheme by Ministry of Food Processing Industry (MoFPI), at Mallavalli (V), Bapulapadu (M), Krishna (D) wherein, a Cold Processing Centre is setup, along with basic enabling infrastructure for establishment of Food Processing Units with around 28 plots available for allotment. Parties interested to avail these facilities established under the park may contact the following:
Ch.S.S. Prasad
Engineer in Chief
+91-9505015007
chiefengineer.apic@apic.in
M. V. Raghava Krishna
Zonal Manager
+91 9848933877
z.m.vi.apic@nic.in
For further details on the list of plots please visit :
<https://kpi.apic.in:8443/kpi/api/cf/vacantPlots/so/param=vac23/usrn=AL&srn=VJAYAWADA¶m1=MegaFood%20Park%20Mallavalli>

LIST OF FACILITIES	
Aseptic Pulping Line	ECRC Ripening Chambers with crates and conveyor system for fruit transfer
Fully automatic Aseptic brick carton filling and packing line	Packing Unit for powders and granules
Warehouse	Civil Work and Building (Including PEB) of above components
Cold Store	Plots for allotment : 28 Nos

KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED (R)

1, Dr. Siddappa Puranik Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bangalore - 560 079. Phone : +91-80-2383218, Fax : +91-80-23281477, E-mail : ad.kdls@gmail.com

No.HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/Covid-19/Re-TND/RT PCR-Consu-Category-01/155/20-21 Date:25-02-2021

TENDER NOTIFICATION

- Ref. 1. Short-Term Tender Notification No. HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/ Covid-19/Re-TND/RT PCR-Consu-Category-01/155/20-21, (IND-792), Dated : 25-02-2021.
2. Short-Term Tender Notification No. HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/ Covid-19/Re-TND/RT PCR-Consu-Category-02/156/2020-21, (IND-793), Dated : 25-02-2021.
3. Tender Notification No. KSMSCL/TND/31/2020-21, (IND-788). Nation wide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tenders:

1. Tender for Supply of RT PCR Consumables for Covid-19 Test. (Category-1) (IND-792).

2. Tender for Supply of RT PCR Consumables for Covid-19 Test. (Category-2) (IND-793).

3. Tender for Supply of Drugs, Chemicals & Miscellaneous items for the year 2019-20 (IND-788).

The tenderers who have registered under e-Procurement department may participate through e-tendering system.

Details regarding specification, Terms and Conditions and other information is available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the Website : <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> from 25-02-2021. The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders.

Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

Sd/- Managing Director

DIP/DDU/2925/Manjal/2020-21 (Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd.)

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

6 Feet

Wear Mask | Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

+ 'Devise mechanism to curb pollution of river stretches'

NGT order comes after *The Hindu* report

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Mechanism [NRRM] or given any other suitable name. The NRRM may also consider the observations with regard to setting up of national, State or district environment data grid at appropriate levels as an effective monitoring strategy."

Directing Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories to ensure strict compliance, the Bench further added, "The process of rejuvenation of rivers need not be confined to only 351 stretches but may be applicable to all small, medium and big polluted rivers, including those dried up."

Ex-serviceman in EOW net for duping people of ₹2.5 crore

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 46-year-old ex-service man has been arrested by the Economic Offences Wing for allegedly duping people of ₹2.5 crore in the name of investment in housing project.

Joint CP (EOW) O.P. Mishra said that the accused has been identified as K. Ponniah, owner of Defence Personnel Welfare Housing Organization and a resident of Tamil Nadu. He convinced people to invest in his housing firm, DPWHO, for a project to come up in Dwarka sector 23.

He showed investors rosy pictures of the project and said the construction had started and would be completed within the stipulated time, the police said.

A case was registered in 2017 and transferred to EOW in 2019.

Khelo India

Major Attractions

- WINTER GAMES
- SNOW SHOE
- ICE SKATING
- SKI MOUNTAINEERING

Inauguration of 2nd Khelo India National Winter Games

By Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister
(Through Video Message)

In the august presence of

Shri. Kiren Rijiju
Hon'ble M.o.S (Independent Charge)
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
GOI

Shri. Manoj Sinha
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor
UT of Jammu and Kashmir

Shri. Farooq Khan
Advisor to Hon'ble Lt. Governor
Youth Services and Sports
UT of Jammu & Kashmir

Venue: Gulmarg
Date: 26th Feb, 2021

Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council

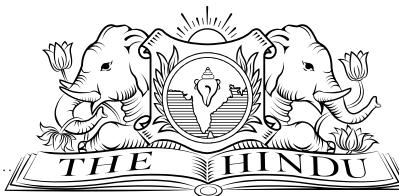
Major Attractions

- ICE STOCK
- AWARD CEREMONY
- ICE HOCKEY
- FIRE WORKS

Fit India

J&K Tourism

SAI



Vaccine inequities

The government can consider vaccinating all those over 45 years of age

The decision to open up about 20,000 private hospitals across India from March 1 – in addition to about 10,000 government sites – to vaccine people older than 60 years and those above 45 years with comorbidities will at once increase the number of vaccination sites. Roping in the private sector to support the government programme of vaccinating about 270 million people belonging to the two high-risk priority groups can surely speed up vaccination coverage. At 13 million at the end of six weeks since the vaccination programme began, only a little over a third of health-care and frontline workers have been covered. With the average uptake per session only about 35%, beginning the second phase of the programme could increase this percentage. Even if CoWIN platform glitches and a decline in daily cases are partly responsible for low uptake, the hesitancy to available vaccines among health-care workers, who are one of the most informed and also at greater risk of infection, cannot be overlooked. Whether the elderly and those above 45 with comorbidities will behave strikingly different or take a cue from health-care workers and prefer to wait before queuing up for a vaccine remains to be seen.

Crucial to increasing vaccine uptake in private hospitals will be the cost of vaccination, especially when it is available for free at government sites. At a time when vaccine uptake has been low even when offered for free, the only way to increase coverage is by making it easy for people desiring to get vaccinated to have one. While the intent to quickly protect people with comorbidities above 45 years who are at greater risk of progressing to a severe form of the disease or even death is commendable, the insistence on documentary evidence for vaccination should be reviewed if the uptake remains below the desired level. One in three adults in India has hypertension but only about half are even aware of it. It is one in 10 in the case of diabetes; awareness is about 50%. The trend is the same for a few other diseases that make a person eligible for a vaccine. With just over 21% of the population above 45 as per the 2011 Census data, the government can consider vaccinating anyone above that age who comes to a site. Similarly, insisting on prior registration on the CoWIN platform will further worsen inequities; vaccinating people who walk in without registration must be allowed. That less than 10% of people have opted for Covaxin nationally is proof that vaccine uptake is directly related to availability of trial data. The government can still win back trust and improve vaccine coverage by quickly making all vaccine trial data public. Also, timely resolution by the national committee, of serious adverse events and deaths following vaccination and sharing the details will surely inspire public confidence in the vaccines.

Judicial blow

PM Oli stands exposed after Supreme Court reversed his decision to dissolve Parliament

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court of Nepal quite rightly overturned Prime Minister K.P. Oli's decision to unilaterally dissolve Parliament in December 2020 and which was later approved by President Bidya Devi Bhandari. The ostensible reason for Mr. Oli's decision, clearly without any merit, was inner party intrigue within the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP). The Court correctly observed that there was the possibility of the formation of a new government in case Mr. Oli did not enjoy the confidence of Parliament, and therefore ruled his decision unconstitutional. The NCP has since then fractured politically into two factions, one led by Mr. Oli and the other by Pushpa Kumar Dahal and Madhav Kumar Nepal, both former Prime Ministers who belonged to the erstwhile Nepali Maoists and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), respectively. These parties had merged into the NCP in 2018. But this fracture is not yet formalised even though the Dahal-Nepal faction has "expelled" Mr. Oli from the party. In defence of his decision, Mr. Oli had argued that he required the support of a two-thirds majority to govern the nation and had sought re-elections, but the Supreme Court's decision has now rendered that moot by restoring the *status quo ante* as of December 2020. The Court also went on to scrap all appointments made by the government after the dissolution of Parliament on December 20, 2020.

Having received such a stinging rebuke by the Supreme Court, the right course of action for Mr. Oli should be to resign on moral grounds, but knowing the combative politician, that is not going to happen. The NCP's vertical split into two near-equal factions in Parliament should allow the formation of a new government if the Dahal-Nepal faction chooses to support an alternative – it has already pledged support to Nepali Congress (NC) leader Sher Bahadur Deuba if the NC stakes claim to form a new coalition government. The repeated changes in government should not surprise anyone as Nepal has a history of unstable regimes and frequent changes in Singha Durbar's occupants since the end of absolute monarchy in 1990. But the NCP missed a historic opportunity after it came to power with a two-thirds majority in the bicameral Federal parliament and in six of the seven provinces. Mr. Oli could have used the mandate in 2018 to ensure a stable regime, and governance and development in a country battered by the 2015 earthquake, political instability, and now the COVID-19 threat. His government singularly failed on most counts, and he and other NCP leaders could not work as a cohesive unit. The electorate's expectations of a stable regime, the first elected one since the promulgation of its Constitution, have been belied yet again due to the failure of the political leadership.

Single party dominance, democracy imperilled

Those who believe in progressive politics must ensure that winning polls through any means can never be an objective



M.K. NARAYANAN

Weeks hence, the nation is set to witness a series of elections to several State Assemblies. State elections normally do not attract too much attention, but as the nation moves inexorably towards single party dominance, the outcome of each and every Assembly Election becomes critical to the end objective. India, more accustomed to glacial changes in political behaviour and attitudes, is today confronting a new phenomenon, *viz.*, that the winner seeks to take all at any cost, irrespective of a raging COVID-19 pandemic.

Shadows over elections

If anyone were to peruse the numerous newspapers, and listen to the different television channels in the country, one would get an impression that India is approaching a new 'gilded' era. Unfortunately, electoral politics in the country appears to be out of sync with this portrayal. Threats to the conduct of orderly elections are increasing, more so in some States than perhaps in others, and must not be underestimated. Pressing the stop button is not a viable option as of now, as it is a reflection of the pervasive decline in political attitudes and behaviour in the nation. Violence, money power, and communal attitudes tend to exercise a disproportionately greater influence on the outcome of elections as of now.

A great deal of this is attributable to the prevailing belief that winning elections is the *sine qua non* of democratic politics, and the *raison d'être* for any political party to exist. India's leading political party, which currently holds power at the Centre and a majority of States, has converted this into a

fine art, and makes no secret of its determination to pursue this path. Other parties are attempting to emulate this, but with far less success. Across India, meanwhile, we are witnessing a near daily ritual of individuals belonging to one political party or the other shifting their allegiance and, while doing so, indulging in a diatribe against the party they exited. Electoral majorities as a result, and the character of some State governments, have, hence, tended to change. The shifting patterns of party alignments are, in turn, converting democratic politics into a kind of charade which could damage the fabric of both electoral and democratic politics.

Questions do arise as to what kind of polity will emerge as a consequence of all this. Of serious concern is that elections could hereafter become an instrument to trounce democracy. With all political debate becoming highly polarised, elections could well degenerate into a ritualistic exercise, without truly reflecting the democratic will of the people. Attributing motives is no panacea for what could well lead to the demise of electoral democracy.

Power though proxy

Coming to the State-level elections scheduled to be held in the near future, which are confined to the eastern and southern regions of the country – Bengal and Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the Union Territory of Puducherry, it is only to be anticipated that these elections will witness the finessing of a strategy employed successfully previously, including that of encouraging defections of key Opposition members, an incitement to violence, specially of the communal and sectarian kind, selective use of state agencies to build an atmosphere of fear, to gain an unfair advantage, etc. Such tactics have, no doubt, been employed in the past, but seldom on the scale anticipated in the prevailing scenario.

In the southern States that will be going to the elections, there



could be one significant variant, *viz.*, the objective of achieving power would be through proxy means. In Tamil Nadu, the present State government has earned a not-so-healthy reputation for 'kowtowing' to the party in control of the Central government. This is already an issue of unstated and unspoken concern, but the greater fear is that in return for electoral support this time, many more demands would be made, resulting in an acceptance of subalternity, *vis-à-vis*, Delhi – effectively demolishing all pretence of regional exclusiveness and autonomy. Much the same concern applies to the Union Territory of Puducherry, where the ruling party at the Centre has less than a toehold in terms of influence. In both Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, the shadow of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would eclipse everything else in its wake.

From Kerala to the Northeast

The election scene in Kerala is markedly different. The principal objective of the ruling party at the Centre would be to reduce the Congress into insignificance while seeking to simultaneously reduce the influence exercised by the Left, even as the BJP can hardly hope to capture power here just yet. A Herculean effort is being made to use the electoral gambit to rope in prominent intellectuals into party ranks, for a future eventuality. Kerala has, however, not seen any communal violence as elections approach, and has also eschewed the 'Ayam Gaya Ram' syndrome, common to many other States.

In the Northeast, Assam is already a BJP bastion, and the attempt here would be to strengthen Central authority in contrast to regional autonomy. This is particularly significant in the backdrop of controversial policies such as the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, which created quite a stir and dented the image and influence of the BJP to some extent. The full panoply of divisive politics would be on display here to achieve this objective.

Battleground West Bengal

Given the current stakes overall, it is West Bengal, however, that will be the main battleground in the coming elections. Almost all the tactics mentioned would be, or are already on display in the State. This is likely to intensify further as elections approach. Elections are certain to be a no-holds barred exercise, with the BJP and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) battling it out for control of the State, reducing erstwhile ruling parties, such as the CPM and the Congress to irrelevance. Already, in a State where caste identity has seldom if ever been a factor in elections or otherwise, a manifest attempt is being made to whip up caste frenzy, and rallying slogans 'Vande Mataram and Jai Sri Ram' by rival groups are being projected as the battle cry of the Forward versus the Subaltern classes.

Meantime, in a State where communal tensions are manifestly evident, the State has been witnessing severe communal violence over many months, some of it as serious, as that seen during Partition. The BJP and the TMC are equally to be blamed for the aggravated communal violence, but the real 'fall-guy' has been democracy. With erstwhile dominant political parties having been reduced to bit players, both the BJP and the TMC are picking up more and more of the 'lumpen elements' that previously owed allegiance to the Left and the Congress. These are hardly committed supporters, yet exer-

cise a disproportionate ability to vitiate polls.

Again, in the case of West Bengal, the current elections are proving to be highly divisive, with battle cries being raised to vote for the 'Daughter of Bengal' against 'Outsider Elements', leading to the creation of fresh divisions between the Bengali and non-Bengali segments of the population. Rival groups have had no hesitation to use Durga, the deity, as the epitome of Bengali identity – with the other side rooting for lord Ram as symbolising national identity. Seldom have elections anywhere deteriorated to such depths. All this is giving fresh grist to communal elements, encouraging the creation of new communal parties such as the Indian Secular Front, muddy waters further.

The danger to democracy

What is of utmost concern, however, given the extant circumstances, is that pent-up anger against a distortion of electoral verdicts or confronted with unpredictable results should result in something more serious and dangerous as an open rebellion against participative democracy. Electorates are singularly ill-prepared for such eventualities. History is replete with instances of this kind. There is only a thin line which protects democracy from the ravages of its opponents. The 19th and 20th centuries provide enough examples of how unwittingly, or unwittingly, democracy could become imperilled, leading to unforeseen situations. Ensuring that the current *status quo* is not challenged beyond a significant threshold is critically important for the future of democracy. It behoves all those who believe in progressive politics to ensure that the situation does not get out of hand, and that winning elections through any means can never be an objective.

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

The absurdity of the anti-defection law

It has reduced legislators to being accountable primarily to the party and failed to preserve the stability of governments



M.R. MADHAVAN

The events in Puducherry highlight, yet again, the absurdity of the anti-defection law. In what has now become the standard operating procedure, several MLAs from the treasury benches resigned, lowering the numbers required for a no-confidence motion to succeed. This formula has been seen recently in other States such as Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka.

The anti-defection law was included in the Constitution as the Tenth Schedule in 1985 to combat the "evil of political defections". The main purpose was to preserve the stability of governments and insulate them from defections of legislators from the treasury benches. The law stated that any Member of Parliament (MP) or that of a State legislature (MLA) would be disqualified from their office if they voted on any motion contrary to the directions issued by their party.

Range of the provision

The provision was not limited to confidence motions or money bills (which are quasi-confidence motions). It applies to all votes in the House, on every Bill and every other issue. It even applies to the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils, which have no say in the stability of the government. Therefore, an MP (or MLA) has absolutely no

freedom to vote their judgement on any issue. They have to blindly follow the direction of the party. This provision goes against the concept of representative democracy.

There are two broadly accepted roles of a representative such as an MP in a democracy. One is that they are agents of the voters and are expected to vote according to the wishes and for the benefits of their constituents. The other is that their duty to their constituents is to exercise their judgement on various issues towards the broader public interest. In this, they deliberate with other MPs and find a reasonable way through complex issues. The anti-defection law turns the concept of a representative on its head. It makes the MP neither a delegate of the constituency nor a national legislator but converts them to be just an agent of the party.

A broken chain in India

Look at the contrast with other democracies. For example, in the recent vote on the impeachment of former U.S. President Donald Trump, seven members from his party in the U.S. Senate, the Republicans, voted to convict him. Such a decision does not have any legal repercussion. Of course, the party may take action (it did not). Also, voters may decide to reject the legislator for re-election – and that is the core design element of representative democracy. The legislator is accountable to voters, and the government is accountable to the people who elected them to be just an agent of the party.

In India, this chain of accountability has been broken by making legislators accountable primarily



to the party. This means that anyone from the party having a majority in the legislature – which is, by definition, the party forming the government – is unable to hold the government to account. Further, all legislators have a ready explanation for their voting behaviour: they had to follow the party's direction. This negates the concept of them having to justify their positions on various issues to the people who elected them to be just an agent of the party.

Eroding legislatures

An important consequence of the anti-defection law is the hollowing out of our legislatures. If an MP has no freedom to take decisions on policy and legislative proposals, what would be the incentive to put in the effort to understand the different policy choices and their outcomes? The core role of an MP to examine and decide on policy, Bills and budgets is side-lined. Instead, the MP becomes just another number to be tallied by the party on any vote that it supports or opposes.

The framers of our Constitution did not intend this outcome. While introducing the draft Constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar outlined the differences between the presidential and parliamentary forms of go-

vernment. He said that the presidential form (such as in the United States) had higher stability but lower accountability as the President is elected for four years, and cannot be removed except for proven misdemeanour. In the parliamentary form, the government is accountable on a daily basis through questions and motions, and can be removed any time it loses the support of the majority of members of the Lok Sabha. The drafting committee believed that India needed a government that was accountable, even at the cost of stability. The anti-defection bill weakens the accountability mechanism.

Inducing instability

What is more, it does not even provide stability. The political system has found ways to topple governments. This includes the methods used in Puducherry this week – of reducing the total membership through resignations. The Constitution was amended to ensure that any person disqualified for defecting cannot get a ministerial position unless they are re-elected; the way around this has been to resign rather than vote against the party. In other instances, the Speaker – usually from the ruling party – has delayed taking a decision on the disqualification. This has led to strange situations such as members who continue to be part of the main Opposition party becoming Ministers (Andhra Pradesh in the term of the last Assembly). The Supreme Court has tried to plug this by ruling that the Speaker has to take the decision in three months, but it is not clear what would happen if a Speaker does

not do so. The premise that the anti-defection law is needed to punish legislators who betray the mandate given by the voters also seems to be flawed. If voters believe that they have been betrayed by the defectors, they can vote them out in the next election. However, we have seen many of the defectors in States such as Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh being re-elected in the by-polls, which were held due to their disqualification.

Onus is on parties

The problem arises from the attempt to find a legal solution to what is essentially a political problem. If stability of government is an issue due to people defecting from their parties, the answer is for parties to strengthen their internal systems. If they attract members on the basis of ideology, and they have systems for people to rise within the party hierarchy on their capabilities (rather than inheritance), there would be a greater exit barrier. These characteristics seem absent in many of the political parties, and we have seen a large number of defections despite the anti-defection law.

To sum up, the anti-defection law has been detrimental to the functioning of our legislatures as deliberative bodies which hold the executive to account on behalf of citizens. It has turned them into a form to endorse the decision of the government on Bills and budgets. And it has not even done the job of preserving the stability of governments. The Tenth Schedule to the Constitution must be repealed.

M.R. Madhavan is President of PRS Legislative Research, New 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.

Election strategy

Given the BJP's ambition to rule the length and breadth of this country, the party is likely to increasingly resort to the strategy of engineering resignations from MLAs belonging to the ruling party, wherever the BJP is not in power. Thus, any electoral verdict at the State level favouring any party other than the BJP is likely to be undone by the BJP sooner or later, using questionable means. The lasting damage that such

utterly immoral and undemocratic practices can do to our democracy needs no elaboration. The Prime Minister has more than once proclaimed that he and his government are committed to protecting and nurturing democracy in this country. If he really meant that, I suggest the leaders in his party think about letting the government pass legislation to the effect that any person resigning his/her membership of Parliament/

Assembly shall, on the acceptance of the resignation, not only cease to be a member of Parliament/Assembly but also render himself/herself ineligible for election to any public office for the next five years. This amendment to the relevant article of the Constitution can be made in not more than a week as the ruling NDA has sufficient numbers in both Houses of Parliament. But, going by the government's

past record, forgoing such a tool that forms an important part of the BJP's strategy for expansion, is unlikely.

G.G. MENON,
Tripunithura, Kerala

Need for caution

At a time when new coronavirus cases have once again started rising in some States, one wonders whether the decision to allow spectators, even at half capacity, for the cricket Test at Ahmedabad was a

wise one, considering the probable risk of disease spreading. From what we saw on TV, some spectators did not seem to bother about wearing their masks.

A. MOHAN,
Chennai

Other institutes

The time has come for the Centre to instead start funding and investing in State-sponsored old premier engineering institutions, such as the M.B.M. Engineering

College, Jodhpur, that are even older than the first IIT. This would cost the government much less to spend much in establishing a new IIT. It would also help older institutions aspire to reach the level of the IITs

(Editorial page, "Too many IITs, unrealistic expectations", February 20).

MILIND KUMAR SHARMA,
Jodhpur, Rajasthan</

Should governments regulate online platforms?

PARLEY

Reasonable regulation is democratic, but the moral panic around big tech is muddying the waters

Australia's new News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code will force platforms like Facebook and Google to pay local media outlets and publishers to link their content in news feeds or search results. The Australian law is being seen as one of the early shots fired in the coming battle by countries to regulate tech giants to take back some of the control they have on global communications. But is it an ideal regulatory model? Won't regulating the platforms affect free speech? Is regulating platforms the way to save the news media business that is in the doldrums? Jeff Jarvis and Dwayne Winseck tackle these questions in a discussion moderated by P.J. George. Edited excerpts:



Jeff Jarvis
is Director,
Tow-Knight Center
for Entrepreneurial
Journalism at City
University of New
York's Craig
Newmark
Graduate School of
Journalism



**Dwayne
Winseck**
is Professor, School
of Journalism and
Communication,
Carleton University,
Canada



Scan the QR code to
listen to the full
interview online

Inhibiting free speech

Courts shouldn't pre-empt Assembly inquiries based on limits of legislative competence

RAHUL NARAYAN

When the Delhi Assembly summoned Facebook honcho Ajit Mohan to depose before its Peace and Harmony Committee, it unwittingly provoked a litigation that may have far-reaching implications on federalism, the separation of powers and fundamental rights in India.

Parliamentary privileges

Parliamentary privileges are a set of rights and immunities that are essential for the functioning of Parliament. The right to free speech in the House, guaranteed to the Commons since 1689, and the right to call for evidence and witnesses, are central to the role of the legislature. In our Constitution, both Parliament and State Assemblies were conferred with the same privileges as the Commons. Apart from discussions about judges, no other speech is barred for legislators in the text of the Constitution.

On the face of it, federalism imposes an insuperable challenge to the traditional broad reading of parliamentary privilege. The argument goes: Unlike the House of Commons, the powers of State Assemblies are more limited. If the State Assembly cannot pass a law on a subject, how can it claim a right to discuss it or call witnesses for it?

However, this framing is misleading. First, legislation is not the only goal of discussions. Legislatures also have a separate non-judicial power of inquiry which has been judicially regarded as being inherent to the legislature, flowing perhaps from what Walter Baghot would call the expressive and informative function of the House. Politically, the Assembly is the voice of the people of a State and their discussions are an expression of popular will. Atomic energy is the exclusive preserve of the Union. Does that mean a State Assembly cannot inquire into the possible ecological implications of a nuclear waste site within the State? Cannot State legislatures hear testimony from soldiers and pass resolutions to honour the armed forces? At least four states have passed resolutions against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as affecting their people.

Second, the legislative lists frequently overlap and courts resolve

any conflict by adopting a test of pith and substance of the law in question. But how would this apply pre-emptively at the inquiry stage when the discussions may or may not lead to legislation?

Third, we live in the era of co-operative federalism. How can the Union and the States cooperate if they are barred from even discussing or taking evidence on issues beyond their limited legislative competence?

Fourth, there is the delicate issue of whether the courts can or ought to sit in judgment on the proceedings of State Assemblies determining what can or cannot be discussed based on the courts' view of the topic. No theory of judicial review would justify such a deep dive into the "political thicket" to examine the proceedings of the House, something our Constitution expressly bars.

The experiences of Canada and Australia, both common law federal jurisdictions, are also instructive. The Canadian chronicler Maingot hints about restrictions based on legislative competence but is careful to add that they are self-imposed, not court mandated. In Australia, the Privy Council in appeal from the High Court held that "it is hardly possible for a Court to pronounce in advance as to what may and what may not turn out to be relevant to other subjects of inquiry on which the Commonwealth Parliament is undoubtedly entitled to make laws".

In 1399, the Commons recognised free speech in the House as a tradition by reversing the judgment of treason on Sir Thomas Hauxley. It is this ancient privilege that found its way into our Constitution. It is a landmark of liberty as it allows elected representatives to challenge the most powerful people of the land on behalf of commoners. This ancient tradition would be effaced if the court were to appoint itself an arbiter of legislative discussions. It is difficult to craft any discernible principle upon which such unprecedented power could be judiciously exercised without inhibiting free speech that is the hallmark of our legislative tradition.

Rahul Narayan is an Advocate-on-Record in the Supreme Court and works on issues of Constitutional Law, Technology Law, Digital Rights, and Privacy

NOTEBOOK

Postlude to a riot

Remembering the stench of fear and sweat following the violence in Delhi in 2020

ANURADHA RAMAN

How do you observe the anniversary of a riot that drove a deep wedge into the capital of India? Do you recall the number of bodies, the schools targeted, the homes vandalised, or the mosques burnt? While one part of Delhi was decked up and cheery to receive U.S. President Donald Trump that February day in 2020, another was on high alert. Delhi had already started seething with the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which held the prospect of a large community of people becoming disenfranchised. All it needed was a spark to inflame passions. With some politicians doing their bit, the stage had been set.

A friend and I went four days after the riots erupted in north-east Delhi, which is home to a large population of urban labourers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar,

har, to the affected areas to see the scale of damage and speak to the people. North-east Delhi is a place which has largely been ignored by administrators.

We began our journey from the Metro station at Majupur where people had targeted each other after, some say, a speech made by a Bharatiya Janata Party politician. The shutters were down in the busy marketplace. Inside a lane, there were burnt auto rickshaws and a small minibus. Small shops selling hosiery and shoes, and a teashop, had been vandalised and set on fire. The main street, charred and lifeless, looked like it had witnessed a hundred little bonfires. The police kept peace that day. People didn't talk to each other and when they did, they would only whisper, eyes darting here and there.

A few kilometers away, schools had been laid to waste. In Chand Bagh, two

schools, each overlooking neighbourhoods in which lived different communities, had been set on fire. In one of the many by-lanes, a baker had not lost his graciousness - he offered us tea and biscuits. In his little home above his tiny boulangerie was a room full of women who had fled the ravaged land, we saw random acts of kindness. A shopkeeper offered to help the affected women by giving away clothes, including lingerie, which he had stocked. This gentleman latter called us during the nationwide lockdown to say that the little money he had earned had kept his kitchen going. Another shoe seller offered huge stocks of chappals. Others helped too, though some were clear that they would only help their own.

This is an anniversary I don't wish to remember. Yet, it is important to recall the day the flames of hatred burnt Delhi.

ternet taking advantage of the moral panic and trying to stop a wind that I don't think can be stopped.

DW: It doesn't help to talk generically about the Internet. It's about this idea that the Internet itself has been hijacked by a small group of companies that are rewiring it. They control audience data, which is the currency upon which this walled-garden version of the Internet works. They also control advertising, which is the money underpinning the so-called free Internet. This rewiring of the Internet was one to bring about the online advertising system with hyper-targeted ads. But it's been hijacked for disinformation operations, and to fan the flames of political polarisation, hate speech, misogynistic abuse, terrorist propaganda - all the stuff that give rise to the moral panic. I, too, am very uneasy about private corporate actors having the power to deplatform the most powerful politician, the U.S. President. But Mr. Trump is an index of a bigger problem, that something is fundamentally wrong with a conception of freedom of speech that does not draw boundaries around assaults on democracy. There must be a means - an institutional arrangement - by which those assaults can be brought to heel. Critically, the mechanism cannot be left at the mercy of a handful of private corporations.

Regarding what needs to be learnt from the Australian law, it does get at the problem of who controls the data upon which online advertising system is based. But instead of trying to rein in this kind of surveillance capital model of data harvesting, it basically gives it the government's blessing and tries to bring in the Australian media companies into a better spot at the table and give them a bigger share of the pie. So, when Canada, the U.S., and India look at Australia, my hope is they can cherry-pick the good bits.

One of the most downloaded apps in Australia now is the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's news app. This is being touted as an example of how newspapers exploit the opportunity to end their dependence on news aggregators and social media. However, not all news outlets may have the resources to do

this. Where do the smaller media players, and journalism itself, stand in this tussle?

JJ: What my fear about this kind of legislation is that it delays the inevitability of media learning what they have to learn about this world. It's great that the ABC is getting an audience. But that also relies on the old model of media: that media were the destinations; that you had to come to us. We've got to learn the lesson that social media taught us: we've got to go elsewhere.

What needs to happen here is that we've got to reinvent our fundamental model. What happened in the early days of the Internet is that the platforms took mass media's own attention-based advertising business model and did a better job of it. However, advertising as an attention-based model is inefficient and insulting and bothersome and ridiculous. Media properties have to understand that they are not in the business of making a product called content and then selling our audience to advertisers. That's what we did for a century and that's what the platforms are doing now. Journalism is a service. It has to fundamentally rethink its role in the public conversation. I work under a new definition of journalism and a new mission, which is to convene communities into respectful, informed and productive conversation. We all have to imagine a different future to support a quality public conversation.

DW: We have to realise that journalism has always been a public good in an economic sense. Historically, the general public has never, ever paid the full freight of a general journalistic or news service. It has always had to be subsidised, either by wealthy patrons, or by governments in democratic societies through the public service media system - like the CBC here in Canada, the BBC in the U.K. - or by advertising. Now that the advertising subsidy is falling away from journalism, we have to recognise that advertising was never a virtuous means of subsidising the general availability of news. Can we come up with some form of public subsidies? This is difficult, but it's been done for half a century in some European countries. I would recommend that we do that.



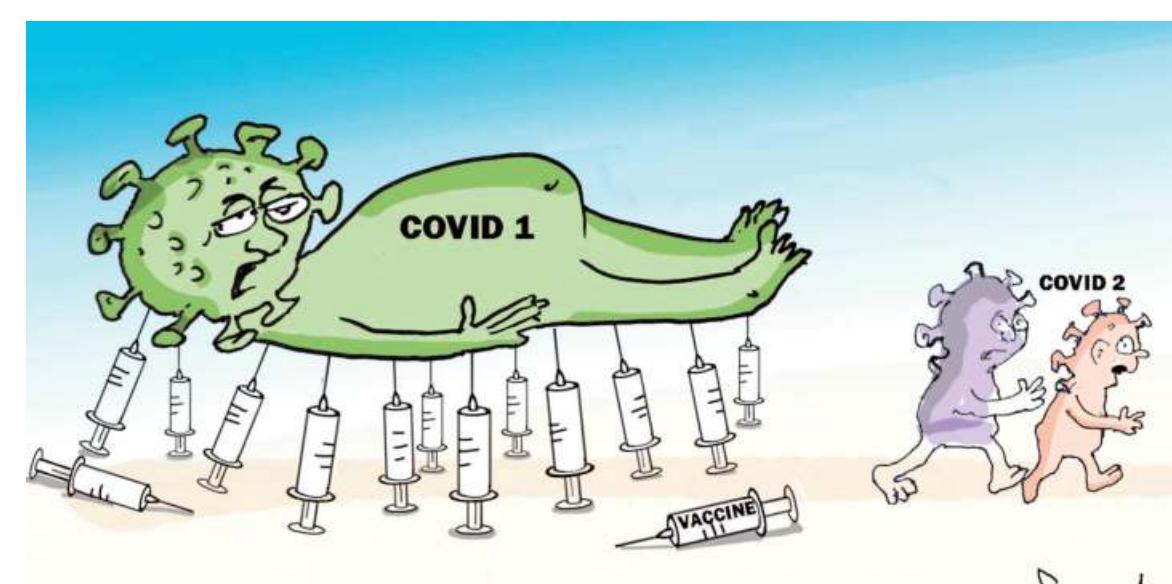
My fear is that we are seeing in media and politics a moral panic in which old institutions are trying to find a Boogeyman on whom to blame all of society's problems

JEFF JARVIS

Mr. Morrison has already spoken to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and these countries, along with the European Union, are being seen as next in line to come up with regulation for tech. What's the long game here?

JJ: My fear is that we are seeing in media and politics a moral panic in which old institutions are trying to find a Boogeyman on whom to blame all of society's problems. That moral panic then gives them licence to do things that in an otherwise sane world wouldn't occur.

We're going to hurt ourselves in how we treat the Internet and speech on it. It's important to point out that it's only because of social media that we have #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo; that the voices too long heard in the mainstream media run by people who look like me, old white men, are now finally being heard. Part of the problem is that the old voices resent the presence of those voices at the table. So, when we have governments joining together to fight the Internet - when it's Mr. Morrison talking to Mr. Modi and Mr. Trudeau, when it's [German Chancellor Angela] Merkel and [French President Emmanuel] Macron complaining about the fact that Twitter took Mr. Trump down - we see old institutions, old governments that are challenged by the In-



Surendra

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 26, 1971

India's 'final warning' to U.K.

India today gave what diplomatic observers believe to be "the last and final" warning to Britain that if its decision to sell arms to South Africa was final and irrevocable, it would be "an exercise in futility for the (eight-nation) study group to meet." The final warning has come from the Minister of External Affairs, Mr. Swaran Singh, who said in a statement that the British decision created a new situation in which it was incumbent on the members of the study group to reconsider the utility of the group meeting at all. Expressing India's regret over the British decision even before the study group had met, Mr. Swaran Singh, however, said if Britain was willing not to make any supply of arms to South Africa till the report of the study group had been considered by the Commonwealth Governments "we would be willing to reconsider our attitude." Diplomatic observers see in the latest warning India's desire not to take any precipitate action. India wants every aspect of the issue, particularly the interest of African countries, to be considered. These observers, however, feel that if Britain does not show any flexibility in its attitude, the study group would not only become futile, but certain other consequences would follow. India had on Monday warned Britain that any British supply of arms to South Africa before the study group completed its work could have serious implications for the very existence of the Commonwealth.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEB. 26, 1911

The reform duck and her eggs

The A.B. Patrika writes: The Reform duck is laying golden eggs. The indigenous Governor of Bihar who has just earned the distinction of being the avowed inaugurator of repression against non-co-operation is one such egg. The ministers represent another. In Bengal they are just now busy in organising a party against Non-Co-operation. Before the advent of the duck, the Government used to maintain outwardly at least an attitude of neutrality to the several political parties. The Government is now identifying itself with one party namely, that of the Moderates. The other day Sir Surender Nath and Mr. P.C. Mitter, the Bengal Ministers, went out with their "liveries" to organise a party against Non-co-operation in the hall of the Dalhousie Institute, a stone's throw from the Writers' Building where the Ministers have got their "portfolios".

M ND-NDE

FROM PAGE ONE

Government to monitor OTT content

The first level of the grievance redressal system will be at the level of each OTT provider. Each complaint will have to be addressed within 15 days.

If the complaint is not satisfactorily addressed, then the complainant can scale it up to a self-regulatory body collectively established by the OTTs. This body will be headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court, a High Court, or an independent eminent person from the field of media, broadcasting, entertainment, child rights, human rights or other relevant fields.

This self-regulatory body also has "censuring" powers in case of any incriminating content.

Stricter rules for social media platforms

They will also have to assist government agencies in investigation.

Speaking at a press conference, IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, said the basic essence of 'The Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021' is "soft-touch oversight" mechanism to deal with issues such as persistent spread of fake news, abuse of these platforms to share morphed images of women.

Think-tanks and experts welcomed the new "well-intended" rules, stating that these bring clarity on responsibilities of intermediaries.

India, Pakistan agree to observe 2003 ceasefire

It added that they would use existing mechanisms of hotlines and flag meetings to resolve any "misunderstandings".

As per the existing mechanism, there is a discussion by officials from the Military Operations directorate every Tuesday but the DGMOs speak only when one side requests for a conversation.

However, Army sources reiterated that there would be "no let-up" in counter-terror operations as a result of the agreement, adding that the agreement with Pakistan was "an attempt to bring violence levels down", but the Army retained the "right to respond" in case there is a terror attack in the

future.

"India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. We have always maintained that we are committed to addressing issues, if any, in a peaceful bilateral manner," said Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Anurag Srivastava, when asked about the timing of the agreement that follows days after India and China announced a disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

"On key issues, our position remains unchanged," he added.

Pakistan's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Moeed Yusuf called the agreement a "win" for Pakistan.

Court nod for Nirav Modi's extradition

"Unless there is an appeal, a requested person must be extradited within 28 days of the Secretary of State's decision to order extradition (subject to any appeal)," according to the UK's official website.

In its order, the Westminster Magistrates Court held that there were sufficient grounds warranting Mr. Nirav Modi's trial in India. It also accepted the evidence put forth by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate that he had conspired to

destroy the proof against him and intimidate witnesses.

It was alleged that he forcibly kept his employees, some of who were dummy directors in the firms floated by him, in illegal custody in Cairo and got their mobile phones destroyed in Dubai.

The UK court observed that Barrack 12 in Mumbai's Arthur Road Jail was spacious enough for Mr. Nirav Modi and that he would get sufficient security. It was convinced that he would not be denied justice in India.

45+ will need medical certificate to get vaccine

The Health Ministry in a release on Thursday added that an advisory has been issued to States/UTs to expand COVID-19 vaccination sessions to all public health care facilities along with Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) empanelled hospitals from March.

"A meeting was held with all States/UTs on Wednesday to review progress of COVID-19 vaccination drives and focus on improving pace of vaccination," the Ministry added. A total of 1,30,67,047 COVID vaccination doses have been administered till 6 p.m. on Thursday as per the reports issued by the Ministry.

The inscription also re-gisters gift of village Honenahalli in Tumakuru for conducting worship to the god Veeraprasanna Hanumantha of Tumakuru.

Kerala denies under-reporting vacancies in Police Department

PSC rank holders are on a fast in front of the Secretariat, seeking placements

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government revealed on Thursday that it had sought to clear the air on Public Service Commission (PSC) appointments during the talks it held with representatives of agitating rank holders last week.

T. K. Jose, Additional Chief Secretary, Home, and Additional Director General of Police Manoj Abraham represented the State. The PSC rank holders are on a fast in front of the Secretariat seeking placements.

During the meeting, Mr. Abraham debunked the allegation that the Police Department had not reported 1,200 vacancies to the PSC. The department had, in fact, reported anticipated vacancies arising out of retirement and promotion till December 31, 2021 to the PSC.

As many as 7,580 candidates figured in the Civil Police Officer rank list. The PSC had issued a memo to 5,609



Fight for jobs: The police using force to disperse people protesting in solidarity with the rank holders in Thiruvananthapuram recently. ■ MAHINSHA S

candidates. The rank list had become obsolete. The government was legally hard-pressed to fill more vacancies from the list.

The government has extended the validity of the Last Grade Servant

rank list till June 4, 2021. It has appointed 6,000 candidates from the rank list already. The government has asked the department to expedite the reporting of vacancies arising out of retirement and promotion to the PSC.

Efforts are on to appoint the maximum possible number of persons from the last grade servant list.

The PSC rank holders have sworn to continue their protests in front of the Secretariat even as more persons joined them.

Congress govt. in U.T. failed to work with the Centre: Modi

We'll form Ministry after the Assembly election'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUTUCHERRY

Days after the V. Narayanasamy government fell in Puducherry, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that it had failed to cooperate with the Centre in implementing schemes and in funds utilisation.

At a public meeting held here, he said that while people voted for the Congress in 2016 with hopes and aspirations, the party leaders tried to please the high command. "I came here three years ago.

Now, I could see more happiness among the people because of two reasons. One is due to the development works I inaugurated this morning... The second is the removal of the Congress government," he said.

Cong. spreads lies' Citing the video of a wrong translation made by Mr. Narayanasamy during Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent visit, Mr. Modi said that instead of telling the truth, "he lied to his own leader and the nation". (Mr. Narayanasamy had subsequently said he had indeed visited the region where the woman complained of lack of attention).

"It is in the culture of the Congress to spread lies," the Prime Minister said.

Mr. Modi was confident of the NDA forming a government in the Union Territory after the Assembly election.

"Such a government will be people's government and the high command will be the people. I want to see the

UT [the Union Territory] become the BEST [business hub, education hub, spiritual hub and tourism hub]."

The NDA government would focus on the coastal development and revive the cooperative sector to enhance the lot of women, he said.

Mr. Modi said the Congress had bagged "several medals in spreading lies".

Inscription on Vijayanagar king's death discovered

KARNATAKA BUREAU
MYSURU/BENGALURU

The first-ever epigraphical reference to the date of death of Vijayanagar king Krishnadevaraya has been discovered at Honnenahalli in Tumakuru district.

As per the inscription, Krishnadevaraya, one of the greatest emperors of India who ruled from the South, died on October 17, 1529, Sunday, and incidentally this day was marked by a lunar eclipse. K. Munirathnam, Director, Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India, Mysuru, said their office received a photograph of the inscription from K.R. Narasimhan, a retired professor, who stays in Yelankula, Bengaluru. On deciphering, it turned out to be an inscription recording the date of death of Krishnadevaraya, he added.

The inscription is engraved on a slab kept on the north side of the Gopalakrishna temple at Honnenahalli in Tumakuru district and is written in Kannada, said Prof. Narasimhan. It records the demise of Kr ish adévaraya—(Virakr ish aráya maháráyalu yi tathá titihulya astamáyarágalu) in Saka 1451, Viðhdi, śu. 15, lunar eclipse, which corresponds to 1529 AD, October 17, Sunday, according to Prof. Munirathnam.

The inscription also re-gisters gift of village Honnenahalli in Tumakuru for conducting worship to the god Veeraprasanna Hanumantha of Tumakuru.

Prime accused in quarry blast case held

Nagaraja was arrested from Hosur

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Chickballapur police have arrested the prime accused in the quarry blast case—G.S. Nagaraja, a partner in Shirdi Sai Aggregates and Bharama Vasini M-Sanders.

Mr. Nagaraja, a BJP leader from Gudipandur, had been absconding ever since six people were killed in the explosion near the quarry on Tuesday. He was arrested from Hosur, Tamil Nadu, on Wednesday, police sources said.

Popularly known as BJP

Nagaraja, he was recently appointed a member of the advisory board of the Southern Railway. Following a police raid and seizure of a vehicle from the quarry area on Monday, Mr. Nagaraja allegedly instructed his employees to dispose of the illegally procured and stored explosives, while doing which the explosion occurred, according to the sources.

With this, the total number of arrests in the case has gone up to six, including all the partners in the quarry and crusher unit.

Noted for the depth of his scholarship in the literature and philosophy of India and the west, Vishnu Narayanan Namboothiri was highly respected as a teacher and orator and represented the finest traditions of contemporary Malayalam poetry.

For some time now, the poet had been confined to Sreevalli, his home on a narrow bylane at Thycaud in

Thiruvananthapuram city, owing to failing health.

As an insightful poet who enriched Malayalam poetry, Vishnu Narayanan Namboothiri was noted for his progressive and philosophical convictions, which, at the same time, were deeply rooted in the Indian ethos.

Fix reasonable fee for MBBS course: SC to Kerala panel

Relief for students and private colleges

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday spelt relief for students and private self-financing medical colleges alike in Kerala by directing the State's Admission and Fee Regulatory Committee to consult with college managements and fix a "non-exploitative and reasonable" fee from 2017-18 onwards for MBBS studies.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao asked the committee to complete the exercise in three months.



The court asked the panel to complete the entire exercise within three months.

not resulting in profiteering or collection of capitation fee. Regulation of fee is within the domain of the committee which shall ensure that the fee is non-exploitative and reasonable," he explained.

3 rounds of litigation

The judgment is based on appeals stemming from over three rounds of litigation involving the State, the managements of private colleges and students in the High Court.

The apex court, in its judgment, cleared the air by confirming the wisdom of a February 28, 2019 judgment of the High Court.

In 2019, the High Court asked the committee to "closely scrutinise the fee suggested by the managements to examine if the fee proposed was not excessive and to eliminate any element of profiteering or collection of capitation fee". The managements were directed to cooperate with the committee in the matter of fixation of fee.

Announcing the package at Kattappana, Mr. Vijayan said it included various projects aimed at sustainable development of the district.

The package proposes a development strategy for six basic sectors.

The State Budget allocation for the agriculture sector in Idukki will be raised to ₹100 crore.



Court dismisses plea to cancel Dileep's bail

KOCHI A petition to cancel the bail granted to actor Dileep in the actor rape case was dismissed by the special court here saying that the prosecution had miserably failed to prove the allegations against the actor. The court noted that the prosecution could not come up with evidence to prove that the alleged acts of influencing the witnesses were either carried out by Dileep or done on his behalf.

Owaisi accuses Trinamool Congress of hypocrisy

HYDERABAD All-India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen president Asaduddin Owaisi accused the Trinamool Congress leadership on Thursday of hypocrisy after his party was denied nod for a public meeting in Metiabruz, ahead of the upcoming Assembly poll in West Bengal. "The Trinamool MPs speak about freedom of expression, Constitution, dissent in Parliament. But they have two faces," he said.

Issue daily COVID bulletins: Telangana HC

HYDERABAD The Telangana High Court on Thursday directed the State government to re-start from Friday the exercise of issuing COVID-19 related daily bulletins with details of infected and recovered persons. Hearing a batch of PIL petitions on Corona-virus-related issues, a bench of Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice B. Vijayans Reddy ordered the government to present a status report by March 18 on the second round of the pandemic in the State.



In-depth look: Topographic Airborne Laser Terrain Mapping has been done for the entire coastline. ■ GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Srinivasa Kumar, in an exclusive interaction.

Such a study has become imperative in view of the recent tsunamis of the Indonesian coasts where more than the quake related high waves, damage was due to landslides under the sea beds causing sudden wave surges leading to much damage without giving sufficient time to alert people, he pointed out.

The research institute, under the Ministry of Earth

Sciences, had also identified 'gaps' across the coast of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha for installing more tide gauges for better monitoring of the sea and more accurate prediction of impending disasters like cyclones.

These will be in addition to the 3D already in the Bay of Bengal, said senior scientist E. Pattabhi Rama Rao.

INCOIS scientists with their counterparts in the Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology and an United States independent scientific agency, Massachusetts-based Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, have been mining the data recorded by a unique 'Flux Buoy' retrieved from the Bay of Bengal off the Kolkata coast recently.

Backchannel diplomacy played its part

In a change, India this week allowed Imran Khan's aircraft to use its airspace to fly to Sri Lanka

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

India and Pakistan have given credit for the ceasefire agreement to military commanders, but several signs indicate that backchannel diplomacy led to the talks and helped produce a joint statement between the two sides, beginning with the call of Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa for resolving the Kashmir issue "peacefully" earlier this month.

"Pakistan and India must resolve the long-standing issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a dignified and peaceful manner as per the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," General Bajwa said in his speech at the Pakistan Air Force Aghas Khan Academy in Risalpur of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on February 3. The comment was interpreted as a clear sign of substantial background outreach. The backchannel talks were first hinted at by



Keeping the peace: A guard walking along the India-Pakistan border at Suchetgarh in Jammu and Kashmir. ■ FILE PHOTO

Moeed Yusuf, Special Assistant to the Pakistan Prime Minister on National Security and Strategic Policy Planning, during an interview with journalist Karan Thapar for *The Wire* last October.

In the interview, Mr. Yusuf said India expressed a "desire for conversation", but he had placed several conditions for restarting official-level talks. The comment had come against the backdrop of India's region-wide diplo-

macy regarding COVID-19, in which Pakistan had participated under the umbrella of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

(SAARC), but had shown reluctance in engaging in bilateral exchanges with India on the global pandemic. However, on February 18, Pakistan supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi's five propo-

sals for collaboration at the South Asian level on containing the pandemic. Pakistan also agreed that there is a need for such cooperation on a regional basis.

India called a virtual summit on the pandemic on March 15, 2020, which was held against the backdrop of a months-long exchange of rhetoric between the two sides over the termination of special status for the erstwhile Indian State of Jammu

and Kashmir. Leaders of all the SAARC countries participated in the talks, though Pakistan Prime Minister sent his representative without appearing personally.

Imran Khan's latest trip to Sri Lanka was one more instance of softening of attitudes. In comparison to the airspace denial that both countries had imposed on each other during and in the aftermath of the Pulwama terror strike, India this week allowed the aircraft carrying Mr. Khan passage.

During these signs of back-channel talks, both sides have maintained their positions on Kashmir. After Pakistan moved to provide "provisional provincial status" for Gilgit Baltistan last November, India hit out saying Gilgit Baltistan was an "integral part of India". After Thursday's announcement, Mr. Yusuf took to social media, distancing himself from any possible backchannel talks with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

NC, PDP, Hurriyat welcome India-Pakistan ceasefire deal

Mehbooba terms the pact a 'big and welcome development'

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

The National Conference (NC), the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Hurriyat, regional parties of Jammu and Kashmir, have welcomed the India-Pakistan fresh agreement to maintain ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC).

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti termed the agreement a "big and welcome development".

"Dialogue is the only way forward if both countries want to stop the unending cycle of violence and bloodshed across the borders and J&K," she said.

'Sustainable peace'
NC president and Member of Parliament Farooq Abdullah said the measure would go a long way towards sustainable peace between the two countries. "The NC has always been a strong votary of India-Pakistan peace. It is the



Mehbooba Mufti

people of J&K that have been facing the brunt of escalating tensions alongside the borders. I hope the agreement is followed in letter and spirit. The development will allow people living alongside the LoC and the International Border to go about their normal lives with minimal disruption and risk," he said.

The former Chief Minister hoped the development would increase the possibili-

ty of some forward advancement towards the resolution of all impending issues between India and Pakistan.

'Right step'
Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq termed the move "a step in the right direction". "For the interest of mutually beneficial and sustainable peace in the entire region, India and Pakistan need to address the core concern of J&K in keeping with the aspirations of its people. We have always advocated it," he said.

Jammu Muslim Front (JMF) chairman Shuja Zaffar described the "silencing of guns on the border a tribute to humanity". "Bloodshed of humanity is no solution. Dialogue is the only way forward. This is a big welcome development. This historical agreement will benefit people on both the sides of the border," added Mr. Zaffar.

President's Rule in Puducherry notified

It comes after the fall of Congress govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

President's Rule was imposed in the Union Territory of Puducherry and the Legislative Assembly was placed under suspended animation, according to a notification issued by the Union Home Ministry on Thursday.

A day ago, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal by the Ministry to dissolve the Assembly and impose President's Rule in the Union Territory.

The notification said President Ram Nath Kovind had received a report from the administrator of the Union Territory on February 22 and "after considering the report and other information", the President was "satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the administration of the Union Territory of Puducherry cannot be

carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963 (20 of 1963)".

The notification issued by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla said, "the Legislative Assembly of the said Union Territory is hereby placed under suspended animation."

Union Territories are administered in accordance with the provisions of Article 239 to 241 of the Constitution, and according to the Allocation of Business Rules, 1961, certain subjects pertaining to Union Territories, namely Legislative matters, Finance and Budget and Services, have been allocated to the Home Ministry.

The decision comes days after the Congress-led government lost power in a vote of confidence.

India, China review status at LAC

Disengagement on banks of Pangong Lake is a significant first step, says MEA

ANANTH KRISHNAN



Easing down: China's People's Liberation Army soldiers and tanks during the disengagement along the LAC. ■ AFP

talks in January, which began to be implemented earlier this month.

On Thursday, the Ministry of External Affairs said the completion of disengagement on the north and the south banks of the Pangong Lake last week was "a significant first step" towards resolving the remaining issues.

"Both sides view the smooth and successful completion of disengagement in the north and south bank as

a significant first step as this forms a basis for resolution of remaining issues to achieve the eventual goal of complete disengagement in all friction areas," said MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava. "The two sides have agreed to work towards a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues."

He said as agreed by both sides, the 10th round of meetings between Corps Commanders was held on

February 20, within 48 hours of the completion of disengagement on the north and the south banks of Pangong Lake.

'Misleading comments'
Responding to what he called "misleading" comments in the media, Mr. Srivastava said, "India has not conceded any territory as a result of this agreement." He added, "On the contrary, it has enforced observance and respect for LAC and it has prevented any unilateral change in the status quo."

On Wednesday, Army Chief Gen. Manoj Naravane said disengagement at the lake was "a win-win" situation for both sides, but cautioned that there was a long way to go towards full disengagement, and thereafter, de-escalation. "We now have to move on to the stage of de-escalation. After that, de-induction of troops, which went to the higher reaches."

Tandav case: HC rejects anticipatory bail plea

Amazon executive denied relief

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The Allahabad High Court on Thursday refused to grant anticipatory bail to Aparna Purohit, head of Indian Originals, Amazon Prime, in the ongoing investigation in the cases lodged against the makers of the web series *Tandav*.

While rejecting her plea, the court stated that while western filmmakers had refrained from ridiculing Jesus or the Prophet, Hindi filmmakers have done this repeatedly and are still doing this most unabashedly with Hindu gods and goddesses.

'Taking advantage'
"Things are worsening as is evident from the fact that an obscure stand-up comedian, Munawar Faruqui, from Gujarat made comments on Hindu god and goddesses in a New Year

show at Indore and gained undue publicity on being arrested in a case. This shows that from films this trend has passed to comedy shows," Justice Siddharth said. "Such people make the revered figures of religion of a majority community a source of earning money in the most brazen manner taking benefit of the liberal and tolerant tradition of country," the court said.

Senior counsel for the applicant said the web series was a work of fiction. The cast and crew of the web series had also issued an unconditional apology.

The court said, "There appears to be a design behind such acts on the part of the people who just give a disclaimer in all the films and depict things in movies which are really religiously, socially and communally offensive in nature."

Explosives-laden car found near Ambani's house

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

A suspicious vehicle with 20 gelatin sticks, an explosive material, and an apparently fake number plate was found parked near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house in Mumbai on Thursday evening, the police said.

The registration number on the number plate was the same as that of an SUV in Mr. Ambani's security detail, a police official said. A letter was also found inside, he said, without revealing its contents.

The vehicle was found on Carmichael Road near Antilla, Mr. Ambani's residence. A Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) team reached the spot immediately, said the official. It was not an assembled explosive device, the police said, adding that further investigation was on.

The Crime Branch of the Mumbai police is conducting a probe, police said.

Court grants protection from arrest to Muluk

He is a co-accused in the 'toolkit' case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A court in New Delhi on Thursday granted protection from arrest till March 9 to Shantanu Muluk, who is accused of allegedly being involved in sharing a "toolkit" on social media related to the ongoing farmers' protest.

Mr. Muluk, along with Disha Ravi and another co-accused, Nikita Jacob, was booked for alleged sedition and other charges.

Police seek more time

Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana granted the relief after the Delhi Police said they needed time to conduct further interrogation before filing a detailed reply to Mr. Muluk's anticipatory bail plea.

The judge directed the police not to take any coercive action against Mr. Muluk till March 9, when the court will further hear the matter.

Mr. Muluk had got transit bail from the Bombay High Court on February 16 for a period of 10 days, with a direction to approach the court concerned.

'Edited by others'

In his application, Mr. Muluk has said that he merely created the toolkit with information on the agitation, which was then edited by others without his knowledge.

According to the police, the 'toolkit' was a sinister design to defame India and cause violence.

Ms. Ravi was arrested by a cyber cell team of the Delhi Police from Bengaluru and brought to Delhi.

Mr. Muluk and Ms. Jacob are currently on transit bail, while Ms. Ravi was granted bail after nine days' custody.

If convicted for sedition, the accused may get a maximum jail term for life.

Constable, woman found dead in U.P.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

The police in Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh arrested five relatives of a woman on charges of allegedly murdering her and her lover, Ajay Yadav, a police constable. Two illegal pistols were recovered from them.

The accused included the parents and the brother of the woman, the police said.

Superintendent of Police, Ghazipur, D.P. Singh, said the two were murdered by the family of the woman as they did not accept

their relationship. The couple had registered their marriage online in 2018, the officer said.

During the investigation, it was found that the family of the woman had called them home and when they reached there, they took the couple to an isolated place under the pretext of talking, he said. Then, there was shooting, he added. The woman's family hid her body in their house, he said.

They could not dispose of the body due to police pressure and registered a missing report online.

as part of a plan to conceal their act, said the officer.

The victims were found dead with bullet injuries on consecutive days.

While the body of Yadav was found on February 22 at Babhuli village in Rampur gram sabha limits, the body of the woman was found the following day in an outdoor enclosure in her father's house at Ichwah village, the police said. Yadav, who was posted at the Gauriganj police station in Amethi, was in his village on leave.

KMML The Kerala Minerals & Metals Ltd.
(A Govt of Kerala Undertaking)
(An ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001 & SA 8000 Certified Company)
Sankaramangalam, Chavara - 691 583, Kollam, Kerala, INDIA
Phone : +91-476-2652125 to 2652127.
Fax : +91-0476-2680101, 2686721.
E-mail : contact@kmml.com, URL:www.kmml.com
Competitive Tenders are invited for following. For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

No	Tender Id	Items
1.	2021_KMML_416220_1	For supply of 154 Nos. of 3 Phase Squirrel cage Induction Motors Chavara 25.02.2021

Sd/-
DGM(MUs)
For The Kerala Minerals And Metals Ltd

Our Products: Titanium Dioxide, Titanium Tetra Chloride, Nano Titanium, Titanium Sponge

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS : TIRUPATI MARKETING DEPARTMENT
e-TENDER-CUM-REVERSE AUCTIONING / REVERSE TENDERING NOTICE
Roc.No.M2-34022131/42/2021
e-Tenders are invited from Registered manufacturers / Registered Traders for procurement of 20,00,000 Nos. of Bio-Compostable Laddu Carry Covers by the Marketing Department, T.I.D., Tirupati through online e-Tender-cum-Reverse Auctioning / Reverse Tendering process. For Tender Notice and tender details log on to the web site http://www.tirumala.org and https://tender.aepprocurement.gov.in. Click on current Tenders and select "more" and "Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams - Marketing". For further details contact Phone Numbers: 0877-2264079, 2264554, Fax No.0877-2264554.

Name of the Item	E.M.D.Rs.	Tender Period	Date of Tender
20,00,000 Nos. of Bio-Compostable Laddu Carry Covers	Rs.3,00,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh only) (to be uploaded online)	Three Months	15-03-2021 on 16-03-2021 (02:00 p.m. to 05:00 p.m.)

Roc.No.PR/13927/Adv.No.329/PRO/2021; Dated:25/02/2021 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Last Date of Issue Of Tender Document : 25.03.2021 up to 14.00 Hrs.

Date of Opening of Technical Bids of Tender : 26.03.2021 at 15.00 hrs.

For details, please visit our website <http://www.cmet.gov.in>. The Tender document can be obtained either from the Administrative Officer, C-MET, Pune. Payment of requisite tender fee by way of DD drawn in favour of 'Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology, Pune' OR may be downloaded from our website. In this regard, tender document fees to be deposited in the form of Demand Draft at the time of submitting technical bid. Tenders submitted as per the terms & conditions mentioned in the Tender Document will be accepted. C-MET will not be responsible for postal or any other delay and reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons.

(Sd/-) Administrative Officer

IN BRIEF



Mohan Bhagwat calls for 'Akhand Bharat'

HYDERABAD
Advocating the need for 'Akhand Bharat' (undivided India), RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday said countries such as Pakistan that broke away from India are now in distress. Speaking at a book launch here, Mr. Bhagwat said 'Akhand Bharat' is possible through "Hindu Dharma" but not by force. "That's why there is a need to awaken patriotism for the country," he said.

Haryana govt. to table anti-conversion Bill

CHANDIGARH
The Haryana government will bring in a Bill against "religious conversions through force or fraudulent means" and another one to recover damages to public and private properties from rioters and protesters in the upcoming budget session of the Assembly, State Home Minister Anil Vij said here on Thursday. Presiding over a meeting of a committee formed to draft the Bill on religious conversion recently, Mr. Vij had said, "The enactment of this law will prevent any attempt to get religious conversion by force."

Chamoli disaster toll goes up to 71

NEW DELHI
The toll in Uttarakhand's Chamoli disaster went up to 71 on Thursday, according to the State public information bureau. The identities of 40 bodies have been established while 30 human body parts have so far been found at different places. The police have sent the DNA samples from 110 family members of the missing persons and 86 bodies/body parts to the forensic science laboratory in Dehradun for matching.

Dhaka promises safety of minority communities

GUWAHATI
Dhaka has assured the Meghalaya government that it will take care of minority communities reportedly being evicted from their homes in Bangladesh. The Garo and Mro communities are ethnically related to tribes in northeast India. Meghalaya's Deputy Chief Minister Preston Tynsong said he had taken up with the Bangladesh High Commissioner to India, Muhammad Imran, the issue of the alleged eviction of some 7,000 Garo and 10,000 Mro people in Bangladesh. "I discussed the reports with the Bangladesh diplomat. He said it was a non-issue and the Bangladesh government would give them the best places in case of any relocation," Mr. Tynsong said.

Surge in COVID-19 cases in seven States

Maharashtra reports 8,807 cases and Kerala 4,106

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's active COVID-19 case load was 1,51,708 on Thursday, making up 1.37% of the total positive cases.

This is largely attributable to a surge in daily new cases in Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh. All these States have recorded a rise in daily new cases, a press release issued by the Health Ministry said.

India reported 16,738 new cases in the 24 hours till 8 a.m. on Thursday. Of them, 89.57% are from seven States.

Maharashtra continues to report the highest daily new cases at 8,807, followed by Kerala with 4,106, while Punjab reported 558 new cases.

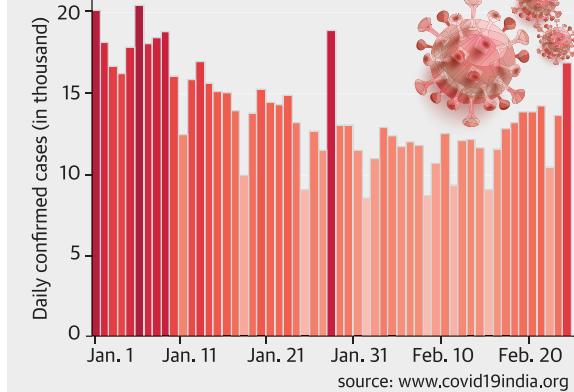
"On the other hand, the country has been witnessing a continuous decline in the cumulative positivity rate. As on 25 Feb 2021, the cumulative positivity rate stands at 5.17%," the release said.

11,799 recoveries

India's cumulative recoveries, it said, stood at 1,07,38,501 on Thursday and the recovery rate was 97.21%.

On the rise

On Wednesday, India recorded 16,930 COVID-19 cases – the highest single-day rise in 28 days. The graph shows the number of daily cases since January 1, 2021



source: www.covid19india.org

"The gap between total recovered cases and the active cases is constantly rising and stands at 10,586,793 today. India has reported 11,799 recoveries in the last 24 hours," the Ministry said.

The Centre has also written to the States and Union Territories to focus on undertaking aggressive measures to break the chain of transmission, and directed that positive persons be promptly isolated or hospitalized.

All their close contacts are also to be traced and tested without delay.

"States have been advised to review the emerging situation on a regular basis with concerned district officials to ensure that gains made so far in COVID management are not lost," the Ministry noted.

Central teams

The Centre has deputed high-level multi-disciplinary teams to Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Jammu and Kashmir to ascertain the reasons for the surge, and coordinate with the State Health Departments in COVID-19 control and containment measures.

LPG cylinder to cost ₹25 more

Price hike is the third revision in February

N. RAVI KUMAR
HYDERABAD

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder price has been increased ₹25 each.

The third upward revision thus far this month, it has made the cooking gas refills dearer by ₹100 each for households in a span of just three weeks. Following the latest increase, 14.2 kg cylinders in Delhi cost ₹794 each, as against ₹769 at which they were supplied on Wednesday.

The new price in Kolkata is ₹820 (up from ₹795), the highest among the four major metros. In Mumbai, the cylinder now costs ₹794 (it was ₹769.00 before Thursday's hike) and in Chennai ₹815 (was ₹785).

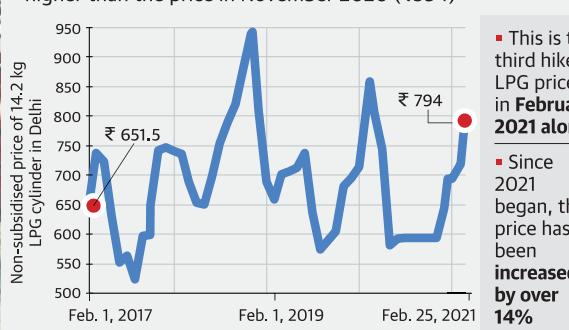
In Hyderabad, a cylinder now costs ₹846 (from ₹821.50).



LPG prices, which are determined based on the international prices of propane and butane, as well as the U.S. dollar-rupee exchange rate, were increased this month first by ₹25 on February 4 and by ₹50 on February 15.

In December, the price of domestic cylinders had increased by ₹100 each. National oil marketing companies had then increased the price by ₹50 twice.

Steep increase The price of LPG cylinders on Thursday was hiked for the fifth time since November 2020. The new price in Delhi (₹794) is now ₹200 (or 34%) higher than the price in November 2020 (₹594)



Congress spokesperson sits on empty cylinder

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Registering a strong protest against a further increase in the price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, a Congress spokesperson on Thursday addressed a press conference sitting on an

'Pandemic generation' hit hard: CSE

Study says 375 million children will suffer poor health, educational losses

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The country is all set to usher in a "pandemic generation", with 375 million children (from newborns to 14-year-olds) likely to suffer long-lasting impacts. The challenges could range from being underweight, stunting and increased child mortality, to losses in education and work productivity, according to the State of Environment Report, 2021, released by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on Thursday.



Big gap: Apart from challenges to health, children also lost out on school during the pandemic. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

Over 500 million children have been forced out of school globally and India accounts for more than half of them. "COVID-19 has made the world's poor poorer," Sunita Narain, Director-General of the research organisation, said in a statement. "115 million additional people might get pushed into extreme poverty by the pandemic – and most of them live in South Asia."

India ranked 117 among 192 nations in terms of sustainable development and was now behind all South Asian nations, except Pakistan, according to the report.

India's air, water and land have become more polluted between 2009 and 2018. Of 88 major industrial clusters in the country, according to the Central Pollution Control

Board, 35 showed overall environmental degradation, 33 pointed to worsening air quality, 45 had more polluted water and in 17, land pollution became worse. Tarapur in Maharashtra emerged as the most polluted cluster.

Lack of action
CSE experts pointed out that this data clearly indicated a

lack of action over the years to control and reduce pollution even in areas that were already identified as critically or severely polluted.

When ranked on the basis of achieving Sustainable Development Goals, the best performing States were Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. The worst performers were Bihar, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh, the report stated.

Forestland diversion continued unabated in the country. Over 11,000 hectares were diverted in 22 States in 2019. Eight coal projects granted clearance in 'no-go' areas would divert 19,614 hectares of forestland, fell over 1 million trees, and evict over 10,000 families. Sixty-seven million Indians died due to air pollution in 2019, the report said. The economic cost was over ₹36,000 million, equivalent to 1.36% of the country's GDP.

229 students in Maharashtra hostel test positive

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PUNE

As many as 229 students and four staff from a school hostel in Washim district in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra have tested positive for COVID-19, district author-

ities said on Thursday. The

ported more than 8,500 positive cases with over 900 active cases as of Thursday.

Officials said most of the 330 students residing in the hostel were from the neighbouring Yavatmal and Amravati districts which have

merged as the new "epicentres" of what is being seen as a second wave, reporting a sudden spike in cases over the past seven days. The students had returned to the hostel on February 14.

Mamata rides electric bike in protest against fuel price hike

She returned home after work the same way

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Staging a unique protest against the rising prices of petroleum products, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday rode an electric scooter to the State Secretariat and later in the day, returned home riding the same vehicle.

On the way back from Nabanna (Secretariat), Ms. Banerjee decided to try driving the scooter.

From the Secretariat to the Vidyasagar Setu and later, on Harish Mukherjee Road, Ms. Banerjee, who has not driven a scooter in her life, tried a hand at driv-



More mileage: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on her way to the Secretariat on Thursday. ■ PTI

ing with the support of her security staff.

She had reached the Secretariat riding pillion with Minister of Urban Development Firhad Hakim.

"We will start our protest in a big way all across Bengal and we request the people of the country to also take to the streets in protest," she said.

I-T searches on premises of Haryana Independent MLA

Kundu is supporting farmers' protest

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department on Thursday conducted searches on the premises of an independent MLA, Balraj Kundu, from Mehami in Haryana and several other places in connection with suspected tax evasion, according to an agency official.

Mr. Kundu has extended support to the farmers' protest against the three farm laws and had also protested against the related agri "reform" ordinances brought by the Centre last year. The searches were carried out at his Rohtak residence and multiple other locations in Gurugram.

Suspected tax evasion
The Income Tax Department released a statement in the late evening stating that the searches were in the case involving a Gurugram-based real estate company, its promoters, directors and other group companies, covering 20 premises.

The company is in the business of government contracts specialising in the construction of roads, highways, bridges and runways. It also is into real estate de-

Amit Shah slams new Assam parties

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday attacked two new regional parties in Assam, one of them formed by a group headed by jailed peasants' rights activist Akhil Gogoi, for their "apparent objective" to help the Congress win the upcoming Assembly election. The election to the 126-member House is scheduled by May.

"Those who led the Assam Agitation have formed political parties with different names to cut the votes of the BJP. Their goal is to help the Congress, which fired on and killed hundreds of youth during that agitation, win the election," Mr. Shah said at a public function at Badadrava in Nagaon district.

"Everybody knows the new regional parties cannot form the government. These parties too know it."

The parties the Union Home Minister referred to are the Asom Jatiya Parishad and the Akhil Gogoi-led Rajo Dal.

The movement against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act led to the birth of the AJP in 2020.

BJP expands 'Sonar Bangla' drive

Party will invite suggestions from March 3 to 20 in all 294 Assembly segments

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Thursday took the party's campaign of 'Sonar Bangla' a step further by launching a new outreach programme, 'Lokkho sonar Bangla' (target golden Bangla).

Under the scheme, announced weeks before the State goes to the polls, the BJP will invite suggestions from March 3 to 20 through boxes made available in all the 294 Assembly segments.

Mr. Nadda, who launched the campaign from the party office in Kolkata, said that along with the 30,000 box-



Poll push: BJP national president J.P. Nadda at the launch of the Sonar Bangla campaign in Kolkata. ■ PTI

es, there would be LED vans where people could give suggestions digitally.

"The BJP wants to work for the development of Ben-

suggestions on how to give a push to industry, agriculture, health and religious tourism among other sectors. The aim of the campaign was to take the State on the path of development, free of corruption.

Parivartan yatras

The campaign is another attempt by the BJP to connect to the masses. Prior to this, the party started five "parivartan yatras" across the State.

During the past several public meetings, the BJP leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had emphasised on the slogan "Sonar Bangla".

Google asked to compensate newspapers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) has urged Google India to compensate print media publishers for use of news as it is proprietary content generated by them.

In a letter to Google India's Country Manager Sanjay Gupta on Wednesday, INS president L. Adimoolam raised various proposals with Google. Pointing to the discussions between the INS's digital committee and the Google team during the past six months, he said it helped in clarifying the strategic and collaborative possibilities between publishers and Google.

He said the print media industry invested heavily on journalism. Indian publishers had been providing quality journalism with credible news that Google's web crawlers shared with its readers.

High on FRUIT

COVID-19 lockdowns made India's locally sourced and produced fruit wines a popular option, with many wineries doubling their sales in 2020

AISHWARYA UPADHYE

The pandemic changed the way we consume food. Households, restaurants and even luxury hotel chains gave up on exotic ingredients and looked into their backyards to use local food to survive successive lockdowns.

The support for the local was not just limited to food; the Indian fruit wine industry, which for years had been struggling to find shelf space between Shiraz and Chardonnay, realised that its time to shine had come.

"Being at home has made people more experimental with their food and drinks. Earlier, everyone preferred to go out for dinners and parties, where they chose from a curated drinks menu that usually overlooked Indian fruit wines. But with the restaurants closed due to the pandemic and supply chains unable to import international brands, they were back in the limelight," says Akalpit Prabhune, director and chief winemaker of Rhythm Winery.

When Akalpit started the Khadakwasla-based winery in 2010, his motto was to showcase fruits grown in various belts of Maharashtra. Stepping out of the grape palate, he started making wine from other fruits that Indians have known for generations.

"We started with a strawberry

wine made from fruit procured from Mahabaleshwar. Eventually we added plum, peach, kiwi and alphonso. All fruits are sourced from Maharashtra, except kiwis which are brought in from Arunachal Pradesh," he says.

In 2019, the company launched two premium wines – Mulberry and Raspberry – which are priced slightly higher compared to the other wines. Available in Maharashtra, Goa and parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Rhythm wines are also exported to the United Kingdom and Singapore.

"We started exporting to the UK in 2018. Our Alphonso wine has been well-received by prime Indian restaurants in London like Ooty, Sindhu and Brigadiers," he says. In India, the product is found in holiday destinations like Mahabaleshwar and Lonavala.

Social media helped the brand penetrate Pune and Mumbai. "People were online a lot. I used the opportunity to make them familiar with our brand name by frequently posting about our winery on Instagram and interacting with our followers by hosting quiz sessions. This worked: we saw more sales from retail stores in the latter part of 2020," adds Vidita.



lack of a proper market. "Our company supports over 300 farmers, out of which 150 come under organised cooperative societies," she adds.

During lockdown, sourcing fruits and getting them crushed in time became a hurdle for wineries. So at Bordi-based Hill Zill Winery, a company that makes sparkling alcoholic beverages from local fruits, the founders – Priyanka Save and Nagesh Pai – took special permissions to run their trucks to fetch harvested fruits.

Success for everyone

"We support over 150 farmers and cooperatives through our winery. If we had not picked up these fruits in time, the farmers would have suffered huge losses. So we had to reach out to the authorities to allow our trucks to run to Mahabaleshwar and Ratnagiri during lockdown. We had to be mindful about sanitisation and social distancing regulations," says Priyanka. The efforts paid off, as despite a pandemic, the company surpassed its yearly sales target in October 2020.

Hill Zill supplies its drinks under the brand name Fruzzante, made from pineapple, mango, strawberry, chikoo and orange that have 6% alcohol. It has a strong distribution network in Maharashtra. The company is now stepping up to launch in Goa, Puducherry, Punjab, Telangana and Karnataka. Adds Priyanka, "This is a great time for people and companies to experiment with local products as the focus is on indigenous produce now more than ever."

In Bengaluru, an online home chef-sourced snack brand is packaging its offerings with thematic cartoons



Fun to eat Homemade ethnic snacks from North Mada Street and (far left) cartoonist Muralidharan

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

says Murali. Going forward, themes will be updated periodically.

Packaging aside, Sairam's main focus was identifying and employing home chefs who excelled in preparing a particular variety of snack or sweet. "I was keen on this model, as I was sure that this would be an opportunity for me to where I can enhance the livelihood of women in rural areas. These women are keeping our traditions alive," he says.

Childhood lessons

This belief stems from his personal experience: "During my school days in Mylapore [Chennai], I used to go from house to house selling vadams and vathals which my mom used to make. Later when we shifted to Anna Nagar, I would try convincing the owner of supermarkets to display the products my mother made, but they would never accept non-branded items," he reminisces, adding that he considers his mother as his first CEO.

When Sairam took up a career in sales and lived overseas for over 18 years, he says that it was the lessons he learnt while marketing his mother's homemade food products that helped him most.

The online store focusses on Tirunelveli's regional specialities such as kai murukku, manoharam, thenkuzhal, ribbon pakoda and special mixture. Adhirasam and the iconic Tirunelveli halwa are the most popular sweets from the region. Staple spice mixtures such as sambar and rasam podi, idli podi and thenga podi also are sold here. "Apart from Tirunelveli snacks, I also source savouries like kara Sev, kara boondi, chakli and spicy banana chips in and around Mangalore," he says.

Sairam repackages the food items in Bengaluru before they are dispatched to customers.

There are currently 16 different savouries, sweets and spice mixes items available on the website. Products are shipped across India.

For more information, log on to www.northmadastreet.com or call 9008942859.

HORS D'OEUVRES



Tiger bites into health food

TTSF Cloud One, a multi-brand cloud kitchen organisation co-founded by the duo behind The Thick Shake Factory, has entered into a brand licensing deal with Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff's Prowl Foods. This partnership looks to enter the fit meals segment, via cloud kitchens as well as retail stores. The new range of ready-to-eat fitness meals matches Tiger's public persona of "Eat better, everyday", leaning on his mass appeal to create a brand presence beyond just the Tier 1 markets. Products include a collection of multi-cuisine meal boxes, gourmet rolls and wraps, khichdi, salads and gluten-free desserts. "I am very excited to be partnering with these young entrepreneurs with the vision to change the future of food service in India and to be creating a healthy food brand which is extremely close to my heart", said Tiger Shroff in a press statement.



It's a food fight

A 20-minute brawl for customers between two groups of chaat vendors in Baraut, Uttar Pradesh has gone viral on social media, spinning off a flood of memes this week. Eight people were arrested in the fisticuffs, video grabs of which meme makers later 'enhanced' with special effects, including Star Wars light sabres and the soundtrack from *Titanic*. Vendor Harendar, dubbed as 'Einstein chachar' and 'Mehendi wale chachar' for his frizzy hennaed hair, became a social media star of sorts as he explained the context of the spat. "I have been running my chaat stall here for over 40 years, but these new fellows have been spreading rumours about my food, telling customers that it wasn't fresh. Many people were returning my chaat. They did it four or five times," Harendar said shortly before getting arrested. The fracas, possibly filmed by a bystander, injured a dozen people, and drew comparisons to a wrestling match besides other tongue-in-cheek comments. But others also pointed out to the sad state of unemployment where eight people had to fight for one customer.



CHITRADEEPANANTHARAM

Packaged junk food and snacks flew off the shelves of supermarkets in the beginning of lockdown. Then, snackers began to look inwards. Gradually, families began to congregate in the kitchen, leading to a revival of sorts, of homemade, traditional South Indian savouries and sweets. This motivated Sairam Gopalan to launch an online snack store in January, the groundwork for which he started in July 2020.

"During the lockdown, while I was chatting with my cousin who runs a sweets and snacks business in Tirunelveli, I struck upon this idea of an online native traditional snack store," says Bengaluru-based Sairam. The entrepreneur was keen to focus on women's empowerment, so he decided to source his food items from families living in agraharams in Ti-

This murukku has a sense of humour

runelveli. He named his online store, www.northmadastreet.com.

"Once I had enlisted cooks who could supply snacks consistently, I focussed on packaging them in a way to attract young customers," says Sairam. The packing has a cartoon character and a tag line,

which is based on current affairs, political developments or sports, and this is linked to the snack.

"The idea was to create it on the lines of RK Narayan's *Malgudi Days*, nostalgic, satirical and funny," says S Muralidharan, Chennai-based cartoonist and a long time friend of Sairam. "While I

was working on designing the logo, this idea of cartoon struck me and therefore I reached out to Murali with this idea and he instantly agreed. He found the idea of concept snacks with thematic cartoons, appealing," says Sairam.

At present, the packs have jokes on work from home (WFH), Zoom meetings, online classes and upcoming elections

At present, the packs have jokes on work from home (WFH), Zoom meetings, online classes and upcoming elections



Modern agricultural practices are finding favour among farmers in Kerala

ATHIRA M

"It has been a long wait and I am happy now," says Aneesh N Raj, excited about the arrival of seeds of butter lettuce and bok choy from Holland.

The 36-year-old, winner of the Kerala State award for the best hi-tech farmer of 2018, has four polyhouses, aquaponics and hydroponics farms on 50 cents at his home in Anchal, Kollam district.

In addition, nearly 25 hi-tech farms have been set up in different parts of Kerala by his startup, QORE3 Innovations. "For instance, seeds of long beans come from Thailand, salad cucumber from Turkey and capsicum from Holland," he says. His farm has leafy greens such as *paalak*, mint, celery, parsley, coriander, kale, thyme, Swiss chard and oregano, besides "honeybee-pollinated tomato" and mushroom.

Farmers in Kerala, young and old, have either adapted to or are exploring possibilities of hi-tech practices such as precision farming, micro-irrigation, vertical gardening, hydroponics, aquaponics and integrated farming in a big way.

Although hi-tech farming was initiated nine years ago in the State, it took a while for the methods to catch on. P Susheela, professor and principal investigator, Hi-Tech Research and Training Unit, Kerala Agricultural University, Thrissur, says acceptance has been gradual and there has been some disappointment as well. "However, it is the need of the hour. Unless you embrace new technology, you can't expect the young generation to take up farming," she says.

Susheela adds that although the pandemic brought programmes at the training centre to a halt for a few months, online classes are on in full swing. "People are registering for training sessions in good numbers. Aquaponics is a big draw with participation from both within and outside the State. While some are passionate to learn, there are a few who have no clue about the practice but want to earn a bumper yield in no time!" she says.

Although many polyhouses closed down after a point, there are farmers such as Aneesh, Shameer S and Ummer Kutty who have tasted

Farmville upgraded



success. The humid tropical climate of Kerala and limited choice of crops that can be grown (salad cucumber, long beans, capsicum, tomatoes, bitter gourd) are the major hurdles in running a polyhouse.

Shameer, winner of the State Government's best hi-tech farmer award 2020, runs two polyhouses in Thiruvananthapuram. "Polyhouses are not compatible with our climate because of high temperature, high humidity and heavy rainfall. So I am always on the lookout for methods to tide over problems and keep it running," says 32-year-old Shameer, adding that he has planted a seedless variety of watermelon for the first time in his polyhouse.

The drawbacks of polyhouses have seen rain shelters or naturally-ventilated greenhouses being promoted. Shameer says that he too is planning to set up a rain shelter at home, while Aneesh's start-up has seen a rise in orders for setting up rain shelters.

"It was after 15 years of research that the Kerala Agricultural University came to the conclusion that rain shelters are more suitable for Kerala than the polyhouses," says Abdul Hakkim VM, professor (Soil and Water Conservation Engineering), College of Agriculture, Padannakkad, Kasaragod.

Enter the dragon

Malappuram-based Ummer Kutty, meanwhile, surprised many by growing dragon fruit in a polyhouse.



An electrical engineer in Riyadh for 27 years, Ummer took to farming after he came back to Kerala in 2012.

"Even though I started out by growing salad cucumber in my polyhouse it had to be discontinued. I believe in going for advanced methods and experimenting with crops. In an international WhatsApp group of dragon fruit growers, I came across a farmer who cultivates the fruit in his

polyhouse. I researched before I ventured into growing the fruit five years ago. The plant is easy to maintain. There are hardly any pest attacks. You don't have to water it every day and the lifespan of a plant is 22-25 years," says Ummer, who grows the fruit in a 12,500 square feet polyhouse and a one-acre open farm.

"My polyhouse is different from the regular type. There are no anti-insect nets and I've kept the sides open to let in honeybees to carry out pollination," explains Ummer. The farm has 18 varieties of the fruit sourced from countries such as Mexico, Hawaii, Columbia, Ecuador, Brunei, Malaysia, Israel... Of the lot, six varieties bore fruit," he says. He also promotes dragon fruit cultivation by providing stems and giving guidance on how to grow it.

At-home experiments

Hydroponics also has many takers now, especially with the availability of DIY hydroponics home kits for urban living spaces.

The team at PlantMe Agro Solutions, Aluva, is excited that orders are coming in even before the official launch of the firm next month, through word-of-mouth. The soil-less home systems are fun learning tools. They are easy to manage and can be placed in the balcony, they say.

Santhosh Kumar S from Thiruvananthapuram has been making and marketing his homemade hydroponics kits. Mint is the main crop grown using hydroponics on his terrace. "I have also tried growing paddy, onion, cabbage and vegetables. The first batch of strawberries is now in flowering stage," he says.

Precision farming is gradually making inroads as well. It stands for precise utilisation of inputs of agriculture, based around four Rs – right input, right quantity, right place, right time, explains Hakkim. "Open precision farming has big scope in Kerala and all crops except paddy can be grown through this method," he says.

Among those following the method is Saifulla P from Malappuram who has been cultivating watermelons for three years now. "You can produce 20 tonnes from an acre. But, unless you follow each step to the T, the crop will fail," says Saifulla. Among the different varieties grown on his two-acre field are Aarohi (yellow flesh and green rind) and Vishala (red flesh and yellow rind).

He has regular visitors to his farm who wish to know more about the cultivation methods.



A-flutter over a rare DUCK

The beautiful Mandarin duck has shown up in Assam after a century, much to the excitement of the birding community, and it is not alone

K JESHI

"I couldn't believe it," says Madhab Gogoi excitedly over the phone from Assam, about his surprise date with the spectacular-looking bird in the early weeks of February. He was at Magur Motapung beel (wetland) in Tinsukia district, Assam, birdwatching in the wetlands when he noticed a colourful bird floating on the surface of the lake. Curious, he zoomed in with his binoculars and realised that it was the Mandarin duck, a rare bird that was last seen in Assam in the 1900s.

"It was a historic moment, as the bird has shown up after 120 years at the same location. It was last spotted at Dibrugarh river in Tinsukia in 1902. The streak of colours on the plumage, especially the male during the breeding season is a mind-boggling mix of white, green, golden orange and blue. You can call it the 'queen' among water birds," says Gogoi.

The eBird website, a platform that documents birds the world over, calls it a 'small-exotic looking bird' native to East Asia, and describes the male as 'very ornate with big orangey 'sail fins' on the back, streaked orangey cheeks, and a small red bill with a whitish tip.'

According to birders like Jaydev Mandal, the duck "seems to have strayed from its regular migratory path". He says over call from Assam, "They breed in Russia, Korea, Japan and the northeastern parts of China – as the name Mandarin also suggests."

The species is also found in western Europe and the US. The bird rarely visits India as the wintering grounds of the birds are Mongolia and China."

Jaydev spearheaded the second edition of Bihu Bird Count that covered 27 districts and recorded 400 species of birds. "We can call it a vagrant that briefly stopped by at the same location where it was last seen in the 20th Century, making it a record sighting."

"Maybe it's a casual sighting" says Nilupal Mahanta, a PhD scholar at Gauhati University and an avid birder.

"The birds that flock wintering grounds in India take the Central Asian Flyway, and Mandarin ducks don't take that route. It could even be a species that escaped from an illegal wildlife trader. Illegal trading of exotic species is rampant along China, Bangladesh, and Myanmar border," he adds.

Curiouser and curioser

Naturalists suspect that climate changes and habitat destruction have triggered a spate of rare sightings in Assam. A pair of black-necked cranes were also sighted in the outskirts of the Manas National Park, a first-ever record in Assam.

Explains Nilupal, "It is a medium-sized crane that breeds on the Tibetan Plateau and remote parts of India and Bhutan. They have been mostly recorded in high altitudes of Jimithang and Sangti valley in western parts of Arunachal Pradesh in India. Locals of Panbari have named bird *deu korchen* (*Deu* means related to God and mythology, and *Korchen* means crane) as it has mythological importance in Buddhist culture."

. "In January, we also spotted the rarely seen Indian golden oriole in Assam. Such rare sightings make us happy," he says.

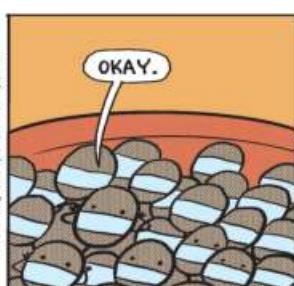
. "Of the 1,200 birds that can be seen in India, over 900 species are found in the Northeast part of India, including Assam and Mizoram. Birders throng to Assam to see resident beauties like grey peacock pheasant and white winged wood duck," he says.

Gogoi then adds, "But the beauty of Mandarin has left not just the naturalists, but also the general public speechless. It has inspired them to give a serious thought about conservation. It is heartening."



Surprise visit
(Top) Shot of the duck; and black-necked cranes, spotted in Assam for the very first time - SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

POOCH CAFE



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

I WAS LATE FOR DINNER AGAIN LAST NIGHT! HELGA SAYS I'M RUDE AND DISRESPECTFUL!

THAT'S NOT THE HAGAR I KNOW!

YOU'VE NEVER BEEN LATE FOR HAPPY HOUR!

YES, MA'AM... I'M BACK FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE...

HE SAID I SHOULD TRY HARDER AT PAYING ATTENTION...

HOW'S THIS?

FORGET IT! THAT PAYING ATTENTION COULD KILL YOU!

TIGER



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



YOU'RE IN REAL TROUBLE NOW, YOUNG MAN...

Biden revokes Trump's immigrant visa ban

It does not advance the interests of the U.S., and to the contrary, it harms the country, says U.S. President

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

The Biden administration took another step on Thursday to undo the previous government's immigration policy legacy by revoking Donald Trump's suspension of new immigrant visas, which had been in effect since late April last year. The order had been extended through to March 31 by Mr. Trump.

The revoked order (Proclamation 10014) had suspended the entry of certain immigrants and non-immigrants into the U.S. ostensibly on grounds of protecting the U.S. labour market in the wake of COVID-19.

In his proclamation, Presi-



Welcome move: A family of asylum seekers after being released by immigration officials in Texas on Wednesday. ■ AFP

dent Joe Biden said his predecessor's proclamation, "does not advance the interests of the United States" and that "to the contrary, it

harms the United States, including by preventing certain family members of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents from

joining their families here". It also harms industries in the United States that utilise talent from around the world. And it harms individuals who were selected to receive the opportunity to apply for, and those who have likewise received, immigrant visas through the Fiscal Year 2020 Diversity Visa Lottery," he said.

The U.S. issues up to 55,000 immigrant visas (these become "Green Cards") after the recipient enters the U.S. via its diversity lottery each year to encourage immigration from nationalities that are demographically underrepresented in the U.S. Green cards for some 26,000

new arrivals were halted on a monthly basis because of Proposition 10014, as per estimates from the Migration Policy Institute.

Pause on H-1B remains

Mr. Biden, however, did not revoke a Trump administration pause on H-1B (skilled worker), L (intra-company transfer) and several other work and exchange visitor visa categories (and dependents of these visa holders) that went into effect on June 24 last year.

H-1B visas are predominantly granted to workers in the IT sector, and most of these visas – over 70% – have gone to Indian citizens in recent years.



Pitched battle: Military coup supporters throwing projectiles at anti-coup protesters in Yangon on Thursday. ■ AFP

need for this ban," the social media giant said in a statement.

"We believe the risks of allowing the Tatmadaw on Facebook and Instagram are too great," it added, using the Myanmar name for the country's armed forces.

The junta has steadily increased its use of force against a massive and largely

peaceful civil disobedience campaign demanding Myanmar's Army leaders relinquish power.

Pages for government offices now run by the junta remain unaffected.

Meanwhile, coup supporters wielding knives and slingshots clashed with anti-coup residents in Myanmar on Thursday, the first such showdown between opposing forces as the nation nears a month of military rule.

Anti-coup demonstrations continued without incident across the city – students at Yangon University waved the signature red flags of Ms. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy Party.

Facebook to invest \$1 bn to support news

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SAN FRANCISCO

Facebook on Wednesday pledged to invest at least \$1 billion to support journalism over the next three years as the social media giant defended its handling of a dispute with Australia over payments to media organisations.

Nick Clegg, head of global affairs, said that the company stands ready to support news media while reiterating its concerns over mandated payments.

"Facebook is more than willing to partner with news publishers," Mr. Clegg said after Facebook restored news links as part of a compromise with Australian officials. "We recognise quality journalism is at the heart of how open societies function – informing and empowering citizens and holding the powerful to account."

According to Australia's competition watchdog, for every \$100 spent on online advertising, Google captures \$53, Facebook takes \$28 and the rest is shared among others.

Gotabaya Rajapaksa to meet families of missing persons

The President is determined to bring closure to the issue'

MEERA SRINIVASAN

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa will soon meet families of missing persons who have been protesting to find their relatives' whereabouts, according to a top official.

"The President is really determined to bring closure to this issue and give the families a solution," Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Retd.) Admiral Jayanath Colombe told *The Hindu* on Thursday.

Scores of Tamil families in the north and east, mostly women, have been relentlessly agitating by the roadside – they recently marked four years of continuous protest – demanding the truth about their loved ones.

This is President Rajapaksa's first outreach yet to the families of the missing, with a promise of closure. "He [President] wants to listen to them, identify their actual grievances, rather than what politicians might say, and given them a solution. It will happen very soon," Mr. Colombe said.

Mr. Rajapaksa's initiative coincides with the ongoing session of the UN Human Rights Council, where members will soon vote on a new resolution on Sri Lanka's rights record. In a scathing report, the UN Human Rights chief has warned of Sri Lanka's "deteriorating"



Long wait: A file photo of Tamil women holding portraits of their missing relatives during a protest in Colombo. ■ AP

rights situation, and sought targeted sanctions against perpetrators, and an International Criminal Court probe into alleged war crimes. Sri Lanka has rejected her report, terming its recommendations "ill-founded".

Key concern

Enforced disappearances – during the war and later – have remained among Tamils' key concerns in the post-war decade, with no government offering a solution that families have found convincing.

Addressing the media during his presidential campaign in 2019, Mr. Rajapaksa, war-time Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, said a total of 13,784 people who had surrendered had been rehabilitated, reintegrated, and given employment. But families, who have testified

before different governmental commissions and the Office on Missing Persons, maintain that their relatives are not among those released.

A month into office, President Rajapaksa told the UN Resident Coordinator that thousands who were reportedly missing were "actually dead", heightening their families' worst fears.

According to rights watchdog Amnesty International, Sri Lanka has one of the world's highest number of enforced disappearances – at least 60,000 since the 1980s.

In addition to war-time disappearances, and abductions reported in the following years, this includes Sinhalese youth, who went missing during the armed insurrection led by the leftist-nationalist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna.

As reserves shrink, Sri Lanka seeks \$2.2 billion from China

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka is seeking \$2.2 billion from Chinese banks, the government said on Thursday, in echoes of a borrowing binge more than a decade ago that resulted in the country having to give up a strategic port to China.

"Within the next two weeks we should be able to finalise it," Mr. Cabral told reporters.

Official figures show Sri Lanka's foreign reserves

plummeted to \$4.8 billion at the end of January, the lowest since September 2009 when they fell to \$4.2 billion.

Officials said the country was also in talks with China Development Bank for a \$700-million loan that would include the equivalent of \$200 million being drawn in Chinese currency.

FB bans Myanmar military accounts

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BANGKOK

Facebook said it has banned all remaining accounts linked to the Myanmar military on Thursday, citing the junta's use of deadly force against anti-coup demonstrators.

The move, which takes effect immediately, applies to the military and entities controlled by the armed forces on both Facebook and Instagram.

It also bans "military-linked commercial entities" from advertising on the platforms.

"Events since the February 1 coup, including deadly violence, have precipitated a

Xi hails 'complete victory' in China's fight to end poverty

+ About 100 mn people were lifted out of poverty in 8 years'

ANANTH KRISHNAN

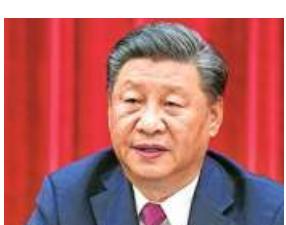
China on Thursday held a high-profile celebration to mark what its President Xi Jinping described as "a complete victory" in eliminating absolute poverty.

Mr. Xi said over the past eight years under his term, 98.99 million poor in rural areas had been lifted out of poverty while all the 832 designated "impoverished counties" and 128,000 "impoverished villages" had been removed from the government's list.

Mr. Xi convened a high-profile gathering at the Great Hall of the People to mark the occasion, which has been seen as aimed at burnishing his legacy. Thursday's event mainly emphasised the last eight years in China's poverty fight, coinciding with Mr. Xi coming to power in 2012, rather than the four-decade legacy of his predecessors Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, which received little mention.

Sustained push

The official Xinhua news agency said in a commentary, "In 2020, after eight years of efforts, all of China's nearly 100 million impoverished rural residents living below the current poverty line had shaken off poverty. Over the last eight years, unabated attention and a sustained push from Chinese President Xi Jinping have ensured continued momen-



Xi Jinping

such as China, at \$5.50 PPP. According to the World Bank, 373 million people in China are living below the upper-middle-income poverty line of \$5.50.

Mr. Xi acknowledged that although China had achieved the target of eliminating poverty below its \$2.30 threshold, set in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 10 years ahead of schedule, the fight still remained unfinished.

"Shaking off poverty is not the finish line, but the starting line of a new life and new endeavour," he said, with a "rural revitalisation" strategy outlined in the 14th five-year plan (2021-2025) and the 'Long-Range Objectives Through 2035' blueprint his government put out last year.

China's State media said infrastructure and connectivity were key factors in reducing poverty in remote impoverished counties, with 1.1 million km of rural roads upgraded or built since 2012 and 4G coverage reaching 98% of the rural poor population. Part of the strategy has also been relocating residents of remote counties and villages, with 9.6 million people moved under the poverty programme.

Armenian PM accuses military of coup attempt

REUTERS

YEREVAN

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan warned of an attempted military coup against him on Thursday, and thousands took to the streets of the capital to support him after the Army demanded he and his government resign.

Mr. Pashinyan, 45, has faced calls to quit since November after what critics said was his disastrous handling of a conflict between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave and surrounding areas. Armenia ceded swathes of the territory to Azerbaijan after Mr. Pashinyan signed a peace deal last November.

ELSEWHERE



Venezuela expels EU envoy over sanctions

CARACAS

Venezuela on Wednesday expelled EU Ambassador Isabel Brilhante Pedrosa over sanctions on 19 Venezuelan officials for "undermining democracy". ■ AFP

NMDC Limited

(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)

10-3-311/A, Castle Hills, Masab Tank, Hyderabad - 500 028

Telephone: 040-23536740, 23538713; Ext: 545

E-mail: jpsingh@nmdc.co.in; bmkumar@nmdc.co.in; pbantony@nmdc.co.in

CIN: L13100TG1958GJ001674

Open Tender Notice (E-Procurement Mode Only)

HQNM/1006-20/54D091

Date: 24/02/2021

E-tenders are invited for following items from reputed manufacturers directly or through their dealers / accredited agents through MSTD portal website

http://www.mstecommmerce.com/eprocurement/nmdc/buyer_login.jsp

Email: rslcdgdmj@gmail.com; hemant.dixit@in.gov.in

Managing Director, RSLDC

Description of Equipment	Qty (ST)	Display of Tender Documents Period	Last date & Time for submission of Final offer
Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 3.3KV, 4 x 360 KVAR APFC Panel at Substation A & B 11 B for RIRANDUL Complex, Chhattisgarh State. (Prebid Meeting on 17/02/2021 at 11 AM through Microsoft Teams. Interested firms should request through email) NMDC Tender No. ET860	02	Draft Tender: 25.02.2021 to 17.03.2021	10.04.2021 by 2.30PM (IST)
		FINAL Tender (Tentative) 27/03/2021 To 10/04/2021 upto 2.30 p.m	CGM (Materials)

Prospective bidders may visit our websites: www.nmdc.co.in; CPP Portal <https://procure.gov.in>; <https://mstecommmerce.com> and may download the tender documents. Any corrigendum to the above tender notice will be uploaded on our website and MSTD e-portals only.

CGM (Materials)

APPOINTMENT

MAHARASHTRA METRO RAIL CORPORATION LIMITED

(Joint venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Maharashtra)

101, Orion Building, Opp. Don Bosco Youth Centre, Koregaon Park, Pune - 411001.

Phone No: 020- 26051072 / 74 | www.mahamegro.org

Advt. No: MAHA-Metro-P/H/01/2021 Date: 25/02/2021

Requirement of experienced personnel from Metro Rail / Railway / Railway PSUs / Metro related infrastructure industries / infrastructure industries on contract / deputation basis for Pune Metro Rail Project.

S. No.	Name of Post	No. of Vacancies
1	General Manager (HR)	1
2	Senior Dy. General Manager (Finance)	1
3	Senior Dy. General Manager (ORM)	1
4	Assistant Manager (Labour Welfare)	1
5	Assistant Manager (Finance)	2
6	Senior Section Engineer (Rolling Stock)	1
7	Section Engineer (Rolling Stock)	4
8	Junior Engineer (Rolling Stock)	1
9	Senior Technician (Rolling Stock)	11
10	Office Assistant (HR)	2
11	Office Assistant (PR)	1

1) Refer website - <a href="http://www.pun

MARKET WATCH

	25-2-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	51,039	-0.51
US Dollar	72.43	0.11
Gold	45,959	-0.75
Brent oil	66.79	-0.22

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	704.30	39.10
Asian Paints	2373.75	12.40
Axist Bank	770.65	21.25
Bajaj Auto	3944.80	12.95
Bajaj Finance	10264.45	64.85
Bajaj Finance	5529.95	-32.95
Bharti Airtel	579.15	6.20
BPCL	461.55	22.85
Britannia Ind	3405.00	-0.55
Cipla	809.15	20.10
Coal India	156.10	11.70
Divis Lab	3440.05	-40.00
Dr Reddys Lab	4480.15	44.60
Eicher Motors	2551.95	16.15
GAIL (India)	150.80	4.35
Grimm Ind	1270.45	20.25
HCL Tech	929.25	13.25
HDPC	2684.70	-23.05
HDPC Bank	1606.40	-0.05
HDPC Life	733.50	14.70
Hero MotoCorp	3434.40	-7.20
Hindalco	350.70	17.90
Hind Unilever	2163.30	-15.55
ICICI Bank	628.00	-13.10
IndusInd Bank	1109.75	39.75
Infosys	1274.55	0.25
Indian Oil Corp	100.90	2.95
ITC	209.15	0.30
JSW Steel	421.75	13.65
Kotak Bank	1895.50	-15.70
L&T	1506.45	-20.15
M&M	859.00	9.40
Maruti Suzuki	6930.35	-22.60
Nestle India Ltd.	16113.90	-232.25
NTPC	108.00	4.80
ONGC	119.05	5.45
PowerGrid Corp	227.55	4.80
Reliance Ind	2144.35	83.35
SBI Life	872.40	0.85
State Bank	407.25	1.00
Shree Cement	27450.90	-102.10
Sun Pharma	609.55	8.10
Tata Motors	333.15	11.50
Tata Steel	742.90	15.20
TCI	2995.80	47.20
Tech Mahindra	957.80	-2.25
Titan	1434.45	-17.40
UltraTech Cement	6383.30	-31.25
UPL	593.00	39.05
Wipro	421.30	-1.80

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.22	72.54
Euro	88.30	88.72
British Pound	102.15	102.61
Japanese Yen (100)	68.02	68.35
Chinese Yuan	11.19	11.25
Swiss Franc	79.74	80.09
Singapore Dollar	54.80	55.05
Canadian Dollar	57.84	58.10
Malaysian Ringgit	17.86	17.96

Source: Indian Bank

Bharti Airtel raises \$1.25 billion via debt

NEW DELHI
Bharti Airtel on Thursday said it has raised \$1.25 billion through issuance of debt instruments. PTI

States can move first on fuel tax cut: FM

RBI chief bats for lower taxes on fuel; Sitharaman says Centre-State talks may help address issue

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman hinted on Thursday that States need not wait for the Centre to cut high fuel taxes or bicker about who is burdening consumers, even as the Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das expressed hope for a 'co-ordinated and calibrated reduction' in the taxes levied by the Centre and the States on fuel.

"I wouldn't be able to say when, it's a *Dharam Sanakat*," Ms. Sitharaman said in response to query by an IIM-Ahmedabad student as to when the government would cut fuel taxes now that petrol prices had crossed three digits. She was speaking at an interactive session with the institution's students, hosted by the JSW School of Public



In tandem: It is time to effect a co-ordinated and calibrated reduction in fuel taxes, says Mr. Das. ■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

Policy on the campus. She added later that the government would initiate talks with States and explore what could be done. "If the end consumer should pay less and the burden should be

less on them... I agree on that point and I also concede it from the pet point of view that more the fuel costs, more the inflation. You have many arguments. But I strongly believe it's no lon-

ger competitive for anyone to say that 'Eh, Centre, you reduce first, then the States would come on board,' she said, adding that it was possible that States may not cut rates on their part.

"We can bicker about who earns more. Even if you want to say, and you are right if you say, the Centre earns more. Everything that the Centre earns, 40% of it goes to the States. So what I am left with is only that portion, although the total amount is what you see. So there's just no hiding the fact that there is revenue there (for the Centre and the States)," the Minister said.

"If... the consumers should not be bearing so much of a burden on this score, it is both the Centre and States that will have to talk. I am sure people will

immediately ask: 'so, when are they going to talk, when are you cutting down?' Yes, I concede that's where action has to be and let us see what we can do," she added.

Earlier in the day, the central bank chief said high fuel prices don't just affect car and scooter users, but also raise costs for manufacturing, transport and a range of activities, spurring inflation.

"There is a need for a co-ordinated and calibrated reduction of taxes... I am sure that going forward, both the Central and the State governments will take some positive decisions in a co-ordinated manner," he said, adding that though both the Centre and States' revenues face pressures amid enhanced spending to fight the COVID stress, the impact on inflation needs to be addressed.

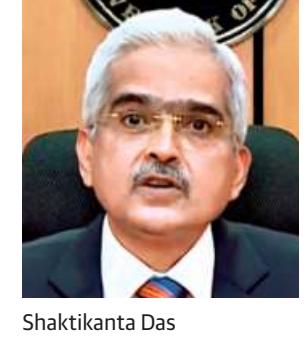
'Bad bank' move will not hit existing ARCs: RBI's Das

'Regulatory structure being upgraded'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The 'bad bank' proposed in the Union Budget will not jeopardise the activity of existing asset reconstruction companies (ARCs), said Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday. He added that the central bank was in the process of upgrading their regulatory structure.



Shaktikanta Das

tivity of existing ARCs," the governor said.

Export worries

"Even though merchandise trade has shown incipient signs of revival since end-2020, recovery in services trade is yet to gain traction as subdued cross-border tourism and travel restrictions continue to weigh on the overall performance of the sector."

"Uneven global trade recovery led by a few Asian countries and select sectors such as medical equipment and electronic products raises concerns regarding its sustainability," he said.

A crucial impediment to revival of global trading activity was the continued disruptions in global supply chains, accompanied by a steep rise in shipping costs since November 2020 and longer delivery times leading to rising commodity prices, he added.

On free trade pacts, he said, "Key considerations should be to identify countries and regions that not only have the potential as a market for domestic goods and services but also have the scope to enhance domestic competitiveness."

Fiscal deficit aim of 6.8% for FY22 realistic'

SEBI aims for transparency in environmental, social, corporate governance space

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

India's Budget is tilted towards supporting growth and the fiscal deficit target of 6.8% for FY22 is realistic, Moody's Investors Service said on Thursday.

It said a weak fiscal position would remain a key credit challenge in 2021.

The fiscal deficit for FY21 and FY22 should be lower than projected, supported by stronger revenue generation in the March quarter and higher nominal GDP growth next fiscal.

Prospects for fiscal consolidation remain weak particularly given the Centre's mixed track record of implementing revenue-raising measures.



Ajay Tyagi

may be relegated to the background as the fund raising in itself was perceived as a challenge in these difficult times.

"However, we can see that focus on ESG issues globally and in India has only increased in this financial year.

In line with the general global trend of ESG becoming more and more prominent for investors, Indian invest-

tors also showed increased interest in ESG investment," Mr. Tyagi said.

From three ESG mutual fund schemes at the end of financial year 2019-20, today we have total nine ESG schemes with six of them added only in the last 10 months, he noted.

From about ₹2,100 crore invested in such schemes in the whole of the last financial year, the amount has increased to about ₹3,800 crore in 2020-21 till January 31.

"While the trend appears to be on the rise, we still have a long way to go compared to global levels," Mr. Tyagi said.

Initial public offerings in this fiscal were largely from firms in sectors resilient to the pandemic or those

which are recovering well, Mr. Tyagi said. A total of 18 IPOs came out this fiscal on the main board till January 2021. He noted that the IPOs were largely from companies in sectors like technology, specialty chemicals, healthcare, certain financial sub-sectors, among others.

E-meeting concerns

Mr. Tyagi said there had been widespread adoption of technological inputs at corporates in the face of the pandemic, with both board meets and AGMs going virtual. "However, virtual meetings have given rise to new concerns which were earlier not there in physical meetings. These include confidentiality and security concerns," he added.

Xiaomi to raise mobile, TV production via tie-ups

Company partners BYD, DBG, Radiant

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Xiaomi said on Thursday it has roped in three new manufacturing partners for augmenting its smartphone and television capacities in India.



Technologies in Andhra Pradesh.

The China-headquartered firm has tied up with BYD and DBG for setting up smartphone manufacturing plants in India and Radiant Technology for manufacturing smart TVs.

Xiaomi currently manufactures smartphones in India through its partners Foxconn and Flex, which have factories in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, and TVs in partnership with Dixon Kumar Jain said.

The decision follows an assessment based on financial results of the insurers

scious call in the matter of declaring dividends for 2020-21 considering their capital, solvency and liquidity positions," Pravin Kumbhare, Member (Finance and Investment) said.

The decision of IRDAI follows an assessment based on financial results of the insurers for the September and December quarters. "The performance of the insurers in terms of business is gradually reviving," the communication said.

Will address causes of NSE glitch: SEBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI

A day after technical glitches halted trading at NSE for around four hours, market regulator SEBI on Thursday affirmed it will take all necessary measures to ensure the underlying causes, including 'institutional deficiencies,' are addressed.

"SEBI would take all necessary measures to ensure rectification of the underlying causes including addressing institutional deficiencies," it said in a statement, elaborating on the steps required to be taken by market infrastructure institutions (MII) like NSE after a technical issue.

Gadkari urges auto firms to raise localisation to 100%

'Govt. may otherwise mull increase in customs duties'



Nitin Gadkari

need to stop imports of auto components.

"I urge both vehicle and auto-component manufacturers to increase localisation of components to the maximum. Not maximum, my expectation is to make it

100%. We are fully competent in all the things. Even, I am requesting automobile manufacturing companies to take it very seriously otherwise for imports of components we will think in the direction of increasing customs duty on them," he said.

Earlier in the day, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers president Kenichi Ayukawa sought government support for localisation of electronic components, especially semiconductors which are currently facing a global shortage, stating it would need huge investments.

Speaking at an event organised by the Automotive Components Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA), Mr. Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways, said the present level of localisation of parts in the Indian auto sector was about 70% and "at any cost, we

are to stop imports of auto components. "Almost all my jumps were 20 to 25cm behind the board, even in the last my toe just touched the board," the National record holder told *The Hindu*.

National record holder Annu Rani was consistent in women's javelin, Asian Games champion Angad Vir

Axar, Ashwin propel India to 2-1 lead as Test hurtles to a two-day finish

Spin twins share nine wickets to keep the home side ahead of the game on a day of collapses; Root's five for eight can't make up for England's abject batting

ENGLAND IN INDIA

AMOL KARHADKAR
AHMEDABAD

Thanks to Joe Root bowling possibly the spell of his life, England started the second afternoon with a spark. But even before the ring of fire at Motera was illuminated to full dazzle, the spark had been extinguished.

A combination of a strip that made life difficult for batsmen with every passing over, accurate bowling from India's spin twins and another ordinary performance by England's batsmen meant the third Test ended with India registering a facile win to take a 2-1 lead in the four-match series.

Seventeen wickets fell for 176 runs on Thursday, resulting in India winning what turned out to be the shortest completed Test (in terms of balls) since World War II.

Starting the day at 99 for three after dismissing England for a paltry 112, India was skittled out for 145, finding few answers to Root's off-spin (five for eight) and Jack Leach's left-arm spin (four for 54). But Axar Patel and R. Ashwin then took over, dragging the game back India's way. The spin duo bowled virtually unchanged to wind up England's second essay in a session for a meagre 81 – its lowest, and first two-digit, total against India.

Chasing a target of 49, openers Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill completed the formalities in 46 balls. Rohit hoicked Root over cow corner for the winning shot 20 minutes after the dinner break.

On a day that saw spinners dominate right from the

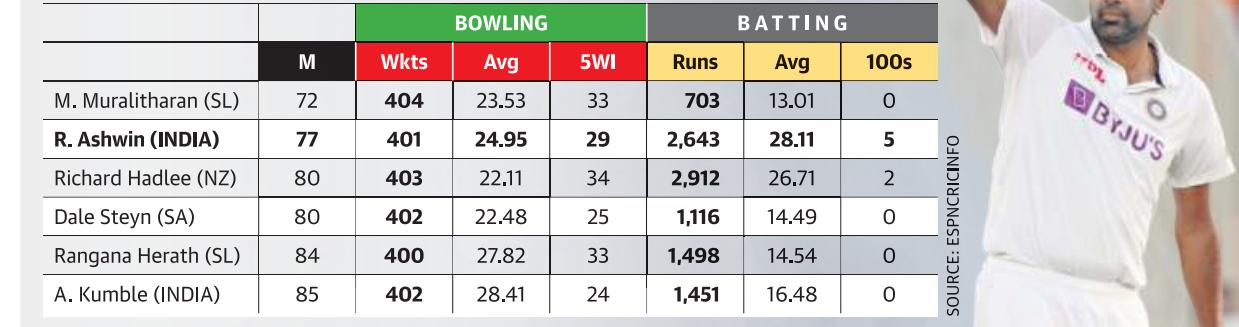


Action replay! While Axar dismissed Bairstow for a duck for the second time in the Test, Ashwin breached Pope's defence in the second innings too. ■ SPORTZPICS/BCCI

Fastest to 400

Ashwin is the second quickest to 400 Test wickets after Muralitharan. The Sri Lankan had reached the landmark in 72 Tests while the Indian achieved it in 77. A look at the bowling and batting performances of the top-6 players when they reached the landmark

	BOWLING				BATTING			SOURCE: ESPNCRICINFO
	M	Wkts	Avg	5WI	Runs	Avg	100s	
M. Muralitharan (SL)	72	404	23.53	33	703	13.01	0	
R. Ashwin (INDIA)	77	401	24.95	29	2,643	28.11	5	
Richard Hadlee (NZ)	80	403	22.11	34	2,912	26.71	2	
Dale Steyn (SA)	80	402	22.48	25	1,116	14.49	0	
Rangana Herath (SL)	84	400	27.82	33	1,498	14.54	0	
A. Kumble (INDIA)	85	402	28.41	24	1,451	16.48	0	



SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND – 1ST INNINGS

112

INDIA – 1ST INNINGS

Rohit Sharma lbw b Leach 66 (96b, 11x4), Shubman Gill c Crawley b Archer 11 (51b, 2x4), Cheteshwar Pujara lbw b Leach 0 (4b), Virat Kohli b Leach 27 (58b, 3x4), Ajinkya Rahane lbw b Leach 7 (25b, 1x4), Rishabh Pant c Foakes b Root 1 (8b), R. Ashwin c Crawley b Root 17 (32b, 3x4), Washington Sundar b Root 0 (72b), Axar Patel c Sibley b Root 0 (2b), Ishant Sharma (not out) 10 (20b, 1x6), Jasprit Bumrah lbw b Root 1 (12b); Extras (b-2, lb-2, w-1); Total (in 53.2 overs): 145.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-0 (Crawley, 0.1), 2-0 (Bairstow, 0.3), 3-1 (Sibley, 8.3), 4-50 (Stokes, 17.2), 5-56 (Root, 18.5), 6-66 (Pope, 21.6), 7-68 (Archer, 23.2), 8-80 (Foakes, 28.2), 9-80 (Leach, 29.4).

INDIA BOWLING

Axar 15-0-32-5, Ashwin 15-3-48-4, Washington 4-0-1-1.

INDIA – 2ND INNINGS

Target: 49

Rohit (not out) 25 (25b, 3x4, 1x6), Gill (not out) 15 (21b, 1x4, 1x6); Extras (b-8, lb-1): 9; Total (for no loss in 7.4 overs): 49.

ENGLAND BOWLING

Anderson 13-8-20-0, Broad 6-1-16-0, Archer 5-2-24-1, Leach 20-2-54-4, Stokes 3-0-19-0, Root 6-2-3-8.

ENGLAND – 2ND INNINGS

Zak Crawley b Axar 0 (1b), Dom Sibley c Pant b Axar 7 (25b),

Total (in 53.2 overs): 145.

WTC points table (top-4)

	PCT (%)	Points	Series	Matches		
	Won	Lost	Drawn	Won	Lost	Drawn
India	71.0	490	6*	11	4	1
New Zealand	70.0	420	5	7	4	0
Australia	69.2	332	4	8	4	2
England	64.1	442	6*	11	6	3

Qualification scenarios

- India needs to draw the last Test to qualify for the final against New Zealand
- England's loss in the third Test knocked it out of contention
- Australia will make it to the summit clash if England wins the fourth Test against India and the series is drawn 2-2

* indicates ongoing series

SOURCE: ICC

Blame batsmen, not pitch: Rohit

S. DIPAK RAGAV

'Not just England, we played horribly too'

AMOL KARHADKAR
AHMEDABAD

Despite the third Test between India and England ending just after dinner on day two, Rohit Sharma has stressed that there were no "demons" in the pitch.

"If you look at the 30 wickets which have fallen, I don't see anything the pitch did. It's what the batsmen did. It's not just them, we played horribly too. It seemed a normal pitch to me. Very typical Indian wicket," Rohit said after India's 10-wicket win.

"We didn't pick the right shots to play. No rough, unlike in Chennai, England batsmen just missed the line against Axar, and we also played well below our skill. We will be equipped to handle these conditions in the future."

Rohit, whose 66 in India's first innings was the highest in the match, said the "pace of the pink ball" added to

the batsmen's difficulty.

"It came on to the bat faster than the red ball. It has got to do with the conditions in the evening. Temperature goes down and the dew [comes in] too. Again, all in all, the pace of the pink ball is slightly faster. We need to adjust to that," he said.

Rohit had high praise for Axar Patel and R. Ashwin. While he referred to Axar "coming out of nowhere and making it to the squad" and

producing decisive performances in successive Tests as "brilliant", he described Ashwin as possibly "the match-winner in Indian cricket history".

"One of our match-winners or the match-winner in Indian cricket history. He has won so many games for us. Big congratulations to him. Great feat. Hats off to him. Also his contribution with the bat in this series can't be forgotten."



Pleased as punch: Kohli delighted by the Axar show.

Bitterly disappointed: Root



Root. ■ SPORTZPICS/BCCI

or not, and that is up to the ICC."

The 30-year-old also felt that the pink ball was a significant factor in the batsmen being beaten for pace. "The plastic coating and the hardness of the seam compared to the red SG ball meant it gathered pace off the pitch if it hit the shiny side and that had a big part to play in things. Credit to Axar for exploiting that."

FATH

Controlling the mind

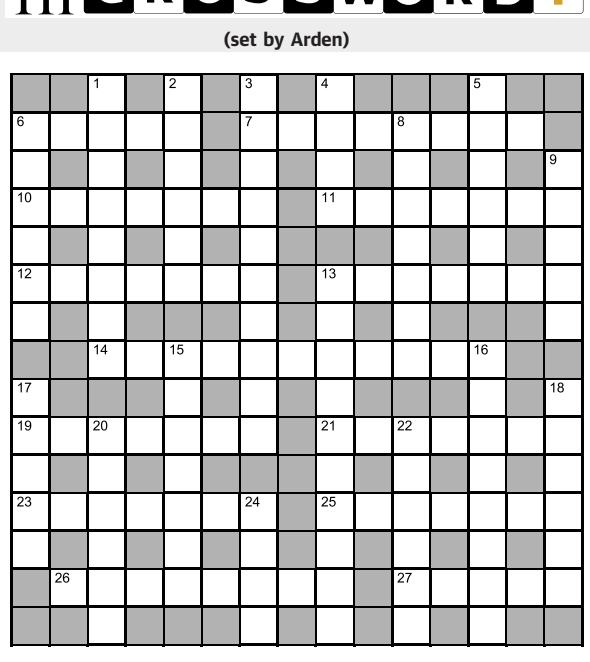
Mahabali took the kingdom of the celestials, and Aditi, mother of the devas, was very unhappy. She asked her husband sage Kashyapa what could be done to help their sons. Kashyapa said that if one observed payo vrata one's wishes would be granted. He told her that he had learnt about this vrata from Brahma. He told her that total control of the indriyas was necessary for the success of the vrata. Achieving control of the indriyas, one must focus all one's attention on Lord Narayana, for the vrata to yield results. Following her husband's advice, Aditi did payo vrata for twelve days, said Kidambi Narayanan in a discourse. And of course, she had to keep her mind in control, without letting her attention wander.

The indriyas can be likened to an untamed horse. You need a trained charioteer to discipline it. And he uses the reins to control it. In the case of human beings, if the indriyas are like a wild horse, buddhi is the charioteer and the manas constitutes the reins to control it. Diligently, after keeping her indriyas in check, Aditi did the payo vrata. At this point in the narration, sage Suka tells Parikshit that whatever karma one does with shraddha, one will get the desired fruits. When you do something, where you do it and how you do it are also equally important. If one operates within the prescribed framework, the results will be evident.

Dasaratha's performance of putrakameshi yaga is a good example. At the end of the yaga, the yaga purusha gave him the divine porridge, consumption of which by his wives gave Dasaratha sons he could be proud of. At the end of Aditi's vrata, the Lord appeared before her, told her He knew what her grievance was, and assured her that He would help.

CROSSWORD + 13181

(set by Arden)



ACROSS

- Review part of colonial system on those killed (5)
- In private I'm a flower (8)
- Ban settler's review, stop and leave (7)
- Ice – sounds doubtful to accompany singer (7)
- Trooped out to destroy... (7)
- ... even commits to stop crime, that's noble (7)

Display keystrokes of genius.
Type your answers into online grids!
at <https://rgo.page.link/jjpTn>



SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to puzzle 13180

R	I	C	H	D	B	U	R	T	O
B	C	I	A	E	S	L			
A	P	I	N	G	D	C	L	I	T
C	C	H	E	C	I	R	A	</	

TV PICKS

WTA 500 Tour: Adelaide International, Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 9.30 a.m. & 1 p.m.
Serie A: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 1.15 a.m. (Saturday)
ISL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD), 7.30 p.m.
PGA Tour: Eurosport (SD & HD), 8.30 p.m.

IN BRIEF

Messi leads Barcelona to win over Elche

MADRID Lionel Messi scored twice in the second half as Barcelona stayed near the top of the Spanish league by defeating Elche 3-0 in a match postponed from the first round. Jordi Alba also scored to help Barcelona move back to third, two points behind second-place Real Madrid and five from leader Atlético Madrid, which still has a game in hand. AP

ICC signs deal with IMG
DUBAI A total of 541 matches across three upcoming World Cups will be broadcast globally following a live streaming deal between the International Cricket Council and IMG, the game's governing body announced on Thursday. The live streaming deal, which is up until April 2023, will enable fans to watch all qualifying matches to three World Cups — men's T20 World Cup 2022, men's World Cup 2023 and women's T20 WC 2023. PTI

Olympics torch relay from March 25

TOKYO The torch relay for the postponed Tokyo Olympics is to start in a month. The relay begins on March 25 from J-Village in the town of Naraha and will criss-cross the country before ending on July 23 in Tokyo. AP

Shaw hammers double hundred

His 227 is the highest score by an Indian in List A; Delhi beats Himachal



In full flow: Prithvi Shaw put up an exhibition of scintillating stroke-play. ■ FILE PHOTO

HAZARE TROPHY**SPORTS BUREAU**

JAIPUR

One sent a strong reminder to the national selectors. The other justified their faith in him.

Together, Prithvi Shaw and Suryakumar Yadav put up an exhibition of scintillating stroke-play and helped Mumbai score a crushing 233-run victory over Pondicherry in the Vijay Hazare Trophy one-day tournament here on Thursday.

The former champion's 457 for four is now the highest total in List A cricket in India.

In the process, Shaw also broke the record for the highest score by an Indian in List A. His brilliant 227 not out (152b, 31x4, 5x6) bettered Sanju Samson's 212 not out for Kerala against Goa in the tournament's last edition in 2019-20.

This is the opener's second hundred in the compe-

tition after his 105 not out against Delhi four days ago. He was also captaining the side in the absence of Shreyas Iyer, who was rested.

Astonishing knock

Suryakumar, whose admirers include Brian Lara, celebrated his maiden call up to the Indian squad for the upcoming T20I series against England, with an astonishing 58-ball 133 (22x4, 4x6) and added 201 for the third wicket with Shaw off just 103 balls.

Before that, Shaw had put on 58 for the first wicket with Yashasvi Jaiswal (10) and 153 for the second with Aditya Tare (56, 64b, 7x4).

Pondicherry could not come up with any such partnership and was bowled out for 224 in the 39th over.

In the day's other matches in Group D, Delhi defeated Himachal Pradesh by six wickets with 11 balls to spare, while Maharashtra beat Rajasthan by 44 runs.

THURSDAY'S HAZARE TROPHY SCORES

Elite D (Jaipur): Maharashtra 277/6 in 50 overs (Yash Nahar 55, Kedar Jadhav 101 n.o., Satyajeet Bachhav 44) bt Rajasthan 233 in 48.1 overs (Mahipal Lomror 86, Salman Khan 68, Pradeep Dadhe 4/48).

Himachal 251/8 in 50 overs (Nikhil Gangta 100 n.o.) lost to Delhi 252/4 in 48.1 overs (Dhruv Shorey 51, Nitish Rana 42, Kshitiz Sharma 67 n.o., Lalit Yadav 52 n.o.).

Mumbai 457/4 in 50 overs (Prithvi Shaw 227 n.o., Aditya Tare 56, Suryakumar Yadav 133) bt Pondicherry 224 in 38.1 overs (D. Rohit 63, Sagar Trivedi 43, Prashant Solanki 5/48).

Elite E (Kolkata): Haryana 308/6 in 50 overs (Chaitanya Bishnoi 45, Shivam Chauhan 123, Rohit Sharma 51) bt Jammu & Kashmir 295 in 49.1 overs (Parvez Rasool 86, Bandeep Singh 51, Abid Mushtaq 46, Arun Chaprana 4/35).

Saurashtra 324/9 in 50 overs (Pratik Desai 41, Tarun Kohli 56, K.B. Pawan 89 n.o.) lost to Meghalaya 237/8 in 48 overs (D.B. Ravi Teja 42, Dipu Sangma 60 n.o., Abhay Negi 40).

Manipur 162 in 40.1 overs lost to Sikkim 165/2 in 36.1 overs (Ashish Thapa 43, Robin Chauhan 57, Mohit Ahlawat 69, Bist 85 n.o.).

Friday's matches
Elite A (Surat): Tripura vs Goa; Baroda vs Chhattisgarh; Gujarat vs Hyderabad.

Elite B (Indore): Madhya Pradesh vs Andhra; Vidarbha vs Punjab; Tamil Nadu vs Jharkhand.

Elite C (Bengaluru): Odisha vs Bihar; Railways vs Uttar Pradesh; Karnataka vs Kerala, all at 9 a.m.

Gaurav Gambhir 4/51).

Plate (Chennai): Assam 294 in 49.5 overs (Sibsankar Roy 106, Goluk Sharma 70, Khrievito Kense 4/61) bt Nagaland 210 in 45.2 overs (Chetan Bist 57).

Arunachal Pradesh 225/6 in 50 overs (Techi Doria 44, Kam-sha Yangfo 58, Nazeeb Saied 54) lost to Uttarakhand 226/2 in 24.3 overs (Kamal Singh 68, Jay Bista 46, Kunal Chandela 78 n.o.).

Mizoram 236/7 in 50 overs (Pratik Desai 41, Tarun Kohli 56, K.B. Pawan 89 n.o.) lost to Meghalaya 237/8 in 48 overs (D.B. Ravi Teja 42, Dipu Sangma 60 n.o., Abhay Negi 40).

Chandigarh 224/8 in 50 overs (Arslan Khan 44, Gaurav Gambhir 44 n.o.) bt Services 219 in 49.4 overs (Ravi Chauhan 57, Mohit Ahlawat 69, Bist 85 n.o.).

Jeevan in hard quarantine

KAMESH SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI

Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan, who flew to Singapore for the ATP event, was required to "hard quarantine" after a passenger next to him in the aircraft tested positive for COVID-19.

He was scheduled to partner Yuki Bhambri for the doubles event, but was forced to remain in the hotel for 14 days despite repeatedly testing negative.

Bhambri and Nedunchezhiyan were taken off the draw, and a wild card pair replaced them.

Rohan Bopanna had earlier experienced the hard quarantine in Melbourne, as passengers in his flight had tested positive.

"That was for playing a Grand Slam. There is nothing to look forward here," said a disappointed Nedunchezhiyan, whose doubles rank has slipped from a career best 64 to 187.

Guptill shines as NZ edges Australia

AUS IN NZ**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**

DUNEDIN

Martin Guptill returned to form with a blistering 97 as New Zealand held on for a nail-biting win over Australia in the second Twenty20 International on Thursday.

The Black Caps set Australia a target of 220 but were made to sweat as Australia came within four runs of victory.

Both sides took advantage of short boundaries in a thrilling match that featured 30 sixes and 434 runs at an average of 10.9 an over.

Marcus Stoinis starred for the Australians with 78 off 37 balls, but Guptill's 97 off 50 laid the foundation for New Zealand's win.

Black Caps spinner Mitchell Santner took four for 31, while Australia paceman Kane Richardson claimed three for 43.

The scores: New Zealand 219/7 in 20 overs (Martin Guptill 97, Kane Williamson 53, James Neesham 45 n.o., Kane Richardson 3/43) bt Australia 215/8 in 20 overs (Josh Philippe 45, Marcus Stoinis 78, Daniel Sams 41, Mitchell Santner 4/31). NZ won by four runs and leads 5-match series 2-0.

Jazz thumps Lakers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LOS ANGELES

Utah Jazz manhandled NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers on Wednesday for a pitiless 114-89 victory.

The results: Utah Jazz 114 bt LA Lakers 89; Miami Heat 116 bt Toronto Raptors 108; Indiana Pacers 107 lost to Golden State Warriors 111; Atlanta Hawks 127 bt Boston Celtics 112; Cleveland Cavaliers 112 bt Houston Rockets 96; Phoenix Suns 121 lost to Charlotte Hornets 124; Chicago Bulls 133 bt Minnesota Timberwolves 126 (OT); New Orleans Pelicans 128 bt Detroit Pistons 118; Oklahoma City Thunder 102 bt San Antonio Spurs 99.

Chhatwal to meet Sharma in final

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The top two seeds, A.J.S. Chhatwal and Surinder Sharma, set up a title clash in the over-65 event of the PHDCCI-ITF Seniors tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Thursday.

In the over-35 event, Avinash Kunwar beat Mukesh Kumar 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. **Over-45 (quarterfinals):** Shankar Krishnaswamy bt Tikan Singh Panar 6-2, 7-5; Rohit Rawat bt Vijay Kumar 6-1, 6-2; Preetam Yashvant bt Amitabh Chaturvedi 6-4, 6-1; Anshul Bagai bt Yoesh Kohli 6-2, 6-2.

Over-55 (quarterfinals): Chandra Bhushan bt Shyam Mehrotra 6-1 (retired); Ajeev Bhambhani bt Dipankar Chakravarti 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; Nagaraj Revansiddaiah bt Sharad Tal 6-0, 6-2; Sanjai Kumar bt Pawan Jain 6-3, 6-4.

Over-65 (semifinals): AJS Chhatwal bt Bhag Nand Singh 6-1, 6-3; Surinder Sharma bt CR Gangadharan 6-4, 7-5.

Shillong to host National TT
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

host affiliates: National championship (Meghalaya), National junior and youth (Karnataka), National cadet and sub-junior (Andhra Pradesh). **National rankings events:** North (Haryana), East (West Bengal), West (Gujarat), South (Pondicherry) and Central (Madhya Pradesh).

The decision was taken by the TTFI following the election of its office-bearers for a four-year term at Panchkula on Wednesday.

List of events and approved

Shillong will host the next edition of the National table tennis championship.

The decision was taken by the TTFI following the election of its office-bearers for a four-year term at Panchkula on Wednesday.

List of events and approved

The decision was taken by the TTFI following the election of its office-bearers for a four-year term at Panchkula on Wednesday.

shedpur FC on Thursday.

The result: Jamshedpur FC 3 (Eze 16, Kuki 34, Grande 41) bt Bengaluru FC 2 (Fran 62, Chhetri 71). **Friday's match:** NEUFC vs Kerala Blasters, 7.30 p.m.

TRUE VALUE

MARUTI SUZUKI

SELL. BUY. TRUST.

True Value, the leading destination to buy and sell pre-owned cars.



*T & C apply

**SELL****AT HOME EVALUATION****DETAILED DIGITAL EVALUATION****AI BASED SCIENTIFIC PRICING ENGINE****HASSLE FREE DOCUMENTATION****BUY****376 CHECK POINTS****VERIFIED CAR HISTORY****UP TO 1 YEAR WARRANTY & 3 FREE SERVICES*****HASSLE FREE DOCUMENTATION**

For enquiry, call 1800 102 1800 | Visit www.marutisuzukitruevalue.com

Download the App here.
Images used are for illustration purposes only

East Delhi: **Gokulpuri**, TR Sawhney: 9871655966, 99990050348 | **Mayur Vihar**, Fair Deal Cars: 9911111117, 8510821882 | **Patparganj**, Bagga Link: 9354679909, 9871458664 | **West Delhi: Dwarka**, Sec 14, DD Motors: 9999003888 | **Peeragarhi**, DD Motors: 9999003888 | **Badli**, Competent Automotives: 7011669053, 7827765644, TR Sawhney Motors: 9910690463 | **Central Delhi: IP**, TR Sawhney Motors: 9999399189 | **North Delhi: Gurmandi**, Saya Auto: 9560568162, 8368178332 | **Okhla**, TR Sawhney: 9999399180 | **Sarita Vihar**, Rohan Motors: 9205719372, 9818898285 | **Gurugram**: Rana Motors: 9582896172, 9899965993, Prem Motors: 7065003664, Pasco Automobiles: 892920076, TR Sawhney Motors Pvt. Ltd. 9899480368, Vipul Motors: 9910491831, Competent Automobiles: 8571018770 | **Faridabad**: Fairdeal Cars: 9991984646, 9911523193, Vipul Motors: 9582703290, 9266892675, Automation: 7290032393, TCS and Associates: 8377002245 | **Manesar**: Platinum Motorcop: 9953345306 | **Rewari**: Dino: 7082100275, 708210019 | **Palwal**: Rohan Motors: 8198939709, 9813779814 | **Sohna**: Pasco: 8929600036 | **Greater Noida**: Rohan Motors: 7065331010, 8700413343 | **Noida**: Fairdeal Cars: 9719102344, Rohan Motors: 981898123, 7065862020, Vipul Motors: 8510