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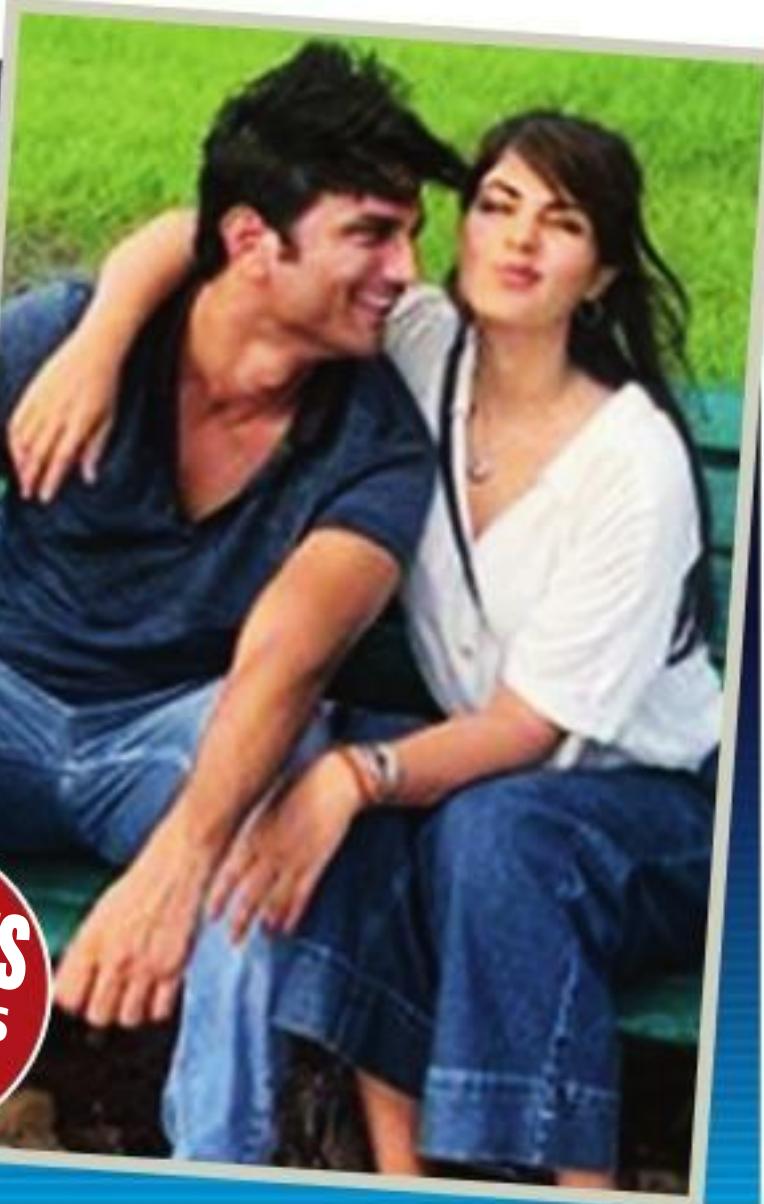
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## SC NO TO CBI PROBE PLEA IN SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT CASE

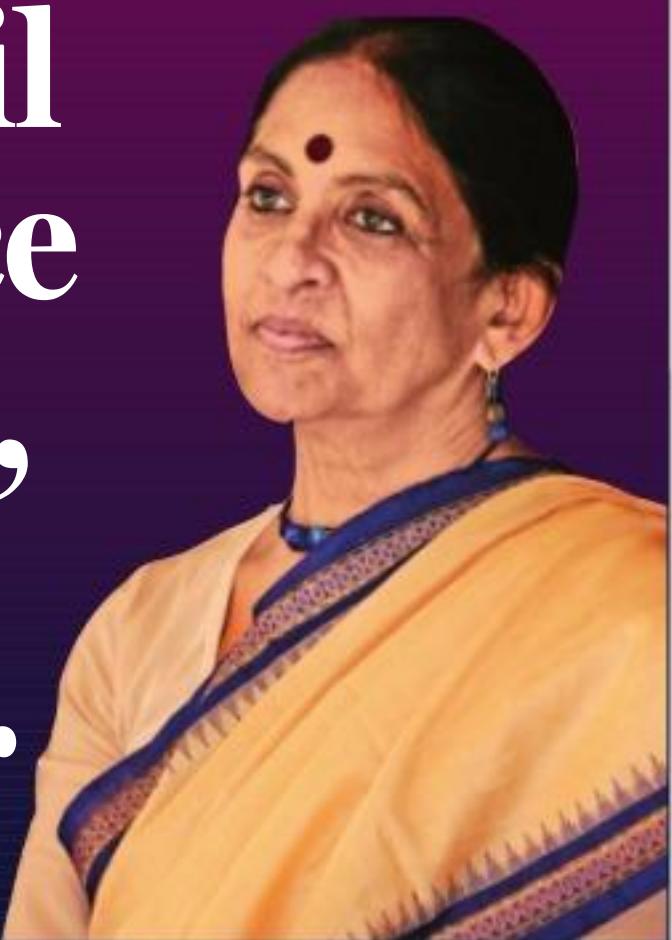
PLUS ED looking into money-laundering charge against Rhea

REPORTS  
ON PAGES  
14-15



Jaya Jaitley gets 4-year jail in defence deal case, HC stays the order

SEE PAGE 6



# HOW COVID IS TURNING EID & RAKHI VIRTUAL

Families and friends in Capital curtail shopping, plan Zoom get-togethers as virus fears alter the way we celebrate festivals

## Covid-19 FALLOUT

By Chayyanika Nigam and Ajay Kumar in New Delhi

SYED Nazish Naqvi, who works at a Delhi-based IT firm, would travel to his home in Lucknow every year two days before Bakri Eid. This time, he chose to leave much earlier for the festival that falls tomorrow.

"Since I was driving, I feared catching the coronavirus on the way. So I decided to keep myself in isolation for a week, at my friend's place in Lucknow, before joining the family. I did not want my parents to be at any risk because of me," said the

Turn to Page 2

SEE PAGES 2-3



A woman buys rakhis at a shop in South Delhi's Sarojini Nagar Market on Thursday, ahead of the Raksha Bandhan festival. Only a few shops are selling rakhis this year.

## 'HERD IMMUNITY ISN'T AN OPTION'

'Herd immunity is developed when there is a vaccine or a population has already suffered and recovered from a disease. Achieving herd immunity in a country as populous as India without a vaccine would come at a great cost,' Health Ministry said.

14 cops and a priest on duty at Ayodhya's Ram Janambhoomi complex, where the Ram Temple groundbreaking ceremony is expected to be held on August 5, have tested positive for Covid. PM Narendra Modi is expected to attend the ceremony with 50 VIPs.

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC

India is currently conducting around five lakh COVID-19 tests every day and the plan is to double the number in next one-two months.

— DR HARSH VARDHAN, UNION HEALTH MINISTER



The Delhi government Thursday set up four committees, comprising medical specialists, who will inspect hospitals in the city

from where a large percentage of COVID-19 fatalities are still being reported, according to an order. The order was issued by the health department.

Continued from page 1

35-year-old, who lives with his wife and son in South East Delhi's Abul Fazal Enclave.

Twenty-year-old software engineer Surbhi Sinha has chosen not to visit her paternal house in South Delhi's Greater Kailash, despite the fact that Monday will mark her first Raksha Bandhan after marriage.

Watching online tutorials, she has made four rakhis using tissue paper, thread and colours for his brothers. "I have posted immunity booster gift hampers for all my brothers," said the Dwarka resident.

Nazish and Surbhi are no exceptions. Four months of the Covid-19 pandemic have altered the way people celebrate festivals across communities in Delhi.

Many women won't be able to tie rakhis to their brothers due to travel restrictions as well. Delhi Metro has been a great link for this occasion but it remains shut to halt the spread of the coronavirus that has caused more than 1.34 lakh infections. A total of 3,936 patients had died as per data released on Thursday evening.

Nidhi Rawat has a sweet tooth and her younger brother, who lives in Mumbai, brings 'Bombay halwa' for her every Raksha Bandhan. This year, he won't come home.

## People are avoiding outdoor shopping as a precaution

Most women have opted to send rakhis — some hand-made or in the shape of face-masks — through post or e-commerce firms.

Pummy Saini sent a rakhi and a letter to her Ahmedabad-based elder brother and nephew. She says the restrictions made her realise how much she loves them.

People are avoiding outdoor shopping and preferring Zoom and WhatsApp video calls over physical get-togethers and have decided to be decked up for online meets.

Surbhi said she is excited about her gifts that her brothers have ordered. "We have planned a WhatsApp video conferencing call and also decided to get decked up for the online meet."

## 'COVID' IN CAPITAL

For siblings Aqib Khan and Asif Khan from Old Delhi, the trademark hugs will be missing this Eid. "Eid is about sharing pleasantries and hugs. But we know how big the threat of the disease is. So we will try to keep our children indoors," said their father Shamshad Khan.

Though the shadow of the pandemic was also over the last Eid in May which is celebrated after Ramzan, the month of fasting, this Eid, popularly known as Bakri Eid, involves bigger celebrations, including sacrifice, which lasts three days.

But many people are not buying goats for financial and physical distancing reasons. "We decided to pay the money that we used to spend on goats to an orphanage. It's better to stay isolated," said Mohd Rafique, a resident of Zakir Nagar.

Butchers are staring at massive losses. Imtiyaz Qureshi, for example, got more than 50 bookings last year for animal sacrifice on Bakri Eid. This year, he said, there is hardly any work.

"People are afraid that they might get infected since butchers visit many places," he said.

Eid is also marked by congregational prayers. While most clerics have urged people, like during the last time, to pray inside homes, mosques have made special arrangements such as dividing prayers in two shifts to avoid overcrowding.

## QUIET MARKETS

Markets are not buzzing as many people won't come out for shopping and rather prefer to buy things online. Preeti Sharma, a law student, has opted to purchase an online gift hamper including a rakhi, roli, rice, a small pooja plate, sweets and a mug.

"Why go to the market when things are available online? It's better to have contactless shopping especially when we anyway have to courier it," she said.

Ram Veer, 59, a shopkeeper in Lajpat Nagar, told Mail Today that he had never witnessed so few footfalls right before Raksha Bandhan. "Usually, thousands of people used to visit the market for shopping. Be it rakhis, clothes,

PHOTOS: QAMAR SIBTAIN & PANKAJ NANGIA



# VIRUS TAKES THE SHEEN OFF FESTIVALS



Buyers at a Rakhi shop ahead of Raksha Bandhan in New Delhi on Thursday.

gifts or household items. But now hardly 100-150 people come daily. It seems that everything has faded away," he said.

## THE ONLINE OPTION

Travel restrictions and safety

precautions have fuelled demands for online merchandise as siblings in different cities or even in different homes within the same city have to avoid meeting in person on Raksha Bandhan.

Leading FMCG player Bonn Group of Industries has come up with an exclusive range of cakes and cookies for siblings so that the celebration of eternal bond doesn't get dampened.

"Raksha Bandhan is the first event for Indian consumers that marks the beginning of the festive season and we don't want to dampen the spirits despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. We have especially curated this range of products, which accentuates the bond of eternal love, care and good health between siblings," said Amrinder Singh, Director, Bonn Group of Industries.

Ritu Raj, a resident of New Palam Vihar, however, said, "One of my sisters who lives in Jaipur has sent 'Corona Kit Rakhi' comprising sweets, sanitiser, mask, hand wash and hand gloves, among other things."

"The other sister who lives in Ranchi has sent money online (Paytm) for me to purchase rakhi and my daughter was asked to complete the traditional process," he said.

## HARRIED IN HOTSPOTS

Life is even tougher for people who live in coronavirus containment zones. Rajesh Malik, a resident of Gurugram's Shivaji Nagar, said: "Ours being a Large Outbreak Region (LOR), the district administration has barricaded all entry points. Hence, I cannot roam with my car outside the locality. My younger sister, who moved to Delhi's Rajouri Garden after her marriage in 2017, has proposed a plan to have the rakhi rituals in the car near the barricades."

"The rakhi will be sanitised and dried up under the sun. She will use homemade sweets. Besides, we would wear hand gloves to minimise the virus threat," Malik said.

Sources in the police department said that there is a possibility that restrictions will be imposed on inter-state movement of private vehicles. Also, RWAs and authorities have been advised to not encourage guest visits on Raksha Bandhan.

— (With PTI inputs)

On Eid al-Adha, prayers can be offered in mosques with limited number of persons. Some mosque committees in Kerala have decided to cancel prayers...  
—PINARAYI VIJAYAN, KERALA CM



450

New Covid-19 cases reported in Jammu and Kashmir.

With economic activities resuming gradually, corporate houses are opting for rapid antigen and antibody tests to

screen and protect their employees from corona, several diagnostics labs and hospitals in the NCR have said.

## CORONA CURVE

**52,123 NEW CASES IN INDIA, TOTAL 15,83,792**

**775 MORE DEATHS, TOLL MOUNTS TO 34,968**

**1,093 NEW CASES IN DELHI, TOTAL NOW 1,34,403**

**29 MORE DEATHS, TOLL MOUNTS TO 3,936**



There are not many buyers for sacrificial goats in New Delhi.

## Delhi open to more economic activities

THE Delhi government on Thursday decided to end night curfew and allow more economic activities, including normal functioning of hospitality services, in the national capital under 'Unlock-3' guidelines, according to a statement.

The government has also allowed weekly bazaars (markets) on a trial basis for seven days with social distancing and all necessary COVID 19-appropriate measures in place, it said.

On Wednesday, the Centre issued nationwide Unlock 3 guidelines, opening up more activities outside coronavirus containment zones, but schools, colleges, metro services, cinema halls along with bars will continue to remain shut till August 31.

The Unlock 3 guidelines will come into force from August 1. The government has decided to end the night curfew that was earlier in operation from 10 pm to 5 am, the statement said. —PTI

# India forms 'air bubbles' with UK, Germany now

By Poulomi Saha  
in New Delhi

IN THE absence of scheduled commercial international passenger flights, India has been in the process of striking bilateral agreements to keep limited international flight operations going.

'Air bubbles,' as they are called, have been in practice since mid-July, allowing both India and the destination country to operate flights through their respective carriers to and from India.

Until now, there were 'air bubble' arrangements with the United States and France, but India Today Television has now learnt that agreements with Germany and the United Kingdom.

### Flights can carry passengers both ways

dom have been sealed too. Soon flights for both countries will be announced by Air India and their respective national carriers.

Air bubble agreements so far have been fortnightly arrangements.

In the initial tranche, US' United Airlines announced 18 flights between India and the US from July 17 to 31.

Similarly, Air France agreed to operate 28 flights in total from Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore between July 18 and August 1.

India Today Television has learnt that agreement with both countries has now been extended for another two weeks at least, upto August 15.

The limited period agreement



Air France agreed to operate 28 flights in total from Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore between July 18 and August 1.

## Kolkata airport to remain shut

AUTHORITIES at the Kolkata airport have announced suspension of flight operations at the airport for seven days in August in view of the complete lockdown announced by the West Bengal government.

In a statement the airport said operations at the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport

shall remain suspended on August 5, 8, 16, 17, 23, 24 and 31 due to complete lockdown announced by the state government on those days.

The airport has also requested passengers to contact individual airline operators for information about rescheduled flights.

—Indrajit Kundu

with the United Arab Emirates though, between July 12 to July 26, is yet to be renewed. Under this agreement, UAE had finally allowed for ICA-approved UAE

residents at the least to board flights from India to UAE. Up until then, Indian carriers were flying empty to the UAE, under the Vande Bharat Mission.



Now prices at ₹73.64

## Delhi diesel price cut by ₹8 per litre

THE DELHI government has decided to reduce VAT on diesel prices from 30 per cent to 16.75 per cent and reduced diesel prices in Delhi from Rs 82 to Rs 73.64. Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday announced the decision to slash diesel prices in Delhi by Rs 8.36 per litre.

Addressing a press conference on Thursday, Kejriwal said, "Delhi Cabinet has decided to reduce VAT on diesel from 30 per cent to 16.75 per cent. This will reduce price of diesel in Delhi from Rs 82 to Rs 73.64 i.e. by Rs 8.36 per litre."

CM Kejriwal also said that there was a serious challenge of reviving the economy of Delhi but it will be achieved together with the cooperation of people.

The diesel price in Delhi will now come down from Rs 82 a litre to Rs 73.64 a litre, said Kejriwal and added that traders and industrialists in Delhi had demanded the rate cut. The decision was taken in a meeting of the Delhi Cabinet chaired by the chief minister.

[www.indiatoday.in](http://www.indiatoday.in)



## NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED

(A Government of India Undertaking)

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### EXTRACT FROM THE STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2020

(₹ in Lakhs)

S. N.	Particulars	STANDALONE					CONSOLIDATED				
		Quarter Ended 31/03/2020 Unaudited	31/12/2019 Unaudited	31/03/2019 Unaudited	31/03/2020 Audited	31/03/2019 Audited	Quarter Ended 31/03/2020 Unaudited	31/12/2019 Unaudited	31/03/2019 Unaudited	31/03/2020 Audited	31/03/2019 Audited (Restated)
1	Total Income from operations	304006	379653	315221	1319186	1248065	304006	379653	315221	1319186	1248065
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) from operations before exceptional items and tax	6504	14442	11965	13614	46337	5574	14376	11662	12609	45889
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) before tax after exceptional items	(32381)	14442	11965	(25271)	46337	(33311)	14376	11662	(26276)	45889
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax	(23935)	10777	8088	(17101)	29845	(24865)	10711	7785	(18106)	29397
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/ (Loss) and Other Comprehensive Income for the period)	(26205)	10690	7753	(19631)	29608	(27135)	10624	7450	(20636)	29160
6	Equity Share Capital	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058	49058
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year				143036	172844				141166	171979
8	Earning Per Share (of ₹ 10/- each)*										
	(a) Basic	(4.88)	2.20	1.65	(3.49)	6.08	(5.07)	2.18	1.59	(3.69)	5.99
	(b) Diluted	(4.88)	2.20	1.65	(3.49)	6.08	(5.07)	2.18	1.59	(3.69)	5.99

\*Not annualised in case of quarterly figures.

Note: 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Yearly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Yearly Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchanges websites, [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com) and [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and website of the Company [www.nationalfertilizers.com](http://www.nationalfertilizers.com).

Place: Noida  
Date: 30.07.2020

For and on behalf of Board of Directors  
Sd/-  
(Virendra Nath Datt)  
Chairman & Managing Director  
DIN : 07823778

NFL : FARMERS' FRIEND, NATION'S PRIDE



Bajrang Dal, VHP, Durga Vahini and Matra Shakti volunteers collect sacred water and soil of different temples, for the 'Bhoomi Poojan', in Kanpur on Thursday.

## Priest & 14 cops Covid positive in Ayodhya ahead of Ram temple ground breaking

By Kumar Abhishek in Lucknow

**A**JUNIOR priest at the Ram temple in Ayodhya has been found positive for coronavirus. Pradeep Das, who is a pupil of the head priest Acharya Satyendra Das at Ram temple, has been put on home isolation following the test.

A total of four priests are given charge of taking care of the Ram temple. Das, who tested positive, is one of them.

Out of 14 police personnel on duty at the temple, four of them have also tested positive for Covid-19, following which all of them have been asked to isolate at home.

However, it is worth mentioning that all the policemen and priests were subjected to rapid antigen Covid-19 tests and their RT-PCR tests have not yet come in. All 15 are asymptomatic and they had been sent for home isolation.

The incident comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's expected visit to lay the foundation stone of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on August 5. The construction of the temple will start

with the ceremony to lay the foundation stone.

A Ram Mandir Trust member had said that in view of the coronavirus pandemic, only 200 people would attend the ceremony and all social distancing norms will be followed at the event.

As per reports, separate blocks will be created for 50 people each in order to maintain social

distancing. While one block will be for political leaders and those associated with the Ram temple movement, another block will be for priests and religious leaders.

Apart from Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, veteran leaders expected to attend the ceremony include LK Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Uma Bharti and Kalyan Singh.

By Nelanshu Shukla  
in Lucknow

THE Ayodhya city is being decked up for 'bhoomi poojan' on August 5 to begin the construction of Ram mandir, while on the other hand 25 km from the temple city is Dhannipur village where the 5-acre land allotted to the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board is wearing a completely deserted look.

The people living in the village have not seen any activity on the land allotted to the Sunni Board for the construction of mosque.

Speaking to India Today TV, Sohrab Khan, a local resident said: "The board accepted the land in February given by the government following the Supreme Court's order in the Ayodhya title suit case. A team of the Sunni board came here once to witness the land but we haven't seen any activity here. We want the mosque to be constructed at the earliest and the government should announce schemes to develop this area."

The Sunni Board announced a 15-member trust named Indo Islamic Cultural Foundation to construct the mosque.

Speaking to India Today TV, the secretary and spokesperson of the trust Athar Husain said: "We will now apply for a PAN number and bank account. The trust will also look for an office. There are other formalities which are

## NO ACTIVITY AT THE LAND ALLOTTED FOR MOSQUE



pending and it might take 30-45 days for us to settle down. After completing the procedures, we will be holding a meeting for the construction of mosque."

"The trust has planned to construct a mosque, Indo-Islamic research centre, library and a charitable hospital for people living in the area. We are dependent on public donation to begin the construction work. However we have already been assured some financial support," he said.

# SCARE BEFORE TEMPLE GALA



A hoarding of PM Narendra Modi and other leaders put up beside an idol of Lord Hanuman, ahead of the foundation laying ceremony of Ram Temple, in Ayodhya, on Thursday.

## Rameshwaram soil sent to Ayodhya for Ram temple



By Akshaya Nath  
in Chennai

AHEAD of the ground breaking of the upcoming Ram temple in Ayodhya, a special puja was conducted in the city of Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu on Thursday.

The puja was conducted at a site that is believed to be the spot where Lord Ram and Sita along with Lakshman had built the idol of Lord Shiva -- which is now believed to be the deity of the Rameshwaram Shiva temple.

This location has been a regular pilgrimage site and owing to Covid-19 situation, the special puja was conducted at the Shankaracharya matt near the Rameshwaram temple

which is opposite to the Hanuman statue.

The puja was conducted by the priests, locals of the town and Hindu Munnani members ahead of the ground breaking ceremony of the Ram temple in Ayodhya on August 5. The August 5 cere-

### Special puja was conducted in city

mony will mark the beginning of the temple construction, after a decades-long title suit over the site was settled by the Supreme Court in November last year.

Mud from Rameshwaram will now be sent to Ayodhya. The holy mud will be sent to Ayodhya via speed post.

Don't use Lord Ram with bow and arrow image for temple promotion. It projects him as an aggressor which he was not.

— M VEERAPPA MOILY,  
CONGRESS LEADER

Everybody must understand Ram temple is a symbol of national pride. Some people are opposing it. It is part of their politics.

— MILIND PARANDE,  
VHP LEADER

The Delhi BJP will install giant LED screens across the city for people to watch the groundbreaking ceremony...

— ADESH KUMAR GUPTA,  
DELHI BJP PRESIDENT

# '75% of local militants wiped out, focus now on those from outside'

**2G Net will stay to stop Pak from spreading hate, says J&K top cop**

By Kamaljit Kaur Sandhu in Srinagar

A WEEK before the first anniversary of abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, Jammu and Kashmir DG Dilbag Singh said the Union Territory is faring better in all parameters of security. Speaking exclusively to India Today TV in Srinagar, the top cop said, "We have fared better in security parameters with 73 percent drop in law and order issues and 40 percent drop in terror-related activities."

IG Kashmir Vijay Kumar has said, "75 percent of local militants have been neutralised and security forces will now focus on going after foreign terrorists." Nearly 150 terror operatives have been neutralised in the past six months.

**Politicians, including BJP's Waseem Bari, were killed in terror attacks**

J&K authorities have restricted high speed mobile internet in the region since last year and allowed only 2G internet to continue. DG Singh expressed apprehension saying, "A desperate Pakistan is trying to foment trouble by misusing the internet, hence the decision to continue with 2G. It is to avoid misuse by troublemakers."

Speaking further, he said, "We have eased internet restrictions over the past one year from no communications, to allowing phone calls, landlines and eventually mobile phones, but the speed restriction is to limit Pakistani elements from indulging in mischief."

Meanwhile, with indications of politics resuming in the state and political workers being targeted, Singh said, "Pakistan's ISI has targeted political workers and cops in a desperate bid."

He added, "We are trying to provide security based on threat assessment." IG Kashmir chipped in saying "100 percent security coverage may not be possible for all political workers." From providing personal security officers to strengthening security apparatus is some-

thing J&K police has worked on.

Even as there are signs that there may be resumption of political activity in the UT of J&K, political leaders including Ajay Pandita and BJP's Waseem Bari were killed in terror attacks.

The J&K Police has given security to several leaders irrespective of party affiliations, though there have been allegations that some workers targeted did not get adequate security while it was withdrawn from several other workers.

On political leaders still under detention after a year, J&K cops said that it is a decision of the administration.

Jammu and Kashmir DGP Dilbag Singh

Militants on Thursday opened fire at an Army vehicle in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

There was no loss of life in the attack. The ultras opened fire on the vehicle of

Forces have launched a search for the militants

the Army at Drubgam Payeen in Pulwama and fled from the spot, a police officer said. Security forces have cordoned off the area and launched a search for the militants, he added.

- PTI

## MILITANTS TARGET ARMY VEHICLE IN PULWAMA

By Manjeet Singh Negi  
in New Delhi

As the winters approach in the eastern Ladakh valley where India and China are engaged in a military stand-off, India is preparing for a long haul with an advantage that all its troops have done a term or two in the extreme cold conditions like the Ladakh sector.

India has deployed around 40,000 troops in the area after the Chinese moved in there three divisions close to the Line of Actual Control and entered into face-offs with the Indian side in April.

"Almost each and every boy deployed in the eastern Ladakh sector has already done a tenure or two in oil altitude or cold areas like

Siachen glacier, subsector hanifuddin in western Ladakh and Kashmir Valley and is prepared both mentally and physically to take on the Chinese challenge throughout the winters," sources said.

The sources said that the Indian side is also preparing to place large orders for extreme cold weather

### Army is prepared to take on the Chinese challenge during winter

portable cabins and tents for housing the 35,000 additional troops.

The need for the tents is being felt as the deployment on the LAC is expected to be prolonged as the senior armed forces officers feel that the stand-off is likely to continue at least

## 3 soldiers killed in Manipur ambush

By Manogya Loiwal  
in Kolkata

THREE soldiers of Assam Rifles have been killed while six others are left injured in a deadly ambush on the Army unit near the Myanmar border in Chandel district south of Imphal in Manipur.

The ambush took place late on Wednesday night at a location 100 km south of Imphal near the Myanmar border in Sajik Tampak in Chandel district.

On July 29, the Assam Rifles personnel had launched an area domination patrol in Khongtal when the patrol team was returning, insurgents detonated an IED and opened fire.

The bodies of three deceased jawans have been sent to Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS) Hospital, Imphal, for post mortem.

Around 6 jawans have sustained minor injuries and have been shifted to a military hos-



pital in Leimakhong in Imphal West District.

Condemning the attack, Chief Minister N Biren Singh called it an act of cowardice. "I strongly condemn the cowardice attack on 4 Assam Rifles in Chandel district. My tributes to the security personnel martyred in the attack. It is an act of cowardice and brutality. My heart goes out to the martyred and their families," he wrote on Facebook.

No underground insurgent outfit has claimed responsibility for the attack but security forces suspect it is the handiwork of the proscribed People's Liberation Army.

### SONOWAL CONDOLES KILLING

Condoling the killing of three Assam Rifles personnel in an ambush by suspected militants in Manipur, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Thursday said that militancy does not solve any problem, but complicates matters further.

"It is really shocking to know the loss of the life of a brave jawan of our state who became an innocent victim of the dastardly attack of the militants. Militancy is not a solution to any problem rather it complicates the situation," Sonowal said.

## India ready for long haul in eastern Ladakh



A view of Lukung in Eastern Ladakh.

till September-October.

The Chinese have already started pitching in their special winter tents and the Indian side, which has similar tents and structures in Siachen glacier, has used some of these in the Eastern Ladakh sector but the need is for a large number of these tents.

Sources said that staying in extreme cold weather conditions in the eastern Ladakh sector would be difficult for the Chinese as most of their pros or cons scripts or join the army only for a limited period of time and then returned to their normal civilian jobs and professions after doing that stint.

"While we are ready for deployment in cold conditions for longer periods, the Chinese will have a tough time to make their soldiers stay here as they are not used to either exposure or 10 in the way we are," the sources said.

**EXCLUSIVE**

By **Rahul Shrivastava**  
in New Delhi

RAJASTHAN Governor Kalraj Mishra has said that he never blocked a demand for assembly session by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. Speaking exclusively to India Today TV, Mishra said that Gehlot was not clarifying the purpose of session and would have said yes in 'normal circumstances'.

"I did not block a demand for assembly session for no reason. Circumstances are not normal otherwise I would have agreed to an assembly session. The CM was not clarifying whether he wanted a session for trust vote or a general session," said Mishra.

He added that the protest by MLAs at the Governor's residence earlier was 'unfortunate'. On being asked about his 1995 protest at Governor's house in Uttar Pradesh when he was the state BJP chief, he said, "The protest by BJP in 1995 at the Raj Bhawan can't be compared to

### Asserts Constitution is supreme for him

that by Congress MLAs."

When asked regarding issue of numbers of the current government in the assembly, he said, "I would not comment on it till it is brought officially."

Reacting to Congress' claims that the Governor is bound by state cabinet's decision and does not have discretion in holding an assembly session, he said, "Yes, the Governor is bound by the state cabinet's decision but there are court orders and provisions that require the Governor to do due diligence as well."

The Constitution is supreme for me, Mishra said, and refuted allegations that he had acted under the central government's pressure in the political tussle. The Governor also asked the Gehlot government to make all efforts to check the spread of coronavirus and focus on development work in the state.

In an interview to PTI, Mishra, who on Wednesday agreed with the state Cabinet's proposal to call an assembly session from August 14, said he has always directed the state government to follow constitutional provisions in sending its request for convening a session.

# Did not obstruct session demand, says Guv Mishra



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot (C) speaks during a Vidhayak Dal meeting, organised under the 'Save Democracy-Save Constitution' protest at a hotel in Jaipur on Thursday. (Below) Governor Kalraj Mishra

### RAJASTHAN'S BIG POLITICAL CRISIS

He had asked the state Cabinet to follow the 21-day notice requirement to call a session while turning down its earlier three proposals before finally agreeing to call the session.

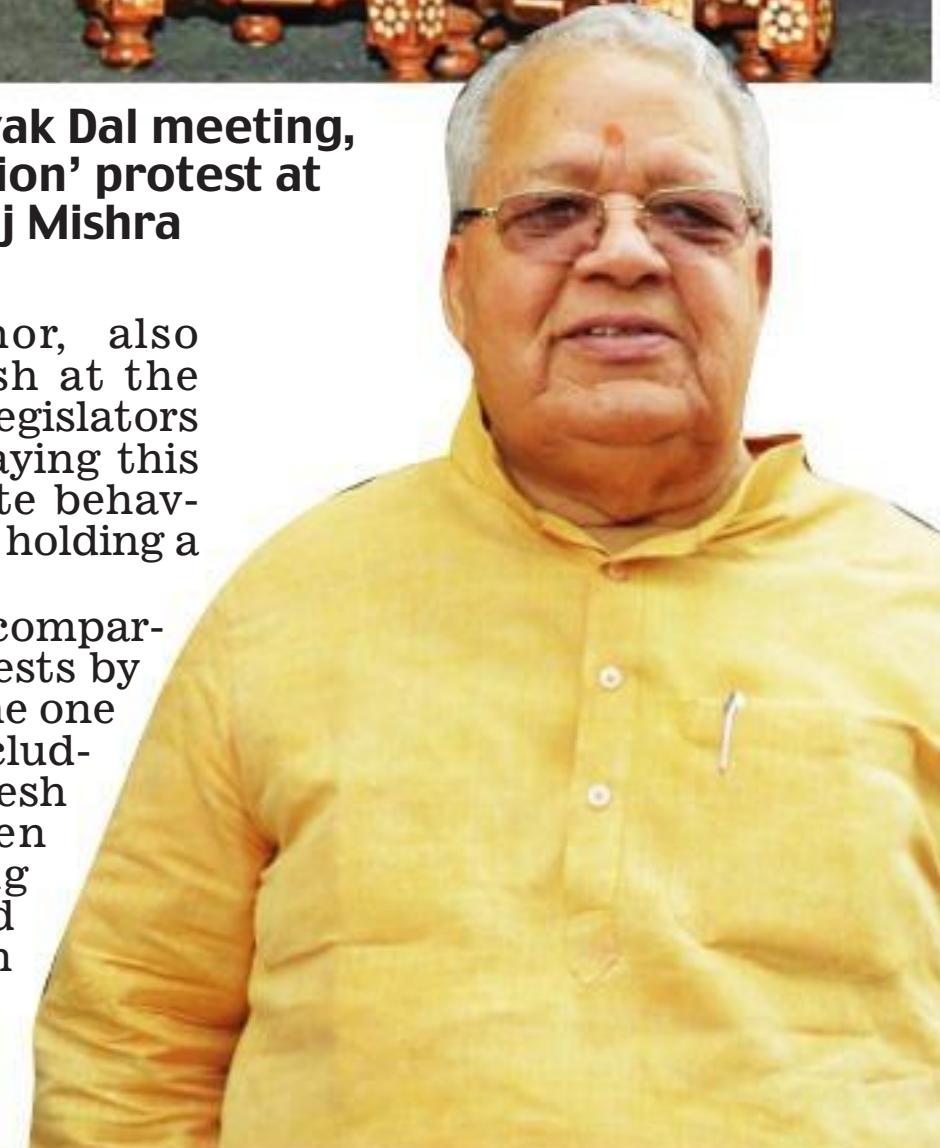
"The Constitution is supreme for a governor. There is no pressure on me," he said when asked about the Congress' charge against him.

Mishra, who was one of the senior most BJP leaders and a former union minister before

being made governor, also expressed his anguish at the protests by Congress legislators inside Raj Bhawan, saying this was not an appropriate behaviour against somebody holding a constitutional post.

He also rejected any comparison between the protests by Congress MLAs and the one by BJP lawmakers, including him, in Uttar Pradesh in 1995 against then state governor, saying UP agitation was held outside Raj Bhawan and it did not violate any decorum.

— With PTI inputs



# Jaya Jaitly sentenced in defence case, HC stays order

A DELHI court on Thursday awarded a 4-year jail term to ex-Samata Party president Jaya Jaitly and two others for corruption in a 2000-01 case related to a purported defence deal saying they compromised the entire defence system of the country.

Special CBI judge Virender Bhat also awarded 4-year jail term to Jaitly's former party colleague Gopal Pacherwal and Major General (rtd) SP Murgai in the case, Murgai's advocate Vikram Panwar said.

"There should be zero tolerance towards corruption in defence procurement deals as



File photo of ex-Samata Party chief Jaya Jaitly

these have direct bearing upon an independence and sovereignty of our country," the court said, adding that the crime committed by the convicts was of highest degree.

The court, in an in-camera proceeding, imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh each on all three convicts and directed them to surrender before it till 5 pm on Thursday itself.

The order was stayed by the high court later in the day. They were held guilty of corruption and criminal conspiracy in the purported purchase of hand-held thermal imagers.

The case stemmed from 'Operation Westend' sting aired by news portal Tehelka in January 2001. The court said the convicts were no laymen but persons of status and means.

— PTI

## Hardik Satishchandra is PM Modi's new PS

IAS officer Hardik Satishchandra Shah has been appointed the Private Secretary (PS) to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to a Personnel Ministry order issued on Thursday.

Shah, a 2010-batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, is currently serving as a Deputy Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). He has been appointed as the PS to the prime minister on co-terminus basis, the order said.

Before moving to the PMO last year, he worked as the PS to Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar.

Satishchandra Shah will take over from Rajeev Topno. Topno, a 1996 batch IAS officer, was appointed as senior advisor to the World Bank Executive Director in June.

— PTI

## Pak, China express worry over Rafale jet acquisition



India on Wednesday received its first batch of five Rafale jets, giving the country's air power a strategic edge.

By **Geeta Mohan** in New Delhi

A DAY after the first batch of five Rafale fighter jets landed in Ambala, adding hugely to India's air capability, Islamabad expressed worries while Beijing cautioned against aggressive posturing by New Delhi.

On Thursday, a spooked Pakistan urged the international community to "dissuade" India from its "disproportionate" arms build-up.

Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson Aisha Farooqui accused India of "disproportionate arms build-up", adding that it "could also lead to an arms race in South Asia".

"India continues to amass military

capabilities beyond its security requirement," she said.

Rafale jets are India's first major acquisition of fighter planes in 23 years after the Sukhoi Su-30 jets were imported from Russia in 1997.

Meanwhile, China also responded to remarks made by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Upon welcoming the Rafale jets, Singh had said that forces that intend to threaten the territorial integrity of India need to be careful with fighter jets purchased from France.

In response to a query regarding the statement, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said, "We hope that the remarks of relevant people in India can benefit regional peace."

<b>EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY</b>				
<b>E-TENDER NOTICE</b>				
E-Tender Notice No. CWMPD-04-2020-21, date : 29.07.2020. On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by Chief Workshop Manager, Bridge Workshop, East Central Railway, Plant Depot, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and on behalf of the President of India, from reputed Firms.				
E-Tender Closing Date : 28.08.2020.				
1. Name of the work with its location : Casting of PSC & RCC Slabs of Standard Span along with ballast retainers as per RDSO Drawing for 25 Ton Loading Standard-2008 at Engineering Workshop, Plant Depot, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. Tender Document Cost = ₹10,000/-.				
2. Approx. cost of the work : ₹2,86,63,795.40. 3. Earnest Money : ₹2,93,300/- 4. Date and time for Closing of e-tender : 28.08.2020 at 15.00 Hrs. 5. Website particulars of e-tendering : www.ireps.gov.in				
Executive Engineer (PD)/Plant Depot/ ECR/Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya PR/0487/PDM/Engg/T/20-21/32				

<b>NORTHERN RAILWAY</b>					
<b>(Open E-Tender Notice)</b>					
The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / Coaching, Northern Railway, New Delhi invites online e-tender through website <a href="https://ireps.gov.in">https://ireps.gov.in</a> , for the parking contract for the period of 3 (Three) years, bid to be opened on 21.08.2020 at 15:00 hrs, at the following stations/locations (Ready Sites) :-					
SN	Name of work with its location/ Railway Station	Advertise value/Reserve Price of one year in (Rs.)	Cost of Tender document & 18%GST (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs.)	Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen
1	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at New Delhi Railway Station (NDLS) Ajmeri Gate Side "A-1" Category Station, with measuring area of 926.68 sq. metres	Rs. 47,95,094/-	Rs. 5,900/-	Rs. 2,87,800/-	<a href="https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no: Parking64-2020">https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no: Parking64-2020</a>

\* Applicable GST and TCS has to be paid by licensee extra, over and above the Advertise value/Reserve Price/ 1674/2020 License fee.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

# New education policy triggers fierce debate

**While some say its directional, many question execution plan**

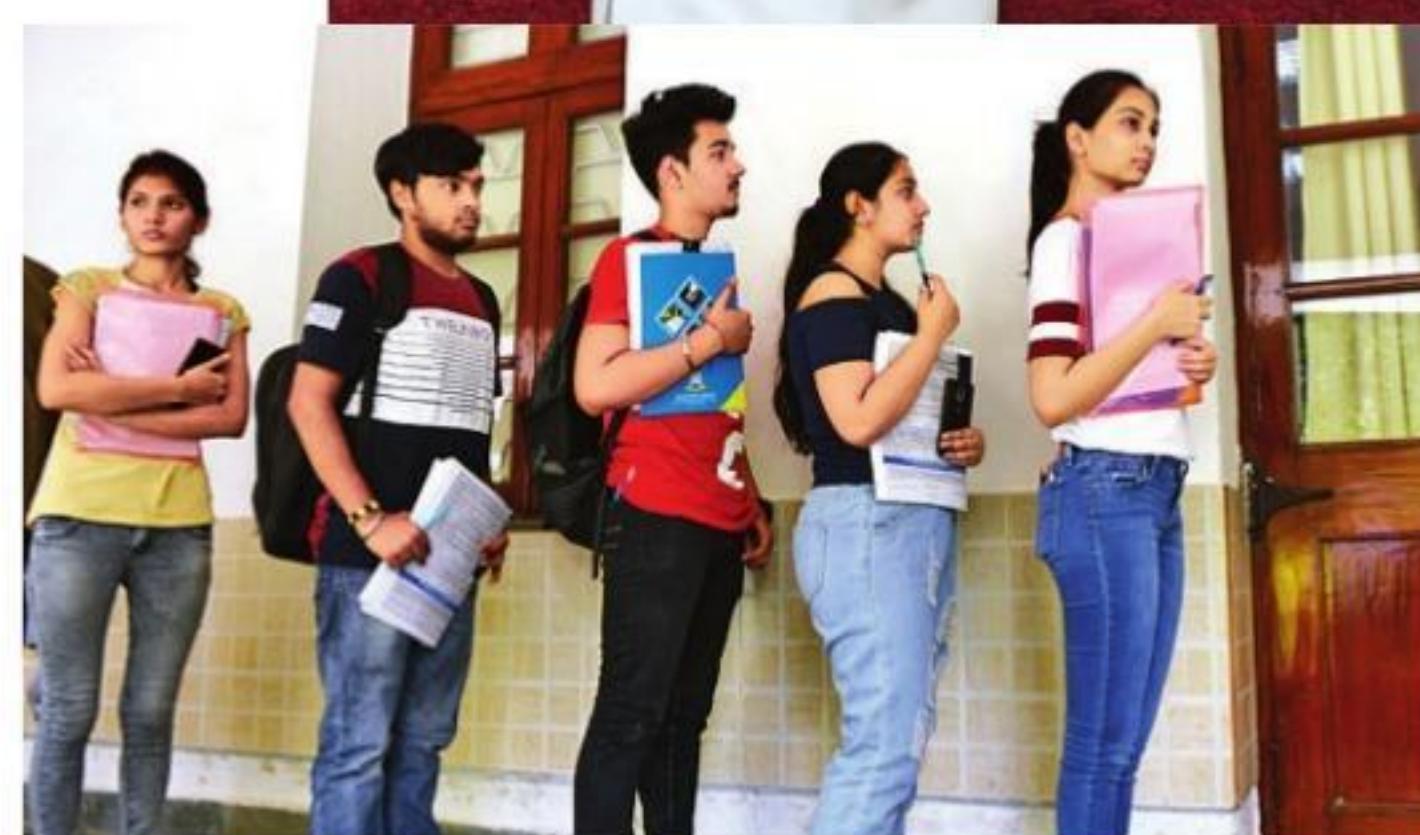
By Milan Sharma in New Delhi

AS the Cabinet passed the new education policy on Thursday, questions on implementation began to surface. The change will begin at the foundation, which means at the very beginning of learning, through schools.

Private schools believe that the policy is a welcome step but directional in nature which may not be enforced and schools could have options to choose.

Amita Vattal, principal of Springdales School in Delhi, said that this policy is all about 21st century learning. "The coaching centres will go out of equation by this policy. There is nothing wrong in restructuring of classes from pre-school onwards which will help children evolve. The CBSE should review the regional language part of the policy for the metro cities where children from all over the country come. They must find a way out. It should be made clear that there is not any forced learning and everything would be optional."

Ashish Dhawan, CEO and founder of Central Square Foundation said, "The policy recognised that almost half the children in the country go to private schools. It does talk about the fact that we need greater autonomy, which is a light and a tight regulation. Get some principles on board and decide a code to be able to make a model of governance for private



schools."

"It is a guiding document and isn't very specific with regards to private schools per se. Specifically, how much disclosure and

autonomy is there? Can these schools be rid of licence raj that they face? The policy needs to be more specific on these issues," Dhawan said.

## How RSS played a pivotal role in planning policy & its impact

By Rahul Shrivastava  
in New Delhi

THE GOVERNMENT on Thursday hailed the New Education Policy as a turning point in India's history but for the RSS, the BJP's ideological mentor, it's a milestone achieved after 60 years of struggle to have a say in what and how students are taught at every academic level. The RSS cadres are jubilant that their voice played a significant role at the policy drafting table.

### Emphasis on Sanskrit, Pali an achievement for RSS

The seventh year of the PM Narendra Modi-led government rule has helped the outfit to turn the emphasis of India's education policy from Congress-era Human Resource development to the sangh's pet template of "education as means for character and nation building".

The BJP's siblings are welcoming the NEP as they feel they had a major say in the final



policy as most of their suggestions have been incorporated. However, sources say that the government walked the tightrope to either leave out some suggestions from its affiliates in the sangh or found alternate methods to make space for them.

The change in the name of the human resource ministry or HRD, coined by the Rajiv Gandhi government, inspired by the set up in erstwhile USSR, to a

RSS' demand for India-centric policy reflected in NEP

simple ministry of education has the RSS stamp on it.

Importantly, the issue of renaming the ministry had figured prominently at a Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal or BSM conference in 2018, where speaker after speaker had urged the government to change the name. PM Narendra Modi and the then HRD minister Prakash Javadekar were among those present on the stage.



Union Education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' hands over the final policy document to Vice President Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday.

## 'Challenge will be to match govt's ambitions in NEP'

By Anand Kumar Patel  
in New Delhi

THE challenge will be to match the ambition in the National Education Policy with implementation and resources, according to Congress leader and MP Shashi Tharoor. "I have my doubts that the finance ministry will be very obliging as far as fulfilling ambitious goals that have been approved by the Cabinet," said Tharoor, while talking to India Today TV.

He said that there are many things in the policy to be happy about, some things to be concerned while some reasons for skepticism about the actual achievement of these goals.

Tharoor tweeted, "There is much to welcome in what we have seen of the #NewEducationPolicy2020 announced by @DrRPNishank. A number of suggestions made by some of us seem to have been taken into account. However, the question remains why this was not brought before Parliament for discussion."

"I've advocated revision of the 1986 National Education Policy since my days in

MHRD, to bring it into the 21st century, I am glad the Modi Govt has finally grasped the nettle, even if it took them six years to do so. Challenge is to ensure aspiration is matched by the implementation," he said.

"For instance, the goal of 6% of GDP to be spent on education was first articulated in 1948! Every Govt articulates this target & then comes up against its own Finance Ministry. In the last 6 years, Modi Govt expenditure in education has declined in real terms. How will it reach 6%?" he questioned.

Tharoor said that the goals of 50% Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education and 100% in secondary school are laudable, but when you realise it's currently

25.8% in higher education & 68% in Class 9, you wonder if such targets are any more realistic than the government's solar-energy commitments in Paris. "The NEP should have offered more tangible & reliable targets for research, the total investment on research & innovation in India declined from 0.84% of GDP in 2008 to 0.6% in 2018," he further added.



Congress leader Shashi Tharoor

## DAY IN WORDS

In a country with a population of this size, herd immunity is not an option without a vaccine. It can be an outcome at a high human cost.

— RAJESH BHUSHAN, Secretary, Ministry of Health, on herd immunity against Covid-19 in the country

It's a process of accepting who you are just as you are. For me, I changed myself over and over to fit what I thought somebody else wanted.

— DEMI MOORE, actor, on the importance of being yourself in relationships

He was standing there. Older, Caucasian guy, grey hair, just yelling at me. He was racially abusing me, calling me all sorts of names.

— DIVOCK ORIG, Liverpool player, on how an opponent's father hurled racial abuse at him during a match when he was 12

## DAY IN NUMBERS

**1.4 mn**      **\$21 bn**

Americans filed for jobless claims for the first time this week, says US Labour Department

owed by Americans in back-rent dues, without any relief from government, say reports

## AROUND THE WORLD

THE GUARDIAN  
ON POLICING METHODS

## Police biases are obvious against people of colour

IT IS so normal for the police to stop black people, on little grounds for suspicion, that it should be no surprise victims include gold medal-winning athletes and ministers.

The presumption of innocence has always had racial caveats. This month, the Metropolitan police commissioner, Cressida Dick, claimed to have special insight into the criminality of stop and search victims — who are 10 times more likely to be black — even when no evidence of wrongdoing is found.

## Stop and search victims are much more likely to be black

The wholesale criminalisation of the black community is not new. It leads to children being harassed by the constant suspicion that they — to use the police's phrase — "fit the profile". A whole new generation is bringing this trauma to their resurgent Black Lives Matter activism.

The normalisation of racist policing practices leads to fatal force against black people who need help from authorities, yet end up dead.

These facts are more sobering when one realises there is no one to hold the police to account.

## DAILY HUMOUR

“Too much money is never enough money.”

— Lil Wayne

## PREPARING FOR UNLOCK 3.0

PTI



A worker wearing a PPE kit sprays disinfectants to sanitise High Street Phoenix mall, ahead of its reopening during Unlock 3, at Lower Parel in Mumbai on Thursday

# Let's welcome new education policy



by Dinesh Singh

recognises the advantages to human development that accrue through practical mastery in at least two languages.

## Against rote learning

Society must recognise that education is not just about gaining knowledge in the traditional disciplines such as history or mathematics. It goes beyond that and this policy document says this very well when it states that at the level of schools, the segregation between the traditional subjects of the humanities, social sciences and sciences and the extra-curricular subjects such as photography, dramatics, debating or the NCC and sports has to be dissolved. Each of these activities is an exercise in getting educated and the sooner society and schools learn of this the better. After all, Sachin Tendulkar, who has no formal qualification beyond high school and who devoted himself almost wholly to cricket, is one of the most 'educated' persons in India.

The other valuable recommendation centres around reducing the curriculum so as not to overwhelm the child. This is essential since schoolchildren in India are so heavily burdened by the number of disciplines that they have to study right from grade 1. This is done in a very harmful manner and is detrimental to the child's intellectual growth in the long run. The policy also de-emphasises rote learning. The PISA tests indicated our schoolchildren don't seem to imbibe or understand in a meaningful manner. To take care of this pedagogical malaise the policy urges and asserts that experiential learning must be incorporated into the curriculum. If we make our schoolchildren learn to use their hands by putting knowledge into action it would make learning that much more fruitful. Tagore and Gandhiji, among many others, had said this very strongly long ago.

I wish to commend the decision to make testing more meaningful so conceptual understanding can happen in school education. By the time students engage with college education they seem to have lost the ability to think originally and to relate their learning to the real world. There are many other very enabling provisions on school education such as the emphasis on understanding Indian culture. However, I hope that this shall not inculcate an insular approach. We must, as Gandhiji had said, open the doors and windows of our homes to the winds of culture and knowledge of the world around us. The important thing is, as he said, not to be blown off our feet by any of these winds i.e. we should stand rooted in our culture. It is wise to lay stress on the making our students adept at coding at an early age and the document lays this down clearly.

## For higher studies

As regards higher education, the document has placed a constructive and welcome pathway before India. The policy lays the ground for a 'hands on' and trans-disciplinary approach with entry and exit points for undergraduates at several levels. The annual dropout rates in Indian colleges is high. The policy states when a student leaves after a year or two years, she has the option of obtaining a certificate or a diploma, which is an enabling step. It allows enormous flexibility in the choice of subjects and dissolves the barriers between science, humanities and technology and other non-traditional disciplines. To gain access to research and entrepreneurship the student can opt for a fourth year of study. The student has the option of taking her bachelor's degree after three years. The policy lays emphasis on teacher education and training at higher education levels. These features are essentially what we implemented with great success at the University of Delhi in 2013-14 and thus I can vouch for them with conviction.

The writer is former Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University and currently Adjunct Professor of Mathematics, University of Houston, USA. The views expressed are personal.

## SO FUNNY

The world is going to end in five minutes. Please log out...



“I like women, I don't understand them, but I like them.”

— Sean Connery

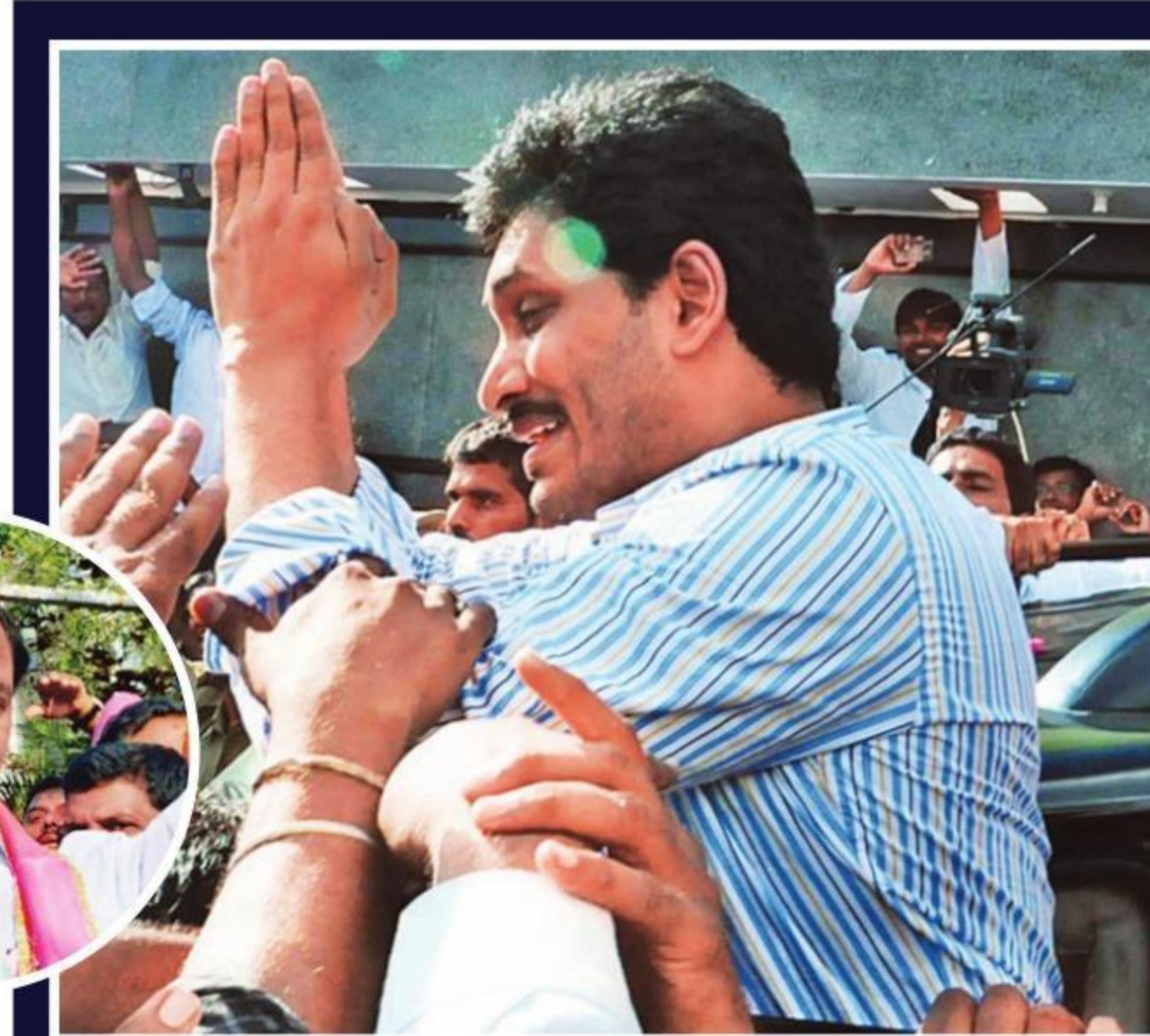


# SUNNY SIDE DOWN

AMARNATH MENON

**T**HE two Telugu states could lock horns at the Apex Council meeting of the Water Resources Ministry on August 5 over the sharing of Krishna waters. The meeting to be chaired by Union Minister for Jal Shakti Gajendra Singh Shekhawat would be attended by Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, to arrive at a conciliation over the water dispute between them. It would be a virtual meeting through video link in the wake of Covid.

Telangana has warned Andhra Pradesh against constructing the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project (RLIP) aimed at drawing more water from the Krishna river. The immediate reason for convening the meeting is Telangana's objection to Andhra Pradesh's plan to divert about 8 TMC feet of water a day from Srisailam reservoir by taking up the RLIP and enhancing the water withdrawal capacity of Pothireddypadu Head Regulator system to 80,000 cusecs from the existing 44,000 cusecs. Differences have sharpened on the water discharge and entry pertaining to the utilisation of Pothireddypadu Head Regulator and K C Canal system as also regarding the



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and Telangana CM K. Chandrashekhar Rao (inset)

# States clash over Krishna waters

diversion of Godavari water to Krishna Delta through the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Project, when huge quantity of water has been flowing waste into the sea from the Prakasam Barrage. This would be only the second meeting of the Apex Council, constituted as per the provisions of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act to discuss water disputes, particularly on sharing the waters in tune with the existing tribunal awards and over construction of new irrigation projects.

Telangana has been arguing before the Krishna River Management Board (KRB) that the difference between the water drawn from Pothireddypadu and record was at least 18 tmcft, while their Andhra Pradesh counterparts contend that it was only 3 tmcft. Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao will make a presentation claiming that the proposed Sangameswara lift irrigation project of Andhra Pradesh and enhancing the capacity of the Pothireddypadu Head Regulator is illegal. He is also to counter the allegations of Andhra Pradesh which had raised several objections to the projects being taken up by Telangana both on the Krishna and Godavari.

Earlier inter-state meetings have

**Union Minister of Jal Shakti GS Shekhawat will chair the meeting attended by the two chief ministers**

also witnessed differences over drawing of water from the KC Canal with Telangana claiming that the drawal volume here recorded was 8.5 tmcft, while the AP engineers put it at only 2.26 tmcft. There is also another contention of Telangana that Andhra Pradesh had already diverted 21.97 tmcft of Godavari water through Pattiseema in the past. Yet another contention of Telangana brought to the notice of the KRMB officials was the claims of Andhra that it had so far diverted 21.97 tmcft of Godavari water to Krishna Delta through the Pattiseema project. The Andhra engineers say the volume of water diverted from Godavari should be deducted from their utilisation.

The meeting assumes significance as it comes ahead of opening bids for RLIP. The EPC has invited tenders to complete the work within 30 months at an estimated cost of ₹3,278.18 crore. It is said that the project is to lift 34,722 cusecs of water per day from the Srisailam Reservoir from a depth of 800 feet. The meeting was initially planned to be held in June and the Union Ministry had written to the two states seeking agenda points for the meeting scheduled to be held during the third week of May.

The writer is Senior Deputy Editor, India Today magazine

## Alarming rise in Covid cases

ON July 29, Andhra Pradesh reported 10,093 Covid-19 cases, the day's highest for any state in the country. Every fifth positive case reported in the country that day was from the state. It also became the

fourth state in the country in terms of the number of positive cases reported. The state's positive cases tally has now increased to 1,20,390. However, in terms of deaths, it stands at eighth position.

## A CLARIFICATION

In a report headlined 'Now, Nitish ousts key health official' published in Mail Today edition dated July 30, the photograph of IAS officer Ritvik Pandey was carried in place of Bihar government official Uday Singh Kumawat. The error was inadvertent and is deeply regretted.

-Editor

Fresh twist in the tale of 3 capitals



Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan

THE DECISION of state Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan is vital in establishing three capitals as proposed by the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill and AP Capital Region Development Authority (Repeal) Bill. But, in the wake of vocal opposition to Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's plan and that the bills were not adopted by the state legislative council the Governor is withholding assent pending legal clarity.

A recent Supreme Court order on the issue of reinstating the sacked State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar is believed to have forced the governor to send the bills for opinion of constitutional experts in Delhi. While the decision is delayed, the government has silently started work in Visakhapatnam to shift the administrative capital from Vijayawada.

On the other hand, farmers in Amaravati have decided to intensify protest to stall the approval of the bills. They say the AP Reorganization Act has clearly indicated that the state would have only one capital and hence the proposal to set up three capitals is not legally tenable.

## NEW LEADER, NEW RESOLVE

"MY agenda is to strengthen the party at all levels until it emerges as an alternative," says Somu Veeraju, the outspoken MLC appointed Andhra Pradesh BJP president on July 27. "I will take my association with the party to greater heights with support of senior leaders including my immediate predecessor Kanna Lakshmi-

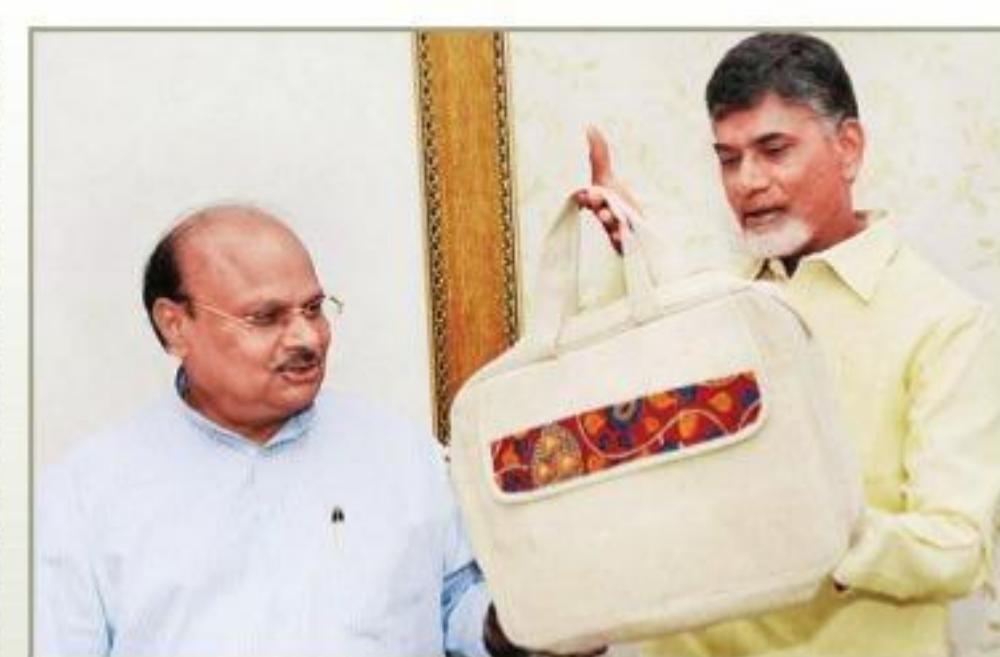
narayana." It could lead to a new thrust for the party in the state. What is his strategy? "In the eyes of the BJP, the YSRC and the TDP are equal. We will keenly observe the functioning of the YSRC and, at the same time, we will also study the impact of the decisions taken by the previous TDP government," he says.

## DEBT BURDEN IS MOUNTING

TELUGU Desam Party (TDP) politburo member Yanamala Ramakrishnudu alleges that in just over a year of its governance, the ruling Yuva Jana Sramika Rythu Congress (YSRC) gov-

### 'YSRC govt took massive loans'

ernment has availed of such massive loans that were equal to the total loans procured by the previous governments over a period of 30 years. "The state's financial crisis is fast becoming unmanageable and the credit rating of Andhra



Telugu Desam Party politburo member Yanamala Ramakrishnudu (left) with N Chandrababu Naidu

Pradesh has touched a new low," he warns, adding the interest and principal loan payments are expected to touch ₹1 lakh crore in the coming four years.

He says the average loans taken by successive governments since 1956 till 2020

came to ₹5,000 Cr per year while the Jagan regime has procured ₹70,000 Cr in just one year, during 2019-20. Along with loans taken by the YSRC government, the total outstanding loans of the state now stood at ₹3,04,500 crore.

# WORLDLY WISE

## Most nations in continent witnessing a record rise in virus cases

SPIKES in novel coronavirus infections in Asia have dispelled any notion the region may be over the worst, with Australia, India and Hong Kong reporting record daily cases, Vietnam testing thousands and North Korea urging vigilance.

Asian governments had largely prided themselves on rapidly containing initial outbreaks after the virus emerged in central China late last year, but flare-ups this month have shown the danger of complacency.

"We've got to be careful not to slip into some idea that there's

We've got to be careful not to slip into some idea that there's some golden immunity that Australia has in relation to this virus.

— SCOTT MORRISON,  
AUSTRALIAN PM

some golden immunity that Australia has in relation to this virus," Prime Minister Scott Morrison told reporters.

Australia recorded its deadliest day with at least 13 deaths and more than 700 new infections, mostly in the second-most populous state of Victoria, where the government ordered all residents to wear face-coverings outside.

The country has confirmed a total of 16,298 cases since the pandemic began, with 189 fatalities, more than half in Victoria and its capital Melbourne, which is under a new lockdown.

Victoria's new infections have seeded outbreaks in other areas, including Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, which reported 18 new cases.

Further restrictions on movement would deal a blow to the economy, already in its first recession for 30 years, but failure



Ambulance officers shift a resident from an aged care facility in Melbourne on Thursday.

## As cases surge, Asia is still not past the worst

to control the outbreaks would do more economic harm in the long run, Morrison said.

### 'FULL FORCE TO TEST'

Vietnam, virus-free for months, has also had a harsh reminder of the dangers with a new surge spreading to six cities and provinces in six days, linked to an outbreak in the central city of Danang.

Authorities told tens of thousands of people who visited Danang to report to disease control centres, as nine new cases were confirmed, taking total infections to 42 since the virus resurfaced at the weekend.

Cases have also appeared in the capital, Hanoi, the southern commercial hub of Ho Chi

China reported 105 new cases on Thursday

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Minh City and in the Central Highlands.

Thanks to a centralised quarantine programme and aggressive contact-tracing, Vietnam has registered a total of only 459 cases, with no deaths.

But now more than 81,000 people are in quarantine and authorities in Hanoi said more than 20,000 residents who recently returned from Danang, a holiday getaway that has been a big draw

since restrictions were eased, would be tested.

Hong Kong also reported a daily record with 149 new cases, including 145 that were locally transmitted, as authorities warned that the global financial hub faced a critical period.

The Chinese territory reported 118 new cases on Wednesday. More than 3,000 people have been infected in Hong Kong, 24 of whom have died.

China reported 105 new coronavirus cases on the mainland, up from 101 the previous day, with 96 of them in the far western region of Xinjiang, five in the northeastern province of Liaoning, one was in Beijing and three imported cases.

As of Wednesday, China had 84,165 confirmed cases, with 4,634 deaths.

—Reuters

## 'Britain worried about a second wave in Europe'

THE BRITISH authorities are worried about a second wave of coronavirus infections in Europe and will not hesitate to bring back more quarantine measures, possibly within the next few days, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said on Thursday.

Britain last week re-imposed a 14-day quarantine period on people arriving from Spain, a move that caused havoc to plans to reopen the continent

for tourism in the summer high season.

Hancock stopped short of naming other European countries that might also end up back on the UK quarantine list, but cited France as an example of one where infections have lately risen.

"I am worried about a second wave. I think you can see a second wave starting to roll across Europe, and we've got to do everything we can to

prevent it from reaching these shores, and to tackle it," Matt Hancock said during an interview on Sky News.

"We have significant concerns about the second wave that is coming across Europe. And it's not just Spain ... but there are other countries too where the number of cases is rising. And we are absolutely determined to do everything that we can to keep this country safe," he said.



Waxworks form a socially distanced queue outside the Madame Tussauds London museum, on Thursday.

When asked whether Britons should be prepared for more measures to be announced within the next few days, he said 'yes'.

Hancock said the British authorities were working on ways to shorten the quarantine period for people coming from Spain.

—Reuters

California, Florida and Texas, the three largest US states, all set one-day records for fatalities from Covid-19 on Wednesday. The United States has registered 10,000 deaths over the last 11 days.



I'm all for supporting tourism. But we should not do that when the infection is resurgent. This is a mistake.

—NORIO SUGAYA, W.H.O DOCTOR

## Trump asks for delay in polls over virus fears

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump on Thursday suggested delaying the 2020 election, in which he is currently lagging badly in the polls, citing the coronavirus and what he said would be fraudulent voting.

"Delay the Election until people can properly, securely and safely vote???" Trump asked in a tweet. "With Universal Mail-In Voting (not Absentee Voting, which is good), 2020 will be the most INACCURATE & FRAUDULENT Election in history. It will be a great embarrassment to the USA," the tweet said.

Only Congress can change the election date, which is set by law on November 3.



US President Donald Trump

With Democrats ruling the lower House, that seems highly unlikely to happen.

Trump has previously insisted that he sees no problem going ahead with the election, where he faces Democratic challenger Joe Biden.

The coronavirus pandemic remains out of control in swaths of the United States, including most recently in Republican-led states like Florida and Texas.

During the presidential primary contests earlier this year, several states delayed voting or opened fewer polling sites.

But Trump has bitterly resisted Democratic-led attempts to increase availability of mail-in voting, saying that this will promote fraud and that Americans should line up at the polls as usual. His opponents say there is no evidence suggesting what Trump claims.

—AFP

# PM Modi: Sharing is our only motivation

**PM inaugurates new Supreme Court building in Mauritius, takes a jibe at China**

INDIA'S development cooperation with other nations does not come with any conditions and is not influenced by political or commercial considerations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Thursday.

He also said that India's approach to development is mainly human-centric and it wants to work for the welfare of humanity. "Our development partnerships reflect the development priorities of our partner nations," the Prime Minister said.

PM Modi was addressing a virtual event of the inauguration of a new Supreme Court building of Mauritius. PM Modi and Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth jointly inaugurated the new Supreme Court building at Port Louis. "The new building in Port Louis is a symbol of our

**Mauritius PM calls it a new milestone**

cooperation and shared values. Both India and Mauritius respect our independent judiciaries as important pillars of our democratic systems," he said.

He said history has taught us that in the name of development partnerships, nations were forced into dependence partnerships. "It gave rise to colonial and imperial rule. It gave rise to global power blocks and humanity suffered. India is making development partnerships that are marked by respect, diversity, care for the future, and sustainable development," he noted. For India, PM Modi said, the most fundamental principle in development cooperation is respecting its partners.

"This sharing of development



(R) PM Narendra Modi and Mauritius PM Pravind Jugnauth during the joint inauguration of the new Supreme Court building at Port Louis via video conferencing on Thursday.



(2L)  
Mauritius PM Pravind Jugnauth and other officials during the inaugural event on Thursday.

lessons is our only motivation. That is why our development cooperation does not come with any conditions. It is not influenced by political or commercial considerations," PM Modi said. Meanwhile, PM Jugnauth expressed appreciation for India's support for the project as reflective of the close ties of friendship and cooperation between the countries. He noted that the construction of the court building with Indian assistance is a new milestone in the modernisation of infrastructure in Mauritius. —PTI

## SC PROJECT PART OF DEAL WITH INDIA

ACCORDING to an MEA statement issued on Tuesday, the new Supreme Court building is spread over an area of more than 4,700 square metre with over 10 floors and a built up area of around 25,000 square metre.

The building flaunts a modern design and

green features with focus on thermal and sound insulation and high energy efficiency. The building project is one of the five projects being implemented under the Special Economic Package of \$353 million extended by India to Mauritius in 2016. —PTI

Court building focuses on high energy efficiency.

**Today we celebrate yet another landmark in the special bond between India and Mauritius. The new Supreme Court Building is a symbol of our cooperation and our shared values.**

**For India, the most fundamental principle in development cooperation is respecting our partners... Our development cooperation does not come with any conditions.**

— Narendra Modi, PM

## HK bars 12 from Sept poll

HONG Kong's government said on Thursday that 12 pro-democracy candidates had been disqualified from running for election to the legislature, citing Opposition to a new national security law imposed by Beijing, but denied impinging on civil rights. Disqualified candidates included pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong, some members of

### Authorities deny curbing civil rights

The Civic Party and others who won an unofficial "primary" vote held by the opposition camp earlier this month.

The move is sure to infuriate supporters of democracy, a month after Communist Party rulers in Beijing announced the national security law reigning in dissent in the semi-autonomous city, and throw China further on a collision path with the West. The government said there

Civic Party members at a presser after 12 pro-democracy candidates were disqualified from running for poll to the legislature in Hong Kong on Thursday.



could be more disqualifications. Critics say the move is aimed at curbing the ascendancy of a young generation of democrats after a win in last year's lower-level district council elections.

Chances for a historic majority in the Legislative Council, or mini-parliament, for the Opposition camp could take a further blow if the government decides to postpone the September 6

vote, as expected, amid the coronavirus pandemic. Prior to this poll, authorities had barred 18 democrats from running in local polls, according to a report by the rights group Civil Rights Observer. Six candidates were barred from the previous legislative poll in 2016, including pro-independence leader Edward Leung, who has since been jailed on a rioting charge. —Reuters

## Pompeo to defend his policies on China, Russia

US LAWMAKERS expect to question Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on dealings with China and Russia, the decision to move troops out of Germany and weapons exports when the country's top diplomat offers rare public testimony in the Senate on Thursday.

Pompeo will testify at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing for the first time in 15 months, discussing the State Department's annual budget request. Foreign Relations Committee Democrats released a report this week that harshly criticised Pompeo's tenure at State, saying he had harmed the department's ability to conduct diplomacy by leaving jobs open for months, treating career diplomats poorly and promoting a



File photo of Mike Pompeo.

culture of retaliation. A host of other issues are also on lawmakers' minds, Senate aides said. Among them are deteriorating relations with China, after Washington and Beijing each closed one of the other country's consulates and Pompeo recently announced an end to Hong Kong's special trading status. —Reuters



**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
Website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

#### E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Amount Rs.
1.	12/DGM(NTC)/SM(NTC)/2020-21	P/L Thermoplastic paint on edge line, centre line broken line, speed breaker, zebra crossing, stop line, arrow on road in Sector-58,59,60, Noida.	4175794.80

Which can be uploaded by date 13.08.2020 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 14.08.2020 at 11.00 AM.

Dy. General Manager, Noida Traffic Cell

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

	भारत सरकार Government of India			
	परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग Department of Atomic Energy			
	नायिकोय इन सम्मिश्र Nuclear Fuel Complex			
	बहिःस्वाव प्रबंधन अनुभाग Effluent Management section			
	<b>जन निविदा नोटिस / PUBLIC TENDER NOTICE</b>			
	निम्नलिखित बहिःस्वाव "जैसा है जहाँ है" की अवस्था में 24 महीने के समय में बिक्री के लिए मुद्रावंच निविदा आपत्ति की जाती है Sealed tenders are invited for buying the following effluent from NFC on, "As is where is condition" for a period of 24 months.			
S. No.	Tender No.	Name of effluent	Total Qty. offered	E M D
1	NFC/EM/AR-NUOFP/2020/01	Acidic Raffinate from NUOFP	2400 KL	Rs. 36,000/-
Last date for sale of Tender documents	14.08.2020			
Last date for receipt of filled in Tender documents	21.08.2020 up to 12.00 hrs			
Date and Time of Opening of Tender documents	21.08.2020 at 14.00 hrs			
अधिक जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट पे जाए For further details visit our website <a href="http://www.nfc.gov.in">www.nfc.gov.in</a>				
				सहायक महाप्रबंधक, बहिःस्वाव प्रबंधन अनुभाग AGM, EM Section
				भारत के राष्ट्रपति के लिए तथा उनकी ओर से For and on behalf of the President of India

#### EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

#### E-TENDER NOTICE

ईसीआर—सीएओ—कॉन्स—उत्तर—ई.निविदा/उत्तर-23-20-21 दिनांक 29.07.2020. E-Tender Notice No.-ECR-CAO-CON-NORTH-ETN-23-20-21. E-Tender is invited on behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work:-

1. Name of work : Supplying and stacking of machine crushed stone track ballast Pakur/Sahebganj Range as per Railway/RDSO specifications on cess and spreading the same on formation between Sathi-Narkatiaganj section (Approx. km 234/500 To Km 245/300) including Sathi yard in connection with doubling of Sagauli-Narkatiaganj section under DY. CE/Con/BTH of Samastipur division. 2. Approx. cost of the work : ₹4,20,62,180/- . 3. Earnest money : ₹3,51,300/- . 4. Date and time for closing of tender : 24.08.2020 at 14.30 hrs. 5. Website particular, Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and addressed of the office from where the tender form be purchased etc. : The above E-Tender, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in> and also can see in the office of CAO/Con/ECR, MHX, Patna. Note : Tenderers are requested to visit the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> atleast 10 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in response to this E-tender.

CAO/Con/North/ECR/Mahendraghat, Patna PR/0482/CON/Engg./T/20-21/44

#### EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

#### E-TENDER NOTICE

e-tender is invited on Behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work:-

1. Name of the work with its location : Electrification of officers rest house at Narkatiaganj including Submersible Pump, street light & circulating area lighting power etc. in connection with doubling between Sugauli to Valmikinagar section. e-Tender No. ELC/N/MHX/ETEN/74/20-21. Approx. Cost of the work : ₹92,88,357/- . Earnest money and tender Document cost to be deposited : ₹1,85,800/- and ₹5,000/- respectively. 2. Name of the work with its location : Removal of overhead infringements of 11KV/440V, provision of transformer, electrification of EOT crane shed, circulating area lighting and street lighting at sick line Samastipur. e-Tender No. ELC/N/MHX/ETEN/75/20-21. Approx. Cost of the work : ₹1,92,71,505/- . Earnest money and tender Document cost to be deposited : ₹2,46,400/- and ₹5,000/-respectively. 3. Date and time for closing of tender : 18.08.2020 up to 12.00 Hrs. 4. Website particular and notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : Tender can be down loaded from IREPS website : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and detailed can be seen from the notice board at CEE/CON/Mahendraghat office, CAO/CON/ECR office Complex, Patna-04.

Dy. CEE/Con/North/ECR/Samastipur PR/0485/CON/Elec./T/20-21/44

#### Office of Superintending Engineer. PHED Project Cr-II, Bhilwara

e-mail: [sepcircle2.bhl.phe@rajasthan.gov.in](mailto:sepcircle2.bhl.phe@rajasthan.gov.in)

Bids for following works are invited from interested bidders upto 06:00 PM, 26.08.2020. Other particulars of the bids may visited on the procurement portal (<http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.

NIB No. 04/2020-21	Parallel Rate Contract of Providing, Laying, jointing, testing and Commissioning of Internal distribution network and providing Functional Household Tap water connection from already laid/New distribution pipe line to property line, including all material and all labour under jurisdiction of PHED Project Division - Asind District Bhilwara with 12 months defect liability period.	UBN: PHE2021-WSOB04255
NIB No. 05/2020-21	Parallel Rate Contract of Providing, laying, jointing, testing and Commissioning of Internal distribution network and providing Functional Household Tap water connection from already laid/ New distribution pipe line to property line, including all material, and all labour under jurisdiction of PHED Project Division- Raipur District Bhilwara with 12 months defect liability period	UBN: PHE2021-WSOB04256
NIB No. 06/2020-21	Parallel Rate Contract of Providing, laying, jointing, testing and Commissioning of Internal distribution network and providing Functional Household Tap water connection from already laid/ New distribution pipe line to property line, including all material, and all labour under jurisdiction of PHED Project Division- Gulabpur District Bhilwara with 12 months defect liability period	UBN: PHE2021-WSOB04257
NIB No. 07/2020-21	Parallel Rate Contract of Providing, laying, jointing, testing and Commissioning of Internal distribution network and providing Functional Household Tap water connection from already laid/ New distribution pipe line to property line, including all material, and all labour under jurisdiction of PHED Project Division- Gangapur District Bhilwara with 12 months defect liability period	UBN: PHE2021-WSOB04259

DIPR/C/5872/2020  
DT. 30/07/2020

Sd/- (J. R. Nayak)  
Superintending Engineer,  
PHED, Project Circle-II Bhilwara

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY

#### OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

#### Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

1	Name of work with its location	1. Hiring of multi-utility vehicle and truck for misc work of Track maintenance/renewal for a period of 02 years in the section of ADEN/MSZ (NIT-17-20-21-W-IV) 2. Replacement of Old MS Steel Tank with RCC tank of capacity 225000 Ltrs & Replacement of corroded pipe at JHI station under Sr. DEN-IV/NDLs (NIT-19-20-21-W-IV).
2	Approximate cost of work	(1) Rs. 1,00,20,089.66 (2) Rs. 90,47,537.13
3	Earliest money	(1) Rs. 2,00,100.00 (2) Rs. 1,81,000.00
4	Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Bidding State date Up to 15:00 hrs. on 11.08.2020 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs on 25.08.2020.
5	Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>

No.: 128-W/260/Tender Notice/NIT 17 & 19/20-21/W-IV

Date : 30.07.2020

1668/2020

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#### MPIDC MP INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED

(Government of Madhya Pradesh Undertaking)  
SECRETARIAT FOR SINGLE WINDOW SYSTEM

CIN : U51102MP1977SGC001392, "CEDMAP BHAWAN" 16-A, Arera Hills, Bhopal-11 (India), Tel. : (91) 755-2571830, 2575773, Fax : (91) 755-2559973, E-mail : facilitation@mpidc.co.in, Website : [www.invest.mp.gov.in](http://www.invest.mp.gov.in) (formerly known as Madhya Pradesh Trade and Investment Facilitation Corporation Limited)

Bhopal, Dated: 30.07.2020

#### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (No. 37)

Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. (MPIDC) invites offer from interested consultant with proven capabilities and demonstrated performance to express their interest to participate in the competitive bidding for "Request for Proposal for Appointment of Consultant for Assessment of Industrial Development and Investment Potential along proposed Chambal Expressway Economic Corridor (Progressway) in the State of Madhya Pradesh".

For details interested consultants can visit following website :-

- [www.mptenders.gov.in](http://www.mptenders.gov.in) - MPIDC HO Bhopal
- Contact Person: Shri S.K. Jain – 9826050599  
M.P. Madhyam/98064/2020

**MANAGING DIRECTOR**



**PUNJAB ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
SOLAR PASSIVE COMPLEX,  
PLOT NO. 1 & 2, SECTOR-33 D, CHANDIGARH.  
PHONE: 0172-2663328, 2663382, Fax: 0172-2662865  
[www.peda.gov.in](http://www.peda.gov.in); [peda.ec@gmail.com](mailto:peda.ec@gmail.com)

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA) is the State Designated Agency for implementation of Energy Conservation Activities within the State of Punjab, invites tender for preparation and publication of report on impact of energy conservation and energy efficiency activities for F.Y. 2018-19 & 2019-20 in the state of Punjab. The tender document may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on any working day up to 4.00 PM on or before 19.08.2020 on payment of Rs. 1,000/- in cash or through demand draft in favour of Punjab Energy Development Agency payable at Chandigarh. The complete sealed tender accompanied with demand draft of Rs. 15,000/- as EMD in favour of Punjab Energy Development Agency payable at Chandigarh will be received upto 3.00 PM on 20.08.2020 and will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

PEDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tender without assigning any reason.

**DIRECTOR**

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY

#### TENDER NOTICE

#### Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

S. no.	N.I.T. No.	S.N. 16-2020-21-W-V
1	Name of work with its location	Development of RPC-4 facilities on line no. 20 at HNZM in the section of ADEN/HNZM. <b>Definition Of Similar Work</b> :- Any Civil work Involving concreting work.
2	Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 13425435.46
3	Earliest Money	(It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway Only. <b>Note</b> :- FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no 201025/CE-I/CT/5/dated 31.08.2016)
4	Completion period of Work	1 Rs. 217100.00
5	Cost of tender	(It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway Only. <b>Note</b> :- FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no 2015/CE-I/CT/5/dated 31.08.2016)
6	Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	1 Rs. 5900.00 Upto 15.00 hrs. on 28.08.2020 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. On 28.08.2020
7	Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on I



## SPRINT TIME

Antelopes run through a field at Kanjari village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad on Thursday.

### YOUTUBE ► trends

1) DILJIT DOSANJH – G.O.A.T. (OFFICIAL MUSIC VIDEO)



Album: G.O.A.T.  
Lyricist: Karan Aujla  
Music: G-Funk  
Mix & Master: Tom Lowry

2) JAAN BAN GAYE – KHUDA HAAFIZ | VIDYUT JAMMWALI | SHIVALEEK OBEROI  
Movie: Khuda Haafiz;  
Composed & Arranged by Mithoon; Singers: Mithoon, Vishal Mishra & Asees Kaur

3) TOP NOTCH (FULL SONG) SHIVJOT FT GURLEJ AKHTAR



Song Top Notch is sung by Shivjot & Gurlej Akhtar. The music is given by Shivjot and the lyrics are also penned by him.

4) SANDEEP MAHESHWARI ON ALBERT EINSTEIN | HINDI  
Sanjeev Maheshwari is a name among millions who struggled, failed and surged ahead in search of success, happiness and contentment.

### LETTERS

#### New education policy is a welcome move by the govt

AFTER a gap of 34 years (on 1986 and modified in 1992), India's National Education Policy (NEP) (which also was a poll promise of the BJP in 2014) is set to get a major makeover and is a welcome step.

When the government is under the 'Hindu hriday samrat' Narendra Modi, then it is not surprising to know that a stream of RSS affiliates were involved through the drafting process? As per media reports there were meetings between RSS functionaries, education ministers of some BJP-ruled states, representatives of the Government and NEP drafting committee chairman K Kasturirangan.

The main theme of NEP 2020 is an extra year of preschool and undergraduate programmes, skill education from Class VI and the option of learning Sanskrit "at all levels of school".

I'm unable to understand why NEP 2020 incorporates a retrograde and regressive move to abolish English as a medium of education up to class V (as the mother tongue or regional language is to be the language of education till class 5).

This action will cripple the students during their future journey in the higher education landscape.

—BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE,  
Faridabad

#### Truth behind SSR death appears to be hidden from us

AFTER a month and a half, there is another twist in the death of actor Sushant Singh. Following an FIR filed by Sushant Singh Rajput's father KK Singh in Bihar against Rhea Chakraborty, the actress has filed a plea in the SC to transfer the case from Patna to Mumbai. Reacting to the same, Sushant's family's lawyer Vikas Singh has reportedly alleged that Sushant was in a bad company and they had expressed their fear

### QUESTION

*of the day*

Mail Today poll



PANKAJ NANGIA

Important festivals like Eid and Rakshabandhan, which people generally celebrate with their families, are happening during the pandemic this year. Do you think social distancing should still be maintained?

#### YESTERDAY'S QUESTION

With a spike in Internet usage during the lockdown, cyber criminals in the National Capital have been unleashing a wave of phishing and hacking attacks. Do our authorities need to be more vigilant?

#### YESTERDAY'S RESPONSE

YES	80%
NO	20%

is helping Rhea Chakraborty. He reportedly revealed that Sushant's family had already filed a complaint against Rhea Chakraborty in February, four months prior to the later actor's tragic demise. In the complaint, the family had alleged that Sushant was in a bad company and they had expressed their fear

of untoward circumstance about the actor. But Mumbai police had ignored them and forced them to take names of big production houses and not Rhea. Aforementioned words show that some real truths are being hidden behind the famous actor's death.

—B O CHANGA, West Bengal

#### Sonu Sood is now helping migrant workers get jobs

IT WAS good to read that the Bollywood actor Sonu Sood is celebrating his 47th birthday. The actor has been serving the migrant labourers in every possible way. And now it appears that on his big day, he took to his social media and introduced as many as 3 lakh job offers for the migrant staff who within this tough phase have lost their jobs. All the jobs will provide good salaries, PF, ESI and other benefits. It is really a commendable decision taken by the actor. I hope it will help thousands of jobless people get livelihood and shelters. The actor has been a real hero during this pandemic. Kudos to him!

—B AHSANULLAH, Delhi

### BLOGS *of the day*

#### ASHLEY HOPES TO INSPIRE WOMEN

AMERICAN model Ashley Graham hopes that her own self-acceptance will inspire other women. The 32-year-old model is a proponent of body positivity, and she wants all women to feel comfortable in their own skin, regardless of their shape and size. She recently decided to show off her stretch marks in a fashion campaign. She said, "A lot of women I speak to have image issues, body issues around confidence."

[contactmusic.com](http://contactmusic.com)



#### ROGEN, GUADAGNINO TEAM UP FOR FILM

SETH Rogen is to script an adaptation of the documentary 'Scotty and the Secret History of Hollywood', which will be directed by the Italian director Luca Guadagnino. The comedy duo are best known for projects such as "Superbad," "This Is the End," and "Pineapple Express. Deadline report that the 38-year-old actor will team up with regular writing partner Evan Goldberg for the project, which is being directed by Guadagnino.

[contactmusic.com](http://contactmusic.com)

WRITE TO THE EDITOR

You can now email your opinion to [letters@mailtoday.in](mailto:letters@mailtoday.in)

# 'When I can be amazing, why be normal?'

**why be normal?**

**Each film that she acted in has served a purpose in Vidya Balan's growth**

By Saimi Sattar

**V**IDYA Balan radiates honesty and warmth, that is so much a part of her persona, even over the phone while speaking from several hundred kilometres away. "A lot of work, like sweeping and swabbing," she says unabashedly when one wonders what she has been up to during the lockdown shattering the diva-esque air that many in the audience might have bequeathed on her unknowingly. But that is the actor — unapologetic about who she is, the choices that she makes and what she does. When the phone connection plays errant, rather than ending the conversation, she shifts to a different corner where it is more audible without any qualms.

Delving into her latest outing as Shakuntala Devi in an eponymous film by Anu Menon, she says that the genius was special and not just because of her mathematical skills. "A lot of times girls and women feel the need to shrink their dreams and themselves so as to not threaten people around them. She didn't shy away from being her brilliant self and that's why the one dialogue, 'when I can be amazing, why do I be normal,' encapsulates her personality so beautifully. I

definitely like to make that my mantra," she says and it does reflect in her roles.

Vidya has spread her arc wide to play a variety of characters and, initially, some of them came in for flak in an industry obsessed with a certain body type, colour and age. But she owns up to each. "I've been very fortunate as each role has given me something though I would struggle to articulate what it was. It almost feels like a healing journey. Sometimes the character has answered questions that I didn't know existed. Some healed a part of me. Some gave me courage like *The Dirty Picture* (2011). Silk gave me the gift of owning my body. I felt extremely comfortable in it at all times," she says, halts and adds, "Not at all time, maybe. But



**Shakuntala Devi was way beyond a mathematical genius. She led a full life which makes you realise that geniuses are human beings too. She had her failings.**

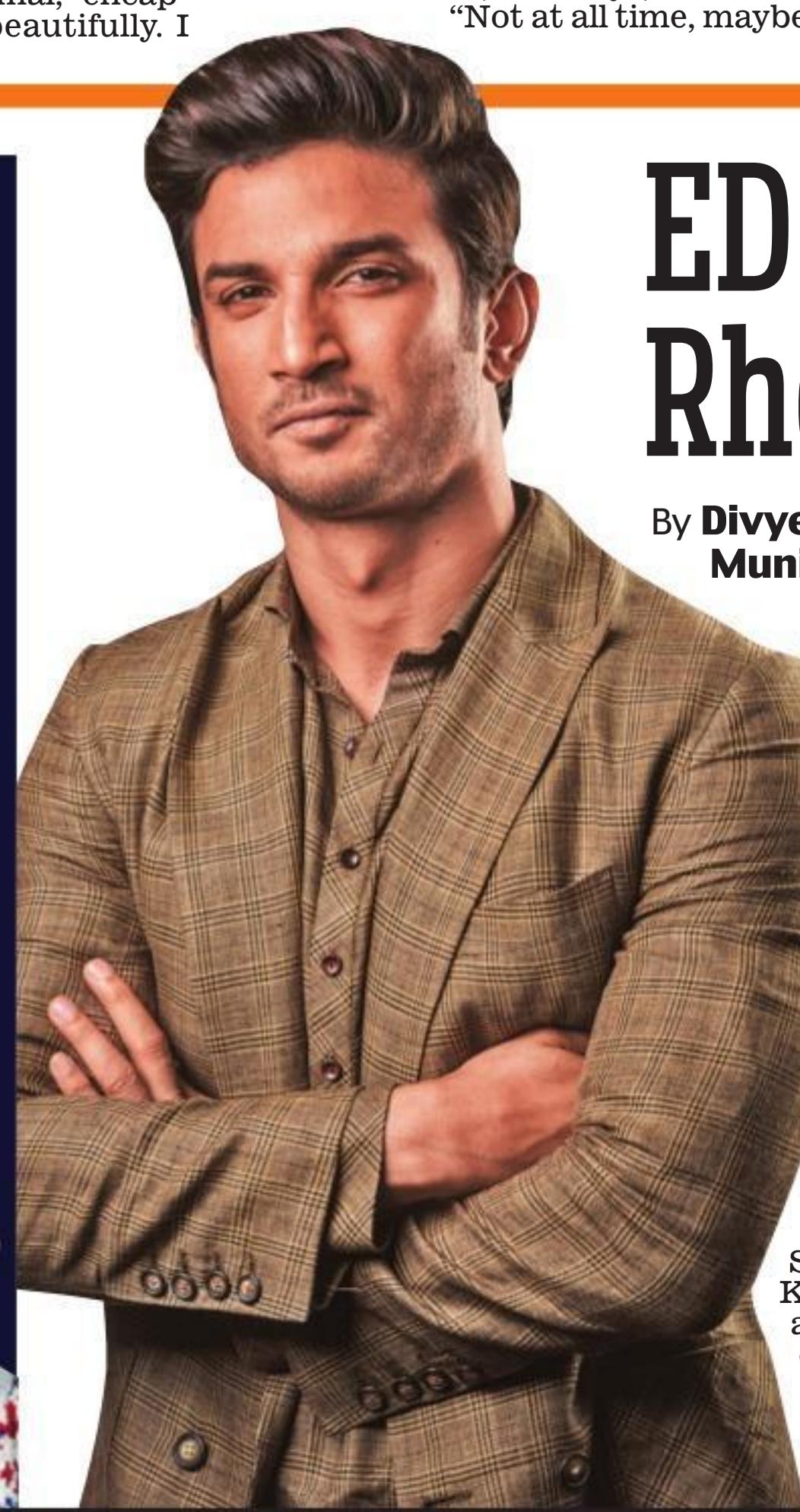
definitely much more than before." Coming back to Shakuntala Devi, she feels that it is amazing that someone who had not been schooled is called a 'human computer'. "Not just maths, she wrote books on a variety of subjects — homosexuality, astronomy, a crime thriller, cookery book for men. How do you fit her into a mould? Everything that I got to know about her was like peeling an onion where there were layers. She was way beyond a mathematical genius. She led a full life which makes you realise that geniuses are human beings too. She had her failings, was child-like and petulant till the very end," says Vidya.

And unlike biographies that just focus on the whites, the film deals with everything — warts, greys and blacks of her personality. "I really want to credit Anu-

pama Banerji and Ajay, Shakuntala Devi's daughter and son-in law who depicted her for who she was without whitewashing her personality. When Anu Menon approached them, they shared details about her with such honesty and integrity that it is really appreciable as it does not happen often in India. You see the person and individual and the child beneath or within the genius," she says talking about the film which is told through the eyes of her daughter with whom she had a stormy relationship. While that is often how relationships between children and parents are but "it is a little more complicated because of who Shakuntala Devi was and the life she led," says Vidya, who will be seen in Amit V. Masurkar's *Sherni*, which is about man-animal conflict, next.

## Irrfan in Academy's new video

As the world grapples with the Coronavirus pandemic, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) has come up with a message of hope through a video that compiles popular movie moments, including actor Irrfan Khan's famous last scene from *Life of Pi*. The video is a reminder of how people are connected to one another through stories. The video, posted on Wednesday on Twitter, features a compilation of clips from films. —PTI



## ED to probe theft claim, as Rhea tells SC she is innocent

By Divyesh Singh and Munish Pandey  
in Mumbai

IN the latest development in Sushant Singh Rajput's death case, Enforcement Directorate (ED) will now look into claims of Rhea Chakraborty stealing ₹15 crore from the actor's bank account. The ED has sought details about the FIR filed by Sushant's father on Tuesday. In his complaint, Sushant Singh Rajput's father, KK Singh, alleged that a total amount of ₹15 crore was withdrawn from Sushant's account by Rhea.

A source confirm-

ing the development said that the FIR has been sought from Bihar Police and it will be analysed. In a letter to the Bihar Police, the ED has sought information on all the bank accounts of Sushant Singh Rajput.

Meanwhile, in her petition filed before Supreme Court, seeking transfer of investigation in Sushant Singh Rajput's death to Mumbai, actor Rhea Chakraborty has claimed that she is innocent and has been falsely implicated.

Bihar Police on Thursday reached Kotak Mahindra Bank in Mumbai's Bandra to seek details of Sushant's bank account. Sushant's father alleged that ₹15 crore from the actor's bank account were transferred to three unknown bank accounts, which are said to belong to Rhea, her brother and her mother. The couple, who

were in a relationship, invested in three start-ups. Rhea and her brother Showik were directors in the three start-up companies.

The FIR was registered against Rhea in Patna by KK Singh on July 26 on charges of theft, wrongful confinement, fraud, cheating and abetment to suicide. A case was registered under Sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement), 380 (theft), 406 (breach of trust), 420 (cheating), 306 (abetment to suicide) of the IPC. Patna Police has been asked to research this matter and take action. In his application, Singh accused Rhea of betraying Sushant and completely cutting him off from his family. The statement of Ankita Lokhande, former girlfriend of Sushant, was recorded by the Bihar Police on Thursday. Statements of seven people have been recorded.

**The couple had invested in three start-ups.**



## 'She was a double-edged sword'

Anu Menon perceived shades of grey in Shakuntala Devi's life – the perfect reason to direct a biopic on the iconic mathematician

By Suhani Singh

LONDON-based filmmaker Anu Menon calls herself the "outsider outsider". "Neither am I Bandra-Juhu blooded nor the Versova-Andheri indie," she says. "There's no pressure on me. It's quite liberating." The long distance arrangement has worked out well so far with Menon having directed *Waiting*, starring Kalki Koechlin and Naseeruddin Shah, and all episodes of season one of *Four More Shots Please!*

Today marks the release of her third feature and her first biopic — *Shakuntala Devi* — starring Vidya Balan in the titular role of the ace mathematician. Menon didn't want to simply glorify her leading lady; she wanted to shine a light on the fact that "genius doesn't mean you are perfect". Devi's daughter, Anupama Banerji and her husband, Ajay, played key parts in ensuring that Menon and her co-writer Nayanika Mahtani

got a comprehensive portrait of the "larger-than-life character" who excelled at numerical equations but not human relationships. Adds Menon, "They had the maturity and large heartedness to agree that (to do) justice to her meant not

**Women are always fighting patriarchy.**

putting her on pedestal."

For Menon Devi's shades of grey were all the more reason to make a film on her. "She was a double-edged sword," says Menon. "As writers we die for conflict and this woman is embroiled in it." If there was a weakness in Devi's life, says Menon, it was her daughter. "She didn't know how to process her feeling (towards

her daughter) properly," added Menon. "There is so much drama in their lives that people will think I am making it up."

Menon and Mahtani document her feats including entry in the Guinness World Records and performances in US and Europe. Adds Menon, "You see the transformation from a coy, well-behaved woman" to one who "has the audience eating out of her hands".

*Shakuntala Devi* continues Menon's quest to tell diverse narratives around women, ones that don't see them through the prism of patriarchy and where their shade card isn't the usual "rebellious and repressed". "It's one of my personal peeves that women in films are always fighting against patriarchy to realise their dream," says Menon. "Or she is special because she did this in spite of being a woman. This need to celebrate this exceptionalism as an aberration is problematic to me. I want to go beyond that."

By Sanjay Sharma  
in Mumbai

THE Supreme Court today dismissed a PIL filed requesting for a CBI probe into actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death. The court asked Alka Priya, the lawyer who filed the plea to let the police do their job instead. The lawyer further added that Sushant Singh Rajput had done a lot of work for children by facilitating their training at NASA, and therefore, his death needs to be looked at. To which, Chief Justice S Bodbe said that that has nothing to do with if he was good or bad person. Sushant Singh Rajput died by suicide on June 14.

There's been a growing demand for a CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death case with several political figures and film personalities weighing in. Amid all this, yesterday, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh also said that there is no need for the case to be transferred to CBI, and that the Mumbai Police is capable of handling the investigation. The

**There's been a growing demand for a CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death case.**

Mumbai Police has been investigating the case since his death. They have recorded statements of over 40 people in connection with Sushant's death, including that of Rhea Chakraborty, Sushant's family, filmmakers Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Shekhar Kapur, and Yash Raj Films head, Aditya Chopra, among others.

Rhea Chakraborty, Sushant Singh Rajput's girlfriend, also recently wrote to Home Minister Amit Shah requesting him to sanction a CBI enquiry into the actor's death. Earlier, Subramanian Swamy also asked lawyer Iskaran Singh Bhandari, who is also repre-

## 'NO PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO ACT IN A FILM'

Rasika Dugal has made a formal foray into commercial cinema with *Lootcase*



By Suhani Singh

SHE'S done a host of acclaimed independent films (*Qissa*, *Manto*) and popular web shows (*Mirzapur* and *Delhi Crime*) but with *Lootcase* actress Rasika Dugal is officially foraying into commercial Hindi cinema. Dugal agrees largely because unlike her other work, *Lootcase*, which releases on Disney+ Hotstar on July 31, is "completely entrenched in the comic space". And Dugal gets to be a part of a dance number.

Still, she doesn't look at films through the "closed boundaries" of independent and commercial. "It's never been a criteria for me to decide to do a project or not," says Dugal. Her method — be it studio-backed or independently produced film — doesn't change. "I don't believe in having any preconceived idea on how to act in a certain kind of film," says Dugal. "I try to follow the vision and sensibility of the director." In *Lootcase*, where she plays a god-fearing wife to Kunal Khemu's character Nandan

who chances on a suitcase stashed with cash, Dugal noted that the director Rajesh Krishnan was "meticulous about the timing of everything".

Next up for Dugal is to finish the dub for season two of the hit show, *Mirzapur*. She also finished shooting for season two of *Delhi Crime* before lockdown. Is the work on OTT translating to work in films?

While Dugal cannot gauge that she does believe that it has given her access to a wider audience. The frequency of her work on OTT platforms "serves as a constant reminder" of her talent. Currently audiences in United Kingdom are getting to see Dugal in the Mira Nair-directed adaptation of Vikram Seth's novel, *A Suitable Boy*. (The show will be available in India on Netflix later). "Some experiences are pure joy and the show was one of those," said Dugal who plays Savita, elder sibling of leading lady Lata. "I've always been in awe of Mira and excited to work with her. She is such a spunky and spirited person."

## Family raises doubts over investigation

2 Mumbai Police has been investigating nepotism, favouritism which are not relevant.

3 Why was a message to DCP Bandra by Sushant's family members that his life was endangered due to Rhea not investigated?

Sushant Singh Rajput's father KK Singh filed a complaint against Rhea and her family in Patna at the Rajiv Nagar Police Station under several sections of IPC.



## SC says no to plea seeking CBI probe into Sushant's death



By Munish Pandey  
in Mumbai

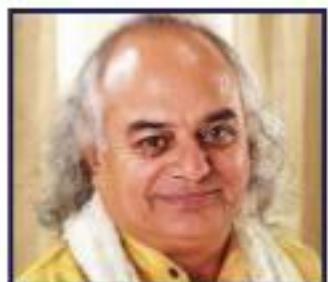
SUSHANT Singh Rajput's family counsel Vikas Singh has raised questions on Mumbai Police, who are investigating the late actor's suicide case. Here are some of their allegations:

1 There is fixing between Rhea and Mumbai police. Earlier, she had asked for a CBI inquiry but now she wants the case to be investigated by Mumbai Police.

sent Kangana Ranaut, to look into the case and supported the demand for a CBI probe, if the case fulfils all the criteria.

Meanwhile, on July 28,

## TWO PAGES OF ASTROLOGY, PUZZLES AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE



By Dr Ajai Bhambi

**ARIES** Apr 14-May 14

A friend can give you a piece of advice to help you which will benefit your love affair. There is chance of proposing marriage very soon.

**TAURUS** May 15-June 15

Professional life will take up a lot of your time and your love life is likely to suffer as a result. Your partner is not going to be very happy with you.

**GEMINI** June 16-July 15

You may need to plan activities around your lover. Do not raise unpleasant issues as there is neither the mood nor energy to deal with it.

# Love Horoscope

\*Dates based on Vedic Sun Signs

**CANCER** July 16-Aug 15

Keep your expectations low so that you do not face disappointment. There is happiness with your lover but you tend to find too much fault easily.

**LEO** Aus 16-Sep 15

You love action and this is how life is going to be on the romantic front. From the word go, you will be fully charged with many ideas and marital plans.

**VIRGO** Sep 16-Oct 15

You are heading for a good day. The topic of marriage is very likely to come up. You will plan some action with your lover and enjoy common interests.

**LIBRA** Oct 16-Nov 15

With fluctuating moods, there could be some friction in love life. It is important to get a hold on yourself and remain pleasant in order to see worthwhile results.

**SCORPIO** Nov 16-Dec 15

Frustrated feelings can leave you feeling lonely. However, your partner will help you by giving you love, warmth and understanding to get onto an even keel.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Dec 16-Jan 13  
A short travel can be undertaken and you will think of taking your lover along. There are chances that you will make a proposal of marriage.

**CAPRICORN**

Jan 14-Feb 11  
You and your lover share a love for adventure. This will lead you to explore a nearby place. Your bond gets stronger with close contact.

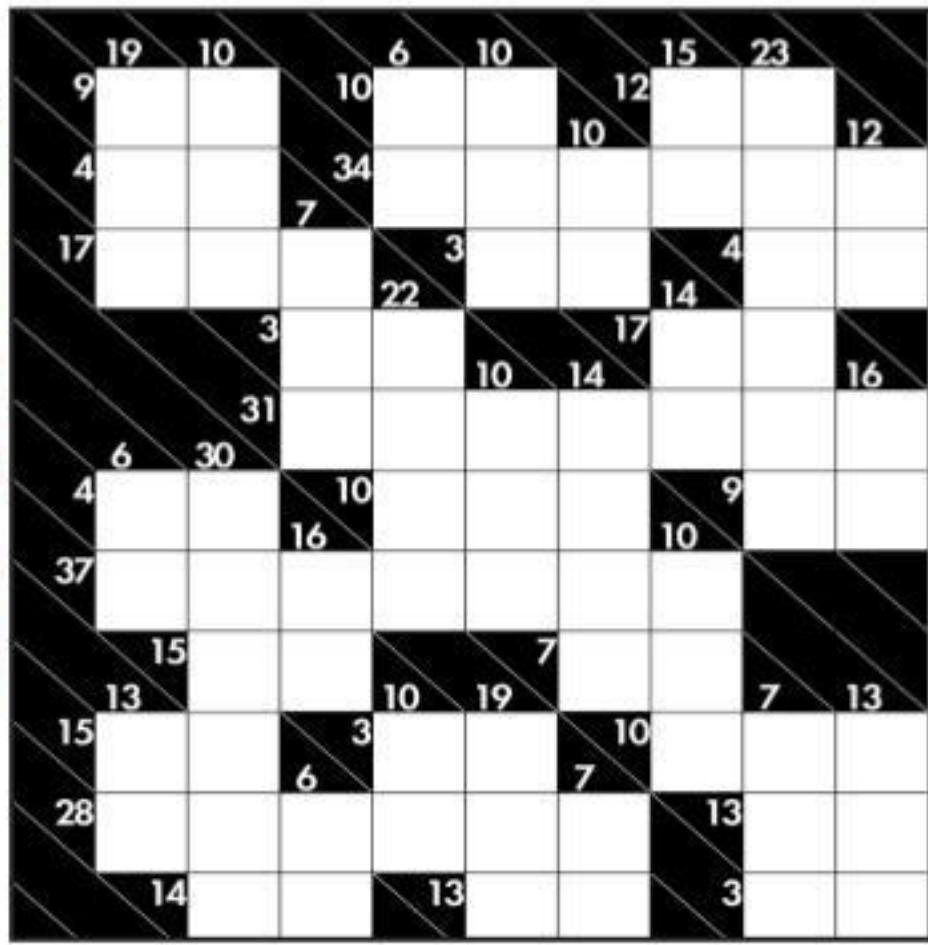
**AQUARIUS**

Feb 12-March 13  
As a creative person you will find many ways of making your romance more interesting. An exciting piece of news during the day will put you in a happy mood.

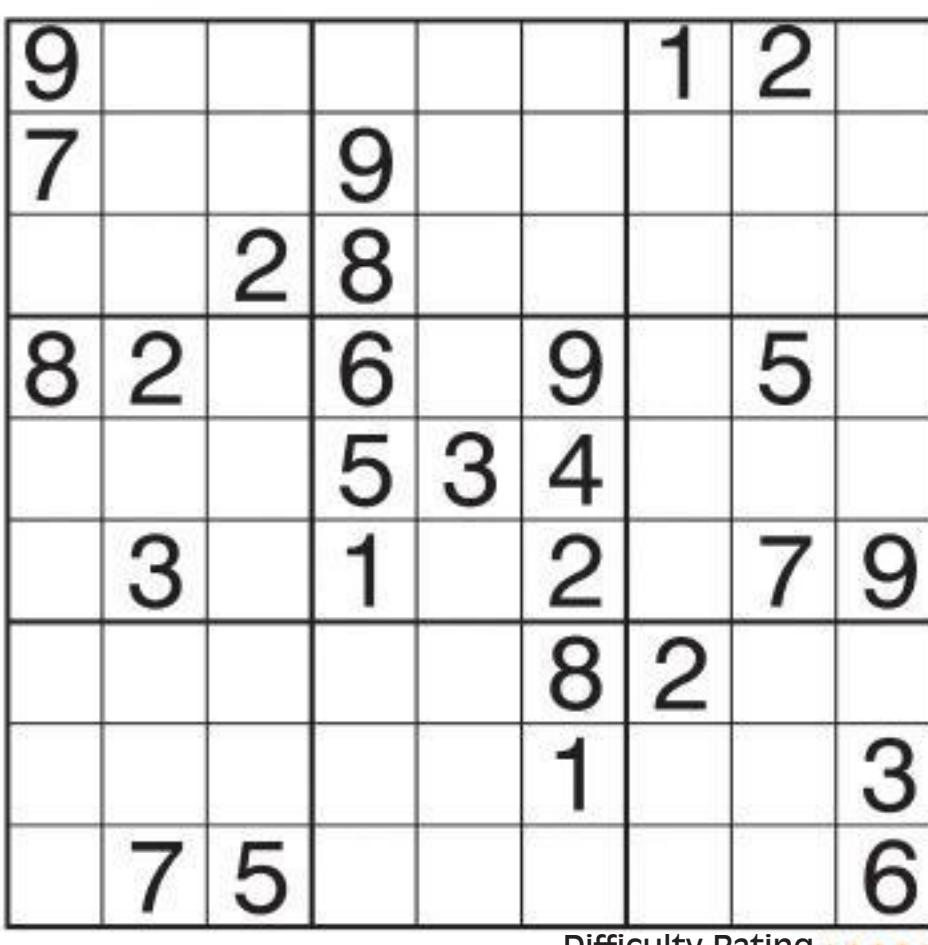
**PISCES** Mar 14-Apr 13

You will come out with some good plans for the future and this includes finding the right person. You are likely to meet this person in the course of your social life.

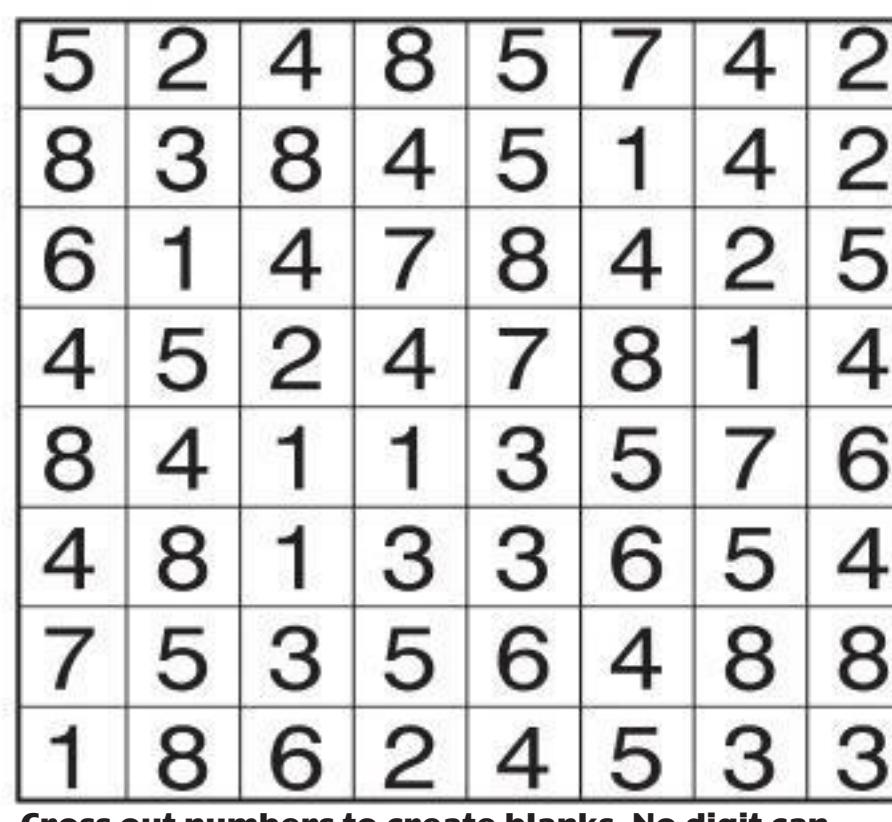
## KAKURO



## SUDOKU CLASSIC



## HITORI



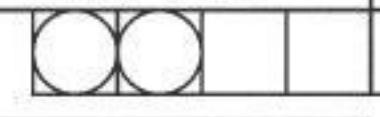
Cross out numbers to create blanks. No digit can appear in a row or column more than once. No two adjacent squares can be blacked out. All the squares left unblacked must be connected — vertically or horizontally — to form a single shape.

## DAILY JUMBLE

**JUMBLE**

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

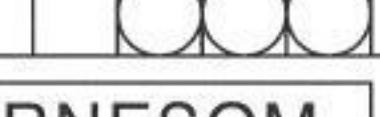
NIRLE



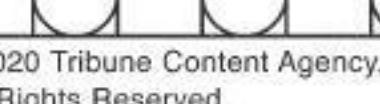
LAZWT



DMARDE

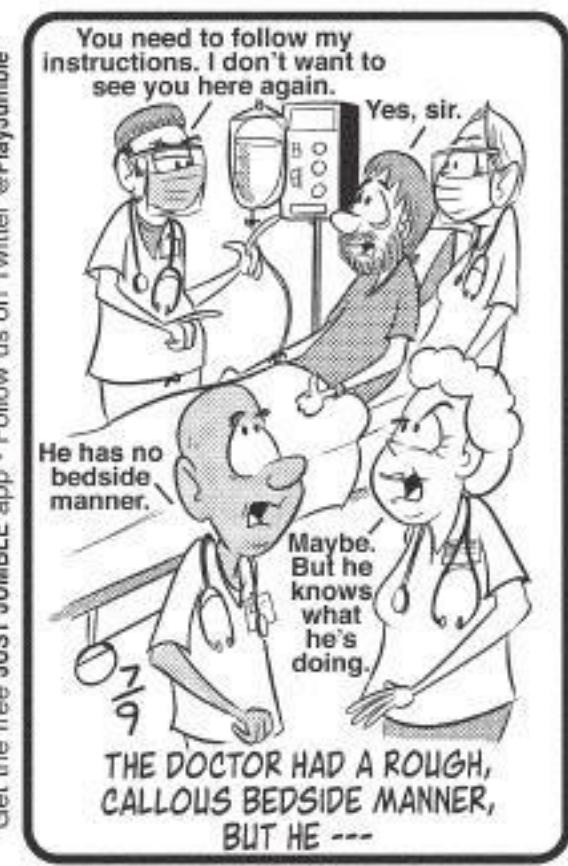


RNESOM



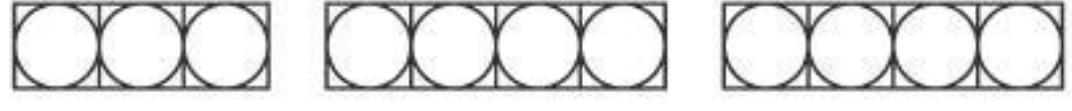
THAT SCRABMED WORD GAME  
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

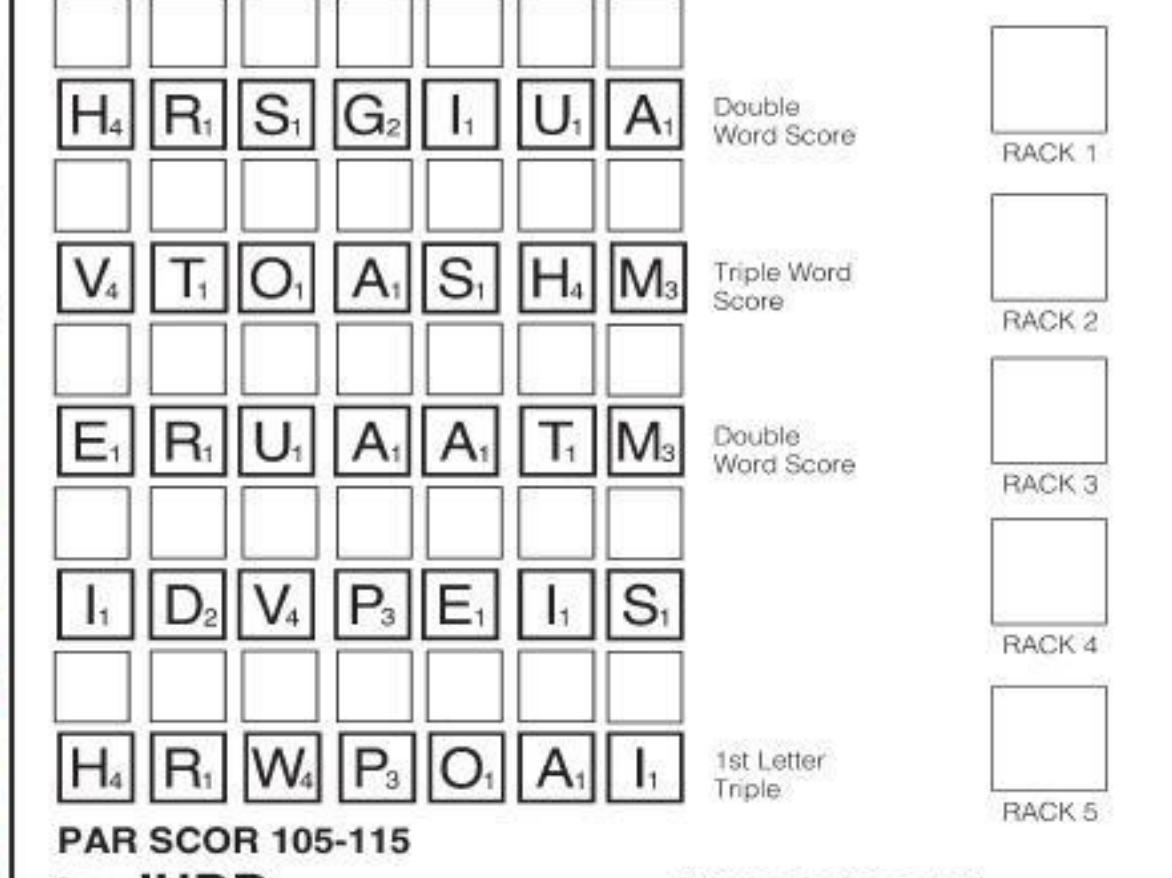
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## SCRABBLE GRAMS

**SCRABBLE** BRAND

SCRABBLE® and SCRABBLE® Tiles are registered trademarks. All rights in the game are owned in the U.S.A. by Hasbro Inc., in Canada by Hasbro Canada Inc., and elsewhere by J.W. Spear & Sons Limited, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc.



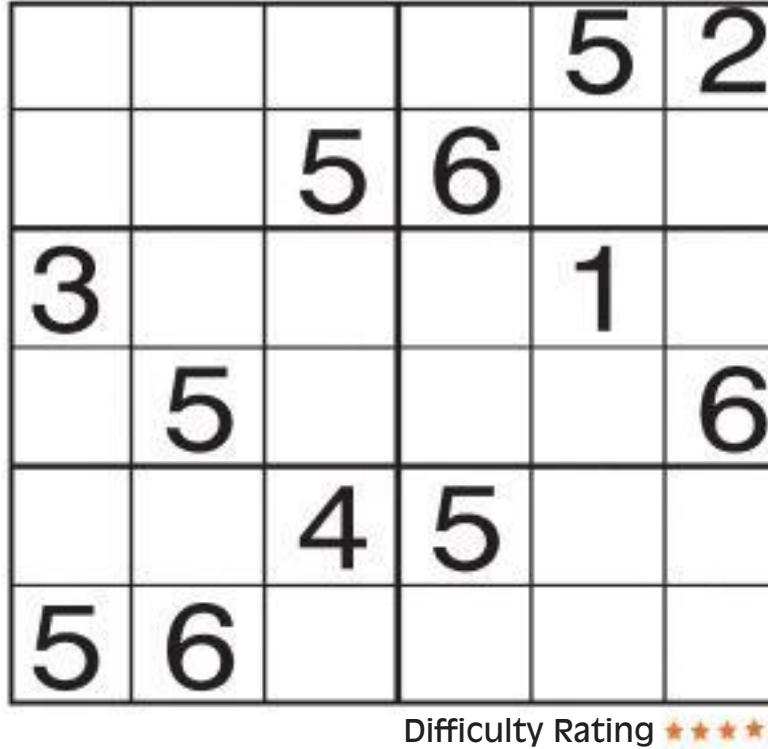
PAR SCOR 105-115

by JUDD

FIVE RACK TOTAL  
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary.

## MINI SUDOKU

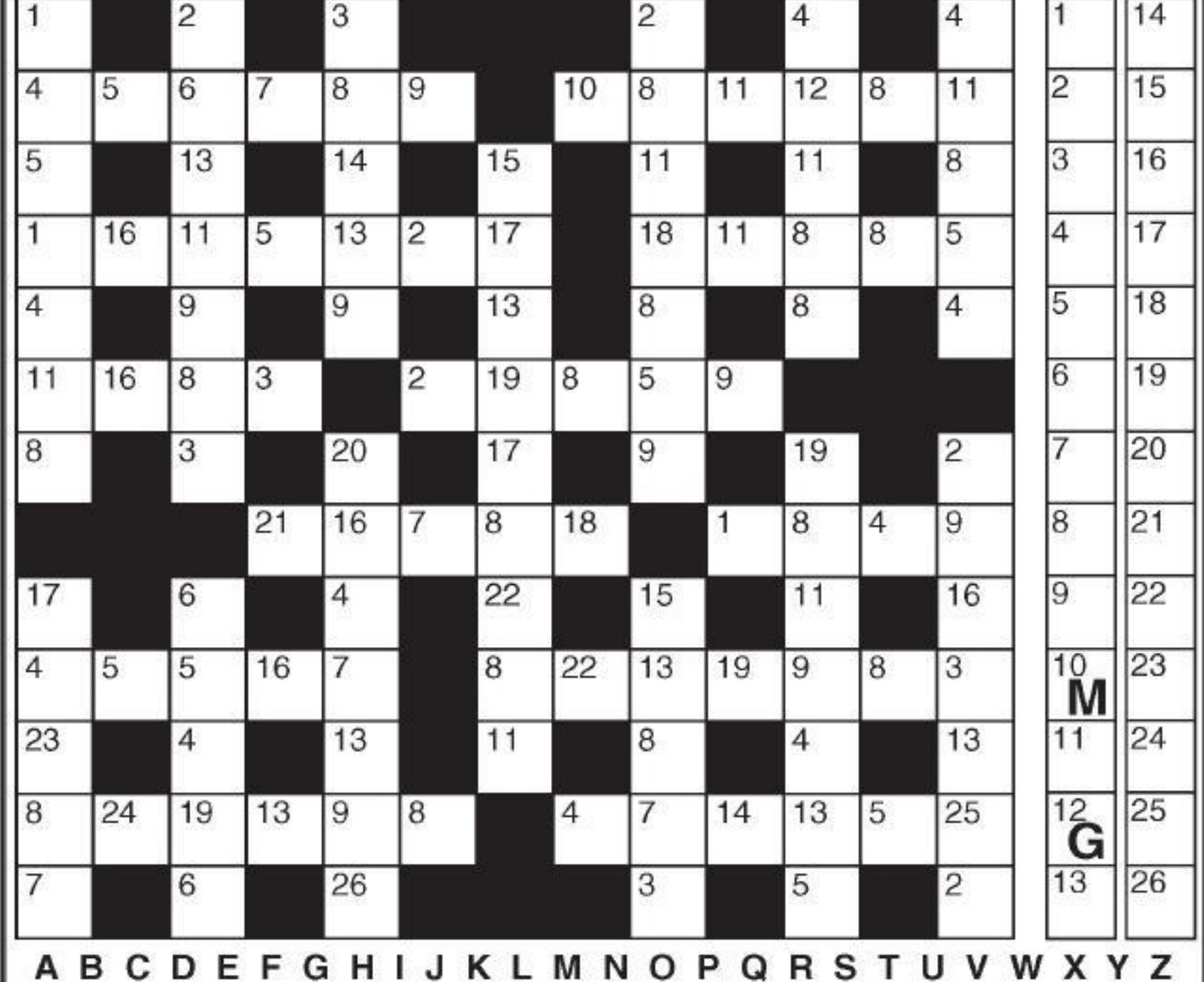


## SUDOKU



## CODEWORD

EACH number in our Codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. For example, today 10 represents M so fill in M every time the figure 10 appears. You have two letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares. As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the list of alphabetical letters as you identify them.



TOP SECRET

**SUDOKU**

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, column and each of the 3x3 squares contains all the digits from 1 to 9. Solutions are below.

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

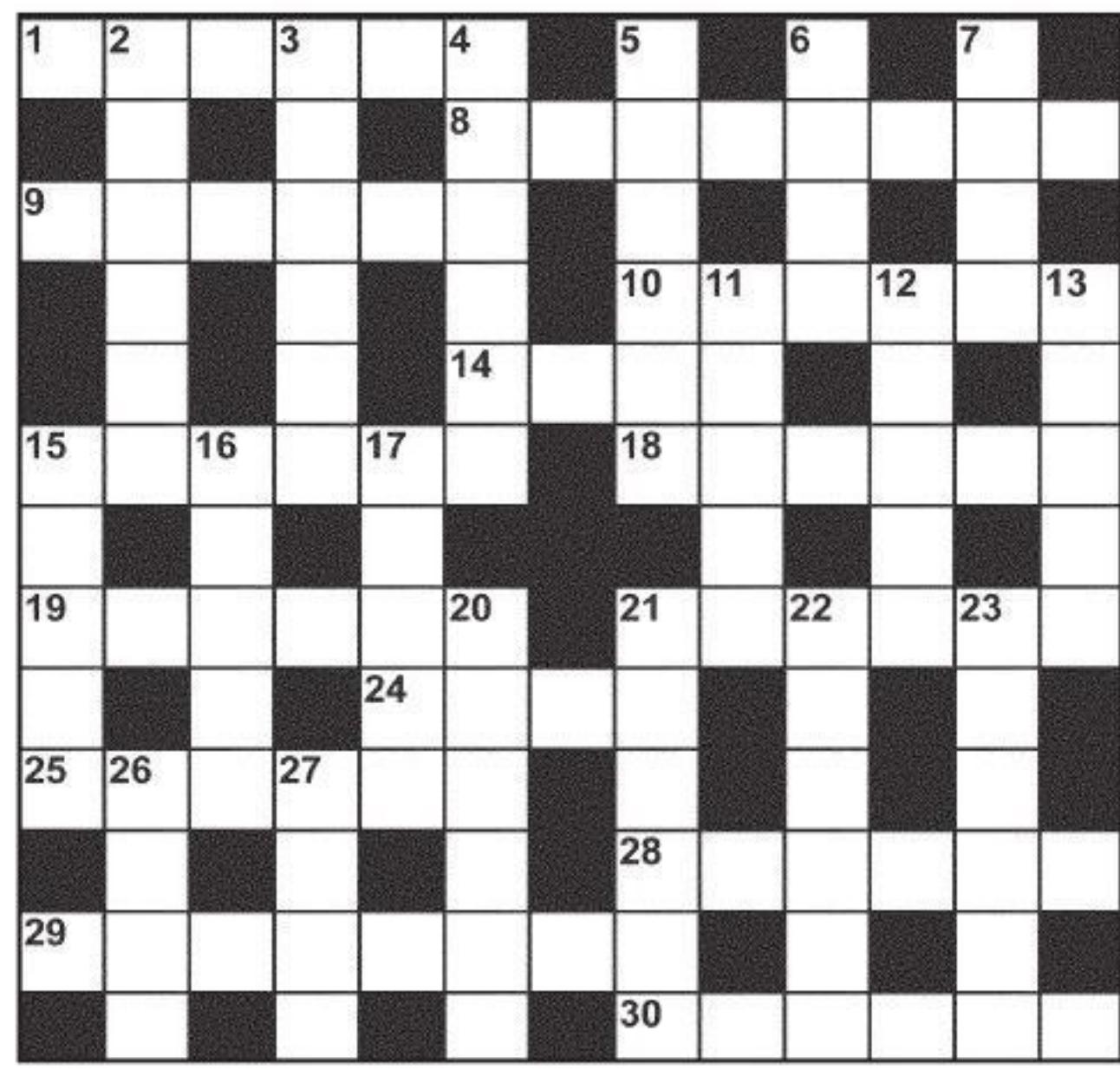
Difficulty Rating ★★

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

Difficulty Rating ★★★

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

Difficulty Rating ★★★★

**CRYPTIC CROSSWORD****ACROSS**

- Is Bert mixed up with those sort of people? (6)
- Wishes Public Relations could begin with less loud talking (8)
- I'm of the attitude that you set it as a burden (6)
- On seeing me stumble, the sun-god felt out of it (6)
- How to live in a wicked way (4)
- Ed get niggardly? It will lower his reputation! (6)
- Hold it! You've too much to say for yourself! (6)
- Food-grain produced by an alien at the factory (6)
- They grow on you, fellows! (6)
- Met in a circle to read a book (4)
- Rene and that sun-god get closer (6)
- Worshipped and with such fuss, I'm blushing! (6)
- The French get direct when it comes to the down-and-out (8)
- A teen's made it and it's shaped like a sword (6)

**DOWN**

- More about the alien and how far removed in place and time he is (6)

- It's so blue and it can be made into a garment (6)
- We send it to a place in Scandinavia (6)
- I'm in fits! He's so totally out of place here! (6)
- That's nothing, friend! Look at this beauty! (4)
- Those four generals have a way to incite one (4)
- No ale for me! I'm unaccompanied (5)
- Gert and I get to meet Stripey (5)
- Leers, gets upset and staggers off (5)
- Don is to meet me and he's so wicked! (5)
- There's abnormal taxation in this island! (5)
- A tree found on a sharp ridge (5)
- Drop it or it will make you lethargic! (6)
- Be there and shed a tear when I scold him (6)
- One to bear that won't get you down (6)
- It will amuse you to see that old queen on a diet! (6)
- Need a change in your garden? (4)
- Free of those rocks? (4)

**KEN-KEN**

Each row & column must contain numbers 1 to 4 (easy) or 1 to 6 (difficult). The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes must combine to produce the numbers in the top-left corner.

30×		7+	3+	2	2-
12×				2-	
	3÷	5	13+		2-
4-				2-	
4	3-	5-	1-		1
				11+	

**QUICK QUIZ**

Joanne Rowling was born on July 31, 1965.

- Where did Rowling write her initial Harry Potter ideas?
- What was the name of her first book for adults which she wrote in 2012?
- When was she named the "Most Influential Woman in Britain" by leading magazine editors?
- In which year was Rowling awarded the Order of

**the British Empire?**

- In which year did Time magazine name her as a runner-up for its Person of the Year, noting the social, moral, and political inspiration she has given her fans.
- Who is Rowling's personal favourite mythical beast?
- How many versions did the first chapter of the first book, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone have?
- Who did the author model the role of the character Hermione?
- Which was her favourite book as a child?

**TODAY'S SOLUTIONS****SUDOKU**

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

**HITORI**

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

**CODEWORD**

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

**KAKRO**

19	10	6	10	15	23																	


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# MY BIZ

ArcelorMittal loss widens to \$559 million

By Mail Today Bureau  
in New Delhi

**GLOBAL** steel giant ArcelorMittal on Thursday posted a net loss of \$559 million for the second quarter ended June 30, and termed it as the most difficult period in its history amid COVID-19 pandemic.

The world's largest steel-maker had clocked a net loss of \$447 million in the year-ago quarter, the company said in a statement.

The Luxembourg-headquartered integrated steel and mining company follows January-December fiscal year. Sales in April-June quarter



Billionaire LN Mittal

stood at USD 11.0 billion, as compared to USD 19.3 billion in the corresponding period of 2019, it said.

Total steel shipments in the second quarter of 2020 declined 23.7 per cent to 14.8 million tonne (MT), significantly impacted by the adverse effects of COVID-19 pandemic across all regions.

ArcelorMittal chairman and CEO, Lakshmi N Mittal, said, "We implemented a comprehensive range of measures to further strengthen the balance sheet which has taken our net debt close to the level at which we will prioritise returns to shareholders."

**Govt curbs import of televisions**

By Mail Today Bureau  
in New Delhi

THE government on Thursday imposed restrictions on imports of colour television, a move aimed at promoting domestic manufacturing and cut inbound shipments of non-essential items from countries like China.

Import policy of colour television.....is amended from free to restricted, Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification. Putting an item under restricted category of imports means the importer of that commodity will have to seek licence from the commerce ministry's DGFT for the imports. The major exporters of TV sets to include China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, and Germany. The curbs are imposed on TV sets of screen size ranging from up to 36 cm to over 105 cm. India imported colour TVs worth USD 781 million in 2019-20.

Fiat Chrysler on Thursday introduced the global limited edition Jeep Compass Night Eagle in India, with BS6-compliant petrol and diesel engine options, at a starting price of ₹20.14 lakh.



## NUMBER OF THE DAY

₹4,059 cr is HDFC's net income in April-June, up 15% from last year.

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

‘The bright spot for us is the rural economy. A good monsoon, strong agricultural growth and rural consumption are leading the overall economic recovery. ’



— DEEPAK PAREKH, HDFC CHAIRMAN

# RELIANCE PROFIT SOARS TO RECORD ₹13,248 CR

**Stake sale to BP, Jio earnings offset Covid hit to oil biz in q1**

By Mail Today Bureau In New Delhi

**R**ELIANCE Industries Ltd (RIL) on Thursday reported a record net profit of Rs 13,248 crore for the April-June quarter as a one-time gain from a stake sale to British oil giant BP and rising revenues of its telecom arm Reliance Jio offset the Covid-19 hit to the company's mainstay refining and petchem segments.

The net profit in April-June was 30.6 per cent higher than the same period a year back, and bettered the company's previous best of Rs 11,640 crore earned in October-December 2019, the company said in a statement.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate said it had a one-time gain of Rs 4,966 crore from the sale of 49 per cent stake in fuel retailing venture to BP Plc.

### JIO SHINES

The company's telecom arm Reliance Jio posted a 183 per cent jump in standalone net profit to Rs 2,520 crore even as its rivals are piling up huge losses.

Jio contributed over 33 per cent of consolidated EBITDA of RIL to become the single-largest business segment by contribution to the total.

The telcos subscriber base went up to 398.3 million from 387.5 million at March-end. Earning per subscriber rose to Rs 140.3 per month from Rs 130.6 per month in the previous quarter.

The conglomerates overall EBITDA declined by 11.8 per cent to Rs 21,585 crore due to lower contribution from oil and

petchem business as the COVID-19 pandemic killed demand for petrol, diesel and jet fuel due to global travel and business disruptions.

### COVID HITS OIL BIZ

Oil refining revenues more than halved to Rs 46,642 crore after the company earned its lowest margin in a decade on turning every barrel of crude oil into fuel. Gross refining margin of USD 6.3 per barrel compared with USD 8.1 a year back and USD 8.9 per barrel in the preceding quarter.

RIL Chairman Mukesh Ambani said: "The severe demand destruction due to

global lockdowns impacted our hydrocarbons business but the flexibility in our operations enabled us to operate at near normal levels and deliver industry-leading results."

—MUKESH AMBANI, Reliance chairman



the Rs 1,52,056 crore raised from stake sale to 13 investors and the rest would go to parent RIL.

### RETAIL BIZ DIPS

With the coronavirus lockdown shutting down malls and markets for the most part of the quarter, Reliance Retail, which had been leading the rise in profitability of the company alongside Jio, saw revenues dip of 17 per cent to Rs 31,633 crore and segment pre-tax profit fall by 47.4 per cent to Rs 1,083 crore. Reliance Retail operates consumer electronic stores, fashion outlets, and grocery stores as well as startup ecommerce venture JioMart.

Fifty per cent of our stores were fully shut through quarter and 29 per cent operated partially, said Dinesh Thapar, Group Chief Financial Officer at Reliance Retail. Overall footfalls for the quarter were down 57 per cent even in grocery stores. He said the company opened 69 stores but coronavirus lockdown restricted opening of another 250 stores. The company had 11,784 stores at the end of March. The firm's ecommerce venture, JioMart has scaled up to 200 cities.

## Gold demand tumbles 70% in April-June quarter

By Mail Today Bureau  
in New Delhi

INDIA'S gold consumption during April-June 2020 plummeted 70 per cent from the year-ago period to 63.7 tonnes, the lowest level in more than a decade as lockdowns to curb the coronavirus pandemic and slashed demand, according to a report by World Gold Council on Thursday.

2020 sales may fall to 26-year low

The decline came even though consumption is generally high during the June quarter due to weddings and key festivals such as Akshaya Tritiya. But the lockdown restrictions and falling disposable income due to mass layoffs and pay cuts across industries kept shoppers indoors this year.

Meanwhile, India's gold consumption in the first half of 2020 plunged 56% on-year to 165.6



tonnes. The WGC said weak demand in the first half could drag down India's gold con-

sumption in 2020 to the lowest since 1994, when demand stood at 415 tonnes.

WGC Managing Director (India) Somasundaram PR said it is still difficult to provide an estimate for full-year demand as the coronavirus crisis is still unfolding.

"Sales trend during the window of opportunity, afforded by relaxation of lockdown in select cities, do point to healthy latent demand that should surface once COVID-19 turbulence is behind us."

# New virus traps users on 300 Android apps

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

A MALWARE 'BlackRock' which can steal credit card details and other confidential user information is attacking more than 300 commonly used Android apps, Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) has warned.

Well-known and commonly used brands of email, e-commerce, banking & financial, social media and dating apps are among the 337 applications in its target list, according to the advisory issued by the country's cyber security agency.

"The attack campaign of this 'Trojan' category virus is active globally," CERT-In's advisory said.

When the malware is launched on a device, it hides its icon from the app drawer and then masquerades itself as a



fake Google update to request accessibility service privileges.

Once this privilege is granted, it becomes free to grant itself additional permissions allowing it to function further without interacting with user, it said.

Threat operators can issue a number of

commands for various operations such as logging keystrokes, spamming the victims' contact lists with text messages, setting the malware as the default SMS manager, pushing system notifications to the C2 (command and control) server, locking the victim in the device's home screen and steal and hide notifications, send spam and steal SMS messages and many more such activities, the advisory said.

Further, the virus can also deflect a majority of the anti-virus applications.

The advisory pointed out that the Android Trojan can control the compromised device without requiring complete admin rights. It can create and attribute its own managed profile to gain admin privileges, it said. CERT-In said users can prevent the attack by not downloading or installing applications from untrusted sources.

By Rahul Srivastava in New Delhi

**A**LITTLE over three years after it was launched on July 1, 2017 amidst great fanfare, the Goods and Services Tax or GST has run into deep stress. The government has for the first time admitted at a public platform that it virtually has no money to pay the states' share as prescribed in the GST law.

Opposition members of the parliamentary standing committee on finance are up in arms over an alleged statement made by Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey. Members from the Congress and other parties who attended the first meeting of the standing committee on finance headed by BJP's Jayant Sinha said Pandey told the committee that "the central government is in no position to pay the share of the states" in accordance with the revenue sharing formula laid down in the GST Act.

The first meeting of the parliamentary committee that had been pending for long due to the COVID 19 pandemic found the opposition members raising the problems faced by the states due to non-release of states' share of funds during the last few months.

The members had flagged that the GST law mandates that the Centre has to compensate the states for any shortfall in reaching a 14% revenue growth target, which is calcu-

## Tax collection is only half of amount owed to states

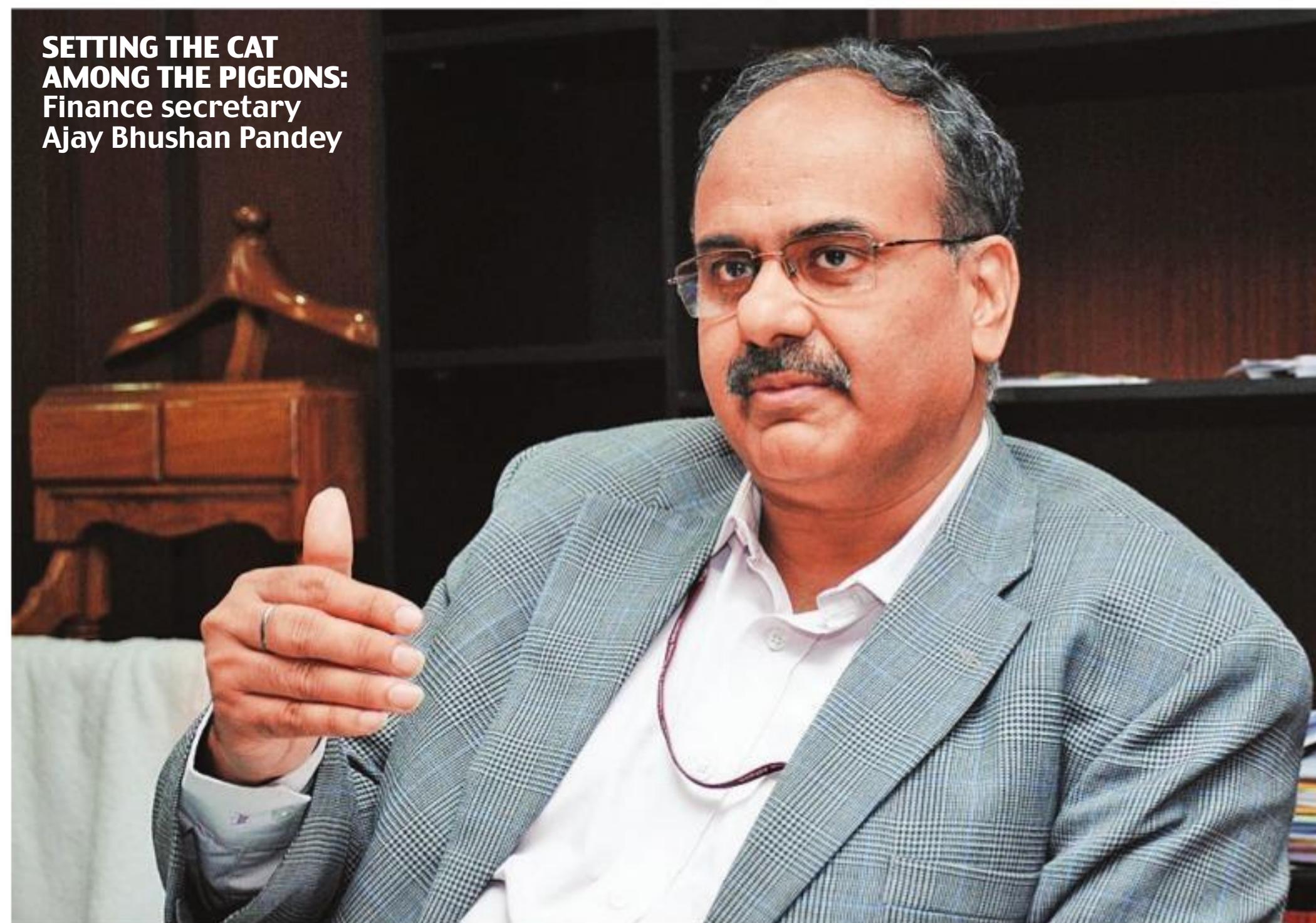
lated on 2015-16 revenue base from taxes subsumed in GST. They claimed that states which are incurring large expenses to battle COVID and assist migrants and jobless labourers have been facing a severe resource crunch.

Angry members of the opposition parties challenged the finance secretary's statement by asking "how the government could renege on the commitment to the states."

A member of the committee said, "The central government was in a rush to push the GST law implementation. The resource crunch is highlighting that the law was hastily drawn and shoddily implemented. The deficiencies are being exposed by the economic crisis triggered by the pandemic and the Centre is as always clueless on how to resolve the situation."

Sources said that the finance secretary, however, informed that the GST Act has built in provisions to rework the formula for paying compensation to the State governments if the revenue collection drops below a certain level. He said that the

**SETTING THE CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS:**  
Finance secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey



issue is under discussion in the GST council. The GST Council meeting to discuss the issue is yet to be called.

## REVENUE SHORTFALL

In the background note the government admits that much before the COVID19 triggered economic slowdown "since the end of August 2019, the Central government has started realising the impending precarious position in paying GST compensation to the States and UTs as the compensation cess requirement was double of the average monthly cess collection." The note says that on average the monthly GST compensation cess requirement was Rs 14,000 crore.

## BORROWING MAY BE WAY OUT

THE Attorney General has opined that it is within the powers of the GST Council to decide whether recourse can be taken to market borrowing to compensate states for the shortfall in their GST share.

The Centre had in March sought views from the Attorney General K K Venugopal on the legality of market borrowing to make good the shortfall in the compensation fund. Sources said the options

before the Council for meeting the shortfall could be to increase GST rates, cover more items under the compensation cess or increase the cess, or recommend higher borrowing by states to be repaid by the future collections into the compensation fund.

A corpus had been created from levy of additional tax on luxury and sin goods such as cigarettes to compensate states for revenue shortfall. —MT Bureau

# Govt working on relief for exporters

THE commerce and industry ministry is trying to find a solution on the issue of export incentive scheme MEIS without having a serious impact on government finances, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

Under MEIS, the government provides duty benefits depending on product and country. The commerce ministry blocked the online system for exporters to apply for availing tax incentives under the scheme from July 23. The Department of Revenue decided to limit the benefits under the plan at Rs 9,000 crore for April-December 2020.

"It's not as if the MEIS is going away anywhere, it's more a cash flow issue. We are on top of it," he said at a CII-organised webinar.

## Duty on solar cells extended till July 2021

THE government has imposed safeguard duty on solar cells for one more year till July 2021 to protect domestic manufacturers and discourage cheap imports from countries like China.

The move followed recommendation by the commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) for continued imposition of the duty for one more year. In its probe, the DGTR had concluded that after a decline in imports in 2018-19 due to the imposition of safeguard duty on solar cells whether or not assembled in modules or panels, imports have increased during April-September 2019 due to reduction in rate of the duty from July 30, 2019.

After considering the findings of the DGTR, the department of revenue in a notification has said that it is imposing a safeguard duty on the product. The department seeks to continue the levy of safeguard duty on imports of solar cells whether or not assembled in modules or panels for a period of one year, it said.

## Airbus cuts production of A350 planes

EUROPE'S Airbus announced a new cut in production of its marquee A350 jet on Thursday as it swung to a larger-than-expected second-quarter loss in the face of the global pandemic.

Airbus said it had cut wide-body A350 production to five jets a month, after dropping it to six from 9.5 in April.

The move came a day after U.S. rival Boeing announced further cuts in output of 787 and 777 jets, which compete with the A350 on depressed long-haul networks.

"We believe it is going to be a long and slow recovery," Chief Executive Guillaume Faury told reporters, adding that travel was picking up but more slowly than previously expected.

The crisis has particularly affected demand for wide-body long-haul jets.

—MT Bureau & Reuters

## MARKETS

<b>SENSEX</b>	<b>38,071.13</b>	<b>-335.06</b>
WEDNESDAY'S CLOSE	37,736.07	H: 38,413.81 L: 37,678.42

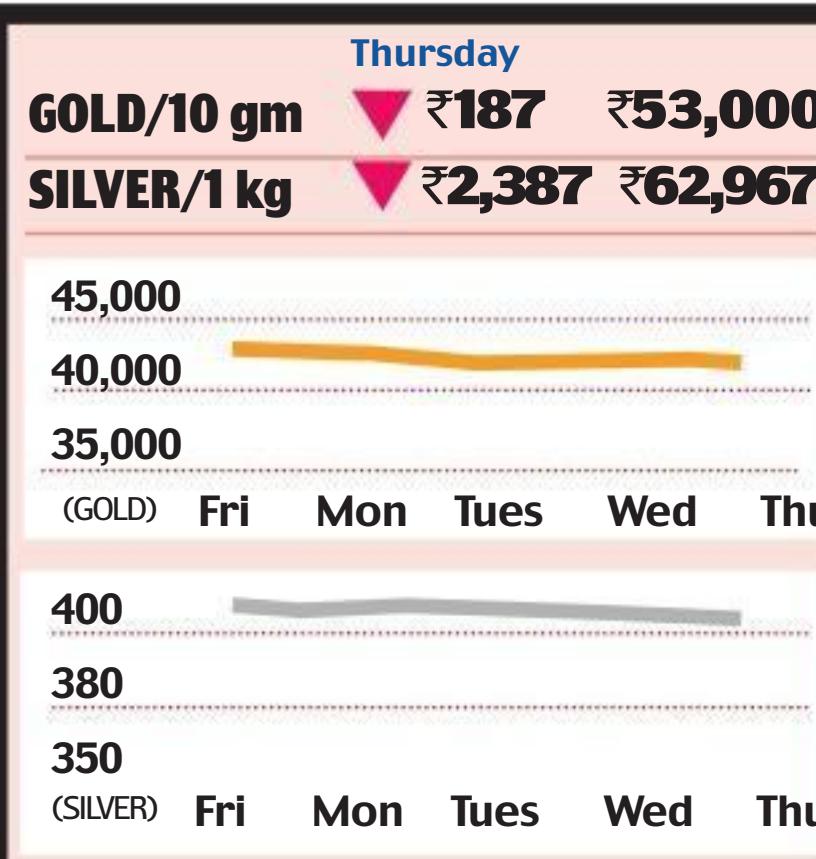
<b>NIFTY</b>	<b>11,202.85</b>	<b>-100.70</b>
WEDNESDAY'S CLOSE	11,102.15	H: 11,249.95 L: 11,084.95

<b>TOP GAINERS</b>		
	% change	Price ₹
1 SUN PHARMA	3.44	509.95
2 MARUTI	1.29	6,265.65
3 INFOSYS	0.84	961.85
4 RELIANCE	0.61	2,108.65
5 ASIAN PAINTS	0.33	1,743.10

<b>TOP LOSERS</b>		
	% change	Price ₹
1 INDUSINDBNK	-5.62	519.85
2 HDFC	-3.64	1,811.00
3 AXISBANK	-3.41	425.80
4 POWERGRID	-2.64	177.00
5 SBI	-2.43	186.55

## BULLION



## EXCHANGE RATE

	Wednesday	Thursday
Dollar	₹74.78	₹74.87
Euro	₹87.70	₹88.01
Pound	₹97.01	₹97.43
Yen (100)	₹71.13	₹71.16
76	100	
72	90	
68	80	
64	70	
60	60	
DOLLAR	Tues	Wed
YEN	Thurs	Thurs
\$	€	£

# Powercracy

## The need for a robust policy for agrochemical spray using drones: FICCI-CropLife paper

"There are around a lakh villages which can seek benefit by the drones. We can design special purpose drones and industry must focus on developing low cost drones for them."

Amber Dubey, JS, Ministry of Civil Aviation

"FICCI is working closely with all stakeholders like start-ups, industry, government agencies and academia to act as a catalyst for collaboration and supporting the enabling regulatory frameworks."

Rajan Luthra, Chairman, FICCI Committee on Drones

"There is an opportunity to extend drone technology to other crops and areas through pragmatic science-based policy framework."

Asitava Sen, CEO, CropLife India

"Drone enabled technology can be very useful in soil analysis of the fields which can help us in better irrigation management and maintaining correct nitrogen levels."

Shomita Biswas, JS (M&T), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

**A**t the webinar, jointly organised by FICCI and CropLife India, the technical paper on 'Drone usage for agrochemical spraying' was released highlighting the application of agrochemical spraying via drones in India, benefits and potential risk and mitigation strategy around it. The technical paper also outlines the drone regulation in other countries such as EU, Japan, Australia and New Zealand citing the best practices in agrochemical spraying.

The report was released by Amber Dubey, joint secretary, ministry of civil aviation who shared that FICCI along with other industry stakeholders should come forward with indigenous solutions for Indian problems; Shomita Biswas, joint secretary (M&T), ministry of agriculture and farmers' welfare mentioned that start-ups should create drone planting system which will reduce the planting cost considerably; Dr SK Malhotra, agricultural commissioner and chairman, registration committee opined that drone spraying would help the farmers increase their productivity, lower water consumption, higher efficiency; besides being safe for human and environment; Dr K Alagusundaram, deputy director general (agriculture engineering), Indian Council of Agriculture Research; Rajan Luthra, chairman, FICCI drones committee shared that India has over 150 drone start-ups and most large companies are understanding the potential impact drones can add and Asitava Sen, CEO, CropLife India who spoke about prime minister's emphasis on modernising agriculture sector and adoption of new technological innovations in achieving the goal of dou-



bling farmers income. Drone technology is one such area deployed on a large scale.

**Key highlights of FICCI-CropLife technical paper:**

- The necessary regulations should take into consideration:

- Civil aviation laws (both local and umbrella) and setting of vehicle specifications.
- SOPs and piloting requirements for safe use of drones.
- Product approval and permissions for spray operations.

- In addition to these general regulations, we would recommend at least five other criteria to be met for obtaining permission:

- Approval of vehicle needs.
- Licensing or certification of pilots/operators and training for agrochemical application by drones.
- Registration of agrochemical product sought to be sprayed.
- Encouragement for fast approval of ULV formulations or allowing mixing of mineral oils to the existing formulations, so as to serve the purpose of ULV formulations, however, by

- proper testing of flash point.
- Strict adherence to product label instructions.

- More specifically, we propose setting up a system for certification or licensing of drone operators to ensure their capability to pilot the UAV machines safely. Such certification/licensing should be subject to regular renewal and conducting of refresher courses. The authorities should also accredit training facilities to put in place a standardised programme for all agricultural drone operations.

- The product registration process for inclusion of drone as alternate equipment for application of CPP must be simplified time-bound and should not be duplicated from scratch. The idea is to reduce registration timelines and make available the same crop protection products to farmers quickly, without compromising on safety and efficacy. A reasonable and predictable timeframe for all the regulatory clearances will create a vibrant and a compliant ecosystem that attracts more investment in the sector.

FICCI-CropLife India's webinar on the release of the technical paper, 'Drone usage for agrochemical spraying', highlighted the application of agrochemical spraying via drones in India, benefits and potential risk and mitigation strategy around it.

### SHORT TAKES

#### KVIC RECEIVES ORDER FOR 1.80 LAKH FACE MASKS FROM IRCS



The mask will have suitably printed IRCS logo on the left side and Khadi India tag on the right side. The supply of masks will begin from next month. This order will generate 9,000 additional man days for Khadi artisans.

#### TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN REBUILDING ECONOMIES AND CITIZEN WELFARE: SECRETARY, MEITY

Technology plays a crucial role as a continuity tool for businesses and citizen welfare. Ajay Prakash Sawhney, secretary, ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) shared, "There is huge potential to collaborate between India and Russia in ICT and digital economy due to their complementary strengths. Solid discussions in the fields of digital technology, AI, blockchain, machine learning, 5G and cybersecurity were held and were quite fruitful during my visit to Russia. During this pandemic, we have seen a rapid shift towards digital transformation and in the long run, we will have to adapt to a new normal where technology will play a very important role."

#### PFC SUPPORTS IIT-K, TO DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE FOR R&D IN SMART GRID TECHNOLOGY

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) signed a MoA with Indian Institute of Technology- Kanpur (IIT-K) for training, research and entrepreneurship development in smart grid technology. PFC will provide financial assistance of ₹2,38,97,000 to IIT-K. R Murahari, executive director (CSR&SD), PFC informed that the objective is to provide support to IIT-K in developing infrastructure for research and development on smart grid technology. IIT-K will also provide training on smart grid technology to 90 participants and provide fellowship to nine selected candidates for development of ideas on smart grid technology.

#### INDIAN RAILWAYS TO COMPLETE 2,800 KILOMETRE CORRIDOR PROJECTS BY 2022: MD, DFCCIL

Dedicated Freight Corridor is one of the most prestigious infrastructure projects in India. A K Sachan, MD, Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation Indian Ltd (DFCCIL) shared, "DFCCIL plans to connect the inland waterways from Varanasi to the eastern corridor to provide direct connectivity from Haldia Port to Ludhiana. We will also be allowing private players to operate on these corridors. The project has opened avenues of employment. The construction industry has highly benefitted from this sector and once the operation starts, the logistics industry will be greatly impacted."

#### LALIT CHANDRA TRIVEDI, GM, EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY ANNOUNCES FUTURISTIC PLANS TILL 2024

In the virtual press conference led by Lalit Chandra Trivedi, GM, East Central Railway (ECR), he spoke about how Indian Railways is diligently serving its countrymen irrespective of the current coronavirus pandemic. Under the ruling govt., yearly investment in Indian Railways has increased from ₹40,000-50,000 (approx.) to ₹1.5 lakh crore. Till 2024, it plans to double its goods loading capacity, give travellers waiting list-free experience etc.

#### UNDER AMNESTY SCHEME, PROPERTY OWNERS OF UNAUTHORISED COLONIES TO PAY TAX ONLY FROM 2019-2021

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

In order to provide relief to the citizens of Delhi, SDMC Mayor Anamika shared that residential and commercial property holders will have to pay property tax only for two years (2019-20 and 2020-21). The pending tax since 2004 will be completely waived off. Under the amnesty scheme, benefit of 100 per cent waiver of interest and 100 per cent penalty is provided to all the properties. The last date of this amnesty scheme is July 30, 2020. "Earlier it was decided that owners of non-residential or commercial properties will have to pay property tax for the last three years and residential properties have to deposit two year property tax, but now there will be same condition for both," she added.



Standing Committee Chairman Rajdutt Gahlot shared "SDMC has provided manual and online facilities for filing property tax returns. Special property tax camps in all colonies, in association with RWAs and local councillors are too organised." He urged all the citizens to file their property tax returns on time. SDMC acknowledges the support of its tax payers for timely payment. Collection of property tax during this period will be an extended financial help from citizens for successful execution of COVID-19 works and other welfare schemes.

# Sports Mail



## Hardik and fiancee Natasha blessed with 'baby boy'

# WINDIES SAVED ENGLISH CRICKET

**England must now come to the Caribbean to help us stay afloat**

By Jason Holder

I have seen so many comments on TV, radio and media since the end of the third Test expressing gratitude towards us for coming over and playing against England this summer and we appreciate all of them. We feel we've done something significant to help the game.

A lot of those posts say we 'saved' English cricket and hopefully we can have England over to the Caribbean in the not-too-distant future to help us continue to stay afloat. Times like these really highlight the inequalities in world cricket and it would not only do us a hell of a lot of good if England come, say before Christmas, it would also help the global game. It's just about finding a window.

We haven't had a home Test series this year and that's really hit our revenue. And there's no likelihood of any unless we can schedule a tour at the end of the year.

We are sitting tight and we would benefit tremendously from having England over. Something has to change within the game over how money is shared because if we carry on the way it is, with home boards keeping all their broadcasting revenue, lots of teams are going to struggle in the COVID world. We don't make any money if other countries host us, so now we are back to square one — trying to find the commercial deals and TV revenue which keep the West Indies board, and others, afloat.

If COVID is around for maybe another two or three years it could have serious ramifications and I certainly agree with our board chief executive Johnny Grave when he says 20 per cent of revenue raised in a series should go to the visiting side.

I don't want to criticise the ICC but we need to be in a situation where West

**Teams like Windies, South Africa need more profit shares**



West Indies captain Jason Holder feels the Caribbeans have done something significant by playing in England amid the COVID-19 pandemic. (Below) England rallied to win the series 2-1 after losing the first Test in Manchester.

Indies, South Africa and New Zealand can share in the profits being generated and stage series themselves — in the way England have. If you only have three countries making money by playing Tests in England, India and Australia, what's the final outcome? A three-team Test championship? A three-team World Cup? They will be standing alone if we are not careful.

Our guys have been through so much by spending close to two months living and working at two cricket grounds and I'm very proud of each and every one of them. It would have been very easy to simply stay in the Caribbean and not play.

It has been difficult staying in the same places for so long.

Guy would have liked to go for dinner, do a bit of shopping or go sightseeing but it's just not been possible.

—Daily Mail



Kemar Roach has been one of the highlights of the series.

## CK Khanna group to support Rohan for DDCA top post



Rohan Jaitley (centre) with CK Khanna (far left) and his wife Shashi Khanna on Thursday.

By Chetan Sharma in New Delhi

ROHAN Jaitley, son of former DDCA president Arun Jaitley, is all set to become the next president of Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) as the strong CK Khanna group has also come out in support of him.

The electoral movement in the DDCA was increased after the order of by-elections for six posts by Delhi High Court. Speaking to MAIL TODAY, CK Khanna, former BCCI acting president, said, "Now it is certain that Rohan Jaitley would be elected next president as he has got support of all the groups (of DDCA)."

Earlier on Thursday, Khanna along with other members met Rohan at his residence. "The group of Dr CK Khanna (For-

mer Acting President- BCCI), has decided to support Mr Rohan Jaitley for the post of president in the forthcoming elections of the DDCA," Manjeet Singh, former Director- DDCA, said in a statement.

"After a few meetings and interactions with Mr Rohan Jaitley, it has become clear that Mr Rohan has a great vision and plans

for both, the game of Cricket as well as the Association. After listening to his vision and plans, the group is convinced that Mr Rohan Jaitley is the right person to be the president, DDCA," he added. "For the post of treasurer, the group has decided to field Shashi Khanna and for the posts of four directors (member apex council) the names of the candidates will be announced in due course," he added.

Recently, former Indian cricketer Madan Lal, who had contested the election for top post against senior journalist Rajat Sharma, also visited Rohan's home and hinted that he, too, is in support of him.

However, later while speaking to MAIL TODAY he said that it was just a general meeting. Vinod Tihara had already promised Rohan support.

**Will field Shashi**

**Khanna for**

**treasurer post**



# SFI pleads for swimming camp

**MAIL TODAY  
SPECIAL**

By S.Kannan in New Delhi

**W**ITH the Ministry of Home Affairs' guidelines for phased reopening, Unlock 3 as it is called, not having good news for the swimming fraternity in India, there is a chance that the Swimming Federation of India will finally push for a national camp to be conducted overseas for a dozen or so elite swimmers.

Since Unlock 1 was announced in the end of May, MAIL TODAY has consistently been highlighting the fact that India's sports leaders have consistently ignored the resumption of training by swimmers who have achieved B qualification mark for the Tokyo Olympics.

At a time when even gyms are being allowed to reopen after August 5 (subject to following Standard Operating Procedure), it is baffling that not even one swimming facility has been given permission to reopen for elite swimmers. In conversations that MAIL TODAY has had with elite swimmers and officials, it is clear that they are frustrated that the sport is being throttled.



"We have had discussions with the sports ministry and MHA regularly. There is a fear about swimming, and it is how swimmers do tend to take in some water into their mouth and also spit it out. The fear of Corona virus for swimming stems from it," said a Swimming Federation of India official.

Sajan Prakash is training overseas and five swimmers who have made the B qualification mark for Tokyo 2020 are Srihari Nataraj, Virdhawal Khade,

Kushagra Rawat, Aryan Makhija and Advait Page. The last two, studying in US universities, are currently in India and may not be able to return to the US in a hurry.

Apart from these swimmers, there is also a development group which has been identified for the 2024 and 2028 Olympics, not to speak of the 2022 and 2026 Asian Games.

The federation requested government to create a bio-bubble so that a camp could be held for elite athletes

None of them has had a feel of the pool waters since March and the frustration level has been growing every day. Despite the nature of Indian swimming where extended national camps have not been held in the last couple of decades, thanks to the bloated egos of coaches, there could be a change this time if the Swimming Federation has its way.

We have had discussions with the sports ministry and MHA regularly. There is a fear about swimming, and it is how swimmers do tend to take in some water into their mouth and also spit it out.

— SFI OFFICIAL,  
ON TRAINING CAMP

At first, SFI requested government to create a bio-bubble so that a camp could be held for elite swimmers. The possible venues could be in the Balewadi complex in Pune or even a university with a good 50m pool with a modern filtration plant. If this proposal does not get the government's nod, SFI will ask for a camp in Dubai.

The UAE has allowed tourists to come in, provided they hold a COVID negative test report 96 hours before boarding the

Sajan Prakash is training overseas but the likes of Srihari Nataraj (below) are restricted to fitness regime at home.



## Dubai being touted as a possible option as suspense continues on training

flight. "We are not even talking about a high performance camp in India, swimmers have to get back to basics and then find their rhythm. We must first look at a pool in India to achieve this. It is not asking for the moon as a bio-bubble can be created where swimmers live in the same complex," the SFI official said.

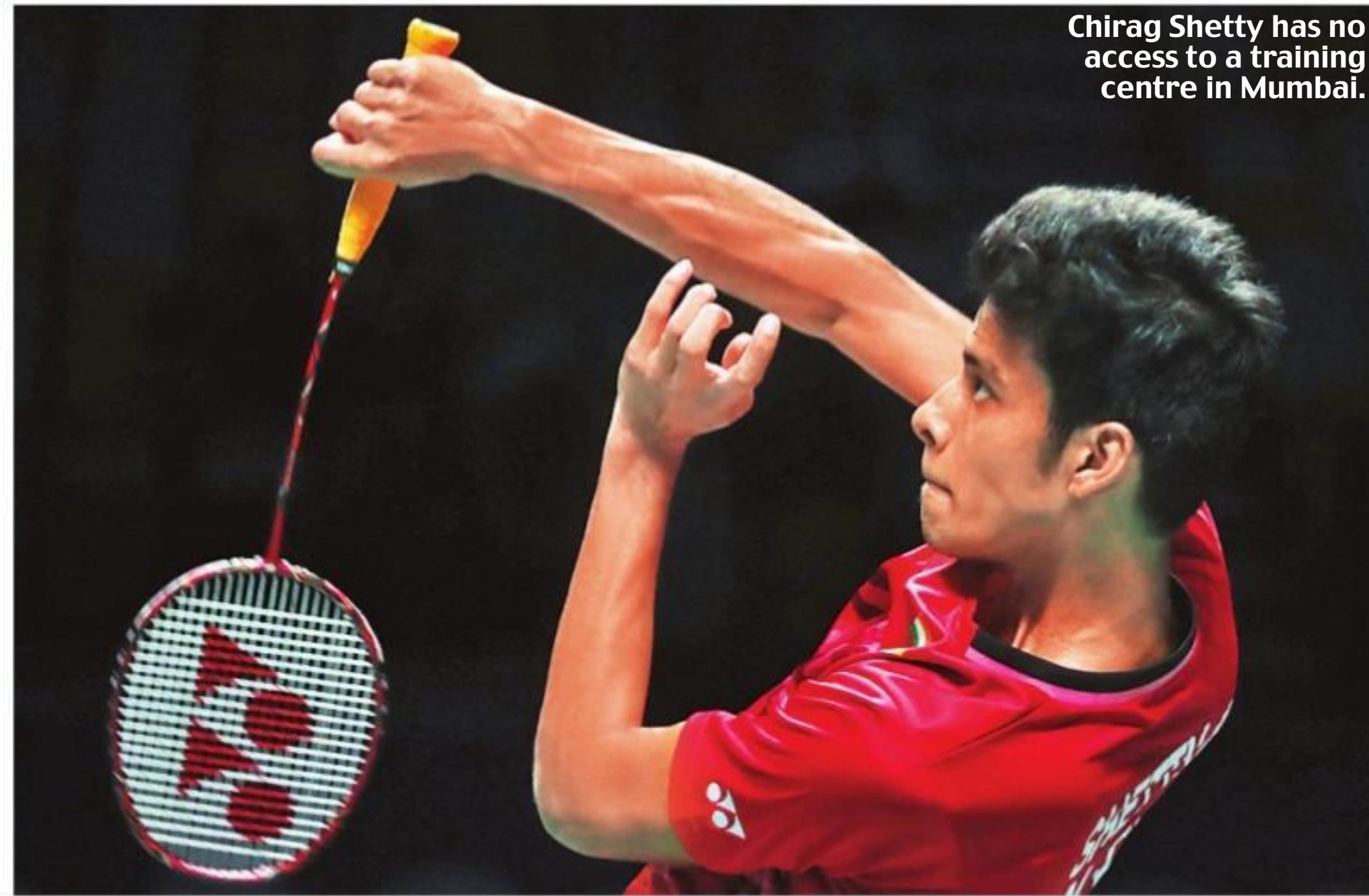
Given the long break from the sport, swimmers feel more hurt as almost every other sport's resumption in India has been mapped out. Swimmers like Srihari and Khade have spoken

**Players have been vocal about their problems**

out loudly. However, their voices seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

The concept of a national camp is a good one and will sort out a lot of egos. For SFI, which has been on the back-foot during the pandemic, this is an acid test. They need to convince the government about the tribulations of the elite swimmers. There are quite a few states in India, Delhi included, where a bio bubble pool can be created. The ball is now in the court of the government.

# SAI tight-lipped on training resumption



By Rohit Paniker  
in New Delhi

IT IS an anxious wait for India's elite badminton players as they hope for positive news regarding their training resumption.

Since the COVID-19 forced national lockdown in March, the gates of Sports Authority of India (SAI)-Gopichand National Badminton Academy in Hyderabad remain shut, restricting the likes of PV Sindhu and Co. to train at home.

In the last couple weeks, players in Bengaluru have resumed outdoor training at the nearby academies but the rest are facing the wrath of the ongoing pandemic.

Last month, the Badminton Association of India had announced the national camp for elite players from July 1 in Hyderabad, subject to permission from the Telengana government. The camp scheduled at the academy has since been postponed indefinitely.

The SAI, responsible for organising national camps due to de-recognition of more than 50 National Sports Federations, has been tight-lipped on an alternative for the players as a

**It is getting frustrating but can't do anything about it. Nothing is open in Mumbai. Travelling elsewhere is risky during this time.**

— CHIRAG SHETTY,  
WORLD NO. 10 DOUBLES STAR

major part of India's Tokyo Olympics hopefuls are yet to resume full training. Many have even complained of monotony and frustration due to lack of outdoor activities.

On query, a BAI official told Mail Today that they have been constantly in touch with SAI to sort out a location for the players to start their training but have not come to a conclusion.

It has also been learnt that both SAI and BAI are reluctant to hold the camp anywhere else as Hyderabad remains the only option.

"Major sports have resumed training in India. Most of them in Patiala and some in Bengaluru. We don't have facilities for badminton in Patiala and Bengaluru being a hotspot in recent days is also not an option. Since BAI cannot organise a camp, we are in touch with SAI to figure out a suitable option but unless we get proper guidelines from the government, we can't act."

"We will have to adhere to it. Hyderabad remains the only place for us to host the national camp, and till the time we get permission from the Telengana government, we will have to wait. Even players we spoke to, have not shown much interest in moving elsewhere," the official said.

Meanwhile, one half of World No. 10 doubles pair Chirag Shetty has said that nothing can be done about the lack of training as there is no clarification. Mumbai, where Chirag is situated, is under severe lockdown and travelling to Bengaluru for training is not an option due to safety risks.

## Top-ranked Barty pulls out of the US Open



World No. 1 women's tennis player Ash Barty.

NO 1-ranked Ash Barty has pulled out of the US Open because she doesn't want to risk travelling during the coronavirus pandemic.

The 24-year-old Australian is the highest-profile player so far to opt out of the August 31-September 13 Grand Slam tournament in New York because of the global health crisis.

"My team and I have decided that we won't be travelling to the ... Western & Southern Open and the US Open this year," Barty said in a statement emailed to The Associated Press on Thursday.

"I love both events so this was a difficult decision, but there are still significant risks involved due to COVID-19 and I don't feel comfortable putting my team and I in that position. I wish the USTA all the best for the tournaments and I look forward to being back in the US next year."

Barty is yet to decide if she'll defend the French Open title she won last year. The clay-court Grand Slam event was rescheduled to start September 27, after the US Open. —AFP

**NEWCASTLE'S £300million proposed huge takeover from a Saudi Arabian-led consortium is off, it has been officially announced.**

*The news comes amid four months of scrutiny from the Premier League following concerns over piracy and human rights complaints in Saudi Arabia, leaving much-maligned owner Mike Ashley now without a buyer for the club.*

*And on Thursday, Saudi Public Investment Fund, PCP Capital Partners and RB Sports & Media announced it has formally withdrawn from the takeover process.*

*The proposed takeover had taken plenty of twists throughout, and on Thursday morning it took another after Saudi Arabia appealed against a landmark piracy ruling - which placed fresh question marks on the mega-money deal.*

—Daily Mail

By Aditya K Halder  
in New Delhi

AMID the uncertain times of COVID-19 pandemic, which has made it extremely difficult to make arrangements for a national camp for 2021 Tokyo Olympic-bound archers, Pune is now back among talks for a national camp for both men's and women's archers.

In the past, women archers have trained at Pune's Army Sports Institute (ASI), while staying at a hotel just outside the Army campus as girls are prohibited from

**Women stars have trained at ASI in the past**

staying at the ASI facilities. However, with the pandemic setting in, likes of Deepika Kumari, Bombayla Devi among others had to return home as strict COVID-19 guidelines didn't allow girls to enter the premises while most of them also decided to go home.

This forced the Archery Association of India (AAI) to plan for a camp in Jamshedpur and Sonepat, depending on the situ-



tion by July end, as reported by MAIL TODAY earlier.

However, Sports Authority of India (SAI), who stepped up its efforts to start camps for Olympic-bound athletes after de-recognition of all the NSFs by Delhi HC, is in favour of a camp in Pune given its past clean track record.

## Pune centre back in talks to host camp for archery

Subsequently, a request has been made to the ASI to restart a camp while accommodating women archers inside the army campus.

"A formal proposal has been made to the ASI to restart the national camp at its facilities while allowing women archers to stay inside the premises in order to ensure safety from Coronavirus," a senior AAI official told the paper.

At the moment, army archers Tarundeep Rai & Parvin Jadhav, who won the Olympics quota last year, are at the ASI since March and resumed training in May. The official further revealed that if talks with the ASI don't go through then the focus will move back to possible camp in either Jamshedpur or Sonepat.

"We have two plans in place for camp resumption. Plan A is camp in Pune in August and if that is rejected, plan B is camp in Jamshedpur or Sonepat by September," explained the official.



# Mexico's Lopez out of LPGA opener after +ve COVID-19 test

Mercedes star Lewis Hamilton



# HAMILTON WILL BEAT SCHUMI

**N**IGEL Mansell has no doubts that Lewis Hamilton will establish himself as the most successful driver in Formula One history by surpassing Michael Schumacher's record of seven world titles.

Hamilton is on course to equal the legendary German's total this season having won two of the opening three races.

Mercedes have shown an incredible dominance over the rest of the field which is a distinct difference for Mansell who was used to lining up on a grid with as many as seven or eight world champions at any one time.

Speaking on *The Gary Newbon Sports Show with Jewson*, Mansell said: "I don't think

**1992 champion says  
staying alive was his  
biggest career success**

there is any question (Hamilton will take the record). And that is not to belittle the talent Michael (Schumacher) had because when he was at Ferrari, Michael won three world championships with reliability alone.

"All the other manufacturers had not caught up with Ferrari so their cars were still breaking down.

"Lewis, (Valtteri) Bottas and you have to say the Silver Arrow Mercedes have just done an outstanding job year after year and Lewis has been fortunate to have capitalised on it. I predicted this years ago, it is fantastic what he has achieved."

While Hamilton's excellence continues to rewrite the record books, Mansell, who won the 1992 drivers' championship for Williams, admitted staying alive

was his biggest success in the sport having competed in an era littered with tragic driver deaths and life-changing injuries from crashes and collisions.

Riccardo Paletti and Ayrton Senna were two that Mansell reflected back on in Newbon's company and it was an emotional topic when he opened up on the life-changing injuries he sustained during his time behind the wheel.

In Mansell's eyes, Hamilton, Bottas and their peers on the grid now are fortunate to be racing in a sport far safer than it was 30-40 years ago.

—Daily Mail



Nigel Mansell (centre) said when he shared the grid with Michael Schumacher (in yellow) back in the 90's, deaths & life-changing injuries were common.

**I don't think there is any question (Hamilton will take the record). And that is not to belittle the talent of Michael Schumacher.**



— NIGEL MANSELL,  
31-TIME F1 GRAND PRIX WINNER

## Pandemic a challenge for 2022 Beijing test events: IOC



2022 Beijing test events in multiple disciplines are due to be held during the 2020-2021 winter season.

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) Coordination Commission for 2022 Beijing has expressed concern over the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on test events for the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

2022 Beijing test events in speed skating, figure skating, ski jumping, Nordic combined and Alpine skiing are due to be held during the 2020-2021 winter season, but the COVID-19 crisis has put these vital competitions in considerable jeopardy.

In his report to the IOC Session earlier this month, Coordination Commission chairman Juan Antonio Samaranch highlighted how measures imposed in China and other nations to curb the spread of Coronavirus could create issues for the Organising Committee when it comes to holding test events.

"COVID-19 impacts related to travel restrictions, visa requirements and quarantine measures could pose chal-

lenges for international experts, officials and athletes to travel to China for the 2020/2021 winter test event season," Samaranch wrote in the report.

"2022 Beijing has committed to work-

**Travel & other  
restrictions to the  
nation is a worry**

ing closely with the IOC, International Paralympic Committee and International Federations to have the best possible chance of delivering test events this coming season."

Test events for the 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics are exempt from a ban on international competitions taking place in the country for the rest of the year, imposed by the Chinese Government in response to fears over a second wave of the virus hitting the nation. 2022 Beijing also admitted the postponement of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics to 2021 will "result in some obstacles".

According to the IOC Coordination Commission report, Beijing organisers 'indicated that some areas would require closer attention' following the one-year delay to Olympics, including the impact on the start date for Torch Relay, the launch of the official song.

Concerns around the availability of specialised staff and equipment from Olympic Broadcasting Services, and their ability to provide services in a timely manner have also been raised by the Committee.

—Mail Today